



Make-A-Wish - Merlin presents Hailyann Turner with a beach bag and water bottle at her wish-reveal party.

Cole Bernhardt | Media Production Specialist

Aloha! Make-A-Wish Student Granted Trip to Hawaii

Olivia Grote
Mystic Media Reporter

On Monday, July 7, Bismarck State College had the special opportunity to host a wish-reveal party for Make-A-Wish student Hailyann Turner. Turner’s mother told her that she would be meeting her new wrestling coach, Tyshawn White, in the Armory Gym. Turner was unaware that upon entering the gym,

she would be greeted not only by her new coach but also her friends, family, and wish granters.

The gym was decorated with Hawaiian-themed decorations including beach balls, inner tubes, leis, aloha shirts, and tropical fruits. Turner’s favorite food, chocolate-chip banana bread, was served. Upon her entrance, her wrestling walk-out song, “Superhero” by Eminem, was playing

on speakers, and the room erupted in applause.

“I was a little overwhelmed. I had no idea what was going on. I was totally shocked.” Turner said.

Her family was given matching t-shirts, and Turner was given a wide array of Mystic+Hawaiian-themed gear including a hat, bag, beach towel, cooler, sunscreen, and sunglasses.

Critical illnesses often lead to extremely stressful and traumatic experiences, not just for the people diagnosed with them but for their family and friends as well. Turner, who has Long QT syndrome, had completed the wish application process but had “no idea” if her wish to travel to Hawaii with her family would be accepted. Due to the age requirement for a wish approval, it

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FOR
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Feature
BSC hosted a surprise Hawaiian-themed wish-reveal party for incoming student HailyAnn Turner.

MYSTIC MEDIA

SHENANIGANS



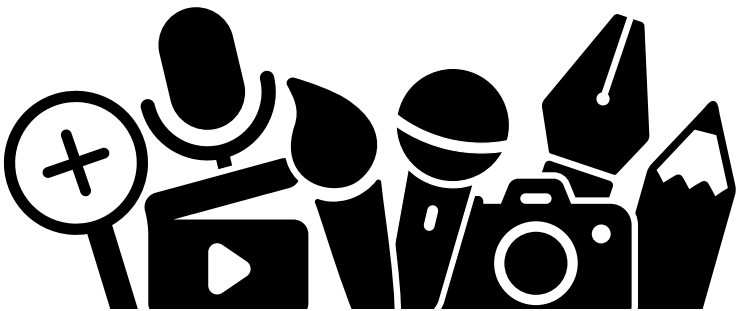
Mystic Media Staff

Kayden Schmitcke <i>Co-Editor</i>	Mygel Porter <i>Social Media Manager</i>	Isaiah Johnson <i>MystiCast Executive Producer</i>
Sophia Fafard <i>Co-Editor</i>	Braxton Nicholes <i>Mystic Media Coordinator</i>	Liberty Friez <i>Content Editor</i>
Tinashe Makuve <i>The MYX Production Manager</i>	Paysha Rex <i>Graphic Designer</i>	Olivia Grote <i>Reporter</i>

Kayden Schmitcke & Sophia Fafard THE MYSTICIAN EDITOR-IN-CHIEF bscmysticianeditor@bismarckstate.edu Room 125, BSC Armory	karen Bauer THE MYSTICIAN ADVISER karen.bauer@bismarckstate.edu Room 111, BSC Armory
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MYSTIC MEDIA MISSION STATEMENT AND DISCLAIMER

The purpose of college media is to serve and give voice to the students. We, as the student based forum of journalism on the Bismarck State College campus, provide content that is informative, fair, concise and of importance to students and the community. With this goal in mind, Mystic Media is dedicated to accuracy and maintaining ethical journalistic practices. We strive to give a voice to student issues and policies within the local community. Our goal is to incorporate as many students as possible and be an outlet for student expression. Mystic Media strives to be objective and is not affiliated with any outside organizations. Mystic Media upholds the principles guaranteed by the First Amendment and utilizes these rights to bring diverse, entertaining, and thought-provoking material to the college community. Thoughts expressed may not be the opinion of all the staff or BSC community.



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Aloha!

Cont. 1

isn't often that a child has been accepted into college by the time their wish is granted, but Turner submitted her application as a 17-year-old.

Since the nonprofit organization was founded in Arizona 45 years ago, Make-A-Wish has been working tirelessly all over the nation to lighten this hardship and brighten the days of both the children suffering from life-threatening illnesses and their loved ones. They do so by granting wishes. These wishes range from meeting a celebrity to going on a trip, becoming someone else for a day (e.g. a superhero, princess, pirate, firefighter, etc.), receiving a gift of some kind, and everything in between.

To qualify for a wish, a child must be from 3 to 17 years old and diagnosed with a critical illness, and in order for their wish to be accepted, it must first undergo a vetting process. This includes a referral usually

carried out by family, friends, or a provider team; submitting an application; and participating in one or multiple interviews. Across North Dakota, roughly 60 wishes are granted each year, but Make-A-Wish hopes to continually expand that number moving forward. On average, a wish costs \$7,500, and attaining the money to grant those wishes depends entirely on the generosity of citizens.

