WILLAMETTE UNIVERSITY

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What's going on with the Department of Education?

Professor, admin, break down what to know about threats to the Department of Education and when to 'believe the hype'

Amelia Hare • Staff Writer • April 17

During his first few months in office, President Trump has prioritized the cutting of funds to federal agencies, his latest move targeting the Department of Education. More than 1,000 employees from the department have been fired. Despite the Department of Education's role as a Cabinet-level agency, President Trump also signed an executive order calling for the education secretary, Linda McMahon, to begin the process of dismantling the organization. This is a move towards the complete shutdown of the department, leading to unanswered questions surrounding the fate of both federal workers and students.

Dismantling the organization would allow states the ability to allocate funds to schools, and states would also have to ensure civil rights protections for students. Even through the confusion, there are steps students can take to better understand the complex information.

This argument for the dismantling of the department leans on the states' abilities to properly allocate funds on their own terms. The coined phrase is "bring it back to the states," which Trump used for justification to dismantle the department. Norman Williams, a professor of Constitutional law at Willamette College of Law, isn't too worried about the lavish calls for its destruction. "What the president has directed is far more modest than how the press secretary characterizes it," he said.

While Willamette receives approximately $5 million from the United States Government, Patty Hoban, the director of financial aid, noted that she doesn't believe any immediate, dramatic consequences are imminent. The Trump administration argues to send the oversight of FAFSA to the Treasury Department since they already handle money. During this uncertainty, the main consequence Willamette may witness is potential issues with Pell Grant distribution and Free Application for Student Aid (FAFSA). Right now, that has not happened, and Hoban noted, "Everybody is in a kind of wait-and see-mode." Currently, there is no specific legislation attacking Pell Grants or FAFSA. Even if Trump were to attack something at the federal level, a wave of lawsuits would ensue in defense.

One of the most confusing aspects of this plan to shut down the department is the legal ability of Trump. Technically, President Trump cannot completely remove the department without the approval from Congress to dismantle the agency, which he is trying to avoid through an executive order. Through an executive order, Trump can order the federal government to take any steps that fall under Constitutional law. While the official dismantling takes the power of Congress through checks and balances, the executive order can begin the long process. Throughout the chaos and pessimistic headlines, Williams advised, "Republicans, don't get too excited. Democrats, don't get too dismayed."

Williams also argued that President Trump is using what is called performative politics, where a politician will discuss grandiose plans of large scale political operations and either not finish them or back down. American citizens have recently seen this with Trump after backing down on European tariffs, calling for a 90-day freeze period on April 9. Williams thinks the gutting of the Department of Education is an example of this, explaining how this fits into Trump's presidential agenda: "[The Trump Administration] get[s] the political benefit to have done something, but then they move on and do something else."

President Donald Trump has threatened to close the Department of Education.
Art by ELLIE STARR

However, during this potentially frustrating period, Hoban believes there are steps students can take to prepare for the 2025-26 academic year. These steps include filing FAFSA as soon as possible, with the federal deadline being June 30, 2026. Also, students should communicate with the office of financial aid if there are any issues with paperwork. Hoban emphasized the uncertainty of this time, explaining the potential of more work for her and her staff. "I think the more immediate impact is going to be one of difficulty and inconvenience."

ASWU senate votes unanimously to divest endowment from university

Amelia Hare • Staff Writer • April 15

The Associated Students of Willamette University (ASWU) senate voted unanimously on Thursday, April 10 to divest the ASWU endowment from the larger university endowment, taking the first steps towards independent endowment management. Past protests from students have called for Willamette to divest, leading ASWU to begin the difficult task. The current Treasurer and President-Elect Stevie Bergstrom ('26) emphasized the long process ahead.

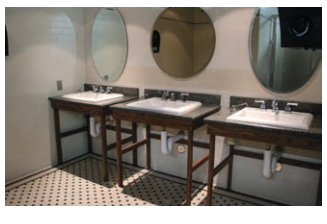
The vote means that the ASWU endowment will be considered fully independent from the university endowment. Thus, senators and executive members will have the opportunity to decide where money should be allocated, both for students and for investments. With that freedom also comes the challenge of obtaining a new endowment manager to oversee the future investments. Currently, the ASWU endowment is approximately $394,452. Around 2.5% of the endowment is invested.

Read more on page 2!

IN THIS ISSUE

News—pg. 2
- ASWU endowment vote
- New provost

Lifestyles—pgs. 3-4
- Cult Cinema Club
- Best Buddies
- Martha Springer Garden



Opinions—pgs. 4-8
- We should be woker
- Animal narratives
- *The Secret History*
- Bathroom ranking

Sports & Rec —pgs. 9-10
- Baseball battles for tourney
- LAX out-Foxed
- Mucken interview

Photojournalism —pg. 11
- Oregon Legislative Assembly

The initial creation of the Task Force intended to analyze if funds were being used properly to support students. Then, it became a potential gateway for student divestment. During their last Task Force meeting on April 4, members voted on two options: continue to invest or divest from the university. Out of six members, the Task Force voted four for divestment and two for sticking with the current investment. This was after a "town hall" panel event on March 13, where students asked questions to task force members. Information from the town hall and the recommendation by the Task Force was presented to the senate for the April 10 vote.

When the ASWU senate voted to divest, Bergstrom explained the relief she felt after working diligently to make this a reality. "It was the first time I've taken a deep breath in months."

The company both ASWU and the university presently use is called Global Endowment Management (GEM). In the future, it will be the job of both the treasurer and the president to work with a new, separate financial advisor to manage the endowment. This shared responsibility is in hopes to not add too much work to the treasurer's already difficult job of managing over 90 clubs and organizations on campus.

Currently, the main concern for both Bergstrom and ASWU is simply removing the money from the university's care. From there, Bergstrom laid out the process of creating a policy statement and amending ASWU constitutional bylaws, along with looking into advisors and the potential creation of a full-time committee. Most of this work will likely be done over the summer and into the early fall semester. Throughout these steps, Bergstrom emphasized that "all of that [process] will be communicated to students."

AWSU members speak in Montag Center for endowment vote on April 10, 2025.
Photo by IRIS MCCLURE

While Bergstrom and President Anastasiia Lemesh ('26) will be spearheading this divestment, Bergstrom also credited work to the Task Force and ASWU senators. Along with that, she hopes that students understand the vote was done out of appreciation for the student body. "I hope that students see that we heard you, and we are here to listen to you," she said.

Willamette students have a long history of calling for the university to divest, from protests in the 1980s to divest from the South African Apartheid to an occupation of university buildings last spring calling for Willamette to divest from companies in the defense industry associated with the ongoing Israel-Hamas war. This ASWU divestment, while only one piece of the puzzle, is "a really important step in the right direction," according to Ernest Jones ('28), an ASWU senator and Task Force member.

Bergstrom also hopes in the future to continue these information sessions about the endowment for students. "I think this has started a wave of transparency," she said. She hopes to further bridge the gap between the work ASWU is doing and the encouragement of student voices. The town hall event on March 13 was a step in that direction, where student comments and questions were sought out.

The process of divestment will hopefully reflect the desires of students, and Bergstrom hopes that students will be understanding through this journey. "It's going to take a while to see the full ideal plan layout, so just be patient," Bergstrom said.

Jennifer Jacobs Henderson named provost at Willamette starting July 1, 2025

Karmen Zhao • Staff Writer • April 20

Willamette University Communications has announced Jennifer Jacobs Henderson as Willamette's new provost starting July 1, following the retirement of current provost Carol S. Long.

Willamette University has had a provost for the past nine years after Long and President Steve Thorsett created the position in 2016 and Long stepped in as Willamette's very first provost. The Office of Provost outlined that within her position, Long has worked in collaboration with faculty, staff, and administrators to "educate ethically grounded citizen leaders" by "ensur[ing] student success, academic innovation, and institutional effectiveness." With Long having announced her retirement at the end of the 2024-25 school year after her 30 total years of service within the university, Willamette welcomes Henderson's tenure starting on July 1, 2025.

