Black Student Union, others speak out against instructor’s tweets

Alexis Ray
@justcallmelman

BGSU needs to come up with a new plan because this isn’t going to work. “The first amendment” should NOT justify the statement that an woman of color in politics should be HANGED. As a student, I would NOT feel safe in this man’s classes and he should not be at this campus. twitter.com/meghmckii/status…

molly @mollythefin @concealedinulin · Dec 2
I have a screen shot of this dude personally badgering me on fb a year or so ago. Shame on @bgsu for continuing to give him a paycheck.

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Black Student Union releases statement
Students call for action against part-time computer science instructor for offensive tweet

Brionna Scebbi
Editor-in-Chief

The Black Student Union tweeted out a statement Wednesday rebuking a BGSU adjunct instructor and recently resigned Napoleon councilman for an offensive tweet. On Nov. 30, Travis Sheaffer posted that Rep. Ilhan Omar of Minnesota should be “tried for treason and hanged” before deleting the tweet and his Twitter account.

BGSU’s Twitter responded to WTOL reporter Tyler Paley’s request for a response, saying Sheaffer does not speak for the university but his expression on social media is protected under BGSU’s policy on free speech and expression based on the First Amendment.

BSU’s statement expressed support for marginalized communities and disdain for the “racist rhetoric” found in Sheaffer’s tweet. The statement also called for students to report Sheaffer through the BGSU bias reporting system.

Since the university responded to Sheaffer’s tweet, students have been speaking out about its response. Many saw the university’s use of the free speech policy as a substitute for consequences.

Latino Student Union executive board member Alexis Ray tweeted out her disapproval.

Asian Student Union President Meghan Mc Kinley also questioned how the university’s response took into account students’ safety.

Currently Sheaffer is an adjunct computer science instructor and the College of Arts and Sciences technology projects coordinator.

Black Student Union
@BSU_BGSU
#SaferWithoutSheaffer

Submit your Bias Report here: bgsu.edu/student-affairs

In light of the recent threats posted by Napoleon Councilman Travis Sheaffer, The Black Student Union stands against the actions of this professor. We, the Black Student Union, will not tolerate any injustice spoken, tweeted, or stated against ANY marginalized community. The self interest of this...

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Students do not feel safe after instructor’s tweets

Alexis Ray  
Guest Columnist

It seems like too many things are happening and not enough is being done about them. After former Napoleon councilman and current BGSU adjunct instructor Travis Sheaffer’s sickening tweet about Rep. Ilhan Omar, the first woman in Congress to wear a hijab, BGSU needs to re-evaluate their current tolerance towards the degeneration of our ethical values.

Sheaffer tweeted on his personal Twitter account: “Rep. Omar needs to be tried for treason and hanged.” As this tweet was brought up to the university, their response didn’t seem to do justice for many students.

Unfortunately, words alone will not establish a new standard; action must be taken to ensure the safety and security of the students who are impacted by the university’s complacency when faced with these aversive situations.

I feel like many students agree that he should be fired from the university, but with BGSU’s application of the First Amendment, he is protected from that happening. A question being pondered is, “Where does BGSU draw the line?”

BGSU’s response to Sheaffer’s tweet

This university attempts to promote their diversity, inclusion and belonging values. However, there are not adequate processes being upheld when it comes to issues and biases that happen within the university.

No matter where students are or what they do, it all falls back on the university. Even when off campus, students are asked to act in a way that would represent the university, so why isn’t it the same for faculty and staff? How come faculty and staff aren’t held to the same standards? Or is it only for certain faculty and staff?

I, along with many other students, believe that if a faculty or staff member of color or from a minoritized identity was the antagonist, there would be immediate repercussions including possible termination from their position. If an administrator of a marginalized group made a similar comment about President Trump, I along with many other minority students have no doubt in our minds that the university would sit down with them and “discuss their actions.”

There is a huge difference in stating an opposing opinion about someone rather than expressing pure hatred and inhumane threats.

As a student of color, I would not appreciate being in a class that is being taught by Mr. Sheaffer at BGSU, or at any university for that matter. How come faculty and staff aren’t held to the same standards? Or is it only for certain faculty and staff?

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1-800-273-8255: It’s not just a number.

