

Alcohol Taskforce Releases Findings, Recommendations; President Hass Commits to Wet Campus, Says Greek Life Not to Blame for Drinking Culture

BY JORDAN HULSEBERG '19
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

President Marjorie Hass' Alcohol Taskforce has released its findings and recommendations regarding alcohol policy and other ways to reduce high-risk drinking. Hass has expressed her pleasure with the results of the taskforce and has determined Rhodes will still remain a wet campus—a policy she has never expressed interest in eliminating. Although none of the recommendations have been selected to be supported or rejected, the seven-page document is a bellwether of what is to come. Hass will establish an implementation committee which will review the taskforce's recommendations and will develop a strategy for implementation. This committee will also have student members.

Hass also made clear she and the taskforce did not find any individual aspect of student life to blame for current drinking behavior. She explained this review was not an assault on Greek life but aimed broadly at fixing campus culture.

"One of the things that really pleased me about this report is that it does not demonize, blame or identify any one group or practice that is responsible for our drinking culture. I think that is one real strength of this document. They've been very clear and I've been very clear all along. This is not a Greek problem. This is not a freshmen problem. This is not a problem where we can point to one area of our campus where this happens. If we did, then we wouldn't need a taskforce and we would be able to solve this problem relatively quickly," Hass said.

The taskforce, chaired by Dr. Barron Boyd '71 and Associate Dean of Students Jamia Stokes, divided into three subcommittees which each provided their own recommendations for resolving the problems they had examined. The recommendations included a ban on "drinking games/activities/equipment that encourage high risk drinking," "public intoxication, regardless of age" and the "use of pure grain alcohol



and other high proof alcohol." The taskforce also called for the institution of a zero-tolerance policy for "illegal possession, drug paraphernalia, and the use of drugs without a prescription" and to "limit public displays of alcohol and open containers."

Not all of the recommendations, however, had the entire taskforce's support. Recommendations to reinvigorate substance-free housing and the rollback of the open container policy received pushback from the taskforce's student members.

President Hass has yet to make any decisions on which policies will be instituted.

"It's premature to answer [the question of which recommendations we will implement]. Our next step, of course, is to have a review of the recommendations which are very thoughtful and very well done. We will be putting together an implementation committee—that will be the next step. That committee will prioritize the recommendations and oversee the implementation of them," Hass said.

She further added, "A lot of what they're talking about is less policy changes and more really significant education and cultural initiatives. So, some of these recommendations are things that can be implemented very quickly by individuals. Some of them require more comprehensive planning if we're really going to be doing a social norms campaign or a really compre-

hensive alcohol education program. So, we need to look at the various steps we need to take to do that and the people who are responsible for carrying that out are around the table."

Other recommendations made by the taskforce which focused on cultural or educational steps to take included expanding "alcohol-free social options on the weekends later at night, including food trucks," providing "incentives to organizations/fraternities that endorse healthy behavior," hiring "a full-time staff member responsible for Health and Wellness" and providing "alcohol education programming during the first 6 weeks of fall classes" for first-year students.

Co-Chair Jamia Stokes, justifying these recommendations, said, "As we talk about social norms, as a Rhodes culture, the goal is for it not to be the norm that drinking on the weekend is the only thing to do. It's important that, as a culture, there be other things to do besides drinking. That's essentially what we're getting at. There should be other outlets for you to have a good time that don't always include drinking. If it does include drinking, it doesn't include drinking to the point of blacking out."

The taskforce began its work with realistic expectations about student drinking behavior and an acknowledgment of the college's status as a wet campus.

Co-Chair Barron Boyd said, "We are not advocating for a dry campus,

we are advocating for a safe campus and a campus where health and safety are both included under the rubric of alcohol. People aren't going to stop drinking—we know that. The question is, how do we handle the negative effects of alcohol? ... We know there is no magic wand. We can't just do one thing and make it better. So, what we advocate is a series of small steps and ways to try and improve the climate of alcohol use and move it in a more productive and appropriate way."

The taskforce was also concerned of instituting too strict of an alcohol policy and implicitly encouraging students to drink off-campus rather than on-campus.

"That's one of the great conundrums that we've dealt with. If you do too many things that are draconian or are really hard-nosed on-campus then they'll just go off-campus. So we want to find a balance between being cognizant of the issue and the dangers of the issue.

Regardless, Hass acknowledged that any changes will likely require further conversations and deliberation.

