

Residence Life Undergoes Major Restructuring

CATHERINE DE OLIVEIRA

Over the summer, Houghton's residence life department went through several structural changes. AC Taylor (Shen RD) became the Director of Student Engagement, Jon Craton (Roth RD) and Laura Cunningham (Gillette RD) moved away, and Beth Phifer was the only returning RD (Lambein RD). Houghton went from four Residence Directors (RDs), down to two RDs, with the introduction of two new roles, an Area Coordinator and a new ARD for the men's dorms.

The goal of this restructure was to ensure that co-curricular engagement was getting as much support as possible, while maintaining the overseeing of residence life. Marc Smithers, Dean of Students, explained that it was, "To particularly address some of the things that we were getting back in some surveys that students had indicated that they were in things like clubs and organizations...as a way to sort of enhance that aspect of the student experience."

Marc Smithers has continued in his position as Dean of Students from last year, but has also become the Chief Student Life Officer. His role changed to encompass more direct oversight of the student life depart-



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The new res life staff. Clockwise from top left: Alissa Collins, Guthrie Collins, Katie Breitigan, and Michael Earle.

ment, while also overseeing student conduct, the health center, Safety and Security and the Highlander Shop. Before these changes, three of the RDs were full time, but they had auxiliary roles, either in student programs or in housing.

Now, Katie Breitigan has joined Houghton Staff as the Director of Residence Life and Housing, while the remaining RDs and the Area Coordinator are able to specialize in residence hall responsibilities.

Breitigan is a Houghton graduate and lived in Lambein all four years. She also served

as an RA at the time alongside Marc Smithers. "As a Houghton student, I have a lot of experiences and positive memories from my time here overall, but also particularly in Residence Life," Breitigan said. "We're still doing some of those same things, just a lot of the intentionality within the halls with the programming in certain things that we do there. But I think there's also areas where we can see what other schools are doing really well and match that with Houghton's mission and vision."

With a majority of new staff,

Breitigan says their primary goal is learning together, particularly "learning about Houghton, our values, and what's important to students, even what students are looking for. I think that includes points of frustration." Learning about the culture has also been important in her role as overseer of the townhouses. "Townhouse students have a lot more independence just from the nature of the buildings. They have their own place to cook their meals. And typically, people are living with a group of friends. And so, their community is within their individual house rather than townhouses as a whole."

As for the residence halls, Marc Smithers explained the unique challenge that campus structure presents residence life. "We have a large building [Gillette]. So even when we are considering our dean to student ratios, it was always hard to manage the workload of the RD of Gillette compared to the RD ratios in the other buildings."

Gillette houses about 330 compared to Lambein, the other female dorm, which houses about 150. The two male dorms house approximately 125 (Shen) and 130 (Roth). So even as the new Area Coordinator position is overseeing two

buildings, they're still not overseeing as many people as the RD of Gillette.

Smithers explained, "The initial plan was to have a Graduate Assistant in Rothenbuler and the Area Coordinator in Shen." Michael Earle, a graduate student in the music grad program is the new Roth ARD, a position that Smithers is happy for. "It's been awesome to have additional ways in which we can sort of equip and train student leaders to be RAs, but then also take on a little bit more responsibility in that."

Although the ARD position was filled according to plan, last-minute staffing changes had to be made in the absence of an Area Coordinator.

"Luckily, Gillette RD Alissa Collins, who was coming from Cornerstone University, and her husband Guthrie was also an RD at Cornerstone. He has the exact kind of experience that we're looking for in somebody that would be filling the men's area coordinator role," Smithers said. "We've never had this opportunity before to have a married couple serving in these unique roles, I've really appreciated the way that the Collins' have brought a lot of expertise into their role, with enthusiasm

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Mullen Introduces Revised Community Life Document

ALEXANDER DEARMORE
Regular Contributor

This semester, the Community Covenant is being revised and rewritten into the Community Life Document. The last time that the document was reviewed was ten years ago, in accordance with President Mullen's plan for the document. According to Professor Benjamin Lipscomb, one of the writers of the document, the Community Life Document "takes [the Community Covenant's] place, but it's also taking a very different approach."

Lipscomb described the process as trying to "write something both more poetic and more aspirational that people will reference when they're working on handbook language." The hope for this new document, Lipscomb said, is that "it will actually be read aloud on a regular basis." He also added that "we've written it with the consciousness awareness that a short document cannot contain all the necessary details of its own application." When asked about

changes that will be occurring to the document, Houghton College President Shirley Mullen pointed out that "The major change is not in particular points—but in the overall way the statement functions." She went on to add that it "is to be a document that speaks about what we are FOR... to hold out before us as faculty, staff, and students the kind of community we want to be."

A big motivation for this change was that the Community Covenant was more "like a terms-and-conditions statement that you have to check when making an online purchase... no one was reading it," according to Prof. Lipscomb. He went on to say that "a document like that can't actually do much to shape the life of a community... we're hoping that the new document can function more like... a mission statement, almost." Additionally, these changes were brought about in accordance with "a survey of major campus constituencies—including fac-

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Continua Opens in Ortlip Art Gallery



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The Ortlip Gallery is being kept locked when a proctor is not present to ensure works like the freestanding *Blind Eye* are not disturbed.

ANNA WRAY
Regular Contributor

Last Friday, November 1st, a new exhibition opened in the Ortlip Art Gallery with a reception held Friday evening. Titled

Continua, it features works by Karen Donnellan and Sarah Blood, sculpture professors from Alfred University.

