

# THE VERMILION

The University of Louisiana at Lafayette Student Newspaper

April 17, 2025

## The Estilette family to open The LLK Foundation in honor of their son Karson

**Ramudhi Kariyawasam**

MANAGING EDITOR

His legacy shines on, as the Estilette family begin their first steps to establish a non-profit organization in honor of their son called the Love Like Karson (LLK) Foundation.

Karson Estilette, son of Cody and Tina Estilette, was a freshman mechanical engineering major, who began his studies at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette in fall 2024. On Sept. 19, as he headed home for an in-between-class break, he was involved in a motor vehicle accident, which ultimately caused his passing on Sept. 20, 2024.

The LLK Foundation “is being created to finish the work he truly felt he was on earth for,” a statement from the family said.

The organization is in its beginning stages; an Articles of Incorporation has been completed and “now we’re working on the whole tax exempt stuff for the non-profit to be able to open an account, [...] where we can start raising money,” said Cody Estilette.

LLK Foundation, at this time, has two main goals: support the Louisiana Organ Procurement Agency (LOPA) and potentially look at supporting prospective engineering students at the University through scholarships.

Karson was an organ donor, and he was able to save four lives with his heart, liver and kidneys last year. “We do have one of the recipients reached out to us in a letter [...], just the communication and hoping to meet them one day, is amazing. We’re hoping the rest would reach out eventually, too,” Cody Estilette said.

“And the gratefulness that they seem to show up to this point, [...] they truly want to know everything about Karson,”



Graphic provided by the Estilette family

Raynette Guidry said, Karson’s aunt. “Since then, we’ve had conversations with both our kids, and our kids have both told us, ‘if I’m ever in that kind of situation, I want you to donate my organs as well.’ It’s opened a lot of our eyes to different things.”

In supporting LOPA, the LLK Foundation specifically hopes to raise money to pay bills LOPA acquires during the organ donation process.

Cody Estilette said, “At the time of his passing, [...] everything after that, LOPA is responsible for the bill. I think it was almost a day and a half that they had to keep him on the vent and keeping all the organs working, medication and everything around the clock until he makes it to Convington and actually do the harvesting of the organs. So, LOPA is faced with a lot of bills, [...] to procure these organs. We’d like to help give back to that.”

As for the scholarships, at this time, the organization aims to support students entering UL Lafayette’s College of Engineering. Some ideas currently in work involve giving an LLK scholarship to incoming freshmen to the University who had a high school education from David Thibodaux STEM Magnet

Academy and continue those ambitions in the engineering program.

Some events the organization is brainstorming to open with include having “a black pot cook-off, [...] adding cornhole tournaments, as well as having a live band performing, [...] having a 5k run, [...] jeep rides, motorcycle poker runs.” These are ideas that are still in the works as the organization approaches its establishment.

The LLK Foundation is expected to start in full swing in spring 2026. However, until then, there will be a few ways people can help out these causes. The organization recently opened “a GoFundMe account to see if we can get donations, and then it’s going to be merchandise. We’re going to try to start branding the LLK shirts, koozies, hats, different items to sell to make money, [...] get us moving in the right direction.”

All events and fundraisers will be announced on the organization’s Facebook page, The LLK Foundation.

“So we are definitely in the very, very early stages of getting it. But it’s getting closer every day,” Cody Estilette.

The Estilette family took the time to reminisce and share their fondest

moments and memories with Karson as well.

Kevin Guidry, Karson’s godfather, shared that one of his favorite memories of Karson was “going to the beach with him. We did that pretty often.”

“The time that y’all set up the slip-n-slide off the mountain in Tennessee, and he had so much fun,” said Raynette Guidry, “I think I just loved his personality, too. He was really funny, just always very loving, always wanting to hug someone and make somebody laugh.”

“And he wouldn’t cut his hair, and it’d look so bad,” Cadence Oswald, Karson’s cousin, shared.

“Didn’t like you to be sad. Always do everything to try to make you laugh. If nothing else, you always got a really good, great big hug. He was a hugger,” Nickole Estilette, Karson’s aunt, said.

“It was the stories we found out later, how he would sit with certain people at lunch, and he always tried helping everybody else’s problems and try to solve the world’s problems and figure out how he can make it better.[...] That was his big thing, is to try to make life easier for everybody else,” Cody Estilette shared. “The takeaway is just that we’re doing this in honor of him because this is exactly what he would’ve done. If he could’ve started his own non-profit to help people out, that’s exactly what he would have done. So we’re just trying to follow in his footsteps and give back to people in need.”

Students and faculty can help by donating just \$1 to Support the LLK Foundation: Honor Karson’s Legacy GoFundMe account. Follow The LLK Foundation on Facebook to stay updated about the organization’s happenings, events and ways in which to contribute to help keep alive Karson Estilette’s loving, memorable bequest.

## The University closes the Office for Campus Inclusion due to mandate

**Kayla Woods-Crane**

NEWS WRITER

The Office for Campus Inclusion was removed by the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. According to The Acadiana Advocate, the University announced the closure in an email to staff at 5 p.m. on Apr. 11.

The abrupt removal comes after increasing pressures from the federal government to remove all diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) programs and language in higher education institutions.

The University also removed a Black Lives Matter statement made in 2020 from their website.

The statement, written by Chad Parker, the assistant vice president for Faculty Development and Academic Outreach, was in the form of a blog post.

It is unclear who initially removed the statement, but upon noticing it was removed, the Department of History, Philosophy and Geology, republished

it but removed it again at the request of the University.

The first line of Parker’s statement said, “The Department of History, Geography, and Philosophy at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette knows that Black lives matter and we stand with Black Lives Matter activists.” The statement detailed how the department planned to use its platform to review curriculum in an effort to understand institutionalized racism and create change within the department.

Jennifer Stephens, the associate vice president for communications and marketing, said in an email that the website’s language and content are “regularly reviewed to ensure consistency, neutrality and compliance.” Stephens said monitoring the site’s content is a part of a migration process that began in 2022, to ensure consistency with the UL Lafayette brand.

“Multiple layers of review and decision-making are in place to ensure that any changes, particularly any

political statements or other sensitive language, are communicated with relevant stakeholders,” Stephens said.

She said this particular statement was removed in the early phases of the University’s migration process, but related conversations about removing content have taken place with “key stakeholders.”

She said the University is expected to align with federal and state guidance. “We continue to monitor and respond to evolving directives. While content and language are reviewed periodically, the University’s core identity remains consistent and strong. Our mission and institutional values are unchanged,” Stephens said.

According to The New York Times, on Apr. 3, President Trump’s administration sent a memo to public education officials threatening to withhold federal funding from public schools unless state education officials verified the elimination of all DEI programs through a certification form.

According to The Associated Press, the memo specifically threatened Title I funds, which sends billions of dollars to schools, targeting low-income areas.

Theodore Foster III, an assistant professor of African American history and Black studies, said he was less concerned with the removal of the statement and more concerned with what the University is going to do to combat systemic racism within the University.

“Does structural racism exist or does it not, right? I think it is not something a scholar simply states. I think it’s something that research, analysis and education debates and discusses, and the University should be a place in which we can debate and discuss that based

on evidence, based on analysis, based on scholarship, based on critical and respectful discussion. Not based on ‘it is’ or ‘isn’t.’”

Foster said that it takes the work of everyone in the University to promote inclusion, and he was not invested in the Office for Campus Inclusion being the sole place where that work took place.

“DEI is but one site through which that work happens. And so, if it was a problem before DEI existed, it’ll be a problem after. What are those problems? How do we identify them? I hope that we can still name those problems so that we can solve them. And that’s my fear is that DEI means we can’t name the thing, the thing. The problem, right? It’s no one problem.”

