

The Patriot

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SGA hosts "Our Voices as One" event FMU stands in solidarity, honors victims

Kei'yona Jordon
Copy Editor

Students, faculty and staff had a moment of silence to commemorate the 8 minutes, 49 seconds of suffering that George Floyd experienced before he died and other tragedies during the Student Government Association's (SGA) "Our Voices as One" event.

The event was held outside from 3-4 p.m. on Oct. 1 on the Smith University Center lawn.

Senior education major Anya Bryant led the students in the moment of silence before giving her speech.

The concert was the second event of the week and despite the fears of the pandemic, many were in attendance.

Before and after the event, the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc. set up a tent where they encouraged and helped students register to vote.

The students were joined in the audience by President Fred Carter as well.

The event featured the Young, Gifted and Blessed Choir (YGB), the University Choir, Voice Collective and Corvon Burgess Ensemble.

Fran Coleman, assistant professor of music industry, led both the University Choir and the Voice Collective.

The University Choir performed "I am light" and



Jeffrey Lampkin leads YGB in a gospel song during the "Our Voices as One" event outside the Smith University Center.

PHOTO BY ADAM ROSE

the Voice Collective performed "Voice on The Wind" YGB performed two gospel songs called "Total Praise" and "Glad to Be in the Number" while Burgess and his ensemble sang "Glorry."

SGA President Tymoshio Robinson said they wanted to use music to show the diversity on campus.

"Today, we are using our platforms to show others, and to show each other, that our voices can come together as one," Robinson said.

"Even where and when the world is divided." During his speech, Robinson told the audience about the purpose of the event.

"We are here today, in the midst of a pandemic, and in the middle of heightened social and racial climates, to not only bring awareness to things that are wrong in our communities and in the world," Robinson said.

"But we are here to highlight those things that make our world and communities special."

After introducing himself and his goals to the audience, Robinson told them that the concert was not to bring attention to him or any of the speakers at the event.

"Make no mistake about it, even after saying all of that, today is not about me," Robinson said.

"Today is not about any one person you'll be hearing from today, and today is not about any single individual in today's audi-

ence. So why are we here? Today is about celebrating all the amazing things that make our communities wonderfully diverse and inclusive."

Anya Bryant, a senior early childhood education major, also spoke at the event.

Bryant urged students to take the first step in creating a better world.

"We now have the blueprint necessary to demonstrate to the world the change

we want to see," Bryant said. "Patriots, it is time for us to take deliberate and thoughtful action steps toward change."

Bryant listed three steps the students could take to do their part in making sure to create change in the world.

The first step Bryant told students was to "smell the flowers." She compared the appreciation of the diversity of each petal on a single flower to the diversity of race and people in the world.

"However, instead of smelling flowers, stop and take time to appreciate the collection of diverse and unique individuals blossoming in the Patriot campus community," Bryant said.

The next step Bryant said was being kind to others.

"Though it may be simple," Bryant said. "The impacts of just being kind can have a ripple effect, like a pebble in the ocean."

The last step Bryant gave was urging the audience to vote.

"Elections are won by people who show up," Bryant said. "Patriots, show up and raise your voice about the things that matter in the community because it is our right, duty, privilege and responsibility to vote."

FMU staff saves couple

Kei'yona Jordon
Copy Editor

FMU maintenance employee Robert Fulmore was one five people who helped save a young couple from drowning in a pond after a car collision off Olanta Highway.

Fulmore said he and his 13-year-old daughter were going for a Sunday drive when he saw a car sinking in the pond and another man struggling to help save the couple.

Shyheim Platt and Nautril McElveen said they were heading to the store when Platt tried to pass the car in

front of him, not realizing another car was coming.

Platt swerved his car back into his lane, but the car ahead had considerably slowed down as they were preparing to turn.

"I thought it was the end," Platt said. "Especially when my door got slammed and I just kind of panicked. We had to try and kind of fight with it because I couldn't get no leverage."

By the time Fulmore got to the scene, he said he had to jump straight into action.

Fulmore said he used his belt to help pull Platt up and sent it back in to try and pull up McElveen. However, she

wasn't able to grab his belt.

"I think she grabbed it but she couldn't hold onto it," Fulmore said. "And by that time I said, 'Well you know, I have to save her.'"

After realizing that McElveen was not going to be able to grab the belt, Fulmore said he knew he had to get into the water.

Fulmore said that when he got in the water he sank down, but got close enough to grab McElveen and began trying to reach the shore.