Portrait of incoming provost Jennifer Jacobs Henderson as featured on the Willamette website.
Photo courtesy of Trinity University

Prior to Willamette, Henderson began in 2002 as a professor of media law and ethics at Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas. She served as the chair of Trinity's Department of Communications and associate vice president for academic affairs, as well as managed Trinity's nonprofit radio station.

In an interview with Henderson, she noted her familiarity with undergraduate arts and science institutions drove her interest in taking on the position of provost at Willamette. She highlighted that she was drawn by how Willamette's mission as an educational institution is very similar to that of Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa, where she completed her undergraduate degree. "The university [Willamette] has been thinking about what the next years of higher education look like, really thinking creatively about intersections of degrees and putting them together in unique and interdisciplinary ways."

Henderson stated that in November, she had spent a day at both the Salem and Portland campuses, where she was met with "great academic programs and people [who] were kind and caring not just about the university, but to each other."

Jameson Watts, dean of the School of Computing and Information Sciences, was a member of the hiring committee that reviewed Henderson's candidacy. In reflection of Henderson's hire, he acknowledged that she had the proper levels of administrative experience and was particularly well-fitted for Willamette. He said that Henderson would excel in her abilities to manage and take lead in the university's complex changes and growth while also raising the voices of faculty and staff.

Watts noted that Henderson is successfully set up to meet the core responsibilities of being a provost, which include managing the deans and faculty members, advising the academic and career services on campus, and identifying and enforcing matters that can uplift Willamette's higher education.

Henderson is meeting regularly with Long in order to "build a bridge between all of that knowledge she holds. Her connections [to Willamette] are essential," Henderson said. "I am new and I just need to listen and learn so many things. [Long] is an amazing guide for that and has been generous and lovely in every way."

Without having prior affiliations with Willamette, Henderson's integration into the position as provost requires her to familiarize and connect herself within this new community. She stated that her first goal is to listen to all the varying faculty and student groups and get to know who and what she is working with. To Henderson, her position as the new provost means that she will be overseeing the core mission of the university, which is education. She will be involved in topics related to student academic experiences, including student life, housing, classes, faculty, and many other factors that surround the student adventure on campus.

Towards the student body, Henderson wishes to convey that her work involving decision making has always been centered around the students. "I am always willing to listen to students and their different voices," Henderson concluded. "I'm an advocate, and I would be happy to meet as many [students] as possible. Come by and see me!"

Reel fanatics: Cult Cinema Club

Aubrey Tuttle • Staff Writer • April 18

One of Willamette's promises and promotions to current and prospective students is that if there is not a club for your interest, then you can make one yourself. This promise is exactly what club president Charis Brown ('27) capitalized on when she established the Cult Cinema Club at the start of the fall 2024 term. Noticing a lack of film-related clubs — and having a passion for cult cinema — she sarcastically thought to herself: "I feel like I have so much time on my hands. I should start a club."

Start a club she did, aiming to create a space for students to watch "cult" films, which vice president Elise Lien ('27) described as "a film that did horribly when it originally came out but years and years later has found a new kind of life." A classic example of cult cinema is "The Rocky Horror Picture Show," which, since its release, has gained quite the cult following and popularised shadow casts, a cast of actors playing along with the movie being screened. Other contributions to the classification and the rise of cult films include midnight showings at movie theaters, as well as the film's inclusion and highlighting of marginalized communities.

Brown explained that "[cult films] are super tied into [the question:] what does it mean to push the boundaries on what film is?" By showing and conversing with these films in an on-campus setting, the Cult Cinema Club aims to combat mainstream narrative, fighting "purity culture" according to Brown and Lien.

Many steps stood before Brown and her dream of getting the club running. The first step to starting any club on campus is to poll interest to see if there are any potential members on the prowl. After passing around the first round of interest forms during the fall club fair, Brown and Lien found that over one hundred students were interested in the club and wanted to see its establishment.

Once the exec team knew that there was interest, club meetings were marketed and began straight away. Without the affiliation stamp from the Associated Students of Willamette University (ASWU), however, the club faced many challenges. The main one was their reliance on the library for club resources. Brown noted that "[the club] used to get [a DVD player] from the library, which was always exciting because we didn't always know if it was there or not."

Assets that the club has gained since obtaining ASWU affiliation include the club's own DVD player as well as an air popcorn popper. Lien, whose official title for the club is vice president, is better known fondly as Popcorn Tsar to club members, as she is in charge of making and distributing popcorn into little red and white striped bags at club meetings.

Club member Jasper Woodward ('28) loves the community aspect of the club and said that "[he] like[s] watching movies on [his] own, but [he] really think[s] that it is such a fun community or group event, especially with cult movies." Club members also enjoy participating in choosing the films that the group watches. Each student can pick a movie from a long list of cult films, and their selection is put in a wheel where one is randomly selected for the succeeding week's showing. Woodward described this system as "mini gambling but with movies," and a way in which everyone wins.

Art by ALYSSA DIGGDON

Cult Cinema Club meets every Thursday at 6:30 in Smullin B17. They encourage any and all participation. Brown emphasized that "[the club has] open doors; you can come late to the movie, you can come to the last 20 minutes, you can just walk in."

Connecting through inclusion; Best Buddies helps bridge the gap between campus and community

Aubrey Tuttle • Staff Writer • April 18

Most of Willamette University's clubs do not interact outside of the "Willamette bubble," which is a term used colloquially to refer to the absolute focus WU students have on their college campus and not the surrounding area. Best Buddies, on the other hand, focuses on the surrounding Salem area, aiming to build connections between Willamette students and people with intellectual developmental disabilities (IDD). Though the club is in its early days, opportunities are already being offered to the Willamette community to get involved beyond campus.

Best Buddies is a program that operates internationally and is dedicated to bridging the gap between people with IDD and those without. They specialize in establishing one-to-one friendships between the two groups, promoting inclusivity through these social connections. In a middle or high school setting, this would involve matches between students enrolled at the school, but since Willamette's chapter is at the collegiate level, outside collaborations are required. The club's executive team secured a local relationship with Direct Support Personnel Connections (DSP Connections). DSP Connections shares a similar mission with Best Buddies, aiming to provide an inclusive and supportive community for individuals with IDD.

Drawing of two stick figures holding hands, with "best buddies" written above in blocky letters.
Art by BASIL ALLEN

Wright got the inspiration to start the club from his cousin, who is a person with IDD that joined the Best Buddies chapter at Western Washington University. After witnessing the effect that belonging the organization had for her, President Nolan Wright ('26) noted, "That's really why I started Best Buddies [at Willamette], to offer opportunities for people like my cousin to come in and meet people [at the university] as well as for [students] to meet people like my cousin."

Wright was also prompted to start Best Buddies at Willamette to help students break the campus bubble after he noticed how "we all go to school here [at Willamette], but it sometimes feels like we are not connected to the community outside of campus."

Since Willamette's chapter has just opened its doors during the fall 2024 term, direct one-to-one friendships have not been established yet, but the club hopes to make a first round of pairings in the fall term of 2025. However, there have been a plethora of other activities facilitated by Willamette's Best Buddies chapter, each a fun community-building experience built to establish an inclusive environment. Some of these activities have included a dance party, bowling, and even a coffee social at the Bistro; each event included individuals with IDD that were able to join up with the club through DSP Connections. Club executive members host at least one event per month and aim to make every activity fun and exciting in order to make the most out of every connection.

The club is also providing other opportunities for community members in a partnership with Candelaria Elementary. Through this collaboration, students have the opportunity to meet with children with IDD and help tutor them in math, as well as facilitate fun classroom activities

Willamette's Best Buddies chapter hopes to expand its membership in the next academic year to heighten the impact that its efforts will have on the surrounding community. Wright hopes the club becomes "a space where you can just be yourself, an hour a day where you can forget about the homework you should be doing," as well as one that can take students out of Willamette's social bubble and help them connect on a deeper level to Salem's community.

Honoring history and the future through the Martha Springer Garden's revitalization

Maya Darski • Staff Writer • April 20

Martha Springer Botanical Garden in 2021 prior to renovations.
Photo by ANUSHKA SRIVASTAV

If you take the trail alongside Sparks Recreation Center and turn by the bridge over the Mill Stream, you will find a quiet, relaxing space with various plants blooming under the springtime sun. This is the Martha Springer Gardens, and it is currently undergoing a process of revitalization to open the space back up for the Willamette community.

