

OCTOBER
2021



FREE SPEECH WEEK ISSUE INSIDE

Looking to make an impact

Maria Sanchez
Contributing Writer

Sophomore Angelica Molina is trying to make a difference in the world.

"People who need it the most, that's where we want to make the biggest impact," Molina, a Global Studies major, said.

Molina recently took on an extensive and exciting new project with Saint Leo's Ministry. She is the new director of Service Project Abroad, a new social service program looking to help countries facing difficult situations. The ministry wanted to form a separate group for social service, and they partnered with Cross Catholic to help other countries in need. However, the program is not limited to that organization.

Molina got involved with the program during the summer when she stayed on campus working at the Student Affairs office and taking summer classes. She was reading a world religions book for one class, and Dr. Jen Shaw, the vice president of Student Affairs, approached her and asked her about the book.

"I told her it was a world religions book for a world religions class, so she told me that the ministry was looking for a leader and that she would contact them with my reference, so that's what she did," Molina said.

Father Randall Meissen, University Chaplain, then contacted Angelica and told her that the ministry was willing to do a social service project if leaders were to



Molina pictured above doing social service helping build houses for families during Martin Luther King's Day in 2021 with Saint Leo University.

direct the project. They already started a group of social services, and they have fifteen members already.

"I told him I was more than willing to lead the project, and now I am the director of international social service," Molina said.

Molina, who is from Cali, Colombia, said that coming from a third-world country that has suffered a lot, she wants to give back to other countries that are not noticed as much, and she wants to make a positive impact anywhere in the world.

"Coming from a country that has been affected politically, socially, economically, and in every way possible, I have experienced what it is like to have needs. I know some countries need more help than others," she said.

Molina believes students should join this program to help others, and she said it doesn't matter their religion of faith. If someone is interested in joining they can contact her at angelica.molina@saintleo.edu or they can contact Father Randall.

Staying active on campus

Lauren Felts
Advertising Manager

Saint Leo University is about community and to honor this value, The Lions' Pride Media Group will choose one student each month to feature in that issue. This issue, our student of the month is Adam Keselicka. Keselicka is a criminal justice major specializing in homeland security from Tresckow, Pennsylvania.

Keselicka describes his enrollment to Saint Leo University as a funny story. "I had a family friend recommend Saint Leo to me and I was blown away of all the stuff he was telling me about the school. I honestly did not think I was going to be accepted if everything he told me was true about the school," said Keselicka. "I ended up applying as a joke to tell my family friend that 'Hey! I at least applied to the

school.' Well, a few weeks later I got a certificate of admission from Saint Leo. I still have it to this day!"

Keselicka explained that he ended up visiting Saint Leo with his family friend and deposited to enroll all on the same day. He affirms that his choice to attend Saint Leo was undoubtedly the right one. "I am very glad I came to Saint Leo. Saint Leo has a special place in my heart that no other school could have filled," he said.

Furthermore, Keselicka is very active on campus, especially within the school's Catholic community. He recommends that other students become involved on campus, no matter the interest, and to find something that you care about.

"You'll never know who you will meet in what club or organization," said Keselicka. "I
Continued on page 5.



NEWSROOM

SAB OFFICE 106

Dr. Valerie Kasper
FACULTY ADVISER



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

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Studying abroad at Saint Leo

Adriana Rodriguez
Contributing Writer

“Studying abroad sounds wonderful, but it’s too expensive! There isn’t enough financial aid offered! The applications are too complicated! It’s only for American students!”

These are a few of the misconceptions that students typically entertain about the study abroad program, and they rob prospective participants of a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

“Studying abroad is taking a semester, year, or a summer to be able to study at another institution outside of Saint Leo’s main campus,” said Paige Ramsey-Hamacher, executive director, PDSO, and RO at the Center for Global Engagement at Saint Leo University.

Study abroad is available for all students. Hamacher was very clear in explaining that it wasn’t only students with United States citizenship who could apply for the program, but also international students who come to Saint Leo and would still wish to experience other places and cultures.

“I literally came in my freshman year just thinking about when I’m in my junior year, I want to do my study abroad,” Hannah Braverman, a Saint Leo student currently undergoing the process to study abroad in Italy, explained. “I’m going next year in 2022 for the Spring semester.”

A main reason behind participation is the opportunity not just learn a new language, but to also strengthen the fluency and understanding of one that is currently known.

“For example, maybe their home language growing up was Spanish, but it’s really speaking Spanish. It’s not book and university-level Spanish,” said Hamacher.

Even when deliberately choosing a country with a familiar language to study abroad in, most students seem to forget about the existence of foreign dialects and customs.

“Sometimes I don’t think students realize that even though they’re going to a place where the same language is being spoken,

they’re having to become fluent in culture as well,” said Hamacher.

When asked, Braverman confessed, “I was telling my mom, ‘Mami, I think I should just go to Spain. I already know Spanish, so it’s gonna be easy.’ She told me, ‘Hannah, you’re gonna make me pay for you to go study abroad, and you’re not even gonna learn a new language!’”

In the end, Braverman acknowledged that going to a new place with a language barrier would result in a more wholesome experience.

Either way, a deeper understanding of language and culture is guaranteed when studying abroad as it is an immersive experience.

Then, there’s the financial misconception. Although there are, in fact, existing scholarships that are specifically geared towards students who study abroad, Saint Leo does not give out such specialized aid. Instead, it has partner programs that offer such scholarships to approved students on a needed basis.

After attending a study abroad seminar hosted by Hamacher, Braverman stated, “I emailed her and I told her that I was interested in the program, and asked about what other information she could provide me and she sent me a PowerPoint. There was a link to all the universities and all the programs that would be offered. She advised me to choose a program that would be partnered with Saint Leo so the financial aid would be covered.”

Fortunately, any pre-existing scholarships that Saint Leo has already approved for a student will serve as a replacement when that student wishes to study abroad. In this way, Saint Leo scholarships are more general and flexible in their financial aid.

“We’re already putting behind you when you go and study in one of our partner programs any financial aid that you’re already receiving, so there’s no additional ones that we give specifically to that,” Hamacher said.

For this reason, it is highly recommended that any student interested in studying abroad does so through one of Saint Leo’s



partner programs as the possible additional financial aid offered by them could supplement the aid already given by Saint Leo.

“Figure out which one fits, which price, as far as overseas, works best within your price range,” said Hamacher. “We would then adjust the bill based on that and then we would subtract any financial aid scholarships, and then still whatever’s left is what you would owe. Or if you had federal and state aid that you were receiving that would go above and beyond what that is, then you could potentially get a refund.”

Of course, such a hypothetical refund is subject to change based on the cost of the chosen program and the current cost of attendance at the university.

“Basically, if the cost was \$12,000 and the Saint Leo scholarship was \$13,000, we’re not gonna give you a \$1,000 refund back, but we would cover all \$12,000 of the program price,” said Hamacher.

When applying for studying abroad, it is imperative to take the processing time of documents and deadlines into consideration in planning. Saint Leo provides its students with various websites like saintleo.abroadoffice.net and saintleo.edu/study-abroad, as well as help centers with advisers like those found in the Student Activities Building that can help in the process.

“If you’re on the main page, you can just go to saintleo.edu/international,” Hamacher added.

Although Saint Leo has been unable to send students to study abroad for the past year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is their hope to re-open the program in Spring 2022. It is up to the COVID Incident

Command Team to determine this possibility.

This does not mean interested students shouldn’t get the necessary documentation in order as soon as possible. The current deadline for studying abroad submissions is Feb. 1, and all paperwork must be turned in by that time if students are aiming to participate in the program that following academic year.

“You have to go to Residence Life, the Registrar’s Office, Financial Aid, and they have to approve you for the program. Then after that, you have to go to [your] Academic Adviser and you guys talk about the classes ... That’s not talking about [the] other process when you’re applying to the university itself ... I would recommend starting a year before,” Braverman said.

Hamacher will be informing students more about the program and its deadlines in an upcoming seminar via Zoom on Nov. 15 from 3-4 p.m. with the link being sent out in the weekly Student Activities Newsletter.



Paige Ramsey-Hamacher, Executive Director and PDSO, Center for Global Engagement

To be or not to be vaccinated?

Saint Leo University student opinions on the COVID-19 vaccine

Alora Peters
Editor-in-Chief

While Saint Leo University has outlined within its “Advancing the Pride” framework that they “may not compel employees or students to become vaccinated” against COVID-19, the university has nonetheless made it very clear that they encourage reception of the vaccine. Saint Leo stated in the “Advancing the Pride” framework that they “assume everyone who can be vaccinated will be vaccinated and operate accordingly,” and introduced vaccine incentives at the beginning of the semester with the aim of “reward[ing] those who do” receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

Though the opinion of Saint Leo’s administration is easily discernible, the opinion of the student body is less so. To gain an insight into the thoughts of the student body on the COVID-19 vaccine, The Lions’ Pride Media Group conducted an anonymous survey and found that student opinion was not as black and white as one might suspect.

Of the survey respondents, the majority —57.1 percent--have received the COVID-19 vaccine, with another 11.7 percent of respondents who have either received a partial dosage or are planning on being vaccinated. 31.2 percent of respondents do not plan on receiving the vaccine.

There are a variety of reasons that students gave for receiving the vaccine. The majority

of vaccinated students explained that they wanted to get the vaccine to protect family members or friends who were most at-risk.

“I want to keep my family, especially my mother, as safe as possible and if the vaccine helps even a little bit I’ll take it,” said one student.

Other students were vaccinated in hopes of returning to normalcy.

“I want things to go back to normal,” said one respondent. “I’d like to give handshakes again, see people’s smiles again.”

Not all students who received the vaccine, however, are happy with their decision.

“I received part of the vaccine because I wanted to be protected from the virus, but then I did not get the second dose because the first one caused me to have a seizure right after I got it,” said one student respondent.

Some students also indicated that they felt coerced into receiving the vaccine, or had no other options.

“I didn’t want it, but I was tired of getting tested three times a week,” said a student. “I just caved.”

As for those who elected not to receive the vaccine, concern over possible side effects and the lack of data and literature on the long-term effects is one of the main reasons behind the decision to abstain.

“All [things] considered, we don’t have long-term data, and the short-term data we do have has been mired in politics,” said one student. “I am not confident that we

are being given enough information to make an informed consent to many of the current shots.”

Other non-vaccinated students simply do not believe the vaccine is medically necessary for them.

“I am naturally immune to COVID-19 through getting it in the past, and I believe that should be recognized,” one student stated.

A strong majority of students who took the survey—74 percent--have never been diagnosed with COVID-19. However, most students—75.3 percent--do know a family member or close friend who has been diagnosed with the illness. Most students responded that their decision to receive or not receive the vaccine was not influenced by knowing someone with COVID-19. Several students were persuaded against receiving the vaccine by seeing that vaccinated individuals could still contract the virus.

“My friend who is vaccinated just got COVID-19, and had it worse than I did,” said one student.