In addition to their paid staff members, Make-A-Wish relies on thousands of volunteers to fulfill a wide range of jobs throughout the organization. In North Dakota, a team in Fargo is tasked with figuring out the logistics of each wish, so it can be granted smoothly. And one position, titled "wish granter," is responsible for helping the child choose a wish and for planning the child's wish-reveal party.

The two wish granters who attended the BSC wish-reveal event for Turner were KrisAnn Norby-Jahner and Kim



Cole Bernhardt | Media Production Specialist

Smiles & Fun - Hailyann Turner stands with her mother and holds her new gifts.

Weismann. Both had stepped forward to lessen a strain resulting from a shortage of volunteers.

Weismann, the Dean of Humanities, Arts, and Sciences at BSC, said her path to the job began when she said simply, "tell me what I need to do."

Make-A-Wish wish granters are specially trained to put the child



Cole Bernhardt | Media Production Specialist
Say Cheese - Merlin, Hailyann Turner, and BSC Interim President Dan Leingang stand together with Mystic pride.



Olivia Grote | Reporter
Hawaiian decorations - at Turner's wish-reveal party and the gifts she received.

it's for my family," Turner said. "I kind of want to go shark-diving, but also, Hawaii's just Hawaii. It's exciting from what I've heard."

Turner's friends and family will continue to support her as she

grapples with her heart disorder, and when she returns from Hawaii, she will be back on the wrestling mat as a BSC Mystic.

31:8 Project Educates about Human Trafficking

Sophia Fafard
The Mystician Co-editor

The 31:8 Project is a non-profit organization based in Bismarck, N.D. The organization was launched in 2015 with the mission to raise awareness surrounding the topic of human trafficking. Stacy Schaffer is the Executive Director and Founder of the 31:8 Project. She presented at this year's NDPIO conference to educate communicators on the topic of human trafficking.

Apart from the conference, the 31:8 Project offers dynamic workshops, regional summits, and customized presentations. The 31:8 Project also sees involvement with colleges across North Dakota. Colleges may partner and host educational events or assist with the project's "Bravery Backpack" program by organizing drives to obtain the items



Stacy Schaffer
Executive Director & Founder of 31:8 Project

Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves

for the backpacks.

Schaffer shared that college students can be affected by human trafficking too, whether it be directly or indirectly through people you know.

"I think a lot of us believe human trafficking could never happen to us or someone that we love. What I want people to be aware of is to be mindful of who you are connecting with on social media," Schaffer said. "If somebody gives you a bad feeling, it's okay to block them or delete them, or if it goes so far that they're threatening you, it's also okay to report that."

"I just want to encourage people, to not blame yourself when these situations happen, because a lot of times in our trafficking cases, people put a lot of blame on themselves, and instead we want to encourage you. There's resources like us as well as other agencies out there that want to help you navigate this."

Schaffer explained that students can get involved in raising awareness regarding human trafficking. Volunteering for a local non-profit is one way to help. She also said that, since January is human trafficking awareness month, it could be an opportunity to raise awareness within the campus and show support for survivors of human trafficking.

Schaffer added that students can be a support system for survivors.

"A lot of the time survivors feel like they are alone, or isolated," Schaffer said. "And even if you are not sure but you suspect someone may potentially be a victim, just let them know 'hey, I am here for you. If you need help or you need someone trusted to help you, I'll help you find it.'"

Human trafficking is not unknown

to campuses, as some of the 31:8 Project's clients have come from colleges in North Dakota on both the sex and labor trafficking side.

"It's definitely prevalent, it's something that we see, so it's very important to us that students are mindful of the fact that these things are occurring throughout the state," Schaffer said.

Although human trafficking can be a heavy topic, people need to stay informed and continue educating themselves about it.

"I just want to encourage people that by educating yourself and getting informed, you are helping us to do something, and you are becoming that voice," Schaffer said. "Don't let the topic scare you; instead, educate yourself and have these thoughtful conversations because it will make a difference."

Welcome Week Schedule

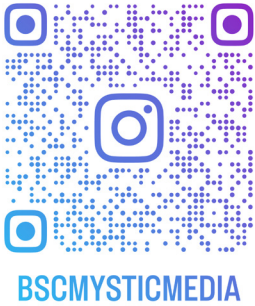
- Casino Night**
Time & Date: Sunday, August 24, 8 p.m. - 10 p.m.
Location: BSC Student Union
- Welcome Fair**
Time & Date: Monday, August 25, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Location: BSC Student Union
- Cookout**
Time & Date: Tuesday, August 26, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Location: BSC Student Union

- Club Fair**
Time & Date: Wednesday, August 27, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Location: BSC Student Union
- Sailesh the Hypnotist**
Time & Date: Wednesday, August 27, 8 p.m. - 10 p.m.
Location: ATC Live Events Center
- Create a Critter**
Time & Date: Thursday, August 28, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Location: BSC Student Union

- Brownie Bar**
Time & Date: Friday, August 29, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Location: ATC Live Events Center
- For more information check out <https://bismarckstate.edu/events>**
- Stay in the know by following [bscmystic-media](#) on Instagram**

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The Mystician



Next issue 87.3 on
August 28



MysticCast

The MYX



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Campus Directory

Campus Police Safety & Security
Office Hours: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday - Friday
Location: Student Union Lower Level Room 120
Phone: 911 – Emergency
701-223-9111 – Non-Emergency
701-224-2700 – Office

Mystic Advising & Counseling Center (MACC)
Hours: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday – Thursday | 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. Friday
Location: Student Union Lower Level
Phone: 701-224-5752

Bismarck State College Library
Hours: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday – Thursday | 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. Friday
Location: Skogen Hall
Phone: 701-224-5450

Bismarck State College Bookstore
Hours: 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday – Thursday | 7:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. Friday
Location: Student Union
Phone: 701-224-5453

Riding for a Cause: *BSC’s President’s Run Supports Scholarship*

Liberty Friez
Content Editor

The President’s Run is an annual Bismarck State College fundraiser that was started 18 years ago. Each year, a place around the Bismarck-Mandan area is chosen to be visited by donors and a BSC program is picked to receive the donations from the Run. This year’s President’s Run was on July 11.

