



## Wesley Trustee Sentenced for Bank Fraud

Faculty and Students comment.

P7

## Wesley Sprinters Reach No. 1

Two track team members are No.1 in the nation, despite the college's lack of facilities.

P2



# The Whetstone

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## Campus Mourns Month-Long Missing Wesley College Student Found Dead

By Brielle Braxton-Young, Dylan Morris and Brooke Retkowski, *The Whetstone*

Junior Justin Cowgill is one of many students who had been worried about fellow student Erick Acevedo-Palencia, 21, who went missing Feb. 12, and whose body was found in nearby Silver Lake on the morning of March 17. The medical examiner said there was no evidence or indication of foul play.

"The last time I spoke to Erick was about two days before he went missing," he said. "The thought of him being gone is always in my head."

Erick was last seen Feb. 12 at 5:21 p.m. Security cameras show him leaving Malmberg Hall wearing a gray hoodie, black sweatpants, and white sneakers. His phone, wallet, license, student identification card, room key and credit card were left in the room.

He had left wet clothes – a pair of jeans and a shirt – in the shower.

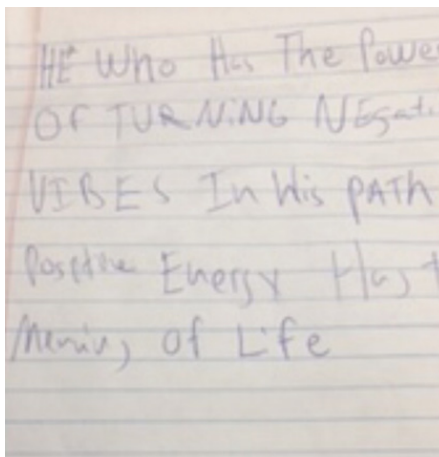
Some friends said Erick often went to Silver Lake to run – he was on the track team – but the wet clothes weren't

track attire.

He also left a note in his room, which read: "He who has the power of turning negative vibes in his path to positive energy has the true meaning of life."

Erick's disappearance and death happened only four months after the week-long disappearance of junior Ahyanna Baker-Griffin, who was found murdered in the Camden home of her boyfriend.

Students mourned both their deaths after they learned of Erick's body being found, and reflected on their lives.



Erick's Note

"This whole situation makes me feel like I'm in the twilight zone," junior Amber Mcnear said. "I can't believe that this is actually happening. My relationship with Erick was a super special one. It went beyond just goofing around and beyond late-night conversations. He was family to me."

Mcnear said she regrets not answering his final texts to her.

"I'll never forgive myself for it," she said. "I love you and hope you're finally at peace."

Junior Ashli Moore said she wished the school had done more.

"With Erick, I feel as though the student body took the situation into our own hands because the school wasn't doing anything until the last minute," she said.

School security sent out an alert two days after Erick was last seen and sent out a "gold alert" the following day. However, no school administrator sent out a message to the campus for two weeks. The school sent nothing out about



Erick Acevedo

Ahyanna until she was found dead. Her family reported her missing the weekend after the Thursday she was last seen.

"My friendship with Ahyanna – we always had fun," Moore

Continues on P. 12

## Wesley Sprinters Reach No. 1 in Nation

By Brooke Retkowski; *The Whetstone*

Freshman Kai Cole ranked No. 1 in the nation in Division 3 for the 60-meter dash at the 2019 Colledgeville Classic on Jan. 19.

Cole ran the event in 6.82 seconds.

"I train by focusing on different running techniques and watching videos on professional sprinters before my meets," he said.



Kai Cole

Brooke Retowski

Cole is just one of many Wesley track team members who are excelling and impressing other Division 3 teams – and many from Division 1 – across the country.

This, despite the school having no facilities for them to practice and never playing at home, the team continues to place at meets.

Sophomore sprinter Maysha Foster said the lack of facilities gives the team motivation.

"Because we do not get the same treatment as other teams, such as having a locker room or a place to practice on campus, we use that as determination at events," she said.

Junior sprinter Evelina Slobob placed first at the most recent meet on Feb. 8. She ran the women's 60-meter dash in 7.60 seconds placing her No. 1 in the nation in Division 3.

"I go to the trainers before every track meet," she said. "I take an ice bath and get any necessary treatment so I am ready to compete."

Coach Stephen Kimes said his team is successful because of the work and time athletes puts into their training.

"It is all about personal sacrifice because a lot of the athletes don't get breaks between seasons," he said. "Some of them start in September, get a few weeks off for winter break, and then come back to continue

**Continues on P. 4**

## Wesley Alerts Go Missing For Some

By Dylan Morris; *The Whetstone*

In a two-week period, Dover Police reported nearly 20 incidents of tires slashed in commercial parking lots along the Route 13/113 area.

Wesley College sent text and email alerts to students, faculty and staff informing them of the incident and to report any suspicious activity to the police.

There was one problem, though. Not everyone was receiving those alerts.

"I got the text and email about the class cancellation on the first day of the semester," junior Allison Mills said. "But recently I have not received any texts alerting me about anything else happening on campus, such as the slashing of tires near campus or the reports of people's cars being broken into."

The Wesley text and email alert system was created in response to the Virginia Tech

shooting of April 16, 2007, which killed 39 students and injured 17.

The college created a system where students can easily be notified of any emergency in and around the Wesley campus.

"We will also use the alert system to notify the college community of inclement weather that could impact the campus," Supervisor Constable Erik Sasse said.

The alerts are sent via text and through the student's email. However, many in the Wesley community received neither during the first-day-of-school cancellation nor the tire slashing incidents.

Senior Megan DiRubbio did not receive the alert that the first day of classes was canceled due to bad weather.

"I'm signed up for the alerts, usually through email, but I did not receive the alerts about the first day of class being canceled," she said. "I didn't

**Continues on P. 9**

## Meet the Staff

Interested in joining The Whetstone's Staff? We are always looking for new writers and photographers to help report campus news to the student body.

If you have any questions or comments, please email adviser, Victor Greto.