Prof. Blood holds an MA in glass from the University of

Sunderland in the UK. She often does work that involves light, particularly neon. One of her pieces, *Blind Eye*, consists of a white neon tube light shaped

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Basketball Teams Prepare for Winter Season

RODNEY SHEPHARD
Sports Writer

The Houghton College Men’s basketball teams opened up practice this year on October 15th, 2019. This winter, they hope to bounce back from a disappointing 2018-19 campaign where they finished 1-24, which had them finish last in the Empire 8. In August of 2019, first-year head coach Lance Westberg made the 15 hour trip from River Falls, WI to Houghton, NY to lead the Highlanders this season. When asked about the hire of Westberg, athletic director Matthew Webb said, “I am excited about Coach Westberg’s philosophy for developing a program, investing in young men, and his passion for recruiting. I am optimistic about the future of men’s basketball at Houghton with him at the helm.”

Coach Westberg has replaced former head coach Corky McMullen, who was at the reins of the program for the past three seasons. Isaac Kopp (’22) commented on the coaching change by saying, “With Coach McMullen leaving it was an unfortunate situation, but I guess he felt it was time to move on into a new chapter in his life and we have to move on into a new

chapter in ours. I think having Coach Westberg coming in with a different mindset on how to run the team is a fresh look and it’s an exciting one. I think he has brought in a coaching staff who is like-minded and have the same goals that we have, which is to win, we all want to win.”

When asked about taking the position here at Houghton College Westberg said, “Prior to arriving to Houghton, I had learned that Houghton is a place with highly respected academics in a strong Christian environment. These two elements were a big draw for me as I come from a background that really values both education and faith. I also enjoy the rural area as I see parts of God’s glory and grace through his creation. Since coming here, I have been blown away by the kindness and welcoming presence of the community here. I saw that the Men’s Basketball program had struggled to win games recently, but received numerous high regards for the people in the program and felt confident in the direction of the athletic department at Houghton.”

Westberg’s hire has generated excitement within people inside and out of the program. When asked about how the new season has been

going so far, Jon Burns (’22) said, “I like coach Westberg and the staff he brought in a lot. I already feel like we’re growing as a team. The practices are really intense and I’m excited for the season to start. I think the new style of play that coach put in this year will help steer us in the right direction.” The Highlanders’ first game will be November 12th at 7pm at Pitt-Bradford.

Key Returners:
Isander Ramos-Net ’20 (9.1 PPG, 2.7 APG, 3.8 RPG)
Scottie Berghaus ’21 (8.0 PPG, 2.3 RPG, 47 Made 3pt)
Jordan Holmes ’21 (14.4 PPG, 4.8 RPG, 2.5 APG)
Darren Clark ’22 (6.5 PPG, 3.6 RPG, 1 SPG)
Kyle Donk ’20 (18 Points, 29 Rebounds, 6 Blocks)

The 2018-19 Women’s basketball team finished their season 11-14 which had them finish in 6th place in the Empire 8, and just two spots away from making the E8 tournament. This year the team is without 5 graduated seniors who combined to average 34.1 of the team’s average 65.4 points per game. Akil Grampus (who was a senior on the men’s team in 2018-19) was asked about the women’s team last sea-

son and he said, “Last year the women’s team really had their moments, I think that losing the senior leadership that they had last year will hurt but I think that they are returning some important pieces to that core.”

Hannah Cybart (’21) is one of the players from last year’s team that will return this season. When asked about last season Cybart commented by saying, “Last year was definitely a taxing year on the court because it seemed like the team experienced a lot of highs and lows. We never quite figured out how to play in an extremely consistent manner, and our win-to-loss ratio ended up being a little lower than we had hoped as a result. That being said, I had a lot of fun last year and genuinely enjoyed my time on and off the court with the team. Lots of laughs and memories were shared throughout the season, and the group definitely grew closer together in a way that only teammates can.”

The Lady Highlanders return 7 players to the court this year along with 3 freshman. The freshman include Alexis Klohr (’23), Hannah Heinel (’23), and Hannah Matteson (’23). The returners include Brooke Lewandowski (’20), Cori Beck (’20), Alex Steele

(’22), Caitlyn Cybart (’21), Hannah Cybart (’21), Janessa Davis (’21), and Emie Taylor (’22).

Hannah Cybart was asked how practice has gone so far and she responded by saying, “Practice has been going great! The focus for our team this year is keeping first things first, and I think that the team has fully embraced this challenge. At least to me, it seems as though each person has shown up ready to give her all from the beginning to the end of practice—even the 6am ones.”

The Lady Highlanders will be led this season by 7th year head coach Alicia Mucher and will open up their season on Friday November 8th, against Westminster at the Nielson Center.

Key Returners:
Cori Beck ’20 (6.9 PPG, 4.5 APG, 2.7 RPG)
Brooke Lewandowski (5.2 PPG, 5.0 RPG, 10 Blocks)
Hannah Cybart (5.0 PPG , 41 Rebounds, 95% FT Percentage)
Alex Steele (3.5 PPG, 46 Assists, 13 steals)
Emie Taylor (16 Points, 21 Rebounds, 7 Blocks) ★

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and energy. It’s been really awesome to see.”

Alissa Collins when describing their planning process, as a couple who had just gotten married in July and who had left Cornerstone to head to Houghton, explained, “We knew that when we got married, typically with res life, you cannot be married and each have your own building. We had been thinking about it and decided that our next move would be for me, which I think is amazing.”

With a photography business, finishing up graduate school, Guthrie Collins had a full plate, traveling back and forth from Michigan and other states, while the couple moved for Alissa’s job at Houghton. Although he did not plan on becoming an RD again due to logistics, he was praying that God would give him a challenge back in August.

