

The Panther

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After protest, faculty to vote



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JACK CLENDENING Staff Photographer

After drawing criticism and condemnation from some Chapman students, the fate of Chapman's controversial "The Birth of a Nation" poster will be decided by a faculty vote April 22.

Jasmin Sani | Managing Editor
Lou Vanhecke | News Editor

Following a protest where at least 150 students gathered on the steps of Memorial Hall April 18 and marched to the Dodge College of Film and Media Arts for a sit-in outside administrator's offices, faculty will decide the fate of the controversial "The Birth of a Nation" poster, hanging in Marion Knott Studios, in a vote during a faculty meeting April 22.

The decision was announced by Dodge's associate dean, Michael

Kowalski, as students cheered, hugged and congratulated each other.

"The vote will be on Monday afternoon," Kowalski told students, who crowded in the hallway on Dodge's third floor holding signs. The announcement was met with applause.

In an April 18 email sent to The Panther, Struppa said that some faculty have suggested an online vote to expedite the process.

"The vote is on Monday; this is what we were trying to accomplish," Arianna Ngnomire, vice president

of student government and one of the organizers of the protest, told the cheering crowd.

The demonstration advocated for the poster's removal after multiple students condemned the film's inflammatory past. The film depicts actors in blackface and is thought to have been one of the key factors in the resurgence of the modern Ku Klux Klan.

Students gathered to listen to members of Chapman's Black Student Union (BSU), Dodge faculty and Ngnomire speak about the poster and

diversity at Chapman.

Jae Staten, a junior film production major, was vocal about his belief that the poster should be taken down in an April 16 community forum held by Dean of Students Jerry Price. At the April 18 protest, Staten addressed the crowd, and at times, turned to speak to President Daniele Struppa – who sent an email to the student body the morning of April 18 about the protest.

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Diversity at Chapman

In a special section, The Panther takes a look at minority representation and diversity on campus and how some students are tailoring their Chapman experiences to fit their needs.

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Duffer brothers headed to court

Dodge College of Film and Media Arts alumni Matt and Ross Duffer, creators of hit Netflix show "Stranger Things," are set to go to trial May 6 after being accused of plagiarism.

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Pitcher aims for MLB draft

Sophomore pitcher Nick Garcia fired a 98 mph fastball March 16. Now, he hopes to be drafted by the MLB post-graduation.

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After at least 150 attend protest, Dodge faculty set to vote on poster removal



Photos by JACK CLENDENING Staff Photographer

President Daniele Struppa watches as at least 150 students protest April 18 on the steps leading to Memorial Hall, where Struppa's office is located.

Jasmin Sani | Managing Editor
Lou Vanhecke | News Editor

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Struppa maintained his position on the poster, writing in the email that while he condemns the “disgusting” racism in the film, he will continue to “defend Dodge College faculty and administration’s right to decide if it remains.”

“You say in your email that we need to do better. Hell yeah, we need to do better,” Staten told Struppa, who stood near Staten at the top of the Memorial Hall steps.

Despite coming from the typically conservative state of Texas, Staten said he didn’t experience racism until he came to Chapman.

“Do you think we actually want to be here protesting right now?” Staten asked. “None of us do. We have class to be at right now. We have an education to have right now and we’re not able to do that.”

He also pointed out discrepancies between Chapman’s promotion of Netflix show “Stranger Things,” created by 2007 graduates Matt and Ross Duffer, and 2005 alumnus Justin Simien’s Netflix show “Dear White People.”

“Tell me why ‘Stranger Things’ gets a big old poster, and what does Justin Simien get?” Staten said, referring to an advertisement for Simien’s show once displayed on a waste receptacle outside of the Marion Knott Studios. “A trash can. That looks bad. That looks horrible.”

Ron McCants, a Dodge adjunct professor who was the only faculty member to speak at the protest, said he hopes Dodge faculty vote to remove the poster April 22.

“I hope that you guys have a love and pride in your university,” McCants said to the crowd. “I find it very difficult for me to ask you, as

a professor, to have pride and love your school when it is not currently showing you that same love, and pride and respect.”

Ngnomire, the final speaker, highlighted a page on Chapman’s website that cites the Cross-Cultural Center (CCC) and Chapman’s Diversity Project to “address” the myth that the university doesn’t care about diversity and inclusion.

Ideas for a cross-cultural or multicultural center had been discussed for years before the eventual opening of the CCC in spring 2017.

“Former President (Jim) Doti said it would ‘ghettoize’ campus to have a CCC here,” Ngnomire said to the crowd. “That is the power that the president of a university has over everyone else. A leader knows what is right and wrong, a leader has morals, a leader has integrity and a leader stands up for minority voices.”

Dozens of students watched as she spoke, some holding up signs and flags that denounced white supremacy and racism while advocating for the recognition of the black community at Chapman.

“My major objection is their desire to have me make a decision over the faculty,” Struppa told *The Panther* after students gathered on the Memorial Hall steps. “That would be a big mistake. I understand that students might not feel that way.”

In an April 10 opinion column, Struppa wrote that he “disagree(d)” with the request to remove the poster, and attended a BSU meeting April 15 to listen to students’ concerns. Other faculty and administrators, including Price, were also at the steps of Memorial Hall watching the protest April 18.

The crowd made its way from Memorial Hall to Dodge College after about 45 minutes of speakers,



Ron McCants, a Dodge College of Film and Media Arts adjunct professor, was the only faculty member to speak at the protest April 18.

crowding through the doors of the Marion Knott Studios. Students lined the first-floor hallway where “The Birth of a Nation” poster is displayed and began chanting, “Take it down.” Two students held a Black Lives Matter flag, as they led the crowd in its chants.

“It’s incredibly easy to just pop it off the wall,” Kaedi Dalley, an undeclared freshman, told *The Panther* while standing in the first-floor hallway. “For folks of color touring Dodge who see this, what does this poster mean?”

About 10 minutes later demonstrators climbed the stairs of Marion Knott Studios to the third floor – where Dodge College Dean Bob Bassett’s office is located. While the doors leading to the administrative offices were locked, the crowd sat on both sides of the hallway and chanted

phrases like, “Listen to the students” and “Vote now, listen now.”

Some students climbed to the top of the window into the Dodge reception office and covered it with the Black Lives Matter flag, as well as posters made by Ngnomire earlier that day with phrases like, “(Expletive) white supremacy” and “Black students matter” written on them.

“Administration not responding to this is a clear indication of a lack of respect for black students,” Yasmeen Abu Khalaf, a sophomore peace studies and political science double major, told *The Panther* while sitting in front of Bassett’s office. “This is a conversation that should have happened much earlier.”

Dodge faculty is set to vote on the poster’s future this Monday, April 22.

At forum on poster, some students have a message: 'Take it down'

Dayna Li | Staff Writer

During his first year at Chapman, film production major Jae Staten called the assistant dean of the Dodge College of Film and Media Arts, concerned about a poster for the 1915 film "The Birth of a Nation" that currently hangs in the halls of the Marion Knott Studios.

Staten, now a junior, was one of about 60 people who took part in a heated community forum April 16, discussing the same poster that he said caught his attention more than two years earlier.

"It is so wrong and rude to put a Band-Aid over a broken window," Staten said during the forum. "It's one (expletive) poster. Take it down."

