Alternative Spring Break inspires students to become change agents

By Sydney Harsh
Editor-in-Chief

Over spring break, nine students and three staff members travelled to Chicago, Illinois to become change agents.

The volunteer group focused on organizational effectiveness, improvement, and development of struggling organizations within Chicago, Illinois.

The Alternative Spring Break trip was planned through an organization called the Amate House, a young adult volunteer program of the Archdiocese of Chicago. The organization hosts college immersion trips, and plans the entire service experience.

Sister Karina Conrad, coordinator of service for the Office of Mission and Ministry, said, “It’s rewarding to see someone involved, and give back to not only their town, Titusville.”

She also added that she does it to help others in need. “It’s rewarding, to see someone I helped be genuinely happy when we help them accomplish a task that they’ve been working on for a few months or sometimes every year,” the designer said. Sister Karina said that it is important for students to be exposed, involved, and give back to not only their community.

See Spring Break, Page 9

Annual banquet spotlights diversity within communities

By Sydney Harsh
Editor-in-Chief

La Roche College took a proactive approach to acknowledging diversity last month by hosting the 3rd Annual Diversity Banquet. The keynote speaker, the Rev. Craig Giles, senior pastor of Trinity Church of Pittsburgh, discussed diversity, as well as its importance within our communities.

He emphasized how each and every one of us need to be more open and accepting to the world around us. “It’s okay to see difference [in the individuals around us], but we should not judge other people because of that,” the pastor said.

Keertha Stuart, a sophomore chemistry major, said his speech was extremly influential. “His speech was powerful because he emphasized that we can’t be color-blind and that we should acknowledge and accept that we are different. His quote, “It’s okay to see difference, but we should not judge other people because of that” stood out to me the most.”

She continued to explain how the previous quote went together with the quote he used from Martin Luther King’s “I Have a Dream” speech about his children “not being judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character.”

See Banquet, Page 10

SGA board discusses goals, projects

By Heather Radick
Managing Editor

Student government is a ubiquitous aspect of any student body, but sometimes its function is not always known among its constituents. La Roche’s recent student government elections spiked people’s awareness of the association, and incited questions about their goals and purposes.

This year’s president Veronica Russo ran her campaign on the promise of repairing the relationship between the student body and the faculty. Russo said that students often feel uncomfortable relating their concerns to faculty, and her goal was to act as an approachable liaison be-
La Roche College received a $4 million-dollar grant from Pennsylvania to bring new life to the worn and outdated second floor of the Science Center.

Michael Andreola is the Vice President for Institutional Advancement at La Roche College and is in charge of acquiring grants for the school. This million-dollar grant comes from the Redevelopment Capital Assistance Program (RACP).

Andreola said the plan for the Science Center is to completely gut the second floor and re-construct it. According to Andreola, the new layout will include new labs, offices, and common areas, as well as new ventilation systems and other amenities. “The new floor plan will provide us with more usable space, by decreasing the amount of space dedicated to hallways. We retained an architect who worked closely with our faculty in developing a design that will be more suitable to today’s teaching and learning styles.”

Andreola said he hopes to begin the renovation in May of 2018. He estimates it will take about six months to complete and expects the renovation to cost more than four million dollars. “We still have a considerable amount of fundraising to do,” Andreola said.

According to Andreola, the college has not received the funds yet as they need to submit more paper work outlining the plan to the state. “We waited a long time for the process to play out, and we were thrilled to find out that we will be awarded this grant,” Andreola said.

The Science Center was opened in 1980. Andreola said, “Our faculty have done a tremendous job providing an outstanding education for our students despite the increasingly challenging nature of the building, but the deteriorating quality of the facilities is getting more and more difficult to maintain.”

Andreola and his team worked on the grant request for more than two years and officially submitted an application in February 2015. He said they did not find out they received the grant until October 2016. Andreola said they will be able to preserve all of the good equipment that is currently in the Science Center and re-use it in the renovated building. Members from the business and finance division of the college administration will oversee the project, he said.

“La Roche is blessed with excellent faculty in the sciences, along with outstanding students. It is time that we have science facilities worthy of both.”

- Michael Andreola

SASS offers varied programs for seniors as graduation nears

By Lauren Villella

Entertainment Editor

The countdown is on. For seniors eagerly anticipating May or August graduation, a host of academic services and programs fill the spring semester to meet students’ varied needs.

Brandi Stretavski said the office of student academic support services (SASS) offers programs that highlight the specific needs of graduating seniors. Stretavski is the student academic support services program coordinator.

“We are trying to make sure that our seniors are prepared as best as possible,” Stretavski said. “We are here to support them as they transition into the work world.”

Last year, the college brought back the “Countdown to Commencement” event after not holding it for several years, Stretavski said. A large number of offices participate in the event, Stretavski noted, including the registrar’s office, student accounts and career development. This year, the event expanded to include the offices of institutional advancement and marketing and media.