"The taskforce wisely understands that these are things that would require discussion and conversation. I'm pleased they've pointed us to some specific policy areas to review," Hass said.

Ultimately, Hass expressed hope for a positive response from both students and the Rhodes community at large.

"I hope that there is great enthusiasm. Everyone who is aware of some of the issues we have had around alcohol abuse is concerned about students' safety. I feel confident that as people read these findings and review them, they will interpret them to be in the spirit of creating a safer and more positive environment. I also recognize we may need more conversation about specifics, we're not going to rush to implement something that we haven't thought about how to implement. There's a lot of good positive work we can begin to do," Hass said.

NEWS, CONT'D

KD Confidence Week

By KATIE BREWSTER '18
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The Rhodes College chapter of Kappa Delta (KD) put on their annual Confidence Week last week to promote confidence and raise money to benefit Prevent Child Abuse America (PCAA). The week's events began with the women passing out free coffee and "Caught You Being Confident" cards in the Troutt Quad. That night, a stream of Kappa Deltas walked across campus with pillows in hand towards the Bryan Campus Life Center gym. Although it looked like a slumber party, the pillows were actually used as makeshift punching bags for a self-defense class. Vindhya Pasupuleti '21, a new member in KD, used her taekwondo background to teach the women some basic self-defense moves.

"I've done taekwondo for seven years now and it has really built my sense of security. I feel like getting my black belt gave me strength through not just the moves I learned but the identity I built related to it," Pasupuleti said. "Sometimes it's not the technique, it's confidence versus being a deer in the headlights. It's knowing you can protect yourself."

Pasupuleti ran the women through a variety of drills from "shrimping" that was used to show how to escape an attacker while on the floor to a simple exercise of yelling to "get back" at full volume.

"I loved getting everyone out of their shell. I made them punch my hands as hard as possible. I said 'think of anything that's pissed you off and shaken your sense of stability and take it all out.' You should be able to trust your-



From left: Jordana Terrell '20, Davi Hertz '20, Jackie Paiz '20, McKenzie Dorris '20, Lillian Spell '20

self that you can put your best self out there and feel secure," Pasupuleti said.

On Tuesday, students could put their thumbprint on the Confidence Pledge, a promise to work to instill confidence in both yourself and others. Sticky notes were posted across the school with encouraging phrases like "Radiate confidence" and "You are incredible."

The following night, a speaker from Kappa Delta headquarters came to speak to the campus in Blount Auditorium. Kim Lewis, a Senior Project Manager for KD, encouraged everyone to take the time for self-care and not forget to "do things for yourself."

"I think the coolest thing she did was a game of Rock Paper Scissors where first you complimented the person. Then if they won you stood behind them and cheered for them," Kappa Delta Ruth Scott '18 said. "It reminded me that we

as women should support each other."

The next day, the "Trash Your Insecurities" event in the Rat encouraged students to take Lewis' words to heart and chuck a piece of paper with their biggest insecurity on it into a large gold trash can. On Friday, the "You Make Me Smile Campaign," an event popular in KD chapters across the country, had students write loving messages to one another on blue balloons.

While part of the week's goal was to promote confidence, Kappa Delta also raised money for their philanthropy Prevent Child Abuse America. The organization is dedicated to promoting services and developing programs to improve child well-being across the nation and prevent all types of abuse and neglect. On Wednesday, students were encouraged to drop their change into jars to support PCAA. Each jar was la-

belled with a different possible theme for All-Sing, KD's biggest fundraiser of the year and the longest standing fundraiser at Rhodes. Themes included Once Upon a Time, Female Singers, One-Hit-Wonders and Music Fest.

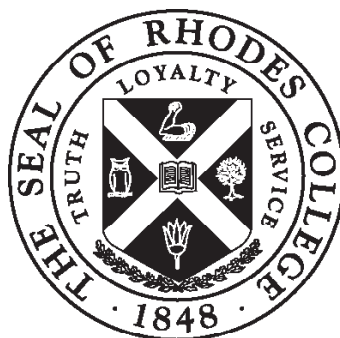
The final and largest event of the week was the "You Make Me Smile" celebration. The festivities were moved inside to the BCLC after an incoming rainstorm and cold front made Oak Alley an unappealing option. There was music, giant bubbles for the enjoyment of both students and professors' children and plenty of food. Some of the proceeds were donated to PCAA from every purchase of a grilled cheese from the Say Cheese truck parked outside or Mempo's popsicle. To encourage participation throughout the week, points were awarded to each class every time someone from that year attended an event or donated. The Class of 2021 won the competition and its prize: reserved, decorated seating at All-Sing next semester.

