



# The Sou'wester

An All-American College Newspaper

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RHODES AT MEMPHIS, APRIL 15, 2015

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## We Will Not Abide

By: Daniel McGowan,  
Staff Reporter

In the past month, Rhodes students have received email after email about sexual assault and what the college plans to do to prevent it.

But why in this one month have we received over five emails relating to sexual assault when in previous months we have received one or two at most?

The answer is simple: there has been a wake-up call across this campus in the form of the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI)'s Crime on Campus report.

The Crime on Campus report is a yearly publication that presents how many times certain crimes, ranging from murder to liquor law violations, have occurred on campuses throughout Tennessee.

In the 2014 report, which came out on March 20 of this year, the statistic that turned the most heads was the number of

reported forcible sexual offenses at Rhodes.

According to the report, out of the 89 reported forcible sex offenses at Tennessee colleges, 17 were committed at Rhodes, 11 of which were forcible rapes. This is over five times as many sexual assaults as was reported in 2013.

While it is unlikely that sexual assault is five times more common than it was only one year ago, these statistics have had a strong and immediate effect on the campus.

Students and faculty alike have taken notice of this information and responded accordingly.

On March 27, only a week after the report was released, the Rhodes Student Government distributed the "Department of Psychology Statement of Concern," which outlined ... (see page 2)



(Photo Courtesy of Google Images)

"CRIME ON CAMPUS" Social life at Rhodes came under fire last week when the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation's recent report detailing the number of sexual assaults on college campuses including Rhodes made its way into the @Rhodes.edu inbox of the entire student body.

## Charles Manson Just Drives Right Onto Campus

By: Hayley Rosenfield,  
Satire Writer

Memphis, TN – In an unprecedented breach of Rhodes College's security, eyewitnesses reported seeing Charles Manson just drive right onto campus Saturday night.

Despite the swastika carved into his forehead and not having a Rhodes sticker on the windshield of the green Volkswagen pickup truck clearly identifying him as the notorious cult-leader and murderer of Hollywood actress Sharon Tate, Campus Safety reportedly waved the elderly white male right on in.

"He slowed down in front of the Bailey Lane entrance and I just thought 'what an amateur.' Why even bother? Waste of fucking time," reported one student eyewitness.

Surveillance footage corroborated the student's report, showing Manson roll up to the Bailey Lane entrance, wait for an officer to approach the very getaway car used in the grisly 1969 murders widely credited with ending the idealistic Age of Aquarius and drive off un-questioned after smiling and waving.

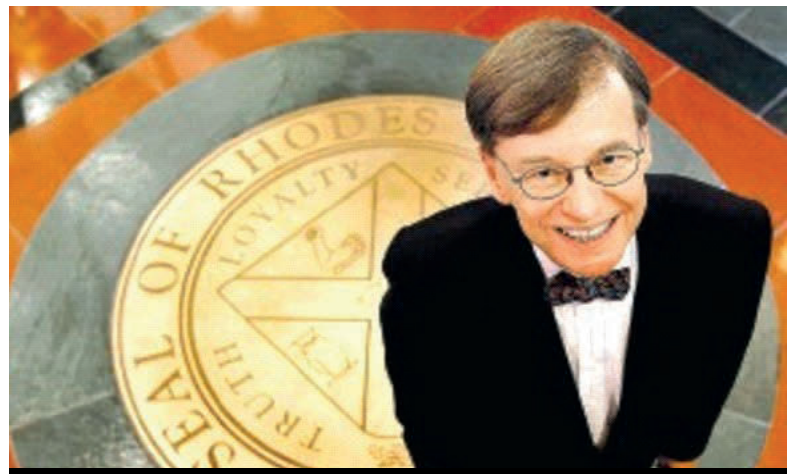
University authorities denied allegations that the incident was related to racial profiling, despite recent campus conversations about the fairness and consistency of procedure at the main college entrance.

Stating the mishap was being "blown out of proportion," administrators affirmed that Rhodes College is still a secure campus and that there is no

hiding. "The safety of Rhodes students, faculty, and staff always has been, and always will be, our highest priority," an administrative official stated in his email statement to the Rhodes Community. "But honestly, that guy could've been anyone's grandpa."

"Yeah alright, the serial killer with a swastika carved into his forehead gets through with no problem, and I still have to show my ID every time I enter campus," reported one African-American third-year student. "But I'm sure racial profiling wasn't a factor at all."

At press time, students were demanding Ashton Kutcher and his Punk'd film crew come out of



(Photo Courtesy of The Commercial Appeal)

"PRESIDENT TROUTT SPEAKS OUT" President Troutt released the campus climate commission's report last Thursday.

## Campus Climate Forecasted

By: Doug Fetterman,  
Page Editor

On April 10, the President's Commission on Campus Culture released a report containing both a brief history of previous administrative action made toward improving diversity during President Troutt's tenure as well as the Commission's current recommendations going forward. The report spans 50 pages, 30 of which are dedicated to attachments containing supporting evidence or supplementary information, such as data from the Campus Climate Surveys or the Rhodes Diversity Statement. The first 20 pages, however, are where the most interesting reading resides.