The forum, held by Dean of Students Jerry Price in the Cross-Cultural Center (CCC) April 16, saw students and faculty sharing their frustration and concerns about the poster while debating Chapman administration's approach to its debated removal.

The poster, which was donated by the Cecil B. DeMille estate, has drawn controversy on campus, as the film features actors in blackface and is thought to have contributed to the resurgence of the modern Ku Klux Klan.

Citing Chapman's low percentages of black faculty and students – at 1.8 percent and 1.7 percent respectively, some students criticized the university's advertisement of diversity and inclusion, saying that it doesn't follow through.

"It is a privilege to walk by that poster and not be affected by it," said senior Arianna Ngnomire, vice president of student government, during the forum. "'The Birth of a Nation' is symbolic for white supremacy, but it's also symbolic of Chapman's lack of diversity."

Among those who attended were members of Chapman's Black Student Union (BSU), Dodge students,



MIA FORTUNATO Staff Photographer

Grace Kabondo Mutangilwa, a senior political science major, sits next to Black Student Union president Naidine Conde at an April 16 forum about the controversial "The Birth of a Nation" poster.

faculty and doctoral student Betty Valencia, who ran for Orange City Council in November 2018.

The recent controversy surrounding the poster began at Chapman after Arri Caviness, a first-year film production graduate student, tweeted a picture of herself and a group of students standing in front of the poster March 29. It took the school five days to respond on Twitter.

"Why does Dodge College, @THR's (The Hollywood Reporter) 6th best US film school, still condone the celebration of white supremacy?" she tweeted.

Caviness told The Panther that she has given her "thoughts and sound logic."

"It seems like neither have really been as effective as I would have hoped," she said.

President Daniele Struppa has argued that the poster should be kept up for educational purposes – and to give students the opportunity to confront America's "problematic past" – but

many don't agree.

Naidine Conde, president of BSU, said in the forum that she feels her mental health has been impacted by the discussion about the poster.

"Why am I educating the president of my university, who has more degrees, before I have even gotten mine?" she asked.

Debate over the poster's presence has gained momentum among students and faculty, resulting in Struppa taking part in a BSU meeting April 15.

At the April 16 forum, students suggested solutions for dealing with the poster's history, including adding a description next to the poster about its history and implications, or moving it to a museum-like setting. Some said the poster should be replaced with plaque to explain its removal. Others petitioned to have the poster removed in its entirety.

Price acknowledged that the poster's "current situation" is "poor," but asked attendees if an educational opportunity could be missed if faculty

or administration rush into a decision.

"Is there not a temporary solution?" Price asked.

After debates over the poster's future, the conversation shifted to what it's like to be a black student at Chapman.

Grace Kabondo Mutangilwa, a senior political science major from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), made a point that drew nods of agreement.

"It was only until I came to this country that I had to learn to be black," he said at the forum.

Mutangilwa told The Panther after the forum that when he lived in the DRC, he was not self-conscious, because the majority of its population is black. But, he said, he now realizes what it means to be a black man in America.

"It means I could be shot because the idea of being black is as terrifying as the crimes that have been committed," Mutangilwa said.

Former BSU president and sophomore Troy Allen, who is transferring after this semester, said during the forum that her experience at Chapman "has taken a huge toll on (her) psyche."

"Navigating the climate is a psychological minefield," she said during the forum. "I am constantly traumatized by being on this campus."

Some students proposed that the posters displayed should be of work created by Dodge graduates, like 2005 alumnus Justin Simien's film and Netflix show "Dear White People." A poster for "Dear White People" was once displayed on a trash can outside of Marion Knott Studios.

Price told The Panther that he has his own "professional perspective" on an appropriate resolution.

"I'm disappointed that we didn't visit this issue on our own," Price said. "It is a tough experience for most of our black students. We're trying to understand that, to see what things we might be able to do to enhance that experience."

'Black students don't feel comfortable at Chapman': Struppa attends BSU meeting

Carolina Valencia | Staff Writer

In a "passionate" late-night meeting, some members of Chapman's Black Student Union (BSU) became upset as President Daniele Struppa said he would not tell Dodge College of Film and Media Arts faculty what to do about the controversial "The Birth of a Nation" poster hanging in Marion Knott Studios.

The meeting, which took place April 15 in Beckman Hall 105, began at 10 p.m. and lasted until around 1 a.m.

"The Birth of a Nation" poster has garnered controversy on campus since late March, as the film features actors in blackface and is thought to have contributed to the resurgence of the modern Ku Klux Klan revival.

In a column published in The Panther April 10, Struppa acknowledged the "insensitivity" with which the film portrayed African Americans, but held that he would not remove it.

"There were a lot of tears, a lot of shocked faces, a lot of hurt and confusion. I still have yet to hear one good reason to keep the poster up," Naidine Conde, president of BSU, told The Panther.

Toward the end of the meeting, BSU member Arianna Ngnomire, who is also vice president of student government, asked Struppa if the poster would be taken down if Dodge College faculty voted for its removal. He said yes. Dodge faculty is set to vote on the future of the poster at the faculty meeting April 22.

Students have strongly advocated for the poster to be taken down, with film production graduate student Arri Caviness tweeting at Dodge's Twitter March 29. It took the school's account five days to respond.

The poster is a reminder of the casual but violent racism prevalent in the 1900s and today, Caviness told The Panther April 7. A petition for its removal has garnered more than 66 signatures, as of April 21.

Struppa said he will not advise faculty on how to respond, but will protect whatever decision is voted on.

"If the president tells the faculty, 'You have to take down the poster,' that is censorship," Struppa told The Panther in a phone interview April 16. "If the faculty doesn't want to have the poster because they don't think it serves a positive educational perspective ... if I were to say 'You need to keep it,' that would be censorship."

Film production professor Henry Finch said that faculty should weigh in because they work alongside students.

"I don't think it should be censored by taking it down and hiding it away," Finch told The Panther. "It should be shown at a museum in a historical context of the history of race relations in this country."

Struppa was attentive during the meeting and took notes while students shared their opinions, Conde said.

"As a white, European man who didn't grow up in the racist culture



CASSIDY KEOLA Photo Editor

Student Government Vice President Arianna Ngnomire, a member of Black Student Union, asked Daniele Struppa, Chapman's president, if he would remove the controversial "The Birth of a Nation" poster from campus if faculty voted in favor. He said yes.

of America and who is not impacted by the racist culture on this campus, I think it was a very eye-opening discussion for him," Conde said.

During the meeting, Struppa told The Panther, his understanding of students' perspectives widened. He also learned that conversations

surrounding the poster have been circulating around Dodge since at least last year.

"The poster is a byproduct of a larger discussion," Struppa told The Panther. "Black students don't feel comfortable at Chapman. That was the key message I received."

'Stranger Things' creators headed to court for alleged plagiarism

Lou Vanhecke | News Editor

Matt and Ross Duffer, the creators of Emmy award-winning Netflix show "Stranger Things" are scheduled to appear in court for a jury trial May 6 in Los Angeles. The pair are among the Dodge College of Film and Media Arts' most famous alumni and are scheduled to speak at this year's Convocation.

The pair are accused of plagiarizing the idea for "Stranger Things" from filmmaker Charlie Kessler in 2014, though the 2007 alumni claim to have come up with the show's premise in 2010, according to court documents obtained by The Panther.

In a document filed April 17, Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Michael Stern wrote that the court is "left with an issue of determining credibility" and deemed a trial necessary, citing the fact that there is little evidence verifying the originality of the brothers' idea.