This year Freedom Mine near Beulah was chosen. Vehicles met at 8:30 a.m. at the Jack Science Center parking lot, then departed to Freedom Mine, followed by a tour of the mine. Participants had lunch and then made their way back to Bismarck.

The proceeds raised during the President’s Run went to the BSC Foundation Scholarships for students in the Heavy Equipment Operations and Electrician Programs.

Executive President of the BSC Scholarship Foundation Kari Knudson explained how scholarships are picked to receive the donations.

“Each year it’s different. We have a committee that gets together that determines where we’re going to go so that usually drives part of what we’re doing. A lot of our Runs have



Kari Knudson
Executive
President of
BSC Scholarship
Foundation

been in honor of people like some of our faculty or have been in memory of people who have passed away and been involved in the college, whether they were employees or donors,” Knudson said. “It usually depends on the theme of the Run or if it’s in memory of someone. We’ll look at the programs they were involved with and that will influence where the money goes.”

Knudson also had insight into why and how the Run was started, saying that Larry Skogen, the BSC president back in 2007, along with his fellow motorcycle riders, wanted to raise money for BSC students to earn scholarships. Through the years, the President’s Run has raised around \$120,000 in student scholarships.

“It’s really just a way to give back to the students and also have fun with community members, board members, alumni, and employees,” Knudson said.

The reason behind the Run is still true after 18 years. It’s a way for individuals and businesses who support BSC to have an active part in the education of students. They get to enjoy their passions for classic cars and motorcycles while simultaneously supporting the college.

This was President Daniel Leingang’s first year participating in the Run, as every other year he had preexisting responsibilities. He summed up the importance of the Run saying, “You’re connecting to North Dakota and you’re taking individuals who are highly connected to the college and want to support the college and then having connections to them to the different communities.”

While the President’s Run is a smaller fundraiser, it has been a way to connect BSC to the community for years, and Leingang expressed this sentiment.

“It’s a way to connect the region together in support of students at Bismarck State College. That was the reason it started all those years ago and it’s the perfect reason to keep going today. It’s all about supporting the students and a good way to connect different groups towards that common mission.”



Submitted

First President’s Run - established by BSC President Dr. Larry C. Skogen & included a trip to Hettinger via the Enchanted Highway in July 2008.



Submitted

Second President’s Run - run Hedahls Linton.



Tattoos - A close-up of the merch BSC gave away



Go Mystics - Dan Leingang!



Muscles and parades - Volunteer shows off his muscles at the parade



Kayden Schmitcke | Co-editor

Come get your Mystician - BSC volunteer hands out The Mystician

BSC Joins the Parade

Olivia Grote
Mystic Media Reporter

On July 4, Bismarck State College once again took part in the Mandan Independence Day Parade. The parade, which was in its 144th consecutive year, is the largest of its kind in North Dakota and typically hosts tens of thousands of people as well as more than one hundred parade floats.

BSC’s involvement in the Mandan parade began in 2021. The school has met each parade with a unique float decorated to fit the year’s theme. In years past, themes have included “Happy Birthday America,” “Celebrate the West,” and “Saluting Those Who Serve.” This year, the theme was “Celebrating America’s Past Times.”

One of the many engaging aspects of the Mandan Independence Day Parade is the competition between parade entries. Last year, BSC broke new ground by securing the title of Honorable Mention, and while they didn’t place this year, they hope to eventually place in the top four. The winning entries are chosen by a panel of judges whose names are undisclosed.

The extent of BSC’s float varies year by year and depends greatly on the number of volunteers available to work on it. This year, rather than sporting a float, BSC drove the Mystic Bus.

Alongside the bus, BSC students and staff handed out an array of goodies, including Mystic-themed temporary tattoos, stickers, keychains, and the newest edition and first-ever issue of The Mystician, the BSC student-produced newspaper.

BSC’s Public Information Officer Juanita Lee has participated in the parade every year.

“I love to be out in the community representing BSC ... [and helping] people learn about what we do, what we have, and what we can offer them,” she said.

Additionally, she commented on the large numbers of BSC alumni she typically encounters during the parade.

“They’ve got Mystic pride. ... [It’s] really cool to be able to hear that as we walk through,” Lee said. “It’s exciting to see people that went through and have had a great experience here at BSC.”

This year, there was a new development in the parade’s location. Due to construction operations obstructing part of the parade’s typical route along Memorial Highway, the parade ran from Third St. SE to Mandan Avenue, meaning seating had to be found solely along Main Street.

For those looking to attend the parade in the future, it is recommended to arrive early to snag a good viewing spot.

See you next year!

