# The Centurion



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# s The US Doing Enough To Help Ukraine?

Centurion Staff

Over the last 80 years there have been many wars, with none being to the scale of World War II, but with the rise of war between Russia and Ukraine, students believe the United States has an obligation to help.

The New York Times reports that "A Russian invasion of Ukraine would be unlike most wars in the past 80 years."

Students were asked what they personally think the U.S. should do to help with the conflict going on in Ukraine.

Communication major Tara Birnbaum, 20, of Bristol Borough says, "I believe the U.S. should help as much as we can while still protecting our country and its people."

Recently, President Joe Biden has issued a series of sanctions against Russia in an attempt to cripple Russia economically.

Biden says, "Today, I am authorizing additional strong sanctions and new limitations on what can be exported to Russia. This is going to impose severe costs on the Russian economy, both immediately and over time."

Early childhood education major Adriana Worley, 19, of Southampton says, "I feel that the U.S. should step in to help because the President of Ukraine does not have military experience."

On a similar note, Central Bucks High School South Senior, Alyssa Chmielewski, 17, of Warrington says, "I think we should send them supplies."

Something these students can agree on is that the U.S. should be aiding Ukraine while at the same time maintaining the safety of all U.S. citizens.

When asked if the sanctions were enough, Birnbaum reports, "I believe that the sanctions are making an impact, but we are

capable of helping the Ukrainian people more."

Chmielewski replies with a simple, "Yes."

Worley explains why she believes NATO should help militarily in the war, giving the prime example of, "Ukraine was trying to join NATO."

After being asked to share their personal thoughts on the war in totality, Birnbaum explains, "I believe Biden is helping the Ukrainian people but needs to be careful with his next steps in

order to avoid further escalation of the war. The war that is going on is unnecessary, so many lives are being lost because of Putin's selfishness. It is my hope that it deescalates in the coming days."

Chmielewski says, "Putin should let them be safe and at peace in their own country."

Worley expresses a similar belief, saying, "I think this war was completely out of line."

While the beliefs of these students do not match 100 percent, something they can agree on is

that this war is not right.

Agreed amongst these students and others is that Russian President Vladimir Putin was selfish and out of line for starting this

This war has come at the cost of Ukrainian citizens and the various cities that have become battle grounds for Putin's invasion.

President Joe Biden is trying to economically harm Russia in hopes that the war will end without shedding American blood, but is this enough?

# th Celebrated at Bucks

AILEEN F GORMAN LEONG

Centurion Staff

Women's History Month, which has been celebrated during the month of March in the United States since 1987, gives recognition to the many accomplishments of women in history, culture, literature, and society.

While it's important to honor women during March it could be argued that we shouldn't need a particular month to honor the achievements of women, nor should special events be required to highlight the inequality women face every day.

"Reproductive rights; equal pay; safe and affordable health care; and childcare; freedom from harassment and assault in the workplace, in schools, and at home; elder care; good schools; the availability of safe housing; and good food affect everyone: these are not women's rights; they are human rights," says Professor Annette Conn of the English Department at Bucks

Bucks offers a Women's Studies emphasis to those studying an English major, and Conn is teaching courses in both Women's Literature and Gender Studies this semester.

For those interested in these courses, there isn't a better nor more urgent time in our culture and society to explore these issues through the lens of female writing and literature, and gender studies.

Is there such a thing as 'female

writing?" "Yes," argues Conn, because "it is writing which is woman centered," and all the literature studied in the course "explores the world from a woman's point of view, and with the goal of exploring women in the world and consciousness," she says.

Women's Literature gives students the opportunity to study female writers from the very late 19th century and its Victorian culture right up to those writing today: through novels, short stories, and poetry. "Women writers in the past faced more problems than women writers today, even though many of the obstacles still persist," says Conn.

Gender Studies "explores the idea that, while sex is biological, gender is culturally determined," says Conn. The Gender Studies course is "urgently needed today," she says, "when 25% of millennials and Gen Zs identify as non-gender conforming."