Rosalind Fletcher
Copy Chief

In May 2018, I lost someone before I graduated from high school ... it was my cousin. I remember the call, I remember the screech of my Mom when she was told the news, I remember everybody saying “I don't understand why,” and the pain from the funeral.

Death is not easy, but neither is the matter of suicide. Learning of a friend or a family member who took their own life ... it’s not an easy subject to approach. But, I know it was not easy for them; they wanted to get rid of the pain. I know it all too well.

You’re probably wondering why I am writing this in a column, but I know the experience all too well. I’ve experienced thoughts and emotions ... wanting to get rid of any pain. I will keep it at that.

Anyway, when I heard she died, I cried for one of the first times at death. There were only two to three other times in my life I’ve cried at a funeral. In my eyes, death is a natural thing to experience, so I don’t typically cry when people pass on. I am not saying it’s okay to cry and mourn, I just don’t always do it. It’s as simple as that.

But, at their death, I cried.

Suicide is not an easy matter for me because I have been there, then to hear my cousin was gone, I was still. I was taken back to a time — not even two months earlier — where I was hiding my mental struggles. They were the same case — they were hiding their mental struggles and kept quiet. No one intervened on theirs, and they were given to the universe.

Despite the pain that came along with their passing, I was impassioned to be a vessel of support and love for others who were silently suffering.

It is too common in our communities to avoid the conversation of mental health and not help those who may be struggling. It’s still 2019, and it is still a taboo-like subject some people do not want to bring up, and that’s sad.

We need to talk about it. As a community, let’s talk about it. The conversation is starting to make it into our communities, but there is still work to be done when it comes to mental health. It starts with us.

For anyone who may be suffering: I can’t promise you this, but it will get better. You will get better. It may not seem like it. I surely didn’t think I’d get better. But, here I am, roughly five years later from a dark time. Not perfect, but better than I was before. I am hopeful. I have people to rely on when I need it. It is still hard for me to open up, but it has been five years of learning and growing to be better and feel better.

Have I struggled and had downfalls? Yes. Was seeing my cousin pass away easy? No. Did it remind me of where I was in the previous years? Yes. Am I doing better? Yes. Is their passing always going to be hard? Yes.

Despite the sorrow of it all, I am encouraged to help others, whether that is sharing encouraging quotes on Instagram, or just being honest and vulnerable when I am not okay. Seeing others struggle makes me sad, but providing a space where an individual can express their emotions is so important. It’s what it takes to get better.

Recently, a friend and I have been checking up on one another each week to make sure we are okay. Even in the simplest of ways, our communities can strive to make the conversation easier.

It can be as simple as saying, “Hey, how are you?” to an individual.

Overall, my cousin’s passing was not easy, it will never be. I shutter at the thought sometimes because it triggers memories with them and thoughts of the day they passed on. But, it taught me through remembrance and mourning of them, I can help others. Through my own pain and mental battles, I can help others. Encourage and listen to those who are struggling and be a gateway for support. If you don’t know how to support those around you, then simply ask, “What can I do to help?”

Please, as a person who has lost, and has almost lost loved ones, if you or someone you know is struggling with depression or has had thoughts of harming themselves or taking their own life, reach out to the Wood County Crisis Line (419-502-4673) or The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-8255).

I may not know you, your family or friends, but I don’t want to lose any of you. Your life is precious and you matter.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:
Letters should be fewer than 300 words and can be in response to current issues on campus or in the Bowling Green area.

COMICS:
Comics can be three to six panels, and the artist has creative freedom on what the comic is about.

GUEST COLUMNS:
Guest columns are generally between 400–600 words and can be submitted by Monday before 5 p.m. They can be advice, listicles, or editorials. Sources are not needed, but any outside information used in the article needs to be cited.

POLICIES:
Letters, columns, and comics are printed as space permits and all other submissions can be published online at bgfalconmedia.com. Name, year and phone number should be included for verification purposes. Personal attacks, unverified information, anonymous submissions and hate speech will not be published.

