

THE IONIAN

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Iona strives for sustainability through partnership with Cenergistic

By: Stacey Franciamore

Editor-in-Chief



PHOTO COURTESY OF THOMAS VANWERT

VanWert accepted an award at the Sustainability Awards Approaching Zero on behalf of the facilities department for their campus wide LED lighting upgrades.

In an effort to reduce its carbon footprint, Iona College has been working with Cenergistic, a leading energy conservation firm, to help reduce the consumption of oil, natural gas, water and electricity on campus. With the goal of saving over \$2.5 million in energy costs and reducing energy consumption by roughly 20% in the next five years, Iona has made it a priority to practice sustainability and go green.

Thomas VanWert is Cenergistic's on-campus Energy Specialist at Iona. The Ionian's Stacey Franciamore interviewed Van Wert to discuss Cenergistic and its role on campus.

This interview was conducted via email and has been edited for space and clarity.

SF: What is Cenergistic and what do they do?

TV: Cenergistic is a behavioral based energy conservation company, backed by technology, which was founded in 1986. By applying our sustainability principles and with the use of our proprietary software, we have helped save nearly 1,500 school districts, universities and municipalities a total of \$5.8 billion to date.

The five-year partnership began in June 2019 and our mission is to save as much energy and money as possible for our clients while increasing comfort in the buildings. It is a win-win for all, as greenhouse gas emissions are reduced and the money saved can be used to fund other campus initiatives.

SF: What is your role in the Iona College – Cenergistic partnership?

TV: As an Energy Specialist, I am on campus at all different times and days auditing and

analyzing every energy use point in order to find ways to reduce consumption. This can be as simple as making sure lights are turned off in an unoccupied building or optimizing a building's entire mechanical system to increase efficiency.

It is not just me who is working to reduce energy as Cenergistic provides a network of resources to do the job. We have consultants available remotely and on-site, such as our boiler and furnace expert who, in a normal year, would make building adjustments before heating season begins. GreenX is our multi-purpose software used to look at past, current and future data. The 'Audit' feature creates alerts which helps me know where to focus next time I am in the building while 'Simulate' forecasts building energy costs and performance through interval data analysis.

SF: By working with Cenergistic, Iona plans to reduce the consumption of oil, natural gas, water and electricity by roughly 20% and save over \$2.5 million in energy costs over the next five years. How far along is Iona in this plan and do you have an estimate of how much energy and money has been saved so far?

TV: Through year one, we have saved over \$380,000, or 16% cost avoidance, equivalent to 3.3 million miles of automobile travel taken off the road. This number has been increasing month over month and I believe that by this time next year, we can be at 20% overall. Additionally, the average cost per square foot required to power the college's facilities has decreased from \$2.50 to \$1.91 today.

SF: Can you emphasize the importance of these sustainability efforts and the bigger picture?

See **CENERGISTIC** on Page 2

Greek organizations pledge against hazing

By: Mary Conroy

Staff Writer



PHOTO COURTESY OF HAZINGPREVENTION.ORG

Various resources are offered on HazingPrevention.org, an organization that empowers people to prevent hazing.

The sisters of Phi Sigma Sigma and the brothers of Pi Kappa Phi held an event called "These Hands Don't Haze" on the Spellman Portico on Sept. 7.

The annual event is a national pledge to prevent hazing as well as intervene and report hazing if one sees it occurring. Both Greek organizations united to take a pledge against hazing to keep each other accountable for the safety and well-being of all their members. This event is a significant tradition for both organizations as it kicks

off National Hazing Prevention Week, which encourages sorority and fraternity members to make hazing prevention an everyday activity.

See **HAZING** on Page 2

Cenergistic

FROM PAGE 1

TV: As most are already aware, climate change continues to happen world-wide which is why it is important to mitigate carbon emissions in every way possible. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) recently passed the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA) with the goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions 40% by 2030 and 85% by 2050. It will take continued individual energy awareness and broader programs like the Iona-Cenergistic partnership to reach these goals.

SF: How can students and faculty at Iona contribute to this program and Iona’s sustainability efforts?

TV: It is important that the campus community do their part by turning off lights and equipment when it is not in use and submitting work orders for things such as leaks or faulty equipment. When leaving for class for example, getting in the habit of turning off the AC can help save hundreds of dollars annually in just that single room. Just think of the potential savings when that behavioral change is extrapolated campus wide. It is important to follow the program guidelines which can be found on Iona’s website.

SF: How has COVID-19 impacted the

program?

TV: This unique period has forced us to manage the buildings like they never have before. During the spring months while most of campus was empty, we were able to reduce energy consumption by over 50%. With students and faculty back, we have put in measures to increase air quality, such as pre and post occupancy building flushes and allowing more outside air into buildings for greater ventilation. While we are still currently saving energy, the focus for now has been on healthier buildings.

SF: What is a specific measure you have taken to reduce energy?

TV: I am always looking out for grants and other energy saving programs. Last year, I received over 60 smartAC kits from a Con Ed rebate program. These connect to window ACs and allow for remote scheduling and temperature setpoint capability. Currently, every classroom in Doorley Hall, and parts of Cornelia, and Murphy have these installed. The Facilities Department has also done their part by installing LED lights campus-wide and upgrading to more efficient boilers to heat Spellman Hall, for example.