Women's History Month is a time to reflect upon all the women of history and those today who continue to do great things in our society, but the spotlight should not deflect from those women balancing many duties, and who achieve the extraordinary in their everyday ordinary lives.

"Women's History tends to honor individuals who achieved some remarkable feat, but we need to also focus on women who have been treated as 'less than' throughout history: women of



Photo Courtesy of Unsplash

Gender Studies courses offered at Bucks should appeal to a wide range of interests and students, with crossover into other areas like psychology, education, nursing, and social work but "the lens through which we look at the highlighted issues is unique," says Conn.

Like all issues, those affecting women must be highlighted, debated, reflected upon, and Women's History Month, International Women's Day and these courses offered at Bucks provide an ideal platform and starting point to that discourse.

color, working class women, single parents, grandmothers raising children, the heroic women like those we are seeing right now in Ukraine who are fighting for

democracy," says Conn. Progress has been made and women are making greater strides in society with more women attending college and graduate schools, running their own businesses, and being CEOs of large corporate organizations.

"However, the majority of women still earn only 75 cents on the dollar that men earn in similar positions, and many women still

struggle to balance the demands of family and work. One in four women still report that they have experienced sexual harassment or sexual assault in their lives. So, clearly, we have a very long way to go," says Conn.

Women's History Month and International Women's Day, which is celebrated each year on March 8, provide focal points to celebrate women's achievements, and the ideal opportunity to reflect upon women's rights and contemplate just how far (or not) society has progressed.

The Women's Literature and

Sawdust, The Gende Skateboards Pay Gap In and Passion 2022

The Gender

**Teachers** Organization Club

### **Profile**

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#### JAMES BONNELL

Centurion Staff

To visit Sloan Palder, your best chance is to catch him in or around some form of skatepark.

It's been this way his whole life and luckily, for the sake of this article, his current location in relation to skateboarding happened to be in West Philadelphia.

This particular location can be found just around the corner from the Philadelphia Zoo on North 40th Street.

Driving in, you're faced with the traditional image of the fringe locations that border most sections of Philadelphia. It's congestion, traffic, and construction.

While not particularly nerve racking or stressful, these environments can pull someone away from the reality of why they're there

Walking up to the door though, this is actually quite reassuring. It's reassuring to see that Sloan is heavily involved with something he loves, and that it doesn't matter where

A man in a tattered, bright yellow sweatshirt opens the door and invites me in

"Damn man, how many decades has it been?", Sloan asks.

Truth is it's only been one, but still a considerable amount of time has passed since we've been in the same room.

Inside the small entrance you are immediately met with what looks like a renovation. To the left is a small hallway that leads to a collection of skatepark ramps.

It turns out this location is known as Skate the Found-ry and it's for children of all ages to come take lessons from skateboard instructors in a safe

environment.

It also turns out that Sloan from a decade ago and his business had a pretty big hand in getting the Foundry off the ground.

Sloan and his business partner, Jesse Clayton, are co-owners of the skatepark building company known as 5th Pocket Skateparks. Jesse started the company over 10 years ago. After a brief pause in the company's history, Jesse revamped the idea and brought Sloan in. The two have been building parks together since

2017.

For the last two weeks, Sloan and Jesse have been hard at work inside the Foundry. They are recreating a feature known and loved by skateboarders in the Philadelphia area for almost a decade. This particular build is a nod to a location that spent considerable time in North Philadelphia before having to be removed due to financial issues, a bit of vandalism, and a lot of skateboarding.

Inside the build site, Sloan is wearing a worn out 5th Pocket Skateparks hoodie with the hood up. His hands are dirty and callused and he is drinking a tall can of Pabst Blue Ribbon. In between

# Sawdust, Skateboards and Passion



Sloan At Work

sips from the can and answering questions, Sloan finds time to add nails and cut wood. His ability to divide his attention is something that must come from experience.

Even though he has found work in construction outside of skateparks, he doesn't find the same satisfaction there.

"Say you renovate kitchens or something. You can be passionate about your work, but you can't get to that level of passion we have for this. Because, not for nothing, but I'll never use your kitchen," he expressed.