“It was like, ‘Lord, I’d love to do something else and I’d love your guidance in that,’” Guthrie said. “That same morning, Alissa woke up and said, ‘Hey, my boss Katie texted me and wants you to come in and talk to her at lunch.’ So I said, ‘OK, I’ll do that.’ I walked in and they just offered me the position without me even really having an interview for it. So we took the weekend to pray about it and then decided that was pretty clearly what the Lord had in store. So yeah, that’s been a journey.”

“We love being full-time resident directors,” Alissa explained. “Just because like the nature of the job. So that’s been really fun.” At her old job,

she oversaw men and women, but she likes the transition to women only. “I love having just women, like it’s just so refreshing to be able to connect with all my students on a deeper level when necessary. I love compelling programming students like chatter about. That’s very memorable. That you couldn’t do anywhere else. So that’s like one goal. Tough programming that really draws students and connects them together and helps them make memories like I love that about college, and also adding a higher spiritual element to the dorms.”

Guthrie’s fast-paced photography schedule is going to slow down, and for the final two months of the year, he can invest more time in the community.

“There’s a lot of students for me to supervise. But overall, it’s been quite a nice transition for me,” Guthrie says. “I was an RD for three years before this. So, to come here, I feel like I’m ready to experience the very different nature of Roth, which is quieter, quaint, calm. And then Shen, which is more upbeat, a lot more going on, louder. I can’t tell you which one smells worse, but I’ll let you decide, if you like.”

Guthrie, known for his humor, loves a lot of things about Houghton: “I love Jesus. I think a lot of transformation can happen in your four years of college. And the reason why I am here is to help young men become more like Christ. I love to meet with guys and talk about who they’re becoming, who they want to become, and who God is calling them to be. I love sports. You can see me at four o’clock, usually on the ultimate Frisbee field

with all the people out there. It’s a really cool opportunity at a place like Houghton, with virtually nothing around to really be a part of the community that’s pursuing Christ. And I’m honored to play whatever part I can do. And that’s just it. It really is a privilege and it is awesome to do it with my wife at the same time as we’re both RDs here for that reason.”

Guthrie describes his feelings about the residence life team as a “big fan” and it is the “best team he has ever worked on.” Alissa agreed, saying, “Katie’s an awesome boss, like she’s a great leader. And so, with all the change, I really trust her to make good decisions. And you can tell, she already cares for us. So much is looking out for the RD’s and the students. And working with Beth and Katie has been a wonderful team. It’s been very easy. It’s also new. Like whenever you saw someone new, there’s honeymoon season working there. And we’re probably still in that. But it’s been really good, like a really positive transition to [both the] organizational culture and the student body”

With the new team on campus, there are a lot more dogs. Breitigan, who has a yellow lab named Belle, mentioned this new change. “Beth has two dogs in Lambein and Alissa and Guthrie have a puppy in Gillette...so that’s been a lot of fun.” Students are encouraged to stop by and visit the new campus dogs, but Breitigan also encourages students to share their concerns and feedback. “We have a lot of feedback from our current RAs, but that’s kind of an internal sort

of feedback. So we want people who are not involved as leaders in residence life to give us some feedback as we’re in a year of receiving that, so that we can hopefully next year implement some changes that hopefully well, whether there’s policies or procedures like room draw or if it’s just a little bit more of communicating better about what we do and how we can benefit students.”

Smithers says it is important for students to know that these changes are a direct result of feedback of residence life surveys. “We’ve actually been talking about the possibility of an Area Coordinator position for at least the last four years,” Smithers says. “A lot of intentional sort of measuring student satisfaction and student success to ensure that the changes that we’re making are good. An institution that doesn’t change is in some ways not responding to the needs of students. The student population changes, a quarter of it changes every year. And so, the new student needs, new student interests require us to change. We want to be an institution that responds well to what students are asking for while also maintaining the sort of consistent Houghton experience that students came here for.” ★

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ulty, students, staff and alumni; as well as reflective discussion among the writing team both at the beginning of the process, and in response to each of the constituencies with whom they have consulted in the process,”

according to President Mullen.

The writing committee for the document consists of the Dean of Chapel, Michael Jordan and Professors Benjamin Lipscomb and Mim Case. They were appointed by President Mullen for their “particular leadership roles within various constituencies of the campus... and therefore with special responsibility for Spiritual Formation... they were chosen because of their own deep understanding of the institution—its complexity and its commitments,” per President Mullen.

There is also a reading committee consisting of sixteen people chosen by the President in consultation with the Writing Committee. The reading committee included Sunshine Sullivan, Meghan Taylor, Ryann Cooley, Paul Martino, Daniel Black, Brandon Bate, Sarah Derck, Beth Phifer, Heidi Hui-zenga, Christian Esh, Patrick Hager, Steve Dunmire, Marlene Collins, Julian Cook, Rebekah Kimble, and Tim Deckert

The new Community Life Document was introduced to the wider campus body in chapel last Wednesday, led by President Mullen. The chapel consisted of a brief statement by President Mullen on the importance of our commitment to community and a brief explanation of the document itself. The chapel concluded with a group recitation of the Community Life Document, which was also led by President Mullen.

Student reaction to the change has been mixed--some students, including Rachel Wheeler (’20) and another stu-

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International Voices

Friends are Everywhere

HANNAH FRASER

I used to imagine that my heart was split down the middle. One half was planted in the American soil where I had been born, and the other flourished in Hungary where I was growing up. Each time my family moved, the half that I left behind began to shrivel and die, and the ache of it was almost physical at times.

When strangers hear that I grew up in Hungary, I think they suddenly have certain expectations about me. Sometimes I don't understand cultural references, I say things that aren't very relatable, or I just act in certain ways that became natural as a result of all the travel and the deep experience with more than one culture. However, unique elements of my personality have also resulted from what I think has impacted me most: people.