Andrea Stretavski said the government required SASS to know their graduates’ upcoming plans. Seventy students completed the survey, Stretavski said.

“For seniors as they enter the workforce or attending graduate school,” Stretavski said.

Sister Janice Vanderneck (above) at Standup Sisters, an event promoting education about Catholic sisters. National Catholic Sisters Week sponsored the event, which occurred on March 14 in the CC Square.
Man on the Street

Entertainment Editor Jess Lee asked students: “What was your good luck charm?”

Name: Ramon Rios  
Year: Senior  
Major: Health science  
Quote: “I used to wear a necklace.”

Name: Kate Lehr  
Year: Freshman  
Major: Child and family studies/performing arts  
Quote: “It was a golden acorn. My mom gave it to me when I was in first grade. It was for a charm bracelet.”

Name: Edward Thomas  
Year: Freshman  
Major: Business management  
Quote: “My chain.”

Name: Ryan Roccia  
Year: Senior  
Major: English literature  
Quote: “For years, when I was boxing, I would wear a boxing glove on a chain around my neck.”

Name: Ramon Rios  
Year: Senior  
Major: Health science  
Quote: “I used to wear a necklace.”

Name: Gianna Spagnolo  
Year: Senior  
Major: Psychology  
Quote: “For ages I used to wear a gold necklace.”

Name: Gianna Spagnolo  
Year: Senior  
Major: Psychology  
Quote: “For ages I used to wear a gold necklace.”

Name: Kenny Swegman  
Year: Sophomore  
Major: Computer science/computer engineering  
Quote: “I wore a striped tiger shirt three years straight when I would go to the zoo. Does that count? Or I would say my Steelers hat since I wear it every day.”

Name: Kate Lehr  
Year: Freshman  
Major: Child and family studies/performing arts  
Quote: “It was a golden acorn. My mom gave it to me when I was in first grade. It was for a charm bracelet.”

Interested in joining our staff?
The Courier is always looking for new writers and photographers.

Contact either Sydney Harsh or Lauren Villella for more information on writing for the Courier.

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Students hesitant about Trump presidency

BY MINA HOLLAND
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

U nited States President Donald Trump’s election on November 9, 2016 and his inauguration on January 20, 2017 dissatisfied many in the nation. According to an article from The Guardian, approximately three-fourths of American adults did not vote for Trump in the presidential election, and out of 250 million American adults, only about 25 percent voted for him.

The Guardian said that about 65 million people voted for Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton and an article from Heavy.com reported that 90 million eligible voters did not vote at all. A Bloomberg news article said that many who did not vote were people ages 18 to 35, ranging from college students to young adults. They added that Clinton dominated the millennial vote by 55 percent as opposed to Trump’s 37 percent.

According to a report from the Pew Research Center, more millennials are Democratic than Republican, approximately 51 percent identifying as Democratic. An article from The Hill said that young voters dislike Trump for a variety of reasons. Students were interviewed at La Roche College on their outlook of a Trump presidency.

“I don’t think [Trump] is experienced enough to fulfill this job,” a freshman, Lauren Ranalli said. “I do not think he will improve the country because, like I said, he doesn’t have enough political experience and, quite frankly, enough intelligence to do as big of a job as running the country.” She added that someone cannot run a country like a business, which she said Trump is doing.

Though three-fourths of Americans oppose Trump, some say that even though he is a bad president, they won’t entirely resist against him. “Obviously, I don’t really like [Trump] but in my defense, I didn’t like him before he even wanted to be president. But, now that he’s president, even if I don’t like him, I heard there’s a lot of people saying, ‘he’s not my president.’ Technically, he is because we live in America, he’s America’s president, so now that he’s here, I hope he doesn’t do terrible things,” Seirra Anderson, a sophomore, said.

Other concerns people say they have are Trump’s immigration policies such as banning people from six countries to enter the United States. Anderson added that she has family all over the world and said she is worried that they could not visit her or if she could not visit them.

Overall, people say that they are concerned that Trump does not know what he is doing. Ranalli said that the United States should have elected someone with more political experience as president. Anderson added that though Trump has been changing a lot of things, he does it without thought and doesn’t know what he is doing.

“It’s like us, but in the presidency. But, we’re not supposed to be in the presidency and we’re supposed to learn stuff and know once we get there, but he knows nothing and just assumes things without any solid arguments for it,” Anderson said.

“I don’t think [Trump] is experienced enough to fulfill this job.”

- Lauren Ranalli

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Students

Conversation partnership program fosters friendships and language skills

By Lauren Villella
Editor-in-Chief

Strengthening their English-speaking skills and forming new friendships are two common goals for international students when they attend college in the United States.

La Roche College’s conversation partnership program aids international students in both of these endeavors. The program helps international students develop their English-speaking skills and fosters friendships between international and domestic students.