The initial complaint was filed by Kessler's representatives April 2018. It has been followed by a series of motions and requests from both parties throughout the year.

Chapman's president, Daniele Struppa, wrote in an April 18 email to The Panther that he was not aware of the impending trial and could not give any information.

"As far as I am concerned, the Duffer Brothers (sic) are innocent until we see evidence to the contrary,"



Panther Archives

Matt and Ross Duffer, the Chapman alumni behind hit Netflix show "Stranger Things," are headed to court after being accused of plagiarizing the show's concept by filmmaker Charlie Kessler.

Struppa wrote.

Representatives from the Creative Artists Agency, the company that represents the Duffer brothers, did not immediately respond to The Panther's request for comment.

In April 2018, Kessler filed a lawsuit against the pair, alleging that the Dodge alumni "misappropriated, used and exploited" the idea that turned into "Stranger Things" after he

and the brothers had a conversation at the 2014 Tribeca Film Festival.

"It's not uncommon for a hit series or movie to draw these types of claims. That's not to say whether or not this particular claim is legitimate – I don't know how the facts will prove out," Judd Funk, a Chapman entertainment law professor, told The Panther.

Funk said the lawsuit proceedings

so far are "pretty standard" in similar lawsuits.

"Although a trial date has been set, it's quite possible that the case will settle prior to the actual trial," he said.

"Stranger Things" – which premiered on Netflix in July 2016 – has won six Primetime Emmy awards, with its third season set to premiere on Netflix July 4. Chapman has lauded the Duffer brothers since the creation of the series, awarding the pair the Alumni Achievement Award in 2017 at the annual "Chapman Celebrates" fundraising event.

The brothers hold that their creation was independent and "occurred prior to (Kessler's) alleged disclosure of his idea to them," according to an April 17 judgement.

Funk said that "the primary argument (the Duffer brothers' legal team) is seeking to prove is that their series is the product of 'independent creation' as opposed to an idea Kessler pitched to them.

"The Duffer brothers are saying 'We can establish independent creation' and the plaintiff is saying 'No, you can't.' And the judge is saying 'OK, we're going to have to find out,'" Funk said.

This is a developing story. Follow The Panther as we continue reporting.

President Emeritus Jim Doti donates kidney to Santa Ana grandfather

Jade Yang | Staff Writer

There typically isn't much opportunity for a university president and a cabinet maker's paths to cross. But on March 18, when Chapman's President Emeritus Jim Doti donated a kidney to 52-year-old grandfather Jose Tolento, they did.

Jose Tolento, a Santa Ana resident, had been on dialysis for more than six years – until Doti's kidney became a match.

"I've lived my life and now I can give something back," Doti said. "I'm not sacrificing my life span, it's not a big deal. What is a big deal is Jose and his family. How many opportunities does anybody have to save another person's life?"

When Doti met Jose Tolento and his family, he said, Tolento's son and daughter translated for Doti, as Jose Tolento does not speak English.

"The most moving thing was when I walked in and his little granddaughter came running and hugged me and wouldn't let go," Doti said. "That's when I knew it was all worthwhile. The little sacrifice I made was to give this man and his family the gift of life."

Jose Tolento was placed on the kidney transplant list December 2018.

"Before the transplant, (while) on dialysis, he was still working part-time and when he'd get home, he'd be very tired and exhausted," said Leticia Tolento, who spoke on behalf of her father in a phone interview with The Panther. "Sometimes he'd get home not feeling well, sometimes he'd be tired and just go straight to bed right after dialysis."

Some members of Jose Tolento's family were nervous about waiting for a donor, as they had seen a friend's aunt wait on the kidney transplant list for eight years, Leticia Tolento said.

"If there was any pain (Doti) was feeling, he didn't show it," Leticia Tolento said. "How grateful we all are for Dr. Doti and the miracle he gave us."

Leticia Tolento said her father will recover for three to six months, but visiting friends and family have already seen improvements in his health.

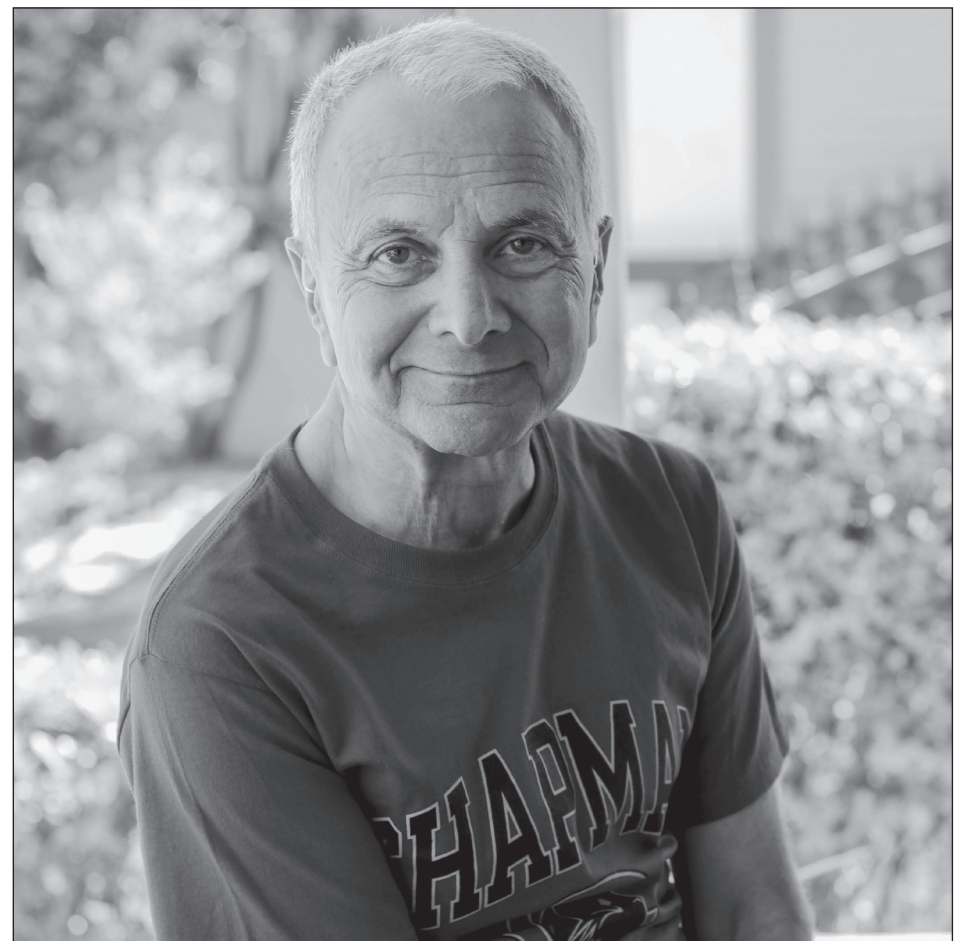
"His complexion has changed; he has a lot more energy and he feels like he can do more," Tolento said.

Doti was inspired to become a donor after witnessing a close friend donate a kidney. He went to the University of California, Irvine (UCI) donor website to apply, but ran into a roadblock: At age 71, he was above UCI's donor age limit of 65.

After reading a 2012 BBC article about an 83-year-old man who became the oldest person to donate a kidney to a patient in England, Doti called to speak to Uttam Reddy, the medical transplant program director at University of California, Irvine Medical Center.