E-MAIL SUBMISSIONS:
Submissions can be sent as an attachment to mkross@bgsu.edu with the subject line marked “Letter to the Editor”, “Comic” or “Guest Column”. All submissions are subject to review and editing for length and clarity before printing, and the BG News reserves the right not to publish any submission.
Finding Your Voice in Social Justice Learning Community
Faculty director reflects on teaching experience

Brian Geyer
Social Media Editor

“If what we are doing is gathering and creating knowledge then that should be used to help people - otherwise, what's the point?” Ethnic and gender studies professor, Dr. Jess Birch, said.

The back of her office was lined with bookshelves, each book with its unique purpose. A couch sat in the back of the room, a place where she said students often come to relax, trying to escape from the “whirlwind” of college. Her desk was neat with only a few papers. Beside her, a basket of candy that was nearly full. Birch sat at her desk, wearing a dress and combat boots. Her curly dark brown hair was pulled back into a ponytail and her arms were filled with tattoos with different meanings.

Jess Birch lived in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, up until the seventh grade, which can be visibly seen from her Pittsburgh Steelers tattoo on her arm. From Pittsburgh, her family moved to South Bend, Indiana.

“I was a good student because it was easier than not being a good student,” Birch said. “My brother was good at sports. I was good at standardized tests.”

Her strength in testing gave the impression that college had to be an obvious choice, she said. Birch tested into college, majoring in English, with junior level credits at the University of Pittsburgh. Later, Birch said she began to wonder if college was the place for her.

“I worked various terrible jobs for a while,” Birch said, explaining her career path after dropping out of the University of Pittsburgh following her first year.

She worked full-time with an attorney who specialized in social security disability. Birch said she watched homeless individuals turned down because of their lack of employment.

“I was going home on a Friday, crying, because I knew I had to go back on Monday and I was like, I'm doing this from the wrong end. There is no way I can make anything genuinely different at this end, so I finished my undergrad degree while I was still working full time,” she said.

She finished her degree and received a master's degree in English at Indiana University South Bend, finishing her student career at Purdue University and receiving her doctorate in American Studies.

Dr. Susana Peña, director of the School of Cultural and Critical Studies, said Birch is committed to her students.

“She thinks very deeply and very passionately about student needs and advocating for students. I think she is the perfect director for the learning community,” Peña said. “Students are her top priority. She is willing to take risks for students with their interests in mind.”

“Read the rest at bgfalconmedia.com.”

Jessica Birch works with her students.
Radio stations play holiday hits on repeat

Jake Pietrasz
Pulse Reporter

Radio stations have switched over to Christmas music for the holidays, but they’re known to only play a select group of songs and artists, according to visual journalist Jon Keegan, and people are starting to take notice.

Around mid-November, radio stations switched to holiday hits to spread peace and joy throughout the holiday season. Although the intention of the music is to spread some holiday spirit to listeners, that hasn’t been the outcome for some, mainly due to stations’ use of repetition.

In 2018, visual journalist Jon Keegan sat down and analyzed 122 hours of Christmas music playing on the radio. After compiling his data, he noticed something he could not ignore. The radio station had only been playing certain songs and artists, as if they were on a continuous loop, instead of playing a wide variety of Christmas music.

Keegan is not the only individual who has noticed this pattern. Although he reached this conclusion through in-depth analysis, others have noticed it by just listening to the radio on their daily commutes.

“I do notice that radio stations tend to play the same Christmas songs almost every hour. It does annoy me when I’m either on a short car ride or a long one, where I hear the same song over and over again. I want to hear something new and it’s not like there isn’t a wide variety of songs to choose from. I don’t understand why it’s the same five songs,” junior communication sciences and disorders major Kali Meyer said.

Even though it might be annoying to some individuals, radio stations have a few reasons as to why they constantly repeat songs.

According to an Oct. 19, 2018 Live 95.9 article, the main reason local radio stations repeat songs is because they want to ensure people will hear a chart-topping song at least once during the day while listening to the radio. Repeating songs creates a better chance for listeners to hear them. To some this may be annoying, but to others, it doesn’t bother them in the slightest.

“I feel like they play the most common ones like ‘Santa Baby’ or ‘All I Want for Christmas is You,’ but I don’t mind,” sophomore human development and family studies major Caiden Twining said.