"This year, we wanted to have as much campus engagement as possible. Having the class competition helped. We also had more fundraising this year than we have in the past which is incredibly important to us," Jordana Terrell '20, KD Vice President of Community Service, said. "Thank you to everyone who came out, I was overwhelmed by the amount of support we received. It made my heart happy."

Editorial Staff:

Editors-in-Chief, Jordan Hulseberg '19
& Katie Brewster '18
Design Editor, Zoe Laulederkind '18
Sports Editor, Jack Patton '18
Circulation Editor, Warren Socher '19
City Editor, Pramika Sriram '21

Staff of the Sou'wester



Writing Staff:

Staff Writers, Rohan Kaza '21,
Junior Walters '19, Ty Georgeadis '20,
Beth Trueman '18, Ayalita Crosston '20,
Rylan Lorance '21, Maddie Rhodes '18

Interested in joining *The Sou'wester*? Have any stories you think need a voice? Comments/concerns? Email us at rhodescnews@gmail.com
Find us on Instagram @[souwesternews](https://www.instagram.com/souwesternews) and Facebook at [facebook.com/souwesternewspaper](https://www.facebook.com/souwesternewspaper)

WITHIN THE GATES

RSG President-Elect Spencer Beckman Has High Hopes, Big Plans for Next Year

BY JORDAN HULSEBERG '19
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Following his electoral victory, RSG President-Elect Spencer Beckman '19 has big plans for the upcoming year.

This year Beckman hopes to use the remaining value of the student activity fund to complete his pads and tampons initiative. This initiative would make it possible for women to have access to these products for free—especially during class.

“One thing I would really like to do, with the end of the year, is with the student activity fund and the remaining amount. I would like that to go the pads and tampons initiative—paying for pads and tampons to be in all the academic restrooms. The purpose behind that is just academic equity. A guy could have a period and get to stay in the classroom all class long but if a girl has a period in class, that’s time they have to miss that a male doesn’t. Just having those supplies in academic restrooms allows students to be that much quicker to get back to class. We want to maintain an equal environment for education,” Beckman said.

The remainder of his agenda for the upcoming year includes a student center, fixed tuition and the usage of work orders more heavily to improve residence halls.

“A lot of things I would like to touch on, the main ones are a student center. By the end of my presidency, I would like the college to commit to building a student center—not have it built, because that’s just unrealistic, but I would really like a firm commitment that the college is going to have a student center on campus. Fixed tuition is another thing I’m really going to push for. It’s not frozen tuition but the college makes a prediction of what tuition is going to look like for the next four years, they take the average of that, divide it by four and pay that chunk every year. It’s just a commitment so that the student knows what they’re paying ahead of time. Right now, we increase every year by three percent, it’s just a matter of students don’t really know that when they come to the college—just transparency, people paying what they expect to pay. So those are the two major



“Expect More”: Spencer Beckman '19 wins RSG Presidential Election.

things and additionally I would really like to see people utilize the Work Plant in terms of work orders with addressing issues with our residence halls. Our residence halls are getting a little bit of an overhaul this summer but the immediate problems we need to address right now sort of need to be handled through work orders,” Beckman said.

Beckman also indicated his desire to reform the current meal plan policy, though he had yet to meet with President Hass to discuss the subject.

“I would also like to include meal plans but I haven’t met with President

Hass to discuss that yet. There’s a discussion about food quality, food variety and then also what our current meal plans look for. One thing I would like to see is if you swipe in at one meal time, just like at most colleges, you can come in and out as much as you want for a meal during that time. We have the honor code, I don’t understand why that’s such a big concern—I don’t think it is. Just letting people swipe in for lunch, go to class, and be able to go back for lunch shouldn’t be a problem,” Beckman said.

With regard to alcohol policy, Beck-

man hopes drinking behavior can be more heavily examined in first-year seminar and he expressed his support for nearly any policy the college’s alcohol taskforce makes to curb excessive drinking.

“Just healthy drinking is what I want to encourage and I think the presidential taskforce will have some good first steps on how to deal with that but I’m leaving the ball in their court. I would like to see better implementation of training for first-year students about alcohol in the first-year experience and first-year seminar. I think a wet campus is a good policy because we’re honest with ourselves—students are going to drink, let’s not make them hide it to a point where it gets dangerous. I can’t really see any policy the college making that I would be against,” Beckman said.

