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JOSH MESSIER

Families, friends, faculty and staff make their rounds through the Senior Art Exhibition in the Jewett Center for the Performing Arts on April 1. As a capstone project for graduating art majors, each student was tasked with displaying their own exhibition that showcases the work they have done throughout their years at Westminster College. The reception gave students a chance to discuss and explain their works of art while enjoying complimentary food and beverages.

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JAKE PHILLIPS

Westminster College student Adam Redling skates a backyard halfpipe in Sugar House on August 26, 2018. This September, the Utah State Fairpark will host the Vans Park Series Men's Pro Tour World Championship, putting Salt Lake City in the spotlight along with world-class cities such as Shanghai and Paris.

SALT LAKE CITY GETS HEAD START ON OLYMPIC SKATEBOARDING INDUSTRY

JOSH MESSIER
STAFF REPORTER

Salt Lake City further strengthens its connection to the Olympics by hosting a world championship skateboarding event and making plans to build an Olympic-caliber skateboard park.

The city is scheduled to host the country's first ever Vans Park Series Men's Pro Tour World Championships at the Utah State Fairpark Sept. 6-7, according to the 2019 schedule on the Vans Park Series' website.

Additionally, with skateboarding set to debut as an Olympic sport in the 2020 Tokyo games, Vans plans to contribute \$200,000 towards the addition of a new "Olympic-caliber" skatepark for the World Championships, according to Rep. Michael McKell, R-Spanish Fork, who is pushing to make it all happen. McKell has also proposed that the Utah state legislature fund another \$300,000 to complete the skatepark.

McKell said that Utah plans to receive over \$200,000 from tick-

et sales alone, which will almost entirely recoup the state's investment, but a majority of the projected earnings will come from other sources.

According to the schedule, the Vans Park Series will have four qualifying stops before making its way to Utah. The first stop will be held in Shanghai, followed by São Paulo, Montréal and Paris.

"Because this is a world championship event, you're spotlighting Salt Lake City across the world and comparing it to these world-class cities," McKell said. "We think that's about an \$8 million bonus to the state of Utah, as far as earned media and marketing. We also think that you'll see upwards of \$4 million created as far as revenue spent and purchased in Salt Lake [City] during the event."

With skateboarding soon to be an Olympic event, people are excited to see Salt Lake City get a head-start on the industry.

"I think it's an awesome idea," said Alex Mazzeo, a Westminster College alumnus. "People come to Utah for action sports, so it's defi-

nately putting it in the right place." McKell echoed these sentiments calling Utah "an Olympic community."

"That's something that we're really proud of in Utah, and I think that Olympic spirit will thrive at this skatepark," McKell said. "There's a high likelihood that we'll have some of our future U.S. Olympians training at this facility."

Liam Conkling, an undergraduate at Westminster College, said he's interested to see how the Olympics, as well as the upcoming event, will affect the way people view skateboarding.

"When I see action sports in the Olympics these days, I think of them as branches off of skateboarding," Conkling said. "So, I think it's pretty cool that skateboarding is finally becoming part of it. That way it would get people more hyped on skating and hopefully build a bigger community around the sport."

Others agree that it will introduce more people to the sport, but said they believe it won't have much of an impact on the existing community.

"It's going to be good for exposing [skateboarding] to a broader audience and raising the legitimacy of it," Mazzeo said. "But it's only like a niche. There's way more street skaters than there are [competitive skaters] in the world."

There has been some opposition to the investment, like a recent opinion article from the Salt Lake Tribune, in which columnist Robert Gehrke added the skatepark to his list of Utah lawmaker's "frivolous projects."

But McKell said he remains confident about how beneficial hosting the World Championships and building an Olympic-caliber Skatepark will be for Utah.

"If there's negativity out there, I'm not seeing it," McKell said. "I think there has been overwhelming support and I was amazed by the response from legislature. Once they realize how big this event actually is, folks are going to be really, really excited to see it come to the state of Utah."

WESTMINSTER PUSHES INITIATIVE AGAINST EXCESSIVE USE OF PLASTIC STRAWS

RAFFAEL BREU
STAFF REPORTER

Bon Appétit, Westminster College's primary food vendor, is fighting against the unnecessary use of single-use plastic, along with many other businesses in Utah and across the U.S., by removing plastic straws from its café and restaurants.