**Editor-in-Chief** Cheyenne Graden  
cheyenne.graden@email.wesley.edu

**Adviser** Victor Greto  
victor.greto@wesley.edu

**Reporters/ Photographers** Brielle Braxton-Young  
Brooke Retkowski  
Dylan Morris  
Lydia LaSure  
Rahim Harris



## College Center Elevator's Ups and Downs Fixed - For Now

By Rahim Harris; *The Whetstone*

Registrar and Director of Student Academic Records Patricia Seunarine couldn't take the elevator in College Center on Jan. 17 – it had been broken for months – and then tripped while going to the first floor from her third floor office.

She went to the ER but she suffered no serious injuries.

"My accident must've been the spark needed to fix those elevators," she said. "Those elevators are very important for people who need that accommodation."

The 46-year-old elevator, which had been out of service since the end of the fall semester – a semester during which it broke down repeatedly – was in service beginning Jan. 29.

However it is still work that needs to be done to ensure the ongoing issues don't reoccur.

"As the renovation is completed, the elevator requires thorough testing to meet the state safety requirements," said Tom Idnurm, director of facility management. "The College Center elevator took two weeks longer because of these issues."

The elevators were first installed in 1973 and have had no upgrades since.

"Because of the age, the new equipment isn't always direct-



ly compatible with standard components and may require custom made components," he said.

It takes nearly three months to upgrade the elevator properly.

"However, we don't have that much time to be without service so we accelerated the schedule by purchasing materials and testing prior to the commencement of work," Idnurm said.

Then the elevator had to be thoroughly tested to meet state safety requirements.

"The College Center elevator took two weeks longer because of these issues," he said.

Although Wesley students, faculty and staff hope it keeps working, they remain leery.

"It seems to never work, especially when I need it the most," junior Tyron Henry said.

"I thought I was trapped,"

senior Danielle Gaines said of one time she had used it.

Gaines was stuck on the elevator and started to panic. The elevator doors opened just before she was about to press the emergency button.

Students rely on the elevator to work so they can get to their classes without wasting time and energy, both of which the stairs require.

"If I am in a rush and I need to get to my class on the fourth floor, the elevator not working makes me even later than

what I am," senior Billy Peyton said.

People who are not able to take the steps said the inconsistency of the elevator had isolated them to just one floor.

Pastor Bonnie Mullen, Chaplain of Spiritual and Community Engagement, whose office is located near Student Life on the first floor of College Center, also had trouble with the elevator.

"I got in the elevator and pressed the button for the third floor and it went nowhere," she said. "I started to get out of the elevator only to be struck on the shoulders by its doors."

The College is using a new company, "First State Elevator," which fixed it.

The elevator now has an interior design of wood-grained walls, brighter lighting and a Wesley College placemat on the floor.

"We are working toward renovating a lot more of the facilities like the elevator," Idnurm said.

## Long EIF Process Worries Student Organizations

By Brielle Braxton-Young;  
*The Whetstone*

Organizations on campus could save themselves a lot of stress by filling out the EIF form properly.

Turning in documentation

on time is the main reason events are not approved, Naomi Rubin, head of reservations, said.

Alexis Bynum, vice president of the Fairy God sisters of Delaware, said she was frustrated last semester planning events.

**Continues on P. 5**

## College Comments on U.S. President

By Rahim Harris; The Whetstone

Donald Trump or Donald Dump?

Anger, confusion, bitterness, ill will, discouragement, malice.

These are some of the feelings expressed by Wesley College students after Donald Trump was elected president.

“I hate the guy,” junior Kierra Whitaker said. “I don’t see how we could allow him to become the president.”

Senior Ben Miller said he remembers the election like it was yesterday.

“Almost like a nightmare that I can’t seem to forget about,” he said. “I may be in the Marines and he may be my boss, but I can’t stand the guy.”



Ben Miller

Senior Kabrea Tyler doesn’t like him.

“He is a jerk, a racist, and isn’t doing anything for this country,” she said. “He is basi-

cally a joke.”

Students weren’t the only ones who felt negatively about Trump.

“He is irresponsible, narcissistic, self-serving, sexist,” said Dr. Jeffrey Mask, professor of religion and philosophy. “He is a deplorable human being. In fact, I don’t even think he is a human being.”

Dr. Cynthia Newton, a professor of Political Science, said Trump is unlike any other U.S. president.

“He has never held elected office before and is not versed in the Constitution or intricacies of diplomacy,” she said. “He revels in being a disrupting force without fully appreciating the consequences of his actions on others.

Newton also views him as favoring some groups over others.

“His views on and comments about women and people of color are extremely problematic for an officeholder that commands such sway of public opinion,” she said.

Some students found good things to say.

“I think it’s cool how he set himself up to become the president,” senior Ajanæ Fort said.

Junior Joshua Hughes said he doesn’t know what the big deal is about Trump.

“My parents like him so I guess he can’t be that bad of a person,” he said.

## Wesley Sprinters From P.2

to train for spring meets. They have to have a passion for it because it’s tough to come out and run, throw, or jump all the time.”

Sophomore sprinter Thomas Kalieta Jr. said the team is used to having low resources to prepare for meets, and credits Kimes’ ingenuity for overcoming them.

“Coach Kimes finds ways to incorporate exercises and drills that gets the job done with the little resources we have,” he said. “As a team we push through these challenges and it makes us better.”

Kimes said he and the other coaches have to be creative when it comes to practicing.

“For example, we have to figure out how we are going to long jump inside when we don’t have the space to do a full approach,” he said.

The team changes practice locations based on the weather and what they are trying to accomplish for an upcoming meet.

Kimes said they practice at different locations all the time.

“We use Wesley West to do hurdles, jumps, and throws,” he said. “If it is warm out we will go out to the track at Central Middle School, old Dover High School, the grass area at the post office, or the grass field by the Governor’s Mansion. When



Coach Kimes

it is cold outside, we will use Wesley West or the old Blue Hen mall parking lot.”

Last semester, all of Wesley’s athletic teams, except football, joined the new Atlantic East Conference.

Sloboh said the new conference does not affect the way the team trains for meets.

“We are continuing to work hard because we don’t know what to expect,” she said.

Kalieta said he doesn’t think the new conference will affect the track team.

“This winter season we aren’t going to have a conference meet and personally I am thrilled we don’t,” he said. “It gives us more time to focus on the championship season.”

Kimes said he is looking forward to competing in the new conference.