Foster added that he has confidence in his colleagues to “help our students see those problems through their classes, through their service learning projects and through scholarship research opportunities.”

Kiwana McClung, former chief inclusion officer for the Office for Campus Inclusion, said the purpose of the office was “to make sure that everyone on this campus feels they belong, and to remove barriers for people that might get in the way of them effectively doing their jobs or getting their education or engaging in the great events that we have on campus.”

When asked where she thought the attacks on DEI would end in general, for the country, she said, “I don’t know exactly where it’s going to end, but what I can say is that...no matter how people demonize the words, they will eventually look up and realize that leaving people out of the situation... excluding people, it doesn’t, it doesn’t help any of us, right? It always backfires.”



Photo by Alyus Dick

Exterior door of the former Office of Campus Inclusion, located in Martin Hall

### Arts and Culture

#### IDSFA FUNDRAISER DOWNTOWN

A fundraiser was held on Apr. 12 by Industrial Design Society of America (IDSFA) during Art Walk, Downtown on Polk St.

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### Candids

#### LAGNIAPPE DAY FESTIVITIES

See snapshots featuring students enjoying Lagniappe day, eating crawfish, playing games, and exploring the swamp.

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### Sports

#### CAJUNS SOFTBALL LOST TWO GAMES

The Louisiana Ragin’ Cajuns softball team lost two games against the James Madison Dukes in the conference series.

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### Goodbyes

#### SENIORS LEAVE THE VERMILION

The Vermilion’s Managing Editor Ramudhi Kariyawasam and Allons writer Marie Ducote write about their time with Student Publications.

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# France wants Ms. Liberty back

**Geonna Tipton**  
NEWS WRITER

The French politician Raphaël Glucksmann, who is currently serving as a member of the European Parliament with the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats, spoke at a party convention on Mar. 18, scolding the United States of America for its recent behaviours.

According to the Agence France-Presse (AFP), Glucksmann stated, "Give us back the Statue of Liberty. We're going to say to the Americans who have chosen to side with the tyrants, to the Americans who fired researchers for demanding scientific freedom: 'Give us back the Statue of Liberty.'" He then added, "We gave it to you as a gift, but apparently you despise it. So, it will be just fine here at home."

Lily Stanley, a freshman majoring in visual arts, when informed about this political event, stated, "Wow, I didn't think that was happening, but I guess it's reasonable. A lot of things have been happening since Trump took office, and

a lot of people around the world are upset with the U.S. because of it. But for France to want the Statue of Liberty back that seems a bit extreme, especially since it wasn't lent to us, it was a gift."

Lady Liberty's full name, "Liberty Enlightening the World," was created by the French anti-slavery activist Édouard de Laboulaye in 1865 to honor the foundation of the U.S. Declaration of Independence and to honor the friendship between the U.S. and France, whose support helped win the American Revolution.

In 1884, France presented the U.S. with the Statue of Liberty as a gift to celebrate their newfound alliance between them. The statue was then taken apart and shipped across the seas in the French Navy vessel Isère.

When the statue arrived in the U.S. in 1885, it was greatly admired and was "met with great fanfare," according to the National Parks Service.

The entire structure was put back together and was finished in 1886.

Lady Liberty now stands in New York and has since become an icon of

freedom within the United States.

Her raised torch and words of welcome on the statue greeted millions of immigrants at Ellis Island in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

It has remained a global symbol of freedom, patriotism and democracy for many years until its meaning was beginning to be contradicted in the current times.

Due to the actions of Elon Musk and President Donald Trump in the White House people around the world are expressing their concern and disapproval.

Upon taking office for his second term, President Trump fired or laid off many people throughout the U.S.; more than 2 million federal workers are now without jobs.

Trump, with the influence of Musk, spent his first weeks in office dismantling the federal government and the Department of Education with cuts to about half of its workforce.

Trump is also shutting down and laying off the staff of the United States Agency for International Development,

and is currently taking steps to do the same to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

This, in turn, left many unemployed and this act, among others, sparked the comment from Glucksmann, who demanded the return of Lady Liberty.

Glucksmann stated, "The second thing we're going to say to the Americans is: 'If you want to fire your best researchers, if you want to fire all the people who, through their freedom and their sense of innovation, their taste for doubt and research, have made your country the world's leading power, then we're going to welcome them.'"

Glucksmann believed that the U.S. is not holding true to the same founding principles of Lady Liberty by firing and laying off countless citizens.

Aiyanna Smith, a sophomore majoring in early childhood education, despite admitting to not keeping up with politics daily commented, "Trump firing all those people probably caused problems for many families across the states, so I see where Glucksmann is coming from when he states that Lady Liberty should be returned, but then again Lady Liberty was given to us, and you shouldn't be able to take back what you give."

However, when the U.S. found out about Glucksmann's statements, the White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt in a briefing stated, "Absolutely not." Leavitt then continued, stating, "My advice to that unnamed, low-level French politician would be to remind them that it's only because of the United States of America that the French are not speaking German right now.

So they should be very grateful to our great country."

Since the U.S. government owns the Statue of Liberty, according to UNESCO World Heritage Convention reports, France most likely won't be able to take Lady Liberty back anyways.

Even though this smaller issue was resolved, the ongoing tension between the U.S. and outside countries still remains.



Graphic by Caitlyn Comeaux

## Police Reports

Compiled by Nyria Mustiful

### Apr. 13

- At 2:35 a.m., an officer observed a suspicious person on the 400 block of E St. Mary. An arrest was made.

### Apr. 11

- At 2:55 p.m., officers responded to a domestic dispute at the Wingate Hotel. Suspect was located and arrested.

### Apr. 9

- At 2:26 p.m., officers responded to a burglary of a DeWALT battery heat gun with a 20-volt battery, a DeWALT oscillating saw with a 20-volt battery, a DeWALT reciprocating saw with a 20-volt battery and a Fluke 324 multimeter yellow and red, which had already occurred at the Hilton Garden Inn.
- At 2:08 p.m, officers conducted a traffic stop at 200 Oak Crest Dr. involving a 2016 black Jaguar. 20 rounds of 9mm bullets, a black 9mm Taurus handgun with two magazines and a digital scale with suspected marijuana residue were found. An arrest was made.

### Apr. 8

- At 4:34 a.m., officers located a suspicious person with an outstanding warrant at 124 S Campus Dr. A white container with two grams of marijuana and a black bag with a tennis racket were found. An arrest was made.

### Apr. 7

- At 10:23 p.m., an officer was dispatched to Taft Parking Tower in reference to a parking lot crash between a black 2025 Mazda CX-5 and a silver 2020 Ford F-150.
- At 2:17 p.m., officers were dispatched to Zone 15 parking lot in reference to a suspicious item. The item, a clear plastic bag containing six grams of a marijuana, was collected.

### Apr. 6

- At 6:41 p.m, officers were dispatched in reference to a suspicious person carrying a yellow and black Stanley screwdriver and an orange Ozark Trail knife and lighter. An arrest was made.

## Weather

Thursday 4/17	Friday 4/18	Saturday 4/19	Sunday 4/20	Monday 4/21	Tuesday 4/22	Wednesday 4/23
High: 82 F Low: 68 F	High: 84 F Low: 71 F	High: 84 F Low: 71 F	High: 83 F Low: 70 F	High: 82 F Low: 67 F	High: 84 F Low: 66 F	High: 85 F Low: 69 F

**Ramudhi Kariyawasam**  
MANAGING EDITOR

- This past weekend, the Northeast received a blanket of snow, despite it being April.
- Experts state that the beaches with the clearest water are in Florida.