The Mandalorian’ starts off strong

David Banks
Pulse Reporter

Spoilers ahead for ‘The Mandalorian’

“Star Wars,” a franchise that started back in 1977, began as one movie that exploded into multiple forms, such as trilogies, spin-offs, cartoons and even a holiday special among others. One form it has never explored was live-action TV series. “Star Wars” creator George Lucas tried to make one in the past, but never got it off the ground due to budget issues. Seven years after Disney bought the rights to “Star Wars,” the first live-action series, “The Mandalorian,” has been created by Jon Favreau. The show follows the Mandalorian (Pedro Pascal) five years after the events of “Return Of The Jedi” as he travels in the outer reaches of the galaxy as a bounty hunter for hire.

‘Chapter 1’

The first episode of “The Mandalorian” does a decent job establishing the world for the show but overall is not that great. The episode feels more like a fan-film. A decent one but a fan-film nonetheless.

This episode was directed by Dave Filoni who, up until this point, has only worked in animation, so this was his first attempt to make something live-action. It shows. The opening shot of the series is dark and dirty, and the cantina scene with Greef Karga (Carl Weathers) had the same look but worse because it was indoors.

Now, that’s not to say it was all bad or anything. The action was good, the characters were fine and the pacing was ok. For a first-timer directing something live-action, Filoni didn’t do too bad.

Then, there is the Mandalorian himself. In terms of physical appearance, Pascal does a great job at coming across as very intimidating. However, his voice? Not so much. It sounded flat and unthreatening, and he goes from barely speaking a word in the beginning to a chatterbox at the end. In this episode, the Mandalorian is tasked by the Client (Werner Herzog) to deliver a bounty dead or alive, and the only information he has about the bounty is that they’re 50 years old. The Mandalorian tracks the bounty to an unnamed desert planet and teams up with an IG-11 droid (Taika Waititi). This character is both cool and funny. There is a gunfire at the end and throughout it, IG-11 keeps activating his self-destruct code and The Mandalorian keeps telling him to cancel it. At the end of the episode, it’s revealed that the bounty is an infant member of Yoda’s species, to which IG-11 points out that some species age differently. Overall, the first episode isn’t perfect, but it’s a pilot episode, which never are. It does a decent job world-building, and it kept me wanting to see more.

‘Chapter 2: The Child’

The second episode of “The Mandalorian” is a step up from the first in terms of production value. It looks nicer, and the story flows better. A common complaint about this episode is that it feels like a filler episode. While that is accurate for this episode, it was still fun and had good character development for The Mando.

In this episode, he is on his way back to his ship when he sees Jawas have robbed it. He tries to get his stuff back by force, but fails. He ends up making a deal with them: if he retrieves an egg for them, they will return what they stole. He succeeds, but during the fight with the protective mother of the egg, it’s revealed that the fan-named Baby Yoda is force-sensitive when he lifts the creature in the air. Overall, this was a good episode. We got to see The Mando get knocked down many times but continue to get back up, showing he’s flawed but determined. Just like the pilot, this episode left me wanting to see more.
The future of streaming services

Brian Geyer
Social Media Editor

The streaming service landscape is changing with Disney+.

The new service boasts 30 original series, 7,500 past episodes and 500 movie titles, including titles from Star Wars, Marvel and Disney Pixar. The service is focused on including all of its family-friendly content, adding content up to a PG-13 rating, including TV shows such as The Simpsons, for $7 per month.

The popularity of the streaming platform was met with excitement and technical difficulties across the United States. Over 10 million people signed on to Disney+ on its launch day, with the help of a Verizon offer, giving Verizon unlimited customers a year of Disney+ for free.

The technical difficulties started around 7 a.m., focusing on video streaming issues. Other difficulties included issues of logging into the service. According to downdetector.com, a total of 8,000 difficulties were reported.

“The consumer demand for Disney+ has exceeded our high expectations. We are pleased by this incredible response and are working to quickly resolve the current user issue. We appreciate your patience,” a Disney+ spokesperson said in a statement, according to a CNN article published on Nov. 12.

Disney estimates to have 60 million to 90 million subscribers by 2024. Netflix last reported 160 million global subscribers in comparison.

By contrast, in April 1998, Netflix was launched as the first online DVD rental service. In 2007, Netflix expanded its services by introducing an on-demand streaming service. Streaming services are commonplace in households in 2019, with 62% of respondents stating their household is subscribed to Netflix in a September 2019 survey.