The survey also revealed the majority of student respondents—76.6 percent—do not feel pressured by Saint Leo to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, and most students said that they do not feel any less welcome on campus because of their vaccination status.

“Everyone is super kind here,” said one student.

Similarly, 76.6 percent of students feel comfortable disclosing their vaccination status to peers, professors, and staff at Saint Leo. Those who do not feel comfortable

discussing their vaccination status cite fear of being shamed and rejected as the main reason.

“I think there is still a lot of judgement in the air,” said one student. “I wish I didn’t have to worry about what others thought.”

This is especially true for unvaccinated individuals who worry that they will be considered selfish for not receiving the vaccine.

“I do not feel comfortable publicly disclosing my vaccination status to professors or staff because I fear that I will be shamed or looked down upon for being unvaccinated,” said one student.

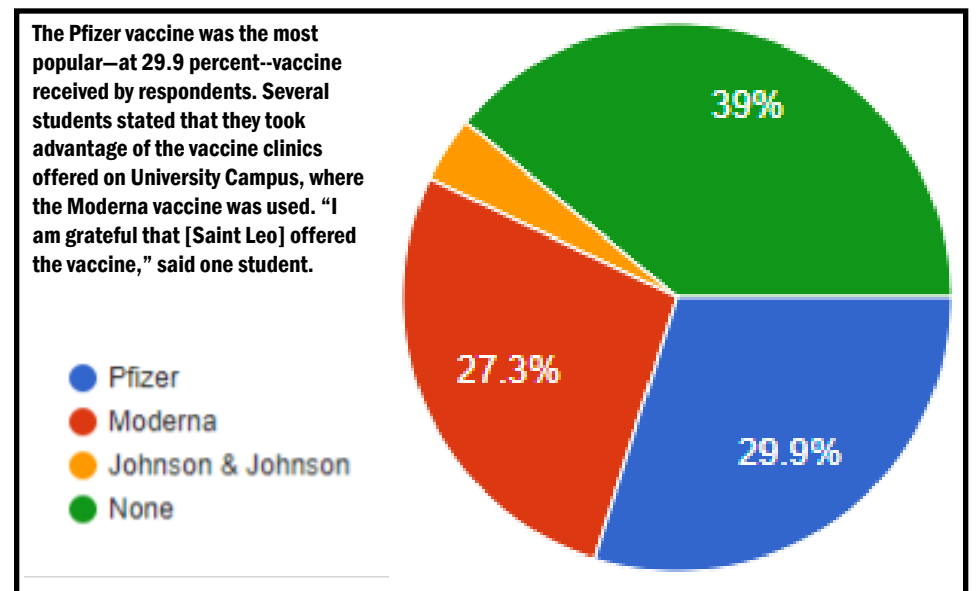
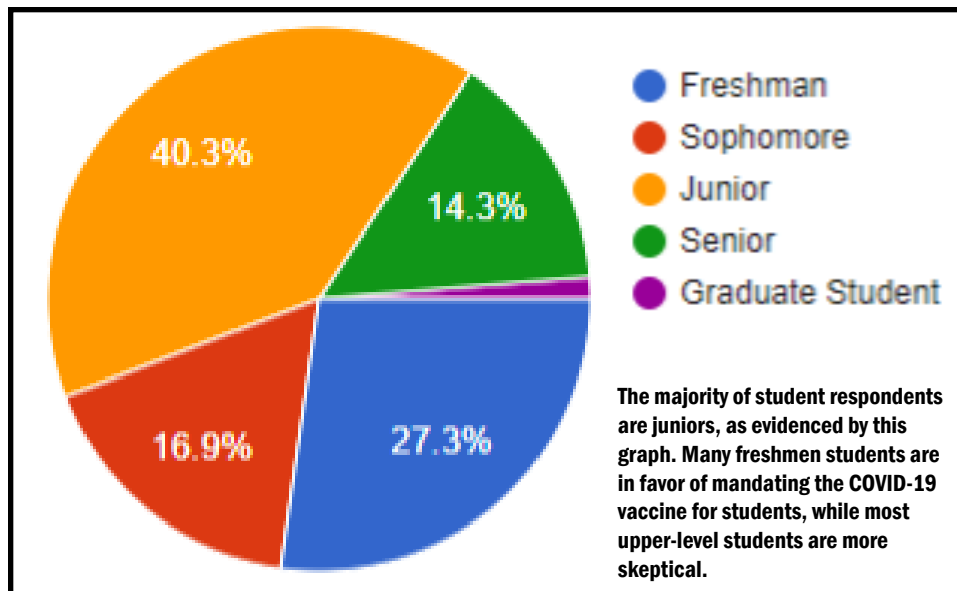
“I feel as though saying I’m not vaccinated causes others to look at me differently or judge me for not caring about the greater community,” another added.

“I have witnessed, firsthand, someone get bullied and harassed for not having it or for not wanting to take it,” said a third student.

Unvaccinated individuals are not the only ones to worry about discrimination.

“While I did post a photo of my vaccination sticker on social media, I feel reluctant to really speak publicly about being pro-vaccine due to the political orientation of many people I know,” said one student.

A final issue that students were polled on is whether Saint Leo should mandate the COVID-19 vaccine for students. 28.6 percent of respondents believe that the university should mandate the vaccine.



Editorials

"There are other vaccines that are already required to live on campus, so I think it's fair to require this vaccine, especially during a pandemic," said one student.

Most students who support a vaccine mandate think that mandated vaccination would be the best way to support public health and limit the spread of COVID-19.

"Keep the virus under control and not out of control," said one respondent.

Many students encourage vaccination for everyone simply because they are tired of wearing face masks.

"The more students who are vaccinated, the closer we get to ditching masks at school," said one student.

"I think it would be nice just to look people in the face," said another. "I don't even know what most of my classmates look like."

The majority of students—54.5 percent—believe that the university should not mandate the vaccine.

"HELL NO," said one student. "If they do, I'm outta here."

"Part of the reason I came here was because I didn't need the vaccine," added another student.

Many respondents think that mandating the COVID-19 vaccine for students would infringe upon an individual's freedom of choice.

"As a religious institution, I would hope [Saint Leo] would honour the students' right to choose what they allow to enter their body," said one student.

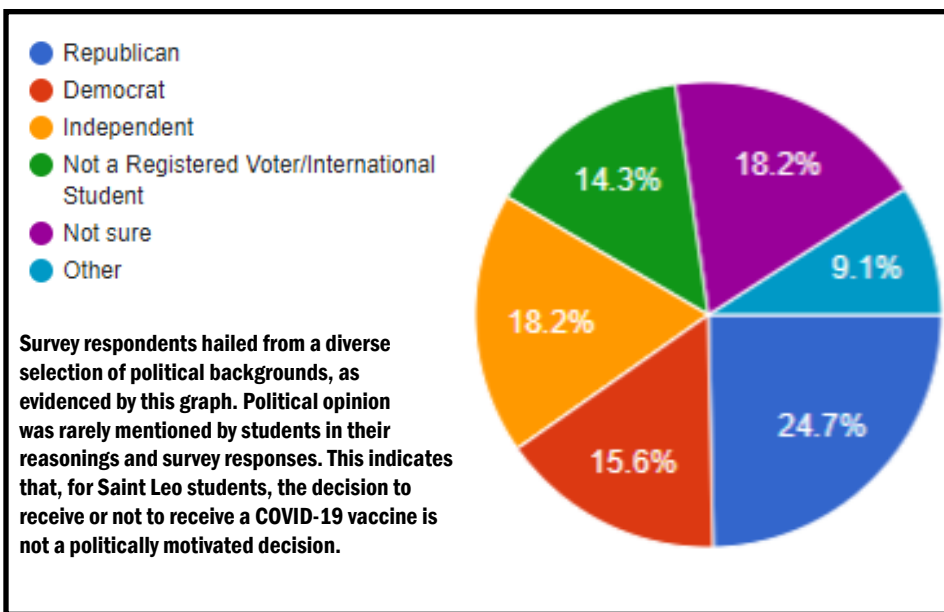
"While I am pro-vaccine, I feel people should have bodily autonomy in deciding to get it," said another.

"The matter of my medical conditions or my medical information should have zero affect as to my work ethic and performance as a student," said a third student.

Many students wish that the issue of vaccination was not so heavily polarized and divisive.

"I think it is sad that people cannot mature up in order to have a decent conversation with other people," said one student.

"I just wish people would not rush or pressure others to do something they do not wish to do, and that they would listen not only to reason, but also to what and why they are choosing the actions



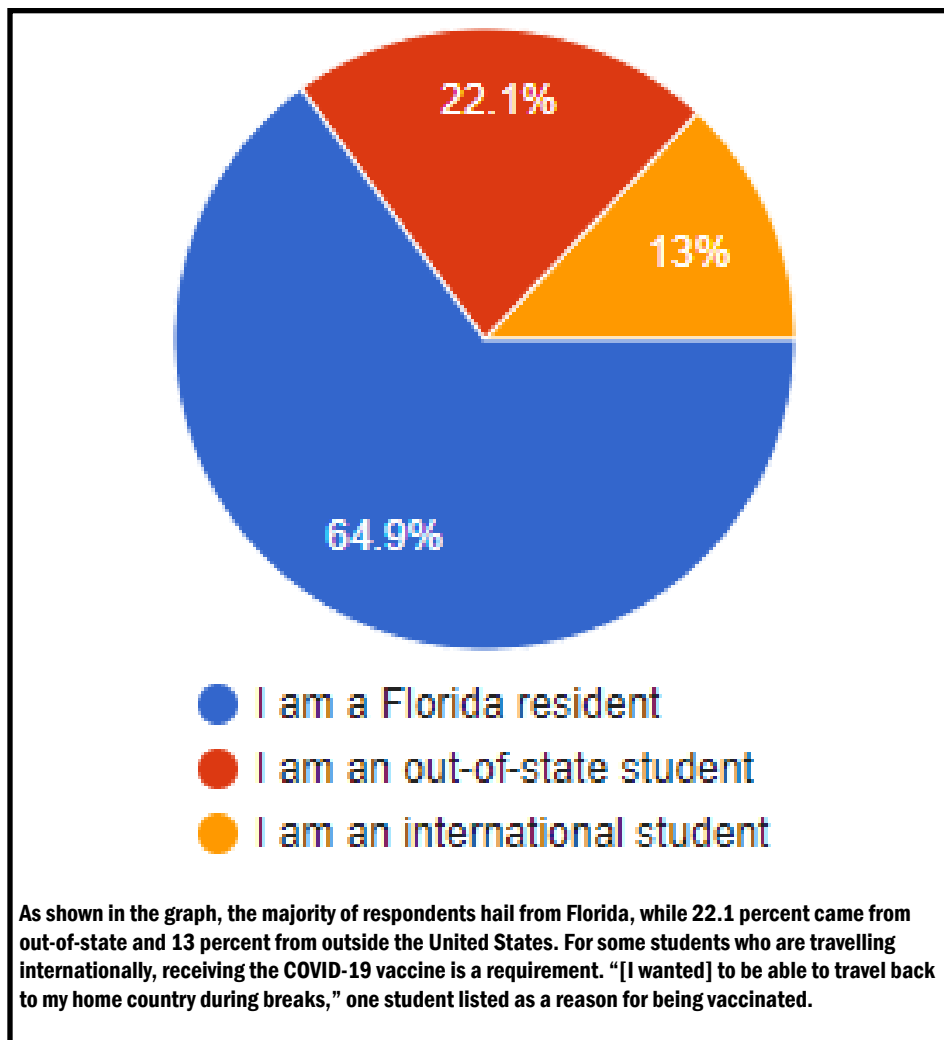
they are choosing," added another student.