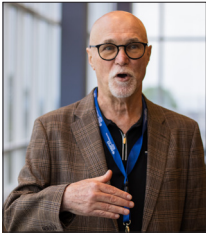
NDPIO Conference Sparks Fresh Ideas

The annual NDPIO Conference helps communicators network and grow

Sophia Fafard
The Mystician Co-editor

The 3rd Annual NDPIO Conference brought communication professionals together at the National Energy Center of Excellence at Bismarck State College. The conference, which took place from July 14-16, gave attendees the chance to enhance their professional skills through insightful presentations and open discussions.

NDPIO is the North Dakota Public Information Officer Association. Their mission is dedicated to strengthening and engaging public sector communicators across North Dakota. Rob Keller is co-founder and director emeritus of the NDPIO conference alongside Maxine Herr. Keller has been a strong advocate for those in the communications industry and seeks to provide opportunities for communicators to reach out and connect with one another,



Rob Keller
Co-founder & Director of NDPIO

hence the creation of the NDPIO conference. “This is our third [conference]. Our first one was a trial, since we didn’t know what was going to happen,” Keller said. “With the second one we made a lot of improvements and brought in more engaged speakers. We knew what the membership wanted as far as training. What we have now is the result of surveys, of reaching out and hearing what the people wanted.”

Keller was one of the several presenters at the conference. His demonstration “From Stage Fright to Stage Bright” described how to get over the fear of public speaking. Other notable presentations included “The Art of Caring Leadership” presented by Frank White, and “The Practical Content Strategy” by Brock White. Panel discussions included small town emergency stories and a North Dakota case study of the 2024 wildfires.



Count me in - Communicator raises hand as speaker takes a poll



Taking notes - Conference attendee writes as speaker presents.

Although the conference debuted two years ago, many attendees have returned from the years prior. Brock White is the Marketing and Communications Coordinator for the City of Watford City.



Brock White
Executive Director & Founder of 31:8 Project

“Coming to the conference last year made me realize how resourceful this group is, and the networking is fantastic. I took away things from this conference last year that I am using every day, so hopefully people have got that this year as well,” Brock White said. “For me, just learning about the resources and the same struggles that people in the same fields work with, it’s invaluable to have that connection with each other.”

Each year, an award is given out at the NDPIO Conference. This is the Golden Gov Award, which serves as a prestigious recognition of outstanding public information officers who demonstrate exceptional skills in elevating government communications and fostering public engagement. This year, the award went to Jacob Just, Director of Communications for the North Dakota Insurance Department. Co-Founder of the NDPIO Conference Maxine Herr presented the Gold Gov Award. Herr has had a strong role in communications, from TV news reporter to freelance writing, and then government communications. She encourages more people to attend the NDPIO Conference.

“You will come away with new friendships, you’ll come away with such a great network of people to know that you can reach out to if you have questions if you’re not sure how to do something,” Herr said. “These are all huge things in our industries: collaboration, working together, and working smarter.”

Save the date for the 2026 NDPIO Conference on July 13-15 at Bismarck State College.

Originally published in the Morton County News Journal

Capitol Shakespeare Comes to Campus

Olivia Grote
Reporter

Capitol Shakespeare’s 18th season of productions brought changes in both the location and nature of this summer’s play.

Every year since its founding in 2008, the non-profit theater organization Capitol Shakespeare has put on a free outdoor Shakespeare play. In years past, the summer plays have been on the Capitol grounds in the outdoor amphitheater near the Heritage Center; however, due to ongoing construction on the new North Dakota Laboratory, Bismarck State College hosted the performance this season and is expected to be the play’s home for at least another year.

The play’s location on the lawn beside Schaffer Hall meant that rather than being set up on its usual rectangular stage, with the audience seated on the treads of a grassy terrace, the play was performed “in the round” (i.e. on a circular stage in the center of the audience). The actors performed to all sides, making for a unique—but not diminished—viewing experience depending on where an audience member was situated.

This summer’s production was A Midsummer Night’s Dream, a comedic play by William Shakespeare, which was edited, adapted, and directed by Erin Weigel. It was performed at 7 p.m. daily from July 16-20. Like in previous years, there was a concession stand selling drinks, Shakespeare-shaped cookies,

and more for suggested donations.

The play featured recorded music from numerous local artists along with live music played by one of the cast members, Juan Gelpi, who acted as a wandering minstrel.

Capin Wardner and Millie Hyatt both made their debut Capitol Shakespeare performances after participating in Young Bards productions for several years. Hyatt played Peaseblossom, one of Titania’s fairies.

Wardner, who played Francis Flute, said that his favorite part of being in the play is “the joy and laughter that [they] get to share ... as a cast together.”

The Capitol Shakespeare plays are free to the public and run entirely on free-will donations and sponsorships by local businesses. The casts are composed of actors of a variety of ages and backgrounds, and plays typically begin with a short Young Bards performance by youth ages 12-18, although that wasn’t the case this season as the program is currently undergoing reformation.

In addition to its annual summer Shakespeare plays, Capitol Shakespeare also puts on a classic play in the middle of winter. This February, they will perform Our Town by Thornton Wilder. The play will be in the North Dakota Heritage Center in the Russell Reid Auditorium. For more information, visit CapitolShakespeare.org.