## WHERE'S ALLAN?

**Thank you to everyone who participated in the Where's Allan scavenger hunt!**

**We hope to see you in the Fall!**

## ROLY POLY.

the original

- A house in Tennessee is "immune to flooding," as floodwater did not even touch the home.

## Politics

# All four amendments fail in the Louisiana municipal elections

**Andrew Courville**

POLITICS WRITER

The Mar. 29 municipal elections were a litmus test for Louisiana politics, particularly Governor Landry's administration. Every Louisiana voter could vote yes or no on four amendments, as well as numerous parish and local-level races.

Amendments to the Louisiana state constitution are outlined by Section 1 of Article XIII. They are first drafted by the state legislature and then voted on. If the proposal receives a two-thirds majority in favor, it's moved to the ballot, where voters reject or accept on election day. All four amendments on the ballot this time were rejected, since they received less than 50% in favor. Thus, state law has not changed. The overall turnout was approximately 21.3%.

Amendment One expanded the Louisiana Supreme Court's ability to discipline out-of-state lawyers using unethical legal practices while in Louisiana and granted the legislature greater authority to establish trial courts of specialized jurisdiction.

Amendment Two, the longest of the four, included extensive revisions to the tax policies outlined in Article VII and provided for a permanent teacher salary

increase. Among other provisions, it would've lowered the maximum income tax rate, provided more tax deductions for citizens over 65, installed a government growth limit and provided for property tax exemptions (including for religious organizations and homesteads). The amendment would've also kept certain characteristics of Article XII, the Coastal Protection and Restoration Act, Transportation Trust Fund and the TOPS program.

Amendment Three would have changed Article V to allow the legislature to determine by a two-thirds majority vote which felonies committed by juveniles (persons under the age of 17) could be transferred to an adult court, and how the accused would be treated while the trial is underway. The current Constitution has a set list of felonies for which such proceedings would apply, such as murder, manslaughter, rape, kidnapping, burglary and robbery.

Amendment Four would require a special election to be held immediately when a vacancy for a judgeship opens, unless the vacancy occurs 12 months prior to a congressional or gubernatorial election.

Professor Jacob Authement of the Political Science Department explained

that "packaging all the amendments together led to their collective defeat."

Amendment Two was also 115 pages long, so its complicated structure may have confused voters. State law requires that ballot amendments contain a short summary of the proposed changes, which may have dismayed voters when Amendment Two was condensed into less than 100 words. Authement suggested that, "people are more likely to stay with the status quo if they don't understand what the changes will entail."

Meanwhile, Amendments One and Four were relatively uncontroversial and not very confusing. Yet, Authement noted that all four amendments were rejected by similar margins, between 64 and 66%. This may be because out-of-state influence pushing Amendment Three to fail created a negative perception of that proposal as well as the other amendments simply for appearing on the same ballot.

Elections may be perceived as a test for the current administration. Authement said that Landry's Administration and state Republicans have probably not changed in popularity. However, they must change strategies in order to get their agendas passed. He said, "you'll see more amendments that are individually less controversial."

Meanwhile, Democrats must tout this as a major defeat for Landry to be as successful as possible. They may try to make bolder stances against Landry's governorship. Should Landry's popularity wane, Republicans in the legislature may be more willing to break with him on policies.

After the results were released, Landry, who strongly supported the amendments, remarked on his disappointment in Amendment Two failing. He said, "We realize how hard positive change can be to implement in a State that is conditioned for failure

[...] This is not the end for us, and we will continue to fight to make the generational changes for Louisiana to succeed." He also placed blame on Democratic influencers such as George Soros for spreading lies about the amendments.

Students at the University were varied in their opinions on the election results.

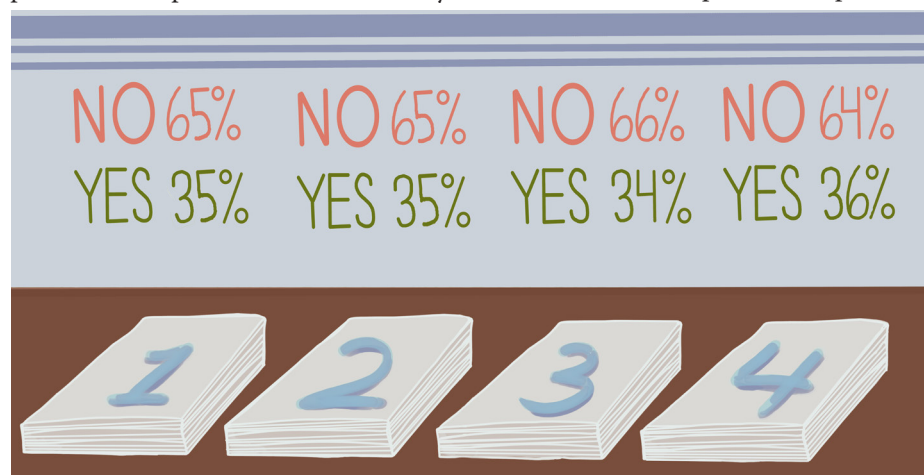
Madison Firmin, a sophomore in sociology, said, "I was happy with the results. I know a lot of people weren't happy with them."

Gabbie Lopez, a freshman kinesiology student, was dismayed about Amendment Two's rejection. Lopez said, "the most important one for me was the teacher pay raise because everyone in my family is teachers, and it did not go the way I wanted it to go."

Cameron Robin, a freshman political science major, stated, "Things like changing taxation procedures or expanding the list of felonies that will have juveniles charged in adult courts, only open pathways for the state government to openly abuse. We shouldn't be giving powers away for people to abuse."

When asked about their thoughts on voting in general, each interviewee expressed that it's a privilege and a right to vote, and one should vote if they can.

State Representative Julie Emerson, who represents the Carencro region (R-District 39), the author of the second amendment on the ballot, released a post-election statement on her personal Facebook account on Mar. 30, explaining her thoughts on the criticism that state republicans have received for the amendments. Its purpose was to "fix several things at one time so we could cut down on the need for so many changes in the future," but Emerson relented that it was too complex. Emerson finished her statement admitting that, "I'm not settled on what the best path forward is right now but I am committed to trying to find it."



Graphic by Izzy Lamb and Caitlyn Comeaux

## Have any leads?



Scan the QR code below to submit any topics you'd like The Vermilion to look into



### THE VERMILION

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EMAIL thevermilion@louisiana.edu BUSINESS 482-6110 MAIL P.O. Box 43721 Lafayette, LA 70504-4813 LOCATION 101 BOUCHER DRIVE LAFAYETTE, LA

### Arts and Culture

## IDSA fundraiser held downtown

**Jenna Kimball**

NEWS WRITER

On Saturday, Apr. 12, from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m., the University of Louisiana at Lafayette's Industrial Design Society of America (IDSA) held a fundraiser downtown during Art Walk at Parc San Souci, located at 201 Polk St.

The organization had a booth set up and they sold tote bags and pencil pouches that the Industrial Design students created.

Tote bags were sold for \$15 a piece and pencil pouches were sold for \$10 a piece.

In order to create the items, IDSA had a competition in which students made their own designs and then voted on the ones they liked most.

In the end, the six best designs were chosen and those were the ones that were sold at Art Walk.

The tote bags were donated from Fletcher Hall, and the pencil pouches were left over from previous IDSA groups.

Before the event, Kaylie Burchard, the events coordinator for UL Lafayette IDSA, said, "It's a really big event. I mean, they have a ton of people that come by and shop through the booths. It's very local, so we're hoping to get a lot of engagement and really let people know that UL IDSA is a thing and that we're re-emerging and trying to be more present on campus."