Remembering lives lost on 9/11

The following Iona College alumni died on 9/11:

Thomas V. Hohlwek, Jr. ’74MBA; Joseph P. Keller ’96; Michael A. Lepore ’84; Laura M. Longing ’94MBA; Michael F. Lynch ’94 (FDNY); Francis N. McGuinn ’83MBA; Dennis P. McHugh ’90 (FDNY); Michael E. McHugh, Jr. ’95; Robert M. McPadden ’99MS (FDNY); Diana J. O’Conner ’86, ’89MBA; Joseph R. Riverso ’91; Edward Ryan ’81; Joseph Spor ’88 (FDNY); Sean P. Tallon ’96 (FDNY); and Joanna Vidal ’96.

The following Iona College alumni served as first responders on 9/11 and have since died:

Thomas Foley ’95, Lt. Richard A. Nappi ’86, Lt. Christopher M. Pupo ’95, and James Ryan ’84.

Hazing

FROM PAGE 1

The curators of this event were the Philanthropic Chairs of Phi Sigma Sigma and Pi Kappa Phi, Carlie Brainard and Spencer Boos.

The event was held following the CDC’s and Iona’s safety guidelines. Each participant was required to have a green Covid-19 badge from the Gael Care App, wear a mask and maintain a social distance.

In previous years, members of Phi Sigma Sigma and Pi Kappa Phi traced their hands with markers on a poster. To ensure safety this year, hands were made from construction

paper prior to the event. Members signed their names on the cutout hands and the event moderators taped them to the poster. The poster was displayed in LaPenta Student Union.

Carlie Brainard, a senior and a campus minister reflected on the event.

“These Hands Don’t Haze is an event Phi Sigma Sigma and Pi Kappa Phi host every Fall semester, right before recruitment,” Brainard said.

Brainard emphasized the significance of the event.

“It’s a great way to kick

off recruitment on a positive note together and remember the true meaning of sisterhood and brotherhood by taking the pledge against hazing.”

Brainard looks forward to planning and holding more philanthropic events this semester in the safest and healthiest way possible.

To learn more about These Hands Don’t Haze and the National Hazing Prevention Week, visit <https://hazingprevention.org/> or contact cbrainard1@guels.iona.edu and sboos1@guels.iona.edu.

Outside Iona

Throughout our hectic student lives, we should always remain aware of what is happening around us. In this column, I find the most significant things going on in the world and provide you with a small blurb of all the important details. Here are some of the major events that have been happening since last issue of The Ionian:

By: Krystal Ortiz News Editor

General Coronavirus update.

According to the CDC, the total amount of COVID-19 cases in the United States has passed 6 million as of Sept. 8. As New York City continues its reopening process, Governor Cuomo has allowed indoor dining at restaurants to start on Sept. 30 as long as there is a 25% capacity limit. New York’s daily COVID-19 cases are seeing a steady decline, with each county reporting less than 50 daily cases, with the exception of New York City, which has been reporting 200 daily cases. Governor Cuomo announced on Sept. 7 that New York has gone one month with an infection rate below 1%, a new milestone for the state that was once deemed the epicenter of the virus in the United States.

Information from the CDC, the New York Times and NYS Governor website.

Portland Fires

This past week, Oregon has had over 650,000 acres of land destroyed due to wildfires. Governor Kate Brown has been warning Oregon residents that they expect many lives to be lost, and many towns to be destroyed. Heavy winds are expected to make fire storm down on small communities. This isn’t one big fire, but rather several big fires combining to cause uncontrollable damage. Known causes for the wildfires include a 15-year-old boy setting off fireworks, a family using a pyrotechnic device to reveal the gender of an expected child in California, which burned over into Oregon and Washington, and transmission lines giving off sparks that ignite fires. It is currently unknown how many lives have and will be lost at this time.

Information from KGW8 News and the NY Times.

Funeral home finds Michigan woman alive after being declared dead

On Aug. 23, the Southfield Fire Department answered a phone call claiming that a woman was unresponsive. Paramedics responded to the call and arrived on the scene, performed CPR on the 20-year-old woman for 30 minutes. After giving her many tests, it was determined that the woman had no signs of life. While sources claim that the woman was responsive and breathing, paramedics claimed that it was a side effect of the medication the woman was taking. She was transported to a Detroit funeral home, where her family was told to make arrangements for her passing. However, employees of the funeral home found the woman showing vital signs of life. Emergency crews took the woman to a hospital, where she is recovering.

Information from NBC news and the Click on Detroit website.

Zoom vs. in class fashion

By: Shakinah Silverberg Contributing Writer



PHOTO FROM ZOOM ON INSTAGRAM

Getting dressed for your zoom classes can make you feel more focused, engaged, and prepared to tackle the day ahead of you - even if it's from home.

While in the comfort of your own home, who really wears anything besides their pajamas? Fashion is only one of many things changing during these times, and the way we dress to go to our Zoom call classes may not be anything like what we would have worn to our in-person classes.

Even though students are only showing their upper bodies for most of their classes, it is expected for those in attendance of each Zoom class to not be clothed in sleepwear. This may seem to be evening out the convenience of being in the comfort of your own home for classes: you may not have to go far, but you are still expected to get dressed as if you were. How many students really change out of their pajamas as some professors even explicitly request in their syllabi? It may seem that most people would simply change their shirt and call it at that, but others may even put on their regular makeup and do their hair since more eyes are on them online than there would have been in an in-person class.

When asked about how she personally dresses for online class vs. in-person class, freshman Alesandra Payne focused on the fact that she has to dress to go outside regardless because she attends classes with a hybrid schedule while living on campus.

“Since I am living on campus, and have both online and in-person classes on the same day, I’ll wear the same thing for both because I have to be around people either way,” Payne said.

Hybrid classes prompt students who have both online and in-person classes in one day to dress more presentably on a daily basis.