The Martha Springer Botanical Garden was first created and dedicated to beloved biology professor Martha Springer in 1987. The gardens were a popular and well-used space until the COVID-19 pandemic and a huge ice storm in 2021 hit the university. The ice storm did significant damage to the trees and plants, and since people were not on campus during the pandemic, the garden became overgrown and difficult to maintain. This called for a revitalization project to make the gardens a place for community and learning once again.

Alum Paul Boaden ('77) reflected on how Springer was always referred to by her students as "Ma Springer" because of her first name and how mother-like she was to her students. She was well known even to students who did not have her as a professor, like Boaden. "She was a great lady. If you had her for class, you were invited to her home for dinner. If you needed something, Ma Springer was the person to go to. She was well-loved," Boaden reminisced.

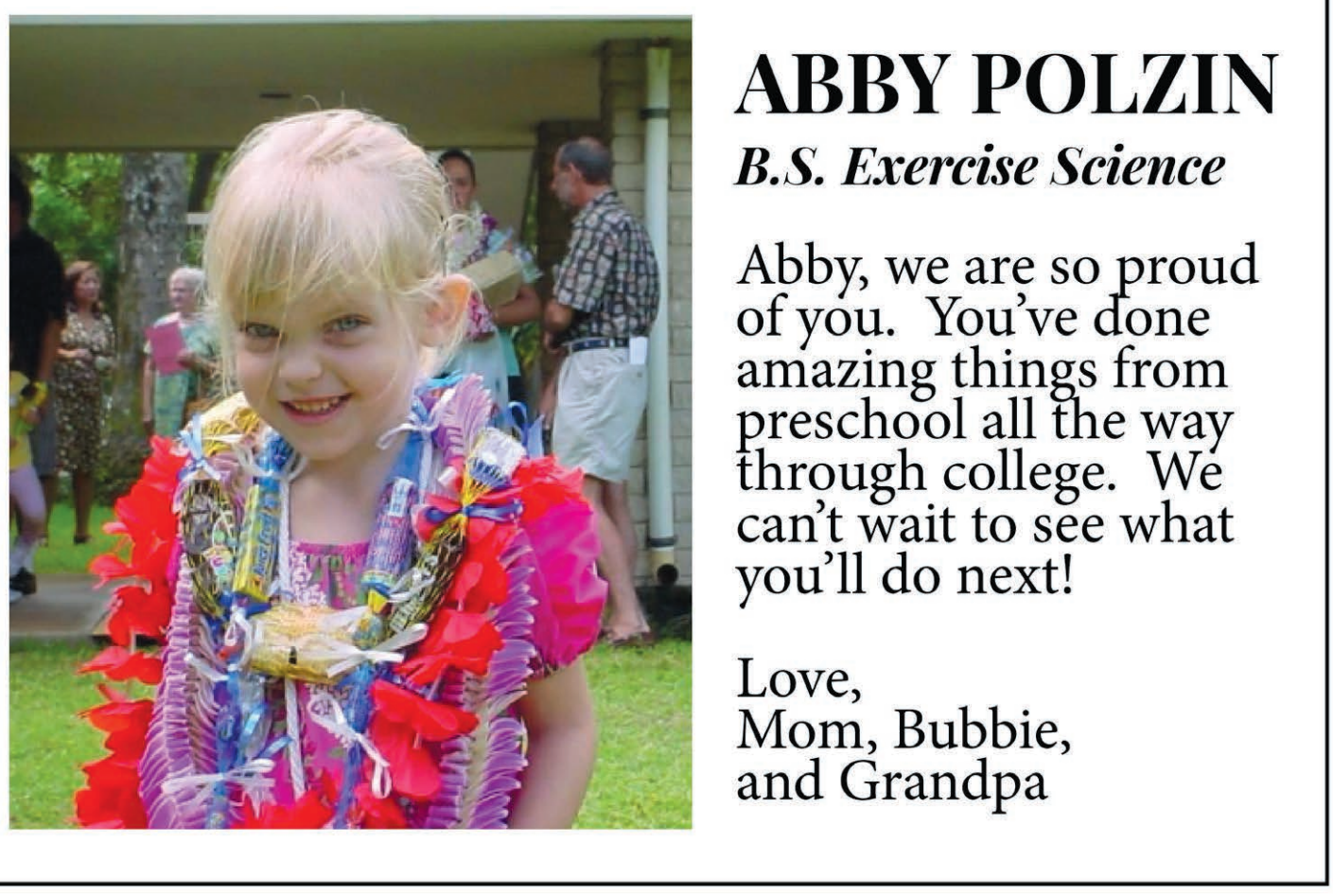
According to biology professor David Craig, the gardens "used to have raised beds with different kinds of educational plants and herbs which were related to classes, such as plants from Shakespeare plays for English classes." Visiting the Springer Gardens after it was made, Boaden's favorite part about the garden was the Oregon native plant area. He was also particularly fond of the educational features of the garden, such as the nameplates for various plants, so passersby could learn what they were. "All in all, I enjoyed that it wasn't just a garden, it was a place where you [could] learn things," Boaden said.

Having previously created a scholarship that he named after his late mother, Boaden was looking for a way to honor his late father as well. Boaden's father was someone closely associated with education and had a passion for gardening, and Boaden realized that doing something in his father's memory "that involved gardening was more appropriate than just the scholarship." This led him to donate over $100,000 for the renovation of the Martha Springer Garden after learning the garden needed help. According to Craig, this donation was "significant in helping pay for new things in terms of the redesign, such as materials, rocks and fences." A small plaque bench in the gardens will honor his father.

Donating towards the revitalization of the gardens was important for Boaden because he wanted to ensure that the space would continue to be educational. He hopes that the changes, such as adding more seating in the gardens and creating a space where events can be held, will give more incentive for the place to be used by the Willamette community. Specifically, his vision is that on nice, sunny days when students may want to be outside, "professors can give lectures in this nice, relaxing location. In addition, if alumni want to hold events such as alumni weekend, they have an event space."

The renovation plan includes adding new elements as well as fixing what was damaged. Craig explained that the water features are being repaired and will be brought back, a ramp for baby ducks will be built by the stream, there will be a bee hotel for native bees, and banana plants will be added. Craig added that with the revitalization, there will be new sustainability goals which include having the highest level of organic certification, increased biodiversity, and treatment changes such as having more hand weeding than pesticides.

Boaden's favorite feature of nameplates will also be brought back and enhanced through QR codes and updates on the nature-centered app iNaturalist. There will also be a new entry sign and a sculpture for the entrance created by a sculpture professor from PNCA. Boaden said that he "likes the idea of doing something of that nature to help tie the two universities together." In June 2025, there will be a rededication of the Martha Springer Gardens, along with a "thank you" to Boaden for his donation.



Opinion: Stay woke. Stay mad.

Maisy Clunies-Ross • Staff Writer • April 3

Before America's overwhelming embrace of conservatism was evident in elections, it was visible on Pinterest. It was palpable, as the queerness associated with cottagecore became secondary to the aestheticized oppression of tradwifery. It was clear, as "health conscious" and "crunchy" fell to the side to reveal anti-vax and anti-science ideologies. It was striking, as "old money" trended and a lifestyle only possible for beneficiaries of generational wealth labor exploitation was pedestalled. It was bone-chilling, as TikTok's "what kind of pretty are you?" content fed into racist, eugenicist thinking. It was evident, in the way recent trends praised hyperfemininity, health, work and traditionality. It was so disgustingly obvious.

This shift towards conservatism has been particularly notable among Gen Z, the once proclaimed "woke generation." Survey data from the Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI) shows that 58% of Gen Z men (ages 18-27) reported voting for Trump. While young men are more likely to support Trump than young women, women, too, are susceptible to the conservative push.

Read more on page 5!

While some commenters claim Gen Z's embrace of conservatism was predictable, many pollsters, journalists and politicians were shocked. "This demographic transformation challenges long-held Democratic Party assumptions about younger generations forming an "ascendant majority" that would secure their electoral future," reports Adeola Adeosum from Newsweek.