All five board members of the organization attended the fundraiser along with multiple student volunteers.

Art Walk happens on the second Saturday of every month, and IDSA is hoping to repeat their fundraiser again in the future.

Desmond Bourgeois, the president of IDSA, said, "We've looked into getting a screen press with t-shirts and stuff like

that and then move into other stuff, but really we're just trying to figure out, can we put some money on the books with what we have? That's really our goal right now is just to kind of prove we can do it."

Farmer Brown, a sophomore marine biology major, said, "The industrial design students have an amazing artistic mind to be able to do the things they do. One of my friends is in industrial design and has been making her project all semester. The amount of hours and small critiques that they have to do and focus on is absolutely astonishing."

He continued, "They devote many hours to their projects and designs to make sure everything fits together. It takes a lot of hard work and a special type of patience and creativity to do what those students do."

Kate Ebarb, a junior kinesiology major, said, "Industrial design students are some of the most creative and resourceful people on campus. They're a cool blend of artist, engineer and psychologist—designing products people actually want to use."

IDSA is a national organization in many colleges around the United States, however, UL Lafayette's IDSA is the only one in Louisiana. The closest sister organization is an IDSA group in Houston, Texas.

Burchard said, "We're working on getting a website launched as well so that people can have a more organized forum to get in contact with us and see what we're up to with everything all on one page. So lots of things are coming, we're hoping to grow a lot more within the next year or so."

In the upcoming semester, the industrial design major is expected to grow quite a bit, bringing in new members and new connections to the IDSA group at the University.

### VERMILION STAFF

**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF** Kay Padilla  
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**NEWS EDITOR** Ramudhi Kariyawasam  
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# Cajun Crossword

Compiled by Vallen Power

No. 24

## INSTRUCTIONS

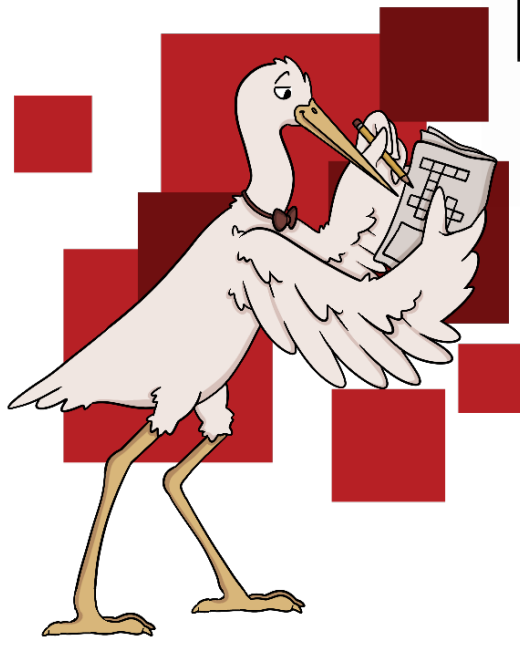
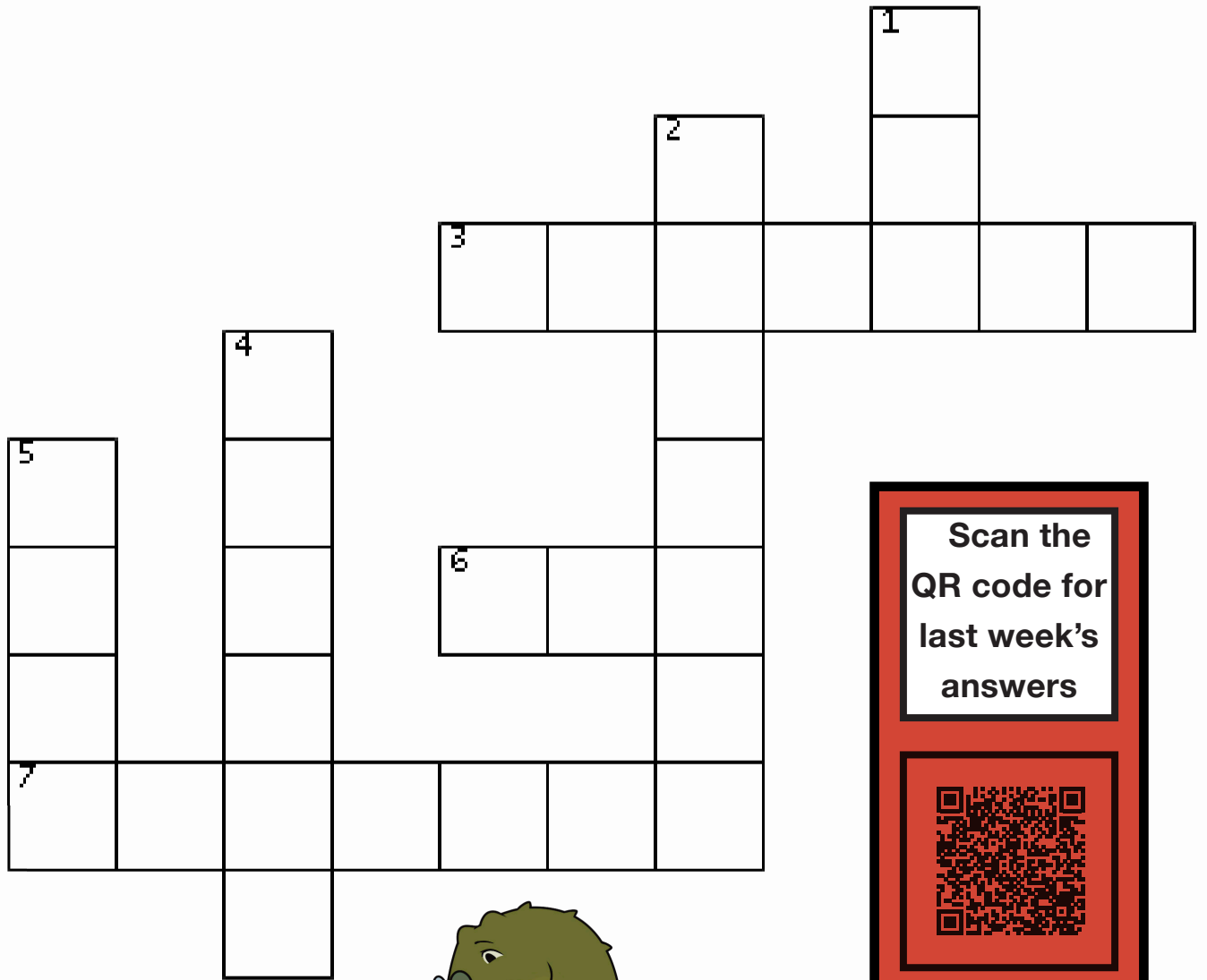
The answers can be found throughout the newspaper, so make sure to thoroughly read each story. Try to find all of them and see if you got them correct in the answers provided in the next issue's crossword search!

### ACROSS

- 3. Where did Tetairoa McMillian play for college?
- 6. What is Trump targeting (acronym)?
- 7. The Author of Amendment Two on the ballot was Representative Julie \_\_\_\_ (last name).

### DOWN

- 1. How many sizes bigger is Nyria Mustiful, in comparison to her 10th grade body?
- 2. Due to President Trump's new changes, more than two \_\_\_\_ people are now without jobs.
- 4. Which Cajuns softball leadoff hitter scored against the JMU Dukes (last name)?
- 5. In "ENA: Dream BBQ" the Shama tells Ena to get a \_\_\_\_.