Environmental impact of plastic straws

Between 170 and 390 million straws are used in the U.S. every day, according to the New York Times. Considering an average straw length of 8 inches, the waste from daily plastic straw consumption, lined up behind each other, would be sufficient to circle the world at least once.

According to Ocean Conservancy, plastic straws are also one of the top ten items found at coastline clean ups.

Plastic, as used in the straws, is popular due to its high durability and stability. Therefore, it should not be surprising that it is not biodegradable, according to Polymers Journal.

"Plastic has a decomposition period of approximately 400 years yet, we have been consuming it as if a biodegradable material that can simply be produced and then easily absorbed and metabolized by Earth," said Tim Lindgren, a Westminster environmental studies alumnus. "Only about 10 percent of

plastics historically produced have been recycled, and our ecological systems across the globe are bearing the violent impact of that figure."

Initiatives across the U.S.

Due to growing awareness of and concern over plastic pollution, there have been national efforts to curb the use of single-use plastics.

In 2019, California became the first state to put a ban on plastic straws, forbidding restaurants to provide them, unless explicitly asked for by customers.

The city of Seattle went even further and required all food service businesses to replace all disposable food service items made of plastic — containers, cups, straws, etc. — with compostable alternatives.

Big food and beverage companies are also responding to the environmental concern.

Starbucks Coffee Company, for example, pledged to replace plastic straws with environmentally friendlier options in all their stores by 2020, in a press release March 20. The company claims this will eliminate more than one billion plastic straws a year.

Additionally, the Bon Appétit Management Company began removing plastic straws and stirrers from all of its 1,000 cafés and restaurants in 33 states, in May 2018, including those on Westminster's campus.

Initiatives in Utah

In Utah, the state government prevents the regulation of "auxiliary containers" or imposing mandatory fees on those items whether they are made from plastic, paper or other materials.

Nonetheless, there are local organizations advocating for a shift away from plastic straw use in Salt Lake City.

The movement Strawless in SLC, started by the SLC Air Protectors, urges local businesses to move away from plastic straws, to reduce the amount of single-use plastic. So far, 95 restaurants in Salt Lake Valley have signed on to be part of the Strawless in SLC campaign.

The organization said they have only reached about 12 percent of restaurants in the Salt Lake Valley.

Initiatives at Westminster

The Westminster café, located in the Shaw Student Center, implemented the plastic straw ban in the Fall semester of 2018. Since then, only paper straws have been available on request.

"We were going through plastic straws like crazy," said Tony DiRaddo, general manager of Bon Appétit Westminster. "We were going through boxes of straws in a week."

Before replacing plastic straws, Bon Appétit was going through about 1,200 straws every two weeks, according to DiRaddo.

Christine Sheehan, a Westminster student-athlete, said she likes

that Bon Appétit is being conscious of the waste it's producing.

A lot of people right now are on that train that plastic straws are killing all the animals in the ocean," Sheehan said. "It's just more sustainability work, it's not hurting anyone to take out straws."

Master of Teaching student Steven Dama also said he supports Bon Appétit's decision to reduce plastic waste but wonders how efficient it is.

"People put a lot of pressure on consumers — the industry and politicians do too — because it is easy to make people feel guilty," Dama said. "For example, when I see on a shampoo bottle, 'turn off the shower while you shampoo your hair,' that is going to save so little water. I think that's useless because then you drive past an oil refinery and [think about] how much water they are using."

Tim Lindgren echoed Dama and said, in the grand scheme of things, plastic straws use is not the most pressing environmental issue.

"Considering the sheer conjunction of ecological harm factors, the plastic straw ban is, quite literally, a straw in a haystack of actions needed," Lindgren said. "It will certainly help. But we should not be tricked that such, or other small-scale solutions, will suffice."



RAFFAEL BREU

Asia Huynh eating at the McDonalds restaurant on 2310 E 2100 S on March 29. Big food and beverage companies like McDonalds and Starbucks are responding to the growing environmental concern over single-use plastics by replacing them with paper straws.