Outdoor Theatre- Oberon (Zach Turner) walks down the aisle with his wife Titania (Morgan Nelson)

Doors Open on Campus at New Residence Hall

Liberty Friez
Content Editor

Big changes are coming to Bismarck State College for students living on campus. The Health Science building is being renovated for dorm space, and Swensen will be a co-ed resident hall.

The new Health Science hall will be an all girls dorm with 55 spaces. This will allow those in Health Science programs to live in the same area as they study, though it is not a requirement to be in a Health Science program to stay in the new dorms.

“I think it’s important to talk about general growth at BSC. We’ve seen more interest in our academic programs and more growth in our academic programs ... growth overall has helped us know that students are interested in also living here,” said Kaylyn Bondy, the Vice President of Student Affairs.

“With that, we have taken some time to assess where we are at with numbers of students and interests, and with that, the Health Science residence hall space became available for BSC to use,” Bondy

said. “Understanding our students, our population, and growth, it made best sense to be using that space for a residence hall.”

Rooms are expected to be ready by the 2025 fall semester.

The change to make Swensen Hall a co-ed residence area came from input given by students.

“Including an additional female space in that Health Science Hall, and then allowing for some latitude, or flexibility in the Swensen Hall, allows us as an institution to be flexible to who applies,” Bondy said. “We also listened to our students and we know that they have said that living in co-ed styles of residence halls has been an interest of theirs as well. It’s important to know that we have made improvements in Swensen Hall to make sure that restrooms and those facilities have private spaces.”

The changes made to Swensen Hall will also be ready this upcoming school year.

Editorial

OUR VOICE

Letter from the Editors



Kayden Schmitcke & Sophia Fafard
Co-Editors

Summer is almost over. The next year looms before us as a monster awaiting prey. For some of us, this monster is a familiar beast, one we understand a little better and know how to tackle. For most of us, this is a whole new challenge.

This monster is called college.

Yes folks, college season is almost here, and we're enjoying the last few weeks of summer before we get back to the grind. Both of us have finished our internships at the Morton County News Journal, but we're not done yet. While Kayden goes off to Idaho for a five-day camp, Sophia starts training to be a resident assistant for Swensen Hall. Meanwhile, we are working to bring you another issue of the Mystician amidst the chaos of the upcoming college year.

There are several things to look forward to as we return to BSC, which feature in this issue. We cover sports news, from a new women's wrestling coach to the addition of competitive dance to BSC's athletic roster. We also see changes in the residence halls, as well as reflections on BSC events.

Hopefully, dear reader, you will be able to relax, sit down with the Mystician and an iced coffee in hand, and soak up the rest of the sun's rays before summer winds to a close. Make sure to take some time to yourself and spend time with family before the busy school years gobbles up more of your time. But don't forget, college is also an exciting time. No matter how stressful college can be, it really is a great life experience.



Our Ambivalent World

Isaiah Johnson
MystiCast Executive Producer

Numb. I believe this word pretty accurately sums up the state of the world today. We simply don't care anymore. Our lives are dominated by stimulation. The simple beauties in life lose their luster, because a more impressive or enjoyable piece of content is always at our fingertips. Our interactions with friends and family seem dull by comparison. The breathtaking beauty of a daily sunrise and sunset barely causes us to bat an eye. Developing a skill through hard work and determination is tossed out in favor of simply watching excellence on the internet. Our ever-decreasing memory and attention spans shackle us to our carnal desires and trap us within our own minds. Work and daily interactions become

shrouded with grey. What makes life worth living in our age of endless entertainment?

In order to answer this question, we need to step back for a minute. Our minds are constantly soaked with content, so a temporary reprieve from consumption is imperative. Now, what does make life worth living? Well, humans languish and waste away without a purpose to devote themselves to. This desire to devote oneself to a higher cause has motivated mankind to fight in wars, explore the world, build grand structures, send astronauts to space, compete in sports, and countless other ventures. We were made for a higher purpose, and we've always tried to find it. But our fulfillment never lasts. One war gives rise to another. The euphoria of winning the Super Bowl

only remains for a few days. We simply return to the same restless state. This problem is exacerbated when we refuse to devote ourselves to anything at all. Many of us are content with the dopamine hits our phones give us, unaware that we are gradually wasting away.

What higher purpose will we devote ourselves to? There is only one path to true satisfaction, and his name is Jesus Christ. Only when I laid down my life to serve Him did I truly become alive. Because of Him, I have hope. I know there is a life after death, and that He is the only way. The closer I draw to Him, the more I break free from superficial stimulation, start to appreciate the beautiful creation around me, and live to serve others.

Do you have an opinion,
thought, or something that
just needs to be said?
Let's hear it.

