

Spring forward

Time change is on March 8
prepare your clocks!



Top 10 NHL players

Learn about the Editor-in-Chief's favorite players.
Read more on page 8.



NORTHWESTERN NEWS

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Lady Rangers make 2026 GAC playoffs



By **OAKLEE FIELDER**
Sports Editor

The Lady Rangers made the Great American Conference and are seeded 2nd with their first opponent being East Central University on Thursday.

Northwestern sealed their ticket to the tournament after their game against the University of Arkansas at Monticello on Feb. 21. After a win against Oklahoma Baptist in the final home game of the season and a tight loss against Southern Nazarene, they were seeded second in the standings, above Arkansas Tech and below Harding University.

The Lady Rangers are set to face East Central University, seeded seventh, on Thursday in the first game of the playoffs. If they win, they play Saturday at 8 p.m. against the winner of the Arkansas Tech vs. Ouachita Baptist game.

The Lady Rangers have a 1-1 record against East Central. In their last meeting, they were defeated by the

Tigers 61-56. Earlier in the season, though, they topped the Tigers 74-56.

In the last five games, the Lady Rangers won four, only losing the last game against SNU by two, 50-48.

Kira Bass continues to be the top player on the Lady Rangers' roster. Bass has been the GAC Player of the Week three times and the Division II national player of the week once. Summya Adigun is also one of the top players with 246 points, 9.1 points per game on average and 107 defensive rebounds. Jaida Shipp is another player to watch out for with 231 points, .462 field goals made and .814 free throws made.

With a 14-8 GAC record, Northwestern sits in second place behind Harding with a 17-5 record.

The Lady Rangers easily are one of the top three teams in the tournament, and have a high chance to make the finals. They only have to play their best to win.

According to Sports Information, this is the highest seed that the Lady Rangers have had since joining the Great American Conference, and the third season in a row that Northwestern has made the GAC tournament. Last season, the Lady Rangers defeated Oklahoma Baptist in double overtime to win

their first GAC tournament game in program history.



3x GAC POTW and 1x National POTW Kira Bass makes a layup against Oklahoma Baptist. Bass scored 565 points over the 2025-26 season with an average of 20.2 a game.

Photo by Ingrid Maldonado

What to know

Great American Conference tournament

Where: Northside Arena, Fort Smith, Arkansas

Watch: gacsportsnetwork.com/watch.html

Listen: 105.7fm KRDR or alvaradio.com (scroll to the Listen Now button)

#2 NWOSU vs. #7 East Central University

When: 2:15 p.m., Thursday

If NWOSU wins:

Plays winner of #3 Arkansas Tech vs.

#6 Ouachita Baptist

When: 8 p.m., Saturday

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NEWS

Band, choir prepare spring shows

By **BRAXTYN TURNER**
Student Reporter

Northwestern's Fine Arts program has a busy week ahead while they prepare for the spring performances.

Starting strong, NWOSU Concert Band and Jazz Ensemble will have an evening full of live music. The event will take place at 7 p.m. Tuesday in Fellers Family Auditorium. Audiences can expect high energy and high quality performances from the students of the NWOSU University band and NWOSU Jazz Ensemble.

The performance will include music selections full of modern arrangements, traditional repertoire and classic big band

arrangements.

While the Ranger Band usually focuses on its football game performances in the fall, this time, the performance is more traditional. The spring performance is the first opportunity for the group to play a seated concert band program, making it an important event since only two are held each year.

"Ensemble music, for one, doesn't have a drum line," said Xan Perkins, director of bands. "This type of music has actual percussion instruments, things that you wouldn't see during a regular marching band performance."

The program will last a little over an hour with the Jazz Ensemble performing a 30-minute set and the Symphonic Con-

cert Band performing a 45-minute set. The performance will allow for the audiences to experience jazz and wind band traditions in a singular setting while highlighting the hard work of Northwestern's Fine Arts program.

Later in the week, the NWOSU Choir program will be having its spring concert. The concert will take place at 7 p.m. March 12 at the Presbyterian Church, at the corner of 7th and Church streets.

"Illuminations: Songs of Light and Hope" covers vocal works from contemporary styles, folk traditions and classical masterworks. Pieces of music by Bob Dylan, Mozart and Laufey are all included in the performance.

Rylee Ott, a junior biology major from

Forgan, explained the work that Northwestern's choir program has put into the production, even outside of their time in class.

"I'm involved in just about everything," Ott said. "We are doing a lot of work outside of class to get ready for this. It's been a bit of a struggle to work on multiple pieces at a time, but overall I think we are going to be totally prepared for the concert."

Choir members welcome audiences of any and all ages to attend the concert.

For more information on either of these upcoming NWOSU Fine Arts performances, contact the Fine Arts Department or check the University calendar at nwosu.edu. Both concerts are free and open to students, faculty, and the Alva community.

Women's History Month

Women often overlooked in history

By **CORKY HALL**
Senior Reporter

Women's History Month may arrive every March on the calendar, but Northwestern Oklahoma State University history professors say the stories it highlights have never really gone away; they have simply been overlooked.

According to Eric Schmaltz, professor of history, the academic focus on women's history expanded significantly in the 1960s and 1970s as part of a broader movement toward social history, which aimed to bring everyday people into the historical record.

"Women make up about half the population," Schmaltz said.

"It makes sense that they should have a place at the table."

While women were largely dismissed from formal political power for much of American history, faculty say their influence never stopped. Roger Hardaway, professor of history, noted that the lack of voting rights once limited how seriously women's voices were taken.

"If you don't have the right to vote, who cares what you think?" Hardaway said, referencing the long fight for suffrage that culminated in 1920.

Even so, women continued shaping the nation. Jana Pittman, instructor of history, pointed to Abigail Adams, who urged her husband to "remember the la-

ties" as the nation's founding documents were drafted. Though women would wait more than a century for the right to vote, their advocacy did not pause.

From suffrage leaders to civil rights activist Clara Luper, women steadily pushed for reform. Schmaltz highlighted Harriet Beecher Stowe, whose novel "Uncle Tom's Cabin" shaped public opinion on slavery, and Jeannette Rankin, the first woman elected to Congress in 1916.

Pittman added that women were central to westward expansion, public education and historic preservation, including saving Mount Vernon through a women-led organization.

"Women have always been

there," Pittman said. "They've been working alongside men to build this country, even if they weren't always written about."

That legacy is measurable today. Women now earn nearly 60 percent of bachelor's degrees nationwide, and their representation in Congress has grown steadily over the past several decades.

Still, faculty say awareness remains essential. Studying women's experiences in politics, reform movements and community life gives students a better understanding of the country's foundation.

As Pittman put it, women were never absent from history; they were simply waiting to be written in.

FACTS

Women's History Month

- 1978: Started in Santa Rosa, California, to coincide with International Women's Day, March 8.
- 1980: President Jimmy Carter issues first proclamation declaring National Women's History Week for the week of March 8.
- 1987: Congress officially designates March as Women's History Month.
- 2026: The National Women's History Alliance selects a theme for the month — Leading the Change: Women Shaping a Sustainable Future.

Other interesting facts

- First Women's Day celebrated in U.S. on Feb. 28, 1909.
- More than 70% of U.S. teachers are women.



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NEWS

WHAT'S UP

6

End of first 9 weeks

7

Castle players karaoke event in the student center ballroom 7 PM- 11 PM

9

- W or F issued on dropped course for 16 week courses
- SGA meeting in SGA senate room 6:30 PM- 7:30 PM

10

- Presidential lectureship series student center ballroom 11:30 AM- 1 PM
- Concert band and Jazz ensemble concert Fellers Family Auditorium 7 PM- 8:30 PM

11

OSSAA concert band contest

12

- Vocal instrumental audition day
- Choir spring concert at First Presbyterian Church 7 PM- 8:30 PM
- Chi Alpha night at Ranger Perk 7 PM- 9 PM



Everything that's meant to be is bound to stay. - Zach Bryan

Spring break is on it's way

Spring break will start on March 16 and end on March 20.