In conclusion, this anonymous survey reveals that the opinions of Saint Leo's student population on the COVID-19 vaccine are very diverse. These opinions, however, are also all valid opinions made by educated persons who were truly trying to do what they thought was right.

I find it both sad and disheartening that I have seen numerous friends—both vaccinated and unvaccinated—rejected and excluded by others simply because of their vaccination status.

We as students need to remember that, even if our classmates, roommates, or co-workers have different opinions from ours, those students are still deserving of our respect and understanding, and ought to be treated with dignity.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a stressful and trying time for everyone. Discriminating against and judging people based on their vaccination status is unnecessary, unhelpful, and is only driving people further apart when we need to, more than ever, be working together.



Staying active on campus continued

can say personally that I have met friends that I will keep in touch with long after my time at Saint Leo."

Keselicka is vice president of a pro-life club, Imago Dei, which he has been active in since his freshman year. Additionally, this year he joined another organization, Omicron Delta Kappa, which is an honor society. He is also active with Residence Life on campus, and the University Ministry.

"My role in 'UMinn' is a leader for Men's Group and Bible studies," Keselicka said. "I got involved in 'UMinn' by just going to events they hosted and building community with those who were already involved since I was a freshman."

Keselicka also mentioned how glad he was having joined so many clubs and being so active on campus. He said that it has helped him to love the person he has become here at Saint Leo.

Although the university has helped him in his journey, one day Keselicka intends to move on from Saint Leo and pursue other opportunities.

"In five years, I see myself living in Florida, preferably the tri-county area of either Pasco, Hernando, or Hillsborough counties," said Keselicka. "Hopefully in five years I have traveled to at least three countries and have started a family. Lastly, I hope to start a hobby of bee keeping."

Finally, to the students who have maybe just started this year at Saint Leo or to any future incoming Lions, Keselicka's advice for those is as follows:

"To future lions, come and experience what it is like to be a lion, and the community many, including myself call home. Dive right in and see how you will love the person you become here."

If you would like to be featured in the next month's issue of The Lions' Pride, please contact the newspaper's social media page @lionspridemedial or contact lauren.felts@email.saintleo.edu directly for more information.



According to Business Observer, Florida's minimum wage will increase by \$1.00 every September until 2026.

Florida minimum wage increase: Will it do more harm than good?

Tayhana Taylor
World News Editor

Effective Sept. 30, 2021, Florida's minimum wage increased from \$8.56 to \$10.00 per hour. This increase in the minimum wage is much more than workers getting paid more; Such a drastic change in the economy has implications for employers and employees who work minimum wage.

"An increase in minimum wage usually means an increase in employer costs. To remedy this, employers will often raise prices (and pass these costs to consumers)," said Dr. Moneque Walker-Pickett, a criminal justice professor and associate chair of Saint Leo University's criminal justice department. "Some threats to unskilled workers include job losses, decreased work hours, and unemployment, which then affects poverty."

In theory, positive implications of increasing minimum wage would be to bring more people out of poverty and increase the income of individuals and their households. But this is not always the case.

"The unemployment rate will likely increase because of this change. Businesses will look for substitutes for the higher-waged workers. Investments in replacement technologies or outsourcing work will likely ensue," said Dr. Zachary Smith, an associate professor of economics and finance at Saint Leo. "Unless these displaced workers retrain themselves and seek new jobs, some increases in unemployment seem almost inevitable."

Although unemployment can be a negative implication of increasing the minimum wage, it is not the only possible side effect.

In some instances, employers may compensate by reducing the number of hours they allow their employees to work each week.

"Unemployment rates should increase, but this can be tough to connect to the data as some employees have their hours cut to more prime time when they are needed, which technically means they are still employed," said Dr. Ryan Murphy, an associate professor of economics at Saint Leo.

Additionally, many workers who have suffered from the lack of living wages—such as many of the migrant farmworkers in Florida—will still not see any benefits from the raising of the hourly minimum wage. In Florida, there are several migrant farmworkers who get paid differently from the average minimum wage worker.

"The industry of farmworkers is quite unique because it is regulated differently from other industries, so an increase in the minimum wage would not have a positive impact in any way for farmworkers," said Dr. Randall Woodard, an associate professor of Theology at Saint Leo.

Farm workers like the Immokalee workers, for example, do not get paid an hourly minimum wage rate.

"The problem with minimum wage for farmworkers is that they get paid by how many baskets of produce they pick," said Woodard. "Even if there was to be an increase in the minimum wage, it would not make a difference in pay for farmworkers or any worker in the agricultural industry because they get paid by the load."

In other industries like fast-food and retail, it may be an

easy fix for bigger companies to prepare for this increase in the minimum wage by investing more in automation. "Businesses are already positioning themselves to handle these adjustments to minimum wage. More and more jobs are being replaced by machines [...] just look to the new Publix and all the self-check-out lanes. The same can be found at Walmart and McDonald's," said Murphy.

The increase in the minimum wage to \$10.00 is only one of the first steps of Florida's trajectory to get the minimum wage to \$15.00 per hour.

"The anticipated change, which is an increase in the minimum wage rate to \$15, will lead to wage compression. This occurs as a result of setting a new wage floor in the labor market," said Smith.

Since the minimum wage was created in 1938, Congress has increased it nine times.

Smith further mentions that it is feasible for Florida to reach this goal of \$15.00 per hour by 2026, but he poses the question of whether it should reach this goal. "As this wage floor resets, relatively unskilled workers entering the labor force will receive the same wage rates as higher-skilled workers. This change could reduce morale and productivity amongst the group of workers with better skills," said Smith.

As wages increase, so will the supply of labor, but the demand for labor will decline. "People will be competing for fewer jobs because some employers will not be willing to hire additional employees at the higher wage rate," said Smith.

Since employers will always do what is best for their businesses, they will seek alternative ways to get a job done rather than hiring the next unit of labor. Smith stated that "If there are more attractive alternatives compared to paying this higher rate, they will deploy capital in a manner that ensures that it is used as productively as possible and this could, in turn, lead to the destruction of jobs through automation."

Automation has always been

a quick solution for employers. Hence, it is important for people to develop unique skills that set them apart. It is also vital that people acquire skills that will still be relevant in the far future and will keep them at an advantage over automated machines.

"Innovation and technology are not bad, but it is how we use them that makes a difference," said Woodard. "If we do replace some people with automation because of this increase in the minimum wage, non-profit organizations and the government could step in to offer alternative training pathways for people who are being laid off."

Dr. Rita Ray, an assistant professor of economics, asserts that the United States needs a comprehensive policy to reduce the number of discouraged workers and help them to acquire skills to qualify for the existing jobs.

"The non-participation rate amongst prime-age males (25-54 years) without having a college degree has been increasing significantly. One major reason for that is the decline in the demand for middle-skill workers," said Ray.

Wages are important and should be ethical, but when it comes down to increasing the minimum wage, the underlying question remains: how much should it be increased to?

"I think it is important to raise the minimum wage, but there needs to be a balance in not raising it to the point where it discourages individuals, especially young people, from going to college and making a better life for themselves," said Dr. Passard Dean, director of graduate studies/chair and professor in the department of accounting economics and finance.

If the minimum wage becomes too high, young adults may pass on attending college after high school—which is another issue in itself. "The minimum wage should be raised so that those who are in a position where they are not able to attend college can still make a decent living," said Dean.

Florida is well on its way to making incremental increases in the minimum wage paid to workers, but when making such a consequential change, the present and future implications must be fairly considered.

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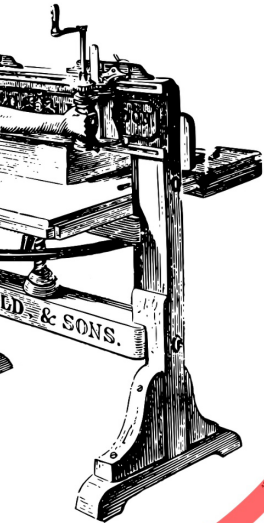
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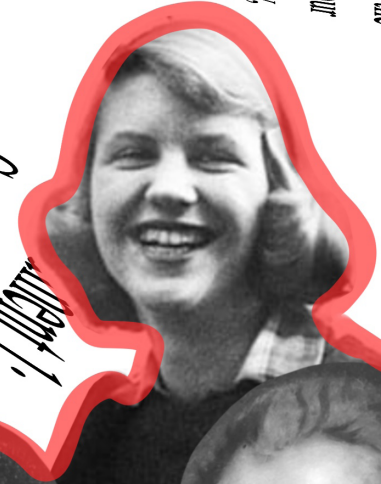
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What is the value of free speech?

Without freedom of expression, we would be living in anarchy

Lester Williams JR

Contributing Writer

The meaning of free speech, to put it simply, is a human's ability to be able to share their ideas, opinions, and experiences with the public. Historically, although this concept seems simple, freedom of speech has not truly been implemented effectively in society to make positive changes.

The origin of free speech dates as far back as the signing of the Magna Carta in England in 1215 where King John, in response to a rebellion, signed a document to declare the rights for both noblemen and regular people. In America, the origin of free speech dates to 1641 in Massachusetts where the First Amendment was approved.

The First Amendment is a vital part in the history of free speech because it ensures that the people living in the United States obtained their freedom of expression and were given the right to start petitions. It also included information about the due process which is used to ensure that U.S. citizens would be respected by the government.

As time goes on, more people are given the option to tell their story to make the public more aware of the challenges they are facing. It is thanks to free speech that the USA has constructed a society that puts more focus on equality and positive representation.

Free speech is a vital resource because it is a basic human right which is used to help improve society. Without free speech, countries like America would be a harder environment to

live in because people would not have access to the same rights and segregation would be widespread across the country.

Although current generations living in the United States have not lived with the harsh suppression compared to older generations, that does not mean that they should forget the sacrifices made to give them the freedom they have today.

Let us not forget when Dr. Rev. Martin Luther King, an African American civil rights leader, gave his 'I Have a Dream Speech' in 1963 at Washington, D.C's Lincoln Memorial. People like King are still celebrated because they demonstrate the power of free speech.

Before people like King took center stage, racial segregation of African Americans was widespread across America. One site even claimed that from the 1880s into the 1960s, a majority of American states enforced segregation through Jim Crow laws.

