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EAST AFRICA PROGRAM'S CANCELLATION ADDRESSED

JENNIFER PAGE '24

The last cohort of Houghton University's East Africa Program returned to campus this fall disappointed in the program's cancellation and hungry for answers.

Since 1998, the East Africa Program has impacted the lives of Houghton students by offering them the opportunity to experience a culture vastly different from their own.

Dr. Eli Knapp, professor of biology and director of Houghton's East Africa Program since 2013, explained that the program offered a holistic approach to education where students and professors experienced life together, which allows relational opportu-



Spring 2022 East Africa cohort.

COURTESY OF SAMANTHA GORSKI

nities a traditional classroom does not.

Knapp participated in the program in 1999 and has a firsthand understanding of its effect on students and their education.

"I came alive as a student on the program," he said. "Normal classes were fine, but I didn't realize there was a higher plateau I could reach. Seeing lions on a kill in my Wildlife Behavior

course was different from hearing a professor talk about it or reading about it in a textbook. I wanted to perpetuate that model of experiential learning."

This type of experien-

tial learning helped students recognize how the lessons they were taught influenced their lives outside of the classroom.

"The program forced me to grow as a student and as a person, which is something my normal classes haven't done," said junior Kayleigh Verspoor. "It also forced me to challenge the beliefs I already had in place and find something deeper and more authentic. I really miss my time in Kenya."

When asked how she felt about the program's cancellation, Verspoor said, "I'm deeply saddened. I think it takes away life-changing opportunities for students."

See **EAST AFRICA** page #2

An Unfortunate CAB Event

JAX JOHNSON '23

It is with great pleasure that the Houghton STAR presents some unfortunate news. At 9 p.m. tonight in the John and Charles Wesley Chapel, the Campus Activities Board (CAB) will host the Wheel of Unfortune, where teams of up to five people will compete in a Wheel of Fortune style competition for a chance to win a prize.

This event will be based on the popular game show, "Wheel of Fortune." In the TV show, "Wheel of Fortune," contestants spin a wheel with various

amounts of money listed and, after spinning the wheel, are allowed to guess a consonant with the goal to complete the word puzzle on the board.

Hannah Tyer, who is running Houghton's own version of Wheel of Fortune, describes how teams will compete in a series of challenges to get ahead and win prizes.

"It will run similar to Wheel of Fortune (the game show on TV)," Tyer said. "The big differences are that it is team run (instead of playing individually) and instead of buying letters with money, they will have to perform tasks (like a certain amount of push-ups, eating spicy foods, etc.) in order to buy vowels similar to the show."

Tyer also expressed her excitement for this event, saying, "My favorite part of the event are the prize baskets for the winning top three teams to pick from." As to what those prizes are, only she knows—students will have to show up to find out.

Director of Student Engagement Jana Newberry, also describes the event saying, "Participants can sign up as a team to compete for some unique high stake's prizes. It should be a great event that any student can enjoy."

Whether students love "Wheel of Fortune" or just want something to do tonight, they can show up to the chapel at nine and see who will win Wheel of Unfortune.★

WHEEL of UNFORTUNE



**november 11th
chapel
9pm**

**find your wordiest
group of friends
(5 max) to compete
for awesome prizes**

Sign-up your team by 11/10

COURTESY OF CAB

“FOUL PLAY” AT HOUGHTON

ANNA CATHERMAN '24

Next Thursday, Nov. 17, students will have the opportunity to take a stab at solving a mystery - a rather large mystery.

The mafia-style event will ask students to solve the murder of a well-known Houghton University figure: Luckey the Lion.

Junior Eileen Goodge, one of the event's organizers, explained that the event is designed to be a fun way to meet new people and work together. Players have to find out the who, where, and why of Luckey's murder, just like the board game “Clue.” There will be several different

mock rooms, according to Goodge, in which groups of 10 players will search for cards and clues.

Goodge explained that, though the event is themed after “Clue,” the gameplay resembles more of a murder mystery dinner party.

“Emily [Fausnaught] and I have both played a dinner mystery game,” Goodge noted, which inspired them to choose a similar concept for their event.

Fellow organizer junior Zachary Fahey noted that the event is designed to be “a thrilling experience for students while letting them just let loose while still using their minds to solve a

murder.”