MARINA [INSERT LAST NAME HERE]

Last names continue to disappear at Westminster College on March 30. Students, staff and faculty are left in the dark as the campus-wide issue of a lack of last names causes confusion and panic among community members.

LAST NAMES HAVE DISAPPEARED FROM WESTMINSTER CAMPUS

LEWIS [INSERT LAST NAME HERE]
CONTRIBUTOR

Check the syllabus, check the roll call, even check your saved contacts and ask yourself: ‘where are the last names?’

At Westminster College, a mystery unfolded as students and teachers alike realized no one knew anyone’s last names and mass confusion followed.

This phenomenon started at the beginning of the semester with teachers introducing themselves with only their first name but it seems to be growing.

“I know I must have a last name, right?” said Katie [last name here], a Westminster student. “I must have my last name on my birth certificate, but besides that, I don’t even know when I used my last name last.”

For one junior student, the lack of last names means there is no possibility of contacting her professors.

“They’re all named John!” said Laura [insert last name here], an undeclared first-year student. “How am I supposed to know which teacher is which when they are all named John?”

Professors said the situation is just as confusing for them.

Greg [please find a last name] said he turned in that 50 point assignment for his history class, but with three Gregs in the class and only one assignment turned in, professor Julie said she didn’t know who to trust.

Professors said they are also too busy with their own set of problems, like showing up to the wrong classes and mixing up paychecks, to be worried about every student concern.

“You know, I once taught a science class for two whole weeks before a student finally got the courage to ask how this related to science,” said David [I just need one last name that’s it]. “I’m an art teacher. I don’t know a lick about science.”

Some people said, because of personal reasons, they almost feel the hole of missing last names.

“I used to hate my last name growing up,” said Frances [insert last name here], an academic advisor. “I don’t even remember what it was, but I remember hating it until I got married and then I didn’t change it. Now, I don’t even have justification for why I don’t have the same last name as my husband.”

Many people have come forward with their own versions of the story and possible solutions to the problem.

Jane [one. last. name.], an English professor, said when she first started working at Westminster there was a ritual of kissing the building on campus you are based in.

Looking back she said it felt similar to a wedding ceremony as if working at Westminster meant taking on the name of the college.

Matthew, a professor in the communication department, said he tried to hire a private investigator to find the missing names last year, but the investigator refused to acknowledge the existence of the very real problem.

A group of science professors on the third floor of Meldrum calling themselves the Last Resort, said they’ve hypothesized that the problem is caused by widespread amnesia produced by the water used in our coffee and food, or possibly the ghosts that haunt the college walking through people.

“It has to do with some variable exclusive to us here at Westminster or it would be happening everywhere and we would see it in the news,” said Lesa [do we really not have any last

names?], a neuroscience professor who formed the group. “Currently we are meeting weekly to discuss what it could be and to do experiments to test correlation. Due to our limited numbers though we haven’t gotten too far yet, but we expect a big breakthrough in a couple days. Or weeks. Definitely before months, that’s for sure.”

The suggested solutions from the group so far range from everyone going vegan to hiring someone to steal the last names back from the ghosts.

There are also rumors, popular amongst students, that the last names are stored in a safe somewhere on the campus only to be released upon graduation.

“It’s like we are working for some huge BuzzFeed organization,” said a local conspiracy theorist who wishes to remain anonymous [no last name for this either I guess]. “They are taking our names so that everything we do and makes is theirs. It’s not Ethan who wrote that amazing award-winning essay. No no no, it’s a Westminster student who wrote that amazing award-winning essay.”

REVIVAL OF DUNGEONS & DRAGONS PROVIDES WESTMINSTER COMMUNITY WITH UNIQUE STORYTELLING OPPORTUNITY

ALEX CATMULL
STAFF REPORTER

You're walking in the forest and you hear a strange noise, you pause listening for whatever it might be. The forest remains quiet and you begin walking again, suddenly a zombie appears in front of you, what is your action?

This is what it's like to play Dungeons and Dragons.

Dungeons and Dragons, or more commonly known as D&D, is a fantasy role-playing game, created in 1974 by Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson, where players tell a story together by creating worlds and going on adventures.