As a Third Culture Kid (or TCK), I like to form friendships fast. My whole life I've been moving away from the people I care about or they've moved away from me, so I've learned to make the most of the precious time I had with them. Whether it's at a camp, a school, or a church, the moment I meet someone I connect with, I'm devoted to developing as deep a friendship as possible. Certainly, this causes more pain when the separation inevitably happens, but the pain is worth how much meaning I find in those relationships.

Hungary's culture plays a role in my view of friendships as well. In Hungary, strangers don't smile at each other or make small talk on the streets. Cashiers don't want to know about your day, but once you prove yourself to someone, your friendship moves toward a strong, deep level at almost terrifying speed. The same goes for most TCK's. While I have been groomed by my years in the US to know what to say in social situations where small talk is appropriate, I want more than that. And the friendships I've gained as a result of my years in both Hungary and the US have probably played the most significant role in

my growth as a person.

When I've felt homesick, whether it was for the States or for Hungary, it was the people there that were on my mind. Sure, I miss kürtőskalács (or chimney cake, which I would love to share with every person on campus if I could), but I would much rather spend an hour with my best friends than enjoy the flavors of my home country. I could write about how living overseas has molded the way I view the world or how moving so many times has instilled in me a reliance on God's steadfastness, but I think the gifts that stand out to me the most as I face a whole new phase of life and friendships are the people who helped me become who I am.

Some of the most meaningful relationships in my life would never have formed had I not moved around the way I did. Never would I have experienced the day in and day out of companionship, the perseverance when a misunderstanding arose, the risky feeling of laying out your heart to someone, the determination to cross over a language or cultural barrier so that a conversation can happen, or any of the other moments that shaped me. I miss the friends I made every day, as well as my family who were one of my very few constants.

While many of my experiences are unique because of my missionary kid history, I've come to realize that people are not difficult to find. Making deep, lasting relationships does not require years overseas. Friends are everywhere, whether we seek them out or not, and God has used my time traveling to show me how beautiful each connection with another person is. Whether we stay connected or not and whether we see the impact or it remains hidden, our brushes with each other have lasting effects. I'll always be thankful for the impact my friends and family have had on me, even though we're regularly in different countries, because I know that without them I would be a shallower version of who I am today.★

Humans of Houghton

Ronnie Lott

ALLY STEVICK

Ronnie Lott has wanted to be a doctor ever since he was a little kid. This spring he will graduate from Houghton with a major in biology and a minor in chemistry, and next year he will attend Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine and work toward fulfilling this dream. "I remember when I was a kid, going to the pediatricians, and I have a brother who hated it, but I was so excited to go," Ronnie reflects. "I just had always really been interested in like, how being a doctor works and the biology behind the human body. I don't know, I've always been nerdy like that since I was a kid and I'm one of the rare exceptions I think that, what I wanted to do when I was five is still what I want to do." Ronnie says that after med school he would like to end up as a pediatrician. "I've done a ton of shadowing and I just love kids," he explains. "My mom's a kindergarten teacher so I think it's kind of in the blood a little bit."

Ronnie was the Outstanding Student in Organic Chemistry last year, a class which is famed among STEM majors for being incredibly difficult. I ask Ronnie to tell me a little bit about his experience taking Organic Chemistry. "Dr. Torraca is phenomenal," he says right off the bat, "She makes the class very fun even though it's obviously extremely challenging. I spent many a night up late, and up early, studying and working on it. But for me I think it was a ton of work but I really enjoyed it because I've always really liked learning and this was really applicable. We went into lab one day and made lidocaine, which is the drug you use to numb your teeth, and I was like, 'I made that.'" Besides the interesting content of the class itself, Ronnie mentions the friendships he formed in the class. "I walked out of there with a little bit of an organic chemistry family. ... It's pretty cool to build that brotherhood and sisterhood. Even though [the class is] really hard, which it is, it's a good time."

Ronnie says that the friend-

ships he's formed in science classes are part of what helps him to balance his time between difficult classes, playing a sport, and the other demands of college life. "I have a really good friend group in the sciences ... and it makes it a lot easier to work [on homework] with people, because they can teach me stuff and I can teach them stuff. Physics homework goes a lot quicker when there's five of us talking about it. So I think really leaning on other people is something that's been really helpful to balance it all."

Ronnie also really values the friendships he's made on campus through playing baseball. "Those guys are my brothers," he says. "It was so cool to come on campus and immediately have like thirty friends, just like that. It's like a forced friendship, but a very good one." In high school Ronnie played baseball, basketball and football, but he says baseball is his favorite. "I think my family kind of bonded over it, and that's why it's my favorite," he explains. "When my mom was a kid she went with her parents to all thirty major league baseball stadiums in the nation. So now I'm trying to do that with my parents and grandparents. So we've done twenty-one. Like six years ago we drove to California and back and hit like eighteen stadiums. It's like family tradition just to love and watch baseball, so it's definitely a passion."