Throughout our conversation, it started to become clear that what was being done at 5th Pocket Skateparks is a bit more than just construction.

As the conversation moves forward, Sloan tells of parks that have been broken down, refitted, and repurposed. One build in particular was commissioned by Vans (the shoe company) for a three-day skateboarding celebration in Philadelphia.

After the three days were over, the agreement with the city required the park be taken down.

"We got hearts. We're not just going to put it in the trash you know?"

So instead of tearing the build down, 5th Pocket used its connections to haul many of the parks features to the Roebling Wire Works building in New Jersey where they are used on a daily basis.

To Sloan and his business, these parks are a representation of community. And community is what allows skateboarding to reach as far as it does.

This admiration for connectedness has allowed 5th Pocket to create a number of accessible parks for communities all over the world.

On one site in Pokhara, Nepal, Sloan recounts, "...waking up to seeing Mount Everest every morning."

As amazing as waking up to Everest must be, he found the positivity of the local people almost equally as important to note.

"I mean those people don't have

much. They hardly have anything, but everyone was always smiling," he mentions.

It's tough to say if this partic-

It's tough to say if this particular build is entirely responsible for Sloan's appreciation for the communities he's helped create. Perhaps the time he's spent on various Native American reservations throughout the country may have something to do with it as

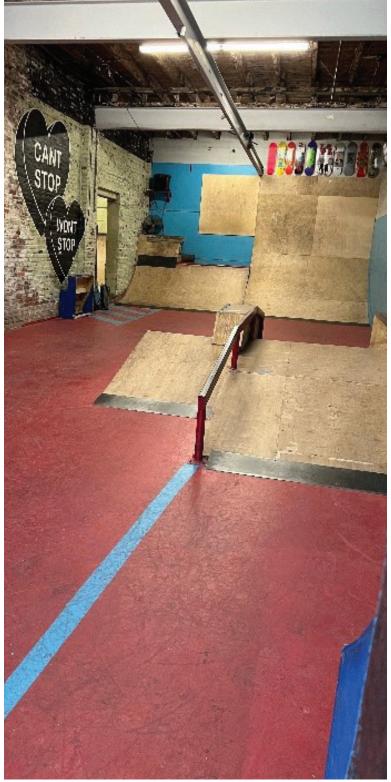
His dog's name is Rez, short for reservation, and he was given to him while actually living on a reservation.

Towards the end of the interview, he mentions working for a nonprofit called Wonders Around the World that is also working to provide accessibility to skateboarding all over the globe. Over the last few years WAW has built parks in Tanzania, Bangledesh, and Jamaica.

In September of this year Sloan and members of his construction outfit will hopefully start work on the first ever Wonders Around the World project in the United States, in New Mexico. This project has been pushed back more than once because of the pandemic, but the expression on his face while explaining the plans wouldn't tell you that.

Even in the face of not being able to get started and potentially not having a solid start date, just the prospect of helping create something new for skateboarding, is enough to make Sloan smile.

Skateboarding has always been an outlet for individuality, expression, and passion. Sloan Palder understands how important these concepts are and hopefully his work around the world can inspire future generations to seek happiness where happiness found him.



The Founds



Sloan Putting in More Work

## Gender Pay Gap

# Tracking The Gender Pay Gap

TARA BIRNBAUM

Centurion Staff

Even though women's history is celebrated during the month of March in the United States and the United Kingdom, it is still important to fight for the equality of women for many reasons, one of them being the gender pay gap that still exists in 2022.

Many companies post on their social media appreciation post for women during this month of celebration, even companies that still discriminate based on gender.

Two women, who have made an incredible impact this month, are Francesa Lawson and Ali Fensome. The pair created the Twitter account @paygapapp.