First, a disclaimer: the constraints of newspaper word limits render it impossible to summarize all of the important information contained within the report. And so I implore, exhort and beseech you, the consumer, to read each and every page of the report so as to be a well-informed member of the Rhodes Community.

The Commission laid out 26 proposals focusing primarily on campus life and student well-being. One notable proposal, titled "First Year Orientation," suggested engaging students in discussions about diversity starting as early as Open Rhodes. Although there is currently some diversity programming both during Open Rhodes and Welcome Week, the Commission supports strengthening the focus on diversity during new students first days on campus. In addition, they introduce the idea of a First-Year Seminar.

It will begin with something similar to the current PA group orientation, but with a focus on gaining "language and cultural competency necessary to live with others different from themselves." There will also be summer reading assigned, which would tie into the First Semester Plenary lecture given by the author of the summer reading book. Finally, students will create group projects on issues of social justice during the First-Year Capstone Experience. The hope is that early education of social issues will prevent the intolerance that comes from ignorance.

Another proposal addressed concerns with the curriculum. There are concerns that the curriculum is too focused on Western Culture, and the F9 (Cultural Perspectives) requirement is the only exposure to other culture that some students receive in the classroom. Although the wording is not clear, it would seem that the Commission is exploring the feasibility of incorporating these cultural perspectives into the F1 courses (Search and Life).

One of the main issues discussed in the report was socioeconomic diversity. The median household income of new students who deposited at Rhodes for the 2014 school year was \$125,996 ... (see page 7)

# NEWS

**(SEXUAL ASSAULT)** ...nine areas of concern and desired actions. Some points that the statement touched on were the need for swift and transparent action, more bystander training that is in a serious fashion rather than humorous skits such as Sex Signals and the desire for convicted sexual offenders to not be allowed to return to campus. While the statement by the Psychology department was the first to come out after the TBI's report, it was not the last.

Four days after the Department of Psychology's statement, the Department of Anthropology and Sociology released their own statement about sexual assault on campus, which was then distributed by the Rhodes Student Government on April 2 in an email with the election run-off results. This statement called for three actions: that Rhodes partner with a third party to evaluate its practices concerning sexual assault in order to best address this problem, that Rhodes create a Student Advocate Ombudsperson who would implement the recommendations of the aforementioned review as well as supporting students who have experienced sexual violence or discrimination and that the College's public statements on this issue acknowledge concern for the sexual violence occurring on our campus and express empathy toward those who have experienced sexual assault.

This past week we have also seen a number of statements on this issue. President Troutt's statement is one of the most notable, in which he let students know some new actions that are taking place. An administrative group is being formed that will work to ensure easier access to reporting, mandatory training for staff, students and faculty and revisions to the current policies and procedures.

The students themselves have not been silent in this conversation either. Rhodes Student Government released a response to questions raised by students about sexual assault in response to February's Town Hall meeting on sexual assault. Additionally, that same day the Report of the Commission on Campus Culture was released, which briefly touched on sexual assault on campus.

So what does this all mean? Recent events have shown us that sexual assault is a problem that students recognize and are working towards rectifying. We've seen multiple groups make concerted efforts to eliminate this problem, such as the wide participation in the It's On Us campaign as well as RSG's and the Peer Advocate Center's separate efforts.

The fraternities and sororities have also shown support by offering optional sexual assault training, with some fraternities even requesting multiple sessions of training to allow for scheduling conflicts. It is only through active recognition of the problem we can move closer to a safer and healthier campus, but there is still a long way to go.



**"BEST SPEAKER"** Charles Best, founder of Donors Choose, visits Rhodes thanks to the Lecture Board. *(Photo Courtesy of Google Images)*

## Lecture Board Chooses Best

By: Theodore Nollert,  
Staff Reporter

An intimate crowd of about twenty students turned out on March 25 to hear an 8:00 p.m. lecture by philanthropist Charles Best, founder and CEO of Donorschoose.org. Undaunted by the limited attendance, Best took to the stage with vigor and told the story of his philanthropy's rise to prominence. Donorschoose got started in the early days of online philanthropy—way before the internet was a commonly accepted arena for businesses to venture, and his story is a testament to what can be achieved through persistence and creativity.

Best got his start as a teacher in the Bronx. He and his fellow teachers struggled with inadequate funds until Best got the bright idea of finding donors to fund their projects. He and his students pulled out a phone book and started writing letters. Lo and behold, they got enough funds for all the teachers to put together new projects which invigorated their students.

With some help from an early tech-guru, Best got a utilitarian website put together (the name, donorschoose, was selected because it was accurate—donors choose projects they want to fund). What really got the group off the ground, however, was two big breaks: relentless pestering for an article in the New York Times and appearances on television with Oprah Winfrey and Steven Colbert (the latter is now on the board for Donorschoose). Thanks to the public recognition these opportu-

nities provided, Donorschoose took off and has been going ever since.

The business model focuses on getting funds from donors and providing goods and services to teachers; the cash stays with Best's group, and they do the work of acquiring whatever it is teachers need to make their projects happen. Best spoke for about an hour; then students questioned him for half an hour. Thanks to the small size of the group, Best was able to field questions quickly and easily and give plenty of attention to each question.