As for the first-year seminar, Beckman acknowledged its poor favorability among students and supported the new plans for it next year which are aimed at making the program more personalized and tailored to meet each student’s needs and to focus on “things that actually interest them.”

In the end, Beckman had this to say to the student body, “I’ve been very overwhelmed and grateful for the opportunity to serve as student body president. I honestly believe that this year is going to be, like, when we look at next year, at this time, we’ll be in a better place as a community than we were a year ago. I’m so excited for all of the energy on campus right now and all the student leaders we’ve just elected. I think Rhodes is going to be a great place to be.”

Beckman also expressed his thrill about working with the new RSG cabinet. He called them, “the best group of student leaders I could even have imagined.” He shared high hopes for Vice President-Elect Catherine Owen and her future chairpersonship over the Senate. Beckman also hoped he could incorporate his election opponent, Aylen Mercado '19, in the RSG process as well.

WITHIN THE GATES

Suits and Saris: A Multicultural Formal



From left: Mounika Aramandla '19, Anisha Dash '21, Anjali Mangrola '20 and Arati Joshi '19

BY ROHAN KAZA '21
STAFF WRITER

A whirl of colors filled Stop 345 last Friday as a crowd of people wearing everything from suits to saris gathered for a Multicultural Formal organized by South Asian Culture and Advocacy (SACA) and All Students Interested in Asia (ASIA.) Since the event took place off-campus, buses were provided throughout the night to escort students to the venue. The food served was from the ever-popular Mulan Asian Bistro and the lesser-known Hyderabad House, an Indian restaurant named

after the capital of southern India's Telangana state. The food was befitting for the occasion in its variety of flavors from chicken 65 to spring rolls to samosas. The music had all of the guests jiving with selections from Bollywood (songs popular in Hindi films,) K-Pop (pop music originating in South Korea) and usual American party music. SACA won third place in last year's Kappa Delta All-Sing, evidence of its members' considerable dancing abilities.

"Good food. Good music. A lot of people had fun. [It got] crowded later in the night [and] there were good performances on the dance floor/stage,"

attendee Michael Geddati '21 said.

The Multicultural Formal was aimed to provide students with both a weekend activity other than the usual Greek-associated events as well as to exhibit some of the different cultural backgrounds the students on this campus have to offer. The latter was especially relevant for some of the prospective students who were visiting for that weekend that were able to see the diversity of the campus.

"I was happy that people could connect with their cultures. It was a formal meant for people's ethnic identities to shine and people delivered. Everyone

dressed up in cultural attire from South Asia, East Asia, Africa and more. People of all cultures were appreciating the food and music of a culture that was not their own. To me that's important," president of SACA Arati Joshi '19 said.

Multicultural formal provided an inclusive space that allowed for an acknowledgement and experience of cultures perhaps different from one's own: a key component in promoting understanding and interconnections.