## Cajun Candids Lagniappe Day

Photos by Alyus Dick



# Sports

## Softball: more high-leverage woes plague series vs. Dukes

**Isaac Henry**  
SPORTS WRITER

The Louisiana Ragin' Cajuns softball team lost two games at home to the James Madison Dukes in last weekend's conference series.

Losing the series brought the Cajuns to 19-22 in overall record and dropped their conference standing to 5-9.

In a press conference held Apr. 7, Head Coach Alyson Habetz opened by talking about what she views as the reason for the close walk-off losses that have plagued the season.

"I still think we leave a lot on the table in the sense of, like, there are games we should win and could have won that we didn't, and it comes down to little things

that we need to take care of and we need to get better at," Habetz said.

When asked if any strategies have been scouted to increase the pitching rotation's effectiveness, Habetz shifted the focus to the offense and the urgency, or lack thereof, when ahead in a game.

"At the end of the day, we've gotta score more than they do. I think that's another thing; being on the road, they get last at-bat," Habetz said.

"We have opportunities to win, and sometimes, like, we go up four [runs], and again, we've said this before, we can't just stay with that. We have to continue. We can't settle and be comfortable with a four-run lead, especially when they have last at-bat."

Habetz hearkened back to the Cajuns'

Mar. 30 victory over the Chanticleers as the blueprint for the team accumulating wins.

"We just have to keep scratching, clawing and putting runs on the board, and that's what we had done at Coastal Carolina in the sense of, like, the goal is to win every inning," Habetz said. "Instead of just the game, let's be intentional about winning every inning."

Habetz reiterated that for both sides of the ball, detailed execution was all that was missing.

"Again, in my opinion, it's not big things. For the pitching staff, like Tyra Clary in the first game [against Carolina], she threw strikes," Habetz said.

"Again, throwing strikes and eliminating the freebies, we're gonna figure out a way to win games."

In the matchup on Friday evening, both teams' starting pitchers, Mallory Wheeler and Payton List, served up fantastic games.

The Cajuns' Wheeler would end the day with six strikeouts to three walks, while the Dukes' List gave up just four hits all game.

The story of the game was close calls — for the Cajuns, Kayla Falterman got tagged trying to steal home in the second inning; runners were left in scoring position in the third; and the bases were loaded in the fourth, all resulting in no runs generated.

James Madison couldn't get much of anything rallied until the seventh inning, when a walk allowed freshman Raegan Wall to steal second, and a single to right field by Lily Romero took the lead for the Dukes at their last chance.

Like the rest of the matchup, the Cajuns failed to match the Dukes and muster even a single run, ending the game 1-0 and giving List a 123-pitch shutout victory.

Saturday's outing featured loads more offense to start. The Cajuns' Maddie Hayden scored after hitting a leadoff single and getting bunted over, and Emily Smith was able to run to home after the Dukes' third baseman couldn't get up to a tiny mishit, 2-0.

Cajuns' starting pitcher Bethaney Noble struggled in the second inning, loading the bases off some tough walks and hits. A hit-by-pitch scored JMU its first run.

Tyra Clary came in to relieve Noble and tried to salvage the inning, but the Dukes took great advantage of the one-out situation, bringing home three runners off back-to-back hits to take a 4-2 lead.

Three innings later, Sam Ryan relieved Clary for the Cajuns.

In the fifth, Sam Roe did what she usually does, collecting another hit and bringing home Falterman to cut the lead to one.

Unfortunately, in the sixth, Ryan's save attempt got shattered by List, whose homer to left center brought home three Dukes and blew the game apart.

A wild last-inning rally by the Cajuns, including a bases-loaded walk and a two-RBI single by Hayden, brought the game within one, but the team, again, fell tragically short, 8-7.

Next up for the Cajuns is another home weekend three-game series against the South Alabama Jaguars, starting Thursday, Apr. 19.



Photo by Makayla Walker

Maddie Hayden on second base against LSU Mar. 25

## Saints favorite to draft QB Shedeur Sanders; Is that the correct choice?

**Charles Martin**  
SPORTS EDITOR

One of the most exciting parts of the offseason for the NFL is now just a week away. The 2025 NFL Draft begins Thursday, Apr. 24 with the first round, before ending Saturday. A full year of scouting college players pays off as teams try to find their next franchise guy or fill depth spots in the later rounds.

While it is fun to do a mock of the whole draft or debate who will be taken first overall, the focus here will be to figure out who the New Orleans Saints should draft. What holes are currently in the team that could be filled by the draft? What players might we expect the Saints to take?

With the possible loss of Derek Carr for the entire season due to shoulder injury, many think the Saints should draft a quarterback. The Saints hold the ninth overall pick in the draft, a pick that has not been used on a QB this century.

Yet, despite that, the player favorite to be drafted by the Saints is Colorado Buffaloes quarterback Shedeur Sanders, with FanDuel having the odds placed at +105. This reflects a recent inflation on the quarterback position, and also the falling draft stock of Sanders over the draft process.

Sanders spent two seasons at Jacksonville State before transferring to Colorado when his father, NFL Hall of Famer Deion Sanders, became the Buffaloes head coach. His two seasons in Boulder were fairly underwhelming for all the hype around it. He went 4-8 in 2023 and finished his senior year with a record of 9-4, including a blowout loss to BYU in the Valero Alamo Bowl.

In his two seasons at Colorado he went 1-6 against ranked teams, with his only win coming against a bad TCU team who were only ranked because they had made the National Championship game the season prior.

In his senior season he passed for 4,134 yards and 37 touchdowns, averaging 8.7 yards per attempt with a 74% completion rate. Additionally, he threw 10 interceptions and was sacked an astonishing 42 times in 13 games,

down from the 52 sacks taken in 12 games in 2022.

While this does reflect the truly awful offensive line that Colorado had, it also reflects one of Sanders' biggest weaknesses. He holds onto the ball for far too long, something you can not do in the NFL, especially behind a bad offensive line. He also tends to fall back instead of climbing a pocket, like a 13-year-old playing Madden.

He also has not shown the greatest leadership skills, continuously throwing his o-line under the bus in interviews. That, though, is not something I am too worried about as people can always mature.

Sanders has positives as well, he would not be considered a first round pick if he did not. He is the most accurate quarterback in the draft by far, even if the zip is not necessarily there. His great td-int ratio over his career shows an ability to make good decisions with the ball, minimizing unnecessary turnovers.

With all that said, the Saints should not take a quarterback in this draft; well, at least not an early one. This is, by all metrics, one of the weaker QB classes in weaker memory. For reference, most NFL scouts and GMs agree that Cam Ward, consensus first overall pick, would not have been a first round pick in the QB heavy 2024 draft.

Instead of forcing a swing at a QB, the Saints should instead just let Spencer Rattler start. If things work out well, then the Saints have their new franchise quarterback. If they do not, then they will be in prime position for the 2026 draft.

They could also just wait until the second or later rounds to draft a project quarterback, such as Alabama's Jalen Milroe, Syracuse's Kyle McCord or Louisville's Tyler Shough.

That does leave the question: Who should the Saints draft at nine? Well, there are a few positions the Saints are in need of as it stands.

One of the biggest is a lack of a big body receiver, that could be just a big wide receiver or even a tight end. The Saints should have the chance to draft both.

As it stands, the team is in prime position to draft Arizona Wildcats receiver Tetairoa McMillian, one of the top receivers in the draft.

McMillian is an absolute freak show of a prospect, standing at 6'4" and weighing 219 lbs, yet he was able to run a 4.48 40-yard dash time.

He burst onto the national scene as a sophomore in 2023, hauling in 90 receptions for 1402 yards and 10 touchdowns.