One student asked if Best was planning on adding volunteer services to the things teachers could request; Best admitted that this had been tested. But it proved inconvenient because his organization had no way to ensure that time-donors actually showed up, yet once the donation was 'filled' online, the request

would disappear—leaving teachers high and dry if the volunteer backed out. Volunteering remains outside the domain of Donorschoose, but Best did hint that Donorschoose would be testing some new possibilities in the future.

Perhaps the most interesting of these was a scheme to link monetary rewards on the website to measurements of student performance: teachers who teach well-scoring AP classes, for instance, might receive benefits. Alternatively, rewards might be linked to student evaluations of their teachers.

Best's eloquence was backed up by his actions: he donated his honorarium (speaker fee) to the teachers on his website, presenting students at the lecture with boxes of vouchers worth fifty dollars each on the website. Fittingly, each student left with a choice.

**Interested in joining the Sou'wester? Have any stories you think need a voice? Comments/concerns? Contact us at [rhodescnews@gmail.com](mailto:rhodescnews@gmail.com).**

# NEWS



(Photo Courtesy of Google Images)

**“FACELESS HATE” Anonymous posts on social media application “Yik-Yak” lead to campus uproar.**

**(COMMISSION REPORT)** ...For non-Hispanic black students, however, the median was much lower: \$62,525. Although this may demonstrate a success for the college in recruiting minority students from lower-income households, it creates problems when students who already may feel different due to the color of their skin must also contend with the difficulties of keeping up with other students who possess more wealth.

Going beyond race, students coming from lower-income families reported feeling “constrained in their ability to fully participate in the social life at Rhodes.” Low-income students who must work while at school also felt hard-pressed to participate in Greek life due to additional dues and time-commitment.

This segues well to the section of the report discussing Greek life. Fraternity and sorority concerns were among the most common at the listening sessions. In general, students felt as though Panhellenic fraternities and sororities prevented “ubiquitous feelings of student inclusivity.” Because Greek life dominates the social opportunities at Rhodes, independent students are more likely to feel left out. Students also expressed they felt there was a lack of quality social alternatives to fraternity parties.

The Commission handed down several proposals in order to facilitate a more inclusive social community. One of the biggest changes recommended was moving rush to the spring semester, which was further discussed in one of the attachments. They cited many positives of spring rush, such as giving “students six months to acclimate to Rhodes social life and academics” as well as decreasing the number of students who rush because they feel obligated to. The potential cons included the loss of money from first-year fall dues as well as the possibility of “dirty rushing.”

The President’s Commission on Campus Culture touched on so many other issues plaguing the campus and generated potential solutions where they could. They proposed new positions, such as creating Diversity Fellows in each department. They also suggest forming a Social Justice Institute on campus which would be charged with training all student leaders. In order for any of their solutions to work, however, people need to be informed and involved with the process.

## Commission on Campus Culture: A Plan for a Better Rhodes

By: Olivia Glenn,  
Staff Reporter

In 1999, his first year as the president of Rhodes College, President William Troutt established a diversity task force. At the time, 4 percent of students were black and 3 percent of full-time faculty members were black. The task force was in charge of collecting information on the experiences of students, faculty and staff.

From this information, it would generate recommendations to promote diversity on campus. Although definite progress has been made, fifteen years later, Rhodes is still plagued by issues regarding diversity.

Following a slew of derogatory and aggressive posts on the app YikYak this past fall, students took action. Led by BSA, GSA and other targeted student groups, students participated in a series of town hall meetings. At the same time, a brave group of concerned students interrupted a faculty meeting in order to discuss the problem with our professors.

The cause continued gaining support and momentum as a walkout was held in Evergreen, where the newly-formed Black Lynx made an appearance. In response to these events, among others, the President’s Commission on Campus Cul-

ture was announced on November 21. Their purpose was to research the state of the campus in order to offer new suggestions to the president with respect to how to improve Rhodes College.

In order to conduct this research, the Commission hosted a series of listening sessions to allow students, faculty, and staff to express their experiences at Rhodes College.

Mira Patel, one of the student leaders on the Commission, said, “A lot of students on campus [were] feeling as though there wasn’t a diverse array of activities available for them.

They felt that Rhodes [wasn’t] doing whatever they could to really promote and foster inclusivity and diversity.” These sentiments, echoed by the faculty, show that members of the Rhodes community continue to feel excluded based on issues of diversity.

Though the listening sessions revealed a lot of the long-held feelings of minority students about their experiences on campus, the process was certainly not perfect. Chloe Moore, another student leader from the Commission, noted that “the student community at Rhodes is disjointed in terms of how they see problems at Rhodes.

They range from ‘I don’t see a problem at all’ to ‘I think this is a larger issue.’ Facilitating dialogue between these two groups is one of our goals.”

Patel also noted that the students present at the listening sessions were not representative of the student body. A lot of the same people showed up at the meetings multiple times. Meredith Davis, the Assistant Dean of Students for Multicultural Affairs, believes that students were given many opportunities to participate in the sessions but chose not to attend.

Because of this, Moore disclosed that the majority of the plans being recommended by the Commission reflect long-term, rather than short-term, proposals.

The Commission closed the listening sessions and presented their plans to President Troutt on April 2. “We’re doing our best at making sure that everyone’s concerns that were voiced are at least addressed within the proposal,” said Patel.