However, in the process Fulmore said he also began sinking and was worried for

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PHOTO BY KEI'YONA JORDON

From left to right: Shyheim Platt, Nautril McElveen, Addisyn Porter, Derrick Porter, Robert Fulmore and Bree Porter.



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Finn Millians
Staff Writer

A product of FMU herself, Kellie Middleton, a registered nurse who clinically practices in the field of hemodialysis and a professor of nursing at FMU, now works on the production of other registered nurses through FMU's nursing program.

As much as she loves her role now, however, teaching was not always part of the plan.

"When I first graduated and took boards to become a registered nurse, I went straight into the field of community nursing," Middleton said. "I knew that hospital nursing was not for me; I was, at the time, a young, single mom, and I just didn't have the time."

Middleton worked solely in the field until she was asked by FMU's nursing program to help teach some of the clinicals. She was an adjunct instructor at that time.

"I was asked to be a clinical adjunct instructor for FMU," Middleton said. "While I was a master

student, I taught several of the clinical courses."

An old professor of hers was the real reason she was able to become a professor. As such an involved member of the FMU community and nursing program, it only made sense that her adjunct professor role would evolve into a more permanent teaching position.

"I had a 10-year relationship with the school," Middleton said. "I had one of my former professors reach out to me as she was interested in preparing for her retirement role and asked if I would be interested in taking over her course: fundamentals of nursing. That is how I ended up in the role I am now – transitioning from clinical instructor to professor of nursing."

After Middleton filled out the forms and applications and was accepted into the role, she loved it. It was a bit of a shift, though, especially being a professor at the same nursing school she graduated from.

"You know, it is really different being on the other side of the podium," Middleton said. "I relate to

the students. I have been there, I sat in the same auditorium, and so there is a lot of commonality there; I understand what they are going through."

As a former student turned nurse in the community, Middleton said it is important to help train nurses who are ready to take on the professional role required of the job.

"I just feel at home at Francis Marion," Middleton said. "Francis Marion will always be my family. I received both of my degrees here and now to be able to give back and help produce these nurses who are going into the community – it is an honor."

Middleton said she even gets to witness her students taking on their own roles and positions in the hospital system.

"I was actually hospitalized over the summer, and two of my former students ended up being my nurses," Middleton said.

With her connections with the school as well as Florence as a whole, Middleton said she finds it

is imperative to give back to the community.

"I actually volunteer at the Dillon Free Clinic," Middleton said. "This facility is set up for underprivileged, underserved patients, most of whom are uninsured. They would not be able to have access to healthcare otherwise. I volunteer there several times a month, just as my way of giving back, there is no pay associated with it. I do that along with several of my colleagues in the nursing department."

Middleton feels it is important to use her clinical skills and teaching skills to grant people without access to learning the ability to learn about health.

"I really enjoy being able to give back to those vulnerable populations who otherwise wouldn't have a chance to have education about health issues and what they can do to prevent health issues," Middleton said. "It kind of ties back into my love for teaching."

Middleton just finished her doctorate in nursing at USC Columbia. She pursued this degree with the goal of further educating herself so

that she can better educate others.

"I pursued that degree because I feel that, in my role as a nurse educator, it helps me have the most knowledge possible to be able to share with my students," Middleton said. "The more knowledge I have, I think the more knowledge I can help nurses with as they come through our program."

Having been with FMU since her time as an undergrad, Middleton plans to stay. Her doctorate will help her further her career and achieve her ultimate dream: having a leadership role in the administration of the nursing school at FMU.

"Ultimately, my goal would be to advance in my role here, and this may be 20 years down the road, but I would love to be the chair of our nursing department, if that opportunity ever arose," Middleton said. "My long-term goal would be to have some leadership role among the administration."

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Drowning

his life in his attempt to get McElveen closer to shore to be pulled up.

"I thought everybody had given up on me," Fulmore said. "And then I said, 'God, I know you're not gonna let me die.'"

Fulmore said that just as he finished praying to God to save him, a hand reached out

to grab him.

Derrick Porter and his wife Bree Porter were two of the people helping to rescue the young couple from the water.

"It took every single one of us for no fatalities to happen," Porter said

Porter said she and her husband did not think about

themselves when they saw what was going on.

"We didn't think about our lives," Porter said. "We were thinking about the others' lives."

Platt and McElveen were very thankful to all the people who risked their lives to pitch in and save them.