So everyone can take a breather and the break they need.

Spring break will allow everyone to take the time off that the feel like they need.

Enrollment for the fall semester will follow spring break on March 24.

The Administrative offices at all three campuses and the J.W. Martin Library will be closed Monday through Wednesday during spring break.

The J.R. Holder Wellness Center will maintain regular hours during it.

The Administrative offices and library will open back up on March 19 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Classes will start back up on

March 23.

Summer term enrollment is open. Interim classes are scheduled for May 11-29 need to verify schedules.

June an June and July classes will begin on June 1.

June only classes will end on June 25. The summer session will end on July 23.

Fall semester classes will begin on August 17.

If there are any questions students can reach out to the Registry offices of thier campuses.

Talk with your advisors if you have questions on what classes you need to be enrolled in for next semester or if you are intrested in taking any summer courses this year.

—Univeristy Relations

OKC Thunder

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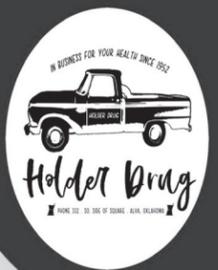
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IF YOU'VE BORROWED ITEMS SUCH AS ICE MACHINE, CRUTCHES, KNEE SCOOTERS, WHEELCHAIRS, NEBULIZERS, ETC.

IT'S TIME TO RETURN THEM. THANK YOU!



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OPINION

Middle East explodes

By ECE OZDEMIR
Opinion Editor

The chronological beginning
of the war was marked by the co-
ordinated airstrikes launched by
US and Israeli forces on strategic
points in Iranian territory on the
night of February 28.

These operations, codenamed
"Operation Lion's Roar" and
"Operation Epic Wrath," went
down in history as one of the
most extensive air offensives in
modern military history.

Official statements from
Washington and Tel Aviv cited
Iran's nuclear program reaching
an "irreversible point" and its
ballistic missile capabilities pos-
ing an "acute threat" to regional
security as the primary justifica-
tions for this intervention.

In the first hours of the opera-
tion, reports of the death of Iran's
Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali
Khamenei revealed that the con-
flict aimed not only at military
destruction but also at symbolic

and political devastation. With
the Iranian state declaring 40 days
of mourning, the tension in the re-
gion escalated into a full-fledged
war.

This war has transcended be-
ing merely a confrontation be-
tween three countries, encom-
passing a vast geographical area.
On one side is the US-Israel alli-
ance, conducting the operation
with its technological superiority
and intelligence network.

This front attempts to legiti-
mize its attacks with the rheto-
ric of "preventive defense" and
"bringing lasting peace" to the
region.

On the other side is Iran, the
center of the structure called the
"axis of resistance," which claims
its sovereign rights have been
violated. Tehran responds to the
attacks with ballistic missiles and
unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs)
from its own territory and through
its allies.

This defense line is actively
supported by Hezbollah, based in
Lebanon, and other local militia

groups in the region. However,
in a tragic twist of fate, countries
trying to maintain neutrality have
also been caught in the crossfire.

For example, Kuwait's mis-
taken downing of three American
warplanes by its defense systems
is a bitter example proving the
chaos on the ground and the high
risk of "friendly fire."

Looking at the current state
of the war, the humanitarian cost
has reached terrifying proportions
as of March 3, 2026. The Iranian
Red Crescent has reported over
550 casualties, and the attacks
have spread to more than 130 cit-
ies.

Civilian and military casual-
ties continue to be reported from
the Israeli and Lebanese fronts.
However, the impact of this war
is not limited to the places where
bombs fall. Iran's strategic move
to close the Strait of Hormuz has,
so to speak, dealt a heart attack to
the global economy.

The closure of this strait, the
lifeline of world oil traffic, has
led to a speculative explosion in

energy prices, causing the effects
of the war to be felt by everyone
from a stockbroker in New York
to a factory in Tokyo.

This is the most concrete ex-
ample of how a local conflict can
turn into a "global security and
economic crisis."

Today, predictions about how
long the war will last are contra-
dictory. While the US adminis-
tration anticipates the operation
will achieve its objectives with-
in a few weeks, the Iranian side
emphasizes that this struggle is a
long-term "war of existence."

Although Israeli defense agen-
cies claim that Iran's offensive
capabilities have decreased, the
increasing number of downed
missiles indicates that the reality
on the ground is far more com-
plex.

In conclusion, the 2026
Iran-Israel/US war is not merely
a military conflict; it is a major
test of international law, global
energy policies and human digni-
ty. How this conflict unfolds will
likely redefine regional power.

Scrolling into silence

By ECE OZDEMIR
Opinion Editor

While the worlds in our pock-
ets connect us to people thou-
sands of miles away in seconds,
could they be widening the dis-
tance between us and our class-
mates sitting right next to us?

Is social media truly connect-
ing university students, or is it
turning us into the most connect-
ed yet most isolated generation in
history?

On paper, social media is a
miracle. We can instantly be in-
formed about an event on cam-
pus, share lecture notes in groups,
and communicate with academics
on the other side of the world. Es-
pecially in the post-pandemic era,
digital platforms have become the
lifeblood of our education.

Reaching thousands of people
via Instagram with an announce-
ment from a student club is far
more effective than a physical
poster. From this perspective,
social media unites us more than
ever before in terms of "informat-
ion flow" and "organizational
connection."

However, when it comes to
"human connection," we encoun-
ter the dark side of this bright
coin. Can likes, comments and
shared "happiest moments" re-
place true friendship?

Liking a friend's story doesn't
carry the same depth as having
a coffee with them, looking into
their eyes, and saying "How are
you?". While we think we're con-
necting, we're actually just ex-
changing data.

University years are a period

**"We are more
connected than
ever – yet we
have never felt
more alone."**

when individuals are at their most
vulnerable, searching for their
own identity. Social media, how-
ever, builds a massive "showcase
culture" on top of this vulnerabil-
ity.

Every time we turn on our
screens, we see our "perfect"
peers who get the best grades,
wear the most stylish clothes, and
have fun in amazing places every
weekend.

This digital illusion inevitably
creates a feeling of inadequacy in
the student: "Everyone is so hap-
py and successful, am I the only
one struggling?"

This silent comparison traps
the student within themselves.
Young minds, comparing the real-
ity of their own lives to the glam-
orous displays of others, hesitate
to enter social environments or
are only present to document that
"perfect moment."

The result is an individual with
thousands of followers but no
true friend to have dinner with,
digitally connected but emotion-
ally isolated.

Another isolating effect of so-
cial media is its ruthless steal of
our attention and time. A univer-
sity student's most valuable asset
is their time; the time needed to
explore, read, and socialize. But

algorithms are designed to keep
us glued to our screens.

A notification while studying
in the library not only interrupts
our work but also kills a potential
connection we could have with
the person next to us.

Building a genuine connection
requires taking risks; it requires
greeting someone despite the fear
of rejection, being yourself with-
out filters.

While the false sense of secu-
rity offered by social media seems
to protect us from these risks, it
actually hinders our growth.

At a time when we're dis-
cussing mandatory mental health
days, "digital detox" and increas-
ing physical interaction spaces on
campus are equally vital.

In conclusion, social media
is like a knife; either a tool that
makes our lives easier or a weap-
on that wounds us from within.
As university students, we must
question the great lie that screens
unite us.