When I ask Ronnie what he likes best about Houghton, his answer is no surprise to me, given what he has told me about how much he values his friends from science and the baseball team. "The people," he says. "Yeah, that's definitely my answer, I love the people. Everybody here is just so nice, no matter what. Even people you maybe have never had a conversation with before, or have just seen in passing, they'll smile at you and wave. They'll get to know you, they care about you—it's so cool. I'm going to miss it when I'm gone, for sure."★

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dent who wished to remain anonymous, have said that the recitation itself felt "cultish," and "uncomfortable," although they agreed with most of the content in the document itself. Others have had completely positive reactions to the document. Emily Allen ('20) pointed out that "being able to say it out loud reinforces the fact that we are making a covenant before God." Grace Armstrong ('23) pointed out that the revisions were a benefit to the "wellbeing of the College." ★

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into a hoop. The hoop is draped all around with VHS tapes. Prof. Blood choose to use this mate-

rial because she is interested in issues of visibility, invisibility, and things hidden in plain sight. The VHS tape contains information, but that information can no longer be accessed. Another of her pieces, *ENOUGH*, features that word spelled with neon tubing and set against a curtain of dark sequins. She started this piece the day after the Charlottesville rally, somewhat in response to what had happened. She chose the word, "enough," because she was looking for a word that was final, but optimistic. In explanation, she said, "We are enough, we have enough, but we've had enough." She sees this piece as representing the moment responsive action begins, which is why there is space between it and the wall: it is meant to be a beginning and

not an end.

Prof. Donnellan also trained in glass and holds an MFA from the Rochester Institute of Technology. She also works with "mixed media, sound, video, drawing, performance or whatever the work calls for." Her artistic interests include attempting to make the intangible experiential, as well as the interplay between glass, which captures light, and sound, which captures vibration. One of her pieces in this exhibition is titled *Silent Amplifiers (Mutual Dreaming)*. It consists of two iridescent glass discs, one positioned above the other. In discussing the piece, Prof. Donnellan explained that in addition

to an amplifier being an object that literally amplifies sound, "It also references the shape of an expanding universe or black hole." She sees her work as having varied and interwoven layers of meaning. Another of her pieces, which did not have a title, consisted of many objects arranged on a table. The objects included glass, some of which was blown or cast by Prof. Donnellan, tuning forks, mineral samples, moon gold, and more.

Sarah Halvorson ('22) attended the opening reception and said that she left with an overall sense of peace and calm. She explained, "With the emphasis on light and sound, it all

really drew you in." Halvorson compared this experience to looking into the coals of a fire. She particularly enjoyed Prof. Blood's pieces *ENOUGH* and *Luna VII*, which featured a circular neon tube partially encased in an irregularly-shaped piece of cement. She thought this piece represented something imperfect being unified by light.

Continua will be on display until December 13. The Ortlip Art Gallery is located on the first floor of the Center for the Arts off the atrium and is open Monday through Saturday from 1pm to 6pm. ★

Meet the New STAR Staff Members



News Editor Riley Gastin, a senior this spring, is double majoring in International Development and Communication. In fall of 2018 she transferred to Houghton College after attending a one-year theology and missions program at Elim Bible Institute & College. Riley is an RA in Lambein, serves on the MercySeat cabinet, and can often be found wandering campus in search of wildflowers or a spot of sunshine. She lives in Rochester NY, but has spent significant periods of her life in South Africa visiting her mum’s family. Riley is always up for an adventure, whether it be traveling to countries for less than 24 hours or living on falafels for extended periods of time. Riley may also be a bit confused about which words are American vs. British English but she is excited to be an editor for the STAR and put it to the test.



Opinions Editor Owen Hardiman is a sophomore majoring in Communication with a concentration in Media Arts and Visual Communication, with minors in Theology and Psychology. In his free time he enjoys creative writing, working in community theatre, and playing piano, as well as religiously playing Frisbee on the Roaring Sheep Houghton Ultimate team, serving as a Houghton Ambassador for the admissions office, and actively campaigning for the eradication of plastic straws from society. He is excited to be working with the Houghton STAR this year because it presents a great opportunity to connect with new people and become more engaged with campus activities and news. If you’re interested in writing an opinion piece to be published in the STAR, please contact him at owen.hardiman22@houghton.edu.

English Department Welcomes Prof. Jesse Sharpe

VANESSA BRAY

Professor Jesse Sharpe is Houghton’s newest addition to the English department. Sharpe has been an educator for over ten years, teaching at institutions such as the University of Bridgeport, the University of Houston, and LeTourneau University. Sharpe holds a BA in English Literature from Simpson College, an MS in Library and Information Science from Drexel University, and a PhD in English Literature from the University of St Andrews in Scotland. Although originally from the San Francisco Bay area in California, Sharpe and his family have moved to Houghton from East Texas. A son of missionary parents, living in different places is something that Sharpe is accustomed to and recognizes as an aid in helping him inform the classroom. He states, “There is not just one right culture or one right people, or one right language group. Or anything like that. I enjoy international communities. I really enjoy being in places where not everybody is the same.” Sharpe admits that when he was younger, he did not see himself as becoming a teacher. But once he started librarianship, he soon found that he had a passion not only for libraries,

but for teaching as well. When the first opportunity presented itself to teach, Sharpe said he “absolutely loved it. It’s been a lot of fun. I love teaching and finding books that pose difficult questions for me, raising those with students, and seeing what answers everybody comes up with. I definitely learn a lot in the classroom...I just love seeing other people and the passion that they bring to the classes and revelations that come.” English Department Chair, Susan Lipscomb, led the search committee that hired Professor Sharpe. Lipscomb listed Sharpe’s knowledge in Early Modern literature and Medieval text, as well as his expertise in research and library collections, as top reasons why Sharpe was a standout choice. “He is genuinely somebody who cares about the liberal arts. He wants to ask hard questions about literature and culture and faith... and he is very open about talking about faith, and how that intersects with literature. Sharpe impressed the search committee with the level of engagement he had with sample classes during the interview process. Johanna Florez (‘21), who is currently taking Professor Sharpe’s Literature of Faith, and Doubt class this semester, was one of the students who attended the sample class. Florez says “I saw