“We left the CAC Conference with several records,” he said. “I can assure you we will have the best quality in the new conference.”

## Long EIF Process From P.3

“There were so many events that we looked forward to that didn’t get approved, even when paperwork was in on time,” she said.

Bynum wasn’t the only one who said she had this problem.

Alpha Phi Omega Event Coordinator Sydney Brokenborough said she was unable to get events approved as well. She said the forms aren’t processed quickly enough.

“I think there has to be a medium,” she said. “I understand there are a lot of organizations here on campus, but sometimes if (Rubin) needs help, then say that. I don’t think it’s bad to have an assistant to help her out – at least we would know from a student’s eye that she’s not the one to fault for the problems that are going on with the paperwork. I just don’t want the same things to happen this semester.”

Bynum also blamed the process.

“When you follow that process, things are more efficient,” she said. “In my opinion, there was some type of miscommunication (getting proper signatures) between SGA and Reserva-

tions.”

Rubin, who oversees booking rooms and getting events approved for student organizations, said she sends emails when organizations’ event person is missing paperwork for events approvals.

She said the problem is event persons’ who do not turn in paperwork on time, or have missing documentation when they turn it in.

Rubin said this semester, organizations do not have to go through SGA, but submit EIF forms straight to her office.

“Last semester, I was able to submit an event two-three weeks before, and it would get approved in a timely fashion,” Zeta Phi Beta Sorority Incorporated Event Coordinator Kierra Whitaker said.

“It is very important that when planning an event the reservation request

should be done four weeks in advance of the event and EIF forms are submitted four weeks in advance of the event,” Rubin said.

Black Student Union President Rex Chege said he has submitted events properly.

“My team and I plan events for the next month in advance, he said. “We have at least three events per month, with two out of three of those events we try to do without having to spend money.”

Chege said the process is long but worth it.

“We fill out the room reservations and EIFs together with the information we know we don’t need to wait on,” he said. “Turn in the room reservation and wait for approval. While we wait, we get our adviser to sign off on the EIF and start making the flier. Once we get that information, we then are able to turn our EIFs in a few hours after we get confirmation.”



Rex Chege

Brielle Braxton-Young

## EIF Process

1. Fill out the Room Reservation Form and email it to Reservations @Wesley.edu or drop it off at Reservations Office. There are bins outside the office for that purpose. There are forms there as well. Forms are also available at <https://wesley.edu/campuservices/facilities-reservation-request>.
2. All Reservation requests must be done in writing or by email.
3. You will receive an email confirming your reservation. You will receive your requested room or, if it is not available, another option will be chosen for you. This takes 1- 4 business days.
4. Once you receive your confirmation email, fill out an EIF form if your event involves spending any money (on food or a vendor or merchandise) or inviting an outside speaker or guests. The event contact and coordinator has to be the same person.
5. All EIF forms that have been reviewed with your adviser and include all the required paperwork (Food quotes from Aramark or elsewhere, check requests, invoices, and contracts) should then be dropped off at the Reservations Office.
6. No contracts may be signed by anyone except CFO Belinda Burke
7. Once the EIF form is received, Rubin logs it, gives it an event number, and reviews it. She forwards it to the SGA for approval.
8. Rubin also emails the Public Safety Office for approval.
9. Once it has been approved by the SGA and Public Safety Office, Rubin brings a hard copy of the EIF for to the CFO for approval.
10. This process may take up to 3-4 weeks.
11. No event may be advertised until it has been approved.
12. The approved EIF will be sent to the contact event organizer, who may forward a signed contract to vendors and order any materials for the event.



## Student Athletic Advisory Committee Hopes to Bring Athletics Together

By Brooke Retkowski, *The Whetstone*

Sophomore Theodora Loukopoulos was voted one of four student athletes on the Student Athletic Advisory Committee board last semester.

“I want to make a change and

ensure student-athletes have a voice on campus,” she said.

The Student Athletic Advisory Committee (SAAC), is a student-run organization.

This year, the board members said they want to grow the organization.

Last September, SAAC asked the Student Government Association asked for a budget and was given \$300. The organiza-

tion had never asked for money before.

The money allows the organization to host events and activities.

Sophomore Amanda Curry, SAAC’s secretary, said this year the organization wants to bring the athletic teams together.

“We host meetings where all members of the teams are invited to come,” she said. “We

want more teams to come to each other’s games to show support.”

In the past, SAAC only held meetings where athletes came to vote on specific rules regarding their sport. Board members said they want SAAC to be an organization athletes may take pride in.

Dean Burrows, the advisor  
**Continues on P. 10**

## Professors Have Heard It All When It Comes to Student Excuses

By Dylan Morris; *The Whetstone*

Dr. Anthony Armstrong sat at his desk during the last week of classes for the semester when a student walked into his office.

Although Armstrong knew he was in a class he taught, he had never seen the student before or received any of the course work from him.

The student insisted he give him a D for the class. Not a chance.

“He then threatened that he would go to the academic dean with untrue accusations that could get me fired,” Armstrong said. “I told him to go ahead. He didn’t follow through with his threat.”

Wesley College professors said they’ve heard it all when it comes to student excuses for not doing work – let alone threats like the one Armstrong received.

“I even had a father of a student who was failing several of my classes call me from New Jersey implying he was with the Mafia,” Armstrong said.

Some students blame their animals or their computers.

“The best one recently was that a student’s cat destroyed his homework, then a couple of weeks later it was his dog – and he had pictures from both,” said Dr. Cynthia Newton. “There are a lot of relatives that die, graphic descriptions of illnesses, convenient computer problems, and the ever popular Wesley IT-related ones.”

Junior London Young said she often uses technical issues as an excuse.

“I usually say the printer wasn’t working, the computer was down, or the Wi-

Fi was off,” she said.

Dr. James Wilson said the most common excuse he’s heard has to do with corrupted files.

“Students seem to know that a file can be corrupted at upload, meaning a file name will go through but the professor will be unable to open the document,” he said. “So, if a student simply uploads a blank document, he or she can say that it must have been corrupted. This can give them just enough time for the student to complete the work when asked.”

What students don’t seem to know is that there is a way to tell if a file is actually corrupted. Corrupted files will show a zero kilobyte file size when uploaded, whereas a blank file will load as one kilobyte, he said.