"He told me that 65 is the limit because the organs start breaking down and only very healthy people can give a kidney," Doti said. "I run marathons, I've never smoked, never been much of a drinker ... I've climbed mountains all over the world, so I think I'm pretty healthy."

Doti went through \$10,000 worth of health tests before he was able to donate. After receiving the all-clear, the search for a perfect match began.



MIA FORTUNATO Staff Photographer

President Emeritus Jim Doti was inspired to donate a kidney after witnessing a close friend do the same. "I've lived my life," he said. "Now I can give something back."

Doti received a call a week before his surgery, notifying him of the match with Jose Tolento. The surgery was scheduled for one week later.

Doti, who now teaches economics at Chapman, planned for the surgery to take place during the university's spring break to avoid missing classes. He returned to campus without taking prescribed pain medication and has

not missed any class.

"I was teaching 80 students in my econometrics class, so I didn't want to miss it," Doti said.

Doti said he can feel his strength returning. Once recovered, he told The Panther he plans to take part in the upcoming Orange County half-marathon May 5.

As Notre Dame burns, students abroad feel effects

Lou Vanhecke | News Editor

Sophomore Zach Davis was sitting in his Paris apartment April 15 when a friend texted him a startling message: "Notre Dame is on fire."

"I Googled it, but couldn't find any information," Davis said. "I didn't think she was lying, but I thought it was a little exaggerated."

Davis, a peace studies and political science double major who is studying abroad in Paris this semester, quickly realized that the fire's gravity was not an exaggeration. After taking the Metro as close to the cathedral as he could get, he understood the extent of the blaze.

"I got as close as I could and watched the flames. I got a news notification from CNN while I was standing watching," Davis said. "I was there before the news even broke. I wanted to cry. It was the first place I went in Paris when I got here in January. I pass it every morning on my way to class."

Notre Dame, the iconic gothic cathedral located in the heart of Paris, caught fire April 15. The fire broke out at around 6:30 p.m. Notre Dame's two towers, which are visible throughout the city, were saved but about two-thirds of the roof was destroyed, according to The New York Times.

When junior communication studies major Katarina Trifunovic took a selfie in front of the Notre Dame Cathedral with her cousin at around 1 p.m. April 15, she didn't think that she would be watching the historic structure burn just hours later.

Trifunovic, who is studying abroad in London for the spring semester, took the train to Paris the morning of April 15. She then watched in shock with tourists and Parisians alike as the gothic building was engulfed in flames, its signature spire collapsing.

"I was taking a video on my phone and turned my back to the cathedral quickly. I turned back around and the



Photo courtesy of Zach Davis

The Notre Dame Cathedral went up in flames April 15, its signature spiral collapsing. Zach Davis, a sophomore peace studies and political science double major who is studying in Paris this semester, watched as the cathedral went up in flames.

spire had collapsed," Trifunovic. "You don't think twice that something like that would fall."

Davis said that everyone around him gasped as the spire fell.

"The whole crowd audibly made a noise," he said. "We could also see all the flames through the stained glass windows."

The cause of the fire is unknown, but the building has been under construction since September 2017 to repair limestone and its damage from age. The construction was estimated to cost up to 150 million euros, or about \$180 million, according to The New York Times.

"Usually when there is news (like this), there's an article about it. But when you're there witnessing it, it's

something else," Trifunovic said.

About 500 firefighters battled the flames, with one sustaining serious injuries. On April 11, 16 statues of apostles and evangelists were removed from the structure so the cathedral's spire could be renovated. The spire collapsed due to fire damage, while many in the crowd gasped and cried.

Notre Dame was built during the 12th and 13th centuries and is known as a religious and cultural icon of France. It is visited by about 30,000 people per day, averaging at 13 million per year. Its unique location on a small island called Ile de la Cite on the Seine River caused firefighters to struggle in putting out the flames.

The fire drew thousands of people

who watched the catastrophe unfold. Trifunovic, who is staying in a hotel about five minutes from Notre Dame, got closer to the cathedral as the fire progressed.

"It was the biggest crowd," she said. "Parisians around us were distraught. People who clearly were not French or Parisians left (the crowd) around 10 p.m., but the Parisians stayed," Trifunovic said, calling the fire an "emotional disruption" for those who watched Notre Dame burn.

Trifunovic said that two young people in the crowd, about 13 and 15 years old, played violins while the crowd sang.

"People were crying," she said, noting that people were still watching the fire unfold at 1 a.m.

Davis returned back to Notre Dame April 16 and was met with "hordes of people" still surrounding the cathedral.

In the wake of the damage, French billionaires have pledged donations to restoration efforts for the cathedral which are estimated to cost between 1.13 billion and 2.3 billion euros, according to USA Today.

The owners of luxury fashion brand Louis Vuitton, Christian Dior and Givenchy have pledged 200 million euros, while other French families including the Bettencourt Meyers family, owners of cosmetic line L'Oréal, and the Pinault family, owners of French luxury group Kering, have pledged a combined 300 million euro donation, according to CNN.

Donations were pledged within hours of the fire and were met with backlash from French protesters involved in the ongoing yellow vest movement. Some criticized the donors for selectively choosing to help the cathedral rather than social issues like France's rising taxes, according to the Washington Post.

The cause of the fire is still unknown, as officials are still assessing the damage.

Asian and Pacific Islander culture celebrated at Attallah Piazza event

Jade Yang | Staff Writer

In a celebration of Asian and Pacific Islander culture, members of Asian Pacific Student Association (APSA) gathered in Attallah Piazza April 18 for dancing, singing and bubble tea.

Sarah Scholle, the APSA president, said the event's aim was to give talented Asian students a platform – something that, Scholle said, is lacking in entertainment.

"On this campus, we're not able to see all of these performers, so we've invited people to come specifically out in the Piazza to come by and see the performances," said Scholle, a senior integrated educational studies major.

Scholle said she's seen an increase in event attendance and in club membership after working with student government and the Cross-Cultural Center to put on the event.

"We've been able to create a community with all the Asian students on campus. We really strive for people who are part of this community to feel empowered."

Scholle said that she hopes people who are not part of the Asian Pacific Islander community understand the importance of promoting Asian voices on campus.

Asian and Hawaiian or Pacific Islander students make up almost 13 percent of Chapman's undergraduate population. Amanda Galemmo,

cochair of APSA, who was one of the head coordinators of the event, told The Panther that the event is "to make sure the Chapman community knows we're here."

Chapman's APSA club was founded in 1931, Galemmo said. The annual APSA celebration began on campus in 1998.

"It's an event where we say 'Hey, we're Asian students; we're proud of that and we want you to see what we can do,'" Galemmo said. "It's a great venue for us to showcase a lot of really great Asian American talent."

Sophia Saturnino, a freshman business administration major, told The Panther that she chose to perform in the dance groups Floor 13 and Kapamilya to take part in "traditional dances" and culture. Kapamilya is a Filipino dance group that performed a traditional style dance and a modern hip-hop routine at the event.

Shortly after them, student-dance group Floor 13 performed a hip-hop routine at the event.

"I'm a freshman and spring admit, so I don't know much about the APSA and Asian community (at Chapman)" Saturnino said, who is Filipina. "After looking at all the performances, I was so excited to see a community that I've never seen in a white-majority college."

Saturnino said the event exceeded her expectations.