In some ways, the return to conservatism was logical, although not inevitable. Gen Z had the pressure of fixing the world, combating climate change, and leading the revolution placed upon them from an early age. School shootings have become common in the past two decades, climate destruction has continued to run rampant, doom scrolling has taken over, and the pandemic forced young people online in the desperate hope of connection. Life often feels hopeless. The world is bad, and it's only getting worse. The left offers no respite from this misery; it demands action but provides only infighting and infographics in return. By contrast, the unabashed, hedonistic hate of the new right promises a simpler life.

The current media ecosystem provided the perfect circumstances for such conservatism to take hold. People are increasingly distrustful of mainstream media, instead seeking out influencers with strong personalities who provide the facade of authenticity. These influencers "tell it like it is" or "stand up to cancel culture." They speak directly to people who feel wronged or left behind by the progress of society. To white men and women, these commenters rail against affirmative action and diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), encouraging their audience to blame people of color and other marginalized groups for the lack of success in their own lives. To marginalized people, right wing commenters sell the lie that aligning with power will get you power, convincing minorities that conservatism is meritocratic and those who are smart or respectable enough can achieve equality. They're selling a fantasy, a vindictive path to the "American Dream."

It's easy to see how disaffected youth seeking community, disenfranchised people, and unhappy WASPs are taken in by charismatic conservative figures. However, this isn't reason for the left to lose hope. In some ways, the left's culture of hopelessness did the right a favor by priming people for their false promises and convenient fiction. (To be clear, Trump's policies were always going to help rich, white people. But for everyone else — poor white people, people of color and other marginalized groups — the right's beautiful lies were just that.)

> ***"Let us be radical, let us imagine a genuinely good world, ... let us envision a future worth fighting for."***
>
> —Maisy Clunies-Ross

So yes, in order to combat the wide appeal of the right, the left needs hope. Not the Obama era hope of years past — everyone is too jaded and cynical for that. Now, we need to be fueled by our rage. The current political climate is devastating, tragic and traumatic. However, we cannot let our sadness consume us or make us inactive. As challenging as it may be, the only path forward is to channel that pain into anger, and that anger into action. Conservatism benefits from its promise of the American Dream, so the left must do the same. Let us be radical, let us imagine a genuinely good world, not one where people must vote for the "lesser of two evils," and let us envision a future worth fighting for.

The failure of Kamala Harris' 2024 presidential campaign is a key example of the pitfalls of the current Democratic Party. Many people who voted for Harris did so not because they wanted to but because they had to. The Biden administration failed many of the progressives who voted for him, and Harris made no attempt to distance herself from that. In fact, she ran a fairly moderate campaign. The campaign featured prominent Republicans, conservative immigration policy, and an unwillingness to defend trans people or condemn Israel's violence attacks on Palestinians. The Democratic Party seemed to be attempting to appeal to moderates and Republicans while taking the votes of displeased-but-willing progressives for granted.

Clearly, this didn't work.

In times of political polarization or social conservatism, the left often moves center to adjust. While some may position this choice as politically necessary, it's honestly just spineless. This shift abandons society's most vulnerable groups. This ideology puts those people in danger and positions them as a necessary sacrifice for a greater good. But it's a great good that will never come.

Conservative fabrications, like the model minority myth, are intentionally captivating. There are a few minorities who have had great success on the right, tokenized and held up to show that there is room for everyone in the ideology of exclusion. However, these cases are exceptions to the rule. These people will be tossed aside when they no longer serve their party. Aligning oneself with the oppressor may serve individuals in the short term, but it does nothing to protect marginalized groups in the long term. Don't distance yourself from those more marginalized or less normative than you, whether for momentary gain or the illusion of approval. Rally together for sustainable change, working towards legal rights and social acceptance.

Maybe this appeal is unnecessary at Willamette University, where "blue hair and pronouns" abound. But even here, it's important not to let our "liberal bubble" keep us from addressing policies and engaging in community organizing, rather than simply complaining.

We must push back against conservatism. Legally, socially, even aesthetically. Don't succumb to the lie that to be passionate is to be cringe. Don't let the right co-opt alternative subcultures to appeal to an incel goth girl fetish. Don't just look punk; be punk! Push back against the status quo. Don't forgo your radicalism for momentary acceptance. Don't stop being angry. Rest, but don't give up.

Opinion: 'The Boy Who Cried Wolf': The environmental importance of the stories we tell

Thalia Reddall • Staff Writer • April 12

Throughout human history, practically every culture on the planet has woven stories about local wildlife. In Greek mythology, crow feathers are black because they were scorched black by the anger of Apollo. The pink river dolphin of the Amazon is said to be able to transform into a seductive man by night. Even in this modern age of science and reason, people's perceptions of animals are shaped by the stories we tell each other. For example, mice can't even digest cheese, and it is far from their favorite food. These narratives, while seemingly all in good fun, can proliferate dangerous ideas and misinformation about animals, to the point where these stories can disrupt and destroy entire ecosystems.

Many European fairy tales pose the wolf as an antagonist, like "Little Red Riding Hood" or "The Three Little Piggies." This is in part due to wolves playing an antagonistic role in the lives of farmers, with many packs learning to attack vulnerable domestic prey. But the wolf is also a keystone species, vital to the continued existence of its surrounding ecosystem. When hunters wiped out almost all of the wolves in America, it caused the deer population to skyrocket, decimating a precarious balance and driving away smaller herbivores and the smaller predators that preyed on those smaller herbivores. Much of this damage was swiftly undone when wolves were reintroduced. Furthermore, wolves are shy creatures that do not actively hunt humans and are actually very avoidant of humans.

The same can be said of sharks, another animal that was slandered by popular media to the point where its population was damaged. Shark attacks are rare and often accidental, but media depicting them as evil bloodthirsty hunters — most notably, the movie "Jaws" (1975) — has resulted in people disregarding their importance to the ecosystem. Endangered sharks are often finned for profit or butchered for the sport of it, and conservation movements struggle to gain traction for these fish. Both the author of the book "Jaws" was based on, Peter Benchley, and the famous director Steven Spielberg acknowledged the damage this movie had done to public perceptions. Benchley tried writing books depicting sharks in a more favorable and scientifically accurate light to undo the damage he had done.

The fact of the matter is, some of the most important animals in any given ecosystem are often animals humans don't care for, and thus people write stories casting those animals as villains, antagonist roles and/or as some great force that needs to be overcome rather than protected. Adorable pandas or noble elephants win the hearts of charities, and while all animal conservation is important, the most important parts of an ecosystem are often left at the wayside when it's discussed.

Wolves benefit from looking and acting like dogs, and sharks benefit from a certain "cool factor," but how many people do you see advocating to save the reviled vulture? These animals, often depicted as sinister and filthy omens of death, are extremely important to their local environments as scavengers. Their ability to quickly pick corpses to the bones allows them to keep energy flowing within an ecosystem, remove sources of disease, and generally keep any given environment from being littered with corpses. Yet these precious creatures are often the victims of both accidental and intentional poisoning due to human activity.

This isn't even getting into the fact that scientists estimate 75% of the flying insect population has vanished in the past 27 years. That is existentially terrifying, yet it somehow doesn't find its way into policy discussions very often.

It's not a coincidence all of these animals are often posed as villains in the stories we tell. Even if we tell ourselves it's just fiction, our subconscious tells us otherwise. Fiction is a form of communication between humans, and the ideas it carries about the world we live in are slowly internalized by our society over time.

A wolf standing with its front paws resting on the trunk of a fallen tree.
Art by WES MOWRY-SILVERMAN

So what can we do to help the public image of these important animals? For one, we can raise awareness, at the very least on a local level. Unfortunately, it's not enough to just tell people the facts. The archetypes these animals represent in our own collective mythology must be changed as well. Creatives should aim to make art and stories that rehabilitate the image of these animals, acknowledging them as wild animals and thus potentially dangerous, but also extremely important to the world we exist in.

The natural world is something that exists without human permission, and yet we insist on anthropomorphizing everything within it, assigning moral roles to amoral creatures. It's all in good fun up to a point, but it's also directly contributed to the human-caused plights of these animals being ignored and even actively worsened. But stories can be changed, the future can be rewritten, and we can save these animals from our own folly.