Racial segregation may not be on the minds of every U.S. citizen today; however, it is vital that everyone recalls how activist use free speech to fight for racial equality. According to the Cato Institute, "racism is an age-old problem," meaning that it is a struggle that will affect all generations.

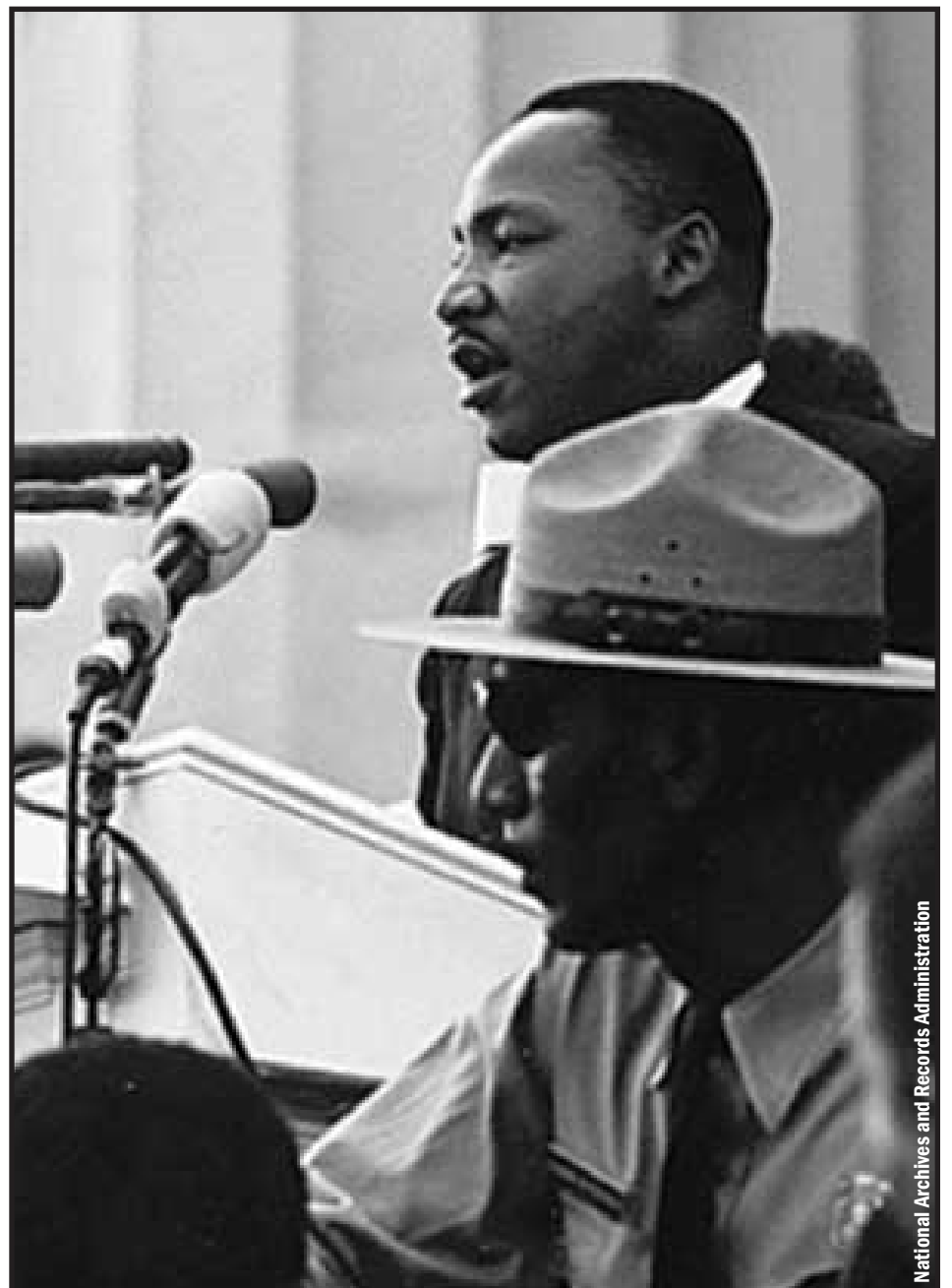
When asked to discuss freedom of expression, Francis Orlando, a political science instructor at Saint Leo University, said "The idea of unrestricted freedom to say whatever one likes is being challenged on a lot of different fronts. For example, should speech deemed hateful

continue to be protected by the First Amendment?"

To add to his response, Orlando also claimed "Another huge topic deals not just with governmental restriction of speech, but restriction of speech patterns elsewhere, such as college campuses, and more universally, on social media. Should First Amendment protections apply to platforms such as Twitter or Facebook?"

Based on Orlando's comments, the debate on the limitations of free speech will go on for several generations as technology introduces new ways for people to express themselves and governments work to alter how they define the limitations of free speech to maintain society.

Free Speech in Action
"But somewhere I read of the freedom of assembly. Somewhere I read of the freedom of speech. Somewhere I read of the freedom of press. Somewhere I read that the greatness of America is the right to protest for right."
- Dr. Martin Luther King



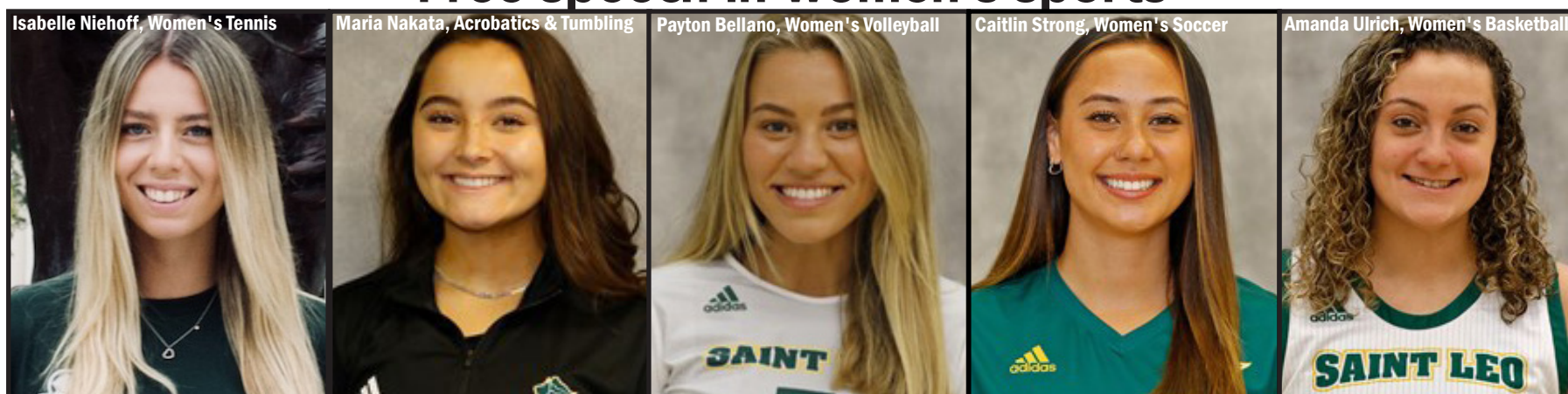
National Archives and Records Administration

First Amendment

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

Free Speech Week

Free speech in women's sports



Photos provided by SaintLeoLions

Anthony Martinez

Sports Editor

Free speech within sports has been around for as long as some of these sports have been around. Some athletes have used free speech to express their thoughts and agendas or make political statements.

Some athletes, while having the ability of free speech, are not always listened to, issues remain unchecked and problems linger. These are mainly women athletes who don't always have their voices heard.

There was an example last summer with the Tokyo Olympics involving 32-Olympic and world championship medal winner, Simone Biles.

Simone Biles, who became a truly dominant Olympic athlete in the last few years, won four gold medals for the U.S. Olympic team.

With all these expectations and weight, she made the hard decision to pull out of the Olympic team final before eventually pulling out of the individual all-around gymnastics' competition. She decided based on her mental health.

From then, she was ridiculed for taking time off for her health and discussing mental health in general. Athletes have been judged for this, with some looking at it as a weakness. However, none of the criticisms were to the extent that Biles experienced last summer.

That wasn't the only situation involving Biles this past summer that caught national headlines and Biles wasn't the only Olympic gymnast that experienced the same controversy.

Back in 2015, there had been multiple allegations of sexual assault committed by former Team U.S.A physician, Larry Nassar. However,

although allegations had been made against him, there was negligence in the handling of the case. Therefore, Nassar continued to treat patients for over a year before more allegations were made, a warrant was given, and child pornography was found in his possession.

People started to wonder why there was such a slow start for the investigation regarding Nassar. Over a few months, Nassar plead guilty to possession of child pornography and then criminal sexual conduct charges for 115 alleged victims

Then, he was later sentenced to prison for 40-125 years before more years were added on.

This year, the Department of Justice released a report on the F.B.I.'s handling of the Nassar situation or lack thereof. Additionally, many women athletes such as Ali Raisman, Maggie Nichols, and McKayla Maroney were involved and spoke out. This brings this whole situation to a big problem: not listening to women pleads.

Athlete or not, women's pleas go unnoticed and Nassar's case wasn't lacking evidence. Due to the F.B.I.'s slow start, more women were abused by Nassar because the women were not heard.

Free speech in sports has always been important, but it has not been the same for women. Male athletes have had their voices heard and have brought about awareness or change.

When N.F.L. quarterback for the Dallas Cowboys, Dak Prescott, talked about his mental health situation, he received a much more positive reaction.

Additionally, the N.B.A. lockout of 2011, that occurred due to the disagreement between owners and players' salary, was met with mass media attention and support.

Women in sports share the same sentiments regarding free speech, not only on the international stage but right here on the Saint Leo campus. The athletes were asked: "As a women athlete, do you feel your voice is heard enough or is there still more work to be done in that regard?"

"I believe as a women athlete today I do believe our voices are heard; however, I do also believe there is still work to be done. There has always been a stigma surrounding women athletes and their inability to be tough, and strong-willed," said acrobatics and tumbler freshman, Maria Nakata. "We as a society have become accustomed to believe that female athletes can only be contained within a certain box, but with the help of influential athletes like Nastia Liukin, Alex Morgan, and Serena Williams, just to name a few, they have paved the way for females in athletics."

They were then asked the ways they could use their voice as an athlete. "I think that it is important to lead by example. I want to inspire others to advocate for women having the same voice, power, and rights as men in sports," said women's tennis player and graduate student, Isabelle Niehoff. "I think a good way to use my voice is to connect with other female athletes from other sports, because together we are stronger and can actually make a change in the world of sports."

The importance of leading by example was a common thread between Niehoff and her fellow women athletes. Along with the thought that leading is inspiring, Saint Leo basketball player and junior, Amanda Ulrich, expressed how she felt her freedom of speech could be useful.

"I believe my voice can be useful in many ways as an athlete.