"If nobody had been

there to help us, we could've been gone," Platt said. "I know I wouldn't have made it because I was drowning already."

McElveen, Platt, Porter and Fulmore said they would be bonded together forever now.

Porter said she plans to keep in contact with everyone

who was there to help out.

"We are definitely going to stay in touch," Porter said. "This was a life changing experience for everybody."

FMU's Got Talent brings in special guests

Kei'yona Jordon
Copy Editor

The Campus Activities Board (CAB) hosted the second round of "FMU's Got Talent" from 5-7 p.m. on Oct. 14 in the Chapman Auditorium.

In the midst of the pandemic, CAB said they are working hard to provide the sense of normalcy the students are craving.

"Students come to college for the experience," said student life coordinator Alex McGill. "So that's what we are trying to do."

The second round of judging featured 13 acts.

Because of the pandemic, CAB was restricted in how many students were allowed to come in unlike previous years.

This year McGill said they were able to only seat up to 110 people for the show.

During the first round of FMU's Got Talent, CAB decided to go without using a judge to ensure everyone's safety, but changed their minds for the second round.

McGill said she realized that the audience enjoyed having judges last semster and fed off their energy and responses to the performers.

"The role of the judges is to critique the performers," McGill said. "So we realized not having that element took away from the experience."

CAB invited last year's winner, Rischard Brown, to serve as the judge.

Senior mass communication major Kristen Woodard performed original spoken word poetry

for the second year in a row.

Woodard said that even though things were different she enjoyed herself.

"This year's talent show was a very fun experience," Woodard said.

Woodard also said the only difference between performing during the pandemic was having to wear a mask backstage before they performed.

McGill said the show hosts and judges had to put in more work than usual because of the restrictions on the size of the audience.

Tarchea Brown, a senior political science major, and Corvon Burgess, a sophomore computer science major, were the show hosts for the entire night.

Burgess and Brown kept the audience engaged and

laughing all throughout the night.

"Corvon and Tarchea are a great balance," McGill said.



PHOTO BY ELODI BREG
Aleah Smalls sings "Can't Take My Eyes Off You" by Lauryn Hill

Your Lives Matter: Students Speak Out

Kei'yona Jordon
Copy Editor

The Student Government Association (SGA) closed out Mental Health Awareness Week with a "Your Lives Matter: Students Speak Out" forum from 5-6:30 p.m. on Oct. 6 in the Chapman Auditorium.

SGA invited Linda Sullen, president of the African-American Faculty and Staff Coalition; Louis Venters, associate professor of history; Caira Wilson, president of the FMU NAACP chapter; and Michael Youseff, campaign manager for the Chaquez McCall for Florence City Council, to speak on the panel.

In light of the different race and diversity movements taking place in America, SGA wanted to give students a chance to use their voices

and make their opinions and experiences heard.

Daphne Carter-McCants, assistant vice president for the Student Life Office, moderated the panel and directed questions from the audience.

Venters told the audience about his life raising two bi-racial children. He also shared the story of his son's first encounter with the police and how, because of their race, they would have more encounters with the police.

"Statistically speaking, it won't be his last encounter with the police," Venters said. "And all my sons are doing is getting taller and taller."

The panel also discussed the argument that racism is different between the younger and older generations.

Each of the panelists had different opinions. Venters said he had always put a

lot of faith in the younger generation erasing racism, but had been discouraged when he saw acts of violence geared toward racial differences being carried out by younger people.

"I was feeling good," Venters said. "But maybe it was some of those pictures from Charlottesville a few years ago where a lot of those Nazi's were young college students."

Youseff said, in his opinion, things were getting better because the leaders of the younger generation were being born.

"I think we are definitely seeing the new generation rising up," Youseff said.

He backed up his statement by sharing some of the statistics from the city of Florence's younger population.

"Florence had the highest

voter turnout for young people that we have ever seen," Youseff said.

Youseff said the protests for George Floyd all around the country showed him the new generation is starting to prioritize effecting change.

"The new generation is starting to realize what the older generation went through as far as racism," Youseff said. "And the new generation is acting on it."

Sullen said she was confident that the younger generation is the generation who will make change.

"This is the generation that is going to fight for my rights," Sullen said. "So I have faith that we are going to see a change."

Wilson also agreed that the younger generation will make a change, but before that change is made, there is a long way to go.

"I feel like the older generation has fought and it's time for the younger generation to pick up the torch," Wilson said.