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Professor Jesse Sharpe is teaching at Houghton for the first time this fall semester. that he was teaching Literature of Faith, and Doubt and got really excited. . . I was happy to register for the class and have more of the same kind of discussion with him. . . It’s just great to study led by a teacher who really loves the material.” Conversation is one aspect Sharpe says he loves most about his job as an educator, which can be seen with the emphasis Sharpe establishes in his classroom. Sharpe intentionally excludes overusing PowerPoint in order to encourage interaction and engagement. “I try to keep students as present and as engaged in the classroom as possible.” Gathering perspectives, both from his students and from the text, is why Sharpe likes to incorporate other authors along with the notable canons of literature. Sharpe remarks this inclusion of perspectives and different voices as something that’s a lot of fun to have in the classroom. Two life experiences that Sharpe credits for greatly affecting his manner of teaching are his years of experience in librarianship, and his experience of having a son who is autistic. Sharpe says that through li-

brarianship, “I’ve learned how to walk into a room where nobody really wanted to see me and try to figure out how to win the room over.” Knowing that English literature may not be everyone’s favorite subject, Sharpe has found the skills he acquired through librarianship on how to generate excitement and interest applicable to the classroom. Sharpe says having a son that is autistic has helped him to consider how he teaches. Providing a classroom environment that is respectful of different backgrounds and abilities is important to Sharpe. Sharpe says he tries to make sure he doesn’t have “a singular vision for what constitutes a good student.” He goes on, “I try to allow for all sorts of different approaches to learning and understanding of learning...I don’t ever want to take that for granted that a different style doesn’t mean the person isn’t learning or enjoying themselves. So, I’m just trying to be as open as possible to diversity and all of its terms.” As Sharpe continues to finish teaching his first of many semesters here at Houghton, he looks forward to the interesting books, conversations and questions that will continue to arise in and out of the classroom. ★

Review: Kanye West Drops New Album

MOLLY BRIZZELL
Regular Contributor

JESUS IS KING: one of the most anticipated albums for the past year. The album was first expected in September and November of 2018, but creator Kanye West delayed it. Then, this past August, West’s wife Kim Kardashian teased its release for September; but, once again, it was delayed for two more release dates in that month. Finally, on October 25th, West dropped *Jesus Is King*, still even a few hours later than the expected midnight release time. In sum, *Jesus Is King* has been building hype for an entire year—and now it’s finally arrived.

And it has the perfect mesh of current modern hip-hop, gospel, and R&B with Christian themes. While its content is unexpected based upon West’s previous albums, it displays an example of the growth that happens in those who are born again.

The samples West chooses to include in some of the tracks are some of the most interesting parts of the album; many are extremely secular songs over which he raps or sings Christian lyrics. This is precisely what many young, Christian music listeners of the day have been craving—the ability to enjoy popular music while simultaneously glorifying God. This same effect is achieved on the album during West’s collaboration with other artists, who also typically create very secular content. One example is Ty Dolla Sign, who was featured in the provocative hook of Megan Thee Stallion’s



COURTESY OF AMAZON.COM

Kanye West’s new album *Jesus Is King* consists exclusively of religious songs.

“Hot Girl Summer” just months ago. Taking these artists onto an album like this, makes the listener feel like they’re still enjoying popular music while being fed God’s wholesome truth.

The album opens with the full force of gospel power in the choral “Every Hour,” preparing listeners for a fun journey of listening and worshipping. West’s voice isn’t heard until “Every Hour” transitions to “Selah,” a heavy gospel track full of references to the Word, with challenges for our culture. It also contains nods to West’s 2016 album *The Life of Pablo*—the album with the first known West song where he openly proclaims his spirituality. After this, with yet another flawless transition, “Follow God” enters in, and the first thing heard is the voice

exclaiming “Father, I stretch / Stretch my hands to You.” This is yet another nod to *The Life of Pablo*, specifically West’s song “Father Stretch My Hands Pt.1.”

With “Follow God” ending in a frustrated exclamation after being told West was “not being Christ-like,” listeners are met with the mellow beat of “Closed On Sunday.” This track is likely one of the most critiqued for its lyrical content, which to some is almost comical. “Closed on Sunday, You my Chick-Fil-A,” West raps, “You’re my number one, with the lemonade.” This is an interesting play on stating that West professes God to be his number one priority—for those who take it very seriously, it’s disappointing; for those looking to have some fun, it’s clever and great to sing along

with. It makes for a good break from the heavier content West rapped about in his previous tracks.

A closing cry of “Chick-Fil-A!” brings the listeners into the next track, “On God.” A phrase turned into common slang, West uses this opportunity to speak about his own mistakes, and how his journey with God is anything but smooth. Using this slang for the title and being open about his struggles makes this a track one that is easily relatable for listeners, and lets West sit with them on a level where they feel heard. This transitions into “Everything We Need,” which is almost a reassurance by West after making listeners consider how they’ve turned on God before, and their ups and downs in the Christian life. Ty Dolla

Sign’s words ponder an internal identity crisis in the midst of storms, but are surrounded by assurances of “we have everything we need” in God. This leads into the next track “Water,” where West begs Jesus for forgiveness, and to be washed of his sins. This song finishes this small three track arc of condemnation, confession, and crying out for grace.

The next three tracks, “God Is,” “Hands On,” and “Use This Gospel” all focus on the next step for Christians: admiring God, praying, and using the words of the Lord to heal and build their lives. They become the resolution to the album’s earlier arc, smoothly mellowing out to the album’s closer: “Jesus Is Lord.” West says over a trumpet-filled track, “Every knee shall bow, every tongue confess, Jesus is Lord.” This wraps up the album’s story of the Christian journey in a similar style to the way it opened: briefly, with a repeated confession of God and His greatness.