Freshman Krystal Phillips still puts effort into her daily looks despite attending classes on Zoom.

“I do prefer to actually try a bit, especially since I love exploring my own fashion sense! But at the same time, my dorm is where I can be my crazy, lazy self,” Phillips said.

If these answers are representative of the majority of students, then in-person vs. online fashion differs from day-to-day, depending on what classes someone has, their desire to share their style with others and, to put things lightly, if they wake up on “the right side of the bed.”

Whether on Zoom or in-person, the most popular clothing style seems to be Iona gear. Students are constantly representing their Gael pride on the daily, both in-person and at home. Some days people even wear outfits that match their mask, truly changing the way that we dress ourselves. Choosing an outfit for the day may be hard, and some outfits that are worn to sleep may even sometimes be presentable as casual clothing. In this way, some students probably do get away with wearing their pajamas on their Zoom calls.

Either way, picking an outfit can be one of the most fun parts of the day. Putting together an outfit that you feel confident in can really impact your mood for the day, and maybe even help you make a friend or two along the way!

Gaels chat dream jobs

By: Tiffany Persuad Staff Writer

Iona College is well known for its LaPenta School of Business, but students are also well-versed in the various majors and minors on campus. Ranging from those in the STEM field, business and liberal arts, undergraduate students have the leeway to be educated in any field or personal interest. Not only does Iona offer hundreds of courses, in-person and now online, clubs and extended resources are actively used for students to further enhance their studies and land their dream job.

Michael Mitrione, an Iona peer assistant and co-owner of the Echomixers, played football at Archbishop Stepinac High School as a defensive tackle and intends to pursue a career in his favorite sport. He dreams of being a collegiate football coach. However, he intends to work at a high school level at first to acquire the reputation and skill needed to handle a college team. Since Mitrione now only plays leisurely football due to an injury, he abides by a strict workout routine.

“Daily exercise helps keep me mentally and physically tenacious,” Mitrione said. “Not only to help with motivation in school but to build resistance for my future.”

Elizabeth Petrunia, a senior and finance and management major, is aiming for a managerial position once she graduates college. Before waitressing, she interned at an investment firm this past summer, as a junior advisor to the CFO. Once she is financially stable, Petrunia aspires to help the disabled.

“In high school I volunteered for Super Athletes Day, which was a field day for children with disabilities, and found my passion,” Petrunia said. “The main reason why I strive to be successful is to help those who may not have the ability to fully function like their peers, but have been given the most loving personalities.”

Petrunia intends to use Iona’s Handshake resource, a career-services platform, to apply for beginning position jobs and the many resources offered at the Career Center, like interview preparation.

Sabrina Benfaida, a junior and speech pathology major, has a dream of opening her own clinic to help children with communication disorders.

“Seeing a child’s face light up in awe of being able to do one of the blessings we take for granted, like speaking properly, means the world to me,” Benfaida said. “I’m Moroccan and would love to do aid and humanitarian work in Morocco to also help with speech disorders amongst the poorer communities.”

Although she is not in any of Iona’s clubs or interning in that specific field, she has worked alongside a behavioral therapist. After graduating, Benfaida will apply for jobs in her field within a pediatric hospital, seeking to learn how to handle minors.

Attending college is a happy but uncertain time. Regardless of your GPA, the job search is competitive. As students continue on to the reality of adulthood, many will say goodbye to the comfort of our small community. But, maybe one day the success stories of this generation will be inscribed alongside the names of Iona College’s finest alumni.



PHOTO FROM IONA.EDU

The Gerri Ripp Center for Career Development offers guidance and various resources to help students kickstart their career, including a career fair.

Interested in writing for the Features & Lifestyle section? Email Features & Lifestyle Editor Aliyah Rodriguez at arodriguez3@iona.edu.

Balancing academic, social life with a hybrid schedule

By: Aliyah Rodriguez Features & Lifestyle Editor

Due to COVID-19, many students are either taking classes completely in person, completely online or in a hybrid schedule. With this new change in how they learn, students may be facing the additional challenge of maintaining and balancing their academic and social lives. Keeping in touch with friends while also staying on top of their grades was already a prevalent concern for students prior to having to learn online, but now it’s all the more difficult to do so.

Students taking all their classes at home might still be adjusting to the difficulties that come with Zoom. It is easy to get distracted at home, especially since all of your personal comforts are just a few feet away, but most students who are taking classes from home are trying to make the best of it and keep everything balanced.

While learning from home has been difficult for senior Michael Matalavage, he’s grateful for the opportunity because it allows him to keep his parent with significant health concerns safe.

“Learning from home has been extremely tough,” said Matalavage in an email. “I know that personally I tend to be more reserved and less forthcoming with answers and discussions in class, just because it can be hard to hear if someone is talking in the classroom and I am afraid I will just shout right over someone.”

Senior Aaron Bailey takes his classes on a hybrid schedule and has been juggling being in person for some and being at home for others since the start of the semester.

“I do go back and forth sometimes, and I will say it’s an interesting experience for the sole fact that outside of class nothing really feels the same anymore on campus,” Bailey said in an email. “A lot of the different places where one would hang out with their friends have been closed off as a precaution against Covid-19, so once class is finished, I usually find myself wandering or just going straight home, but that’s just the way it is. “

The abrupt closure that Iona experienced in March followed by the state shutdowns left many students struggling to keep in touch with friends. Many welcomed the start of the semester as an opportunity to get back to normal and hang out with all their friends again, but Iona’s offering of a hybrid schedule hasn’t made it easier to reconnect.