Near the end of the event, Carter-McCants opened the stage to students who wanted to share their personal experiences or comments.

Some of the SGA senators went on stage and shared what they thought needed to happen to see change. Other people talked about how they had experienced racism as a young kid and how it took away their innocence or instilled anger in them.

SGA said the event was very successful and would not be the last diversity and race discussion on campus.

The Patriot is published four times per semester by and for the students of Francis Marion University. Opinions expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official opinions or policies of FMU. We encourage letters to the editor but do not guarantee publication. *The Patriot* reserves the right to edit or reject any material submitted.

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COACH SPOTLIGHT | Luis Rincon

Finn Millions
Copy Editor

For Luis Rincon, head coach of the Patriots’ men’s soccer team, soccer has always been a focal point in his life—a passion that turned into an opportunity and then turned into a profession. However, Rincon’s profession in coaching college soccer was not always part of the plan. “I never thought I was going to coach, to be honest,” Rincon said.

Rincon eventually found his true calling, and now he uses it to change the lives of young men and women through soccer.

“Regardless if they go pro or not, I want them to take my experiences to life,” Rincon said. “I have been through a lot to be where I am right now and I am still learning, and I want to share that. As we are hungry for success, I want them to be hungry for success in their professional careers and in their lives.”

Rincon is originally from Bogota, Colombia. After graduating high school, with virtually no skill in the English language, he moved to the U.S. to attend school and play soccer at Warner University – a small, private, Christian university in Lake Wales, Florida – in 2005 where he received his bachelor’s in business administration. He red-shirted his sophomore year and graduated early, which allowed him to have



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Luis Rincon, head coach of the FMU men’s soccer team, led the Patriots to a 16-5-1 season last year.

two extra years of eligibility to further his education. Rincon moved to Texas in 2009 to attend Texas A&M International, where he finished his soccer career and received an MBA in international business.

He had a job right out of school with Enterprise as an assistant manager in Miami where he worked for two and a half months. However, he soon discovered that he did not enjoy the position and missed his true passion: soccer.

“I didn’t like it,” Rincon said. “I was missing soccer

and my coach from Texas A&M offered me a job as a full-time assistant coach for both programs – men’s and women’s. That changed my career path completely.”

With his new job as an assistant soccer coach, his career path shifted in a new direction and quickly brought him to his first head coaching position at Ohio Valley University (OVU).

“The baseball coach at Texas A&M International got a job at his old alma mater as the athletic director,” Rincon said. “He called me up and said, ‘Hey, what you do over

there, I want you to do it here as a head coach.’”

The first year was a true transition for Rincon. He went from being an assistant of two teams to being the head coach of the OVU men’s soccer team. There was a lot of responsibility and countless challenges, but he looked forward to the opportunity.

“I was eager for the opportunity to be a head coach,” Rincon said.

From a 0-19 record and a year-and-a-half long losing streak to two conference championships under his belt

and an Elite 8 finish in the NCAA tournament, Rincon turned the program around completely. The team was even ranked number two in the country for a couple weeks.

However, after his 2018 season, Rincon decided he wanted a change of pace. He was offered a position at FMU, which he accepted.

“I really like the facilities; I really liked the people,” Rincon said. “I was closer to home – my parents live in Miami. I also thought we had the resources to do something special here.”

And do something special he did. Rincon took the Patriot’s from a 9-7 record in 2018, to a 16-5-1 record in his first year. He concluded the season with a PBC tournament win and made it to the second round of the NCAA tournament. He attributes these victories not only to his program, but to the school as well.

“We have a lot of support from administration and the staff,” Rincon said. “Without those key things we would not be able to achieve what we have achieved in such a short time.”

Rincon also said that setting high expectations and striving after them is what makes their efforts rewarding and successful.

“With me, every training is serious,” Rincon said. “I do not take this as fun; I take it very seriously. We want to achieve excellence. We demand excellence in everything. Every pass is important, every pass counts. There are no breaks with me. Fun is winning.”

With this lifestyle, it is no wonder Rincon has big plans for the future. That demand for excellence is leading him and his team down the only path he will accept – the path of success.

“It’s a process, but I think we are in a good route,” Rincon said. “It takes time, but to be able to get 17 players back – 10 of them starters – is a good sign of things and we can improve a lot of the team.”