Jesus Is King thus completes its goal of portraying the Christian journey, whilst creating an experience that is audibly enjoyable for the listeners. It stays consistent, and flows seamlessly from track-to-track, managing to tell a story within its distinctly different yet cohesive tracks. West has proven that a body of work can be made in the popular music style that professes God’s truths and shares a Christian journey—and has cemented this album as a classic for any fan of Christian hip-hop. ★

PHOTO OF THE WEEK

Jared Hobson (‘20) went to Shenoween dressed as a “trendy” Dr. Meic Pearse. (Photo courtesy of CAB’s Facebook.)



Send your favorite picture from this week to editor@houghtonstar.com for a chance to be featured next week!

A Visitor’s View of Houghton’s Culture



COURTESY OF KARINA MELENDEZ
KARINA MELENDEZ

On the second weekend of a relatively busy October, I had the opportunity to visit my closest friend, and by extension, Houghton College. Suffice it to say, I came for my friend, but by the time I had to leave, found part of myself wishing I could stay. For my friend, naturally, but also for the amazing people, events, and academic opportunities available at Houghton (and perhaps an elevator by the name of Otis had something to do with it, too).

For some background, I am currently a third-year under-

graduate student at the University of Toronto, pursuing a double major in political science and European studies. Now, what does it mean to attend the UofT, exactly? Well, dear readers, it means that my average class size is anywhere between 150-200 people, the expectations to succeed are so high that everyone considers one another as rivals, and the campus is so big that sometimes I have a fifteen minute walk between one lecture and another. Oh, and being ranked as Canada’s number one university, it attracts a lot of international students; particularly, the brightest and apparently best-dressed the world has to offer. To be fair though,

day because of it.

Going from a bustling city like Toronto to a small, rural town like Houghton may seem like it warrants a bit of adjustment, but being someone who grew up in a small American town, it really just felt a lot like coming home. Except, Houghton College completely shattered my misguided expectations of the typical small-town college, to which an apology is owed; because, you see, Houghton is an incredible intellectual hub, to which I find myself eager to know when I’ll return.

My most notable observation from my short time at Houghton was the appreciation I quickly gained for the abil-

and intellectual development. The fact that the atmosphere at Houghton seems to be teeming with discussion about all manners of topics and viewpoints is in and of itself quite the feat. I believe it is the small and close-quartered nature of Houghton that brings you, in one way or another, into contact with so many perspectives. From someone who often never has the chance to sit next to the same person in lecture, cherish this. Please.

At Houghton, you have people you can rely on; professors, teaching assistants, fellow classmates, and even your roommates. I’m certain every one of you has formed at least one relationship, at some point or another, with a member of the Houghton community with whom you feel comfortable asking for help-- with academics, or just life in general. I’ve heard of remarkable professors who take the time to give seemingly otherworldly advice on the most mundane of matters. During my stay, I even talked with a teaching assistant, and she spoke with such passion about providing help in order to see fellow students succeed. When it seems that life is pull-

ing you in a rather confusing, extremely unconventional way, there’s someone you can count on to offer support to you on your journey. Whether it’s that person that happens to be studying at the same time of the night as you, or your favorite professor, I hope that you can come to realize how lucky you are to live within this kind of community.

To all students at Houghton, I hope that good things may always find you, you succeed in everything you set your sights on, and that you live with a passion that continues to inspire those around you. You’ve already inspired me plenty, and I’m certain I’m not the only one. Thank you to each and every one of you for making Houghton the place that it is, the college that I have had the pleasure of getting to know. Because of you, I will always think of Houghton fondly. And quite frankly, I can’t wait to visit again. ★

Karina is a junior at the University of Toronto majoring in political science and European studies.

“...Houghton College completely shattered my misguided expectations of the typical small-town college...”

the UofT has challenged me academically in ways I doubt I would have the ability to experience anywhere else, and I am proud of the individual I am to-

ity to bounce information and ideas off one another. Everyone has an opinion, and to be able to have a civil discussion is integral to personal growth

Editorial Rerun from 1917

This editorial originally appeared in Volume 10, Issue 4 of the STAR on November 15, 1917 (along with the advertisement). G.B.S. was G. Beverly Schultz, the editor-in-chief and a graduate of the class of 1918.

Editorial

HOUGHTON WILL NEVER BE LARGE!

Houghton is a college which was founded mainly for the advocacy of Christian principles, incidentally as a place where boys and girls might obtain an education. As Christian principles, however, are quite unpopular with the great throng of mankind, multitudes will not care to matriculate in our ranks. Nevertheless we are pleased that the moral tone of the school is not lowered for any commercial advantage that might be gained thru numbers. If we are small in numbers, we are large in Christian integrity; if we are derided by the Sciolist for our narrowness we are praised by the righteous for our devotion to principle. Our sanest conclusion, therefore, is that our safest course is in following a well-wrought, distinctly articulated principle. Therefore, unless the trend of humanity should suddenly change, a fact of which there is no present indication; or unless Houghton ignobly surrenders these lofty principles, she will continue to remain comparatively small.

G. B. S.

Is Houghton’s small size due to its Christian principles?

Should Houghton adjust its principles to attract more students?

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What’s Your Relationship Status?