The game has had a resurgence in recent years, according to an article from SYFY Wire. The game had its highest number of sales since 1997 in 2017.

Over 8 million people in the U.S. played the game in 2017, and 9 million people have watched others play it through streaming sites, according to SYFY Wire.

English professor Chris LeCluyse said he thinks D&D has become popular because it offers people an escape through a medieval fantasy.

"It allows people to maybe even relive or re-enact some of their favorite fantasy fiction, so it's kinda almost like a form of fan fiction," said LeCluyse, who teaches the Roleplaying Games in Society May Term course. "So, you can see role-playing as a form of collaborative storytelling."

Fanfiction is stories written by fans about characters from pop culture.

LeCluyse said that online role-playing games may have opened a door to the resurgence in popularity for tabletop role-playing games.

"For the longest time tabletop games were this relatively small, niche community, and then things like World of Warcraft made online role-playing games extremely popular," LeCluyse said. "I wonder if there may now be a kind of backwards effect where people who started out with computerized role-playing games may want to shift into the in-person."

LeCluyse also said that role-playing games like D&D are more normalized now than they used to be.

"There's actually a lot of really famous people, like Stephen Colbert, who have talked about their early involvement with role-playing games, and how that's affected their creativity, so it's kinda gone more mainstream," LeCluyse said.

Senior history major and D&D player Abigail Angell said she thinks D&D has had a revival because of the popularity for "retro-chic."

"People are going back to pencil and paper, and vinyl records, because they're tired of all the digital stuff," Angell said. "They don't want to get rid of [digital technology], they just want to take a break from it, and D&D is a good way to do that."

Annette Donald, a senior gender studies and justice studies major,

said in an email she thinks D&D has had a resurrection due to the Netflix TV show "Stranger Things."

"That's how I heard of it," Donald said. "Beyond 'Stranger Things,' I think it's become so popular recently because it [is] more inclusive and accessible."

Dylan McKernan, a senior technical theatre and theatre performance major, said through email that she thinks D&D has become popular because nerd culture as a whole has become more accepted.

"D&D is a really well-rounded game that allows people to be vulnerable and explore and learn more about themselves in a safe setting, and has aspects that can appeal to anyone," McKernan said.

Chris LeCluyse said he likes the creative aspect of the game. He said he usually plays as dungeon master, the moderator or referee of the game, since they control the world people are playing in.

"I like being a dungeon master because it's a supreme act of creativity," LeCluyse said. "I'm world-building, I'm storytelling, I really like the collaborative aspect of that, to approach [my players] as co-creators in actually shaping the world."

LeCluyse said, on the rare occasions he participates as a player, he likes to use his "characters to explore different subjectivities."

"I tend to play characters who are not like me, and enjoy that experiment," LeCluyse said.

Angell said that she plays D&D because she is a storyteller.

"I love to tell stories and I actually used to write books, but I was frustrated that I didn't feel like my characters had enough agency," Angell said. "But I really found what I was looking for in D&D, because I don't know what's going to happen, because there's other people playing and [...] real people playing has the agency that I was missing."

McKernan said D&D is a great way to relax and spend time with friends.