Sister Veronica Kim, CDP, said the program started as an idea nine years ago when she joined the La Roche faculty. Sr. Veronica, the assistant director of international student services, said she expanded the program and worked to make it more proficient and organized.

“It’s a very good program,” Sr. Veronica said. For international students, she added, the goals of the program are “to learn English-speaking skills through the volunteer, plus make good friendships.”

International students are not required to participate in the program, Sr. Veronica said.

“This is their option to apply to the program,” Sr. Veronica said. “I don’t push them. It’s their option. If they’re interested to learn English-speaking skills through our volunteer, they can come to see me.”

In order to recruit English-speaking volunteers, Sr. Veronica noted, she creates flyers and sends emails. Volunteers, she added, could be current La Roche students, faculty and staff members, sisters from the Motherhouse or other people who are interested in volunteering.

There are currently 28 English-speaking volunteers and approximately 20 international students in the program, Sr. Veronica noted. According to Sr. Veronica, volunteers typically meet with an international student for an hour each week.

Jenny Hua, a freshman ESL student from China, said she learned about the program from an ESL instructor. Although she has spoken English for over 20 years, Hua said, she joined the program in order to improve her pronunciation. She added she also wanted to learn more about the casual conversation style native English speakers possess.

“Because when we study English language, it’s quite formal, academic,” Hua said of Chinese international students.

Seirra Anderson, a sophomore majoring in criminal justice, has served as a volunteer in the conversation partnership program for three semesters. See Conversation, Page 14

La Roche students awarded National Science Foundation scholarships

By Heather Radick
Managing Editor

Twenty-one students entered La Roche College’s CheM Scholar Program after receiving a scholarship from the National Science Foundation (NSF). The CheM Scholar program, which was developed in 2014 after La Roche received a $607,000 grant from the NSF, provides scholarships of up to $10,000 annually to academically talented undergraduates.

The National Science Foundation offers awards and scholarships in support of research in the chemical sciences and as a means for recognizing achievements and encouraging future progress.

The following students are recipients of the NSF scholarship at La Roche:

Amber Alcindor
Robert Behers
Amanda Bodner
Noah Borland
Nicole Fulton
Felicia Gehres
Owen Hill
Alexander Hudak
Jinsuk Kim
Miranda Lasher

Dakota Leonard
Breanna Marvin
Megan Mason
Kayla Ordos
Gina Quahliero
Alaya Rhymer
Kara Sainato
Ricardo Serrano Perez
Aleta Tyrell
Thomas Vukson
Isabella Wallance

Read more at courier.laroche.edu
Humans of La Roche

Similar to Brandon Stanton’s Humans of New York, Editor-in-Chief Sydney Harsh set out to ask students inspiring and motivating questions, eliciting insightful responses

**Question:**
What are you most grateful for?

**Answer:**
“I am most grateful for my friends and family. I couldn’t have achieved the goals I set for myself without them always rooting for me. Sometimes you just need them to go that extra mile. I cannot thank them enough.”

-RaeAnna Palmer, graduate accounting and management major

**Question:**
What do you cherish the most in your life?

**Answer:**
“I cherish every second I get to spend with my friends, pets, co-workers, loved-ones, and family because what tomorrow holds is never set in stone and can be gone in the blink of an eye.”

-Kevin Correll, sophomore biology major

**Question:**
What lifts your spirits when life gets you down?

**Answer:**
“When I’m down, I play music that reminds me of good times or that relates to my current situation. Playing music takes me to a happier place and helps me think clearer when I’m down.”

-Tori Albert, junior marketing and management double major

**Question:**
What risk would you take if you knew you could not fail?

**Answer:**
“If I knew that I could take a risk and not fail in any way, I would choose to do something edgy and dangerous, like jumping out of a moving plane. The view would be incredible and beautiful. I also would not have to worry about dying as I fall back to Earth.”

-Ryan Norkus, sophomore criminal justice major
Students and faculty reveal thoughts on race relations on campus

By Tiara Phillip
Contributing Writer

La Roche College boasts of being a very diverse campus. But is La Roche College racist?

In February, the Courier surveyed La Roche College undergraduate students. The survey asked 30 black students and 50 white students to assess racial attitudes on campus. The survey also included 20 faculty and staff, three of whom are black.

The survey defined racist as a person that shows or feels discrimination or prejudice against people of other races, or believes that a particular race is superior to another.

The survey defined diversity as the inclusion of individuals representing more than one national origin, race, religion, socioeconomic stratum and sexual orientation.

Twenty-eight percent of white students said they are intimidated by blacks. In comparison, 10 percent of black students said they are somewhat intimidated by whites.

See Race, Page 12

Is technology in the classroom a recipe for distraction?

By Danielle DiNatale
Copy Editor

Most students can sympathize with one another over the flighty, inattentive feeling that takes over every now and again. Their vision goes from focused on the front of the room to staring at their phones, distraction isn't entirely avoidable.