“Moreover, a file’s history can be examined,” Wilson said. “If a file has been

worked on for any length of time and has multiple saves along the way, we can see it in the file’s statistics.”

Sometimes a student uses an old favorite.

“I just say that I was sick,” freshman Ariana Reza said.

Another professor said that family emergencies are common excuses.

“One student had a nest of angry bees in their chimney and had to get it removed,” Dr. Brantley Craig said. “I’m more accepting when people are genuine about getting the work to me as quickly as possible.”

Dr. Nancy Rubino said that the most unusual excuse she heard was that a student’s horse sat on the student and broke several of her ribs.

“It ended up being a true story and the student was hospitalized as a result of the injury,” she said.

## Former Wesley Board of Trustees Chair Sentenced for Bank Fraud

By Cheyenne Graden; *The Whetstone*

Junior Justyn Cox said that Wesley's former Board of Trustees Chair Robert Harra Jr. should have stepped down nearly four years ago when he was indicted for bank fraud.

"The first thing that should have been done once he was indicted was for him to be suspended, or for the trustees to take the initiative to force him to step down," he said.

Robert Harra Jr., former Chair of Wesley College's Board of Trustees, was sentenced to six years in federal prison.

He was charged in 2015 with conspiracy to commit fraud related to the purchase and sale of securities, conspiracy to defraud the United States, and making false statements to regulators and the SEC.

Harra and three other former Wilmington Trust executives are avoiding jail time for the time being until their case is reviewed by an appeals court.

Some faculty echo Cox, and said Harra should have stepped down as soon as these charges were brought against him.

"I believed that Harra should have stepped down when he was indicted," Dr. Jeffrey Mask said. "The indictment should have been enough to



Robert Harra Jr. Wesley College

step down if one cared enough about the institution."

Dr. Angela D'Antonio, who served as convener for faculty during the time Harra was indicted, said many faculty members talked about the indictment and expressed an overwhelming concern about his role at the College.

Eventually, these concerns led to a faculty resolution that asked President Clark to ask Harra to step down as Chair of the Board.

"In light of the federal criminal indictment of Robert Harra, the Chair of the Board of Trustees of Wesley College, and of the potential damage to the reputation of the Col-

lege if he continues to serve in this capacity, we the Faculty believe it is in the best interest of the College that Mr. Harra relinquish his position as Chair of the Board," the faculty resolution said. It passed Oct. 19, 2015.

Clark responded to the faculty resolution by saying that he spoke with senior members of the board and prominent people in the community. He said they didn't feel that the situation would have a negative impact on the school. They also said that the crimes happened a while ago, and that he had done a lot for the community. And, he said, they empathized with his family.

"While I have empathy for Harra's family, the appropriate and ethical thing for Harra to do is step down as Chair," D'Antonio said.

Dr. Anthony Armstrong said he disagreed with some of the community members who gave their opinion of Harra after his indictment.

"I think there is a real class bias when important members of the community say that Robert Harra should be treated differently because he gave money to various causes," Armstrong said. "These people would not say the same thing about someone who is poor. Poor people do not have anything to give but Harra had plenty."

The Board of Trustees voted

unanimously to keep Harra on the Board.

In the Code of Ethics for the Board, point number 13 states, "To refrain from actions and involvements that might prove embarrassing to the College and to resign if such actions or involvements develop."

Armstrong said he believed the charges reflected poorly on the college.

"Unfortunately, the news stories almost always mentioned that he was on the Board of Trustees for Wesley College," he said. "Reputation is very important to the college and it has an impact on the way donors, prospective students and other institutions view the college."

Harra never stepped down from the Board. His term on the board ended Fall 2018, right before he was sentenced.

"I still believe that the appropriate and ethical thing to do would have been for Harra to step down," D'Antonio said. "Now we not only have a member who was indicted but now we have a member who was convicted and this results in a larger stain on the college."

Mask said he believes that sentencing raises an important issue.

"Now that Harra is sentenced, it calls a lot of decisions that Harra helped make into question," he said.

**Continues on P. 8**

## Former BOT Chair Sentenced From P.7

The crimes committed by Harra affected many people in Delaware, especially the people who worked for Wilmington Trust.

"I know former employees at Wilmington Trust who despise Harra," Armstrong said. "They feel that Harra stabbed them in the back. There is a real human cost of what he and the other officers of the bank did."

Cox said he thinks students should care about this issue.

"A good majority of the student body probably isn't aware of who the Board of Trustees member are, but having an untrustworthy member on the board still affects them," Cox said. "Having someone who is deemed untrustworthy reflects poorly on the college itself and most students care about the college and the reputation that it has."

Some students said they were surprised that something like this could ever happen at Wesley.

"It's shocking that something like this has happened so close to home and at a small college," sophomore David Wyatt said. "You hear scandals like this happening at bigger schools and institutions but never at small schools like Wesley."

## SGA Changes in the Middle of Academic Year

By Cheyenne Graden and Lydia LaSure; *The Whetstone*

Three members of the Student Government Association resigned their positions early this semester and were replaced within two weeks.

The Student Government Association president Jamal Earls, Secretary Myasia Davis and Treasurer Autumn Brown resigned.

The new members include Vice President Kelsey Fitzpatrick, Secretary Christina Roe, and Treasurer Nichole Naprsteck.

"I would like to inform you that I am resigning from my position as Student Government Association President effective January 18, 2019," former President Jamal Earls wrote in an email to students. "Thank you for the support and the opportunities that you have provided me during this year."

This came as a shock for some students coming back from winter break, who said they believed there were already serious issues with SGA.

"There had already been a lack in SGA communication," senior Lauralynn Richardson said.

"Even before the SGA board was put into the office, I knew



SGA Board Members

Lydia LaSure

there was going to be an issue because in spring 2018 there was an email sent out about improper voting," junior Cortey Holder said.

Proper voting is either voting completely on your own, or having someone else vote on your behalf or by proxy. But a candidate cannot tell a voter whom to vote for. Nor may a candidate witness them voting.

"It has come to my attention that there may have been some improper voting in the recent SGA election," SGA advisor Dr. Jack Barnhardt said in an email a year ago. "If you personally experienced or witnessed any improper voting, it's important you speak up by emailing Dean Anderson."