“We’re trying to do our best to ensure that everybody has an opportunity to be listened to and feel as though they are important to Rhodes as a whole.”

# WITHIN THE GATES

## From the Commissioner

In the past, the Allocations Board, as well as the Process it oversees, has been viewed as both ambiguous and confusing due to its behind-the-scenes nature. Looking to change this reputation, the Allocations Board's by-laws were reconstructed to better fit the needs of the Rhodes community, creating a new, dynamic process that was put into place this year.

Based on a rolling submission format, the adjusted process allows registered student organizations to submit budget requests weekly, or as often as necessary. Each student organization is assigned a representative from the Board. Elected yearly by the student body, these Board members work extremely hard to assist the organizations in

creating their budget proposal and contact them after meetings to relay the Board's decisions re-

garding the proposal.

This year we have emphatically embraced our role at Rhodes while making a point to emphasize transparency and taking major strides toward improving our communication with both administrative bodies on campus as well as the student body at large! We have greatly increased our presence on InRhodes, providing students with a copy of our by-laws, sample budget forms and summaries of previous alloca-

***"With one month left in this academic year, \$36,353.83 remains"***

tions.

With one month left in this academic year, \$36,353.83 remains in the Student Activities Fund for the Board to allocate! I encourage student organizations to consider submitting budget requests for supplies for events such as Rites to Play or miscellaneous equipment that your organization requires to function.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns regarding any aspect of the Allocations Board.

Sincerely,  
Ally Limmer  
Allocations Board Commissioner

## Rhodes is Going Back to Court

By: Thomas Mitchell,  
Staff Reporter

In the case of *Rhodes College Mock Trial v. Collegiate Mock Trial History*, we find in favor of *Rhodes College Mock Trial*.

Nearly three decades ago, in 1987, Professor Marcus Pohlmann started the Rhodes College Mock Trial team. Since then, the team has, in many ways, established a dynasty qualifying for 29 straight National Championships and twice winning back-to-back.

The team has also produced more than 70 All-Americans, an award given to those individuals who have excelled at the peaks of competition.

There is a simple explanation for the teams' successes, and it lies in the idea that if they focus only on the round in front of them, then they will, eventually, be focusing on the National Championship Final Round.

This year is no different. Beginning in October of last year, Rhodes' teams have placed in the top five or ten teams at several major invitationals, including: Tobacco Road, the Great American, Mid-South and Downtown.

Unsurprisingly, at least one member of the team has received an award for outstanding witness or attorney in every tournament they have competed to date. Several weeks ago, Rhodes College had the honor of hosting one such tournament.

Rhodes College hosted one of the Opening Round Championships on March 20-22 at the Shelby County Courthouse. Rhodes "A" and "B" teams competed in a field of 24 of the nation's top teams, including Vanderbilt, Emory, Baylor, Florida State and Texas at Austin.

The "A" team, led by senior co-captains Henry Morris and Lauren Tesler, placed fourth in the tournament with a record of 6-2.

Jay Campbell, junior, was named an Outstanding Witness for the Plaintiff, receiving 16 ranks. Attorneys Henry Morris and Amelia Yeomalakis, both seniors, were recognized as Outstanding Attorneys for the Plaintiff, receiving 18 and 17 ranks respectively.

The "B" team, led by co-captains Elizabeth Ross and Ian Hunley, placed fifth with a record of 5-2-1. Jacob Hill, sophomore, was named an Outstanding Witness for the Defense, receiving 17 ranks.

As a result of their top six finishes, both teams have qualified for the National Championship, which will take place on the 17-19 of this month in Cincinnati, Ohio. Their appearances will mark the record-breaking 29<sup>th</sup> appearance of Rhodes Mock Trial in the championship.

They enter as sure-fire contenders for the national title, as the "A" is ranked second, behind only Harvard, while the "B" team enters the tournament ranked eighth.

It's important to note that their rankings give Rhodes the claim to yet another Mock trial feat: having two teams ranked in the top ten power rankings at one time.

The journey will become a little more difficult, though, as the American Mock Trial Association introduced a new case for the National Championship.

Rhodes will now have less than one month to read through the case, assign roles and work out the complexities of the case before the National Championship takes place April 17-18, in Cincinnati, Ohio. If history repeats itself, as it tends to do, then Rhodes' teams will be tough to beat.



## Delta Days

By: Kim Macharia,  
Staff Reporter

Tri Delta raised \$10,000 during their annual weekend-long fundraiser for St. Jude Children's Hospital, Delta Days, on March 26-29. "Do it for the kids" was the theme for the week preceding Delta Days as the Tri Deltas and their Greek philanthropy partner Sigma Nu worked to sell wristbands and tickets for the weekend's festivities.

For wristband holders, the weekend began Thursday with a night at Frida's, a Mexican restaurant in Midtown, followed by all-day shopping discounts on Friday at Madewell and The Pink Door. Each of the participating establishments donated a portion of their profits to St. Jude. The Luau Fest was next on the Delta Days agenda.

Despite the peculiar snowy weather, wristband and ticket holders came out Saturday afternoon to enjoy Central BBQ and some great tunes courtesy of The Flying V's, the Dumptruck Boys, and Live by Satellite. To top off the weekend, the Tri Delta ladies raised \$4,000 with their philanthropic auction, Bids for Kids.