Forty-three percent of La Roche College students said they might be able to go one class without checking their phone or using a computer. Forty-two percent said that it would be easy to go one class without their personal devices, while 15 percent said that they couldn't manage a class without them.

During the month of February, the La Roche Courier surveyed 100 students about their use of technology in class and how it affected their education. The survey participants consisted of 66 freshmen, 21 sophomores, eight juniors, and five seniors.

Out of the students surveyed, 99 of 100 said they have a smartphone. Jonathan Brown, a freshman and computer science major, said that he has a flip phone for calls and texts.

Students keep their phones in varying places. Forty-seven percent of students keep their phones in their pockets. Thirty-six percent keep their cell on the desk, and 12 percent keep them tucked away in a backpack. Meanwhile, five percent of students said that they keep their phone on their person, either seated on their lap or in their hand.

No matter where students store their phones, distraction isn't entirely avoidable. Nineteen of 100 students said that they check their phone more than 10 times during class.

See Technology, Page 13

No pain, no gain

Student athletes reveal extent of injuries

By Haley Ebersole
Contributing Writer

Around 30 million young people participate in sports in the United States. Among these 30 million people, 3.5 million injuries happen each year.

The La Roche Courier conducted a survey in February that examined the injuries, if any, that students on La Roche’s campus have endured because of sports-related activities.

Student athletes on campus participated in 100 surveys. Thirty participants requested anonymity by not releasing a name, an age, a gender, and some refused to reveal their sport. Of the other 70 students, 39 freshmen, seven sophomores, 11 juniors, and nine seniors returned the survey.

Of the 100 participants, 24 student athletes reported that they had never been injured. Of the remaining 76 students, there were eight baseball players, 11 basketball players, one cross country runner, one golfer, seven lacrosse players, 17 soccer players, 17 softball players, and 14 volleyball players who reported an injury.

A total of 38 females and 32 males filled out the survey. Our student athletes have endured many injuries, sometimes even participating in a sport that is not their primary sport. Soccer has presented the most injuries to athletes, with 19 reported incidents, while golf has had no reported injuries.

Softball and basketball fall behind soccer with 14 and 13 reported injuries, respectively. Volleyball reported 11 injuries, baseball reported nine, lacrosse reported six, tennis and cross country both reported one, and two respondents marked ‘other.’

La Roche’s athletes have experienced a wide range of injuries. They have had to face six dislocations, 21 sprains, nine broken bones, 19 torn ligaments, four deep cuts/gashes, and five concussions.

Twelve student athletes have experienced something more specific. Josie Buckley, a senior softball player, said in regards to her thumb dislocation, “I struggle to find a bowling ball with a big enough thumb hole.”

People forget that while our student athletes are strengthened and conditioned to avoid injury, they still feel the pain when that strengthening and conditioning fails them.

Pain is arguably the worst aspect of an injury. Athletes rated their pain in regards
Nature

La Roche community can help combat declining bee population

BY SARAH VORSHECK
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Things are abuzz as the declining bee population continues to affect the nation and our local community. However, La Roche’s campus can get involved and help save this essential part of our ecosystem. Since 2006, beekeepers and scientists have noticed a drastic decline in the bee population - dropping almost 70 percent in the past 10 years according to the USDA - with no sign of slowing down. Bees pollinate 75 percent of the crops we eat and 90 percent of the crops that we feed to our livestock, making them directly responsible for a large majority of the food we eat nationwide. When most people think about bees, honey bees are the first species that come to mind. Farmers have relied on honeybees for crop pollination for generations. Hives of the European honeybee (both domestic and wild) have declined 59 percent over the past 60 years. Native bees are also in decline, both domestically and worldwide. About half of native bee species disappeared from their historic ranges in the last 100 years. Bumblebee species have suffered a 96 percent decline in the last 20 years. Recently, the Rusty patched bumblebee became the first bee in the continental U.S. to be declared endangered. Not only does this drop affect our nation, but it has begun to affect us on a state and local level.

Local beekeeper and co-owner of Bedillion Honey Farms Sara Bedillion raised concerns about the grim reality of our local bee population. “On average, 30 percent of bee colonies nationwide are lost annually. In Pennsylvania, 60 percent of bee colonies are lost each year,” Bedillion said. Bedillion Farms places a strong emphasis on the important role bees play in our everyday lives. “We’ve always said ‘we keep the bees, and the bees keep us,’” Bedillion said, “sort of like our version of ‘do unto others,’” because our top priority is a happy, healthy life for the bees. When they’re at their best, we get the best from them. This means our mind is always on the health of our local environment. “The benefit of promoting an affection and appreciation for the honeybee (who are well-deserving!) is that it necessarily promotes an affection and appreciation for the wonderfully diverse plants and animals we have growing right in our backyards. Those plants feed the bees and in turn ourselves. The diversity provides stability and resilience in the system,” Bedillion said.