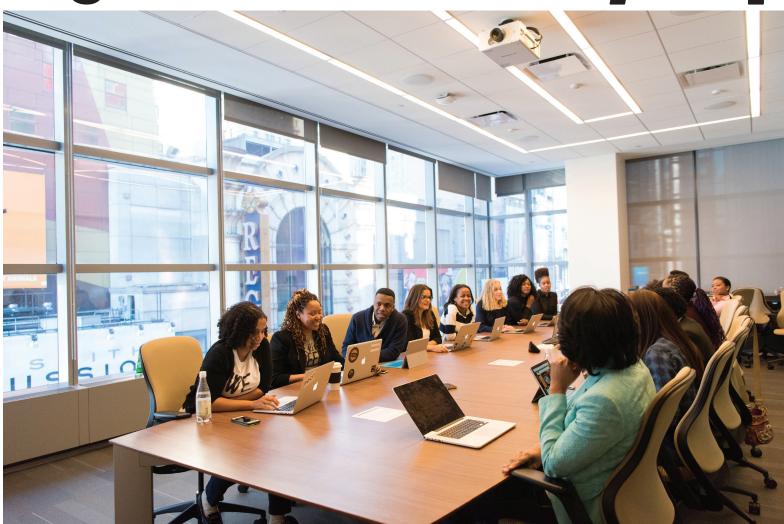
On their account, the 'Gender Pay Gap Bot' takes companies tweets about International Women's Day and quotes them with their gender pay gap rates.

The account has exposed many companies, mostly in Britain, for their difference in median hourly pay rate between men and women.

Their bio on the account states, 'Employers, if you tweet about International Women's Day, I'll retweet your gender pay gap"

Francesa Lawson, 27, told The New York Times, "The bot exists in order to empower employees and members of the public to hold these companies to account for their role in perpetuating inequalities. It's no good saying how much you empower women if you have a stinking pay gap."

Their cover photo on their profile says, "Deeds not words. Stop posting platitudes. Start fixing the problem."



The creators of Gender Pay Gap Bot make sure that companies are not praised for posting during International Women's Month if their pay does not match their claims.

In just one year since the account was created, they have gained 250,000 followers that support the account owner in calling out companies for their claims of equality.

The account has already inspired more data to be collected

in hopes of demolishing gender inequality in the workplace.

The fight for equality of women is still important today on a local and global level.

According to the United States Census Bureau there is an \$11,396 wage gap between men and women in Pennsylvania.

Many companies and colleges in the area notified their participants on their support for Women's History Month and what they could due as individuals to celebrate International Women's Day.

Bucks sent out an email to all students on March 7 with a list of all the events happening that week on Bucks+.

When asked about her view on the gender pay gap, Maria Shurdich, owner of Summit Public Adjusters in Bensalem, PA said, "As a female business owner, equality is a priority in my business every day no matter the circumstance. The gender pay gap should no longer exist in 2022, which is why the fight for gender equality certainly isn't over."

The gender wage gap has decreased over time in many countries including the United States. This decrease has only encouraged women across the world to continue to fight to assure that this decrease continues and the world moves toward a place with no gender bias.

Photo Courtesy of Unsplash



## **Future Teachers Organization**

# FTO is a Great Group for Education Majors

Alexandria Liga

Centurion Staff

The Future Teachers Organization Club, FTO for short, is a group that believes that Education majors could benefit from having an open discussion about anything they have encountered in their studies that relate to Education as a whole.

They also fully support, and often become involved in Education application, on and off campus. One such FTO involvement is their partnership with the Autism Cares Foundation.

In discussing her working with ACF, FTO president Olivia Cremonese said, "Volunteering for the Autism Cares Dance is something I find to be the most fun."

Olivia went on to explain that these dances are for teens and young adults with special needs and are usually themed to the season or a holiday like Halloween.

For anyone who wasn't sold about a themed dance party already, Olivia offered that, "You can help decorate the venue where the dance is, then you can dance the afternoon away with some awesome people. Pizza is always included too! I absolutely love going to the dances, and I think most students would!"

Although ACF is the main organization that FTO is aligned with outside of campus, they work with a variety of others.

What is Olivia's role with FTO you ask?

In her own words, "In my club personally, I help plan and organize events. I also attend every event we are invited to or have ourselves. I also love to share any information that I know is helpful



for education major with students in my classes and try to get people involved.