His 2024 season saw slightly weaker stats, but that can be chopped up to bad QB play, with 84 catches, 1319 yards and eight touchdowns.

He could be the missing piece to elevate the Saints young receiving corps of Chris Olave and Rashid Shaheed.

The Saints are also in a good position to draft Penn State tight end Tyler Warren, the 2024 John Mackey Award winner for being the best tight end in college football.

At 6'5" and 256 lbs, Warren is both a catching threat and can be used as a good extra blocker.

He finished the 2024 season with an

absolutely insane 104 receptions for 1233 yards and eight touchdowns.

Either McMillian or Warren would be a great addition to the Saints receiving corps, and be perfect for Kellen Moore's offensive system. Offense is not the only side of the ball, some young players could be used to supplement the aging defensive corps. There is a particular need in edge rusher, someone to match with Chase Young and take over for Cam Jordan for when he, eventually, retires. That replacement could be found in Tennessee Volunteer James Pearce Jr.

Pearce is quick, startlingly quick. He can propel his 6'5", 245 lbs body 40 yards in 4.47 seconds. Pearce combined for 17 sacks over the 2023 and 2024 seasons, and was a big contributor for the Volunteer's elite defense the past two seasons.

There are other positions that need to be filled with depth, such as in the secondary, the offensive line and additions to the running back room. It will be easy to fill running back, even in the later rounds, thanks to this particularly stacked draft class.



Graphic by Izzy Lamb and Caitlyn Comeaux

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# Allons

## Cooking up conspiracies in the new game 'ENA: Dream BBQ'

Landon Fruge

ALLONS WRITER

On Mar. 26, "ENA: Dream BBQ" released its first ever chapter for free on Steam. Now, I have been following the "ENA" series for a decent while now. For those who don't know, "ENA" is an animated YouTube series featuring a character by the name of Ena. Each episode is its own separate thing, telling different adventures.

The first ever known instance of Ena was a GIF of the character posted by the series' creator, Joel Guerra, on Twitter in 2020 who said "I've always had in my mind this idea of making characters with strange shapes in a colorful world where nothing makes sense." This post was liked by many and would eventually lead to the creation of the series on YouTube.

Even further down the line, they would eventually make his first game as well. That very game was "ENA: Dream BBQ", which they made with the help of a small team.

The series is known for its incorporation of various art styles and its late 1990s and early 2000s PC aesthetic. Within many of the episodes, it takes the form of an old computer game, in a sense, and features a variety of characters that typically speak different languages and have their own unique voices.

Each character's personalities tend to be very strange and otherworldly sometimes.

Many times there are characters that speak what almost feel like incoherent sentences.

The dialogue can have this eerie feeling to it, especially with the way that these characters may drag out words or pauses in speech. Despite the eeriness of it, there is some level of charm that just draws me into the world of this series.

This series is four episodes long and approximately 36 minutes total in length if you were to watch all of it. It is very strange and really charming, so I highly

suggest giving it a try before playing "ENA: Dream BBQ."

Now, "ENA: Dream BBQ" is a game that was announced all the way back in 2021 that has the player playing as a different variant of the Ena we know and love. One thing I forgot to mention is that Ena has multiple personalities that switch to show different emotions. Typically, one side depicts sadness and the other joy, but with this Ena, there are two different sides. One side is that of a salesperson, and the other side is bossy.

Over the course of the game's development, there have been occasional updates on its progress. After playing through the first chapter and going through most of what it has to offer, I can confidently say that this game gives off the exact feeling of watching an episode of "ENA."

The game follows this new version of Ena as she tries to complete her job alongside a man in a frog costume named Froggy. It is kind of elusive as to what your job is. All that is known is that your target is the boss, and the only way to get to the boss is by getting one of the genies to turn off the smoke machine that is generating the thick cloud of smoke blocking your way.

As you go through this journey, you are given a couple of tasks and meet a variety of interesting characters, such as, my personal favorite, the Shaman. The Shaman's art style is clearly based on, or at least partially inspired by, the animations from the strange and infamous old "Legend of Zelda" CD-i games. He sounds like your stereotypical old wise wizard from movies, which I find very charming.

At one point, the Shaman assigns Ena to go out and create life itself so that she may reach the "bathroom." So, before leaving, he tells Ena to go away and "get a life." This line was honestly really funny to me, especially how casually but seriously it is stated. The voice acting for the character is so well done, but

this can be said about many of the other characters, especially Ena's voice actors.

There are many really creepy and strange moments throughout this game that have me extremely curious towards what direction it may be going in the future, and these moments are only built upon further with bossy Ena's amazing voice acting.

The game carries this very surreal feeling to it as well, which makes sense, as the original series is also heavily surreal. Despite the randomness of the game though, it still feels coherent in some strange way, which I greatly appreciate.

This was probably one of the best games I've played in a bit. The voice

acting, animation, music and overall aesthetic are really well done and have even inspired me to incorporate the aesthetic into some of my own projects. The character's personalities are also so charming to me, and I just can't wait to see where the story of this game will be going from here, as this is only the first chapter.

The game is free on Steam, so if you have a computer, I highly suggest checking it out.

It is a really enjoyable time, especially if you appreciate games with unique art styles and strange, but interesting characters. It truly is a really charming but also bizarre experience.



Graphic by Landon Fruge

## All plus-size women have amazing 'summer bodies', including myself

Nyria Mustiful

ALLONS EDITOR

Recently, I saw this TikTok made by a man who sang this song to the theme of "Pretty Little Liars", and it was about being a "big back" and "losing weight to get a summer body." My initial reaction was "Why did he make this?", but as I kept scrolling, I continued to see more videos with the same rhetoric. When I look at pictures of "summer bodies" for women, most of them are thin, sometimes muscular, with booties that are made of more muscles than fat.

I know that my body doesn't look like that, so does that mean that I don't have a "summer body?" As I thought about the answer to that question, I took a trip down memory lane to recall my weight journey and how I came into the body I have today. I was always a skinny girl when I was younger. My mom would always tell me that I was the size of her pinkie.

Being tall and having a high metabolism helped distribute my weight more, so even when I hit 169 pounds, I still looked relatively thin. I think the biggest thing on me, until around 10th

grade, was my thighs, and they were still small, in my eyes. I remember hating my body so much. Looking at my mom, who is a very curvy woman, I would always get frustrated with myself because I looked nothing like that.

Girls all around me through each year of school seemed to be developing breasts, wearing training bras, transitioning to real ones, having guys comment on their butts, etc., and here I was, falling behind the curve, literally. I would walk through life feeling disgusted with my thinness, wanting to gain weight more than anything. I also began to realize that while bigger girls were my weight goals, for some of them, I was theirs, which I didn't understand.

Around my junior year of high school, I began to gain weight and see my shape forming. My bra size had gone from B to C, I had a small yet noticeable butt and I had a little stomach as well. I don't think I had ever been more obsessed with my body.

I was finally feeling more comfortable with the skin I was in, and to me, that was everything. It also didn't hurt that more guys had begun to notice me as well.

That summer, I was so excited to go to the water park and show off my new "beach bum." My stomach had gotten a little bigger, but I had on a high-waisted bathing suit, so I wasn't too worried about it.

When I approached one of the water slides, a group of white girls were standing in line in front of me.

One of them turned around, looked at me, and began laughing. Another one said, "She must really think she looks cute in that bathing suit." Another said, "Maybe if she lost a couple pounds, it'd fit right." I was so embarrassed. I wanted to run out of the line, but I was so close to getting on the slide. I got on, cried the whole way down, and didn't leave my chair the entire rest of the visit. For the first time ever, I wanted to be skinny.