The USDA said parasites, pathogens, poor nutrition or sublethal exposure to pesticides could be causing the decline. PennEnvironment has been promoting a national campaign since late 2015 to persuade the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to ban the use of a class of pesticides, known as neonicotinoids, which is believed to contribute to decline in bee colonies. The EPA is conducting its own study to determine the effect of the pesticide, but PennEnvironment hopes the government agency will speed up its research and ban the pesticide in the meantime. While banning these pesticides would be a great push, there are many active ways the La Roche community can help save the bee population, and already are. Some of these ways include:

• Joining the garden club or planting bee-friendly plants at home or in your community. Some plants that are bee friendly and are already in our campus garden include floral plants such as strawberies and thyme.

• Buy local honey! It’d be awesome if the cafeteria at La Roche started using raw, local honey. You should also consider using it in your home.

• Avoid mowing down dandelions and clover when they are in bloom. I try to select annuals and perennials bees favor.

• Leave them alone. It may seem like a simple solution, but do not kill bees. Bees are naturally aggressive, and disturbing their hive life could lead to collapse in the ecosystem.

According to the USDA, the bee population has declined 70 percent in the past 10 years. ©SARAH VORSHECK

©SARAH VORSHECK

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Positive Space art show encourages students to reflect on artists’ hard work

BY HEATHER RADICK
MANAGING EDITOR

Starting on March 20, 2017, La Roche college showcased more than 150 works of student art during its annual art and design exhibit, Positive Space.

The show was organized by La Roche graphic and interior design students, and featured artwork across a wide variety of categories, including 3-D modeling, drawing and painting, photography, and package design.

The theme of this year’s show was Reflections. A junior graphic artist and participant in the show, Olivia Healy, said the show “reflects where we are and is a great opportunity to show everyone...that we are capable of so much more through hard work, dedication, and determination.”

Positive Space has enriched La Roche’s appreciation of art for over twenty years. Former La Roche professor Rosemary Gold first developed Positive Space in 1993 as a venue for students to display their work.

Charleigh Smith and Taylor Zediker, both graphic design students, said Positive Space was an excellent opportunity for students to gain recognition and awareness for their work and to foster the idea that graphic and interior designers are important members of the community.

Heather Clay, a junior graphic design student, said that it took “a tremendous amount of work...to create each piece,” and Positive Space is a means for this work to be appreciated and reflected upon.

The exhibit was open to the public through the end of March.

By Heather Radick

(above) Athena Russo - The Cube © JESS LEE

(above) Jihye Kim - The Red Umbrella © JESS LEE

(above) Brittany Craig - Water Pollution © JESS LEE

(above) Melissa Braun - Wonderland © JESS LEE

(above) Jennifer Navari - Papa Legba Mixers © JESS LEE

Read more at courier.laroche.edu
own communities, but other communities as well. “I believe serving one another is our calling from God,” she said. “When Jesus washed the disciple’s feet during the last supper he said, ‘I have given you an example that you should do as I have done to you’ (John 13:15). Jesus was willing to humbly and unconditionally serve other. We, too, are called to do the same.”

The group of change agents volunteered at various service sites such as social service agencies, food assistance programs, and community centers during their stay in Chicago. They also had the opportunity to explore the beautiful city of Chicago.

“Chicago is a very large and powerful city,” Hunt said. “However, traveling to Chicago made me realize that it has its weak spots just like any other city.”

The volunteers began their first day of service at the St. James Catholic food pantry.

“St. James food pantry serves residents facing high levels of unemployment and increasing scarcity of affordable housing,” Sister Karina said. “We spent the day processing donations, packing food, and organizing distributions.”

The change agents also spent a day at a local soup kitchen in Chicago sponsored by Pacific Garden Mission. The students and staff served dinner to guests who could not afford a proper meal.

Cornerstone Community Outreach, a homeless shelter and thrift store for the poor, was their next stop. Here, they sorted donated clothes for those who could not afford them.

“Cornerstone Community Outreach also provides shelter and helps find homes for families and individuals who are at the greatest risk of being excluded from necessary services,” Sister Karina said.

The volunteers then offered a helping hand at Taller de Jose, a community resource center that offers help to Latino immigrants in the Chicago area.

The change agents shifted gears from the community resource center to a Catholic elementary school in West Englewood, Chicago.

“Academy of Saint Benedict the African is the only remaining Catholic elementary school in West Englewood,” Sister Karina said. “We helped teachers and staff in their classrooms, while also interacting with the children.”

With education on the volunteers’ minds, their next service activity was tutoring elementary school students who live in the Back of the Yards neighborhood.

“Port Ministries offers free services and resources to south-side Chicago residents so they can better themselves and their families while strengthening the community,” Sister Karina said.

The Alternative Spring Break participants lending a helping hand at Saint James food pantry in Chicago

Spring Break, continued from page 1

Karina said.