Some students said the timing of the three resignations was weird.

"I feel that they left at a bad time," junior Alexis Bynum said. "They should have sent out an email during the break instead

of sending an email before classes started."

"I feel like the SGA changes are throwing everyone off because, at the end of the semester, we finally had gotten everything on track," junior Sydney Brokenborough said. "We were all excited for the new semester to come back and work with each other. I feel like these changes have only put paperwork, money and event approvals on hold with three positions recently being filled."

Brokenborough said she was afraid budgets for student organizations may be put on hold.

"As an Alpha Phi Omega member, all of our service events are now on hold because the people who handle these processes are no longer in office," she said. "This also affects our budgets for the spring semester."

Student Life Dean Wanda

**Continues on P. 12**



## Wesley Alerts Missing From P.2

find out about it until one of my teammates told me.”

DuRubbio said she wants to be notified for practical reasons.

“I am on campus late during the weekdays,” she said. “I also live off campus so I feel it is an important and easy way to send out notifications.”

Senior Ashley Royer said she did not receive many of the text alerts, but got some of the email ones.

“The last text alert I received was on Jan. 13 about the winter storm and check-in being moved to the next day,” Royer said. “I also receive emails typically from Walt Beaupre about any security issues on and off campus, the last one being about tires being slashed off campus and Dover PD arrested the suspect.”

Wesley alerts have also been inconsistent with many of the faculty and staff on campus.

“I get the alerts some time, but not as often as others,” Registrar Assistant Ami Leaming said.

“I know a lot of people were complaining around winter break that they weren’t getting the alerts,” Associate Registrar Erin Collier said. “I signed up for them, but haven’t received an alert in a while.”

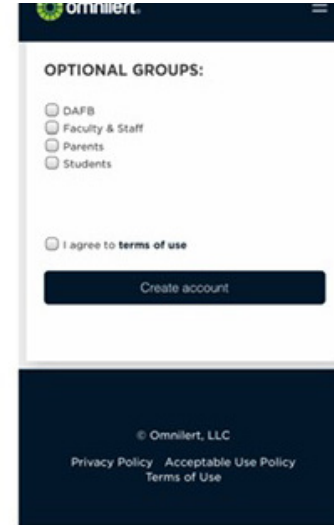


“I seem to get the alerts all the time these day,” said

Customer Service Assistant Shelby Everline said. “Sometimes at 2 in the morning my phone will just start going off with them.”

The Information Technology (IT) and Security Office said there are several reasons why people are not getting the alerts.

“Those new to the system either have not signed up, or did not sign up correctly,” Chief Information Officer Paul Copeland said. “For those continuing the service, they have not gone in and updated their information.”



Additionally, student’s enrollment in the alert system expires every six months and needs to be renewed.

“I received a text at the end of June from the alert system letting me know that my ability to receive the alerts was about to expire,” Director of Public Safety Walt Beaupre said. “It is possible people didn’t renew their enrollment have stopped receiving the alerts.”

To sign up for the alerts, go onto My.Wesley.edu and click the Wesley College Alert System tab on the left side of the page and follow the directions.

You can also sign up using the link <https://wesley.omnilert.net>.

## Security Guards Soon to be Armed for Campus Safety

By Dylan Morris; *The Whetstone*

Chaplain Bonnie Mullen said she sometimes feels vulnerable and afraid for Wesley students.

“Just the other day a man walked right off the street and ran into the restroom in the CC,” she said.

Mullen had worked in an institution in Arizona where armed police were essential.

Now, Wesley College will soon have six armed constables among its security staff after the College decided last semester would join every other college in the state that allow armed constables on campus.

The decision was – and



Chaplain Bonnie Mullen Dylan Morris

Continues on P. 11

## Student Athletic Advisory Committee From P. 6

of SAAC and men's basketball coach, said the organization is important and student-athletes should know more about its benefits.

"The organization helps to provide insight on the student-athlete experience, as well as the policies that pertain and affect student-athletes' campus lives," he said. "This is a way for student-athletes on college campuses nationwide to have a voice in the NCAA through advisory committees on the campus, conference, and national levels."

At the first interest meeting last semester, there were more than 40 student-athletes in attendance.

"We were told the turnout was the most the organization has

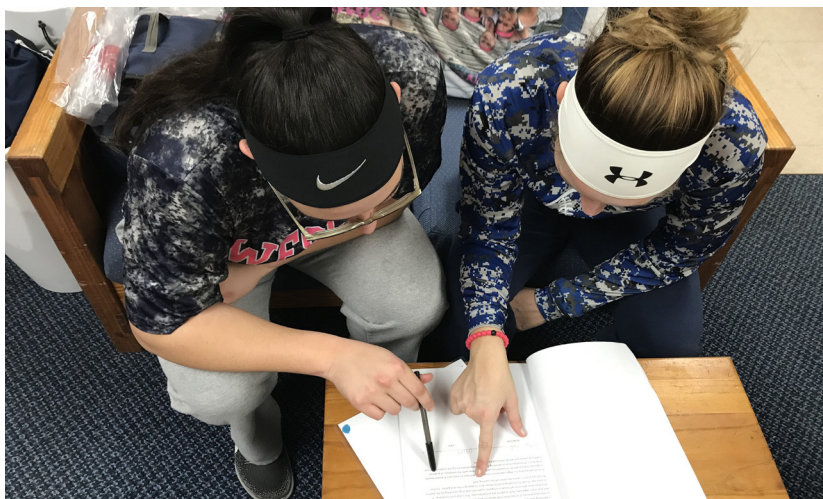
had," he said. Junior Mary Getty, a member of the volleyball team, said she knows about SAAC but did not know how to get involved.

"My coach told me about SAAC, so I went to some of the meetings last semester," she said. "But there haven't been many events to participate in since I have been attending Wesley."

Last semester, SAAC held frequent meetings with student-athletes to discuss the interest in hosting events on campus.

The organization had planned a Halloween event to connect the Dover and Wesley communities. Each team was to decorate a booth and invite youth from the community to trick-or-treat with Wesley athletes.

Curry said the event did not happen due to a miscommunication about the forms needed



Theodora Loukopoulos and Amanda Curry

Brooke Retowski



Dinner for Champions SAAC Event

Brooke Retowski

to host an event.