Bailey uses Discord, an instant messaging app predominantly used by the gaming community, to keep in touch with his friends since he can’t see them in person as often anymore.

“It was a rare sight for my whole group to be able to get together in person before the pandemic so most of the time we’d keep tabs with each other through Discord or through just texting each other on a regular,” Bailey said in an email. “Now, that’s true more than

ever before and I almost strictly spoke and played games with my friends over Discord. We’ve got to do our best to stay safe you know.”

Balancing academic and social lives with a hybrid schedule may be hard, but as the semester continues and students get more used to their schedules and workloads, there is hope that things will get better and we can all get back to hanging out like we used to.

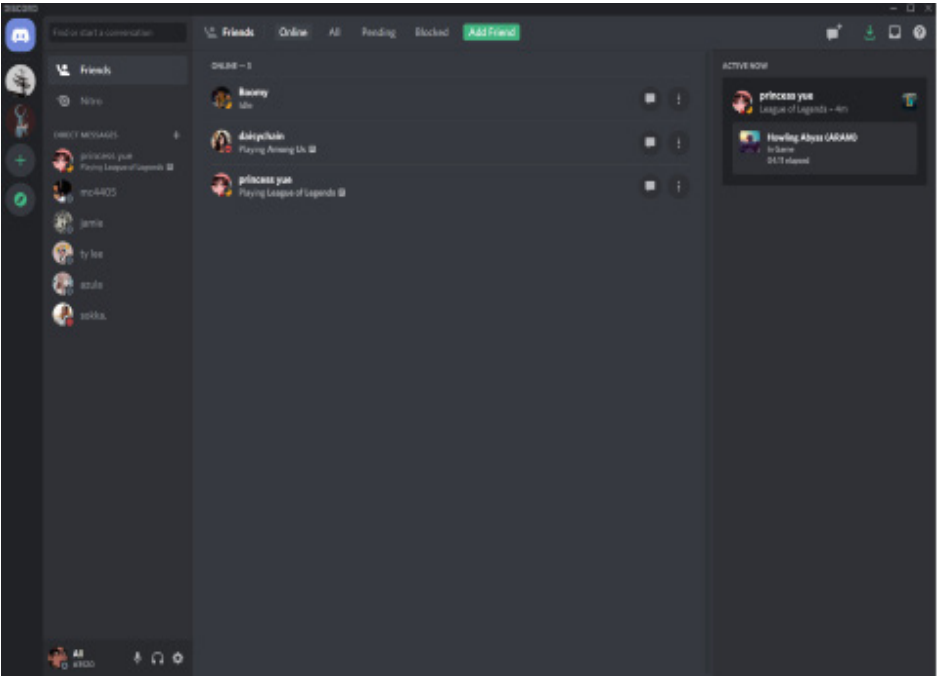


PHOTO COURTESY OF ALIYAH RODRIGUEZ

Discord, an instant messaging app used mostly by the gaming community, provides the opportunity for large friend groups to keep in touch and share video games and music.

How to successfully set, accomplish goals in college

By: Katherine Daly Staff Writer



PHOTO FROM IAMNATHALIESANGA ON INSTAGRAM

Make sure your goals motivate you. Properly setting goals is the first step to achieving them.

Students often strive to set goals in the beginning of the semester in order to get a fresh start. We sometimes underestimate how long it takes to kick a bad habit or adopt a good one. It can be tricky to hold yourself to these goals throughout the term as you slowly begin to burn out from the semester, but it’s not impossible. There are many ways to work on self-improvement and setting specific goals for personal growth, and this is a surefire way to be successful. Here are just a few tips and tricks for setting goals this semester.

Firstly, it’s all about keeping yourself motivated to follow through on your plans. When you set goals for yourself, it is important that they motivate you. You have to make sure they’re important to you and that there is value in achieving them. If you have little interest in the outcome, or they are irrelevant to who you want to be in the future, then the chances of you putting in the effort are slim. Setting goals can sometimes feel like a daunting task and that’s why it’s helpful to write them down almost like a guide.

Junior Natalie Kaizer finds it difficult to accomplish her goals sometimes but feels that it’s important to have them regardless.

“It’s hard for me to finish any of my goals. I end up with far too many, leaving little time to actually develop them,” Kaizer said. “Yet I think goals are extremely important as they motivate you to change and give you the willpower to make it happen.”

The second thing to keep in mind about goal setting is that it helps you take control of your life in a positive way. Setting goals helps mentally propel us toward our future self while keeping us

firmly planted in who we are. Sometimes life becomes difficult and we don’t know what we want. Setting a goal is a great way to articulate what you’re not happy with and how you want to change it. It helps people with their true purpose and creates joy in their lives. We set goals not just for our health, but because we want to become be a better version of ourselves.

Sophomore Allison Dumlao shared similar sentiments about how goals can create good things in our lives.

“It’s easy to feel helpless when nothing is going right and everyone reacts in different ways, but sometimes it just helps to plan ahead and look towards the future,” Dumlao said. “This year in school I’m focusing on my major and that’s what’s important to me.”

Lastly, be realistic. All the self-improvement ideas in the world won’t be helpful if you have no reasoning behind them; setting goals helps you look inward on yourself and gives you an idea of what you can change. For example, acquire a new skill, upgrade your attitude or slow down on nighttime snacks. For a goal to be achievable it also must be grounded in reality and something you can actually change. Creating a goal allows us to challenge ourselves to be better.