ELEANOR HU

B.A. Communications, English & Spanish

Eleanor, congratulations on your graduation from Willamette! You have worked so hard and accomplished so much: finishing a triple major in Communications, English, and Spanish, leading the Collegian, and being inducted into the Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society. We are so very proud of you.

Love,
Mom and Dad

SCAN HERE

for our website, Instagram, mailing list, and more!

https://linktr.ee/collegian_accounts

Opinion: Book review: What 'The Secret History' by Donna Tartt can tell us about college life

Thalia Reddall • Staff Writer • March 17

Three of the novel's main characters, Richard, Bunny, and Henry (left to right) congregating on a couch in a study.
Art by WES MOWRY-SILVERMAN

The Secret History is a book about the difficulties of college life, taken to a seemingly fantastical extreme, yet remaining brutally grounded and real to its very end.The book at first presents as a subversion of a murder mystery, where the killer is given away in the first chapter, but as a whole, the book is more about the pitfalls of college life. The characters constantly fall into a variety of pitfalls, from unchecked hedonism to self-imposed isolation.

For those who have not read the book — recently or at all — the inciting incident is Richard's friend group (sans Richard and Edward, the latter more commonly known as "Bunny") holding a bacchanal: an intense party associated with the Greco-Roman god of wine, celebration and madness. The result of their severe intoxication is the horrific death of an unnamed farmer by their hands, whom they tore apart during their hedonistic frenzy. While it isn't properly revealed to the reader or the protagonist Richard until around halfway through the book, and while it's arguably the most fantastical aspect of an otherwise grounded book, the narrative choice author Donna Tartt made should inform our overall takeaway from the book's events.

While the majority of college students do not try to commune with pagan gods, the fact of the matter is that many college students participate in risky and sometimes immoral behavior, such as drug use, irresponsible sex acts, and reckless driving. It's also no accident that the students in this book are studying Greek language and Greek gods. In the real world, a youthful disregard for one's own safety along with the safety of others can be strongly associated in popular culture with fraternities, often known as "Greek life."

There is also a specific aspect of the subtext of "The Secret History" that rings true when it comes to college students. The divide and conflict between the college students in the book, typically foreign and wealthy, and the less fortunate and poorer locals is of particular interest. We follow the point of view of Richard, who himself is less financially fortunate (the only one in the friend group on a scholarship) but wants to appear wealthier than he actually is, lying about his family in the process. Since he is so captivated with the lives of his fellow intellectuals, who all come from rather wealthy families, we only get to see the perspective of an entitled and insular group of friends at an exclusive college — there is no insight shared from the wider community.

This theme of economic classism is only further reinforced after the murder of the farmer. He is considered so insignificant that he doesn't even get a name. The farmer's insignificance is juxtaposed with what happens when one of these college students, Bunny, "goes missing" after threatening to expose the crimes of his former friends. A large-scale search is launched for him, a local drug dealer is almost framed for his murder, and the rest of the story is focused on the fallout of his death. To be clear, Bunny was a vile and manipulative man, constantly making homophobic statements even around gay characters, only caring about people in terms of their use to him, and showing little respect for human life. Bunny's friends know his flaws more than anything, yet he gets so much more fanfare than an innocent farmer.

While vastly dramatized in "The Secret History," there is much to be learned from the book's classist theme. College students often live in a bubble that makes it easy to become detached from the rest of society, and the same could be said of many of us at Willamette. Students have a tendency to forget that they are not the majority of the population. In fact, the majority of people within the country (and the vast majority of the world) live more challenging lives, having to worry about job security, paying their mortgages, keeping their kids safe, and so on. The "Willamette bubble" is very much a real thing.

On the topic of college students being isolated from the rest of society, there is also something hauntingly realistic about the period in the book in which the protagonist is the most lonely. During a harsh winter break, Richard refuses to stay with any of his friends: he doesn't want to reveal that he actually has to work since he does not come from a rich background. Rather than risk losing status among his elitist friends, he opts to instead stay inside a freezing warehouse with a hole in the roof. He becomes extremely lonely and depressed, to the point of suicidal ideation. Richard is willing to go to an extreme just to keep up his facade out of fear of losing status among his friends.

While this part of the story is not as important to the overall plot, it's one of the most memorable for me. The chapter gives the reader vital insight into the character of Richard, who is not responsible for the murder yet willingly becomes complicit. It also reflects some of the greatest dangers of independent living at college, since it can become extremely easy to isolate yourself and suffer needlessly alone. It's also common to become overly attached to friends or groups of people who are a negative influence and can get you into undesirable situations where you feel pressured to do things you should not do.

"The Secret History" is a cautionary tale against some pitfalls of college life, and deserves more credit for its well-observed insights.

OLIVIA HOFFMAN
& ALEX SIMMS

Congratulations SEAL grads! We are so proud of you and excited to SEALebrate your graduation. We cannot wait to see and hear about all the incredible things you do next, so make sure to come back and visit. Thank you for making SEAL a part of your Willamette journey!

All the best,
Lisa, Jodi, Sarah and Quinn

Opinion: Ranking the bathrooms on campus

Maisy Clunies-Ross • Staff Writer • April 15

While the bathroom may be a laughing matter to some, for a lactose intolerant legend such as myself, there's no room for potty humor. It's a war in there. And I can only pray to come out on top. I always strive to be number one. (Even when I go number two.) I am a master of my craft, so it seems only right to share this knowledge with the general public. Even if it does mean you'll be blowing up my spot. (Literally and figuratively.)

1. Waller first floor

Where one may find sanctuary, amidst the seemingless endless overwhelm that comes as a consequence of our humanity, is a question scholars and philosophers have pondered for centuries. Poet and novelist Herman Hesse suggests one find it in the mind. Psalm 91:2 suggests one finds sanctuary in the love of the Lord. TJ Maxx suggests sanctuary is a home, especially one where it is always wine o'clock. There is a value in all of these ideologies. Of course, there is a reason their supporters are so fervent. However, to me, there is no greater sanctuary than the Waller first floor bathroom by the financial aid office. To weary travelers, you who have traveled far and wide searching for a place to look inward, to start a new life, or even take a fat dump, this bathroom is for you. Breathe in and appreciate the immaculate scent of a rarely used bathroom. Gaze up at the gentle light that filters through the window. Admire it, how immaculate it all is. Finally let yourself believe, you are home. You are safe.

2. Library second floor

While the first floor bathroom in the library is nothing to write home about, legends of the second floor bathroom will be told for generations. Some say that a solitary figure, unsure if they needed to poop or pee, wandered into this bathroom once. When they saw the feet of another in the stall over, they knew it would have to be pee. To poop would be simply uncouth. Yet, as they sat down, they heard the telltale squelch of a poop beside them, and that sound made them feel safe enough to do the same. There is no other intimacy that comes anywhere near this one, nothing else that epitomizes the feeling of being so close … yet so far away. The second floor bathroom is a place of community, love and acceptance. I hope to raise my children there.

3. Theatre Building

Everyone knows the theatre building for the art on the stage, for the intricately crafted sets and the heart-wrenching performances. Few give credit to the theatre building's decadent bathrooms, masterpieces that they are. We exalt flowers, hold them up as the epitome of beauty or the symbol of love. But, do we credit the soil in the same way? Hidden, yes. Less flashy, certainly. Yet, the backbone of the whole operation. To be unseen does not mean to be unworthy. So, today is a win for the underdogs. The wallflowers. The unnoticed. Today is a win for the theatre bathroom.

4. Smullin/Walton first floor single

ancient memory
relic of past, oh toilet
many years you flush

The first floor Smullin/Walton single-user bathroom is a place of contentment, a reminder of the chic simplicity of bathroom design. The window is large, but it does not feel like an exercise in exhibitionism, merely a vessel for filling the space with the tranquility inherent to natural light. This same acclaim does not extend to the multi-user bathroom which is right next door. It's dark, dank and musty. The double is the haunted house to the single's chapel.