"There was so much energy



GABRIELLA ANDERSON Staff Photographer

Students performed modern hip-hop dances as a part of the Asian Pacific Islander cultural celebration April 18.

and everyone was cheering. Our community is a lot bigger than we think," Saturnino said. "Not a lot of Asians feel like we're represented,

but having events that showcase our culture is very important in recognizing that we are diverse and we aren't hidden."

Students and faculty push for establishing Africana studies minor

Gabby Toczek | Staff Writer

For almost a year, integrated educational studies professor Quaylan Allen has wanted to create an established Africana studies minor at Chapman. But Allen now faces the obstacle of finding 12 students to enroll in the program and make it an established minor in the course catalog.

Allen's goal is to show students that the minor isn't tailored to black students. Instead, he said, it's meant for those who are interested in learning about or working in the fields like global affairs or locally in the communities that are discussed within the program.

"You shouldn't need demand to know this is important to have on the college campus, if we want to compete with universities and be seen as the Harvard of the west," Allen said. "Well, guess what? Harvard has these types of programs."

Jacky Dang, a junior screenwriting and peace studies double major, has a self-designed Africana studies minor, serves as cochair on the Diversity and Inclusion Curriculum Task Force, and is involved in the Chapman Diversity Project. She's helped Allen and Jerrica Newkirk, a senior integrated education studies major, advocate for the establishment of the Africana studies minor.

"It's so important to have identities reflected in the curriculum that we haven't been able to experience or be a part of," Dang said. "It's been taught through history that curriculum is very Eurocentric with a lot of white pedagogy, so being able to study outside of what we know is critical to be a proper human."

Africana studies began as a self-designed minor when Newkirk was one of the first to take part in the program. The Africana studies cluster examines humanities in African and African American culture

while looking at its contributions to world civilization, according to Chapman's course catalog.

Allen, who spoke on the program at Chapman's 2018 Education & Ethnic Studies summit, and has acted as a liaison between students and the administration. The group has also reached out to administration and faculty who might be interested in teaching courses for the minor.

"We help look over the syllabus (for the minor) before it goes through, and then also asking students from clubs and classrooms to see what classes they like, what classes they don't like and then also what classes they want to create," Dang said. "It's important to include students in that voice."

Another thing that Dang mentioned the task force considers is the diversity of staff involved in the minor.

"(Chapman should) hire more professors who are people of color, so we can see more of ourselves reflected on campus," Dang said. "Half the student population isn't white, so shouldn't the faculty also be like that?"

Chapman hired activist and professor Prexy Nesbitt to teach in the peace studies department, Allen said, but Nesbitt has also shown interest in supporting the Africana studies minor.

Nina LeNoir, Chapman's vice provost for Undergraduate Education, said that interdisciplinary minors aren't just for those part of that culture.

"We're not going to learn about each other if we separate each other," LeNoir said. "Creating an atmosphere where everyone is welcome is going to be a big challenge, but I think they're doing that."

Interdisciplinary minors at Chapman began when the women's studies program was created in fall 2005, according to LeNoir. Since its inception, these unique areas of study now



CASSIDY KEOLA Photo Editor

Women's studies program director C.K. Magliola has been a part of shaping the curriculum for the women's studies minor, which was created in 2005.

include a disability studies minor and a LGBTQ studies minor.

But some students in the LGBTQ studies minor struggle to find courses to complete the program, with after the core requirements are done – because the electives are only offered "as needed."

Ally Evans, a junior creative writing major and LGBTQ studies minor, said she understands the university doesn't offer some classes every semester because they might not be filled to maximum capacity, but believes it's still necessary to offer them.

LeNoir told The Panther that the university doesn't want to "allocate resources where there's no interest."

"I'm sitting here as a junior, going to graduate and I need three more

classes that I haven't taken," Evans said. "I find that because we don't have our own classes, the school looks at them and says, 'The major doesn't need these right now.' They don't think about the minor."

C.K. Magliola, a women's studies professor, said the program struggled in its beginnings because there was no faculty to teach the core courses. But Magliola sees her teachings as essential to educating well-rounded students.

"You can graduate and go your entire educational career ... and if you didn't take Intro to Women's Studies, then you wouldn't know so many important basic things," Magliola said. "Our curriculum, our culture, our academia is androcentric."

'It should be normal': Students, faculty talk inclusive brands

Mitali Shukla | Staff Writer

Sophomore Mollie Browne understands firsthand what it means for people who have disabilities to be represented in the media. As a disability studies minor, and a health sciences major, Browne – who has post-traumatic stress disorder and anxiety – said retailers rarely depict those with disabilities in advertisements.

"Growing up, you always see advertisements, and not being represented takes a toll on children with disabilities," Browne said. "Kids should see people on magazine covers who look like them."

A recent movement to accommodate those with disabilities has influenced a number of adaptability clothing collections. Retailers and brands like Target, Zappos, Land's End and Tommy Hilfiger have collections tailored to people of ranging abilities.

"It should be normal that brands and stores – and even the buildings themselves – are accessible, so everyone can be included in what they have to sell," Browne said. "Such a large percentage of the population is affected by disabilities."

Called "adaptive apparel," this type of clothing often has special features like side-entry openings, zip-off sleeves, and shirts that have snaps in the back instead of buttons – all designed to cater to people with physical limitations.

Junior computer science major, Greg Tyler, the undergraduate cochair

of Chapman's Advisory Group on the Status of Disability & Accessibility said the positive impact of adaptive clothing comes from its ease of use.

"One trend I've seen is magnetic flips," Tyler said. "The pieces snap together and line up, as opposed to zippers or buttons."

Adaptive apparel can make it easier for people with disabilities to help them get dressed, since those with disabilities often need long-lasting, comfortable and sometimes larger clothing sizes for medical enhancements and devices.

Arthur Blaser is a Chapman political science and peace studies professor who was left partially paralyzed after a stroke in 1993. As someone with the use of one hand, he said he values the benefits of adaptive clothing for people with disabilities.

But Blaser does see an overarching problem: Adaptive solutions typically only focus on solving one problem, he said. He wants disabled individuals to have a choice in what they wear and not be limited to certain brands or styles.

"It's important to the disabled person to feel included, and (to not) have to pay outrageous prices for 'special' merchandise," Blaser said.

Blaser views his experience having a disability as positive, because he's involved as the faculty cochair of Chapman's disability advisory group, and he enjoys participating at the Dayle McIntosh Center in Anaheim, California – which provides services to people with disabilities, including skills training and transition



CASSIDY KEOLA Staff Photographer

Arthur Blaser, a political science and peace studies professor, is part of making Chapman more inclusive and accessible through his involvement at Chapman as the faculty cochair of the Advisory Group on the Status of Disability & Accessibility.

assistance.

Tyler believes that adaptive clothing lines have more than just disability rights on their minds.

"I'd say they're profiting off of a trend," he said. "But I don't think that's inherently a bad thing, because they're providing a service."

Twenty-six percent of adults in the U.S. have some type of disability, according to the Centers for Disease

Control and Prevention. Leaving out the quarter of Americans with disabilities from the selling pool can impact a company's profits.

"They are businesses and their main goal is to make money," Browne said. "They have so much authority and such a wide scope of customers that they sell to. It's important for them to spread equality and fight for disability rights."