The club as a whole, mainly get together via zoom to talk about what's going in each other's majors.

They often discuss important information like transferring to 4 year schools, requirements, and preparation ideas for upcoming events

Anyone who is interested in learning more about teaching,

working with kids, or kids and teens with special needs is encouraged to reach out to Olivia at cremoneseo@live.bucks.edu, or any education professor even.

While the main focus of the club is discussing and being involved with education, Olivia expressed that the club is, "... also, for any students looking to get involved and make some friends."

FTO is a great opportunity for anyone who enjoys fundraising

and volunteering with local organizations.

And, "...the club can help the students make connections in the real world with organizations that work closely with teachers. This gives many opportunities for students to learn from teachers and other professionals in the field."

Olivia Cremonese works as a full time, student and works at a lab where she accessions covid 19. She also works in the summers full time as a job coach and 1:1 with kids and teen who have special needs.

She is 21 years old and lives in Southampton, Pennsylvania.

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### Clubs at Bucks

# A Club For Bucks' Veterans

EVAN BOYLE

Centurion Staff

Did you know the Bucks County Community College has its very own veterans club? Well now you do. The club was started in 2013 and is still running today.

The club's goal is to unite like-minded people with like-minded goals. They get together to help raise money for charities in the local community. They help each other learn and grow. The club helps give purpose to people who feel they need one.

The club is currently run by Lena Fowler who is a student here at Bucks and has quite a military track record.

Lena has enlisted in the Navy in 1988 and served until 1997. Lena then served in the Army Reserves from 1997 until 1998 and finally the National Guard from 1998 until 2000.

The club hasn't had regularly scheduled meetings due to Covid, but Fowler is looking to get back to business. There are currently two scheduled charity events planned.

The first event is the Lions Club eyeglass collection which recycles eyeglass frames and replaces the lens for people in need.

Fowler said "it's nice to see your charity at work" when she met a girl whose grandparents were helped by the Lions Club.

The second is a cell phone collection for Cell Phones to Soldiers. There is a possible third event called Salute to Service, but a date has yet to be determined.

So, while doing your spring cleaning, if you have any cell phones, working or not, the



veterans club will take them. The phones will be sent to Alpharetta, Georgia, where they will be erased and refurbished. The phones will then be sent to active and inactive military members. The same goes for old or outdated eyeglasses. Keep your eyes out for collection boxes around campus for these items during March and April.

The Stars and Stripes lounge is a dedicated space for veterans to

use for research, for relaxing or for connecting with other vets. It is open from 8:30 a.m. until 9 p.m. there is one on each of the three campuses.

The Newtown Campus -Rollins Student Center room 112-4 Lower Bucks Campus- 2nd floor next to room 238

Upper Bucks Campus- 1st floor of the original building.

Outside of the lounges is a "veterans information rack" where you can find information about programs on or off campus.

Due to Covid restrictions the club has been meeting remotely via Zoom. But, with campuses reopening and students returning the club is hoping to gain more membership. It is not for veterans only but anyone looking to support the men and women of the military.

There are three scholarships available for veterans through

Bucks. If you are a veteran or know any veterans interested in attending this school, please go to the school website and search veteran resources.

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If you or someone you know is interested in this club, feel free to email Lena, at fowlerl@live. bucks.edu, or look on Bucks website for more information.

Photo Courtesy of Unsplash

# Poker Club Looking for New Members



Evan Lechowicz

Centurion Staff

Poker was banned in our high schools as it was a form of gambling, but now students can enjoy the fun and joy of the game that brings a lot of skill.

Tim Youse is the executor of Epic Poker Club at Bucks County Community College; he started the club to bring attention to those on campus that love the game.

"I acquired a great interest in poker after a single home game with friends this past Summer. Since then, I've hosted weekly games for fun. I became eager to organize something at school and share my love for the game." Youse said.

Youse also stated, "I get a lot out of leading the club's direction, allocating tasks, curating our online presence, etc. I feel that it has unlocked a part of me as a man."

One of the main concerns that Youse expresses about running the Poker Club is getting enough people to join in on the fun.