Prior to the Sunday afternoon bidding session, the CEO of ALSAC, the fundraising arm of St. Jude, along with a former patient and her father came out to remind the audience of the purpose behind the fun-filled afternoon.

Senior Mollie Newbern and junior Frances James took to the stage following the inspirational orations to serve as the afternoon's charming auctioneers.

Bidding wars ensued over items like floor seat Grizzlies tickets, dinner with Troutts, a date with newly elected Student Trustee Milan Billingsley, and a long weekend at a 5000 square foot house. Overall, the ladies of Tri Delta managed to pull off another lucrative philanthropy event.

However, without the leadership of Tri Delta's philanthropy chair, Mary Sanderson, the success of Delta Days would not have been possible. Well done Tri Delta!



**"IN THE COURTROOM"** Members of the Rhodes Mock Trial team prepare intently for the upcoming National Championship in Cincinnati, Ohio April 17-18.

(Photo Courtesy of Natey Kinzounza)

# WITHIN THE GATES

## Spring at the McCoy

By: Hayley Rosenfield,  
Staff Reporter

It was hard out there for a prostitute in the McCoy Theatre's modern-day Memphis reconfiguration of Bertolt Brecht's *The Good Woman of Setzuan*, a production as lively as it was pessimistic as it grappled with the possibility of being both selfless and successful in a world of hustle and flow.

This "parable in 10 scenes" ran February 27, 28 and March 1, and though delayed two weeks by two snow days and Spring Break, the show went on with a second weekend, March 21 and 22.

Good Woman centers around a warmhearted prostitute named Shen Te (Andrea Pajarillo), who becomes the recipient of the gods' (Katie Cannon, Alexandra Greenway, and Sam Williams) good fortune (and a cash reward) after proving to be the only truly good person in Setzuan – the only person capable of living in accordance with the gods' Book of Rules.

After being encouraged and funded by the gods, Shen Te buys a tobacco shop and quickly realizes the impossibility of maintaining her business and livelihood while living a moral life.

As a result, she creates an alter ego, Shui Ta, a savvy and selfish businessman keen on committing the questionable acts that Shen Te resisted.

Split between doing business and doing good, Shen Te must switch back and forth between being the ruthless Shui Ta who destroys the community of Setzuan and the selfless Shen Te who rebuilds it.

The Good Woman of Setzuan was directed by Leslie Ann Barker and stage-managed by Karissa Bowley and Montana Pugh.

It featured cast members James Baker, Paul Bierwagen, Maddie Carwile,



(Photo Courtesy of Facebook)

"GOOD CAST" Cast of *The Good Woman of Setzuan* strikes a pose.

Miranda Colegrove, McKenna Davis, Colby Ruth-Holden, Alonzo Lorange, Iris Mosah and Emily Murphy, with music by Zach Williams. Congratulations to the cast and crew on two fabulous weekends of performances!

## The New Sou'wester

By: Christian Baum and Zoe Laulederkind  
Editors in Chief

*Thank you to the professors, staff members, campus leaders, and of course the student writers who have made the first edition of the new Sou'Wester possible. A special thanks to The Bridge's Cassidy Guida and Sam Clark, as well as Wendi Thomas from The Memphis Flyer. What started with junior Merrill Charette's library petition calling for a newspaper has morphed into a team of students who are now dedicated to providing the campus with a reliable college newspaper. In place of a traditional editorial, we've reprinted the original letter that the newspaper revivers sent to potential staff members explaining our hopes for the new Sou'wester.*

Welcome Week. Rhodes United. Tenure. Black Lynx. Mock Trial. RSG. Yik-Yak. Intramurals. The Drag Show. Rush... ISIS?

These things may seem unrelated, yet all of them have held a place in our community's experience. Each of these issues, groups, and events have been essential to some and irrelevant or perplexing to others. It's easy only to confine our focus to our immediate groups. When we do this though, we forfeit the unique opportunity we have

on a small campus to hear each other, to learn about each other. Really seeing and listening requires effort, and when we choose not to exert that effort, we send the message that we don't care about each other. We miss out on an opportunity to learn.

In November, about 500 students and faculty gathered in the McCallum ballroom for a campus listening session. Student after student took the microphone and shared themselves with their peers. The energy produced was chaotic and cathartic. It was fueled by the pain of daily experience, an enemy that we often don't know exists until we near our breaking points.

Near the end of the meeting, President Trout stood up and said something that indicated a lack of communication on our campus. It was along the lines of: "Two weeks ago, before yik-yak, I was proud of this campus. Then, when I found out about what had been said, I was really disturbed." The pain that student activists exposed in the first semester did not start yesterday. This pain has history here at Rhodes. Many students have felt it before and many students are feeling it now. The systems and actions that wound have knowable histories, and predictable futures.

We believe that resurrecting and revitalizing the *Sou'wester* can be a part of a wider effort to

listen to each other, and to make the administration listen to us. An active, thoughtful student newspaper is a forum for students to consistently share their opinions and experiences. A reliable public conversation about what's going on at Rhodes can help us create the school at which we want to live and study, not just the one we've inherited.