Other competing services, launched like Hulu and Amazon Prime Video, leaving customers with more options. Following the launch of Disney+, 47-year-old Dan Lehman said he is debating what services to cut.

“Between cable, Disney+ and Netflix — it's honestly too much. At some point I will probably cut back,” Lehman said.

Lehman isn’t alone in thinking there are too many options. A study from UTA IG showed 70% of people believe there will be too many streaming options within the next few years, with 87% of people worrying that it will become too expensive.

In opposition, Purdue Fort Wayne sophomore Rachel Williamson said she is subscribed to a total of five services, using them all frequently.

“I do not necessarily feel overwhelmed (by the amount of options). I do wish that Netflix would put out newer movies instead of older movies, but I do still love all the options they have. I do think there are many streaming services, but in today’s society, I think it’s just kind of expected,” Williamson said.

Ball State University sophomore Syed Ajmain agreed there are a variety of positives to having a range of streaming services.

“Honestly, I don’t think I’ve ever felt overwhelmed by it. It has only opened up options for me. I think it’s a lot better than cable, because a millennial’s worst nightmare is scheduled TV programming with classes, work or trying to manage a social life — so it’s always nice to come back home and go back to streaming,” he said.

The addition of new streaming services does not seem to be stopping. TV shows such as The Office and the Marvel Universe movies are leaving Netflix for their own respected services.

Tinashe’s most vulnerable album yet

Michael Pincumbe
Pulse Reporter

Even artists at the highest level — such as Michael Jackson, Prince and more recently Taylor Swift — have struggled with the ins and outs of being a part of a label, so signing a record deal can be a blessing and a curse as an artist no matter who you are.

These same struggles have also been a problem for R&B singer Tinashe, who parted ways with record label RCA earlier this year, citing “creative differences” in an interview with Rolling Stone.

Since then, the singer has been preparing her first release as an independent artist, and the end result could not be a better example that some artists do better without the hassle of pleasing a label.

With “Songs For You,” Tinashe regains complete creative control and is able to show fans and critics alike she’s more passionate, confident and open then she’s ever been.

Right away, on the intro track “Feelings,” Tinashe reminds us she’s been working hard and being humble as she sings, “Lately, I ain’t been in my feelings / ‘Nashe, I’ve been minding my business / Throw it in your face you gon’ feel it.” A perfect way for the singer to show off her own self confidence, but also to give listeners a chance to express themselves in a similar manner.

Read the rest at bgfalconmedia.com.

Tinashe at NXNE 2018.

Read the rest at bgfalconmedia.com.
Will Robinson belongs, stands out, hopes to go far

Mary Ross
Forum Editor

Sitting in the Honors Den wearing a black t-shirt, jeans, a pair of tennis shoes and a black Willie Nelson hat with an average sized backpack, most people would think Will Robinson is just an average white guy going to an average midwestern school, getting an average bachelor’s degree.

But for the lives Robinson has touched during his time at BGSU, he is anything but average. Will Robinson is a fourth-year philosophy, politics, economics and law major from Perrysburg, Ohio. Through his time at BGSU, Robinson has been involved with many programs like the Alumni Laureate Scholars, La Conexión Tutoring, Peer Facilitation through the Honors College, Bowling Green Alternative Breaks, the Honors College, the Honors Learning Community and Honors Scholars.

As evident in the activities he participates in, Robinson is a man dedicated to service and academics.

“I think the best way to describe Will is a man of leadership, service and reason,” younger brother, Jack Robinson, said. Will Robinson opted to attend BGSU after receiving the Alumni Laureate Scholarship, a scholarship which offers full tuition and room and board to a handful of incoming freshmen, good for four years.

Being a part of his ALS cohort started Robinson’s service during college. Because of the nature of ALS, all recipients of this scholarship are expected to participate in at least 15 hours of community service each semester. However, Robinson’s service started prior to the scholarship program as evident in his title of Eagle Scout. Being raised by a doctor and a Red Cross worker, Robinson watched his parents dedicate their lives to the service of others, serving as an inspiration for him. His parents taught him that there is no job too small and compassion is one of the keys to living a fulfilling life.