Cradles to Crayons, an organization that supplies children under the age of 12 with everyday essentials, was the group’s next stop. The change agents sorted children’s winter clothing and packed coats, gloves, hats, and scarves for children in need.

“Cradles to Crayons provides children from birth to age 12, living in low-income and homeless situations,” Sister Karina said, “with the essential items they need to thrive at home, at school, and at play.”

The volunteer group endured a challenging, yet fun-filled week of community service activities; however, those service opportunities were chosen for a specific reason: to help the students and staff members become change agents on campus.

“My hope is that students become change agents on campus and that the week of service and justice inspires them to make a difference locally: Not only during their college career, but also as future leaders and whatever field they find themselves in,” Sister Karina said.

During Alternative Spring Break trips, students immerse themselves in more than just a week of service and justice, they also immerse themselves in a new environment and experience outside of their comfort zones.

“In Chicago,” Sister Karina said, “we encountered harsh realities of some of the impoverished communities of Chicago. We reflected on social justice issues we encountered on our trip: poverty, civil rights, immigration, access to education, etc.”

Some of the volunteers expressed what they learned from the social justice issues they encountered.

“Giving service to those around us makes the world more loving and kind.”

- Sister Karina Conrad

The trip will stick with me forever because it was an eye-opening and life changing experience. The image of homeless people wandering the streets of the neighborhoods we volunteered in stuck with me the most,” Hunt said. “We all have these preconceived images in our head of what we think it means to be homeless. But, working first hand with them made me realize that they can be and look normal just like us.”

The group of volunteers said they would recommend the Alternative Spring Break trip because it will teach participant life lessons that they will carry with them forever.

Sister Karina said she is beyond grateful that students look forward to service projects, and helping all communities in need.

“Giving service to those around us makes the world more loving and kind,” Sister Karina said.

Alternative Spring Break participants included: staff members Sister Karina Conrad, coordinator of service for the Office of Mission and Ministry; Candace Okello, director of diversity and inclusion; and Jon Colburn, lead groundskeeper; and La Roche College students: Tiela Hunt, Ashley Walz, Audrey Swandleski, Morgan Ward, Mariana Benitez, Shikira Rodriguez, Babin Thapa, Dipina KC, and Megan O’Neil.

Read more at courier.laroche.edu
SGA, continued from page 1

“SGA, continued from page 1

From left to right: Sierra Anderson, Dipina K.C., Madainia Tavernier, and Justin Hsieh © CANDACE OKELLO

People can become more knowledgeable about the diverse communities by becoming more knowledgeable about the diverse communities that surround us. “It’s important because we live in a diverse world and we need to be able to create relationships across cultures to be more educated and culturally competent,” Evans said.

Evans continued to express why it is important to be a diverse individual. “I think we do ourselves of disservice by not engaging difference. The fear associated with this keeps people from seeing the beauty of other cultures, identities, and experiences,” she said. “We can’t be limited by our fears, instead open to being challenged to move towards more greater competency and try unity.”

Diversity and its importance goes beyond our just communities, it can be interpreted in many ways, depending on a student’s culture and identity.

Evans said that diversity is a blend of other cultures and people coming together to celebrate each other’s uniqueness, as well as to seek a better understanding of one another.

However, Stuart responded more broadly, “Diversity is accepting the difference while also specifically for people of color,” Okello said, “but we will continue to fight for justice and equality and we won’t quit until we see it in our lifetime.”

It was important that the audience heard this message, and are reminded that we all have a role to play in this movement of diversity, she concluded, even though we are only one person, we can certainly make a difference.

Students and our community can become more diverse, while spreading diversity throughout our communities by becoming more knowledgeable about the diverse communities that surround us.

“People can become more knowledgeable about the diverse communities on our campus by attending diversity and social justice programs, participating in service opportunities, and actively pursuing opportunities to get to know someone who they really don’t know,” said Anderson.

Anderson agreed with Okello. “You can’t learn if you’re closed off. It’s hard to excel if you don’t know how to interact with those who may not share the same values and beliefs as you or who don’t look like you.”

Evans also added that we can spread diversity throughout the community that we live in by challenging others to move towards unity and address social issues that continue to divide our communities,” she said.

Diversity is a blend of how we were raised, Stuart said. “It’s so important for us to not stay in our own circles,” Anderson said, “as well as to not cut out the beauty of other people’s experiences and understanding of life.”

The 3rd Annual Diversity Banquet was Thursday, February 23, 2017 in Zorn Auditorium at 6:30 p.m. All students, faculty, staff, and the La Roche College community were encouraged to attend.

The Rev. Giles used the acronym D.R.E.A.M to summarize the importance of campus diversity.

“Diversity is unique and important,” the Rev. Giles said.

The Diversity Banquet also included a diversity reflection by Seirra Anderson, a sophomore criminal justice major.