SGA calms down campus with “calming” jars

Kei’yona Jordon
Copy Editor

Student Government Association (SGA) kicked off Mental Health Awareness Week with calming jars and affirmation stickers at 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. on Oct. 1 as part of SGA Cares Day.

SGA partnered with the Office of Counseling and Testing to give students more ways to deal with stress.

The Office of Counseling and Testing set up tents on the Founders Hall lawn and encouraged students to stop by between or after their classes.

Right beside them were SGA senators handing out goody bags to students walking by and letting them know that SGA cared about their mental health. They also urged students to not ignore signs of anxiety.

Students used glitter glue, water, glitter and a little bit of food coloring to create a colorful mixture in a jar that they can shake to help soothe or calm them down.

The activity was a grounding technique that was meant to help during high-anxiety moments.

Kayla Duncan, assistant director of counseling and testing, said the purpose of the calming jars was to help the person reset from having a stressful moment.

“It’s something small that people can do that could be helpful to them during these stressful times,” Duncan said.

Duncan said all the students responded well to the event.

“We really got a lot of positive feedback from the students,” Duncan said. “A lot of them had never heard

of a calming jar or never done one.”

This year’s Mental Health Week was geared toward giving students resources and healthy ways to cope with mental health.

Meisha Coles, a former SGA senator and a sophomore secondary-level education mathematics major, was one of the students who stopped by to make a calming jar and pick up an affirmation sticker.

Coles said the activities and SGA presence showed they care for the students’ mental health on campus.

“These simple acts of kindness and affirmation can change people, even if it’s just for a moment,” Coles said. “Sometimes all people need is a moment to remember that someone cares and that can bring them back from a potentially dark situation.”

Coles, along with other students, said they liked having the school counselors moderating the calming jars activity.

“Because the therapists were there with us, that also gave us the initiative to ask questions and ask about an appointment if needed or other services they may offer,” Coles said.

Duncan also said the activity got the students working together and sharing their creativity.

“It was very much like a community effort thing and I thought it was a really nice event,” Duncan said.

SGA Senator Kayra Rice came out to volunteer, handing out goody bags and kind words to students.

Rice said she was happy to volunteer for SGA Cares Day as a student senator

because she knows how life can be a little rough and college can be hard.

“College can be very stressful and to add a pandemic on top, makes things 10 times harder,” Rice said.

Rice also said the event offered a great way to get the conversation started about the importance of caring for your mental health.

“This event was a perfect opportunity to meet students and faculty and talk to them about their mental health, to attempt to make someone’s day better,” Rice said.



PHOTO BY JOSHUA HEYWARD
Craft tables were set up outside Founders Hall for students to make their own calming jars.

Students find killer in “Murder Mystery” at UC

Julia Fulmer
Staff Writer

The Campus Activities Board (CAB) hosted a “Murder Mystery” event from 5-7 p.m. on Oct. 7 at the Smith University Center (UC) Commons as a part of its “UC After Dark” series.

Loosely based on the board game Clue, CAB members split students into six groups in a race to solve the murder case. Students took turns speaking to each of the costumed suspects to gain clues on the identity of the guilty party. The first team to find the murderer was awarded bragging rights as well as a trip to the large candy bowl in the center of the room.

Student life specialist Alex McGill said CAB hosted a murder mystery event in the past, but due to time constraints, it ended earlier than

planned. Though the first event was cut short, McGill said it gained a positive response and encouraged them to organize another.

“The feedback we received was that students really enjoyed the event, and we wanted to do something again,” McGill said. “Due to COVID, we had to be creative as far as touching stuff, so this is where this idea came from.”

McGill said CAB took many precautions when organizing this event. Students were offered medical gloves in addition to their masks, as well as pens and paper, which they could use to take notes. McGill said they were encouraged to keep the items afterward to avoid as much contact as possible.

With everyone adhering to the guidelines, McGill said the students were still able to have a fun and safe experience.

“Everybody has been really respectful and have been really safe,” McGill said. “Students mostly just want to have a good time.”

McGill said she enjoyed seeing how the students interacted with the story.

“I love to see how the wheels in the players’ minds turn,” McGill said. “The students get so invested and passionate about it. The CAB members really get into character, and so do the students.”

This rang true for Brittany Clark, a junior business administration major and a new member of CAB, who acted as a suspect in the game. She said she decided to work at the event because she loves mysteries. Clark was not the only one who enjoyed this aspect of the event, as she noticed the students soon became engaged with solving the puzzle.