As summer approaches, I consider the fact that I am now two sizes bigger than I was back then. Everything about my body is bigger, and in my opinion, better. However, it seems that everyone else, meaning the general populace, still seems to think I'd be better off skinny for the summer. I see ads for bathing suits and think, "I wonder if they'll have that in my size" each time. While some may see that

as a sign for me to lose weight, I don't.

I just take it as a sign to go shop somewhere that has plus-size clothing.

This summer, I plan to visit many beaches and water parks, without allowing the fear of a societal stigma to corrupt my confidence in myself and my body.

Everyone will see my 231-pound self frolicking along the shore in my bikini, and I dare somebody to say something. Instead of running away or crying, I'll gladly recite a few choice words about their fatphobic tendencies and ignorance.

Women of all shapes and sizes are beautiful, and have "summer bodies." I hate that term, particularly because it idolizes a certain body type that may not fit everyone, and makes it seem like only those with that body are "made for summer."

As a society, we should strive to create a culture where all body types are welcome all year-round, instead of praising and uplifting one, just because we may find it more appealing.

So, if you want to know what a "summer body" looks like, walk by the nearest mirror and take a good, long look. See you at the beach!



Graphic by Sadie Lynn Burrell

# Goodbyes

## I had a great time in Student Pub

**Marie Ducote**

ALLONS WRITER

Well, it is finally time to close the book on my time at Student Publications.

Every year I read these letters written by my fellow coworkers, wondering how will I sum up my three years at a job that has taught me so much? What memories will I write about? Who will I thank? I ask myself these questions as I get closer to the end of my undergraduate education.

I first came into this job as an 18-year-old freshman, not knowing how crucial this newspaper would be to my college career. Like all first time college students, I was trying to find a community and I did find one in Guillory Hall.

The Vermilion and L'Acadien were my first jobs, the first time I saw my name in print and the first paycheck I could call my own. A lot has changed since I first joined in November of 2021. For example, I did not expect I would be under five editor-in-chiefs in just three years! This is what I have always liked about this job. Things change day-to-day, you never know what challenges will be thrown at you.

The Vermilion has helped me grow as a writer and learn that my voice is important. I am so proud to be a part of a legacy that is over a century old and that I hope will be here for a century more. In my time at Student Publications, I have seen it grow so much! I am always amazed at the amount of people who have found their way to the doors of Guillory Hall.

At my time in Student Publications, I have been able to present the yearbook to the University president, interview professors and students for profiles and events. I got to go to a journalism conference and see the paper win best in the South. I have highlighted what makes the UL Lafayette community special. I have also been able to write my opinion on a whole wide range of topics.

I have also had a lot of fun at this job too. From our outings around town to the time we decided to watch all "The Hunger Games" movies while just chilling in the office, to us staying after

a staff meeting to watch Senator Cory Booker break the record for longest speech in the US Senate. We know how to combine work and fun.

However, I would not be here if it was not for the people who make Student Publications so special. Through this organization I have found a group of people who share the same passion for writing and creativity as I do. I know that whenever I've had a rough day going into Guillory Hall will brighten it up.

These people show why student journalism is so important.

I would like to thank Mr. Tarver for being a mentor to all of us and always believing in what we write. He has challenged us to think outside the box and encourages us to write in what we believe in. I would like to give a shout-out to a few past Student Publications alumni. To former Vermilion Editor-in-Chief Lena Foster, thank you for setting an example on how a leader should be. Former photographer coordinator Malik Jones, for always asking me if I had eaten that day, because he knew sometimes I would forget.

Morgan Courville, I can't believe our meeting in French 101 would lead us to a wonderful friendship and you becoming one of my favorite people to work with at the yearbook! I miss seeing you every day.

I also would like to thank former L'Acadien Yearbook Editor-in-Chief Andre Broussard for texting me out of the blue the summer after my freshman year, wondering if I would like to write two stories for the yearbook. Without him, I would have never even considered writing for the yearbook. He helped a shy 19-year-old girl break out of her shell.

I would like to also shout-out a bunch of current Student Publications members. First, to our fearless leader Kay Padilla. Your friendship has been the highlight of my college career, and I cannot thank you enough for always having my back and believing in me even when I did not believe in myself. I am proud of how much you have grown during your time in Student Publications.

Nyria Mustiful, thank you for

challenging me to broaden my horizons in my opinion pieces and for being one of my closest friends. Thank you for sharing a love for writing and literature with me.

Ramudhi Kariyawasam, thank you for always brightening up the day with a smile and always being there to answer our science questions. You are also the best Managing and News editor a team can have.

Morgan Parker, your enthusiasm as the yearbook Editor-in-Chief has made me so excited to be a writer on this current yearbook, and I can not wait to see all your hard work come together when the yearbook is released.

Charlie Martin and Alyus Dick,

everytime I see y'all in the office I know I am going to leave laughing until it hurts. Isaac Henry, thank you for also being a fellow music nerd and understanding my references.

Hren Gerald, your comics every week in the paper are my favorite parts to read.

To some of the most recent members of Student Publications: Caitlyn Comeaux, Ellie Schimdt, Isabelle Brumley and Ja'lyn Braud, I am confident that y'all will be awesome next year working on The Vermilion. Keep up the good work.

Now, it is time for me to sign off for the last time. I can not wait to see how Student Publications will evolve in the future. Goodbye!



Photo by Alyus Dick

Marie Ducote, The Vermilion Allons Writer

## The Vermilion, I will never forget you

**Ramudhi Kariyawasam**

MANAGING EDITOR

When I began at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, becoming a journalist was the furthest thought from my mind.

I genuinely was not sure what I was here to do, besides developing my scientific and medical skills.

I heard about The Vermilion for the first time in one of my public speaking classes during my freshman year.

I found it intriguing and exciting; it was understandably very different from any scientific field, but the world of news production had always held a place in my heart.

In high school, I was involved in news broadcasting for nearly three years. So, I was interested in continuing the flip

side of news—the writing aspect—here at the University. It wasn't until December of my sophomore year, and after more inspiration from Gilmore Girls, that I actually rallied up the courage to apply to become a news writer and photographer.

I recall the very first time I stepped into the Student Publications office: the white stairs, the vermilion wall, the red office chairs scattered about the office—it seemed to sum up all the chaos but also the immense creativity that happened within those walls.

My first semester as a journalist and photographer can be best summarized as a Bugs Bunny cartoon.

I distinctly remember taking my neurodevelopment and pathology exams and rushing to conduct interviews and take pictures for my articles, with my heart racing and my mind still swimming

in brain pathology and neurological diseases.

I will not lie, it was demanding, but the happiness I felt at the end of the day was far more incomparable; I was doing something I enjoyed, despite how much it was on my plate. Being a journalist became my second life, one that I dedicated to ensuring time and time again that our community received truthful, relevant information. Adhamm Safford, the previous Editor-in-Chief of the newspaper, was always there to provide feedback and challenge me to become a better writer.

In fall 2024, I began my journey as News editor and Managing editor of The Vermilion, working alongside my partner-in-crime and our administration's Editor-in-Chief, Kay Padilla. The idea I had of what the year would go by as, I can say for a fact, was far more utopian than what reality cashed on us.

My perspective was that if we worked hard, and always did what was right, then we would receive the same in return, but I had yet to learn that life did not work that way. I would say the hardest, yet the most beautiful, part about managing a group of people was working with all the different personalities in a given situation, time and place.

It was certainly difficult when the worlds of communication and misunderstanding collided, when uninviting personalities clashed, when all I wanted to do was sit in a corner and get lost in the purpose of life, like 'The Thinker'.