REVIEW

Beyoncé's 'Homecoming' brings HBCU culture to the public



Olivia Harden | Features Editor

Beyoncé, you've done it again. And you didn't even have to try that hard. All you did was take your 2018 Coachella performance and redesign it into something fresh.

The 2016 "Lemonade" era was a culmination of Beyoncé's personal life when her now-platinum album released. But "Homecoming," released April 17, is the manifestation of everything that has led up to this point. We're witnessing an artist step into a realm where she is practically untouchable.

Beyoncé's success is not just due to fan base hype. The 37-year-old has built herself up since "Destiny's Child" formed in 1997. Something that sets Beyoncé's projects apart from other artists' work is the element of surprise. She's been dropping unannounced albums since her self-titled album "Beyoncé," which was released almost six years ago.

Another one of Bey's greatest talents as an artist is popularizing the concept of a visual album. After the 2013 release of her self-titled album, you think we would've seen this one coming. After minimal advertising from Netflix, Beyoncé's documentary "Homecoming" was released April 17.

But no one was expecting her



IMDb

Beyoncé's Netflix documentary "Homecoming," released April 17, came with a surprise 40-track live album, featuring the songs from her iconic 2018 Coachella performance.

2018 Coachella performances to be transformed into a 40-track live album, which is available for purchase and streaming on Apple Music, Spotify, Google Play and Amazon – unlike "Lemonade," which is only available on Tidal (at least until April 23).

Even when she recycles previous performances, Beyoncé knows how to revamp something that could be considered old news and turn it into an entirely new experience.

"Beychella," as it was deemed by DJ

Khaled, showcased black culture in a way that made it accessible to those who have never been exposed to it.

Although Beyoncé didn't attend college after graduating from Kinder High School for the Performing and Visual Arts in Houston, Texas, she and her production team delivered that experience to the crowds at Coachella in 2018. She brought the greatest exhibition of black talent I've ever seen – musicians, step routines, baton twirlers and more to bring the spirit of a historically black college

to some who may not even know this culture exists.

Using a live band completely changed the way Beyoncé's songs were performed. It brings back a nostalgia for cheering along at football games in high school. It brings that same pride to black culture. Singing the black national anthem, "Lift Every Voice and Sing," to a crowd of thousands who probably don't recognize it embodies what she can bring to the pop industry.

By releasing her content around the same time as the iconic musical festival, it seemed like 2019 Coachella faded into the background. Ariana Grande who? Kanye West where? Overnight, performance from the exclusive 2018 festival became accessible anytime and anywhere, because now we're able to experience those front-row seats from the comfort of our own homes.

Listening to her powerful vocals shows how the performer's music has completely defied the typical definition of pop. "Mi Gente" is Latin music. "Feeling Myself" is a rap song. "Top Off" is clearly trap.

The vocal and artistic range Beyoncé has is expansive, and yet, she's able to appeal to enough listeners to stay mainstream and accessible. Every album she produces sounds and feels different. I feel blessed to be born at a time where I'm able to experience this, and I can't wait to see what she comes up with next.

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Acknowledge your white privilege



Maura Kate Mitchelson
Opinions Editor

I'm very white. I have blue eyes and blonde hair. According to AncestryDNA, I'm 81 percent Irish. I love kombucha, Soul Cycle, brunch and anything Timothee Chalamet does. By all accounts, I'm super white.

I'm also straight, cisgender and able-bodied. I don't even have any

allergies. I'm not the ideal spokesperson for diversity on campus.

When I first came to Chapman – moving here from a town in Kansas that is 93.1 percent white – I thought the student body was pretty diverse. Compared to my graduating high school class, where I could name and count every black and Asian student, Chapman has a lot more variety. But that's not saying much.

Because I grew up in such a homogenous town, I didn't see the issue at Chapman until other students started to point it out to me. At first I was confused, because it's the most diverse school I've ever attended – but I quickly realized the gravity of the issue. Chapman isn't in Leawood, Kansas, where only 1.1 percent of the population is black and 4 percent is Asian, according to the U.S. Census.

Nor is it a university that can only accept students who live within a few miles of campus. Chapman is in the heart of Southern California and can accept any student – no matter their background– who meets the academic requirements.

As a white person, I've never felt targeted because of my race. I wasn't the kid everyone turned to in history class when we talked about slavery. No one ever assumed that I could speak fluent Spanish. I was never asked if I thought a new Chinese restaurant in town was authentic. I've never felt singled out or alone because I didn't look like everyone else in the classroom.

The game has been rigged in my favor and I can see that clearly. My life has been filled with privileges, both small and large, that many others have to work for. It is the responsibility of white people to acknowledge just how much our race benefits us and do what we can to try to even the playing field.

Shedding light on the damage white privilege has done and continues to do shouldn't scare anyone – and certainly shouldn't be seen as “reverse racism.” Because racism is an inherently systematic concept, and white people originated that system, there is no racism against white people. Sure, there can be prejudice, but that comes from a personal level, not an institutional one. And that isn't a widespread issue that affects the everyday life and safety of a white person.

Once you realize your white privilege and where it puts you in comparison to others, you will be uncomfortable. Yes, it's easier to just accept the countless benefits you inherently receive based solely on the color of your skin. But knowing how other people are treated, you shouldn't settle for the easy way out.

On April 22, the majority-white faculty of Dodge will be given the chance to vote on the future of Chapman's “The Birth of a Nation” poster. They will be given an opportunity to use their vote to support minority groups and set a new standard for behavior on campus. We aren't a diverse campus, but that certainly doesn't mean we should ignore the voices that are here.

EDITORIAL



Illustrated by Gaby Fantone

Student voices matter

The Panther Editorial Board

On April 22, the faculty of the Dodge College of Film and Media Arts will be given a chance to use their voices in support of students. After three and a half weeks of discussion, sit-ins and columns, faculty will vote on the removal of the debated “The Birth of a Nation” poster hanging in the halls of the Marion Knott Studios.

Last week, President Daniele Struppa told the Chapman community that he wouldn't remove the poster – which has been criticized for its racist portrayals of blackface and lynching. But once students continued the conversation, Struppa turned the decision over to Dodge faculty. Bob Bassett, the dean of Dodge College, has not responded publicly to student efforts to advocate for the poster's removal, though The Panther has contacted him for comment multiple times.

Struppa has metaphorically thrown his hands up and Bassett, who will retire from the university after this semester ends, is nowhere to be found in the process. Students and a number of faculty have taken the matter into their own hands. And they've offered numerous solutions – including moving the poster to a museum to place it in historical context – yet Struppa continues to make the argument that the debate surrounding whether to remove the poster from Marion Knott Studios is a matter of censorship, even if the decision isn't within his control.

Contextualizing something is not censoring it;

it's providing more information that will lead to a deeper, more holistic understanding of the complex history behind it.

The president of a university wields a great deal of power. But we understand that Struppa believes strongly in deferring that power to faculty governance – look at his defense of the university's receipt of donations from the Charles G. Koch Foundation.

We understand that he doesn't view his power as absolute.

“My major objection is their desire to have me make a decision over the faculty,” Struppa told The Panther after students gathered on the Memorial Hall steps to protest April 18. “That would be a big mistake.”

Faculty governance matters, but this isn't your everyday campus conflict. This poster brings up a painful history for the black students on campus. It's akin to displaying a poster for a Nazi propaganda film, which also has its place: in a museum.