For instance, I can use my voice to inspire and prepare younger generations," said Ulrich. "I can inform them that we as women have to work 10 times harder than our male counterparts to be considered half as good. Females have a voice; females are the future. *Let us be heard.*"

Finally, they were asked if they had heard about the situation involving the U.S. Olympic team and Larry Nassar and if they had an opinion. Volleyball player and senior, Payton Bellano, said that she heard about the Nassar case.

"It is a tragedy that it happened and that it also took this long to finally get those Olympic athletes the justice they deserve," said Bellano. "Even though something detrimental occurred to these young, female athletes, we can find the light knowing how widespread it was through the media. Hoping that it will give more courage to the future female athletes who should not withstand or endure any such thing close to this."

It's a situation too many women can understand. Women continue to be shut down. Caitlin Strong, senior and soccer player, said, "I do understand that for the women who were facing this issue struggled with how to talk about it and anytime the women would speak about it, they were constantly being shut down and being told how they should feel about it."

Many more Saint Leo women athletes and women could be asked this question. More so than not, these answers will be similar. There is a problem with not listening to the free speech of these women. While there has been an improvement, there is still a way to go so another Nassar situation can be avoided.

How does the First Amendment guarantee people the freedom of speech?

From North to South, from East to West, in the whole U.S.A, freedom of speech is the law. Every citizen is protected by the First Amendment that ensures everyone the right to say whatever they want to say, without interfering with the rights of others.

Here we are learning skills and knowledge for the future because we are morally responsible for all we say. I can say whatever I want to say, the way I want to say it, and not interfere with what others want to say, because after all, we are responsible for what we say.

Jared R. Davila Cruzado

WHAT DOES FREE SP

The First Amendment was passed on Dec. 15, 1791 to protect the freedom for people to gather for assemblies, or freely speak how they feel without anything being held against them. The five rights in the First Amendment are the power to obtain freedom of religion, freedom from governmental meddling with the practice of religion, freedom of expression, the right of freedom of press, the right to assemble peacefully, and the right to petition the government for redress of grievances. Together, all five freedoms guarantee the promissory from the United States to be a free country. The First Amendment guarantees people the right of freedom of speech by prohibiting Congress and any other form of government from restricting the press or the rights of individuals to speak freely. Additionally, it guarantees the right of citizens to assemble peacefully and petition their government.

Na'Talia Mitchell
Freshman, Biomedical and Health Science

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Rahim Muhamma
Freshman, Sport

To me, free speech means the right to voice your opinion and what is on your mind without having to worry about being persecuted. This means that I can verbalize something extremely controversial without the government getting negatively involved, and blowing it out of proportion. I understand that there is a certain extent that you should take freedom of speech, but it brings peace and changes in society. This allows me to listen to other individuals, and a lot of them have good plans. Without it, we wouldn't have been here today, and in the good society we live in. We will have both sides, either you agree or disagree, and it helps bring morals and respect.

Deon Davis
Freshman, Sports Business

The First Amendment guarantees freedom of speech because it helps make sure that no one will get put down for voicing their opinions. It also helps because it allows news outlets to put out any facts they want, no matter how much it goes against the government. The First Amendment allows for the freedom of assembly, which also helps the average U.S. citizen to stand up for what they believe in.

Karen Hastings
Sophomore, Digital Communications

Freedom of speech means a lot to me, and I am very grateful that in the United States, it could not be as accessible as it gets. There are many things that you can say except for instilling violence among others, or encouraging others to act in on violent acts in any way.

Freedom of speech allows you to be fully expressive in your thoughts, values, ideologies, how you view things, and how it would impact others. In other words, it is a very influential concept that has a lot of pros and cons. The First Amendment right to freedom of speech guarantees people the ability to express said thought on any topic, whether political, environmental, spiritual, or mental. In instances like this, freedom of speech is a way better concept than censorship because of its whole idea of allowing one to state their concerns or agreements. In contrast, censorship is restricted and can often correlate to a political agenda.

Aalanis Harrison, sophomore,
English professional writing.

Free speech is a right that we are blessed to have; it allows us to speak our mind on anything and anyone that we please. Free speech allows us to express ourselves in ways that we couldn't if this right was hindered. It means that we are allowed to say anything that we want without fear of persecution. Individuals are able to express ideas, opinions, and anything that they want and not have to worry about negative outcomes from it. The freedom of speech is what allows every person to be exactly who they want to be.

Meghan Kennedy
Junior, Criminal Justice Major

Free speech means to me the freedom to express myself and my ideas without any restrictions. It is the opportunity to impose myself in which situation I am required to, to stand up and be able to speak. Also, it is a synonym of liberty, which in a country as the United States is the number 1 priority and right of every citizen. To be able to express yourself is an opportunity that not everyone has, so it means a lot to me.

Joao Pedro Palmer Boyd,
Freshman Undecided major.

Free speech means I am free to express my feelings and opinions to whomever and whenever I want, without fearing government punishment. Free speech means I can speak freely about various topics and situations. However, that does not mean I am protected from the consequences of saying whatever I want. For instance, if I were to say "fire" at the theater in my conversation, it would cause a panic and could potentially put others in harm; my words put people in danger, and that is a punishable offense in the same way as physically hurting them.

Khamille Labbe
Junior, Professional Writing Specialist



SPEECH MEAN TO US?

more than what it may seem like or is. Free speech, to me, has a life. It's being able to speak your mind without being judged or speech is when you can make statements and not feel like you said anybody's feelings with the statements. I believe that everybody speak their mind, but in today's world, some may feel like their doesn't matter. That's where problems occur. I believe that the right to speak their mind and it doesn't matter what level you're speech is when you can walk into a room, and be free (as in being self without holding your tongue for anybody).

and
s Business

When I think of the power of the First Amendment, the first thing that comes to mind is that sense of comfort that one feels when they have tried to do the right thing, but it did not work out. The best example that comes to mind is the Texas abortion ban and the many women who stood up to voice their beliefs in hopes of change. Whether it is right or wrong is not my focus; my goal is to show with this example what freedom of speech can do. It can give those women the opportunity to fight for what they believed was right, and if nothing changes, they have the comfort to say that at least they tried. And that is the beauty of free speech for me. It takes the fear of losing your life, and gives you the chance to speak what you think, even if it's against a big corporation or government. It gives one the peace of mind that comes after trying to fight for what you think is right, and I think that's something very powerful that I'm happy to be able to enjoy.

Angie Lopez
Junior, Criminal Justice

Censorship has become one of those things that you have to watch your back for with everything: say one wrong word and you're worse than dead. And it leaves people asking:

"What in the world happened to freedom of speech?"

Answer? It got canceled.

While I will admit that there are moments when common sense should prevail and a person ought to self-censor some of their thoughts (i.e. if you're the swearing sort, don't say such words in front of people who don't swear, don't tell dirty jokes in mixed company) depending on their audience, the idea of societal censorship as it stands today is, to my understanding, in direct opposition to the ideas set forth in the First Amendment. What springs to my mind is a story that I was told about a military man who spoke out about the evacuation from the Middle East in a way that was contrary to how the story was regularly being presented and wound up imprisoned.

In addition, it is far more difficult for people to understand what is or is not to be trusted. You only get one side of a story and are shut down if you ask questions.

Heidi Konow
Senior, English with Theatre Specialization

Free speech allows us to have the right to share our own beliefs, opinions, or thoughts. It is the principle in which people are able to express themselves as well as their opinions freely and openly with the world; whereas censorship is the silence of opinions and expressions. Although censorship can prevent people from making offensive or harmful remarks, free speech is a better option because it promotes connection with others. As long as we are able to express ourselves to each other and communicate in a thoughtful and respectful manner, we should ultimately make progress as a society. Taking away this right [to free speech] would definitely invoke more harm than benefit.

Lauren Felts
Junior, English Major Professional Writing Specialization.

Free speech is one of the most important rights granted to American citizens. To me, it means the ability to speak out against things we as citizens disagree with, and form solutions around those problems without the fear of government retaliation. Free speech gives me the right to raise my voice, take action, and act in support of those who are often not heard, seen, or have the ability to speak up against issues in the United States. Without free speech, fights against racism, gun violence, women's rights, and other social issues would be pointless. The voices of these social movements would become silent due to fear. Without the First Amendment guaranteeing our rights to freedom of speech, the right to assemble peacefully, and to petition the government. We would face situations like the censorship in North Korea where citizens are killed or imprisoned for their viewpoints against the Kim family dynasty. There is also Malala Yousafzai, a student the Taliban shot due to speaking out in support of women's education. Freedom of speech empowers people to speak out and promotes the expression of new ideas, but unfortunately is one right taken for granted.

Eternity Rodriguez,
Freshman, Psychology Major

The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution says, "Congress shall make no law...abridging the freedom of speech..." In June of 1789, James Madison introduced a clause to the House of Representatives that stated: "the people shall not be deprived or abridged of their right to speak, to write, or to publish their sentiments..." The language was changed before being presented to the Senate, and the final clause was agreed upon by both the House and Senate.

The phrasing of Madison's unrevised amendment proposal gives us a more detailed definition of "speech." We can conclude that the writers of the Constitution wanted American people to have the right to speak, write, and publish their opinions. The First Amendment restricts the United States Government from placing laws that infringe upon those rights.

With First Amendment rights, Americans enjoy the liberty to express beliefs, opinions, and grievances without facing punishment by law. Actions not protected by the amendment are those that harm other individuals or society. Freedom of speech is something all Americans should appreciate and celebrate, not just during Free Speech Week, but every day.

Miss Garner
Junior, English Professional Writing Major



Free speech, disinformation, and the dangers of censorship

Alora Peters

Editor-in-Chief

The right to freedom of speech—enshrined in the First Amendment of the Bill of Rights—was added to the United States Constitution to quell the fears of the people of being oppressed again by a tyrannical government, explained Frank Orlando, who teaches political science at Saint Leo University.

“If we think back to why the Constitution was passed, it was to give more power to the centralized government after the failure of the Articles of Confederation, which didn’t give the government enough power,” said Orlando. “The Constitution strengthened and empowered the government—people were a little bit worried about it. The Bill of Rights is there to say, ‘We’ll give the government more power, but they can’t touch these things—including free speech.’”

Since the ratification of the Bill of Rights, the right to freedom of speech—and what is protected under this right—continues to be defined by the rulings of the Supreme Court of the United States. Important cases—such as *Gitlow v. New York*, *Brandenburg v. Ohio*, and *Miller v. California*—led to the understanding of free speech that we have today and reveal that not all forms of speech are protected.

Schenck v. United States is one such landmark case, according to Joseph Cillo, who teaches law and criminal justice at Saint Leo.

“In *Schenck*, the Court ruled that speech that creates a clear and present danger during times of emergency is not protected speech,” said Cillo. “Actions, words, or deeds that are intended or done to incite immediate violence are not protected.”

This especially includes sedition, or the use of violence against the government.