True connection is not estab-
lished by a notification sound, but
by hearing the tremor in some-
one's voice, by reading some-
one's joy not through a screen,
but in the sparkle in their eyes.

If we do not learn to control
the screen, we may lose the very
human connections that give our
lives meaning. Social media itself
is not the enemy; our uncritical
dependence on it is.

The responsibility lies with us
to set boundaries to look up from
our phones and to choose pres-
ence over performance.

Only then can technology
serve our lives without silently
replacing them.

Small room, big lessons

By ECE OZDEMIR
Opinion Editor

When you step into university,
you're given a key; a key that
opens not just a door, but the
most intimate, challenging, and
perhaps most instructive social
experiment of your life: room-
mate. Trying to fit two beds, two
desks, and two different lives
into a space of just a few square
meters seems like an impossible
equation on paper. But are those
endless alarms ringing at dawn,
the music blaring from head-
phones at midnight, and those
imaginary boundaries drawn in
the middle of the room really
worth the effort? The luxury of
being able to close your door and
isolate yourself from the world
in your own home is replaced
here by a "shared silence." You
witness your friend's worst
morning, the night they cried
from exam stress, or that tense
phone call with their family.
While this might seem daunting
at first, it actually teaches you
tremendous empathy. You learn
to respect someone else's space,
to ask permission to turn off the
light, or to quietly stand by them
if they're in a bad mood that
day. The biggest advantage of
dorm life is that it's an antidote
to that "never-ending feeling of
loneliness." At the end of a day
when you feel lost in the campus
crowds, hearing a "hello" when
you enter your room makes you
feel at home. Staying up all night
together during the toughest
exam weeks brings each other.

OPINION

Burnout isn't success

By ECE OZDEMIR
Opinion Editor

From the outside, university life might seem like a “golden age,” adorned with study hours spent in library corners, social clubs and graduation dreams. However, behind this rosy picture lies the silent but heavy reality we've repeatedly highlighted in Ranger Pulse: the burnout.

Today's university student is trapped between the pressure of academic achievement, financial anxieties, uncertainty about the future and the endless comparisons brought about by the digital world.

It's time to ask: In a system where we can obtain medical reports for physical illnesses, why are the cries of our souls still not considered a “valid excuse”? Implementing mandatory mental health days at universities is no longer a matter of choice, but a public health necessity.

When a student has the flu or sprains their ankle, it's perfectly natural for them to email their

professor to say they'll miss class. Nobody expects them to be in the lab in that state.

But what about a student who can't even find the strength to wake up, who's struggling with panic attacks or who's trying to breathe under the heavy fog of depression? In our system, mental pain isn't considered as “tangible” as physical pain.

The pressure on students to “be perfect” is so great that we see taking a break as a failure, a weakness. Yet mandatory mental health days send a crucial message to students:

“You are not just a student number or a GPA; you are a human being, and your mental well-being is more important to us than anything else.”

Many of us grow up believing the old-fashioned academic myth that more work leads to more success. However, scientific facts say the opposite. A brain working under chronic stress loses its ability to process information and solve problems.

Mandatory mental health days are actually a mechanism that in-

“Your mental health is everything – prioritize it.”

Mel Robbins

creases, not decreases, academic productivity. Granting students the “right to stop” during the semester without having to explain themselves prevents major breakdowns and severe burnout.

While you can stop even a machine to cool down, expecting constant high performance from a young person's mind is an expectation that defies logic.

Universities should not only be places where knowledge is imparted, but also spaces where individuals can build themselves in a safe environment. This is at the heart of the “safe space” debate.

If a student is forced to hide their mental health crisis, viewing it as a “shame” or “laziness,” then we cannot speak of true academic freedom on that campus.

Mandatory mental health days are the most powerful tool

to break this stigma. When the school administration recognizes this right, those old, dusty and judgmental curtains surrounding mental health are lifted.

This repairs the bond of trust between the student and the institution; it makes the student feel “seen” and “understood.” Many of our friends work night shifts to pay for school expenses while also trying to get to their 8 AM classes.

Expecting someone to remain “normal” within this cycle is unrealistic. Mandatory mental health days are a vital breathing space, especially for students living under this double pressure.

These days provide that crucial time not just for “sleeping,” but perhaps for calling a family member, taking a walk in the park or seeking professional help.

Some critics argue that such days “could be abused” or prevent students from being prepared for the real world. But that's precisely the real world.

Modern businesses are now integrating wellness days into corporate culture. If universities

are preparing students for the future, they should teach them not just calculus or history but also how to set boundaries and practice self-care.

Fear of abuse is not a valid reason to turn a deaf ear to the cries for help from thousands of students.

Controlled, limited numbers of wellness days, aligned with the academic calendar, promote health, not abuse.

In conclusion, universities are not merely cold corridors where diplomas are handed out; they are living organisms where young minds face their first serious tests in life and construct their identities. For this organism to function healthily, it is essential that each individual within it remains strong not only physically but also mentally.

The demand for mandatory mental health days is not an “escape route” aimed at undermining academic discipline; on the contrary, it is a structural reform aimed at making education more sustainable, humane, and productive.

Redefining modern athletics

By ECE OZDEMIR
Opinion Editor

The weight of tradition is always felt on university campuses. The lights of the stadiums, the chants of the fans and the collective spirit created by the physical struggle on the field have formed the unshakable foundation of the definition of “sport” for decades. But with the speed of the digital revolution, this traditional definition is beginning to feel restrictive.

Today, a new generation is emerging that is as disciplined, strategic and competitive as a running athlete with a ball in hand: e-sports players. So, does sitting in front of a screen diminish the “sporting” value of that struggle?

Or is it time to broaden the definition of sport from physical strength to include mental and technical skill?

The biggest argument against esports is the lack of physical exertion based on sweat. However, modern sports science

has long since stopped measuring “athletics” solely by muscle mass. A top-level esports player possesses hand-eye coordination capable of making over 400 moves per minute (APM) and neurological speed that allows for decision-making in a fraction of a second.

Just as chess, despite being one of the least physically demanding disciplines, is considered a “sport,” an esports player who masters complex game mechanics exhibits the same mental resilience.

The immense pressure a basketball player feels at the free throw line is no different from the pressure an esports player feels in a tournament final, making their final move in front of millions of viewers.

When it comes to discipline, strategy and intense training programs, esports players are no less demanding than traditional athletes. These young people, who train 8-10 hours a day, perfect team communication and analyze their opponents, fully embody the “competitive spirit” at the heart of the sport.

For university administrations, granting esports “varsity” (school team) status is not just about following a trend, but about democratizing campus culture.

Traditional sports, by their very nature, reward individuals with specific physical attributes. Esports, however, breaks down these barriers. In this field, where gender, height, weight, or physical disabilities are not obstacles, it perfectly aligns with universities' mission of “inclusion.”

While some argue that esports is “just a game,” the global economy and audience it generates are too large to ignore.

Today, esports tournaments attract more viewers than many traditional sports worldwide. For universities, establishing a successful esports team means securing new sponsorships, alumni donations, and attracting tech-savvy young people to the school.

The success of a digital team bearing the school's name extends the university brand to thousands of potential students in the digital world. This is not just a sporting

achievement, but also a strategic communication success.

In conclusion, the definition of sport has changed throughout history and will continue to change. From the ancient Greek Olympics to today's technological arenas, the essence of sport has remained the same: the testing of human will, skill and determination.

Esports is the 21st-century form of this ancient struggle. Our universities need to embrace the changing world instead of confining the concept of “sport” to narrow frameworks.

Recognizing esports players as “varsity” athletes is not only a recognition of their merit, but also a way to prepare our universities for the world of the future.