Single user bathroom in Smullin/Walton.
Photo by SOFIE SZIGETI

Bathroom inside the Pelton Theatre.
Photo by SOFIE SZIGETI

5. Eaton second

Darling, Eaton. For many reasons, I praise you, so. I find great joy in your design, in your many stairs, your turrets, and the views from atop your many floors. You are an icon, Eaton. This is why it pains me to admit I hold your lavatories in no high regard. Your bathrooms are mid, Eaton. Please don't be mad.

6. UC first floor

This bathroom is sooooo hot. Why is it so hot?

7. Ford first floor

It's good you're already used to being on the ground floor because you will never see heaven. Honestly, you were set up for success, which makes it especially disappointing that you've betrayed me like this. In the words of Tyra Banks, "I was rooting for you. We were all rooting for you! How dare you!" You were the closest bathroom to me when I had a class I didn't especially care for. You could have been a great place for me to go and sit on my phone when the agony of my big screen became too much and I needed to seek comfort in my small screen. We could've hung out. We could have been friends. BUT NO! You are too stinky for that to ever happen. You smell like mildew. You smell like mold and grime and sewage and pain and lost love and body odor and an algae bloom. You smell like someone rubbed poop into the walls one hundred years ago and it's been fermenting ever since. You smell like you want me to die. And I know it's not the fault of any of the cleaning staff because the bathroom is so so gorgeously clean. It's just you, Ford First Floor Bathroom. You're just rotten right to the core. P.S. Your lighting washes me out and I'm mad at you for that, too.

Author's Note: This ranking doesn't include Olin, Collins, or the art building because I haven't visited them or had truly emotional experiences within their hallowed halls. To all my science girlies, I'm sorry.

Bathroom inside Ford Hall.
Photo by SOFIE SZIGETI

Lacrosse out-Foxed again despite coaches' polling; injuries and staff departure potential factors

William Weeks • Staff Writer • April 16

The Willamette bench watches as Bearcat lacrosse falls to George Fox on April 12 at Sparks Field.
Photo by KEENAN YOSHIZAWA

Lacrosse suffered another tough loss against rival George Fox (GFU) on April 12 at home (5-13). Despite having never defeated the Bruins, the 'Cats were picked No. 1 in the 2025 NWC coaches' poll. After the match, they returned to their perennial No. 2 spot.

Following their No. 2 coaches' poll placement in February, GFU lacrosse took to Instagram, writing, "The Bruins were picked to finish second in the Northwest Conference preseason poll despite not losing a conference game since 2016. They're determined to prove they're still the team to beat in 2025!"

The Bruins trounced the Bearcats 9-19 at their Feb. 27 preseason matchup in Newberg. However, through early April, Willamette seemed to be growing into their expectations.

They fended off a break-out Pioneer side in their season opener 16-8, then defeated Pacific Lutheran 21-1 and Puget Sound 20-0. However, ahead of the GFU bout, the squad experienced some setbacks.

Claire Kisielnicki ('26), who scored five goals in the previous game against Puget Sound, was out with a concussion. In 2025 alone, Kisielnicki has had two single-game point scoring performances within the top three of Willamette lacrosse history.

Willamette also lost assistant coach Yousra Manar, which has affected valuable time spent one-on-one with players working on skills, said head coach Sarah Lautenbach.

Another issue Willamette lacrosse faces is a lack of depth in the lineup. In their George Fox matchup, Willamette only listed 13 players on the roster to GFU's 18, excluding goalies. Not only were players unable to rest, but many had to play out of position, a potential reason for their struggles to clear the ball, Lautenbach noted. Willamette cleared 14 of 30 as opposed to GFU's 20 of 24. Lautenbach explained further that out-of-position playing creates issues cutting into space and getting open.

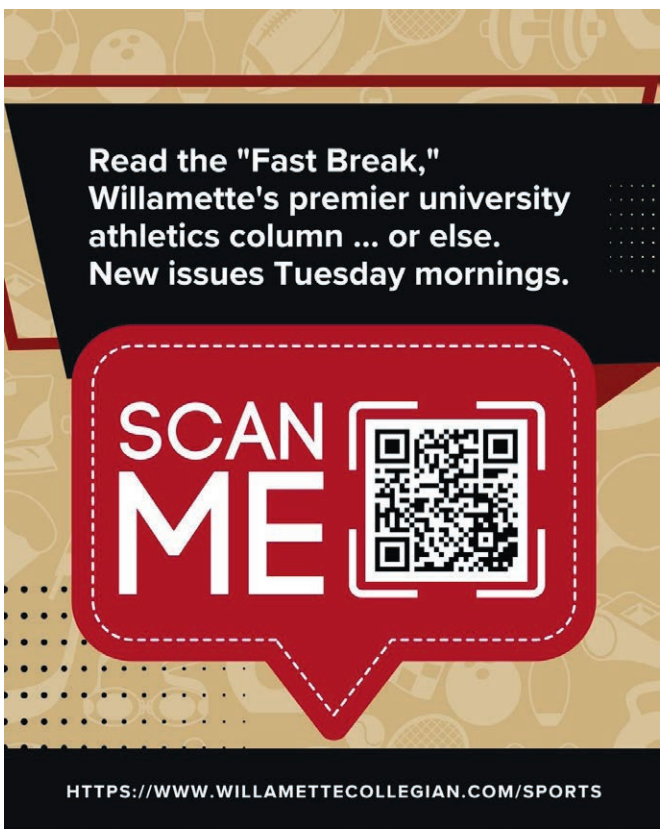
A lack of available players also caused the team to briefly field women's soccer goalkeeper Sam Borngasser ('25), a move not without precedent for lacrosse. In their 2024 Conference Championship loss to the Bruins, the team fielded Willamette basketball players Ava Kitchin ('24) and Carolyn Ho ('24).

Lautenbach affirms that many of these issues resolve on their own, and considering the circumstances, she couldn't be happier with how the team played. Instead, she is focused on "the expectations with where they are, not what I hope."

Coming off that loss, Willamette conquered Whitworth 17-12 in heroic fashion, scoring a 9-3 run through the second half. Lily Bachiochi ('25) set a school record with 10 goals in a game, also putting up two assists, the most for the team. Coming back from her injury, Kisielnicki scored five.

However, they failed to find a result against the Blues away on April 19, who snatched their No. 2 spot. This puts Willamette at No. 4 in standings, 4-2 in conference and 7-6 overall.

At the time of publishing, lacrosse will have faced Pacific on April 23 and will be set to wrap up their season at home against Linfield on April 27. Then, playoffs.



Baseball battles to make playoffs, defend conference title

Ruby Hampton • Staff Writer • April 15

The Willamette University baseball team has proven to be a force to be reckoned with in the Northwest Conference, claiming the 2024 title after finishing No. 2 in the regular season. Now, they're clawing to make the conference tournament.

Last year, the squad finished their season with an impressive 26-16 win-loss record and 49 home runs. The Bearcats defeated Whitworth University 8-4 in the championship game, earning the league's automatic bid into the NCAA Division III tournament.

Sitting at No. 4 in the 2025 preseason poll, the Bearcats set out hoping for another stellar season. As the game stats and results have come rolling in, however, the 'Cats have pitched fans a few curveballs. For one, they've endured some serious point swings. For example, they went 0-11 then 11-0 against Pacific Lutheran University on March 29 and 30, and 12-11 and 2-17 against Whitworth on April 5 and 6.

Infielder Charlie Ferbet ('26) explained, "Baseball is a game of momentum, and being able to bounce back after a rough game is very important. It can be very unpredictable, and that's why it's great to play three games every weekend against the same team. Sometimes, for a variety of reasons, a game might not always go our way."

On Friday, April 18, the Bearcats took on Puget Sound in Tacoma, Washington. Luke Piazza ('25) had two hits, including a grand slam, and drove in five runs, but the Bearcats fell to Puget Sound 7-10 in the opening game of their weekend series. Rocco Granucci (MBA '26) led Willamette with three hits, and Nate Hamburger ('26) scored three times for Willamette.

On Saturday, April 19, the 'Cats had two more conference games against Puget Sound to complete their weekend series. The results were unfavorable — 6-7 and 4-5 — and sealed their No. 8 rank in the conference. Heading into the series, the squad was tied for No. 4.