The paper will update students on the weekly happenings of their college and city, as well as inform students of how their institution functions. Many of our peers are working hard in student government, and, as a student body, we should know who they are and what they do. We plan to honor the liberal arts traditions of attempting to see the world through the eyes of others. In doing so, our goal is to help name the forces that are acting on all of us. We want to understand why life here is suffocating for so many students.

It may feel like our school cannot be changed, that our school has always been and will always be this way. But at the end of the day, it is *our* school, and *our* actions, words, and choices that make this place. We, the students, are responsible for the environment of our college and it's time we acknowledge that.

We aim to celebrate this college's victories, to mourn its losses, and to hold the institution and ourselves accountable. Along the way, there may also be some cartoons.

— Sarah Koehler, Liam Coyle, Zoe Laulederkind, and Christian Baum

## Don't Understand RSG? Come watch us work!

By: Jay Hedges  
RSG Vice President

"Rhodes Student Government is a body of elected students whose aim is to serve in the best interest of students. The purpose of RSG according to our constitution:

As the representative voice, the Rhodes Student Government shall strive for the highest quality of Student life, both inside and outside of the classroom at Rhodes, and the active exchange of ideas, perspectives, experiences, opinions, values, beliefs, needs, and goals between the Students and the Faculty, Staff, Administrators, Trustees, Alumni and Alumnae, and Friends of Rhodes College. (Article I, Section 1)

RSG meets weekly in order to help achieve these goals. These meetings are open to any student, faculty, or staff member who wishes to witness the deliberations. Next week's issue of the *Sou'wester* will include a break down of our organizational structure, but the best way to understand what we do is to see us in action. The next RSG meeting will be Tuesday April 21<sup>st</sup> at 8 P.M. on the second floor of Kennedy."

# WHAT IS YOUR R-NUMBER?



(Photos Courtesy of Facebook)

***“THE SIGNATURE HIGH STEP”*** Kevin Veiera shows off his signature lacrosse move “the high step.” Off the field, he ‘s known for stepping up to the task of pushing for social change on campus.

## Lynx Leader of the Week: Kevin Veiera

*By: Liam Coyle,  
Page Editor*

### What is it like to be black to you?

To me-and I want to be clear that this in no way represents the feelings of all black people and that I only speak for myself-being black is being conscious of being black; an awareness that you carry into every situation. I am black because I am conscious of my black skin, what was done to others with black skin, and how some people chose to perceive those with black skin today.

When I went to the home of one of my white friend’s family in Arkansas, I was not just a friend meeting another friend’s family. I had to be conscious of my black skin and the various reactions that it receives. While in that situation no apparent negativity was dealt toward me because of my skin color, I thought about what the interaction would have been like in another time. In another time or even in another location today, a white person bringing their black friend to meet their family could have gone terribly.

People have been arrested, harassed, killed, and ignored because they were black. For me to chose not to be conscious of this would make me unrealistic and thus I would be potentially endangering myself.

### What is it like to be black at Rhodes?

To be black at Rhodes is a microcosm of the experience of being black everywhere else. It’s a place with many different types of people from various places and cultures who have their own particular ideologies. While the black student population is relatively small we do not all agree with one another about everything.

I have been asked, “Isn’t the Black Student Association and Black Lynx the same thing?” No they are not. Is SAE and Kappa Sig the same thing? BSA is its own organization with particular beliefs that are not endorsed by every black student; the same is true for Black Lynx. This is a critically important point for all students to recognize.

Some black students even propagate ideas of white supremacy when they claim Black lynx is invalidated because their actions are not supported by all black students. When anyone suggests that BSA or Black Lynx speaks for all of Rhodes’ black student population they are endorsing racism through the belief that all black students agree on everything.

**For some people, college is their first time on their own, experiencing a new environment with a different cultural, ideological, and racial composition. What would you say to students who may want to interact with different types of people but feel they have nothing in common with them?**

I would tell them to be yourself. All the non-black friends that I have are those that are cool being themselves around me. I can tell if someone changes their diction or mannerisms in my presence. While I won’t call them out, in my mind I am thinking, “This isn’t who you are.” When that happens I am made to feel like an other; like a spot of oil in a pool of milk.

When people are themselves I feel included into the majority and thus am empowered with agency and choice; the choice to judge people honestly and not based on this altered version that they put on to interact with me.

**How would you advise black students to best navigate this often racially tense environment?**

To me, it is essential for black students to posses the ability to adapt to their surroundings in order to preserve their character; otherwise they risk sacrificing themselves to their environment.

I learned this when I left the public school system of New York to attend a prestigious prep school in New Hampshire.

During a lacrosse game, a player from the other team was yelling slanderous terms at me so I warned him that if his tomfoolery continued I would hit him. He responded, “No you won’t because if that’s the type of black person you are you wouldn’t be here, so lets not even play that game.” This comment inspired a sudden understanding.

He identified that I was black and in this great position of privilege; as well as the fact that it could and would be easily taken from me if I didn’t navigate scenarios conscious of this.

So instead of responding violently, I went to the ref and told him that number seventeen called me something derogative and that I am just trying to play the game; and playing the game I was.

While I did not mention that what he called me was not a racial slur, the ref took it upon himself to perceive that that was what I was implying.