Submit it to the editor email:
BscMysticianEditor@Bismarckstate.edu

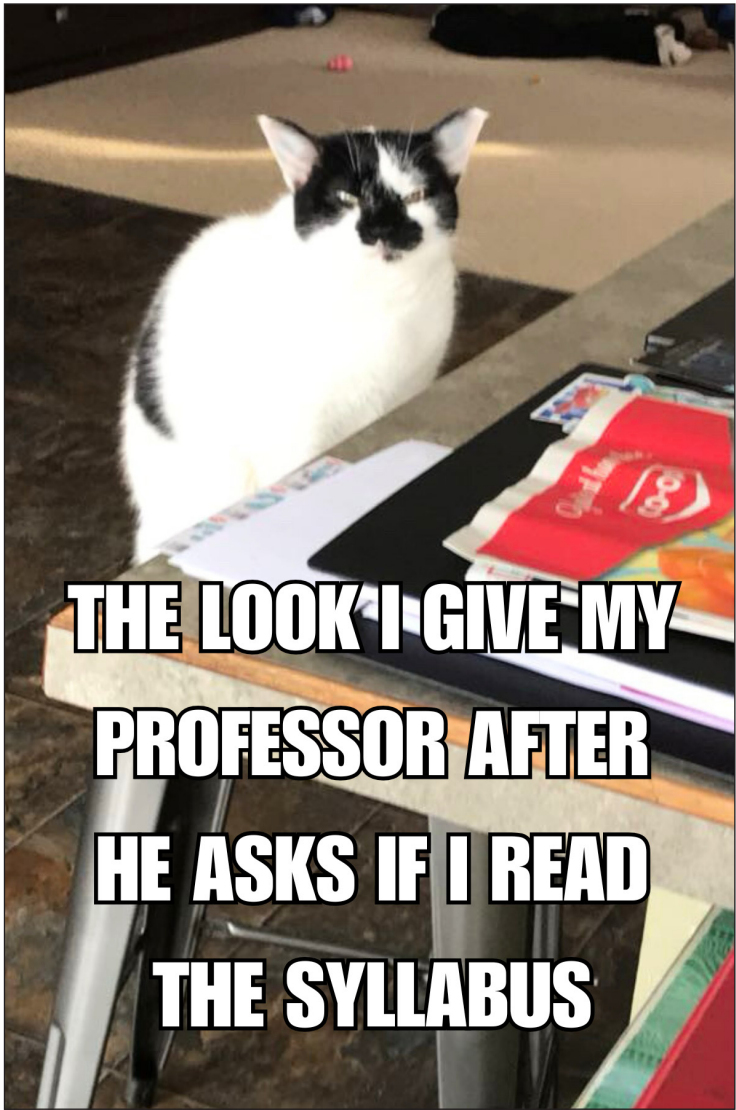
“Education is the most
powerful weapon which
you can use to change
the world.”

- Nelson Mandela



Gold & Clouds - Dark clouds roll over fields of gold.

Kayden Schmitcke | The Mystician Co-editor



BSC ATHLETICS

Student Hadly Erickson: A Rodeo Sensation

Olivia Grote
Reporter

Meet sophomore Hadly Erickson, an agribusiness student at Bismarck State College and accomplished rodeo star. Having been “born into rodeo” as a third-generation competitor, Erickson began competing in the sport as a fourth grader.

Since he first joined the BSC rodeo team during its renaissance last year, he has been actively partaking in rodeo competitions across the midwest and achieving notable successes. As a freshman, he competed in the College National Finals Rodeo in Casper, Wyoming, where he placed sixth in the nation in the category of steer wrestling. The other categories Erickson competes in are team rope and tie-down.

Last year, BSC’s rodeo team made a comeback after 23 years of dissolution. Now, the team—lead by coach Jon Peek who boasts more than 30 years of rodeo experience—has 12 men and nine women dedicating their time to bettering their scores. The team is growing quickly and is expected to roughly double in size during the coming year.

BSC’s women’s rodeo roster competes in events including barrel racing, breakaway roping, and goat tying and the men compete in tie-down rope, steer wrestling, bareback, saddle bronc, and bull riding. Both genders compete in the category of co-ed team roping.

Practices take place in the JT Family Equine facility

every day of the week and last from the moment a team member gets out of class until well into the evening—sometimes until 9:30 or 10 at night.

Although in their premiere season following the hiatus, BSC’s rodeo team has already seen wins. After their first rodeo, the National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association (NIRA) ranked BSC’s women’s and men’s teams 10th and 11th in the nation, respectively, and the men’s team secured first-place wins at Fort Dodge and the DSU Bluehawk Stampede, where Erickson personally placed first in steer wrestling.

Erickson said his goals for the coming year include making the college finals again and for the men’s team to win the overall region. He said he looks forward to meeting his new teammates and seeing increased competition among the team members. He also said he anticipates building the team’s second year and benefitting from the previous year’s learning curve.

Erickson said his favorite part of competing in rodeo is the camaraderie.

“I think rodeo is unlike any other [sport]. We’re all competing with each other, but at the end of the day we’re all doing something we love. ... we want to see [our teammates] do good just as much as we want to do good,” he said.

Students wishing to support the BSC rodeo team throughout the season can find their schedule on the BSC Athletics page.



Photo Submitted by Hadly Erickson

Hadly Erickson - BSC Athlete in Steer Wrestling

BSC’s First Women’s Wrestling Coach, Tyshawn White: A Mentor to Those on the Mat

Olivia Grote
Reporter

The incorporation of women into what has long been a male-dominated sport is a relatively recent evolution. In 1998, Hawaii became the first state to sanction women’s wrestling as a high school sport, but four states have yet to do so. North Dakota took the step in 2021, and by the next year, the number of participants in the sport doubled in the state. The NCAA increased the sport’s popularity on the college level by adding it in January of this year, and Bismarck State College followed suit.