This is not an issue of political correctness, censorship or something that should fall down political party lines. It's a chance for the faculty of Dodge College, which is predominately white, to show the students and faculty of color on campus that their voices, opinions and unwillingness to be constantly reminded of a despicable time in history are valid. We hope the Dodge faculty does the right thing.

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Have a question, comment or idea? Contact us at thepanthernewspaper@gmail.com.

The homogenization of the Asian American experience



Sammi Oh, sophomore health sciences major

When asked about my intersectionality, my immediate response is that I'm an Asian American woman. End of discussion. No one prods further because, after all, isn't the label "Asian American" a sufficient descriptor of my holistic racial and cultural identity?

To a certain extent, yes, because the "Asian American experience" has

evolved into an umbrella term for the sprawling gray area between the two extreme poles of traditional Asian culture and modern Western culture. I use the term "gray area" because the Asian American population is just that: a muddled mix of vastly different cultures and experiences that are thrown into a mass blob of generalization.

I am a third-generation Korean, Japanese and Chinese American woman. But, in a white-

dominant culture in America, my identity stops at Asian.

Yes, there's a sense of community among the Asian American population, especially since we're so often thrown into the same category by our non-Asian peers. But this is a far cry from assuming that Asian Americans are identical in our cultural backgrounds and identities. I've noticed a stark lack of awareness in the cultural divisions that are deeply ingrained in our identities, far more complex than can be explained by the stand-alone term, "Asian."

The stereotypical Asian image crafted by the mainstream media is someone of East Asian descent (Japanese, Korean, Chinese, Vietnamese, et cetera) with lighter skin and small eyes. Even among these dominant East Asian cultures, the American public puts little effort or emphasis on recognizing the differences between these unique nations and heritages. Few non-Asians care about the differences between Korean and Japanese culture, because the presiding attitude is that the distinctions are largely irrelevant.

Additionally, Southeast and South Asian cultures (Filipino, Indian, et cetera) are typically overlooked when speaking about Asian American experiences because their ethnic characteristics differ from that of the mainstream East Asian image. Jokes about how "all Asians look the same" are seemingly harmless, but this attitude has severe implications in America's two-dimensional

perception of what it means to be an Asian American.

Asians also are often forgotten when speaking about racial oppression because we are deemed the "model minority." Because we have achieved high socioeconomic success relative to other minority groups, we're seen as models of productive assimilation in pursuit of the American dream. Because of this perceived success, our struggles with identity are often minimized or silenced.

Western generalization of Asian culture can be seen everywhere. I love Disney's "Mulan," but the assumption that having a single Chinese princess means a checkmark in the Asian representation category exemplifies America's warped perspective of the Asian demographic.

This attitude of homogenization affects every Asian American on a daily basis in interactions with our peers. When people perceive someone as Asian, there's an automatic imposition of the "foreigner" identity. For example, if you're Japanese American, people will expect you to automatically know about your ancestors' culture.

But there is an endless spectrum of Asian American experiences regarding their relationships to their traditional culture.

To read the full column, go to thepantheronline.com.

Take the poster down. It can't wait



Olivia Harden, features editor

As a senior at Chapman University, I am one of 122 Black* students out of 7,281. Being Black at Chapman has always been an exhausting task, but this year, the issues Black students face have come to a head.

Chapman has had a "The Birth of a Nation" poster gracing the halls of Dodge College of Film and Media Arts (the No. 6 film school in

the country) for years. The poster was donated by filmmaker Cecil B. DeMille's estate. The controversial film was made in 1915 by D.W. Griffith and led to the Ku Klux Klan's second wave, which began in Stone Mountain, Georgia in 1865. Bob Bassett, dean of Dodge College, has refused to respond to comment on the issue to The Panther, and President Daniele Struppa has publicly shown reluctance to remove the poster. In an April 10 column, Struppa wrote that the

movie is "artfully done," and that the film has "nostalgia for a time before the Civil War."

Struppa's column was ill-informed about the actual stance of Black students. It was only once he came to a Black Student Union (BSU) meeting on April 15 that he began to understand the consequences of keeping this poster up in the hall. The display lacks context, and most of us who are advocating for its removal have offered other suggestions, such as moving the poster to Chapman's Hilbert Museum – located right near campus – where anyone who wants to engage would be able to have a discussion in an appropriate place. A hallway in the film school is not the appropriate place.

Chapman has a habit of ignoring its Black students, and it shows. Black students often leave because resources are so limited. Trauma is something that exists for Black students every day here. The reluctance to remove a poster with no educational value is indicative of the climate created by the administration who has failed to recognize the white privilege of being able to separate the film's aesthetics from its content and context.

The Ku Klux Klan (KKK) is not just a part of history. For many of us, that fear is a part of everyday life. In February 2016, there was a KKK rally not far from the Chapman Grand apartment complex, where students now live. It is scary to know just how close they were to campus.

After a student protest April 18, the faculty has decided to move the vote to remove the poster from September to April 22 – this Monday. To be honest, I'm scared. I want to believe that the Chapman faculty will do the right thing and remove a celebration of a racist film from Dodge's hallways.

But the attempts to stall the needs of the students makes me wary about the consequence of this vote. This poster is hurting people. It's a reminder that Black student voices have never mattered enough to the university that they would be willing to do something about it.

This conversation is part of a much bigger problem, which is that Black students at Chapman struggle with finding a home. I found mine at Chapman's BSU, but that is a student-run organization with little support from faculty. It is time for the Chapman community to step up as these issues come to a head. There should be no more waiting or putting students off. Address these concerns now before it is too late. The way this conflict is handled will be indicative of the future of the Chapman community for at least the next 10 years. Please choose wisely.

**As a columnist, I have chosen to capitalize Black despite the AP Style rule because in this case, Black is a globally recognized group of people who are marginalized due to race and often share similar experiences.*

What it's like to be 'white (including Middle Eastern origin)'



Jasmin Sani, managing editor

When I applied to colleges in 2016, I found myself looking forward to sitting down, sifting through various application questions and trying to share my life story in prompts that wouldn't let me write more than 700 words. But one thing that struck me as odd was the fact that very few universities displayed a Middle Eastern category in their demographic

questions.

All I wanted was a little box to check off to say, "Yes, I identify as Middle Eastern." But instead, I stared blankly at my cursor as it hovered over the "white (including Middle Eastern origin)" option. I hesitantly clicked.

I'm not white. I'm not Caucasian. And I'm certainly not a parenthetical. And yet, throughout

much of my life – tracing back to first grade, when I took my first state exam in Texas – I've always questioned why I have to be identified as such.

I am proud of my culture and of my heritage. My parents left Iran in 1979 to come to the U.S. as the revolution unfolded, carrying with them decades of our family's Persian legacy. I will not let my people's representation die out because the U.S. Census Bureau refuses to make "Middle Eastern" a category in 2020, according to NPR.

Why is my ethnic background hidden behind "white?" Why is my community being left out? Why, when there are millions of Middle Easterners in America, don't we have our own checkbox?

It's not asking much to add an extra column. It seems obvious. But this upsetting reality also translates to my experience Chapman.

I am so thankful to be studying at this university, but I can't help but feel defeated every time I walk pass the Global Citizens Plaza and don't see the Iranian flag flying high among the other 64 countries represented.

During my freshman year, my current roommates and I realized there was little to no Persian representation on campus, whether that be in the Global Citizens Plaza or in the Cross-Cultural Center. So we took matters into our own hands and created the Iranian Student

Cultural Organization (ISCO) at Chapman. We were thrilled to find that more than 100 students are also Persian or are interested in our learning about our culture.