While there is no dinner at this event, participants will have an opportunity to enjoy cooperative teamwork and meet new people. The event is designed for large groups of 10 people each, maximizing the possibility that people will work with others they don't know well and hopefully meet a new friend. Intergenerational gameplay is encouraged as well: students from the ENCORE program for adult learners have also been invited.

The event is one of several organized by students each semester in the Sports, Recreation and Well-

ness Department's Program Planning and Evaluation class, in which students learnt how to run events.

Goodge spoke highly of the class, explaining that “It covers a lot of stuff our business classes don't.” That “stuff” includes marketing, liability, and collecting engagement data.

Every semester, many events are put on by students in the class. Students creatively brainstorm and put on some of the most unique events on campus. Last week's Mobile Mafia night was put on by a different group of students from the Program Planning class. An-

other group of students is putting on “Luau at the Rock Wall” Saturday, Nov. 19. Other past events put on by the department have included a mac 'n cheese cook-off, an escape room, a horseless horse show, and a movie night.

“Foul Play at Houghton” will take place in the Chamberlain center on Thursday, Nov. 17 from 8p.m.-10 p.m. Goodge expressed the hope that sports teams, and those in evening classes, will be able to participate after their events are over. Sign-ups will be available soon, with various time slots available within the event's run time.★

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Verspoor isn't the only one who thinks this. Senior Nina D'Amato, Verspoor's cohort mate, said, “It seems like [the program] had such an abrupt ending without reason. I think we're all hungry for those answers.”

But those answers are hard to come by.

Dr. Paul Young, who served as provost during the 2020-2021 academic year, gave his answer to the program's cancellation by saying, “In earlier years of the program, the program budget benefited from enrolling several students from other colleges each year. As the numbers of students enrolling decreased, the overall budget became more difficult to balance.”

In early 2021, Knapp received news of the program's termination.

“For the sake of our students, the decision to end such a successful, long-running, and life-

changing program saddened me,” Knapp said. “But a university has to be wise with its resources and I understand the reality of financial constraints. We had something unique and special, and I did want one last year to do it. So I was really grateful for that chance.”

Knapp ended up appealing the decision, and Dr. Shirley Mullen, Houghton's president at the time, approved one final year of the program.

Now that Dr. Mullen has moved on from Houghton, however, the cohort may not get the answers they are looking for. When speaking to David Davies, Houghton's current Provost, he explained that a lot of economic and COVID-19-related factors may have played a part in the decision. “But it was ultimately President Mullen's decision.”

He also stated that Houghton's commitment to international experiences has not

changed and that he does not want to see those opportunities go away for students. If Houghton could find a way to run the program sustainably, like running it on a four-year cycle, he is open to it.

“If we want to have international experiences for students, it makes sense to build off of the relations we already have. It makes more sense than starting a whole new program,” Davies said. “That's a conversation worth having for sure.”

Houghton may not have seen the last of the East Africa Program, but for now, there are no concrete plans for Houghton students to return.

“It was going on for twenty years,” Knapp said. “It changed lives, it changed my life. It really is the death of something, but as I like to remind my biology students, the death of one thing may be the birth—or rebirth—of something else.”★



PHOTOS COURTESY OF SAMANTHA GORSKI

Intentional God Time



MARITH ANDERSON '22

Chapel is truly one of the most important aspects of our lives here at Houghton. Yet I have seen it being treated more like an obstacle or an inconvenience in students' lives than as a stepping stone for their faith journey. In sharing my perspective, I hope others can see the benefits that truly engaging with chapel can have in our spiritual lives.

When I entered into my final year at Houghton this fall, I made a vow to myself to make the most of my chapel experience. I do not know if there will ever be another time in my life when I have time

built into my schedule where the purpose is to stop and think about God in one context or another. As I have grown up over the past few years, I see more and more the importance of not putting God on the back burner. He is not an afterthought, and He should not be treated as such.