COURTESY OF CALEB FESMIRE
MADELYN BAILEY

If you’re a student at Houghton, you’ve probably heard the common phrase “Ring by Spring.” This expression comes from the familiar stereotype that students go to Christian colleges because it provides them with large pools of people with the same beliefs. This may give them a great friend base and grow them spiritually; however, in the end the perk is finding a lifelong partner at an institution like Houghton. This perception of Christian institutions is where we get the phrases like “Young Women after Men” and the one we are all familiar with, “Ring by Spring.” We joke about these phrases, but in truth they reflect a practice that is fairly common among Christian young adults. Why is that? Why do we assume that if we graduate without that “Ring by Spring” we have missed out

on that opportunity? Is it for the best? After some research of my own, I found that Christians are the majority of the young adult population in the United States that are marrying young. One unspoken reason for marrying young among Christians is because many of us have taken purity pledges, vowing to stay sexually pure until marriage. Marrying young with someone that shares your beliefs is a dream come true, especially in a world where fewer people hold true to the Christian values and morals. Meanwhile, non-Christian young adults have stated that they are in no rush to get

“If our eyes are set on what the Christian community has required from us, then how can we be fulfilled as Christians in the gifts that God has given us?”

portray matters of the heart occurring within the young adult age range (18-25 years old). We have been raised to establish love early and see it as one of our main purposes in life. The apostle Paul covers marriage and single living in Corinthians. But more specifi-

of you has your own gift from God; one has this gift and another has that.” I love this verse because it simply poses the question “who is anyone to say when you get married?” Some gifts may be enhanced by being in a relationship, while other gifts may serve you better while you are single.

I think it has become easy to assume that you are meant to get married early in a culture which promotes marriage at a young age, especially for women. We have been brought up to find a husband that loves us and to raise our children in the church the way God intended. However, I think this does us all a disservice. We do not all have the same calling in life, and this is reflected in our individual gifts. Paul made it clear to the Corinthians: it is important to take caution in marriage so that you are not in union with each other, but consequently divided from God’s will for your life in the process.

As Christians, our most important mission on this earth is to bring God glory. If our eyes are set on what the Christian community has required from

us, then how can we be fulfilled as Christians in the gifts that God has given us? God may have more for us than marriage. Therefore, it is important not to be discouraged, but to be content in the season He has placed you in. There is always growth to be obtained, whether you’re single, dating, in an “it’s complicated” situation, engaged, or married.

So my fellow Houghton students, I challenge you to challenge the status quo of obtaining that “Ring by Spring” within your own timeline. I know that, at least for myself and those in my friend circles, marriage is an achievement that we tend to glorify and chase after. It is difficult to realign your focus when the dream of a white picket fence, beautiful family, and devoted husband is sacred and fought over. But realigning your focus on God and the growth of your gifts, as well as knowing that God’s timing is different than our own or any predetermined stereotype, will bring you fulfillment all throughout your life. By allowing God to take charge of our relationships we are able to reorient our goals, and once we do this the rest will fall into place. ★

Madelyn is a senior majoring in Communications.

“We joke about these phrases, but in truth they reflect a practice that is fairly common among Christian young adults.”

married. They would rather pay off their student loans, establish carers, and travel before tying the knot. Let’s consider how culture has raised our standards of marriage. Most likely we are all familiar with the classic Disney films and cultural references throughout our youth that have shown us that romance is supposed to happen in a certain way and at a certain age. Most of the movies, cultural trends, and celebrity lifestyles that we were exposed to during our childhood

cally in 1st Corinthians 7:8-9 he states, “It is good for them to stay unmarried, as I do. But if they cannot control themselves, they should marry, for it is better to marry than to burn with passion.” In my own interpretation of Paul’s words, he is saying, “Get that ring by spring when your passion for that person is all consuming.” If it is all consuming, then how can you give anything of yourself to God? Paul also mentions in 1st Corinthians 7:7, “I wish that all of you were as I am. But each

SPEAK OUT!

Letters to the editor should be 250 words or less

SUBMIT TO editor@houghtonstar.com



The mission of the Houghton Star is to preserve and promote the values of dialogue, transparency and integrity that have characterized Houghton College since its inception. This will be done by serving as a medium for the expression of student thought and as a quality publication of significant campus news, Houghton area news, and events.

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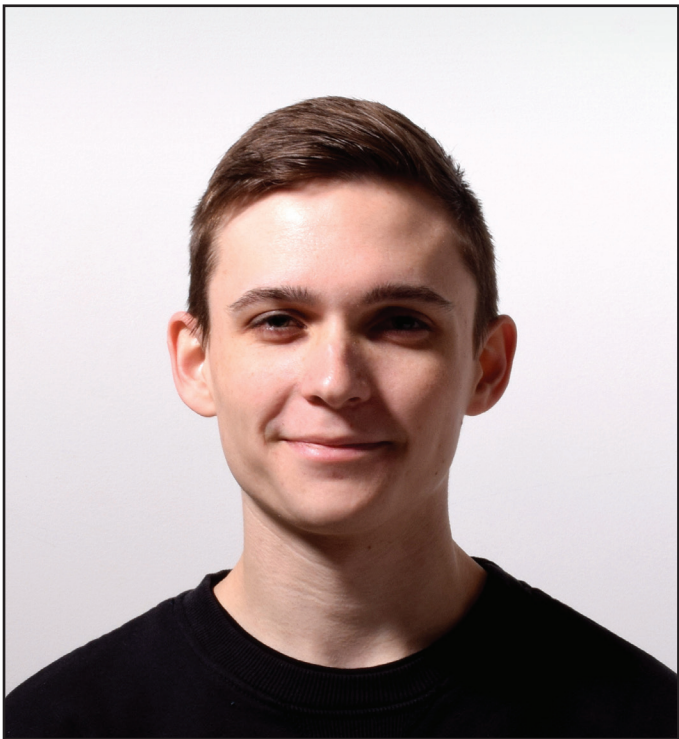
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Artist of the Week

Kyle Dunham

// Senior Applied Design & Visual Communication Major



I love to create because for me art is a great way to visualize thoughts and feelings. I tend to be more design-focused; mostly creating work that is functional and serves a specific purpose, but I have also become very interested in art that is able to tell a story and engage the viewer’s imagination.