We've put on "Chai and Chill" meetings; we've planned visits to the beach and Persian restaurants; we've hosted mehmoonies (also known as parties) and events like Norouz, which marks the Persian New Year. At each of these gatherings we're met with joyful, fascinating and inspiring individuals, some of whom are international students from Iran, excited to be involved in a community that accepts and understands who they are.

This is one of the most influential times of our lives. We want to make the most out of it – and we usually do whenever the DJ drops the sweet, sweet sound of Bandari music while we're on the dance floor. In our cultural organization, we laugh about silly Persian jokes and we have a good time, surrounded by people who understand our ethnic background.

But just having a standard club isn't enough. We want representation on campus, and with just one look at the flags in the Global Citizens Plaza or a quick visit to the student profile ethnicity breakdown on Chapman's website, it's clear to see we don't have that.

After 98 mph fastball, pitcher works toward MLB draft

Luca Evans | Staff Writer

On March 16, sophomore Chapman reliever Nick Garcia fired a fastball that stuck with him. Garcia felt strong in the home baseball game against California Lutheran University, and after he wound up and delivered, a number appeared on the scoreboard.

The ball had sped past the plate at 98 miles per hour.

“We were losing, so it wasn’t that big of a deal,” Garcia said. “Then, on the bus ride home, I sat there and I was like, ‘Holy.’”

In that moment, everyone was looking up at the scoreboard, head coach Scott Laverty said. Garcia said he wasn’t expecting an achievement of this caliber. For the right-hander, the pitch added to his statistics, which include a .89 earned run average for the 2018-19 season, and striking out an average of about two batters per inning.

On Garcia’s current track, Laverty said a chance of being drafted by a MLB team is “100 percent feasible.” But, the pitcher said he feels strange about such a quick rise to success.

“It’s been a weird past couple months now with everything kind of coming a little more to fruition in my life,” Garcia said. “You always, as a kid, are dreaming of what you want to do, whether it be an astronaut or be a professional athlete, but it’s weird because ... I’m so close to getting there, it feels, and yet so far.”

Garcia began playing baseball at five years old, and he said he particularly enjoyed hitting, because he liked watching the ball’s distance. In



MIA FORTUNATO Staff Photographer

On March 16, sophomore pitcher Nick Garcia threw a 98 mph fastball. He now aims for a potential MLB draft post-graduation.

his freshman season at Chapman, he played third base and appeared in 50 percent of games. But, Garcia knew he wanted to stick to pitching because he worked on his mechanics the summer before his sophomore season, and “things just kind of skyrocketed on the mound.”

A combination of long-toss sessions, adjustments to his pitching fundamentals and gaining 10 to 15 pounds added to Garcia’s maturation. Throughout the season, he said his fastball sat in the middle 90 miles per hour, before

reaching 98. His favorite memory from the season is a February 9 game against Pacific University, in which he struck out two batters to close out a tight game.

“I try and trust my stuff, knowing that it’s better than everybody else,” Garcia said. “They’re not going to beat it – basically, that’s my mindset.”

The belief in his “stuff” is driving Garcia to be considered for a draft for a professional team.

“The scouts already know about Nick; he’s already on everybody’s ra-

dar,” Laverty said.

Chapman has had just one player drafted in the past six seasons, a Royals pitcher and 14th-round pick in the 2018 draft: Christian Cosby. If Garcia gets drafted, he and Cosby will have a chance to become the first players from Chapman (since 1984) to appear in the major leagues. But he doesn’t want to get too ahead of himself.

“(I’ll) just keep following that same path, stay focused on what I’ve done and continue to trust that it’ll put me in a very good spot,” Garcia said.

Female track and field team sets personal bests at conference meet

Kavya Maran | Staff Writer

Under the midday heat April 13, with teammates cheering from the sidelines, freshmen Bella Rudis and Promise Johnson had a record breaking day. The two achieved personal season-bests in the long jump and the triple jump events at the third Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (SCIAC) Multi-Duals at Occidental College.

Rudis, a business administration major, scored marks of 4.59 meters and 10.32 meters in long jump and triple jump respectively. Johnson, a broadcast journalism and documentary major, reached 9.88 meters in the triple jump. Despite the track and field meet’s size, the excitement in the air was infectious, Rudis said. But she didn’t expect to pull off a personal record-breaking jump.

“I looked back at my mark in the sand, I was like, ‘Wait, that’s better than usual,’” Rudis said. “I had spent the whole season trying to reach that mark, but couldn’t.”

Johnson said the conference meet was a successful “comeback” for her after she injured her right leg after landing on the runway during a triple jump March 8 at the Ben Brown Invitational Meet.

After the injury, Johnson said she wasn’t sure if she would be able to do triple jumps again. She deliberated about whether or not to participate in the meet, but decided to “go for it.”

Johnson and Rudis weren’t the



CASSIDY KEOLA Photo Editor

After a conference meet April 13, Promise Johnson, left, Josanni Martinez, center, Bella Rudis, right, and the women’s track and field team head to the conference championships at Claremont-Mudd-Scripps April 27 and 28.

only field athletes to achieve personal bests during the conference meet; senior strategic and corporate communication major Josanni Martinez scored her best in discus throw at the meet, with a mark of 23.08 meters at the Multi-Duals

meet. Also, Camryn Hamaguchi, a sophomore business administration major, scored a personal best in shot put with a mark of 10.06 meters at the Collegiate Irwin Scoring Meet at Point Loma Nazarene University March 17.

“Going in, I didn’t feel that

confident because it was only my second meet of the season,” Hamaguchi said. “It ended up being a really successful meet, not just for me, but for the entire team.”

The momentum from Hamaguchi’s personal best kept up when freshman health science major Maija Girardi placed third in javelin throw with a 33.12 meter throw at the University of La Verne March 30. Girardi said her throw was an unexpected but “extremely satisfying” triumph.

“Coming in as a freshman, you’re not expected to do incredibly well,” Girardi said.

During the season, in a typical week Girardi said the team practices for three to four hours every day. But Girardi said the team is starting to ease up on training because the SCIAC Championships – which will be held on April 27 and 28 – are approaching.

Johnson said the team’s primary focus has shifted from an emphasis on strength and technique training to staying healthy for the upcoming championship, where Hamaguchi said the Panthers aim to beat Occidental University and Pomona-Pitzer.

“We’re taking nobody lightly,” Hamaguchi said. “They usually finish in the top three or four for SCIAC, so they are our targets.”

For Hamaguchi, Johnson, Girardi and Martinez – this will be their first-ever SCIAC Championships. “As long as we leave our hearts on the track, no matter what happens, we can be proud of ourselves,” Johnson said.

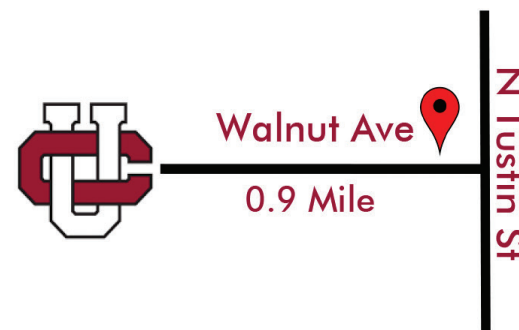
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