We have entered an era where the sweat and mental effort behind the screen deserve as much respect as the sweat on the field. Now is the time to open those doors wide, allowing every young person who takes control to proudly represent their university's name.

Why is your degree more than a resume?

By ECE OZDEMIR
Opinion Editor

From the first time we sit down with an academic advisor, the question hangs in the air like a heavy fog: “What are you going to do with that?” It is the ultimate litmus test for a college major. If you can't draw a straight, undeniable line from your degree to a specific entry-level salary, the choice is often treated as a luxury or, worse, a mistake.

In this climate, we have begun to treat

the university experience as a high-stakes transaction. We treat our four years here like a vending machine: we insert tuition, press the button for a specific career path, and expect a job to roll out at the bottom. We pick our electives based on LinkedIn optimization, join clubs for the “leadership” bullet point, and view our peers not as collaborators, but as competitors for a shrinking pool of internships.

The problem with this “career-ready” mindset is that it assumes the world will stay still long enough for us to catch up to it. We are currently being trained for a

job market that is shifting beneath our feet. With the rapid integration of artificial intelligence and the total transformation of traditional industries, the “hard skills” we learn in 200-level courses may very well be obsolete by the time our graduation photos are framed. If we only learn how to perform specific, repeatable tasks, we aren't just graduating—we are setting ourselves up for obsolescence.

The real danger of the career-ready trap is that it encourages us to bypass the “unproductive” parts of an education. We skip the philosophy class because it won't help

us with a spreadsheet. We ignore the history seminar because it doesn't offer a certification. But these “unproductive” spaces are exactly where the most vital skills are forged. When we narrow our focus to purely vocational outcomes, we lose the “liberal arts” spirit that makes higher education transformative. We become efficient workers, but perhaps less effective citizens. We learn how to answer questions, but we lose the habit of asking them. The pressure to be “marketable” is real, and it's valid—most of us are graduating with debt and a genuine need for a paycheck.

Meet the Ranger Women's Basketball Dream Team

Kira Bass: Center

By SHEALYN PRATT
Student Reporter

Kira Bass' record setting season and national honors highlight her growth as a confident leader and shapes the Lady Rangers' identity, on and off the court.

Bass (6-foot-1, No. 21) is the Lady Rangers' center guard. She is a senior from Killeen, Texas, and has been playing basketball for 10 years.

This semester, Bass has been recognized three times as the Great American Conference's Player of the Week and was recently named as WBCA/D2CIDA National Player of the Week for Week 14.

After playing since the seventh grade, Bass said she never predicted her college career would reach this level and credits Ranger coach Tasha Diesselhorst.

"I didn't think that my skills would have elevated this much," Bass said. "I give props to Coach D because she has honestly turned me into the player that I am. I feel like if I wasn't here, I wouldn't be as good as I am."

What makes this team different from others she has played on? Bass said the respect and love runs deep.

"It is very different because of how much we respect and love each other on and off the court," she said. "It shows when we play. This team is family-oriented. Our root and identity is that we are family-oriented."

Bass said there is no "secret" to the team's success.

"We put in a lot of work," she said. "I have put in a lot of hard work myself, and I have seen that that has paid off. It is just dedication to the sport and trusting in each other to play hard. We have a lot of hard workers, people who do little things on the court that help us in general and in the grand scheme of things. Remembering our identity, like I said, is what helps us play Lady Ranger Basketball."

Bass said the Lady Rangers are focused on the details as they prepare for the Great American Conference this weekend.

"We are putting in a lot of hard work," she said. "Just doing all that we can, we are doing all of the little things that are going to help us in the end."

Personally for Bass, making it to the Great American Conference has come with adversity.



Kira Bass, No. 21, shows the skills Feb. 26 that earned her GAC Player of the Week three times, and a national Player of the Week once. She led the team with 565 points this season.

"I've definitely experienced some adversity this year from last year," Bass said. "The difference is how I've been able to push through. With the losing streak, we were struggling a little bit to find who we are on the court again. I feel like the journey has been up and down, but it has been good."

Northwestern's Lady Rangers clinched their spot in the GAC Tournament last week after Bass averaged 24.7 points, 12 rebounds and 2.3 assists. She season high was 32 points in a 75-68 win against Southern Arkansas on Feb. 19.

Bass said she thinks back to the home game against Southern Nazarene University

as her best when it comes the mindset. "I was just showcasing my skills," Bass said. "It was just a really good game for me overall."

She led that Dec. 18 win 67-55 with 28 points and 11 rebounds.

Bass said this season has changed her as a player.

"I feel like this season has definitely given me a bigger role than last year," she said. "I feel like I have a bigger role as a leader and just as a scorer and an overall person on the court. Like, I would say I'm very important, and it has changed me to have more confidence and do the best that I can — not for just me but for my team."

Photos by Ingrid Maldonado

See more photos and stories, Page 12

Summya Adigun: Guard

By KENNEDY MCGEE
Student Reporter

Junior guard Summya Adigun (5-foot-9, No. 12) of Hugoton, Kansas, shines this season along with her team as they begin the Great American Conference Tournament Thursday.

A Hugoton High School graduate, Adigun has played basketball since she was 5 years old. She credits the sport for shaping who she is, both on and off the court.

One of her favorite memories came when her team advanced to the second round of the GAC playoffs after two overtimes. This season, she said, has been the best she could ask for — full of growth, fun and self-discovery.

Her career-best performance came at home against South-eastern, where she knocked down six three-pointers and finished with 27 points.

"Basketball has always been a huge part of my life, and growing up I fell in love with the moments and opportunities this sport has given me," she said.



Summya Adigun, No. 12, prepares to pass during the OBU game on Feb. 26. She ended the regular season with 246 points.

Great American Conference tournament

#2 NWOSU vs. #7 East Central University

- 2:15 p.m., Thursday
- Northside Arena, Fort Smith, Arkansas
- Watch: gacsportsnetwork.com/watch.html
- Listen: 105.7fm KRDR or alvaradio.com (scroll to the Listen Now button)



Jaida Shipp, No. 34, starting center for the Lady Rangers, goes up for a rebound during the 59-38 win over OBU on Feb. 28. She scored 231 points this season, making her the third highest scorer for the Rangers.

Jaida Shipp: Center

By ALLISON RUWALDT
Student Reporter

Jaida Shipp (6-foot-2 center, No. 34) is a senior who is majoring in psychology at NWOSU and is the starting center on the Lady Rangers basketball team.

When Shipp first started playing basketball, she was a sophomore who had just moved to a new school and wanted to make friends. She hated it at first but decided to stick with it, and eventually she grew to love the sport.

Shipp has connected well with her team at NWOSU, especially this season. She spoke about how her teammates push each other, and all try their best to help improve the team.

The team worked hard in practice to fix small things, prepare for what other teams were going to do and mentally prepared to do their best. Shipp said she feels everyone worked hard to step up and do more little things to grow.

"I would say we probably work the hardest," Shipp said. "We've had girls transfer over from other schools in our conference, and they have said our practices are probably one of the hardest practices they've done, from their former teams to now."

Shipp talked about how she has become more reliable despite the challenges she has had with senioritis. With it being so close to her being done with school, she opened up about the struggle she has staying focused, yet how it has helped her learn about priorities.

She talked about how she felt her best game was at Monticello in January or the first games of the season at Winona. At Monticello, she felt like she let loose and became a different person, but at Winona, she got to help her teammate, and it helped the team grow stronger.

"I really felt like I had to step up and help my team get the W and help us by doing my job," Shipp said.

Madison Denison: Forward

By EMILY WRIGHT
Student Reporter

The Lady Rangers basketball team is attending the Great American Conference Basketball Tournament this week.