Audino and her vice-president, Connor Hagins said that the purpose of the Diversity Banquet was Thursday, February 23, 2017 in Zorn Auditorium at 6:30 p.m. All students, faculty, staff, and the La Roche College community were encouraged to attend.

The Rev. Giles used the acronym D.R.E.A.M to summarize the importance of campus diversity.

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From left to right: Sierra Anderson, Dipina K.C., Madainia Tavernier, and Justin Hsieh © CANDACE OKELLO
La Roche student athletes report the different types of injuries they have sustained playing their respective sport.
Twelve percent of white faculty and staff said they are somewhat intimidated by black people. Whereas, 33 percent of black students said they are not at all intimidated by white people.

One of the many variables in racism is family upbringing. Language and literature major Soraya Benjamin, a black female, said that her family has some misconceptions about race. “I’ve been taught to work for everything because life won’t be easy,” she said. “And things [aren’t] hand on everything.”

Twenty-eight percent of black students said their family upbringing somewhat affected their perception of race. Whereas, 24 percent of white students said their family upbringing very much affected their perception of race.

Journalism major Morgan Zuba- sia, a white female, said her family upbringing very much affected her perception on race. She said, “A lot of my family members are racist so it made me even more passionate about equality.”

Business management major Ray- sha Evans, a black female, said that her family upbringing somewhat affected her perception of race. “Their parents taught me to be accepting, and staff said their family upbringing very much affected their perception of race.”

An anonymous white female mem- ber of the faculty or staff, said, “My parents taught me to be accepting, but it has been more education in bach- elor’s and master’s programs that truly informed me of injustice pertaining to race.”

ESS Instructor Darcey Mains, a white female, said, “I was raised to treat others as I want to be treated. My immediate family is tolerant of others. I am much more informed, despising some negative influences.”

One hundred percent of students who identified as black said they are not racist. Ninety-eight percent of students who identified as white said they are not racist.

Language and literature major, anonymous white female who stated she was racist, said, “I am a white person, so I inherently racist and I will always benefit from racism, even if I try really hard to be inclusive.”

Marketing and management major Kristin Spezialetti, a white female, said, “I do not describe myself as racist. I do believe I have pockets of racism inside but I may not have discovered yet.”

A counselor at the university, said, “Sometimes, I feel racist, especially when I see films that show that blacks are inferior to whites.”

One hundred percent of black students said they have black friends. Ninety-eight percent of white students said they have white friends.

One hundred percent of black faculty and staff said they have black friends. Additionally, 100 percent of white faculty and staff said they do have white friends.

Business management major Mark McIntyre, a white male, said, “I have grown in much with my friends [like] learning where they came from and more about everyone no matter their differences.”

Kristin Spezialetti, political science and sociology major, a white male, said, “There is a certain spectrum of racial animus that is present in my family. Some are admittedly racist, using cer- tain racial epithets and haranguing certain sentiments. Others, though not outwardly bigoted, hold perspectives rooted in bigotry.”

One hundred percent of black fac- ulty and staff said they do not have any racist family member. However, 53 percent of white faculty and staff said they have racist family members.

Coordinator of Academic Coun- seling Diana Atkinson, a white female, said, “Some of my family members have racist comments and have alluded to blacks being subhuman or the cul- pit to perpetuating racism.”

Computer science major Bradley Gray, a white male, said, “It provides a great experience with different cul- tures that has helped me with understand- ing others.”

One hundred percent of black faculty and staff said the level of diversity at La Roche not at all influenced their perception on race. Whereas, 33 percent of black faculty and staff said the level of diversity at La Roche influenced them very little on their perception of race.

When asked if blacks are superior to whites, 96 percent of black students said they do not think black people are superior to white people. Additionally, 28 percent of white students said they do think black people are superior to white people.

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Counselor Erin Dorsch, a white fe- male, said, “Older family [members] feel and believe other races are more likely to be criminals.”

One hundred percent of black students said the level of diversity on La Roche campus not at all influenced their per- ception of race. However, 34 percent of white students said that the level of diversity very much influenced their perception of race.

Marketing and management major Rueben James, a black male, said, “I feel that everyone in particular has a form of upbringing that’s distinct. The mindset might be different, but not necessarily racist.”

Shahidah Queen said, “I feel that the diversity [at La Roche is amongst the people] but not amongst the pro- grams.”

Professional writing major Mina Hend, a white female, said, “La Roche has a lot more diversity than my grade and high school that were mostly filled with white kids.”

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White Students - Have your family upbringing affected your perception of race?

Eighteen percent of white faculty and staff said the level of diversity at La Roche not at all influenced their perception on race. Whereas, 33 percent of black faculty and staff said the level of diversity at La Roche not at all influenced their perception on race.

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Technology, continued from page 7

Thirteen students said that they check their phone six to eight times, and 28 said they check their phone three to five times. Forty students said that they only go onto their phone once or twice while they are in class.