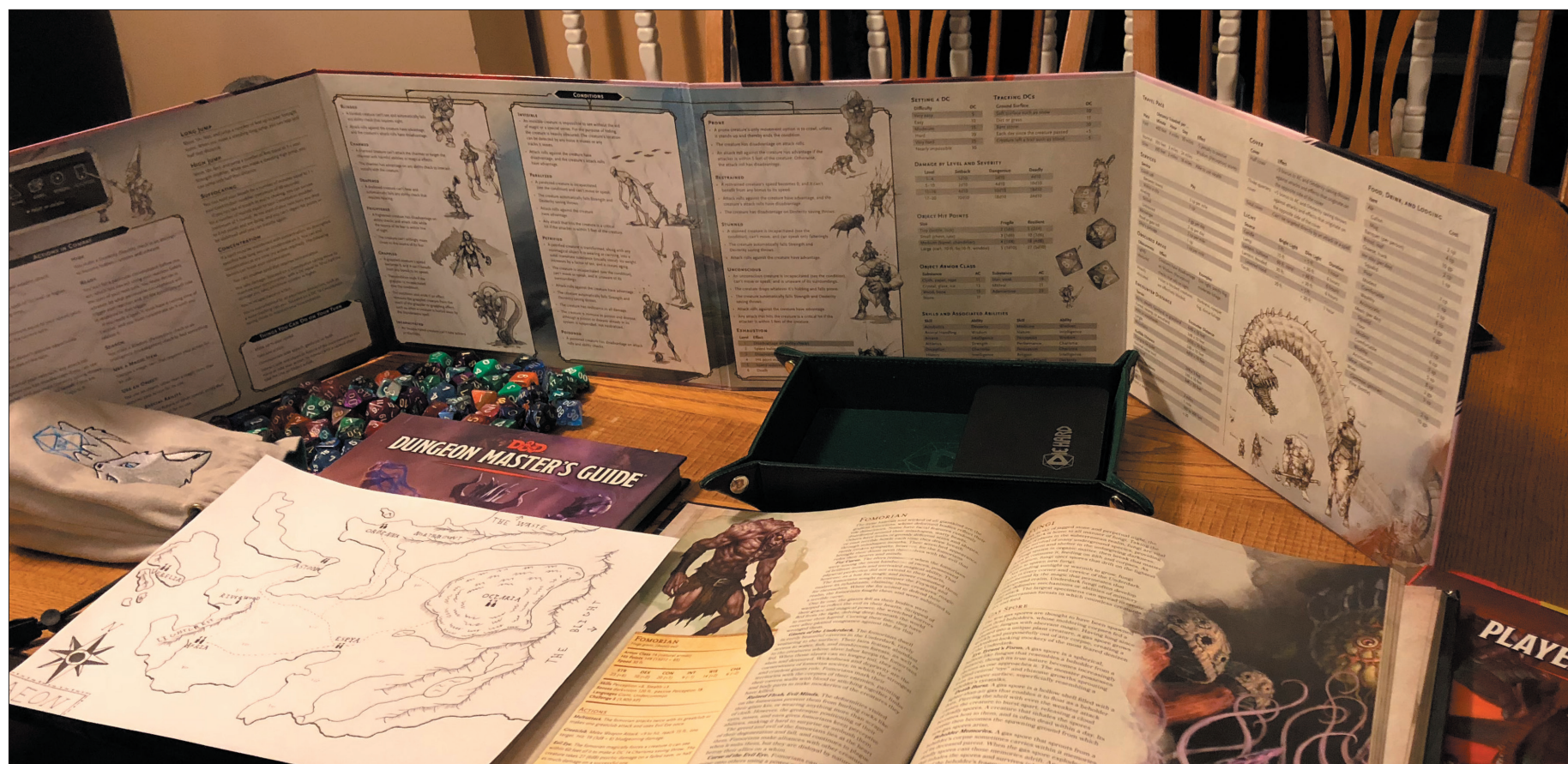
"I'm a super busy person and have multiple leadership roles, so I'm always working," McKernan said. "D&D gives me an escape and allows me to let all of that go and just have fun and explore."

Donald, like McKernan, said she enjoys playing with her friends and being creative.

"It allows me to get to know people in a different [way], to spend time with friends, to be actively creative, and to role-play from a different perspective," Donald said.

Donald also said role-playing allows people to "understand power dynamics, injustice, and privilege." Like when people from privileged groups play as someone who is marginalized.

"Overall, I think role-playing from a different perspective can not only benefit the player as a person but the party as a whole," Donald said.



MARK SANDERS

Mark Sanders' dungeon master set-up for the tabletop role-playing game, Dungeons and Dragons photographed on March 7. The game has recently had a resurgence in popularity and many in the Westminster College community said they play to spend time with friends and to experience 'collaborative storytelling'.



SEBASTIAN DURANTE

Students outside of Giovale Library walk past posters for the "We Are Westminster" campaign in the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion on April 1. The #knowyourbias posters are apart of Westminster College's initiative to promote respectful and thoughtful interaction between people within the college community.