“You can dislike the government,” said Cillo. “But you cannot use speech with the intent of violence against the government and or society. You can’t use ‘humor’ to threaten the life of a



president!”

While there are already a number of established restrictions on free speech, in recent times, many have called for increasing restrictions on what should be allowed under the First Amendment.

“Looking at the amount of the public that is in favor of unrestricted speech, it has declined in the United States—especially among younger people,” said Orlando.

This issue is especially relevant in the realm of social media, where owners and platform moderators have begun removing users and content in the name of protecting the public from disinformation and offensive speech.

“Our current media background is unprecedented,” said Orlando. “Today, it is free to say whatever you want, and you have a much further reach.”

The Supreme Court has yet to address a case on whether social media corporations—such as Facebook and Twitter—have the right to block users and censor

viewpoints they disagree with on their platforms, but, according to Cillo, it is highly likely that the Court will review in a case in the next few years and rule that this censorship is unconstitutional.

“Facebook and Twitter are private entities, but they are functioning as public forums,” said Cillo. “Since they post comments and opinions in the public square, if they block someone who they don’t agree with the opinion of, they violate the First Amendment.”

Aside from constitutional violations, there are other problems associated with censorship of viewpoints on social media in the name of preventing misinformation.

“How effective would crackdowns be?” asked Orlando. “Who gets to decide what is misinformation or not? Who is objective enough to say this is true, or this is false? It’s very hard to do.”

Classical writers and thinkers on free speech—such as the philosopher John Stuart Mill in his essay *On Liberty*—have also argued that restricting and censoring speech would be detrimental to society.

“Libertarians, like Mill, took a very positive approach to free speech,” said Orlando. “They thought it necessary for a free and fully-functioning society that speech patterns should not be restricted—even if others found them harmful.”

Mill was also a utilitarianist, which meant that he advocated for policies that would have the highest net happiness for the highest number of people, even at the expense of a few others’ unhappiness.

“For Mill, the utility that you would gain for restricting speech that was harmful or false would be less than the utility that you would gain for allowing speech in its totality,” said Orlando. For a utilitarian, it would have a more positive effect on a society to allow any form of speech, rather than if that society had to constantly police what was permissible or not.

“What is allowed to be said, and what is not allowed to be said—this changes with time and with place,” said Orlando.

Finally, writers like Mill contest that, even if both true and false speech are allowed in the public square, the true speech will still inevitably triumph.

“You might as well just let people say stuff, and let them look silly,” said Orlando. “The best response to something offensive would be a speech in response.”

Unrestricted speech of this nature would allow for an argument to prove its own merit through victories in debate, and would let individuals make logical decisions for themselves.

“You have to allow the people to hear both sides!” said Cillo.

In order to make sound decisions and to discern between right and wrong, individuals need to have a strong, educational foundation.

“Good citizenship is your highest calling, and you will



Free Speech Week

become so by a good education,” said Cillo. This is far easier said than done, however, as another crucial issue in the debate over free speech is censorship in universities.

“There really isn’t free speech on campuses,” said Orlando. “That type of environment makes things easy for the college administrators, but what kind of citizens emerge from that environment?”

Colleges and schools that attempt to shield students from too much exposure to different types of speech could, in fact, be doing them a disservice.

“By restricting speech, young people have become very sensitive to anything mean or distressing,” said Orlando. “It is not allowing people to develop a defense system for when they are eventually exposed to or attacked with anything harmful.”

It all begs the question: what should students do to better exercise their right to free speech and become better able to differentiate between conflicting viewpoints?

According to Cillo, one of the best things young adults can

do to become better informed is to become more involved in the world around them.

“It’s one thing to be electronically savvy. It’s another to be able to interact with other human beings,” he said. “Issues will affect your fellow humans, not your electronics. You need to interact with others.”

In conclusion, students must learn how to listen to differing opinions—including opinions that come into conflict with their own—and how to enter into dialogue with others, rather than simply dismissing them as ignorant or hostile.

Similarly, universities and instructors must seek to foster this type of dialogue and must aim to teach students how to think and ask questions, rather than simply teach students what to think and what questions to avoid.



International perspectives on free speech

Tayhana Taylor

World News Editor

I have always perceived the United States as the “land of the free.” To be in a space where free speech is celebrated is very different for me because in Jamaica, where I am from, speech is not so “free.”

It is indeed a privilege for Americans to be able to freely voice their opinions through protests, strikes, or even snarky social media posts about a policy or politicians they may disagree with. This sense of liberty is not universal.

Free speech to me is a form of liberation that enables people to express themselves through their words. According to Jamaica’s constitution, “All persons in Jamaica are entitled to the right to freedom of expression and the right to seek, receive, distribute, or disseminate information, opinions, and ideas through any media.”

Sometimes there can be a limit placed on how much a person can “express” themselves through words. In April 2020, a man posted a video on his social media page using derogatory words and bashed the Prime Minister, Andrew Holness, for implementing strict curfew measures.

Shortly after the video went viral, this man was arrested, and later fined a fee of 60,000 JMD (400.00 USD) for breaking curfew measures—followed by a public

apology to Holness.

But in the United States where “cancel culture” has become popular via social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and so on, people can simply slander politicians with little to no repercussions. People with leftist and rightist ideologies often clash on social media as both sides use their “free speech” to express themselves—regardless of the uproar and chaos that may follow.

In my opinion, having free speech gives the voiceless and underprivileged people in society a voice. It somewhat levels the playing field between those who are privileged and those who are not. However, a person should not use the advantage of having free speech to harm others. Free speech should come with some levels of accountability and censorship.

Crystal Smith

Managing Editor

Today in America, free speech is a right afforded to every citizen regardless of age or gender. According to research, in the United States, freedom of speech is more widely accepted than in any other country.

A 38-nation Pew Research Center survey conducted in 2015 revealed that Americans are most supportive of everything that constitutes free speech. This includes freedom of the press and the right to use the internet without government censorship.

With this in mind, it is safe to mention that my perception of what frames free speech in the United States is entirely different from what is considered free speech in many other international countries.

To elaborate, exercising free speech, in my opinion, is a form of freedom that allows a person to express their emotions verbally.

In The Bahamas, where I am from, people cannot freely express this constitutional right. Social and political protests are discouraged, while coercion and abuse of law enforcement power ensure that protests and rallies are kept at an all-time low.

However, in America, Americans can voice their political opinions, whether appropriate or not, through protests, social media posts, rallies, and sometimes even riots.

This liberty is not extended in many other international countries like Jamaica, The Bahamas, and Dominica.

People are arrested and mishandled in an attempt to curb the rate of people who freely express their opinions, whether they are political or not. For instance, a few months ago in The Bahamas, numerous outraged citizens gathered to protest against policies made by the country’s leader

Instead of this exercise of free speech being supported, it was reprimanded, and those who refused to be silenced were arrested or threatened with the reality of being arrested.

The American perception of free speech is genuinely considered a privilege in the eyes of an international individual.



Inclusion and accommodations on Campus

Mariana Navarrete

Arts & Culture Editor

At Saint Leo University, the Office of Accessibility Services is here to promote inclusion at the campus. It is dedicated to ensuring equal access for students through education, advocacy, and resources.

“We do this by working collaboratively with the University community to provide reasonable accommodations, to ensure all community and guests have equitable access to the programs, opportunities, and activities available at Saint Leo,” said Director of the Office of Accessibility Services, Dr. Michael Bailey.

Bailey helps to ensure that students have the reasonable accommodations they need to fully access and participate in clubs, recreation, sporting events, and all facilities.

“The faculty have been so willing to work together and hungry to learn how they can assist any students who may need accommodations to help them fully access their courses,” Bailey reflected.

The process for students to receive accessibility services can vary a bit from one student to another.

Regardless of a student’s situation, he or she must first register on the Office of Accessibility website by creating a profile on the AIM portal. The student can then submit proper documentation through this site. This could range from a recent evaluation conducted at a student’s high school to medical documents that provide the university with information about that individual’s situation.

After this, they work with the student to determine his or her challenges and needs from an accommodations standpoint. Each student’s professors then receive an e-mail outlining the student’s reasonable accommodations, which could vary from one class to another.

The nice thing is that students can select specific accommodations for each class, each term.

“Of course, we can handle this intake process based on how students want to go about it—a face-to-face meeting, by phone, by videoconferencing, via text relay, or any other method that best suits that



student,” said Bailey.

The services are available for those with a visual or hearing impairment, learning or communication disability, psychological disorder, medical need, or any other condition recognized by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Some students have had these challenges since birth, while others have acquired them through military service or in other ways. Because of this, some students received accommodations in grade school, but others may have never had accommodations or it may have been a while since they last received accommodations.

“We occasionally serve students with temporary disabilities, as well such as student-athletes who have sustained injuries and students who may have been in an accident,” Bailey explained.

Accessibility services provides the same level of services to each and every student, no matter where they are located, in any of the Education Centers or Saint Leo WorldWide programs. If there’s a way, they will find it.

“We do this by e-mailing accessible text files of textbooks to them, mailing Braille or large-print versions of materials, or problem-solving reasonable accommodations that their instructors can provide, no matter where the students are located,” said Bailey.

Some of the services they provide are JAWS screen readers, which allow users to interact with a computer by having information on the screen verbally read aloud.

Sonocent software is provided, too, which is a note-taking

software that records audio and then allows users to annotate and interact with this content in various ways. Livescribe is a smart pen device that can assist with note taking.

Students can receive extra time on certain exams and assignments. They can also make arrangements so students can sit in front of the classrooms or sit away from a window or air conditioning vent in certain cases.

Additionally, Accessibility Services has a testing center that students can come to where they may feel more comfortable taking tests or exams. This space seats up to 21 students and is equipped with cameras, since some students are more comfortable without an actual proctor in the room.

Assistant Director Maria Santos has been working a year and a half at the Office of Accessibility Services with Bailey.

Santos appreciates how Bailey and herself are constantly incorporated into important meetings with the leadership of the university, such as strategic planning meetings.

“You can’t have inclusion without the conversation about Accessibility Services,” Santos said.

Santos is impressed with the commitment of faculty to make accommodations in their classes. The fact that it is very easy to connect with them and that they are fully willing to collaborate and accommodate the student makes her work easier and gratifying.

“The Saint Leo faculty is understanding that a student with disabilities is an important member of the class, rather than a burden,” said Santos.

Sometimes campus activities are not fully accessible, and students with disabilities do realize when an event is intentional for accessibility and when it is not. If you do not have a disability you might not realize the little things, but disabled students do.

For example, a movie night on Kirk Lawn might not be accessible for deaf or partially deaf students if there is not closed captioning.

Currently, Accessibility Services has been working closely with the Office of Residence Life, Athletics, and Greek Life to have more accessible events, recruitment, and engagement.

“Send us an email, text us, or call us! If you are doing an event and want to make sure it is accessible to everybody, we can collaborate for sure,” said Santos.

Recently, Accessibility Services partnered with Athletics to have more accessible games for visitors and students. They hired a close captioning software so that deaf and partially hearing people could come to watch the Lions play.