He proceeded to become the biggest black rights activist I have ever seen; kicking seventeen out of the game after chastising him, his coach, and his entire team.

I took stock of the racial dynamic of the situation and manipulated it so that rather than work against me, it allowed me to be myself and protect my power.

Now, as a black student here, I understand that I have a responsibility to aid in the reclaiming of agency for all black people whose voices are suppressed by institutional racism; by any means necessary.

# WHAT IS YOUR R-NUMBER?

## Faculty Member of the Week: Professor Yasir Kazi

By:  
Staff Reporter

“Salaam,” may peace be with you. That’s the first thing Professor Kazi said to me after picking up the phone. It seemed like almost an ironic sentiment considering recent events. With a thick, fist-length beard and a voice that excelled at critiquing some of the greatest forces of evil in our time, he certainly had plenty of reasons to believe that peace would not be with him, at least not in regards to his political activism.

That very political activism had already made him a target for harassment by US Government officials, but now he also had to deal with something bigger: A threat on his life from ISIS. I had the opportunity to interview Professor Kazi today

is completely unaware of what is happening in Africa right now in the Central African Republic. There, there is basically a marauding Christian fanatical group that has quite literally killed or tortured or expelled over 95% of the Muslim population of the CAR. That kind of thing is not being reported on the news. Whereas if anything happens anywhere in the world by a Muslim, then obviously it is reported.

So, after a period of time where you’re constantly exposed to Muslim stories then this perception develops that somehow Islam is more radical than other faiths. Secondly, in terms of sheer quantity, the number one problem in the world has not been

groups. It’s very easy to stigmatize a group of Muslims for what they do. It takes a little bit of courage and academic integrity to take a step back and wonder and ask and question why these people are doing what they’re doing... you understand that given the circumstances and given what has happened in those regions, it is inevitable that small groups will turn to messianic understanding of Islam and will turn to apocalyptic visions of the worlds. After all, it’s inevitable that from that chaos will emerge more chaos, and this isn’t justifying, it is merely contextualizing.

**How has being a Muslim affected you while being in America? Or, the other way, how has being an American affected you as a Muslim?**

I’m very grateful for being an American and living in America, obviously...I am who I am because of my circumstances of birth and upbringing, and I’m grateful to my creator for giving me all that I have. So, I’m definitely proud to be Muslim and to be American and I don’t see any conflict between the two. But, at the same time, there are those who wish to create a conflict between the two, and I find it interesting having to navigate the extremists on both sides, and I find that it’s what I often find myself involved in. There are those who think you can’t be an American and a Muslim, and some of those people are Muslims and some of them are Americans.

**The conception I have is that there are non-Muslims who think you are too conservative and there are Muslims who think you are too liberal. How do you react to that?**

That is a part of my life and reality that I always deal with people who have their preconceptions and would like everyone to be a particular way. And that is not the way we have been created, and I might choose a certain path and others might choose another path and you know, that’s their business. I might have views that some find conservative and others find liberal, but that’s all part of the grand scheme of it all.

**When you hear about events like the professor at Vanderbilt stating that the “Charlie Hebdo attacks prove critics were right about Islam,” what can you do to change such vitriol from an academic?**

(laughs) Just keep talking back. You know, the only way to counter hate speech is to counter it with more academic speech.

For those looking to increase personal awareness of Islam, Professor Kazi left some wise words: “Become friends with a Muslim. You know, chill out, relax, they’re just as human as everybody else.”



(Photo Courtesy of the Rhodes Directory and Google Images)

**“NATIONAL HEADLINER” Professor Yasir Kazi speaks with a Sou’west-er reporter about his recently received ISIS threats as well as the Rhodes College reaction to the event.**

about this hard hitting event, and also to ask him what we as students at Rhodes could do to bring change.

**What did you think when the ISIS threats came in, and how do you think it reflects the state if Islam globally?**

I have already said on my interviews that I’m not particularly worried about ISIS because they don’t have a cult in America. But, I think it shows that ISIS doesn’t have a moral background to stand on when they think that people who disagree with them should be assassinated...It just shows how intellectually bankrupt and how scared they are, to be honest.

Of course I’m highly critical of ISIS... I’m also critical of our own foreign policy and point out that there is a causal relationship of the destabilization of Iraq which we caused, what with the destruction of civil society and the two wars and all the sanctions which unfortunately many Americans are dismally unfamiliar with, and the rise of ISIS.

**I have a certain perspective as a Muslim, but there are also many on the news who point out the Taliban and al Qaeda and ISIS, and try to say that there might be some sort of inherent violence within the Quran. What would you say to them?**

The fact of the matter is that we like to concentrate more on the Islamic [violence] and make [it] a big deal. As an example, the average American

from religions like Islam, it’s really been greed... To be even more controversial, we can see our own invasion of Iraq. I mean, the primary reason is political and economic gain, i.e. oil. The amount of deaths that have been caused by our own foreign policy in the past 15 years is close to 2 million.

Think about that. What would you boil that down to? Would you start to blame democracy? What I’m saying is, it’s very easy to concentrate on one side and ignore the other, and the fair minded courageous person will criticize everything that is worthy of being criticized, whether it’s on “his side” or against “his side.”