WESTMINSTER COLLEGE WANTS TO KNOW, DO YOU #KNOWYOURBIAS?

EMILY VAN ALSTYNE
STAFF REPORTER

Ali Saleh is a senior international student who said his eye was caught by a table set up in Meldrum Science Center recently that said: "We Are Westminster."

Saleh said he was then approached by two people he'd never met before, who asked him two questions: 1) What do you know about unconscious bias? and 2) Why might understanding bias be good for promoting inclusion at Westminster?

After he wrote his answer on a small whiteboard, he said a photograph was taken of him and posted to Westminster College's Office for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion's Instagram page with the hashtag '#knowyourbias.'

He wrote on the whiteboard, "It is important to understand our biases in order to understand how and why we think the way we do. -A.S."

Saleh said he had never heard of the "We Are Westminster" campaign before coming across the table in Meldrum.

What is "We Are Westminster?"

"We Are Westminster" is a multi-platform, multi-phase and campus-wide campaign to unify students through bias-awareness, said

Arikka Von, director of strategic communication at Westminster.

Bias-awareness brings to light "unfair prejudice in favor of or against one thing, person or group compared with another," said Ebony Tyler, a lead communication and program coordinator for the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

Tyler also said people can hold biases "consciously or unconsciously."

Autumn Thatcher, Westminster's director of Publications and Managing, said the unity campaign is separated into three phases: awareness, know your bias and acceptance.

Thatcher said the goal of the campaign is more than just unity, however.

"That's what we would hope, to see our campus community doing is coming together and being better humans and engaging with one another in a respectful manner and taking the time to learn about the lived experiences of others," Thatcher said.

The campaign includes social media messaging, posters and tabling among other communication strategies, and the Marketing and Communication department won an Unsung Hero award at the MLK Unity Luncheon in January for their organization of the campaign.

Tyler said the campaign is import-

ant "because when you have these biases, you tend to limit who you are communicating with, who it is you are trying to get to know, and the way that you're going to speak to these people."

Community response

Tyler and co-communication and program coordinator Cathy Taylor said they were surprised with the ways the students answered the questions.

For example, some used written word while others used pictures and symbols. Some students responded with a comprehensive understanding of what unconscious bias is, while others needed an explanation.

However, explaining unconscious bias is tricky because of intangibility, Tyler said. She said she gave examples to students that needed help understanding such as a white woman clutching her purse tighter to her chest while she passes a black man on the street.

Although that reaction might not be one's intent, Tyler said, the intent doesn't matter because of the impact of the bias which further marginalizes minorities in society.

By the end of the interaction, the team said they usually received responses from students such as, 'Oh, I get it!' or 'Oh, I've definitely done that.'

As a participant, Ali Saleh said that his experience is slightly different as an international student in a college in the U.S. And, with a last name and appearance that is not stereotypically Norwegian, Saleh said people generally do not believe that he is from Norway.

"Whenever I introduce myself as Ali, people say, 'where are you from?' and I say, 'I am from Norway.' Then they say, 'Where are you really from?'" Saleh said. "Stuff like that is based on my name and my looks."

Saleh said it is important to move past bias in order to broaden one's point of view.

"In order to evolve past bias [...] we have to acknowledge that we are different and that I have a different perspective than someone else," Saleh said.

He said an example of an unconscious bias he has witnessed is within fellow science majors perceiving themselves as "better than" other majors.

"We need to look to different areas and think, 'Oh, you guys are not the same, we are different,'" Saleh said. "It's a different type of struggle. It's not just 'Oh, that is easy and this is hard.'"

The campaign coordinators said it's important for them that students feel comfortable exposing their biases.

"I think it creates such a comfortable space when we're able to talk to them about our own personal experiences with [our own biases], and then they're able to open up more," Taylor said.

They also said it is difficult to ask college students to reflect on their own prejudice.

"We went in with this knowing

that it might be hard to get people to open up about these things because it's uncomfortable," Taylor said. "So, if we're going to ask for their vulnerability, we have to be willing to offer up our vulnerability in return."

Tyler and Taylor said they were pleasantly surprised by how many students were aware of their own biases.