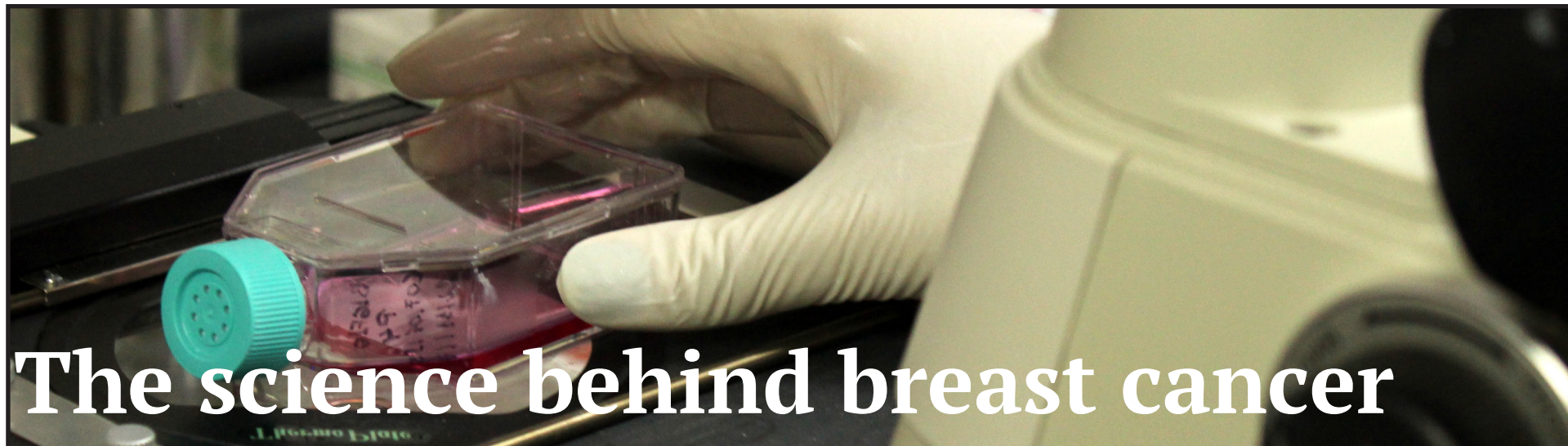
Another recent program is called Autism Connect Support Program. Here, students in Autism Connect receive access to peer mentorship, one-on-one accessibility supports, and various social skills workshops designed to connect students with autism spectrum disorder to the Pride. Diversity, inclusion, and accessibility are the goal. This event will take place the first Friday of every month.

“We want to dispel any creepy notions and myths students have about people in the autism spectrum,” said Santos.

Disability Awareness Week will be from Oct. 11-15. This week will be filled with events on university campus, with opportunities for WorldWide students to join.

Here, students can join and learn more about disability services and resources. It will involve partnering with organizations outside Saint Leo, such as the Division of Blind Services, mental health organizations, and the Special Olympics.

“Having people with disabilities in every aspect of life is part of human diversity.”
- Assistant Director Maria Santos.



Miurel Zamora

Contributing Writer

Breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer among American women. According to Breastcancer.org, a nonprofit organization dedicated to serving those with the disease, in 2021, it is estimated that about 30 percent of newly diagnosed cancers in women will be breast cancers.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), breast cancer is a disease in which cells in the breast grow out of control.

But even within the breast, there are different types of uncontrolled cell growth depending on which cells are affected by the disease-causing different types of breast cancer.

The most common way for women to get breast cancer, according to Dr. Sergiy I. Borysov, a biology professor conducting biomedical research at Saint Leo University, is by DNA damage of the cell produced most of the time by aging. This is how normal breast cells tissue grows abnormally and becomes cancerous.

Women who are 50 years or older are more prone to be diagnosed with breast cancer. This is due to exposures that lead to mutations of cells ultimately becoming cancerous.

Hereditary risk factors also double the probability of a woman being diagnosed with the disease. Other contributing factors include the environment, X-rays, UV light, radiation, diet, hormones, random growth, and so on.

According to Breastcancer.org, white women are slightly more likely to develop breast cancer than

Black, Hispanic, and Asian women. Black women typically develop more aggressive and advanced-stage breast cancer.

Black women are also more likely to die from breast cancer. However, there is not sufficient evidence to correlate breast cancer with race and mortality rate.

“Early detection of cancer is key for patients and usually the treatments will vary depending on the patient, type of cancer, and doctors,” stated Borysov.

According to the National Center Institute, new technology is being developed for the early and efficient detection of breast cancer

For example, 3D mammography, also called Tomosynthesis Mammographic Imaging Screening Trial (TMIST), works by building 3D like images of the breast after capturing images

from different angles.

This will allow researchers to see through the screen cancerous cells and tissue. However, it is still under development and must be tested for five years to prove its efficacy against current 2D mammograms.

“We are trying to bring precision medicine into the arena of screening. The idea is to learn how we can do a better job of screening for breast cancer,” said Laura Esserman, director of the University of California, in an article from the National Cancer Institute.

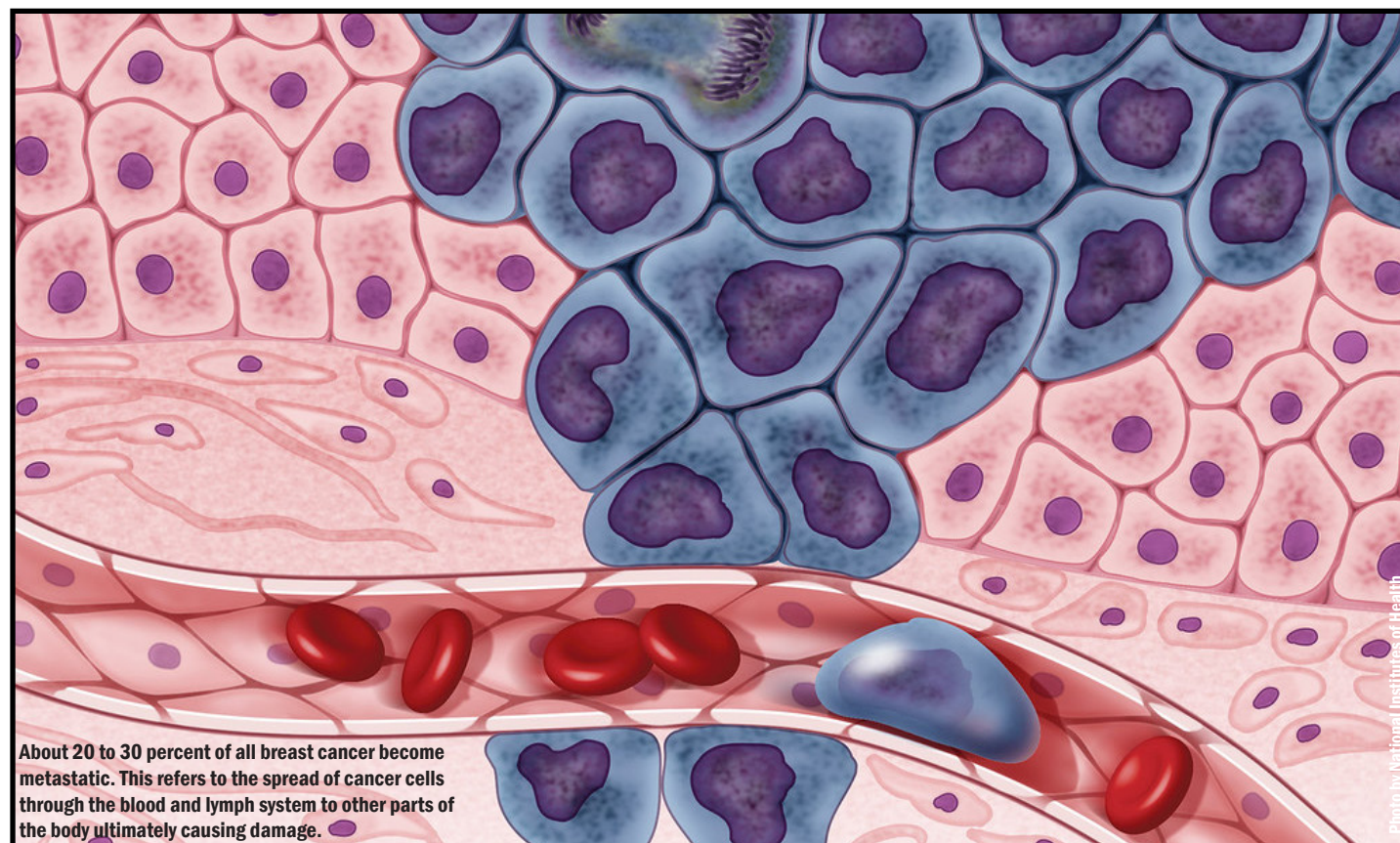
Other known treatments among cancer patients are surgery that removes the tumor and nearby tissue, radiation, chemotherapy, hormone therapy, and target therapy. Amongst all the treatments for breast cancer, “Chemotherapy treatment causes harshest side

effects.” according to Borysov.

“It does not only kill cancer cells, but it kills any cell dividing at the moment and a lot of cells divide in our body every day to keep us healthy for instance our immune cells and those could be compromised,” continued Borysov. “However, each treatment will be considered individually depending on each patient and level of metastasis.”

Cancer treatment may be effective when detected early. Thus, women 40 years and older must begin mammograms screening, as recommended by Mayo Clinic.

After the first mammogram doctors will determine whether to repeat it every year or every other year to avoid abnormal cell growth. You may visit Breastcancer.org to get more information about breast cancer prevention and treatment.



About 20 to 30 percent of all breast cancer become metastatic. This refers to the spread of cancer cells through the blood and lymph system to other parts of the body ultimately causing damage.

Photo: National Institutes of Health

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Lauren Felts

Advertisement Manager

As the autumn season approaches, so does Pink October, also known as Breast Cancer Awareness Month. For those who have lost a loved one to breast cancer, have loved ones with breast cancer, or have loved ones who have fought off breast cancer, here are some ways to recognize this month for what it is and do something meaningful.

Although most people are aware of breast cancer for the most part, women are still reminded to get checked. When the pink ribbon was invented and awareness first began, it was not a common practice to get checked by a doctor. Therefore, the intent of the ribbon originally was to encourage more women to do so.

However, the way we choose to spread awareness or remind others to not forget or not to give up is not by wearing a pink tee or a pink ribbon. Our support is shown in the ways we actively get involved.

Today, there are hundreds of events to attend to become more involved in research or just show support. For example, each year organizations like the Breast Cancer Foundation and Breast Cancer Now host annual charity runs ranging from marathons to quick 5ks. These runs help to raise money for those who are currently fighting their breast cancer battle, as well as helping with research to find a cure.