“The human heart is like a muscle. The more you stretch it, the more compassionate you become,” Robinson said, reflecting on some of the lessons he learned from watching his parents serve others.

Will Robinson belongs, stands out, hopes to go far continued on page 11

PHOTO PROVIDED BY
WILL ROBINSON

Robinson (right) helps with CASA Food Drive.

Will Robinson belongs, stands out, hopes to go far continued on page 11
Despite injured Turner, men’s basketball wins

Max Lewton
Sports Reporter

BGSU men’s basketball won a nail-biter on Saturday against Oakland by a score of 68-65. This was definitely a game of runs, and both teams played some very solid basketball down the stretch. The main issue coming into this game was the question of who was going to step up in the absence of Justin Turner, who is nursing a hamstring injury.

The Falcons came out of the gates hot from the field and were able to score a lot off of the fast break as well as in the paint. Tayler Mattos did a great job of cleaning the boards, grabbing nine and scoring a career-high 12 points. Oakland did not back down from Bowling Green’s intensity and was able to do most of their scoring in the paint. Big man Xavier Hill-Mais was a force down low and caused some problems for Bowling Green’s bigs.

Daegwon Plowden really stepped up in the absence of Turner, starting the game six for six from the field and cleaning the boards. The three-pointer was really working for Plowden, which is usually an area he does not normally excel in. Oakland was somewhat sloppy with the ball in the first half and the Falcons did a great job of applying pressure to their ball handlers to force bad passes. They had seven steals in the first half alone, and turnovers are what ultimately made the difference in this game.

Head coach Michael Huger decided to switch up his subs as well, going with Davin Zeigler and Chandler Turner instead of Matiss Kulackovskis who did not play in this game.

The Falcons went on a nice run to end the half and was able to jump out to a 39-30 lead. Both teams started the second half cold from the field, but it seemed like neither team could get a stop down the stretch.

Plowden continued to dominate in this game, scoring a career-high 25 points, his first career game with 20 or more points, and grabbed nine rebounds. Despite Bowling Green playing a solid game, Oakland would not go away as they went on an 11-point run to actually take the lead with 6:38 left in the half. Huger praised Oakland for their style and insisted the Falcons need to improve defensively.

“We couldn’t stop them to save our lives in the second half, they scored at will,” he said. “The main thing is communication. Our guys would get lost on their cross-screens, a lot of teams don’t play like that and they did a really good job tonight.”

Hill-Mais was the main beneficiary of their cross-screen action, scoring 22 points and 12 rebounds in the game.

Trey Diggs only had 8 points in the game, but ended up being the hero of the night, going on a quick five point run by himself and hitting a huge three to put the Falcons up 63-62 in the final minute of the game. The Falcons got the stops they needed in crunch time and Mike Laster hit some clutch free-throws to seal the victory for the Falcons. The biggest difference in the game was turnovers, with Bowling Green only having five and Oakland with 15. The Falcons will face off against the Cleveland State Vikings in their next game on Dec. 15.
It is a chilly November night in Bowling Green, Ohio. Basketball season is just beginning for the women's team at BGSU. Inside the Stroh Center, the lights are dimmed as the player introductions are underway. Making her first start for the Falcons, wearing number 11: point guard Mari Hill.

The dark-haired, 5'6" athlete is the shortest girl on the court. Many would consider that a disadvantage, but not Hill.

In her first game as a Falcon, the junior transfer tallied nine steals, falling one shy of the school's single-game record. Hill may have been short of the achievement, but she made history just by stepping on the court. Hill is the first Japanese native to play women's basketball in the Mid-American Conference. Hill is the latest in only a handful of Japanese nationals to have played basketball at the NCAA Division I level.

Growing up in Nagakute, Japan, Hill says she had an upbringing unlike the rest of her teammates.

"It's just so different," Hill said. "The food is different. The language is different. Nothing is the same."

Hill's father, Harry, further added to this unique upbringing. He moved to Japan in 1985, and worked as an English teacher, serving hundreds of schools over a two year period. It was during this time that he met his future wife, Yumiko, at a dojo.