Every goal is important, whether it’s deciding to have a healthier lifestyle, spending more time with your siblings or working harder in class. It allows you to make some areas of weakness stronger, but also aids you in bettering yourself and making the right choices for the future. By working on these things, many of us here at Iona can move towards who we want to be in life.

Fans say peace out to ‘That ’70s Show’ on Netflix

By: Owen Conway Staff Writer



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CARSEY-WERNER COMPANY
From left to right are some of the shows main characters. Steven Hyde (Dannie Masterson), Jackie Burkhart (Mila Kunis), Donna Pinciotti (Laura Prepon), Michael Kelso (Ashton Kutcher) and Eric Forman (Topher Grace).

The removal of a fan-favorite television show from Netflix brings a new kind of sadness unique to the digital age we currently live in but is without a doubt a real kind. The streaming service lost another popular series and received negative feedback on social media when the beloved sitcom “That ’70s Show” was removed on Sept. 7. This is the latest in a string of show removals as Netflix attempts to gear itself towards producing more original content, coming at the expense of other wildly popular shows like “Friends” and “The Office.” With the loss of “That ’70s Show,” fans took to social media to mourn the loss of the Forman family and friends, giving a look into just why the show was so popular and will be missed so much.

Like any great sitcom, “That ’70s Show” is so appealing because of its relatability. It’s a show about nothing, just following the everyday misadventures of a group of young, inexperienced high school kids. This near universal experience is something that almost any viewer can understand. This aspect also sets “That ’70s Show” apart from other such shows, as most fans of the show either are or have been in the age group of the main characters. Fans of shows

like “Friends” or “The Golden Girls” may look forward to the experiences that come with being the same age as the characters if they are not that age already, but almost anybody who watches “That ’70s Show” will not have to look forward far, if at all, to get to live like Eric Forman

and his pals. Older viewers can fondly recall their high school years watching the antics of the teens on the show, while younger viewers on the cusp of, in or graduated from high school can easily liken the cast to their own friend groups.

On top of the great appeal of viewers relating their friend groups to the main characters’, “That ’70s Show” also plays to the love of vintage aesthetics that many people have in fashion and lifestyle today. As bell bottoms, paisley shirts and drive-in movies come back into style, it becomes satisfying to see these trends alive and well in the world of a beloved television show. This reinforces the popularity of such things in real life, and the cycle builds upon itself to turn “That ’70s Show” into a paragon of vintage style.

Whether it was reminiscent of high school memories, relatable to current everyday life or a source of inspiration for a retro 1970s Pinterest board, “That ’70s Show” proved to be a fan favorite of many Netflix subscribers who will not be forgetting about the show anytime soon.

‘Tenet’ releases exclusively in theaters

By: Katherine Daly Staff Writer



PHOTO COURTESY OF WARNER BROTHERS PICTURES
“Tenet” is a captivating series that leaves viewers asking themselves lots of questions.

Christopher Nolan’s newest science-fiction thriller “Tenet” faced a daunting task as it released exclusively in theaters on Sept. 3, being one of the first films to do so since multiplexes were forced to shut their doors six months ago. The months-long shroud of secrecy around the film’s plot was not for fear of spoilers but to create an ambitious, noggin-scratching spectacle destined to be critically acclaimed.

“Tenet” is an extremely ambitious project even for a director like Nolan, who uses any means necessary to achieve his vision. The film is shot using practically no green screens, not to mention less computer generated imagery than most big budget films and it shows. The spectacles are absolutely off the rails, but it’s the meticulous and surreal style of storytelling that sets it apart from other films. “Tenet” follows “the Protagonist,” played by John David Washington, on his mission to stop World War III. To save humanity, he becomes a secret agent that utilizes a variety of futuristic tools, including a type of time travel known as time inversion, which allows him to manipulate past events to his advantage.

Like Nolan’s previous films, “Tenet” always keeps the audience on their toes with the director’s signature plot twists. The story uses the classic “fish out of water” technique, in which the main character is introduced to a new world of sorts and taken through it step by step. It’s quite obvious that the story is designed to make you think, as the narrative is purposely confusing. Throughout the film, the story unfolds in surprising ways by presenting deep complex concepts to unravel well after the credits roll. Just when you thought you had everything figured out, Nolan pulls out the rug from under you by weaving more layers of intrigue and intricacy into the story. This film is not perfectly paced, which can make some plot points hard to understand. Despite this, the actors’ level of confidence in their performance assures that the audience at least understands the concept of time inversion.

“Tenet” is an enjoyable action movie, and its spectacle alone is worth seeing on the big screen. It has a polarizing script, complicated plot and an altogether wonderful ensemble cast that will make viewers want to see it multiple times.

Disney’s new ‘Mulan’ is shallow, dull remake of original

By: Joseph Ferrer Arts & Entertainment Editor

The original “Mulan” is fondly remembered as a charming film that uniquely depicted Chinese culture in an animated setting while telling an empowering story about a young girl who trains to prove herself. The live-action remake of the animated classic markets itself as being a more serious, culturally accurate telling of the film. While “Mulan” does achieve this to an extent, it also completely strips away everything that made the original enjoyable while making changes that add nothing worthwhile. “Mulan” is a shallow representation of the original movie and is potentially the worst of the Disney live-action remakes so far.

Compared to other Disney live-action remakes, “Mulan” drastically diverts from its source material for the worse. Memorable characters such as Li Shang and Mushu are completely removed from

the story, and their absence contributes to Mulan herself feeling incredibly underdeveloped. With Mulan having fewer characters to interact with and the script being unengaging, it feels as if Mulan has no personality, and the lead actress’s bland acting makes this even worse.