"We are currently trying to make people aware that we exist as possible or just getting members in general. We have a consistent six or seven people that come right now." Youse said. It is not all about who can make the best 'poker face' during the game, it's all about having fun and creating experiences that students can bring home to their families and friends.

"Experience playing poker is not necessary. We teach the game to inexperienced players and are a friendly group of both amateurs and pros (mostly amateurs)" says Youse.

"Poker may seem overwhelming at first, so I make sure to break down the fundamentals like hand ranks, betting, and bluffing before playing a game." Youse states

Youse and other members of the club are willing to help the newer players by teaching the game. More specifically, the game of poker they like to focus on playing is Texas Hold 'Em. Youse says they would be welcome to play other poker games as well to increase the crowd.

Last semester, the Epic Poker Club ran a tournament as a fundraiser, and it went well. But only 15 people showed up to it.

Youse says he would love to have more people for the tournament this semester. "They don't have to necessarily come to the

meetings. But when we announce

the upcoming tournament, we would want people to be here."

The Epic Poker Club meets every Tuesday and Thursday at 12:30PM in the club organization room across from Starbucks.

For more information, email epicpokerclub@gmail.com

Photo Courtesy of Unpslash

### Entertainment

# West Side Story: Spielberg's Movie Dazzles

MARK RUFFIN

Centurion Staff

When I heard that one of the most successful film directors (Steven Spielberg) wanted to a remake such a revered classic as "West Side Story", I was perplexed.

Not the fact that Spielberg wanted to tackle a musical, this is the man who made "Jurassic Park" and "Schindler's List" in the same year.

Spielberg can tackle any genre and succeed; he has proven this time and time again. I just wondered why he would want to touch a film that won the Academy Award for Best Picture after its release in 1961.

"I don't usually like musicals, but this was good, said James Wright, a resident of Brooklyn, New York."

The famed director proved once again he can do anything he wants and succeed with spectacular results.

The basic plot remains the same as the classic 1957 Broadway musical, taking William Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet and transposing it into mid-1950s New York, but what's accomplished as far as exploring the cinematic art form is utterly breathtaking.

In his latest collaboration with screenwriter Tony Kushner and cinematographer Janusz Kamiński (among others), Spielberg has created one of his most spellbinding works to date, both visually and with spectacular sequences and an ensemble cast that is truly phenomenal. There is only one performance I believe is the weak link in the chain.



Like its on-stage and on-screen predecessors, West Side Story begins with a turf war, as tensions rise between the Jets, a gang consisting primarily of white inner-city youth, and the Sharks, who represent the growing population of Puerto Rican immigrants in Manhattan's Lincoln Square.

As the city continues to develop and undergo urban renewal, ushering in a new age for the rich in New York, the very survival of the two groups becomes dependent on increased territoriality, and personality and racial tensions only serve to increase the heat between the two factions. The leaders of the two sides – Riff (Mike Faist) and Bernardo (David Alvarez) – are prepared for a fight to the death.

Stuck in the middle of this conflict are Maria (Rachel Zegler) and Tony (Ansel Elgort), a pair of star-crossed lovers who fall for one another at first sight during a school dance.

Maria is Bernardo's sister, and Tony is the former co-founder of the Jets now trying to live a peaceful life – having recently given up his leadership position after nearly killing a rival and completing a prison sentence.

The couple quickly falls deeply in love, and they make plans to run away together, but the feasibility of such an endeavor is questioned as warfare and violence looms palpable in the atmosphere.

While I love the ensemble cast on display by Spielberg, the weak link unfortunately is Ansel Elgort's Tony. Elgort is a fine actor as demonstrated in Edgar Wright's film "Baby Driver"; however, he feels miscast as Tony.

Elgort does show some great vocal skills but lacks the presence to command the screen as he co-

stars Rachel Zegler and Arianna DeBose.

"West Side Story" more than deliveries and justifies its existence to exist alongside the 1961 classic.

Grade: A

"West Side Story" is currently available on streaming platforms Disney + and HBO Max.

Courtesy of 20th Century Fox





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