The two married in 1988, and shortly after left for the United States where Hill's father worked on Wall Street. The couple returned to the United States to play at Tallahassee Community College. As a freshman, Hill started 19 of the Eagles' 34 games. She was one of the top scorers on the team with 5.9 points per game. She also averaged 2.1 assists and 1.4 steals a game.

"It was a great experience for me," Hill said. "But it was so different than my Japanese teams. I had a hard time fitting in."

When the NJCAA championship tournament commenced in Lubbock, Texas, Tallahassee CC was seeded 11th out of 24 teams. The Eagles then proceeded to win all five of their tournament games, including the national championship versus Trinity Valley. The Eagles became the lowest seed in NJCAA Division I history to win the tournament.

Hill transferred to South Georgia Technical College for the 2018-19 basketball season. It was there that Hill's stats improved significantly. She averaged 5.6 points and 4.8 rebounds. At 6.4 assists per game, Hill led her conference and ranked third in the nation.

She also averaged 3.7 steals per game, ranking ninth nationally. She led her team to a perfect 18-0 league mark and was named team MVP. "It was fun," Hill said. "Last year I had to lead the team. I had to call plays. I think it made me grow up a lot. It made me become more of a thinker."

Hill was named MVP of the NJCAA Region XVII Tournament. She helped her Lady Jets earn a spot in the NJCAA championship tournament. Her team would lose in the first round to Trinity Valley, the same team she beat the previous year to win the national championship.

One of the people in attendance for Hill's first round game was BGSU assistant Joel Whymer. After watching Hill's performance, Whymer made Head Coach Robyn Fralick aware of Hill as a potential recruit. After graduating in the spring from SGTC with an Associate's Degree in Sports and Fitness Management, Hill began looking for four-year institutions. Hill had a dream of playing for a Division I school, and Fralick needed a point guard.

"We felt like an area our team really needed to grow in was our ability to guard the ball. We felt like she did that really well," Fralick said. Soon after, the coaching staff called SGTC to arrange a visit. Both Hill and Fralick believed the meeting went very well, and on May 2, 2019, the girl from Nagakute signed a letter of intent to play for BGSU.

"Playing at a Division I college was one of my big dreams for a long time. It was just a great opportunity to play basketball at a higher level," Hill said.

Hill is following in the footsteps of her older sister, Rina. Considered by some to be one of the best Japanese women's basketball players, Hill's sister played prep basketball at IMG Academy in Florida, widely regarded as one of the premier sports academies in the U.S. She signed to play college ball at Louisiana State University in 2013. In doing so, she became the first Japanese signee in LSU history, as well as the first Japanese native to play women's basketball in the Southeastern Conference.

Hill was the fifth and final member of a signing class that Fralick considers unique. In addition to Hill, 2019 signees Elissa Brett and Kaillie Hall are from Australia and Canada, respectively. Fralick believes the global nature of the class was a matter of timing and knowing the right people.

"When we got here (as a staff) in April 2018, most of the 2019 prospects were already committed," said Fralick. "In the world of recruiting, it's about having good people that you trust and good connections."

What sets Hill apart from her international teammates is the fact that both Brett and Hall come from primarily English-speaking countries. Hill says that learning English is one of the greatest challenges of her time living in America.

Hill's three older siblings grew up speaking Japanese and English in their home. From early on however, Mari declined to speak English with her father.

"Mari is a bit of a perfectionist," Hill's father said. "Unless she feels she can do something perfectly, she's sometimes reluctant to do it. It's one of those things that she's having to overcome."

Hill feels basketball and school can be more challenging when speaking English. However, Hill is one of three Falcons to start every game so far this season. She currently leads the team in total steals. She is someone her teammates, including junior center Angela Perry, want on the court.

"On the court she plays selflessly," Perry said. "If she has an open shot but someone else has a better one she makes the pass every time and nobody ever has to doubt her effort. She's definitely someone that you want on the court with you."

Hill is part of a small but growing number of Japanese basketball players competing at the collegiate level or beyond in America. Though she is not sure if she will play professionally, as her plans after college are still being decided, she thinks basketball may play a role.