By not being a musical, “Mulan” loses the heart that the original film had. The worst example of this is the iconic “I’ll Make a Man Out of You” scene being replaced with a dull training montage. Not having the songs present makes Mulan even more of a barren character as the musical numbers helped progress her character development in the original.

Arguably the worst change of “Mulan” is the introduction of Mulan’s magical chi abilities. Mulan is now naturally gifted with powerful energy, and from the first scene in the movie

she is shown to innately be physically capable and proficient. Taking a character who originally had to work and train in order to become strong and making her perfect from the start completely invalidates Mulan’s journey throughout the film.

Despite touting itself as a realistic take on Mulan, the film’s action is more exaggerated than the cartoon on which it’s based. Characters run on walls, do backflips and perform other acrobatic feats so frequently that it’s hard to take it seriously. The editing of the film makes action scenes even worse with constant jumps between different shots, making it difficult to keep track of what’s happening.

Ultimately, “Mulan” is at best a shallow, shoddily done action film with no substance, and, at worst, a hollow husk of a remake that is devoid of any heart that the original film had.



PHOTO COURTESY OF WALT DISNEY STUDIOS
Mulan is given a gift of powerful energy and is portrayed as an extreme feminist and hero.

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The Ionian editorial board encourages its readers to write letters to the editor. If you wish to submit one, please sign your full name and graduating year or staff position. Please avoid any untruthful attacks on persons or organizations. The opinions and views presented in each letter to the editor are not necessarily those of the Ionian staff. All submissions must include at least one form of contact information. Letters may be edited for clarity and grammar, and the Ionian reserves the right to write its own letter headlines.

The next issue of The Ionian will hit newsstands on October 8.

Why I choose not to curse

By: Emily Varker

Chief Copy Editor

In high school, I was friend group for being would not curse. Though persona as the “mom group, my friends still what they perceived as curse. Of course, I would back. I would say that if movie they would mess rating. But it annoyed me perceived as an inability actually a personal

As an English major, important to me. For irritated whenever I proper word when I am in conversation with peers or writing a paper. Growing up with a love for words, I learned that there were words that were considered better than others. Yes, some expletives can be used for emphasis or to make a point. They can be used very successfully for those purposes as I learned through tweenage incidents where I used one of those “naughty words.” Instead of the punishment seen in movies where a child’s mouth gets washed out with soap, my mom would just look at me in a disappointed way and say, “You know so



VARKER

known in my the only one who it fit in with my friend” of the teased me about my inability to tease them right my life were a up my PG-13 that what they to curse was choice.

words are very instance, I get cannot think of a

many more eloquent words Emily, use them instead.”

And she is right. If I want to speak out against a bad situation or a person who is not treating me or others well, why should I use curse words? Ultimately, they are empty in meaning since they are not specific to the situation that I am speaking out against. A well-placed cuss may have impact, but I feel it is more impactful if I use words that more truly and fully convey the circumstances. Using specific words rather than a general curse also leaves no room for fallacious argument.

I do not claim to be perfect. I might drop a curse word when someone startles me, or I am frustrated with myself. Nevertheless, I will not allow myself to use curse words when I discuss injustices in our world or personal issues with other people. I know that using swear words is not the best that I can offer. I also know that for any improvements to occur in my world or the world at large I have to give my best.

To contact The Ionian’s Emily Varker, email her at evarker1@gaelsona.edu.

This is not an American success story

By: Margaret Dougherty

Managing Editor

I’m disappointed in America. This isn’t the first time I’ve felt this way and it will probably be far from the last, but I have felt especially disheartened recently. I understand that expressing such disenchantment with our nation may attract some critics. However, I believe having pride in your country shouldn’t prevent you from dealing a healthy dose of deserved criticism as well.

I was scrolling through Twitter a few weeks ago when I saw a video of a baseball game in Taiwan. The batter hit a home run into the stands, where hundreds of people stood cheering. I assumed the video dated back to 2019, a fond memory of the good old days. Yet this game was actually played in July. With a population of 23.7 million, Taiwan has reported 496 coronavirus cases and only 7 deaths as of Sep. 10. The United States, with a population of 330 million, has reported over 6.3 million cases and 190,000 deaths. You don’t have to be a math major to be alarmed by those numbers.

Of course, it is difficult to compare countries’ responses to a pandemic. Besides population size, you need to account for geographical area, cultural differences, governmental systems, travel restrictions, etc. Taiwan, along with all countries, will probably continue to face a long battle with this pandemic. Nonetheless, even without comparisons to another country, the United States’ response to the COVID-19 crisis has been deplorable by nearly every measurement. This disease has exposed an untold number of weaknesses in one of the most powerful developed nations in the world.

In Oct. 2019, the Global Health Security Index released a benchmark assessment of every nation’s preparedness for a health emergency. Although the overall evaluation did not show promising signs for the world as a whole, the United States came in first place. Just months later, the U.S. discovered that the capacity to deal with a crisis alone is



DOUGHERTY

not enough. There must also be effective leadership, a problem that many people have pointed to as the one of the primary causes of the atrocious U.S. coronavirus response. There is no expectation of perfection from a president during an emergency, but there is an expectation that he won’t purposely lie about the severity of the pandemic, contradict health experts, disavow masks and social distancing, promote miracle drugs, call for less testing, withdraw from the World Health

Organization, peddle racist names for the virus, support anti-lockdown protestors, hold unsafe rallies or even ponder disinfectant injections. President Trump has failed to live up to the moment as an example of judgment and character, and the entire country has tragically suffered the consequences.