"We filled out all of the forms we needed," she said. "But we were not told we had to have the forms in weeks before the event, causing us to cancel."

Loukopoulos, SAAC's President, said the board has events planned this semester to unite the sports teams.

SAAC will be hosting Dinner of Champions on Feb. 6, one of 500 national events held on this day in honor of National Girls and Women in Sports Day.

"We will be having a dinner to recognize the many achievements of women in sports, as well as encouraging other women to participate in sports," she said.

Senior Brianna Bacon, SAAC's Vice President, said the board is still in the process of creating events as the semester continues.

"We will also be having sports

movie nights twice a month in CC 206 for student-athletes to come to," she said. "There is also the possibility of having an Easter egg hunt for local children in April."

Loukopoulos said the committee has not come up with specific dates for these events yet, but flyers will be posted around campus throughout the semester for anyone interested in participating.

Future meetings will also be announced through emails and all are invited to join.

Burrows said the meetings are open to people on campus who have a desire to make Wesley College the best that it can be.

"We want to promote a positive student-athlete image on campus," he said. "We truly have many great student-athletes around here who motivate and inspire us."



## Security Guards

From P. 9

remains – controversial. “It would be nice if something happened and the guards could do something instead of having to call Dover PD,” freshman Devyn Allen said. “So long as they are responsible around the students, it should be good.”

Others, like junior Connor Davis, said they were less comfortable with the change.

“I understand why they are doing it, what with everything going on in the world today,” he said. “I just feel it may be going a little to far. I think Tasers should be used primarily over firearms.”

A constable is a peace officer employed by the State of Delaware though the Justice of the Peace Court granted the same powers as law enforcement officers, including the right to carry firearms.

Constables are required to execute all lawful orders directed to them by any judge or court in the state. This includes everything from issuing subpoenas and eviction notices to making arrests with or without a warrant.

“I wasn’t for it at first,” Registrar Assistant Shelby Everline said. “But after I



Wesley College Constables

Wesley College

learned more about what a constable is and what they do, I feel they do need to be armed for their own safety.”

Director of Communications and Marketing Jessica Cook said she was anxious at first when she heard about armed guards.

“But once I realized Wesley was one of the last colleges in the state to embrace constables. I felt better knowing we were doing all we could to protect our students and our community.”

For the constables to be armed, they need to be licensed by the state police, trained by a licensed state police certified firearms instructor, and approved

by the Board of Examiners. The initial weapons training certification is 40 hours.

Constables serve for a term of two years and must be reviewed by the Board of Examiners before being reappointed.

The six constables include Director of Public Safety Walter Beaupre, and security guards Erik Sasse, Angie Fowler, Michael Valkenburg, Eric Hodges-Baines, and Lloyd Stafford.

The constables said the change was a necessary step to being able to perform their job.

“I believe that it is a matter of when, not if we have another mass casualty shoot-

ing,” Sasse said. “We have no idea where or when, but it is always better to be prepared.”

“Unfortunately, I believe that it’s only a matter of time before we have another tragic incident,” Beaupre said. “What we don’t know is, where and when it will occur. We just hope that it doesn’t happen on our campus, however our Public Safety staff need to be ready to protect the campus community, regardless.”

There is no confirmed date on when the constables will complete their training and start carrying firearms on campus.



## Student Government Changes From P.8

Anderson said she was sad to hear of the three resignations.

"I want to see the SGA continue to work effectively with the student body," she said.

After the resignations, SGA faculty advisor Dr. Jack Barnhardt sent out an email Jan. 23 asking for nominations.

Students had until the following Monday to send in names for the three open positions. After the nominations were received, the voting was scheduled to take place from Feb. 4 to Feb. 6.

On Jan. 29, students were informed that there were only three nominations made so there was no need for an official election, putting Fitzpatrick,

Roe and Naprsteck in office. Some students said they had issues with the changes.

"I am concerned about the new people coming in, in the middle of the semester and the way they will transition into their new positions" Richardson said.

For some students and faculty, the changes were positive.

"I'm all for the changes I feel that things will get done quickly" junior Amber McNear said. "I'm very happy that they are all on the board and I think they will do well."

"I believe the new members will bring new ideas and new perspectives," Barnhardt said.

Naprstek said she looked forward to the job.

"From the time I heard about the SGA, I knew I wanted to participate but my schedule prevented me from attending meetings until fall 2018,"

Naprstek said. "I never held a position until now."

Kelsey Fitzpatrick has been on the SGA most of her time here. She was a class representative as a freshman, a secretary when she was a sophomore, and vice president as a junior.

She said she has a mission.

"I want to work on any barriers they have in event planning and do my best to assist them in any way possible," she said. "Over the past few years, I have planned a few large events and truly learned the workings of the SGA. I want to use that knowledge to take some pressure off the organizations and be an extra hand when needed."

Naprstek said she has a vision of her own.

"What I bring that is different from most other students is the life experience of a military

career and the perspective of a 40-plus-year-old," she said. "What I'm hoping this SGA board can do this term is to provide a way for future students and student orgs to access information about the SGA."

Some on campus said they were looking forward to the SGA changes.

"I know that Kelsey was previously on the SGA board and did great during her time so I know she has the experience," junior Kierra Whitaker said.

Senior Deziyah Palmer, president of the Fairy God Sisters of Delaware, said she hoped for more stability.

"I expect the new treasurer knows what she is doing – and we finish the academic year successfully," she said.

## Students Mourned From P.1

said. "No matter what, we would always be laughing and nothing would even be funny. All we did was laugh about stupid stuff. That was my hype girl and I was hers."

For Tyler Grant, a former Wesley student, Erick was always a friend.

"We vented about our depression damn near every time we were together," he said. "He listened to me and never judged me about any-



Ahyanna Baker-Griffin

thing."

Tyler said Erick sometimes acted paranoid.

"He constantly felt like people were always out to get him," he said. "People laughed at his stutter and everything else that came with him."

### Missing For a Month

Milvia Palencia, Erick's mother, said she last heard from her son the afternoon of the day he disappeared.

"I know sometimes Erick wouldn't pay his phone bill, so he would call me on friends' phones," she said. "But when

I didn't hear from him later on that night, I felt like something was wrong."