“I believe the event went

really well,” Clark said. “Everyone who was there seemed to be enjoying themselves and really trying to solve the mysteries.”

Clark said it is helpful for students to have events where they can meet new people and decompress from daily life.

“I think it’s important to host events like this so students can interact with each other more often and get to know each other, the campus and its organizations,” Clark said. “Getting the student body involved in events also gets them away from their stressful schoolwork so they can enjoy themselves.”

Kayra Rice, a freshman pre-nursing major, said she appreciated being able to meet and talk to people while working at the sign-in desk.

“I decided to come to the event to get to know CAB members better, meet new people, and because the

event sounded very interesting,” Rice said. “I enjoyed getting candy and attempting to solve a mystery while signing in all the people who came to the event.”

CAB will be hosting a pumpkin carving for the next “UC After Dark” event from 5-7 p.m. on Oct. 21 in

the UC Commons. They will also be hosting “CarnEvil” starting at 6:30 p.m. on Oct. 29 outside the UC. The main event will take place on the UC porch, but there will also be a movie screening at 7:30 p.m. on the UC lawn.



PHOTO BY JOSHUA HEYWARD
Students try to solve the “Murder Mystery” by talking to suspects in the UC Commons.

PAC hosts first Fresh Air Fest of the season

Ansley Lesley
Staff Writer

The Florence Symphony Strings performed “Scandinavia” for the first Fresh Air Fest event from 6-7 p.m. on Oct. 14 at the BB&T Amphitheatre outside the FMU Performing Arts Center (PAC). The event was free and open to the public and guests were required to wear masks. Socially distanced seating was provided, but guests could bring their own chairs and sit on the lawn near the amphitheatre, if they wished. Attendance was limited to 150 people,

but there was a sizable turnout of listeners for this open air event. This Fresh Air Fest was the first of the season, and the first of three that the Florence Symphony Orchestra is performing in. All of the pieces they performed were written by Scandinavian composers. They opened with “Symphony in G” composed by Johan Helmich Roman and closed with “Holberg Suite” by Edvard Grieg. This is the first performance that the 73 year old orchestra has had since February of this year. Due to COVID-19, the

orchestra has been split up into three separate sections. The woodwinds and the brass sections have performances scheduled for 4 p.m. on Oct. 25 and 4 p.m. on Nov. 2. Both are being held at the PAC’s BB&T Amphitheatre. The Fresh Air Fests were created when both the Florence Symphony Orchestra and the PAC wanted to find a way to bring live music back to downtown Florence during the COVID-19 pandemic. The community was one of the driving factors in creating the Fresh Air Fests. The minds behind the event

wanted to give back to the community and help it recover some from the pandemic. Terry Roberts, professor of music and director of instrumental activities, was instrumental in bringing the Fresh Air Fests to life. “Live music, that’s a big part of downtown,” said Roberts. “Has always been since it was revitalized.” They also wanted to give the FMU student ensembles, as well as other local groups, a chance to perform. “Our ensembles aren’t able really to perform like they normally do,” Roberts

said. “Rehearsal is very difficult also, so we’re sort of giving everyone a chance to do something.” There will be a wide variety of musical genres performed, as well as both vocal and instrumental performances. There will also be choral, classical and jazz performances among others. Two FMU groups, the FMU Jazz Combo and the FMU Voice and Choir, will perform at the Fresh Air Fests. It is not known yet if the Fresh Air Fests will continue through the spring, but there are discussions going on

about making them a more regular event. “If we’re not allowed to actually have indoor performances, we’ll certainly do something,” Roberts said. The Masterworks Choir will be performing at the next Fresh Air Fest. They will be singing both classics and Broadway favorites. Weather permitting, there will be six more Fresh Air Fests this fall. The next Fresh Air Fest will be held at 6 p.m. on Oct. 20 at the BB&T Amphitheatre at the PAC.