Although a lack of leadership is a crucial factor, there have been many more missteps that are indicative of more longstanding and problematic patterns. Over the past six months, hospitals have run low on personal protective equipment, spare beds, ventilators and even staff. Although some of these issues have become less prevalent, the U.S. continues to have an insufficient number of COVID-19 tests conducted each day, a vital practice for preventing further spread. Mass graves were filled with the deceased, while many of those that survived were hit with massive medical bills. These complications are byproducts of a profit-driven healthcare system that is not incentivized to plan for such disasters.

Many people willingly went into lockdown and suffered financially for the safety of others, but they were not provided relief by their government. While other advanced countries subsidized lost salaries, U.S. citizens were given a single \$1,200 check. Unemployment rose to 14.7%, with 26 million people losing their jobs. Thousands of families have waited hours in line at food banks or on the phone trying to file for unemployment. These problems are byproducts of an ineffective

social safety net and a deadlocked Congress that could not agree on relief bills.

Ethnic minorities have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic. Preexisting inequalities in systems such as healthcare and housing have led to distrust in medical providers and increased rates of infection for Black Americans. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Latino Americans and Native Americans have also faced rates of infection three times as likely as those of white Americans, while Asian Americans have faced relentless abuse because of the virus’ origin in China. These problems are byproducts of deep-rooted, systemic racism in this country that affects every aspect of daily life.

American culture prides itself on the value of exceptionalism, and in many respects this title is merited. However, this ideology can go too far. While other countries heeded the warnings of health officials in January and February, the U.S. remained stagnant. Many of us fall victim to this dangerous pattern of thinking. “Surely, we’ll be safe. We don’t have to worry about this type of thing here. We’re the exception.” Yet now we should all face the brutal truth that has been around for centuries. We are far from an exception, not solely in terms of global pandemics but also in terms of poor leadership, defective healthcare systems, inadequate governmental policies and rampant racism. This pandemic is far from over, and all signs point to similar challenges in the future. It is possible to turn America’s response around, but it will require uncomfortable self-reflection and drastic change. The rest of the world is watching.

To contact The Ionian’s Margaret Dougherty, email her at mdougherty1@gaelsona.edu.

If you want to learn more about The Ionian, join one of our staff meetings via zoom. Email sfranciamore1@gaelsona.edu for access to the link.

Morenaite chosen for decade, anniversary teams

By: Matthew Chaves Sports Editor



PHOTO COURTESY OF ICGAELS.COM

Senior Egle Morenaite earned the U.S. Track and Field and Cross Country Coaches Association All-American award in the 2019-20 season.

Senior Egle Morenaite has been chosen for the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference 40th anniversary team and was voted for the Iona College women’s cross-country 2010s All-Decade team.

Morenaite has been a part of the team since she came to Iona as a freshman. Since then, she’s performed at nothing under phenomenal. She has won the MAAC championship every year so far, becoming the only woman to do so in MAAC history. She also received two All-American honors after her performances in the NCAA championship during her sophomore year.

Morenaite wasn’t expecting this recognition anytime soon.

“Iona has always had a good amount of

great runners who [have been] even more successful after they finished their Iona career,” Morenaite said via phone call. “I’m honored to be selected.”

With a focus on training and keeping in shape, the Iona senior hopes to stay healthy and on top of her game for the remaining year to help her team bring home more honors. The selection for such prestigious teams means a lot, Morenaite said.

When it comes to the upcoming spring season, should the MAAC give it the green light, Morenaite hopes to beat her personal best and win the 3,000-meter and 5,000-meter races again at the MAAC Indoor Track and Field Championships. Last season, she took home both victories to help her team succeed, while also

setting MAAC records with 9:29.01 in the 3,000-meter and 16:42.95 in the 5,000-meter.

One of the hurdles facing Morenaite’s progression as a competitive runner is her confidence. The placement in the decade and anniversary teams helped boost the confidence she needed to achieve the goals she set..

“It helped me...see that I’ve been recognized and I’m among those great runners who’ve been selected too,” Morenaite said. “It feels good and it definitely helps to believe in myself more.”

Consistency is one of the toughest things to have as an athlete but for Morenaite, the support group around her helps her stay on top of her game. Her performance

and training coaches as well as her fellow teammates help her achieve her goals and set new ones as time goes on.

Despite having performed at the top of her game for the past three years, Morenaite is always cautious of the possibility of injuries. While the coronavirus is the biggest obstacle for any athlete during these times, for Morenaite, it’s all about staying healthy and making sure injuries don’t spoil her career.

“Besides that, I’m motivated, I want to work hard, I have great coaches, I have a great trainer...I think we can achieve it,” Morenaite said.

Mero adapts well despite season cancellation

By: Giovanni Paolo Tagliafierro Contributing Writer

Freshman Elird Mero is a newcomer to the Iona men’s soccer team this fall. Mero moved to Greece from his home country of Albania at the age of 4. Taking after his father’s love of the game, Mero began playing soccer at the age of 6 and played for the same club in Greece for 11 years.

Mero received a call from the U19 Albanian National Team in 2019 and was asked to join the national team. He recalled how much the chance to play for his home country’s team meant to him in an interview over Zoom.

“It’s always a dream for every player to play for their country,” Mero said via Zoom video call. “It was probably one of the best moments of my life when we sang the national anthem.”

The freshman also commented on how the experience of playing on a national team taught him to have confidence in himself and shaped him into a better person overall.

“It’s amazing how higher you feel about yourself, how much more confidence it gives you,” Mero said. “It makes you a better person,

not just a better player.”