Palencia said the last conversation she had with Erick was on the morning he disappeared.

"Tuesday morning (Feb. 12, the day he disappeared) I texted him," she said. "I checked my phone around 11:30 a.m. and I still didn't get a text from him. Around 2:45 p.m. I received a text from him saying, 'I love you, have a great day.'"

**Continues on P. 13**

## Students Mourned From P.12

When her workday was done, she sent Erick a text about 7 p.m. It didn't go through. She called, and his phone went straight to voice-mail.

"The more I hadn't heard from him the more I started to worry," she said. "So I called my ex-husband and I asked him to go to Dover to go check on him."

By 11:30 p.m., Dover Police were knocking on doors on the third floor of Malmberg Hall.

Junior Kierra Whitaker was one of the first approached.

"I live on the same side as Erick, just a few doors down," she said. "I was in bed and heard a loud bang on the door. I just thought it was people playing on the door but I heard more knocks, and they were loud – not like a normal knock."

When she opened her door, she saw a police officer standing with a baton in his hand and Erick's ID in the other.

"The officer asked, 'Have you seen him?' I said no, because that day I hadn't seen him. He then asked, 'Was I hiding him in my room?' I responded, 'No,' and I continued looking past the door to see what was going on. So many thoughts ran through my head."



Milvia Palencia (Mother) and Erick

On the morning of the day he disappeared, Erick spent two hours with the chaplain, Pastor Bonnie Karen Mullen, while the two waited for the food pantry truck to come.

"He seemed fine," Mullen said. "Nothing was out of the ordinary. He was a little fidgety but I just figured it was because we were in a tight space and he was trying to get some homework done."

Mullen said Erick stopped by her office from time to time.

That morning wasn't the last time she saw Erick.

"He had come into my office around 4 and dropped his things off because he told me

he was going to Bible study," she said. "After that, he never came back to pick up his things, and I never saw him again."

The next day security came to pick up his book bag from her office.

Junior Kyra Wesby said she met Erick through a mutual friend.

"He first introduced himself as Chow," she said. "We were both incoming students that were going to be running track and cross country, after that we created a close friendship."

Palencia said Erick was given the nickname of Chow when he was a young child.

Erick's friends said they saw few signs of his coming disappearance.

Although Erick didn't say anything out of the ordinary, Wesby and other students said they noticed a change in his appearance the day before he disappeared.

"He cut all his hair," she said. "He also cut his facial hair off, and when I asked about it he just said he was looking to get a fresh start."

Sophomore D'Shon Sanders, who ran track with him, noticed that Erick changed his appearance.

"He shaved his beard and hair and I thought it was weird and out of character of him to do that," he said. "I thought he was pledging to a frat or something."

His mother said she knew about her son's plans to cut his hair.

"He face-timed me on Monday," Palencia said. "We were both in the Dollar Store, me, here (Wilmington), and him there (Dover). He told me he was cutting his hair and that he had to tell me something but he said he would tell me on Sunday, which was my birthday. He was coming home to see me."

The receipt from the Dollar Store was found in Erick's room and it showed he bought shaving cream and razors.

**Continues on P. 14**



## Students Mourned From P.13

Palencia came to Dover to look for her son the week of his disappearance.

"I spent over seven hours walking through (Silver Lake Park) and even went into the cemetery," she said.

Palencia also said she found out that on Feb 11, the day before his disappearance, her son quit his job at Foot Locker in the Dover Mall.

Erick always had a job, she said. He and Palencia, along with Palencia's ex-husband, had several conversations about Erick taking on too much with work, school and track.

"He had gotten a second job at Dover Downs Casino, and he would always tell me that he was tired," Palencia said. "It was getting bad to the point where we (her and her ex-husband) had to tell him to quit. Finally, he did."

Psychology Professor Gwen Pursell said she loved having Erick, a psychology major, in her classes.

"Erick is a really positive, fun student," she said. "He sits right up front, is always cheerful, and he asks a lot of question. He is also a bit of a class clown, always keeping everyone laughing."

Pursell saw Erick at the Psychology Club meeting the

night before his disappearance.

"We were playing a game and he was volunteering and having a good time," she said. "He didn't seem that different other than he wasn't talking as much as usual at the club meeting."

Senior Nneka Anderson said she met him her sophomore year.

"He always came up to me asked me how I was doing," she said. "He would make sure I was smiling and happy. He also always gave a look, which lets students know where and what parties there are going to be off campus for the weekend."

Professor Alban Urbanas said Erick had attended his Intro to Philosophy course last fall.

"His approach to participation in class, and his attitude toward the course and the work of the course, was very positive," he said.

Sophomore Di-Avian Blackmon spent a lot of time with Erick.

"We always went to church together and attended IM-PACT on Mondays," she said. "He would even go for runs after church sometimes."

During the fall semester, Urbanas said he did not see any changes in him.

"I wish I could say I saw a

signal here, or a signal that might indicate an issue, but unfortunately I did not see that," he said. "He seemed to maintain the same basic demeanor."

Professor Cynthia Newton said Erick attended one of her classes this semester.

"He was a really good student," she said. "He sat in the front of the class, which I take as a good omen. His work was



Di-Avian Blackmon

good, and he participated a lot, and he was really sweet."

Moore said she saw Erick at a speed dating event Feb. 11.

"He didn't look like himself (because he had shaved) but he spoke as usual," she said. "It was a 'Hey' more so than a 'Wassup Ash, how you doing?' so that was strange to me."

Wesby and Moore saw him leave the event. A miscommunication between security and

students caused security to cancel it at the last minute.

"He told me he was leaving to go shower and do some homework," Wesby said. "Then the next day I saw him it was just a Hi and Bye. It was just unusual of him, so I figured he was just down because of the weather."

### Wesley Administration Slow In Responding

Some students and faculty said they weren't happy that Wesley administration did not express concern about Erick's disappearance soon enough.

Wesley security office sent out a request for assistance two days after he disappeared, and the following day the office released a "gold alert," which included information about his disappearance.

But no emails were sent from either President Robert Clark or Dean of Students, Wanda Anderson, for two weeks.

Erick's mother said she expected more.