Madison Denison (5-foot-11 forward, No. 15) is one of the players who made that opportunity possible.

Denison is an agriculture major from Minneola, Kansas. She has been playing basketball since she was in the third grade and played for Western Kansas Elite in high school.

She began her time at Northwestern last fall. Denison had originally wanted to attend NWOSU immediately after graduating high school, but was encouraged by Coach Tasha Diesselhorst to wait for a spot on the team to open. After attending a junior college, NWOSU was able to offer Denison a place on the basketball team as well as her desired major, something she said other colleges could not do for her.

Northwestern was also able to offer an environment that felt familiar for Denison.

"Talking to Coach Diesselhorst and some of the other

girls, it just felt like family here," she said. "Just the camaraderie between everybody sounded really nice."

She also went on to talk about the community's support of the basketball team. Denison said the team members have been able to achieve success by playing their roles on the team. Denison said the team's coach discusses the importance of understanding each person's role on the team and this has framed how the team plays.

"We know what it takes to score and what it takes to get a stop on defense," she said, "and I think that's really helped

us, you know, get to where we have this season. We're able to play together."

The team's friendship has helped them in achieving all that they have this season, she said. Denison said the women's team members enjoy being around one other being their own biggest fans, which could be a factor in the team's success.

"I know I've come from teams where that team camaraderie isn't there, and we weren't as successful," she said, "and I think that's what's also really helped us is we just play for each other."



Forward Madison Denison, No. 15, tries a shot over an OBU player Feb. 26 during the last home game. NWOSU won the game, 59-38. She scored 96 points this season.

FEATURE

Being a favorite or being a star?

By **JESSICA SCHIEBER**
Editor-in-Chief

Today's article is going to be a little different. I'm going to talk about my top 10 favorite hockey players—it was suggested to do the most attractive, but I felt that was a bit too much, so I tamed it down to my favorites.

My number ten favorite player is probably Tyler Toffoli who plays for the San Jose Sharks. He used to be a member of the New Jersey Devil but was unfortunately traded just before my first hockey game. I am pretty sure I cried when I found out.

Toffoli gives cool uncle vibes to me, and I can't explain why, but I can explain why he is one of my favorites.

Toffoli is on a team with a bunch of younger players, like Macklin Celebrini and Will Smith, both players are amazing at the game of hockey. They are also much younger than Toffoli so when the three interact it's very entertaining to me.

There was a game where Toffoli, Celebrini, and Smith all scored a goal and after the game Celebrini and Smith talked Toffoli into having a sleep over at the hotel.

Toffoli was not so happy about this arrangement, and it led to a lot of conversations online about it. Toffoli, Celebrini and Smith have all gotten on a podcast together and talked about it. That moment made me like Toffoli more and won him a spot as number 10.

My number nine is Sidney Crosby. Crosby is a legendary player and has every right on anyone's top player list. Crosby is nicknamed "Sid the kid" although

he is now 38.

The reason I like Crosby so much isn't because of his on-ice efforts. Crosby tried to meet up with the OSU Cowboys Hockey Club earlier in the season.

He supported the club although they aren't even a registered team for OSU. This made me respect Crosby, and it boosted him up to be a part of this list.

Number eight on this list is Miko Rantanen.

Rantanen plays for the Dallas Stars, and I am honestly shocked I am putting him on this list. Rantanen is nicknamed "Moose."

I really don't have much of a reason to have Rantanen on my list, but he is here. My family and I have a small vocal stim on his name.

We'll be walking around then house going "Oh Miko Rantanen!" and it'll go around all of the house.

Number seven on the list is Mason Marchment. Marchment is currently playing for the Columbus Blue Jackets and although I am not a fan of the team, I will support him.

Marchment is a fighter, and when he played for the Stars me and my sister really started to enjoy watching him. He's this high on the list because I just like to watch player's fight.

Number six is Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen, and he is literally only on this list for his name.

There was a clip that went around of him pronouncing his name, and I highly suggest going and finding it because it is golden. Luukkonen is just a fun name to pronounce and yes; it's going to be stuck in my head as I write the rest of this article.

Now for the golden five, these are my top five players and if I

ever had a chance to meet them in person I think I would cry.

Number five is the oldest Hughes brother, all of them made the top five, and he is on this list because I just enjoy his vibe.

Quinn plays for Minnesota Wild, which he was traded to this season. When he was traded he had to fly from New Jersey, which the Canucks were set to play a few days later, and he left all his equipment there and honestly what a mood.

It is also joked that he sees ghosts while he plays, just look at photos, and you'll see why. In an interview at the Olympics, he made a comment about these jokes.

Number four on my list is Jack Hughes. Jack is an absolute power horse, in my opinion. He is the reason that team USA won gold. He is the alternate captain for the New Jersey Devils and one of the lead scorers for the team.

Jack went through a shoulder surgery in the summer and then this season he had a freak accident at a team dinner. The way he is playing right now you would never be able to tell that.

Jack is the reason I got into the sport in the first place, so he is naturally going to be on the high end of my list.

Number three, you would think is the third and youngest Hughes brother but you would be wrong. Number three is the captain of the Devils, Nico Hischier.

Hischier is a player from Switzerland, a place I would love to visit. Hischier is probably the second player I ever started to like. He is very relaxed and I have loved watching him play.

When I first went to the Stars vs Devils game, I really wanted to take some pictures of him. He has

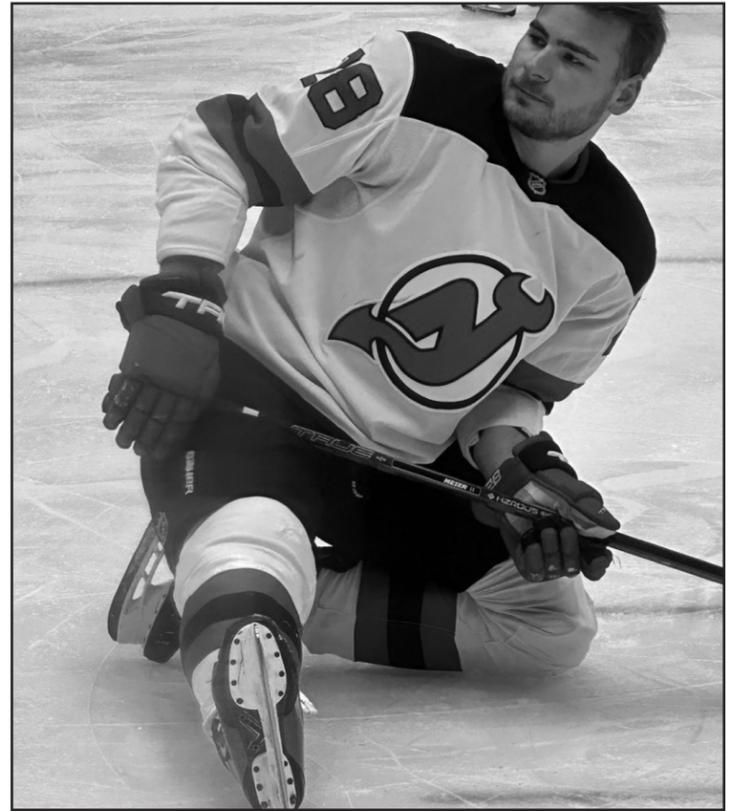


Photo by Jessica Schieber

Timo Meier, Jessica's number one player, warming up on March 4, 2025 to play against the Dallas Stars. He scored a goal in that game.

been a Devil his entire career and I have loved watching him.

Number two is Luke Hughes, who is the last Hughes brother. I have watched him play his entire career and I honestly love the goofy guy.