**Do you think there is any justified form of rebellion right now? Or rather, what is the average Muslim supposed to do?**

American Muslims definitely, without a doubt, have no Islamic justification for a course to any type of violence. They should be engaged with their societies, and at the forefront talking about all kinds of injustices such as those of ISIS and of our own foreign policy. They should be socially involved, engaged, and academically up to date on what’s happening. Most importantly, they need to be role models of their own faith.

**If there was a main take away you could give to students on Islamic views on extremism, what would that be?**

Muslims are just as human as all other faiths and

What is your R#?

Each week this section will preview an interview with three members of the Rhodes College community; a student, a professor, and a staff member. Through meaningful inquisition we seek to shed light on the interesting, passionate, and diverse characters that this campus is comprised of. These interviews and biographies will enable a clearer understanding of our campus’ cultural intricacies.

# BEYOND THE GATES

On-campus events are always well-publicized at Rhodes, but oftentimes the wealth of activities beyond the campus gates go unnoticed. It's a good problem to have when, despite ample page space, there is still not enough room to list all the events happening in Memphis in the next week. As such, I've tried to compile a comprehensive—albeit biased—schedule of 901 happenings that anyone would be remiss to ignore.



## Swan Lake: Ballet Memphis

**April 17, 18, 19 @ Orpheum Theatre**

It has been fifteen years since a production of Swan Lake last came to Memphis, Tennessee. This weekend, you'll have three different show times to choose from—and no excuses to miss out on a Tchaikovsky-soundtracked, four-act ballet at the breathtaking Orpheum Theatre in downtown Memphis.

## Memphis Grizzlies vs. Indiana Pacers

**April 15, 9:30 PM @ FedEx Forum**

Now that the beloved Grizzlies have clinched a spot in the Western Conference playoffs, chances are the FedEx Forum will have every seat in the house filled come Wednesday. Tickets for the nosebleeds are affordable and still promise all the grit and grind of basketball's most fervent fan base.



## Record Store Day

**April 18 @ Goner Records**

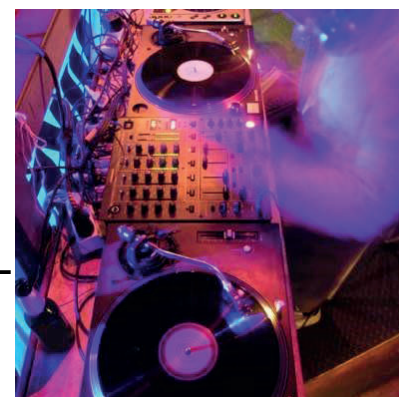
Record Store day at the iconic Goner Records – think King Kahn & BBQ Show, Jay Reatard, the Oblivians – is one of Memphis' annual highlights. The day will feature discounted music, a shred-off guitar event, exclusive 7" label releases and more. Don't miss this!



## All-Access Party

**April 16, 5PM-9PM**

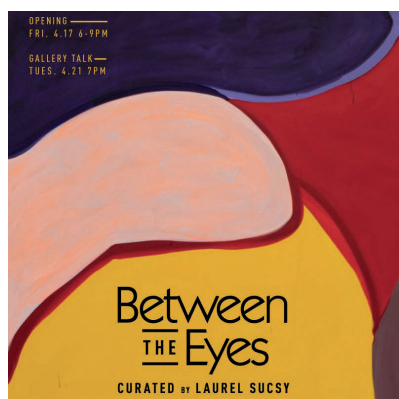
Tickets are only \$12 (\$7 for Brooks members and MULYP members) for this week's All-Access Party at the Brooks Museum in the heart of Overton Park (and just a short walk from Rhodes College). According to the Brooks website: "All Access is an invitation for attendees 21+ to play and connect with museum spaces."



## Between the Eyes

**April 17-May 16 @ 422 N. Cleveland**

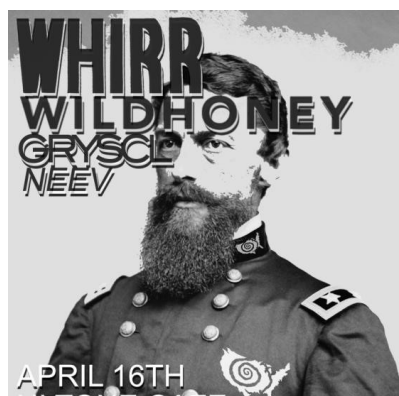
Crosstown Arts is hosting a staggering number of events over the next few months, a development as thrilling as the ongoing renovation of the Sears Building just yards away. As described in the organization's own release, *Between the Eyes* is a "group show about contemporary abstract painting and how we see it."



## Tennessee Brewery: The Revival

**Thurs-Sun, 11AM-11PM @ 495 Tennessee Street**

Complete with interactive art shows, local craft beer, food trucks and games, "The Revival" is a perfect outlet for senioritis and graduation blues.



## Whirr w/ Wild Honey, GryscI, and Neev

**April 16, 8PM @ The Hi-Tone Café**

*Whirr* first took the music world by storm with 2011's *June*, an homage of sorts to the shoegaze bliss of bands like *My Bloody Valentine* and *Slowdive*. This all-ages, \$10 show will sell out quickly, so get your tickets now.

By: Phoebe Driscoll, Staff Reporter