The addition of women’s wrestling to BSC’s athletic program meant someone had to step in to coach the newly created team, and Tyshawn White rose to the challenge. White was an NCAA Division I wrestler at Lock Haven University, and he hails from Pennsylvania, one of the most competitive wrestling states in the country.

White began wrestling when he was just five years old, dedicating himself to the sport to the point that it overtook much of his life.

“My birthday’s in December [during wrestling season], so I never really had cake,” he said with a laugh.

White regularly cut weight to reach his desired weight class, something he said he wishes to avoid with his own wrestlers. His dedication paid off when he ended up with a winning record of 172-14 in high school, placing him as a top-20 wrestler in Pennsylvania.

Later on, White secured a record of 13-3 at the collegiate level. After White suffered an injury around the time COVID-19 shut down tournaments nationwide, he turned to coaching as a

way to help others find the same success. He built on his experience coaching at clinics and camps and worked as an assistant coach in Pennsylvania and Nebraska before returning to Pennsylvania as a head coach for both men’s and women’s wrestling. During that time, he briefly continued wrestling and managed to place third in NCAA Division II while working toward a minor at Shippensburg University.

White has since moved to North Dakota, where he has started the position as BSC’s head women’s wrestling coach. His team consists of fifteen athletes who will be distributed across ten weight classes.

transformations women’s wrestling has undergone throughout his involvement in wrestling.

“We had women [competing at the senior level], but we didn’t see it in the high schools or colleges,” he said. Comparing that to “the last three years ... it’s the largest sport growing in the United States—it’s massive.”

White said he is optimistic about the sport’s growing popularity.

“There are some times when the [women’s] finals are overcheering the men’s, and that’s honestly good to see,” he said.

His goals for the team’s inaugural

“My coaching philosophy is simple: respect your parents, get along well with your teammates, ... please do well in school

Tyshawn White | Women's Wrestling Coach

“I want [the team members] to have a really good experience,” he said. Through coaching, he wants to give others the same opportunity he was given and “see them grow and do well.”

White said that while he will soon be sending the team optional summer workouts, and a lot of the team members are participating in club wrestling over the summer, he doesn’t view summer practice as essential.

“If they’re going to different practices,” he said, “I just tell them to have fun. It’s not a job right now.”

However, practices will pick up as the start of the season in October nears.

White commented on the dramatic

season include maintaining a winning record and helping some of the girls place nationally; however, his aspirations for the team go beyond competition. White said he wants to foster a team that gets along with each other and meets up outside of wrestling as friends. Moreover, White requires that his team members be working toward a degree, so they can walk away with something tangible to propel them forward after their two to four years on the mat.

“The first thing is to get a degree. ... I don’t care what degree,” he said. “After four years, ... your degree is all that matters unless you really want to go into coaching or something else.”

White assures his wrestlers that he’ll

help schedule around degrees that are particularly difficult to acquire and would like to see everyone on the team achieve a GPA of 3.3 or higher.

“My coaching philosophy is simple: respect your parents, get along well with your teammates, ... please do well in school,” he said.

He stresses the importance of coaches forming good guidelines and a culture for their teams, and placing focus on the things that really matter.

“I hate the ‘division one or bust’ motto for a lot of sports, he said. “A lot of kids think that’s the truth, but it’s not,” he said.

White said that involvement in wrestling teaches people that even when it’s hard, it’s going to end up getting better if you trust the process.

“You’ve got to trust the process more than you like winning,” he said. “Winning is fun but [you have to put] everything into motion and handle your ups and downs.”

White said that in wrestling—as in other pursuits—everything matters, even the little things: being polite, going to bed at the right time, eating the right foods, and getting treatment.

If you’re not having fun at what you do, you’re not going to want to do it,” White said.

Students can support BSC’s women’s wrestling team by attending their tournaments in person or watching them via livestream.

Moses Ilunga: A Hacking Revenge Story

Olivia Grote
Reporter

Ten years ago, Bismarck State College student Moses Ilunga said that working in cybersecurity wasn’t on his radar. That was, until a cyber attack led to the loss of 80% of his business—an event that became a turning point for his future career.

In 2015, Ilunga moved to North Dakota to attend the University of North Dakota after tuition at the University of Washington became unsustainable. He spent three years at UND before starting an advertising business that promoted cryptocurrency companies and cryptocurrency education. At its peak, the business had a community of over 160,000 users—130,000 of which were active each week—and brought in an ever-growing stream of revenue.

That all changed when Ilunga’s business fell victim to a phishing attack carried out through Facebook. A phishing attack is a type of cyber attack where scammers send out links, typically disguised as coming from an official source, with the intent of tricking a user into disclosing personally identifiable information, usernames, or passwords, which they can then use to gain access to an account or to assume an end user’s identity.

The attack was devastating and effectively decimated the business.



Olivia Grote | Reporter

Building Digital Defenses - Moses Ilunga working in his office in the National Energy Center of Excellence

“It was a tough pill to swallow, but I learned my lesson,” Ilunga said.

Rather than try to salvage what was left, Ilunga said he asked himself one important question: “How could I have prevented my business [from being hacked]?”

That question drove him to attend BSC for a degree

in cybersecurity, where he said he has found his passion for computer science.

“You can have just a simple-looking laptop, but if you know what to do with that little laptop, you can make a whole Facebook, you can make a whole YouTube, ... anything,” Ilunga said.