He is so unserious and I love it. This man slips like no other, except maybe his brothers. He and his brothers were the cover of NHL 25 and they recorded a video about it. In that video Luke definitely made me laugh more than once.

And at number one, my all time favorite.

A man who I spent 24 hours bedazzling his jersey before a

hockey game. This man is Timo Meier.

Timo currently plays for the New Jersey Devils and I can't explain why he is. He is a current leading scorer and although he hasn't been as impressive as other fans have expected I love watching him play.

Timo is a man who doesn't care about knocking people into boards or using his mass to cause problems for others.

I love watching Timo get at it and stand up for not only himself, but the team.

That was my top ten list and I could name five others who I could add into it.

Sidenote:

Mental health deserves to be talked about

By **JESSICA SCHIEBER**
Editor-in-Chief

Why is it so hard to make time for friends in college?

We are so focused on grades, assignments and classes that any extra time we may have we use to get work done.

It is so hard to set aside time and go out and have dinner with a friend, or to meet up for a conversation.

Most times I'm stuck having to cram in time, or I don't talk to a friend in person for weeks.

Having friendships and in person conversations with someone is very important so when it doesn't happen it can bring a person's mental health down a lot.

People always say they don't have time or they are too busy to meet up, but then they'll start falling behind in their classes because they are getting depressed.

As students we have responsibility to get our stuff done, but as human beings

we have a responsibility to make sure our mental health is in check. Taking care of mental health looks different for everyone. This could be getting coffee with a friend, going to Walmart with your friends, taking a walk outside or studying together.

You must take care of your mental health if you want to take care of your actual health. Life is too much to carry alone, you have to depend on each other to get through it.

It gets even harder when your friends aren't in college with you, how are you supposed to take care of your mental health when you aren't anywhere near your friends?

This, for me, looks like joining TikTok lives with my friends.

It's an easy way for all of us to talk to one another without having to give away any more private social media accounts. My friends Lisa and April are from Michigan, my friend Jack is from Australia, and I have tons of others from all around

the world.

We also talk to each other through Snapchat group chats which Lisa is obsessed with making.

I am currently a part of five different group chats with these people.

They are called Tea Time, Minecrafter, Another one, Another one pt. 2 and Another one pt. 3.

These chats can annoy me at times, but they also bring me a lot of joy through my day. I would be struggling a lot more if I wasn't able to do these things. I really do appreciate these people a lot, and I can only hope they feel the same about me.

I also have my friends who are in college with me and I find it harder to make time for them than my online friends, which seems backwards to be.

It'll be weeks before I'm able to talk to them or meet them for something, but I can talk to my online friends daily. I cannot believe how I struggle more to reach out to those closer to me.

I have struggled a lot with thinking

that my friends here feel like I am ignoring them when in reality I just have a lot of work to get done.

With my online friends we can just call and chat and do our own things, but with my friends here I find it hard to just call and be with each other and work.

I try to meet with my friends at least once a month to unwind and keep each other updated on our lives.

Mental health means a lot to this generation, and yet we are still ignoring the talk about it when it is most important.

We struggle, that's a part of life, our mental health has its highs and lows. We can't just ignore it anymore.

This is a part of who we are and pretending like we aren't bothered by not having human interaction.

As humans, we need interaction and we are the only ones who can make ourselves get that interaction. When we don't get that interaction everything falls apart.

So take this as a reminder to go and talk to your friends, keep them in mind.

ENTERTAINMENT

'Send Help' 2026 user reviews

IMDb: 7.2/10

Rotten Tomatoes: 93%

Metacritic: 75

"Absolutely disgusting-in the best way. Hard to watch at times, genuinely nasty, but clearly meant to push you there. I laughed, I cringed, and there were moments I literally couldn't look at the screen. A very effective dark comedy/horror with actors fully committing, especially Rachel McAdams, who is shockingly good and wildly talented in a role I never imagined her in. Uncomfortable, fun, and memorable."

-MorfenZ (IMDb).

"I liked it. This is Sam Raimi in his favorite mode - constantly playing on the edge (but not beyond it). Pushing humor, horror, genre, and realism to the point where it feels like it's about to collapse, but never actually crossing the line. It's scary, but not trashy. Funny, but not ridiculous. Cartoonish, yet still weirdly convincing. That dark humor works because Raimi knows exactly when to stop. He lets things feel "too much" for a second, then pulls back before it turns into parody. The result is a movie that feels wild and controlled at the same time. Messy in tone, but confident in execution. Not perfect, but very much alive."

"Send Help"

- dark comedy/horror film
- directed by Sam Raimi
- Sam Raimi's first in this genre since 2009



Quick facts of the movie "Send Help" it is being shown in Woodward at Lakeside Cinema for any who want to watch.

-Jelisei (IMDb).

"Even more than the two excellent leads, it's really director Sam Raimi who's obviously having a great time within his distinctive element with this highly intense 2026 survival thriller. With characteristic moments of his filmmaking brio, Raimi manages to bounce fluidly between campy and compelling in this adroit hybrid of "Misery" and "Castaway"

written perceptively by Damian Shannon and Mark Swift.

The plot focuses on Linda Liddle, a mousy numbers cruncher in line for a VP promotion until the company's founder dies unexpectedly and Bradley Preston, his despicably entitled son, becomes CEO. Immediately dismissive of Linda's lack of corporate pol-

ish, Bradley begrudgingly allows her to come on a business trip to Bangkok with his cadre of ass-licking 'yes' men. In typical Raimi fashion, the plane goes down dramatically during a storm, and Bradley and Linda manage to survive the crash on a deserted tropical island. While this set-up felt derivative and somewhat excessive, what ensues is a battle of wits and wills amid a sea of suspicious motives and insidious behavior. How Raimi presents this struggle is through an arresting mix of black comedy, visceral thrills, and discriminate spurts of shocking violence. Rachel McAdams, usually underappreciated as a first-rank screen actor, performs her full character arc with striking commitment and welcome gusto, in particular, when she conveys Linda's more insidious moments.

Dylan O'Brien has less latitude to play with as Bradley, but he successfully captures the venal elements of his character with exacting and unrelenting fury. The rest of the cast amounts to bit parts including an underutilized Dennis Haysbert. Raimi never lets the pacing flag in this rollercoaster of a popcorn movie."

-EUyeshima (IMDb).

"Horror legend Sam Raimi is

at the helm of this madcap survival thriller, in which an office dog's body and her nasty new boss get stranded on a deserted island following a plane crash.

Rachel McAdams plays the lonely and hardworking Linda, with Dylan O'Brien her nepo-baby nemesis, who refuses to give Linda the promotion promised to her by his father. However, once the pair wash up on the island the hyper-capable Linda seizes charge, with the spoilt, incompetent Bradley incensed at the role reversal.

The film plays out like a gender-swapped version of *Sweet Away* (both the 1974 Italian version and its disastrous 2002 remake), with some resemblance to Ruben Ostlund's 2022 *Triangle of Sadness*.

It's not quite as satirically successful as the latter and McAdams as a frump is frankly absurd, but things get deliciously dark and there's a manic energy that's recognizably Raimi. The director gets great value from his leads, with McAdams and O'Brien absolutely launching themselves into their performances as they plumb the depths of human derangement."

-Emma Simmonds (RadioTimes).

"Words do not express thoughts very well. They always become a little different immediately after they are expressed, a little distorted, a little foolish."

-Hermann Hesse

CELEBRITY NEWS

• American actor and filmmaker Shia LaBeouf was arrested in New Orleans for a second time on February 17. Known for roles such as Sam Witwicky in the live-action "Transformers", Cody Maverick in "Surf's Up" and Stanley Yelnats in "Holes". According to sources, Shia was charged with battery after he supposedly punched several people outside a bar when he was refused entry.