WITHIN THE GATES

To Infinity and Beyond: Rhodes Professor Dr. David Rupke Works for NASA

BY ROHAN KAZA '21
STAFF WRITER

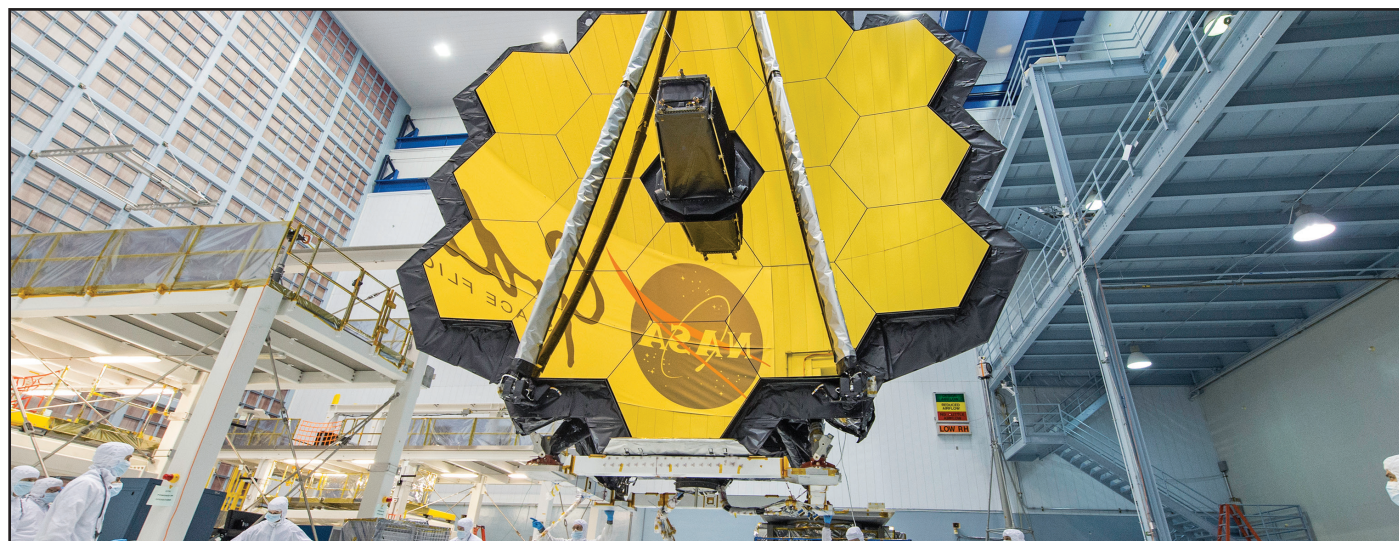
The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has been creating a successor to the Hubble Telescope and they enlisted a Rhodes professor to help get the job done. Rhodes College associate professor of physics Dr. David Rupke has been a part of the effort to decide what the new \$8.8 billion space telescope should observe.

The new telescope, named the James Webb Space Telescope, will be a step-up from the Hubble Telescope in that will be capable of seeing the infrared section of the electromagnetic spectrum. This will hopefully allow scientists to explore extremely distant objects like the first galaxies ever formed. As Dr. Rupke said for an article on the Rhodes website, "The Hubble, which observed the visual wavelength spectrum, revolutionized the general public's understanding of the universe... but the [James Webb Space Telescope] will take this progress much further, helping scientists see how the universe has evolved from its beginning."

New scientific goals for the telescope will, of course, be motivated by previous results from Hubble. In addition, to determine for which specific study the new technology ought to be utilized, when NASA funds a new telescope they usually ask for research proposals. Dr. Rupke's team was involved with the Early Release Science Program which would have them contributing a significant product to astronomers in general. The research his team proposed will be orchestrated during the beginning months of the telescope's operation.

The product they will offer to the community "... is based on software development done in Rupke's lab at Rhodes over the last few years to analyze and interpret spectra from quasars using a technique called integral field spectroscopy," according to the Rhodes website article. Out of 100 proposals Rupke's team's was one of 13 to be officially accepted. Their proposal focused on the observation of extrasolar quasars which are supermassive black holes surrounded by a disciform accumulation of gas.

The task of observing extrasolar qua-



**Top, from left: Nobel Laureate Dr. John Mather and Rhodes professor Dr. David Rupke
Bottom: James Webb Telescope at NASA**

sars will be just one of the many goals for the James Webb Space Telescope; the development of the new telescope will allow for never before realized capabilities. Its larger mirror will allow it to look farther back into time. Webb will also be able to take a picture of the entire disk of Mars at one time. At the moment astronomers only have pictures formed by orbiters which make

a full map. The time that process took meant results could be affected by everyday variability. One hope has been that this new study of Mars will allow scientists to discover more about the planet's transition from wet to dry. This could have major implications in discovering its past and present habitability. Was there ever life on Mars? Will Elon Musk someday be able to have his

space colony?

The telescope was originally scheduled to launch in 2019 but has already been pushed back to May 2020. When that day arrives, the entire Rhodes community will be able to look up into the sky and know one of our own helped create this great technological advancement that will provide us information for years to come.

BEYOND THE GATES

Review: Bhan Thai on Peabody Avenue in the Med District

BY MADDIE RHODES '18
STAFF WRITER

You may not be aware that this old house-turned restaurant exists on Peabody in the heart of Midtown and that is a shame. Not only does Bhan Thai offer an extensive list of Asian rice, noodle and curry dishes but they also serve sushi.

You may have a difficult time parking but as soon as you step foot on the back porch, lit with homey string lights and simply furnished with metal patio dining tables and chairs, all your troubles and frustrations will vanish. You can choose to sit in the covered outdoor bar, the open air patio nestled between two old midtown houses-turned businesses or inside one of the rooms of the dimly lit restaurant. It feels like a different world: one where you can eat sweet and/or spicy Asian food and sip on sake until your heart and belly are content.