But the fight's nowhere near over. Willamette has racked up an 8-8 conference record. Linfield, who are sitting at No. 3, five places above, have a 10-8 record. With six games left in the regular season, it's anyone's season.

The Bearcats will face the No. 6 Pioneers at the Keizer Volcanoes Stadium on April 25 and 26.

Liam O'Connor ('27) takes a swing against Corban University at Volcanoes Stadium in Keizer, Oregon on April 15, 2025.
Photo by MAC CHILDERS

New jav record holder Steeley Mucken talks injuries, personal growth and his epiphany at FairWell Festival

Catie Mohr • Staff Writer • April 7

On April 5 at the Linfield Jenn Boyman Memorial Invitational in McMinnville, Steeley Mucken ('27) broke the Willamette record in javelin with a throw of 65.50 meters — a record that had held for over a decade, having last been set in 2014 at 65.41 meters.

His throw placed him first in the Northwest Conference and — as of April 7 — fourth place overall for NCAA Division III. This season, Mucken also came within sight of Willamette's 100-meter dash record when he ran a time just 0.09 seconds short of the top spot at the Willamette Opener in Salem on March 1. But the road has been far from easy for Mucken, with trials, tribulations and hamstring injuries abounding for the big man. Three days before his record-breaking javelin toss, The Collegian got to sit down with him to hear about his winding path to the top.

Question: Did you quit [Willamette's track and field team] last year?

Mucken: Yes, that is true. I did resign last year. I turned in my gear.

Question: Walk me through what happened.

Mucken: I had, I would say, a poor attitude going into [the track season]. I got injured and then I didn't go into the training room. I didn't go see Ken [Smith, Willamette's assistant athletics director, sports medicine]. He still gives me a lot of crap about that all the time. I was in a rush to qualify for conference and I started running before I was ready. [Then] I strained my hamstring and just threw in the towel. I was like, "This isn't for me." And then, over the summer, I had a really cool experience at a concert. [I was] just standing kinda in the middle of the crowd. The [concert] had a camera that panned back and forth and it just stopped on me. I saw myself a shoulder above everyone else.

This is weird, but then I kind of just reflected on [that image]. Track and field emphasizes a lot of physical talent, so I just saw myself in a crowd of people and I was like, "Man, I really gotta do something with this talent. I gotta do it for me." I think last year I was doing [track] because everyone told me to do it. When I came back [to school], I really thought about it and [decided I had to get back on the team]. And [the coaches] were gracious enough to let me come back on the condition that I'd do the decathlon, which I've come to love.

Question: When you say you were playing last year for other people or because other people were telling you to, what do you mean by that?

Mucken: I was doing it only for my family, because they were supporting me — and I still do it for my family, [I still want them] to be proud of me — but a lot of [the reason I did track last year] was just that I just want my family to be proud of me. This year, I'm just proud of myself and how far I've come. And I still do it for my family and all my friends, just 'cause they're supportive of me, but at the end of the day, I'm doing it for myself because I love it. My family being proud of me is just an added bonus.

Steeley Mucken.
Photo courtesy of Steeley Mucken, by Willamette Department of Athletics

Question: What was the day that you quit like? What led up to it?

Mucken: It was the week after I'd torn [my hamstring] again. I just showed up and gave my coaches all the gear — my uniform and warm up gear. I was like, "I'm done doing this." It was very awkward, it was very uncomfortable, but afterwards I felt very free. I could do whatever I wanted to; I didn't have to go to practice every day. And I could do the exercises I wanted to do. And I can't say that I fully regret [quitting]. I think that, all due respect to my coaches, I did a lot of personal growth in that period where I was not on the team that… made it possible for me to come back to the team. I don't think that would have been possible had I just stayed on the team and kept showing up to practice and doing all the things they told me to do. It would've just created more resentment for the program. I think that quitting, as much as they'll disagree with me, was a positive thing.

Question: So, just regarding the change between who you are now versus your freshman year, in terms of track and field, what were your goals going into your collegiate career?

Mucken: I mean, I just wanted to get better. I wanted to run faster, throw farther, jump higher and farther, all of that. I didn't think that when I graduated high school I was where I could go as far as physical talent, and I just wanted to work harder. I wasn't gonna stop working out after high school, and I really wanted to do something more with it and just invest in myself and work hard to get better.

Question: What about coming off that break going into this season?

Mucken: I wanted to qualify for nationals. I knew I had a shot winning nationals at the decathlon. Just overall improvement in all events. So my goal for this season — I don't really do things in terms of goals. I just do things because I enjoy them. Or, winning. I think my goal is to win.

Question: And then you recently got reinjured. Was it a hamstring strain?

Mucken: Yeah, I was just doing the long jump and I was like, "Oh, that hurts." I was very upset for a while because I had told my coaches that I didn't think I should compete that day, and they got upset and told me to "be more of an athlete." So, I went in and competed and sure enough, I hurt myself. But this time, instead of quitting, I listened to them and went to the athletic training room and recovered very fast.

Question: What does that injury mean for the rest of your season? Do you anticipate it affecting you, or is it just the recovery period and then you're [cleared]?

Mucken: Well, it's hard to say. Injuries don't really tell you before they happen. Fingers crossed it doesn't happen again. I don't think I'm really gonna let it affect my season. I still want to compete at conference and help the team get some points. [Also,] I've qualified to go to nationals for javelin. I don't think it's gonna affect javelin very much.

Question: How has this persistent injury affected your mental state?

Mucken: A lot of my mood on a day-to-day basis depends on how I feel like I'm doing in sports, which can be a really good thing or a really bad thing. When I'm doing well, I'm doing really well, but when I'm doing bad, I'm doing pretty bad. I think again, it just comes back to attitude, you gotta be consistent in the things that you do so that you can have consistent results.

Question: You're narrowing in on two school records in javelin and 100-meter dash. What do you attribute your success to in these specific areas?

Mucken: I would say I gotta attribute some of it to being in the weight room in high school and lifting weights. I think that's where it all started, was my passion for lifting weights. I would attribute a lot of [my success] to being strong. There's a lot of technical factors [in track and field], and in that I would give credit to my coach Mitch [Kruse]: he's a great teacher, a great mentor, he's a great leader of the team. All the technical progress I've made is because of him and my throwing coach Soren [Sorensen].

Question: How are you feeling going into the conference meet?

Mucken: I want to win a couple events. That's wishful thinking. But you never know how it's gonna go. I really want to beat George Fox and the bigger schools that for a long time have just beaten us in everything. I think I can contribute a lot to that because I have a diverse set of events that I've been pretty good at. If I can get up there in a few, that would contribute a lot.

Northwest Conference Championships for track and field will be occurring April 26-27 at Lewis & Clark in Portland. Mucken did not compete at the NWC Multi Championships on April 14-15.

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What's under the golden man? A look inside the 83rd Oregon Legislative Assembly

Keenan Yoshizawa • Photography Editor • April 10

The 83rd Oregon Legislative Assembly gaveled into session on Jan. 21, 2025, with 30 Senators and 60 Representatives tasked with juggling the competing interests of their diverse communities and constituents. With the Capitol a quick walk across State Street, Willamette students have a unique access point to the center of Oregon politics. Numerous current Willamette students and alumni work at the Capitol, and the Politics, Policy, Law, and Ethics program offers an internship class for students to receive academic credit for their work at the legislature. A number of Willamette graduates are currently members of the legislature including Representative Ken Helm (BA '87, JD '93), Speaker Pro Tempore David Gomberg (MBA '81), and Representative Kim Wallan (BS, JD '81). The current session is due to adjourn sine die on June 18, 2025, but must adjourn by June 29, 2025 under the Oregon Constitution.