Mero was well aware that he was coming to a club that had won a Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference championship the previous season, though that did not affect his decision to come to Iona and play soccer. Mero said he wants to play and help his team, no matter if they are winning or losing.

While the cancellation of the fall season was disappointing to Mero, he said he is optimistic about the fact that he and his teammates will have more time to get comfortable with each other, and he will be able to prove himself to his coaches.

Mero also stated his desire to learn different positions during this extended practice period, noting how his new coach, Coach Hamilton, likes when his players are versatile.

The freshman defender hopes to keep his grades up and learn different positions on the pitch to be more versatile for his team during the fall offseason.



PHOTO COURTESY OF ICGAELS.COM

Freshman Elird Mero has played three matches for the Albanian U-19 national team, representing his country for the first time.

Interested in writing for the Sports section? Contact Sports Editor Matthew Chaves at mchaves1@gaelsona.edu.

Overhaul in strength, conditioning processes due to Covid-19 regulations

By: Matthew Chaves Sports Editor



PHOTO COURTESY OF ICGAELS.COM

Strength and conditioning head coach Kelly Shaver has been a part of Iona Athletics since 2013.

Iona College has changed their trainings drastically over the summer to comply with coronavirus regulations, leading to a major overhaul in the strength and conditioning department.

Usually when the season starts up, teams are ready to keep the team in top shape and skill, practicing tactics, plays and drills. This season, it’s been all about bringing the athletes back to the level at which they once were.

Head Strength and Conditioning coach Kelly Shaver has

been leading the changes for the past few months, looking over every drill given to the players. Pressure started to build up for Shaver when quarantine first happened, as exercises that worked indoors needed to be given to the players to keep safe during the pandemic.

Usually, athletes are given a summer packet, anywhere from 10-30 pages, giving them a routine for the time off, according to Shaver. Once the realization that everyone at the school was going to be staying home, Shaver and

his team got to work on these packets. This time though, things had to be changed and tweaked for the extended time off.

“[We] included body weight exercises because we knew some of our athletes didn’t have access to a gym,” Shaver said. “We tried to give our athletes lots of options because we were looking at a variety of scenarios and what they have access to.”

Once athletes got back on campus, they were met with changes in the facilities as well. Athletes have to be 10 feet apart when in the weight room and are in smaller groups when training together. The athletes in the groups are always the same, so it’s easier to track who may have been exposed and who needs to quarantine should it ever come to that, according to Shaver. Additionally, every athlete is required to have masks while they work out, and every workout is shorter.

When it comes to the workouts themselves, Shaver has implemented a three-phase plan. Phase one is focused on getting the athletes back into shape and into the momentum of things while being socially distanced and not sharing equipment such as weights, balls or machines. Phase two allows athletes and coaches to share equipment, so working on passing plays and other such exercises will be allowed. Phase three is back to normal, full workouts with full routines.

The process was simple, according to Shaver. Old routines and workouts were looked at by Shaver and his team, and they made them compliant with the coronavirus restrictions. Some changes might be everlasting in the program.

“We used to go through two or three gallons of cleaning solution a semester,” Shaver said. “Right now, we’re going through two gallons of cleaning solution a week. I think we’re going to continue to clean more often [and] make sure things are sanitary.”

Some teams right now are still in phase one, while others are in phase two. Teams are slowly working towards phase three, according to Shaver.

Iona Alumna receives Arthur Ashe Jr. Award

By: Matthew Chaves Sports Editor

Class of '20 Iona College graduate Tamantha Pizarro has received the Arthur Ashe Jr. Sports Scholar Award after graduating with a 3.65 GPA.

The award is given by the NCAA to students of color who perform both in the classroom and out in their sport. Recipients also show a strong commitment towards their communities and student leadership, according to diverseeducation.com.

Pizarro is studying to get her master’s degree in applied mathematics at Arizona State University after graduating with a bachelor’s degree in mathematics from Iona. She raced with the track and field team during her time with the Gaels. She also earned 12 different Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference All-Academic Team placements in that time span.



PHOTO COURTESY OF ICGAELS.COM

Iona Alumna Tamantha Pizarro has been a Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference All-Academic Team honoree for cross country, indoor and outdoor track for three of her four years at Iona.

It takes discipline and balance to receive such an award, and Pizarro had both throughout her undergraduate career. It was a tough in the beginning, though.

“It was a bit of an adjustment for me,” Pizarro said via phone call. “I would say probably my second year, I started getting more adjusted to that discipline and structuring my schedule.”

Once Pizarro got into the rhythm of things, she rode that momentum all the way to graduation, even achieving at 4.0 GPA

in the 2019 fall semester. The amount of discipline that got her to that point during her undergraduate career won’t be enough for graduate school though, according to Pizarro.

“I have to be even more strict, I would say, with doing homework and being on top of it,” Pizarro said.

While the run at Iona was a great one for Pizarro, with her last wins in track and field being the 200-meter at Army West Point Twilight and the 400-meter at the Brian Horowitz Invitational, there’s still things she would’ve done differently, mostly around the beginning of her undergraduate career.

“I wish I was a bit more on top of the classes I struggled with,” Pizarro said. “I wasn’t used to struggling in classes.”

Balance wasn’t the only trait Pizarro learned during her time at Iona. Being present and performing when she needed

to be is a major trait that has been ingrained into Pizarro’s work ethic after working with one of the best track and field teams in the MAAC. The mindset of knowing that hard work will pay off has become part of her everyday mentality, Pizarro said.

Pizarro still keeps in touch with friends and family here in New York while she studies for her master’s in Arizona.