When asked the reason they go onto their phone during class, students reported multiple answers such as answering texts and checking the time. Students also noted that boredom with the class topic prompts them to take out their phones.

While on their phones, students find various ways to distract themselves. Students reported that they mainly text, check social media, watch TV or sports, and shop online during class. Other students added that they use their phones in class to play games or check their email.

Phones are not the only culprit in stealing the spotlight from academics. Students sometimes attend class in computer labs. Others bring their own laptops to use in class. This results in them constantly staring at a screen. Thirty-three percent of students said that they are more distracted by having a computer in front of them during class.

With the constant availability of a screen to stare at, temptation to use a computer for personal interests is all the more prevalent. Whether it is more distracting or not, 60 percent of students stated that they use computers for something other than in-class work. Forty percent said that they never go onto the computer for any thing other than in-class assignments.

Distractions are not always rooted in the student’s own personal device usage. Thirty-four percent of students said that they are more distracted by something else on their phone or computer for purposes other than class work.

Some professors on campus have strict phone and computer rules for their classrooms. Seventy-four of 100 students surveyed said that these professors have a fair point by establishing strict rules for the use of technology.

“You are paying or your parents are paying for you to take that class,” Delaney Beaver, a sophomore interior design major, noted. She added that she try and do more with student involvement, so we won’t be on our phones,” he said. “So we should do the same.”

On the contrary, 18 of 100 students stated that professors with strict technology rules do not have fair reasoning.

“Having a strict phone policy almost encourages me to be on it as a challenge,” Eric Onofrey, a sophomore computer science major, said. “Some professors have the whole, ‘If you are on your phone and you miss something that’s on you’ and that works best.”

Jacob Brooks, a freshman computer science major, said that strict rules are not fair because he pays to go to the college. “If I want to check my phone during class, I have that right. I am aware slacking off may affect my grade, but that’s my choice,” he said.

Eight students stated that they have mixed feelings about professors with strict technology rules. “Personally, I need a quick break from certain topics and can’t focus consistently, so I check social media and such to give my brain a little break,” Abby, a sophomore marketing and management major, said. “Then I am back to focusing in on the class until it ends.”

Brianta Hilton, a senior criminal justice major, said that making the classes more fun would keep her off her phone. “All four years I’ve only had two interesting classes,” she said.

“I feel as though professors should try and do more with student involvement, so we won’t be on our phones,” TFchina Mitchell, a senior psychology major, noted. She added that she would prefer involvement with the lesson rather than lecture classes.

La Roche students reveal what they do on their cellphones while in class

Some of the reasons La Roche students use their cellphones in class
In that time, she said, she has worked with approximately six international students. Anderson said she saw one of Sr. Veronica’s emails and the prospect of meeting international students motivated her to volunteer for the program. The benefits of the program, Anderson said, are wide-ranging and apply to both the international students and the volunteers. For international students, Anderson added, the program can help them overcome their inhibitions.

“I think it makes the students more open, because most international students, they don’t want to speak that much because they feel like their English isn’t that good,” Anderson said. “But when they meet conversation partners, they realize we don’t mind waiting. They’re not as scared anymore, so I think that’s what helps them with their English as well.”

Hua said she and her conversation partner have discussed the differences in personalities of Americans and Chinese students. “Basically people here are more outgoing,” Hua said. “But in China the people are more shy.”

Anderson said her awareness of the program is a good supplement to the instruction she receives in her ESL classes. “Because (for) ESL students, your classmates are not native speakers,” Hua said. “They are from other countries. They’re speaking (with) accents. You cannot learn from it; you only can learn from your teacher, instructors. So that’s very helpful. I like this program very much.”

Anderson said her awareness of other cultures has increased through her volunteering. “I really enjoy meeting with the students, especially because I like learning different languages, so I get to meet with them and if we become friends outside of conversation partners, I can be able to talk to them,” Anderson said.

Hua said she and her conversation partner have discussed the differences in China’s and the United States’ education systems. Another topic, Hua added, is the differences she has witnessed in the personalities of American and Chinese students.

“I think it makes the students more, ‘Wow, your English is excellent. Better than me.'” Anderson said. “So I could feel their improving English-speaking skills. I am so happy and I tell them, ‘Wow, your English is excellent. Better than me.'”

It is rewarding, Anderson said, to see international students’ improvement as their meetings continue. “As you see their growth it’s kind of shocking,” Anderson said. “Maybe in the beginning you’re the one starting all the conversations, all the topics, but as they go on they’ll start starting the conversations and it’s really exciting and fun.”

The conversation partnership program, Hua said, is a good supplement to the instruction she receives in her ESL classes. “Because (for) ESL students, your classmates are not native speakers,” Hua said. “They are from other countries. They’re speaking (with) accents. You cannot learn from it; you only can learn from your teacher, instructors. So that’s very helpful. I like this program very much.”

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