Additionally, the response from other universities following the

campaign on social media was unexpected like when Brigham Young University's marketing team reached out inquiring about who ran the campaign, Tyler said.

"People are watching, people are engaging, and we've reached a wider audience than I was anticipating," Tyler said.

Evidence of the campaign can be seen throughout campus in the form of black and white posters that show a statement of uncon-

scious bias on the black side and a statement meant to correct that bias on the white side.

"We weren't sure if people were going to be engaged with it, maybe they'll just walk by," Tyler said. "[But, when] I heard about [the BYU phone call], it really made me sit back and think how we impacted people."

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Standard content includes but is not limited to: photography, drawing/illustration, writings, stories and ideas.

If interested, please contact the editors via email:

forumeditor@westminstercollege.edu



ALEXANDRA DUNN

Photo of the "To Kill a Mockingbird" play poster with a cancellation sign across at Salt Lake Community College's the Grand Theatre on March 7. The show was canceled after recent cease and desist letters were sent out by Broadway because a new version of the play is being produced.

CANCELLATION OF 'TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD' AT GRAND THEATRE IS A LOST OPPORTUNITY SAID WESTMINSTER STUDENTS, FACULTY

ALEXANDRA DUNN
STAFF REPORTER

Westminster College students and adjunct faculty have been left without their roles in the Grand Theatre's "To Kill a Mockingbird" after recent cease and desist letters were sent out by Broadway.

The Grand Theatre at Salt Lake City Community College's South City Campus was caught up in a legal dispute between the production company Rudinplay, the estate of Harper Lee and Dramatic Publishing, according to an online statement by Seth Miller, the artistic director at the Grande.

"To Kill a Mockingbird" is a novel written by Harper Lee set in a small town in Alabama in the 1930s. The main plot focuses on an African-American man named Tom Robinson who is accused of rape by a white woman and put on trial.

The rights to the original stage version of the novel are owned by Dramatic Publishing, while Rudinplay holds the rights to a new re-

vised version that is currently running on Broadway.

Ultimately, staff at the Grand Theatre decided to cancel their show as they could not afford to fight the probable legal battle, according to the statement by Miller.

"We had three sold-out matinee shows for students," said Mark Fossen, the director of the Grand Theatre's production. "The Grand has 1,100 seats. Now all of those students, who may not have even read the book, won't get to hear this story."

Fossen also said the cancellation has had a substantial financial impact on the theatre. He said they used part of pre-ticket sales to help pay for costumes and stage sets, and without those sales, the theatre must take on the unanticipated financial burden.

Fossen said he will move onto his next show and that Scott Rudin, a theatre and film producer from Rudinplay, has sent out a special offer for theatres that had to cancel their productions.

"Companies may be able to use a version of the play associated

with the one on currently Broadway," Fossen said. "So there is still hope for that."

The Grand had already started rehearsals for their production of "To Kill a Mockingbird." Fossen said his biggest disappointment was that the actors would no longer have those roles, many of which were making their professional debut, and have missed out on such an opportunity.

"It was my first production," said Taylor Wallace, a Westminster student and actress in the show. "I had made it."

Wallace said the cancellation did not hit her at first.

"When I got home is when it became a reality that the show was done," Wallace said. "I cried. It meant a lot to me and it felt like a slap in the face."

Vivian Turman, another actress in the show, said a lot of hard work had been done by the cast members to crew members before the cancellation.

"It was shitty, to watch all our hard work just being taken away," Turman said. "From the cast, crew,

artists. It's upsetting that all the hard work and hours of rehearsals was just gone."

Wallace and Turman said they were both excited about the opportunity to play the roles they had landed in auditions.

Turman who was to play Mayella Yule, the woman who accused Tom Robinson, said this show was an incredible opportunity for personal learning and growth.

"This role was so important in the time that we live in," Turman said. "In a time of Black Lives Matter and #MeToo, I was excited to explore this role and bring light to a controversial topic."

Turman and Wallace said the cancellation will not stop them from continuing their work as actresses.

Turman said she is auditioning for other shows like the May Term show "Next to Normal" and is currently in the Westminster production of "House of Cards."

Wallace said she will continue "the usual grind of being an actress, and continue on auditioning."