• Speaking of famous actors, Catherine O'Hara posthumously wins award for best female actor at the Actor Awards for her role in "The Studio" as Patty Leigh. Before her death at the age of 71. Catherine was also known

for her roles as Delia Deetz in "Beetlejuice", Kate McCallister in "Home Alone" and Moira Rose "Schitt's Creek". Since she was unable to give a speech, Catherine's co-star, Seth Rogan, accepted the award in her stead.

• American rapper Sean "Diddy" Combs' release date has been moved up. Known for his songs such as "Notorious B.I.G." and "I Need A Girl", Combs was sentenced October 3, 2025 to four years and two months in prison. This ruling made many people furious, as they felt as though it was too light considering all the sex crimes he has been accused of (sex trafficking, pedophilia, racketeering, etc). Recently, it

was announced that his release date has been move down from June 2028, to April of that year. It is predicted that this decision will stir even more uproar from those calling for the disgraced singer to face justice.

• President Donald Trump has been spotted at his speeches with a rash-like mark on his neck. It was not until Monday, however, that the American public got their answer. According to Trump's doctor, the redness on his neck is nothing more than him undergoing a "preventative skin treatment".

• On February 22, at the NAACP Impact Awards, American actor Delroy Lindo made a speech thanking his fans for their support towards him and retired athlete Micheal B. Jordan. See, the week before, at the BAFTA Awards, a racial slur was shouted out in the crowd as the two accepted their award for their roles in "Sinner". However, it was revealed that the man who yelled the racial slur suffered from tourettes. This has caused many people online to defend him, being how tourettes is a disability that causes many people with it to say things that they can not control.

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Fentanyl test strips are small strips of paper that can detect the presence of fentanyl in all different kinds of drugs (cocaine, methamphetamine, heroin, etc.) and drug forms (pills, powder and injectables).



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www.okimready.org/overdose



NEWS

March is National Athletic Training Month

By MEGAN SPRAY
Senior Reporter

Northwestern athletic trainers are being recognized this month for their work supporting student-athletes through injury, recovery and daily health needs.

March is National Athletic Training Month, a time to highlight the role athletic trainers play in injury prevention, emergency care, rehabilitation of an injury and overall athlete wellness.

Keith Wear, Head Athletic Trainer at Northwestern, said the profession goes far beyond what fans see on the sidelines.

"It's so much more than just being on the sideline handing out water," Wear said.

He said athletic trainers work with athletes from the moment an injury occurs through their return to competition. That includes evaluation, treatment plans and rehabilitation. Trainers also support athletes' mental health and

What it takes to become an athletic trainer:

- Bachelor's degree that includes work in biology, anatomy, physiology, nutrition and kinesiology
- Masters degree in a program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education
- Pass the Board of Certification exam
- Obtain state licensure (required in almost all 50 states)
- Complete ongoing continuing education work to maintain certification

often serve as trusted listeners and support.

"A lot of times we're a confidant for them," Wear said.

Wear said much of the job happens behind the scenes. Trainers arrive before practices begin, provide treatment throughout the day and often stay well after the games end.

"If I'm not here 10 to 12 hours a day, that's a pretty rare thing," Wear said.

Christy Kerfoot-Tidwell, Assistant Athletic Trainer at Northwestern, said athletic trainers are often the first line of care when an athlete is injured.

"We are trained in many different aspects," Kerfoot-Tidwell

said.

She said athletic trainers must complete 50 continuing education units every two years to maintain certification and stay up to date with research and technology. She added that more than 90% of physicians agree with athletic trainers' clinical findings, which she said reflects the profession's expertise.

"We're not in it [the athletic training profession] to get rich," Kerfoot-Tidwell said. "We're in it for the outcomes. We're in it to help people."

In addition to injury care, she said trainers help athletes through personal challenges, academic stress and recovery motivation. She also works with the Alva High School athletes and provides education and insight on nutrition and injury prevention.

"It's a lot of hours, but it's really rewarding," Kerfoot-Tidwell said.

Kenzie Golden, Assistant Athletic Trainer at Northwestern,

works closely with the women's soccer team and ranger baseball. She said she's happy about the growing recognition that the profession is getting.

"I'm excited that the profession is growing and we're getting more recognition," Golden said.

Golden said one of her favorite parts of the job is building relationships with athletes while helping them both mentally and physically.

"It's kind of like the best of both worlds," Golden said. "From helping people but it's also fun to be able to come out here, watch them and see them succeed on the field."

All three athletic trainers said National Athletic Training Month is an opportunity to inform others about their work and how much may go unnoticed.

"It's not just for emergency care," Wear said. "It's for everything. How can we help? That's our goal."

Students meet House speaker, other officials at TRIO Day event

By ALLISON RUWALDT
Student Reporter

The TRIO members at NWO-SU who attended TRIO Day at the Capitol got to hear from a state representative and former alumnus.

TRIO Day is a national day on Feb. 28 made to celebrate the program and the good things it accomplishes. Oklahoma celebrated TRIO Day on Feb. 25 by inviting the members to the state capitol.

"I hope that the biggest change in students is that they can see that it is important to be engaged in their state," said Tosh Miller, NWOSU TRIO director.

The event had over 600 members from around the state attending. The students got to hear from Kyle Hilber, the speaker of the House, four alumni and two state representatives.

The students got a chance to hear from state Rep. Arturo Alonso-Sandoval, who is a former member of TRIO. He spoke about his story and encouraged students to strive for great things.

"It's a reminder that you can just do that," Miller said. "Representative Sandoval ran for office at 22 years old right after he graduated from OU Engineering school, and you can just do that."

The students got to tour the Capitol building, and for some, it was their first time going. Though one speaker canceled on them because of a scheduling conflict, the students were still able to enjoy their time.

The thing that impacted stu-



Photo provided

Members of TRIO from NWOSU visited the state Capitol on Feb. 25.

dents the most was realizing how important their voices are. Miller mentioned talking to the students about how often they forget they can call and suggest changes.

"I forget you can just call them and have a meeting with them and voice your own opinion," said Rosa Vargas, a music major at NWOSU. "So it just really opened my eyes, like even though I'm a regular person, I could kind of make a change."

TRIO Day gives the students a chance to hear from important people who have been where they are and connect with more people in TRIO. All the members in the state are welcome to come to make connections with those speaking and attending.

"I know there are people who

are like me, who are first gen or low income," Vargas said. "I can relate, and I'm not afraid to ask questions because, like these people probably have also gone through what I'm going through."

The TRIO program has done great things for its students as a whole, said Itzel Castillo, a social work major at NWOSU. Many of the students find comfort in the community it has created, and being able to attend things like TRIO Day is a way to celebrate that.

"I was able to go and talk to the advisors whenever I needed help with homework or to vent," she said. "TRIO impacted me in a very positive way as I was able to get the academic support I needed."

News in Quotes

From StyleCaster:

"She didn't want it to be a goodbye. But she knows she can't live in limbo forever."

— unnamed source close to the Savannah Guthrie family said Today host Guthrie is saying goodbye to her missing mother, who is believed to be dead.

From NPR:

"She was almost home. You don't go to Kuwait thinking something's going to happen, and for her to be one of the first — it hurts."

— Joey Amor, husband of Sgt. 1st Class Nicole Amor who was among six U.S. service members killed in a drone attack in Kuwait.

From Associated Press:

"It just says that we're tough, and there are things that are really important to us. It's just a part of community."

— Jerry Protector, a retired pastor waiting in line at the annual opening of Dairy Queen in Moorhead, Minnesota, on March 1.