However, sitting here today, what I can say is that life is short, and in that life, we all have a part to play. How that part interacts with others' is indeed different and is neither always coherent nor harmonious. It is rather how we understand the cruciality of those parts that I learned was important.

But beyond the tears and stress, what I will truly remember more, are the happy moments.

When I said Kay was my partner-in-crime, she indeed was, word for word. The number of times I had to work with the police, she was always there. I will never forget our hike to the Lafayette Police Department, on broken sidewalks, by speeding cars, only to find out the

station's department we were looking for was closed.

Sunday's Soda Fountain became our haven to vent about the day's mishaps; we became their best customers, and I will never forget the uncontrollably hilarious Uno rounds we'd play.

Morgan Parker, L'Acadien's Editor-in-Chief, I always admired how positive you were; there was never a moment when you didn't make me laugh. You always inspired me to be in the present and enjoy what I had rather than wishing for more. I will never split the pole!

Nyria Mustiful, I loved the conversations we had. You taught me to see different perspectives and how to approach diverse situations. I admire your confidence and the times you took out of your day to listen to my life. I will always remember your advice.

Alyus Dick and Charlie Martin, you were the brothers of the deskhead family. Although I'm sure you both got bored at times, you definitely added much needed humor to the room. Alyus always complained about my age, and now, I'll take the chance to officially call him an uncle. Charlie, don't get a "hypothetical" injury after I leave!

Caitlyn Comeaux, although I just got to recently know you, I always admired your organizational skills and how you presented yourself. Your calm during a storm is something I still have yet to learn.

Ellie Schmidt, I'm thankful for the times we spent cleaning the office with Kay, Cinderella style. I'm sure someone in the future will find the time capsule that all three of us left.

And, Mr. Tarver, I will always appreciate the long conversations we had as we tried to tackle the meaning of life. Thank you for always being there for me and encouraging me to be the best person I can be. Thank you for Old Tyme, snowballs and the phenomenal golf cart adventures.

Last of all, I would like to thank all the departments, faculty and students of the University, as well as community members that took the time to meet with me to contribute to the newspaper.

All of you have taught me something to carry on for the rest of my life.

The Vermilion, it was an honor to be a part of your team and legacy. Thank you.



Photo by Alyus Dick

Ramudhi Kariyawasam, The Vermilion Managing Editor

# SOUNDING OFF

## "How was your first year?"



**Sophia Theriot**  
ARCHITECTURE FRESHMAN

*"It was good. It was exciting, but kind of scary at first. But it got better because I made a lot of friends. And I think I'm having a good time."*



**Jaleah Burris**  
INTERIOR DESIGN FRESHMAN

*"My first year was good. I got to meet a lot of new people, and get out of my comfort zone. It was stressful, but I got used to it and learned to manage everything..."*



**Alex Hildenbrand**  
ARCHITECTURE FRESHMAN

*"So far my first year is really good. It was a lot better than I expected it to be. I was a little nervous at first, but I made a lot of friends."*



**K'shawn Cheneau**  
NURSING FRESHMAN

*"It was like getting dental surgery on a rollercoaster, painful and bumpy."*



**Kenae Wright**  
EARLY EDUCATION FRESHMAN

*"It was fun, I had a good time."*



**Kyndal Williams**  
PSYCHOLOGY FRESHMAN

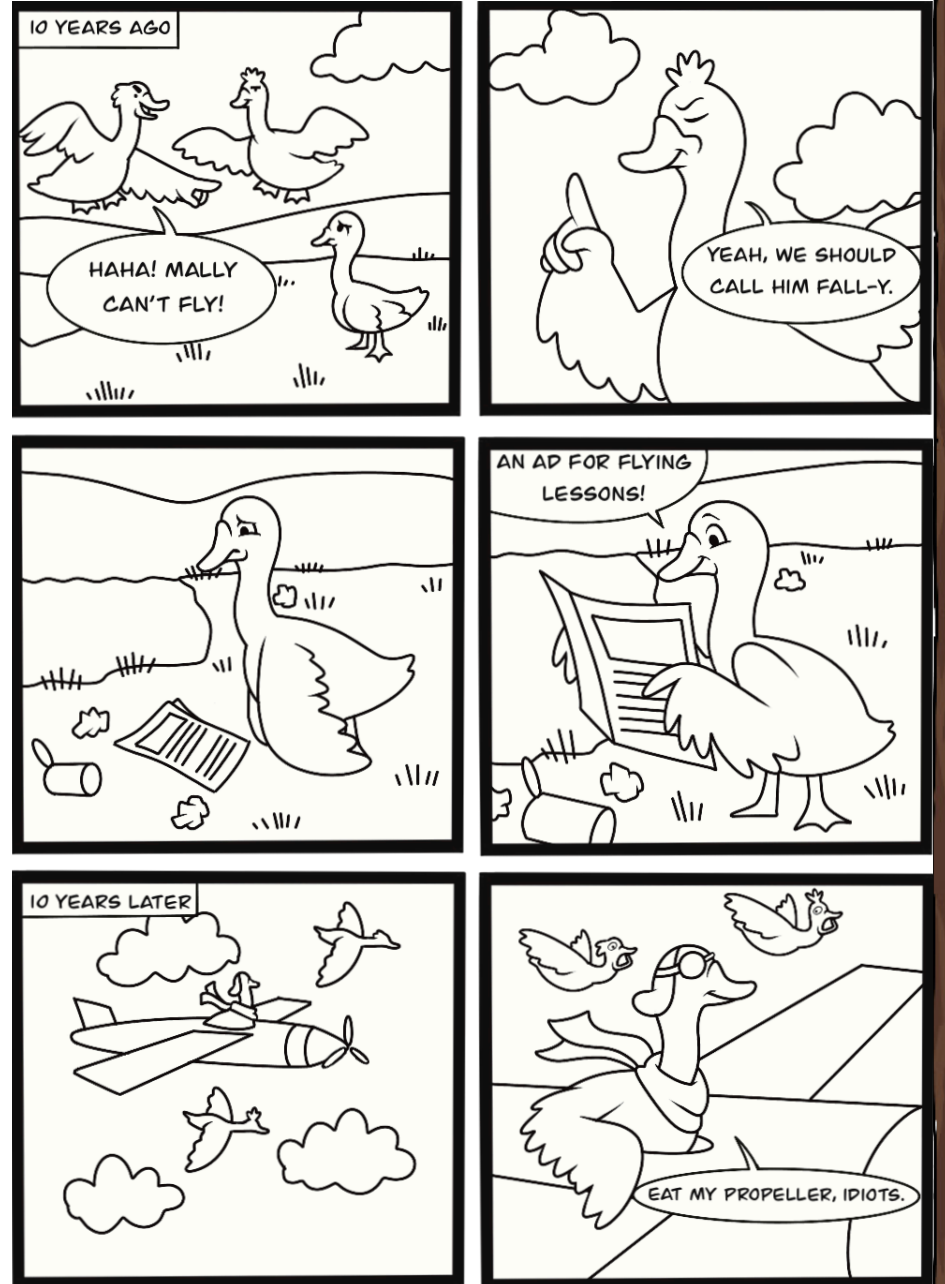
*"I would say my first year was good, just kind of exploring around. I think it was good, a good introduction to everything."*

*Sounding Off is a section devoted to the voice of students. Views expressed in Sounding Off do not reflect those of UL Lafayette administrators, faculty, staff or other students.*

*Photos and interviews by Makayla Walker.*

### COMIC

## Mally Learns to Fly



Comic by Lauren Gerald

**Thank you to all the students, faculty, administration and members of the community who contributed to The Vermilion.**

**See you again next year!**