Legislators prepare to debate and vote on legislation affecting all Oregonians on April 10, 2025.
Photo by KEENAN YOSHIZAWA

Senate President Rob Wagner, D-Lake Oswego, presides over the Senate proceedings on April 9, 2025.
Photo by KEENAN YOSHIZAWA

MASON LACKNER

B.A. Politics, Policy, Law & Ethics

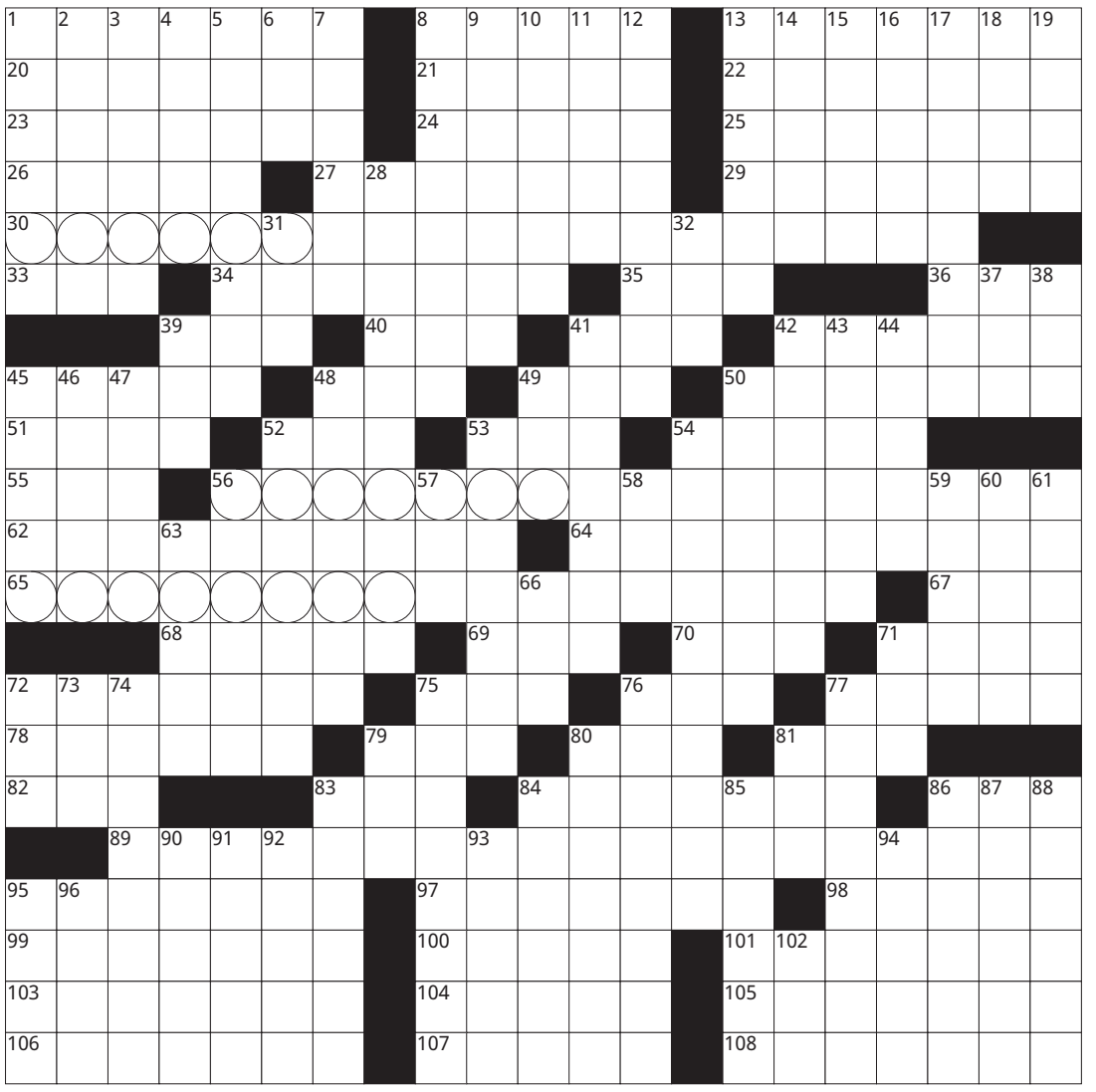
Way to go, Mason! Your family is so proud of you!

(Left to right) Rep. Sarah Finger McDonald, D-Corvallis, and Rep. Bobby Levy, R-Echo, share a laugh prior to a House Agriculture Committee meeting on April 9, 2025.
Photo by KEENAN YOSHIZAWA

Oregon House Republicans gather at the rear of the chamber as the House stands at ease on April 10, 2025.
Photo by KEENAN YOSHIZAWA

End of Year Crossword

Crossword submitted by EZRA NELSEN



ACROSS

1 Like zebras or tigers
8 What marathoners load up on
13 Pressures in a fighter jet cockpit
20 __ Mutant Ninja Turtles
21 Gene Vincent's "Be-Bop-___"
22 Mints sold in tins
23 Fled
24 Star in Orion's left foot
25 Small plant baby
26 "__ to have run in a great circle..." (Jeanette Wilson quote)
27 Cold periods of earth
29 Kellogg's makes them
30 John Guare's 1990 play, "Six __"
33 French summer
34 Been angry
35 Loud noise
36 Sixth of a fl. oz.
39 Gadot of "Wonder Woman"
40 Some NFL linemen
41 Greek letters used to calculate the circumference of a circle
42 Goes around
45 Pellet rifle
48 Opposite of post-
49 Small drink
50 Dominated by two firms
51 Rowboat pair
52 Yours, in Italy
53 Donkey
54 Claus of Christmas
55 Purple yam in some desserts
56 Embassy
62 Justifications
64 __ equals two
65 Tall tube found in a chemistry lab
67 Prefix for some American states
68 Barked, cutesily
69 Dorm supervisors, for short
70 Before, poetically
71 Isn't, slangy
72 Red, east-Asian fruits
75 "___, humbug!"
76 Pigpen
77 Lots and lots
78 A unit of food energy: Var.
79 "My bad," in a text
80 Part of NCAA: Abbr.
81 Swiss river
82 "Scooby-__"
83 When doubled, the second step to a 2015 Silentó dance move
84 Like some ads on youtube
86 Soccer tie-breakers, abbr.
89 Willamette ceremony held on campus on May 18, and a clue to the starts of 30-across, 56-across, and 65-across
95 Deception
97 Released early
98 Farm call
99 Simian Halloween costume
100 Bizarre
101 Unethical
103 Dizzy feeling
104 Group selfies
105 Like some beach resorts
106 Enters gradually
107 Eye drops?
108 Luxembourg film festival

DOWN

1 Big step
2 Pink Floyd's original band name
3 Go back (on)
4 Deduce
5 Italian food topping
6 Bigheadedness
7 Downfall
8 Unbothered
9 Like usernames
10 Tough
11 Censor
12 Corn chip accompaniment
13 Metal fuel holder
14 Group of ships
15 Cheri of "SNL"
16 Cowboy competition
17 Herb in Mexican dishes
18 Biographer Leon
19 Retired planes
28 Under command
31 Snakelike fish
32 Bradbury's "___ for Rocket"
37 3d printer file format
38 "Gangnam Style" singer
39 Astronaut, Grissom
41 Punk rock band, "Sex __"
42 U.S. gymnast with two Olympic gold medals
43 Actor Troy who won an Oscar for "CODA"
44 "Check"
45 French market town
46 Storybook elephant
47 Activist Thunberg
48 Forms a chrysalis
49 Fed. benefits agency
50 Prepare laundry for ironing
52 "Mean Girls" writer and actress
53 "Get lost!"
54 It comes after the second part of an act
56 More gloomy
57 U.K. lexicon
58 Pasta suffix
59 Ancient Greek region
60 Upright
61 Some salamanders
63 Boise's state
66 Talk on and on
71 Unlike this ans.
72 Band, __ Soundsystem
73 Basketballer, Ming
74 Richard Price novel
75 Give someone the heebie-jeebies
76 Like some wine glasses
77 Arthur Miller's "Death of a ___"
79 Droop
80 Weapons expert
81 Wine label abbr.
83 Shipping weight
84 "The Merchant of Venice" heroine
85 Like many movies and video games
86 Illinois River city
87 Massages, like a cat
88 Surgical device
90 Spanish west
91 Trumpeter, Armstrong
92 Assassin, Mangione
93 Trigger
94 State animal of Alaska and Maine
95 Top pick, slangily
96 ___ in the Pod (maternity clothing store)
102 "Turning Red" protagonist

A lovely spring day in Salem.
Comic by BASIL ALLEN