I know I have to hold myself accountable for the times when I find myself falling short of this desire to be present. There are many times I can recall when I have been too distracted to engage, and I need to ap-

"Whether you agree or disagree with the speakers, intentional engagement with the topic and with the implications that is has is crucial."

proach this with grace and mercy, always remembering that I genuinely want to take my faith seriously and cherish the opportunities I am

papers with deadlines, and chapel is a time period in which you could be doing any number of other things. However, I think that is the point. In

a world where we are constantly doing things, we often need a reminder to disconnect from the hectic nature of life and connect with our Creator.

I believe that spending time with God is even more essential during the times when you feel like you do not have the time. I have been taught that this is why the Sabbath, as a day of rest, is so important. It is for our benefit that we take a day and focus on Him, trusting that He will provide for us and having faith that we will still be okay even if we pause our busy lives for one day. I believe this same principle can be applied to chapel.

I realize that when things are required, they have the potential to feel almost oppressive, as if you are being boxed into something with no choice in the matter. I know that there are many students who feel this way about chapel services. I implore those, who have that opinion, to change the framework surrounding that thought. Instead of chapel being something you "have" to do, perhaps try considering it as

something you "get" to do. You get to take time out of your busy day to slow down and praise God with a community of believers. You have the opportunity at least two times a week to listen to His word and apply it to your life.

You get a chance to show admiration, respect, and support for speakers who make great efforts to travel to Houghton and share their thoughts and their life stories. On the other side of that, you get to listen to the thoughts and feelings of people like Dean Jordan or JL Miller, who have been in Houghton for many years and can empathize and understand what students may be going through. These are both very important perspectives that we are privileged to have.

Chapel attendance requirements were not made by accident. Chapel services should be taken seriously as time for deep thought and reflection. Whether you agree or disagree with the speakers, intentional engagement with the topic and with the implications that it has is crucial. Listening to others and thinking critically about their claims helps us to better understand the world around us and what our role is in it as the Body of Christ. ★

Marith is a Senior Psychology and Communications major with a minor in Music.

Have an opinion
you want to share?

CONTACT
christian.welker24@houghton.edu

SPEAK OUT!

Letters to the editor
should be less than 600 words

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The mission of the Houghton STAR is to preserve and promote the values of dialogue, transparency and integrity that have been the ideals of Houghton University since its inception. This is 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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The Houghton
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Coffee Review

By: Victoria Hock

Nestled in Cuba, a town almost 30 minutes from Houghton, is the Perfect Blend, a small coffee shop that features a breakfast and lunch menu as well. On a beautiful fall day, I ventured there with a family member who was in town.

When you walk in, you are immediately greeted by quaint decor. Though there isn't a lot of seating inside, there was still ample seating outside, giving people the opportunity to enjoy views of Cuba as they enjoy their coffee. The Perfect Blend immediately struck me as a place that would be perfect whether you're visiting with family or friends or looking for a spot to get some work done.

The ordering process was simple. We walked in, and immediately walked up to a counter to place our orders with the friendly, helpful staff. The menu was written behind us on a chalkboard, and there were a lot of options, without being overwhelming. After we placed our orders, my family member's drink (I went for a simple bottled iced tea) was placed on the side counter while our

food was brought to us.

As I said, I went for a simple bottled iced tea as my drink — there was nothing particularly unique about it. However, the family member I was with selected a raspberry latte. I hadn't seen a raspberry latte in many coffee shops previously, and with how good she said it was, I was tempted to order one myself.

The Perfect Blend offered a variety of foods, including things like bagels and breakfast sandwiches for breakfast and paninis and bowls for lunch. My family member's and my eventual food selections were very different from each other, with my family member going for a breakfast item with a simple bagel and cream cheese, and with me selecting more of a lunch item with the garlic fest bowl. Both selections were very good.

Overall, we enjoyed

our visit to the Perfect Blend. We look forward to returning in the future. Whether you're looking to just grab a coffee with

someone or as fuel while you get some homework done, or breakfast or lunch, the Perfect Blend is the perfect spot.★

Easy Sudoku

from sudokuoftheday.com

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| | 7 | 2 | | | 5 | | | |
| 8 | | 6 | | | 4 | 1 | | 9 |
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| 7 | | | | 6 | | | | 1 |
| | 6 | 9 | | 1 | 7 | | | |
| 3 | | 8 | 7 | | | 9 | | 5 |
| | | | 4 | | | 6 | 1 | |
| | | | | 3 | | | | 2 |

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