VOICES of the PATRIOT

NOT SO SOCIAL MEDIA

Lesley Willard
Staff Writer

We have finally reached a point in our lives where many young people don’t remember a life without social media. While most of those people believe there is absolutely nothing wrong with staying updated on the latest technology, those who knew a life before it often strongly disagree. The question is: why? The first desktop computer was released in 1943. It was huge, bulky and far from portable, but because of its new technology, it was more than 1,000 times faster than any other computer on the market during that time. People were ecstatic. After the computer, the next big, exciting release was the first wireless telephone, which was introduced to the world in 1973. Before that, all anyone knew was a phone with a cord attached that didn’t let you go more than 6 feet away from where the phone was mounted on the wall. This new phone with no cord was technically considered the first cell phone. Again, people were amazed. All of these new inventions seemed great at first. They brought remarkable changes to the lives of those who used them and completely changed society as a whole. So where is the problem? All was well with technology until smartphones were released and social media apps followed. With these new apps, people were able to communicate with friends they hadn’t seen or spoken to in years. It gave people time to catch up with one another and made relationships much easier to keep up with. Or did it? Along with these seemingly helpful apps came a pretty large set of challenges. We began to rely heavily on them to uphold our relationships. Instead of making a phone call, people began using Snapchat; instead of

printing photos, people began posting to Instagram; instead of watching TV, people began watching vloggers on YouTube; and instead of venting in personal conversation, people began updating their status on Facebook. The problem that people are starting to notice with social media now is that it is beginning to replace one-on-one relationships instead of enhance them. We have started using social media as a way to say and do whatever we want, which has created quite a toxic environment for apps. Because social media has become so prevalent in society today, many people are finding it hard to function in social settings. Social anxiety has sky-rocketed, and when it’s time to have a face-to-face conversation with someone, many people forget what to say or how to act. More often than not, we find people relying on their phones and social media for comfort and using them as a cushion when they aren’t sure what else to do. Along with these coping mechanisms, many people find themselves being distracted by social media during times when their attention should be directed elsewhere, as if the apps are literally an addiction. So, what’s my opinion? Social media is most definitely damaging to personal relationships. It makes human interaction easily escapable and hinders people’s ability to relate to others on the spot quickly without having time to think about what to say or how to say it. Easy-flowing conversation is hard to come by, and I truly think it’s a direct result of the social media craze.

HEALING AT THE ROOTS: HIP HOP

Kei’yona Jordon
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When most people think of hip-hop or rap their minds automatically envision scandalous clothing, sex, drugs and money, which, in their defense, are aspects of hip-hop and rap that overshadow its identity. However, hip-hop and rap are social movements that identify key moments in history, economical trends in society and embody the culture of the majority of our youth and young adults. If you’re wondering why I am separating hip-hop and rap instead of using them interchangeably, it’s because they are not the same. Hip-hop is the expression of a culture and rap is an element of that culture that began by bringing awareness to people living in poverty. Hip hop is said to have originated in the Bronx, New York, in the mid 1970s and was created to uplift, empower and give a voice to people living in impoverished neighborhoods. Rap music specifically allowed them to express how they felt about politics as well. For example, hip-hop started during the time of a black nationalism movement and played a part in political protests happening during that time. According to Britannica, hip-hop culture consists of four elements: rap, graffiti, tableturning and dance. Pioneers of “mcing” created beats from older songs to complement their style of music and dance. Out of the four elements, rap was the one that became more prominent for everybody. Today rap is a billion-dollar industry and is more popular than hip-hop dance, mcing and graffiti. For someone who has grasped a deeper understanding and appreciation for rap and hip-hop culture, I know its foundation has been lost in the greed for money and fame. The most popular rap songs today are very vulgar and explicit and lack any deep meaning. Not all of

rap is like this, but it is what gets all the attention. Today, people from all different backgrounds identify with rap music and hip-hop culture. However, it is not what it once was and it’s up to us to change the narrative and bring significance and meaning back into hip-hop and rap. If our generation and the ones after us can learn about what hip-hop really is, then it can serve its purpose and change things for the better in society. The people behind the music are lyrical and creative artists but sometimes, because of the things they rap about, we don’t pay attention to it. It’s important to clarify that there are a few rappers in today’s time who seem to possess the lyrical and musical talent that hip-hop and rap originated in. Rappers such as J Cole, Chance The Rapper, Eminem, Kanye, Drake, Jay Z are some of the most popular rappers to rap about more than just sex, money and drugs. Some people would argue that rap didn’t change for the worse, but that it only progressed with the time. However, over time hip-hop culture has been overshadowed by rap music, which takes away from the creativity of its expression and purpose. The love of music can not be taught, but appreciation and recognition for it can be. Music changes things, inspires people, advises people and even comforts people. In every genre of music, there is some type of movement associated with it. For example, blues music was associated with the start of the Civil Rights Movement and gave people a voice to speak out and voice their trials. I believe that if music was one of the things to unite people all over the world then rap music can too, but only if we get in front of it now and bring back its importance in our society.

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