The menu is ten miles long and can be a bit confusing. My personal favorite dishes are listed under "Curries" and "Entrees." I try to order something different every time but I usually end up choosing something from these two lists. The Lovely Ginger is fresh and pops with flavor. You will find some bites packed with a ginger punch and that is because there are small julienned slices of ginger sprinkled throughout the dish. Cashew Nut is comforting and nourishing with tofu but is not as spicy as the menu suggests. If you desire a flaming hot dish, I would advise requesting a side of chili sauce. Another favorite that I see ordered often is the "Specialty" Crispy Duck. It is hardy and filling with tender, crispy duck meat covered in a sweet sauce served with vegetables.

If you have allergies or dietary restrictions, the staff is accommodating and makes you feel right at home. It is easy to ask for extra vegetables instead of rice and tofu is optional in many dishes. Bhan Thai is the perfect place for a group of friends (high maintenance ones included) to share a meal. Everyone, allergies and all, will leave satiated and content with a night beneath the string lights.



SPORTS

Track and Field Triumph in Home Meet



The Lynx track and fielders are bundled up to combat the cold and wind.

BY JACK PATTON '18
SPORTS EDITOR

The Rhodes men's and women's track and field teams hosted their home meet last weekend. Although the weather was chilly, the Lynx performed well. The women's team took first and the men received second place. On the men's side there were seven teams competing: Mississippi College, Belhaven University, Philander Smith College, Millsaps College, Trevecca Nazarene University, Christian Brothers University and, of course, Rhodes College. On the women's side, the "7-Way Meet" in fact had 8 teams – the teams mentioned previously and Blue Mountain College.

The Rhodes women's track and field team earned first place with 158 points. The Lynx finished 56 points ahead of Christian Brothers, the next closest team. Seven individual event wins and a numerous other near wins propelled the Lynx to victory.

Laurel Sharp '18 placed first in two events: the pole vault and 400m hurdles. Logan Griffin '20 won the hammer throw. Lauren Roberts '20 grabbed

her first win in the 3K Steeplechase. In the distance running, Abby Watkins '18 won the 1500m and Ashley Litoff '18 won the 800m. And finally, in sprints, Alice Fugate '18 won the 100m dash, running it in just 12.87 seconds. These individual successes were extremely important for the participants.

"The thing about track is that, except for the conference championship, winning isn't as important as getting a good time or mark. It's a very individual sport," Fugate said. "That being said, there is something satisfying in winning a race or an event or even a meet and being the best in that thing that day. It makes you proud of yourself, proud of your teammates and eager to keep improving your own times and marks so that when conference comes you can contribute your best to the team that supports you all year round."

The Rhodes men's track and field team earned 128 points last Saturday; this was enough to take second but not enough to beat Mississippi College who ended with 152 points. However, exciting news still emerged from the meet. Senior Tej Suber '18 managed to break

his own Rhodes record in the hammer throw. As if that was not enough, Suber also won the shot put.

"It felt really good. I wish the weather conditions had been better because I think I could have crushed it be even more. But overall, really happy about it," Suber said afterwards.

On the track side of things, Toler Freyaldenhoven '20 got first in the 800m with a time of 2:00.45. Freyaldenhoven was proud of the entire team's accomplishments despite the weather.

"I thought the team did a good job of competing and supporting each other despite the tough conditions. It was a good indication of what is to come the remainder of the season," Freyaldenhoven said.

Fellow Lynx runner Will Raines '19 finished less than a second behind Freyaldenhoven to earn second place in the 800m. In the pole vault, first year Jack Bolton '21 snagged the win in an exciting finish. After not doing well on his first two tries, Bolton converted on his third and final attempt with a 4.15m jump to win.

Rhodes Track and Field superfan Medora Neely '20 joined the athletes in decrying the poor weather during Saturday's meet. However, Neely justified braving the weather to watch the competition.

"It was cold and really, really windy," Neely said. "[But] it was worth it to see my former roommate Alice Fugate win."

Neely also supported the men's track and field team.

"I really admire how close they are and how supportive of each other they are. I got to watch them grow up—I was the boys' RA last year. They have come a long way," Neely said.

Up next for the Rhodes men's and women's track and field teams will be the University of Central Arkansas Open on Saturday. The following weekend will be the SAA conference championships. As of publishing, the women's team has held fourth place and the men fifth in USTFCCCA South/Southeast rankings as they both lead all SAA teams.