Ilunga currently works as a web developer for BSC’s Public Affairs web team; however, his career plans do not end there. Once he graduates in 2028, Ilunga said he hopes to gain experience in cybersecurity working for the state or for a private company before starting a cybersecurity company of his own later down the road.

“Making sure you have all this money coming in ... is great and everything, but it’s nothing if you can’t protect it,” Ilunga said, offering advice to others looking to protect their own businesses from cyber-attacks. “Make sure every aspect of your business is protected well—I’m talking physical, brick and mortar, ... online networks, everything. If there’s a compromise somewhere, to some degree, you’ll lose it.”

Ilunga said that while he enjoyed running his business, he feels that cybersecurity is his new calling.

“If it pops up again one day,” he said, “I wouldn’t mind running it again. It was fun, but it’s not my end-all and be-all anymore. I have bigger plans.”

Jazzing it Up:

Sophia Fafard
The Mystician Co-editor

This spring, Bismarck State College announced it will be adding competitive dance to its list of sports. The team will be competing in the American Midwest Conference, which is affiliated with the NAIA.

Madeline Neigum will be coaching the dance team alongside her mother, Angie Neigum. Angie was contacted by BSC as they knew she teaches dance. She agreed to start a dance team and asked Madeline to help coach.

Madeline Neigum has been dancing since she could walk. She competed in dance throughout middle and high school before trying out for the National Dance Alliance. There, she travelled across the country and helped teach dance for three years before agreeing to coach the BSC Competitive Dance team. She shared her excitement and what

BSC Athletics brings the beat with new dance team

she looks forward to the most in the upcoming year.

“I’m just looking forward to just getting it started. I know that [BSC] had a dance team in the past, but I don’t think it was as competitive as they wanted it to be,” Madeline Neigum said. “I’m hoping that we can just get it going and get into competitions and everything.”

The dance team will be in a number of competitions. These include small invitational events or larger scale competitions within the conference. The competitions include a variety of dance styles, including Pom, Jazz, Lyrical, and more.

The BSC Competitive Dance Team seeks to build a cohesive and talented group of dancers, optimizing the team size to ensure that all members receive personalized coaching and support, therefore fostering a collaborative environment where all dancers can thrive.

“I want a team to form, and I hope that everyone can get along really well and be really close with each other,” Madeline Neigum said. “That’s how I always was with my teammates, and it makes it more enjoyable.”

The team’s growth has started with the signing of Sophie Schorsch to the dance team. From Century High School, Schorsch is the first official member of the team.

Although dance is a year round sport, the competitive season peaks during late winter and early spring. In early September, the team plans to start practicing three times a week.

“If anyone has any questions, reach out, and we’ll answer them all,” Madeline Neigum said. “We just want to grow the team. So even if you’re nervous at first, just come try it and give it a go.”

Guest Columnist

Kelsey Riggs
Reference & Instructional Librarian

The BSC Library has been busy this summer, and we cannot wait to start the Fall semester with you!

We have many new titles and collections for you to explore, including new access to the Bismarck Tribune and the Magazine Collection on Libby (AKA: North Dakota Academic Consortium). The Bismarck Tribune collection, through NewsBank, allows you free access to their articles published since 1993. The new Magazine Collection presents 5,500+ titles that span an array of topics and interests including Home & Garden, Comics & Manga, Business & Finance, Sports, Science and more! You will find magazines from all over the world available for unlimited, simultaneous use!

We will be showcasing some of our new content at the Welcome Fair on August 25 and at the first Books & Brew of the academic year on August 26. Books & Brew is an event the library holds at the Student Union, where we highlight different titles and collections from our Library. Stop by our table, peruse our spread of books, and check out a book or two

with your Mystic ID! With each book you check out, you will receive a coupon for a discounted Mystic Java drink of your choice – except, sadly, Zingers.

And do not forget: The first day of the Money Smart Mystics challenge starts on August 25. Make sure to log into the Library Blackboard non-term portal to start tracking your activities. For more information, contact the BSC Library or Bookstore.

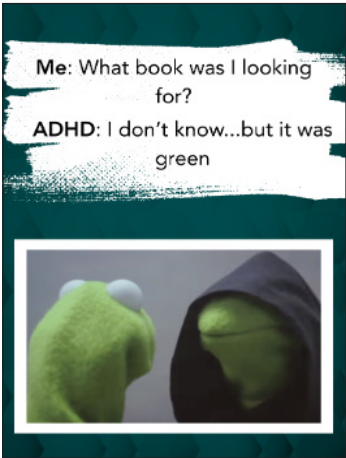
On another note, the restorations from the December 2024 Library Flood are still on-going. As of July 28, the ceiling and lights have been replaced or repaired and much of our artwork has been hung back up. Unfortunately, our compact shelving, open stacks, and Archives areas are still off-limits to the public as we await further word on our new shelving, furnishings, and storage options. If you need access to something from these restricted areas, please speak with library staff.

We have so many amazing reads and reading options for you! Stop by, ask us questions, and start the Fall 2025 semester off right. Three cheers for the new semester!



Cole Bernhardt | Media Production Specialist

PN Pinning Ceremony - On Friday, July 18, 47 BSC Practical Nursing Degree graduates delivered the Florence Night- ingale Pledge and were presented pins at the Practical Nursing (LPN) Pinning Ceremony.



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