"I don't know if I want to go back to Japan or stay in the United States," Hill said. "I definitely want to go back to Japan just to tell people what I've experienced in the United States. I'm interested in becoming a coach in Japan. I want to bring some American style to change Japanese style in a good way."
Will Robinson belongs, stands out, hopes to go far continued from page 8

According to the Honors College website, critical thinking is ‘learning to see the world from a more objective standpoint,’ looking beyond the surface level and asking questions and ‘the ability to analyze and construct an original unbiased opinion.’

For Robinson, critical thinking has become a huge part of how he reasons through life and learns the most for all experiences, including his service experiences.

“Critical thinking allows you to ask more questions, which gives us a way to view the world that isn't black and white. You can navigate that messiness and realize that questions are the way to kind of negotiate with uncertainty in a world that isn't black and white. You can try to find a way to negotiate with uncertainty, and trying to find a way to treat people and how to lead others,” Robinson said.

“I admire the fact he thinks about everything carefully and is not easily swayed by emotional appeals,” Jack Robinson said. “Will has been a great role model for me in forms. There’s a lot of ambiguity to that phrase and I think in some ways that’s a good and a bad thing because as a leader you have to find your own style and the way that you respond best,” Robinson said.

Robinson sees servant leadership as a space for compromise, discussion and engagement.

“That room for compromise and also discussion and engagement is important because none of us is as powerful as the sum parts of all of us,” Robinson said.

Not only do these attributes help Robinson be a leader for those around him, but it adds to what makes him a great friend. “Will is a student willing to help anyone that asks him for help. He has been there for me when I needed help on more than one occasion. He is so kind and welcoming and I am really thankful that I can call him my friend,” Sizer commented.

“Will makes sure to give you one-hundred percent of his attention whenever you speak with him. He makes the effort to encourage others to feel open to talk with him and ask him questions,” second-year PPEL major and one of Robinson’s students in Critical Thinking, Rachel Sizer, said.

More than just allowing others to learn from him, Robinson also serves as a mentor to younger students in general, especially his younger brother. “Will makes sure to give you one-hundred percent of his attention whenever you speak with him. He makes the effort to encourage others to feel open to talk with him and ask him questions,” second-year PPEL major and one of Robinson’s students in Critical Thinking, Rachel Sizer, said.

Leading people is something Robinson began indirectly doing through his service, but now strives to continue doing in his own terms. “I think (servant leadership) takes different forms. There’s a lot of ambiguity to that phrase and I think in some ways that’s a good and a bad thing because as a leader you have to find your own style and the way that you respond best,” Robinson said.

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Life advice from faculty to students

Shaelee Haaf
City Editor

Alongside learning about microeconomics, organic chemistry or media production, college students are also figuring out how to navigate life outside the classroom. Here is advice a few professors have to offer.

Kristie Foell
World languages and cultures associate professor

“Take the risks and do the things NOW, while you’re young! Whether it’s attending grad school in another state, working/studying/traveling overseas, or starting a business or a family, the things you do in your 20s will lay the foundation for the rest of your life. So whatever you’re passionate about, find a way and GO FOR IT! In my own life this meant heading to graduate school in California and lots of time spent in Germany and Austria perfecting my language skills, including a year with Fulbright in Vienna; all of that laid the foundations for my academic career.

“A second piece of advice: once you’re established in a job or career, pay yourself first! Even $25 a month placed in a retirement account will add up to thousands more at retirement age. Don’t be someone like me who is playing “catch-up” on retirement in your 50s or even 60s; make saving a habit while you’re young, and your older self will thank you!”

Robyn Miller
Instructor for School of Human Movement, Sport and Leisure Studies

“The advice I would give students is to make sure you save money and do not get in debt that you cannot pay off. It is very important to make sure you create a budget and have money left over after expenses at the end of the month. Emergencies come up and it is important to have funds for these emergencies. As well as keep your credit rating high so when you buy a house or a car you will receive the lowest interest rate as possible. Interest rates are directly tied to your credit score.”

R.G Cravens
Political science assistant professor at California Polytechnic State University

“Based on my experience, I would advise students to live their lives authentically and find a community that supports them. Students who find a community in college, either through peer groups or student organizations, are more likely to graduate. Even as a faculty member, relocating to BG was made so much easier when I found a community of friends and colleagues. I stay in touch with them and miss them now that I’m in California!”

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