Additionally, the National Breast Cancer Foundation runs fundraising events such as a 31-day squat challenge for the whole

month of October. There are plenty of ways to get involved that even offer supporters a way to start their own fundraiser. However, it is just as easy to support and give to the cause by simply donating. There are a ton of ways to stay active in the battle and help show your support. The foundation also has volunteer opportunities for those who have some extra time on their hands.

For college students, the National Breast Cancer Foundation (NBCF) has college internships available. For marketing majors or business majors, the internship provides experience with marketing and reveals the inner workings of what it takes to work for a non-profit organization. To sign up or learn more information, visit College Internship - National Breast Cancer Foundation.

In addition, Saint Leo University shows their support by hosting a few events on campus to help spread awareness and encourage women to get mammograms. Starting on Oct. 13 from 1:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m., students will be encouraged to wear pink on campus in support of Pink October. Additionally, students who know a loved one with breast cancer or just want to show support are able to make bracelets and tie-dye T-shirts on the Kirk lawn. For more information on the event, visit the campus community page for more details.

For those unable to attend the event, ribbons will be passed out in front of Saint Edward Hall all month long at the front desk. When you have time, drop by Saint Edward Hall, bring a friend, and grab a ribbon to show your support.



"Saint Leo University will be turning pink during the month of October to show support for Breast Cancer Awareness Month."

- Office of University Communications

Exploring the Sandhill Review

Adriana Rodriguez

Contributing Writer

It's hard being a seasoned author, but it's even harder to be an aspiring one.

Publishers want experienced authors, and authors want publishers that help them gain experience: it's a never-ending cycle. Fortunately, Saint Leo University has a solution to this problem, and it's the Sandhill Review.

"Sandhill Review is the literary magazine of Saint Leo University. It showcases [the] work of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and participants of the Sandhill Writers Retreat," explained Dr. Gianna Russo, assistant professor of English and creative writing, and current editor-in-chief of the Sandhill Review magazine.

The magazine was founded by Dr. Kurt Van Wilt, a previous professor at Saint Leo, who Russo described as, "a poet, and a writer, and a huge supporter of student writers and of the literary community." Russo continued, "I'm sure that he founded it to showcase that work and to offer an outlet to the community. That's my educated guess."

Wilt's goal for the Sandhill Review seems to have been met as more members of the Saint Leo community submit their work. The magazine is currently in its 22nd



volume and has recently been made universally available with an online version from the past year due to the coronavirus pandemic.

This transition to digital publishing has increased the sense of community that the magazine provides to all of its readers since it has made it possible to distribute the magazine to the Saint Leo centers all across the country.

This wasn't possible until the magazine took on a digital form. Instead of only its main campus being able to read the edition, all of the Saint Leo community can partake in the published works of its members.

With this in mind, Russo assured that Sandhill Review will continue to keep an online version

of its upcoming volumes.

It's not just writers who are invited to contribute to the magazine. Photographers, poets, and all sorts of artists are also welcome to submit their work for publishing.

"The only thing we really don't publish [...] is an academic-style essay," Russo said. "We're more interested in creative work."

For this year's volume, participants need to become extra creative since the theme, "The World Around Us," forces them to see the world from a new perspective. This is thanks to the new limits as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Partly because we have been so restricted and we've been a little bit hemmed in, it sort of focuses you on looking at things more microscopically," said Russo. "I found myself focusing on the outdoors much more than ever."

When picking a theme for the Sandhill Review, Russo explained that she first turned to her interns for suggestions. This year's theme was actually suggested by one of her interns, Alicia Shook, a current junior at Saint Leo with a double major in history and English with a specialization in literary and cultural studies.

The theme was then, as Russo explained it, discussed with creative writing professors, Dr. Anne Barngrover and Dr. Patrick Crerand,

who, as current staff members of the magazine, loved the new theme.

Once participants have submitted their works to the review, all submissions are then assessed and picked for publishing depending on how they meet the criteria posted on the guideline rules.

"The standards are [excellence] in terms of craftsmanship and technique, and then how are you addressing the theme [...] I think, intuitively, we have a sense of 'this is working, or this isn't,' and it usually has to do with the feeling that's going on with the passion and, but also the craftsmanship. It's not like we have a rubric," stated Russo.

Of course, participants are also required to follow basic rules such as proper grammar, required word-count, and authentic comprehensive images and drawings when submitting their works to the review. They must turn in their own work and not that of others, and failure to do so would result in instant disqualification.

When notifying a participant of rejection, the Sandhill Review staff shows adherence to the core values of Saint Leo by staying mindful and respectful towards the person. By maintaining the civility showcased by the magazine, the participant will then be able to further develop his/ her work ethic and demonstrate professionalism for future submissions and other related attempts.

Although the Sandhill Review has proven to be successful in its publishing and inclusiveness, it still faces obstacles.

"I guess, in a small way, [a challenge is] making sure that everyone knows that it's here and it's available for people to submit to," Russo said.

Sandhill Review is attempting to solve this issue by increasing its accessibility and promoting the literary magazine via universal online websites such as Facebook and Google. The Sandhill Review can be found on Facebook under the name "Sandhill Review and Writers Retreat."



Students interested in submitting to the Sandhill Review should visit www.lightningkeyreview.submittable.com/submit for more information

LOCAL HALLOWEEN EVENTS

FOR THIS SPOOKY SEASON



Fox 13 claims Scream-A-Geddon is one of the scariest haunted houses in the country.



Mariana Navarrete
Arts & Culture Editor

October is here and so is Halloween. The Campus Activities Board (CAB) of Saint Leo University has some events organized for this month with Halloween-related activities on campus. If you want to explore outside campus, there are some events around the Dade City-Wesley Chapel area too. It does not have to be Oct. 31 yet to go to a haunted house!

The annual three-day Family Fall Festival will be from Oct. 15-17 at the SCC Patio and Bowl. There will be a carnival with various rides and food, a tailgate, fireworks and more.

On Thursday, Oct. 21, the CAB will host another carnival at the SCC Patio and Bowl. This carnival includes an interactive haunted house and numerous events inside

and outside the Saint Leo dining hall.

Some of the activities happening will be cake walks and various food trucks among others. The games and food will go from 4:30 p.m. -7 p.m. The haunted house will start at 6 p.m. and close at 9 p.m.

The Halloween Bingo will be on Tuesday, Oct. 26. It will be held on the Kirk lawn or the SCC Boardrooms depending on the weather conditions.

The CAB will organize one of the Universal Studios Halloween Horror Nights for an outside Halloween trip on Oct. 22 and 29.

Tickets will be launched soon, so watch out for the CAB Instagram page for updates or reach out to KJ Ryan via email at karl.ryan@email.saintleo.edu for more information.

If you want to explore off-

campus events in October, some horror-themed parks and festivals range from 10 to 30 minutes away from Saint Leo. You do not have to drive all the way to Tampa to find some Halloween fun.

Scream-A-Geddon is a horror theme park with five haunted houses and zombie paintballs. It is located at 27839 Saint Joe Rd., Dade City. Admission costs start from \$25.95 per person, but the price varies as Halloween gets closer. The general admission ticket includes unlimited access to all haunted attractions. It is open from 7:30 p.m. to 11 p.m. during the week and until 1:00 p.m. during October weekends.

Sir Henry's Haunted Trail is an outdoor trail between Tampa and Orlando. The trail is located at 2837 South Frontage Rd., Plant City. Sir Henry's Haunted Trail offers different experiences for guests to satisfy Halloween and haunted house cravings.

There are three haunted trails, an escape game, and laser tag, along with entertainment and food vendors. Tickets are online for \$25. It is open Fridays and Saturdays from 7:30 p.m. to 11 p.m., and Sundays from 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

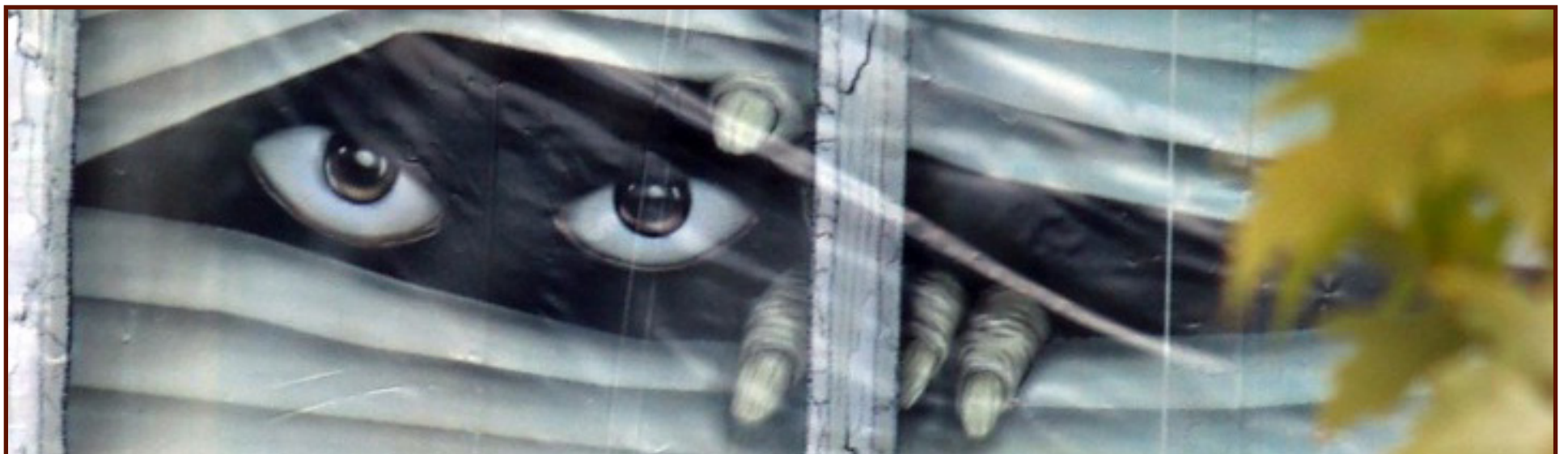
The 2nd Annual Pumpkin

Festival will occur at The Grove in Wesley Chapel from Oct. 15 to Oct. 17. There will be a pumpkin patch, full carnival, food trucks, craft vendors, costume contest, dog costume contest, Mr. and Ms. Pumpkin, and Truck or Treat. Tickets can be bought online and in-person. They are worth \$5 for the whole weekend. Events will take place from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

The North Tampa Bay Chamber of Commerce presents the 17th Annual Wesley Chapel Fall Festival with an all-new location at Tampa Premium Outlets on Oct. 30 and Oct. 31. Everything will start at 11 a.m. and end at 6 p.m. each day. There will be three community stages, live entertainment, a pumpkin patch, and the Trunk or Treat.

The World's Largest Food Truck Rally will also be there with local and foreign food trucks. Tickets are \$10 and can be bought online and in-person.

Whether you choose to stay on campus or look outside Saint Leo, there are plenty of Halloween-themed events you can enjoy and have fun with family and friends. Beware of the events involving frightening activities – always know how much you can handle!





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