"I had to reach out to Public Safety, the Dean of Students, and the President with the help of a co-worker," she said. "I feel because I am not from this country, and I am a woman who can barely speak English, they are not taking me or my missing son seriously."

Three days before Erick's

**Continues on P. 15**



## Students Mourned From P.14

body was found, Public Safety Director Walt Beaupre sent a campus-wide email March 14 about the disappearance.

"This morning President Clark and I, along with representatives from Dover Police and Delaware State University Police had a conference call with Senator Carper. The Dover Police, along with the Delaware State Police and Fire Department personnel have conducted extensive searches in and around Silver Lake from the ground and the air."

Erick's body was found three days later, by a resident who called the police. The body was in the lake near the shoreline of Lake Club Apartments.

### Students Use Social Media to Help

Wesley students had used social media, including Twitter, Facebook, and Snapchat as a way to spread the word of Erick's disappearance.

Mcneer said she posted on social media about Erick every day.

Mcneer, along with other students, created their own search party to get the word out and get tips about his disappearance. A post on social media was made, telling students to meet in front of Budd

Hall on Feb. 17. "We went to Silver Lake and the surrounding streets of Dover," she said. "We knocked on doors by the lake to see if anyone saw him, and asked the people on the streets if they saw him but all we got were dead ends."

Another post that was made on social media reached about 2,000 people in 72 hours.

Senior Gail Trotter said she was also a part of the second search party coordinated by students on Feb. 18.

"When that was posted, we did another search party," she said. "We went to the Dover

Mall, local restaurants and stores, and even on Delaware State University's campus."

For the second search party, eight people met in College Center.

"Most of us were females and we were out here in the bad parts of Dover," Mcneer said, "breaking off branches to put in the water, and we even talked to some of the crackheads in the area."

Students distributed flyers and the story of Erick reached New Jersey, Philadelphia, Maryland and Washington D.C.

## Flyers Taken Down During Open House

Students said they also were upset when they found out Erick's missing person flyers were taken down during the school's Open House on Feb 23.

Junior Sydney Brokenborough said she was one of the first to notice.

"I was just looking around at all of the prospective students," she said. "Then I noticed that a place where Erick's flyer was the night before was no longer there. I asked some other students and they noticed the same thing."

Senior Alexis Bynum said she also noticed.

"I looked and I was like, she's right," she said. "Then I was trying to figure out why they would take them down. It was kind of disrespectful to me because I get the school wants to portray an image but this is a real life situation. I don't think the school would like it if their child went missing and we took down flyers of them."

Students noticed the next day the posters were back up – but crinkled.

"Some of them were ripped and I knew that's not how we left them," junior Cortey Holder said. "They were given to us in a nice way so they should've been put back up in a nice way. The school shouldn't

**Continues on P. 16**



## Students Mourned From P.15

have done that, it is so disrespectful on so many levels.”

### Saying Goodbye

Students said it will take time for them to feel better.

Sophomore Kaelynn Lang said she knew Erick since she has been at Wesley.

“There was never a day I didn’t see a smile on his face,” she said. “The last time I talked to him he gave me one of the biggest hugs and said this semester was going to be his semester. So, Erick, this semester and every semester after is for you. We will never forget.”

Thinking about both Erick and Ahyanna, junior Kendra Klunk said she would love to tell both of them what’s in her heart.

“I would want to say ‘Thank you’ to the both of them,” she said. “They impacted my life in ways they didn’t even know. There needs to be more of them in this world.”

Former Wesley student Davonne Duncan knew both Erick and Ahyanna, with whom she attended middle school in Camden.

“I want to tell Erick that he is loved, kind, and made a huge impact on Wesley way before his death,” she said. “We care about you, Chow, and we will never forget you. Watch over

**“I would want to say ‘Thank you’ to the both of them,” she said. “They impacted my life in ways they didn’t even know. There needs to be more of them in this world.”**

**-Kendra Klunk**

us.”

Sophomore Louisemene Georges said she has a hard time explaining what she’s been feeling since hearing about Erick’s death.

“I feel empty,” she said. “I feel the pain in my chest. I’m broken.”

But Georges also had something to say to Erick.

“If I could say something to him right now, I’d say ‘Chow, you’re such good person. You don’t understand how much of an impact you have on your peers.

“You’re loved! I love you, bro.”

## Spring Semester is All Planned for Some Organizations

Brielle Braxton-Young, *The Whetstone*

Student organizations are making the spring semester at Wesley College one to remember, with events ranging from a block party to a trip to New York City and a never before seen fashion show.

Student organizations, including the Black Student Union (BSU), Student Activities Board (SAB), and Creative Attributions (CA), are hosting the events.

On Feb. 28, BSU held its Soul Food and Chill.

“We just wanted students to enjoy some soul food before leaving for spring break,” Rex Chege, BSU president, said. “We had fried chicken, macaroni and cheese, collard greens, and yams”

Like other organization on campus, BSU hasn’t had many events thus far but they do plan on working with other organizations for future events.

“Usually we collaborate with (Alpha Phi Omega) APO and do the variety show but that’s not happening this semester,” he said. “Our main event is happening at the end of the semester, which is the BSU Block Party. We are going to be collaborating with (Leaders Empowering for Tomorrow) L.E.F.T.”

SAB president Jeanerre Smith wishes that students would attend and try new things

“We always have novelties here in the CC but I always see the same faces,” she said. “Some of the novelties include Stuff your Plush the Wednesday before Valentine’s Day, a bus trip to New

York in March, and Homecoming Reloaded in April. We will be doing a lot more bus trips, showing movies and of course having novelties”

Creative Attributions plans on having one of the biggest fashion shows for students on campus.

“Our biggest event will be the spring fashion show this year,” Corey Johnson, president of the organization, said. “This is my last year, and I have really built CA up to what it is now, so of course I have to go all out!”

There are many student organizations but few are active. One thing that seems consistent is everyone planning for April to host their big events.

Some students said this could be a problem

“There are a lot of scheduling difficulties coming with events,” Johnson said. “The school makes it hard with the whole Room Reservation and EIF process, so aiming for April gives student organizations more time to plan things out properly instead of feeling rushed.”

For more about events look out for the “What’s Happening at Wesley” emails from Mark Berry director of Student Life.