From Associated Press:

"I'm pretty certain I'd look like Chubbs from Happy Gilmore if the alligator had gotten close to my hand."

—New Florida coach Jon Sumrall joking Tuesday following a photo shoot with a live 7-foot alligator after his first spring practice.

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SPORTS

Rangers sweep East Central

By **OAKLEE FIELDER**
Sports Editor

Ranger baseball defeated the East Central Tigers this weekend in the three-game series, with the final game going ending in the 11th inning.

NWOSU defeated ECU after losing their first six conference games. The three wins against East Central were the first conference wins for the Rangers. As the games went on, the finishing score difference between the two teams got closer and closer.

Ranger Nathan Sandoval was named GAC Pitcher of the Week for his efforts in game two versus the Tigers.

ECU 5-11 NWOSU

In the first inning, the Rangers scored the first run of the game after a balk was called on East Central. Then the Rangers hit a single from Cole Barton to send Blake Mattern home to score the second point of the game.

An error from the Tiger short stop allowed Tyler Hogan to run home and score in the second inning. Then, another error from the Tigers allowed Dabrowski to score to make it 4-0. East Central scored one in the third.

NWOSU responded in the fourth with five runs scored. Joel Lindahl hit a single to center field to send Amari Goodfellow home. Then, Jailon Goodfellow hit a homerun into right field, sending he, Chase Gordon and Lindahl home to score. Later, Grady Thomas hit a single to right field to send Hogan home.

In the fifth, seventh and eighth, the Tigers scored three runs to make it a 5-run game.

In the eighth, Hogan hit a triple to right to send Gordon and Lindahl home. The Tigers scored



NWOSU Athletics Photo

Nathan Sandoval, No. 12, P, after throwing a pitch versus Arkansas Tech on February 21. Sandoval was announced as the GAC Pitcher of the Week.

once in the ninth to try to reel the Rangers in, but one was not enough and the Rangers won.

Dabrowski, Lindahl, Gordon and Hogan all scored the most runs with two apiece. Jailon Goodfellow had the most RBIs with three. Hogan had the most hits with three. Pitcher Will Kates had seven strikeouts and only five hits against him.

ECU 1- 5 NWOSU

The Tigers started with the upper hand in game two. East Central scored in the first inning to send an early message. The message was not heard.

The Rangers scored four runs in three straight innings. Jason

McCarty hit a single to left field to send Gordon home in the fourth, Barton hit a homerun in the fifth and Gordon hit a double into left field to send Hogan home and Jailon Goodfellow hit a ground out to third base to send Gordon home in the sixth. This gave NWOSU a three-point lead, 4-1.

In the eighth, Jailon Goodfellow hit a single up the middle to send Dabrowski home and made it a four-run game. East Central was unable to respond, and the Rangers won game two. Jailon Goodfellow had two RBIs in his three at bats. Sandoval pitched all nine innings and only had five

hits against him, and had three strike outs. Sandoval had no base on balls throughout the game.

ECU 1-2 NWOSU

The third and final game of the series went into extra innings and ended in the 11th.

In the first, Barton hit a groundout to first base, which allowed Jailon Goodfellow to run to third and Dabrowski ran home to take an early lead. Not shortly after, ECU scored in the second inning to tie it. The game then went scoreless until the eleventh inning, where Brandon Jennings hit a single. Then, there was an error from the Tigers which allowed Jailon Goodfellow to run

home and win the game on a walkoff score.

The low-scoring game was also slow offensively. Neither team had a player with more than two hits. The Rangers had four hits in total and the Tigers had seven. Nathan Nunez and Trey Barkman had the same number of strikeouts with three.

The next game for the Rangers will be against Washburn University on Wednesday. Then, they travel to Durant to face the Southeastern Oklahoma State University Savage Storm, after the three-game series against Southeastern, they face Rogers State University on Tuesday.

Softball losing streak breaks, loses twice to East Central University in Ada

By **OAKLEE FIELDER**
Sports Editor

The Lady Rangers broke their

losing streak with a win over East Central University this weekend ending in a 1-2 finish in the 3-game series for NWOSU.

Northwestern had a nine-game

losing streak before their trip to Ada, where they ended it quickly with a 2-0 win over the Tigers. In that win, the Lady Rangers scored in the first and final innings with a pair of homeruns. Kaitlyn Corn scored the first homerun, the second was scored by Gabrielle San-

chez.

After the first win, the Tigers flipped the story and won the second game by just one. East Central scored in the third and fourth innings. In the fifth, Taygan Graham made a hit and there was an error from the Tigers' second baseman. Raelynn Sandlin was able to run home amidst the chaos to give the Lady Rangers their only run of the night.

In the third and final game, the Lady Rangers were unable to score and lost the game 4-0.

The next games on the schedule are the first home games of the season for the Lady Rangers. They face Southeastern Oklahoma State in a double header on Friday and one game on Saturday to finish off the three-game series.

NWOSU sits 11th in the standings.

Men's golf finishes on podium, women round out the bottom

By **OAKLEE FIELDER**
Sports Editor

The men finished 3rd with a score of +8. Mathieu Zerwin finished 9th with a score of +3. Anchieh Tsai and Pierce Geminden

finished 16th with a score of +6.

The women finished 16th with a score of +85.

Gracie Duke finished 19th with a score of +13. Tess Linden finished 32nd with a score of +17. Amanda Lane finished 68th with a score of +25.

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SPORTS

Dream Team: Meet the players who make magic happen



Catyn Graham, No. 33, looks for a chance to score in the Feb. 26 win over OBU. She was the second highest scorer that night with 10 points for the Rangers. Her total this season is 220.

Catyn Graham: Guard

By **BRAXTYN TURNER**
Student Reporter

Junior Catyn Graham (5-foot-9 guard, No. 33) credits team chemistry to be the reason behind the Lady Rangers' success this season.

"We have a lot of pieces and talent that work really well together, and everyone understands their role," Graham said.

Graham is from McAlester and has played basketball her whole life. She currently plays shooting guard for the Lady Rangers, but before that, she played for the Oklahoma Baptist University Bison. Graham said transferring to Northwestern has been one of the best decisions she has ever made.

"It has been a blast," Graham said. "I've just really enjoyed being a part of this program. It's been such a great experience, and I'm really grateful to be here."

Majoring in health and sports science, Graham spoke about the high standards within the Lady Ranger bas-

ketball program. She explained how the team has maintained the same preparation and focus since the start of the season, consistently meeting the expectations set by their coaches while continuing to work hard and stay true to their core values.

After opening the season with eight straight wins, Graham said the team quickly learned how to handle the expectations. The Lady Rangers faced pressure to maintain their unbeaten record, and a brief losing streak tested them mentally.

Graham said the experience strengthened the team, encouraging players to trust each other, the coaches and even themselves.

"This season has helped me gain a lot more confidence in myself because I know my coaches have confidence in me," Graham said.

She added that each game throughout the season has carried significance. According to Graham, every game, win or loss, contributed to the team's growth and prepared the Lady Rangers for what postseason play has in store for them.

Photos by Ingrid Maldonado

Assisting Rangers

- Camille Pritchard, No. 23, forward. 127 pts. this season
- Jamie Molina, No. 2, guard 22 pts. this season
- Ella Porter, No. 22, guard 22 pts. this season
- Keely Hussey, No. 4, guard 16 pts. this season
- Carson, Schanbacher, No. 14, guard 10 pts. this season
- Anna Eldridge, No. 1, guard 9 pts. this season
- Emma Jo Locks, No. 0, guard 8 pts this season
- Mattie Rich, No. 11, guard 2 pts. this season
- Conley Cayot, No. 20, guard, injured 213 pts. this season

Kennedy Hight: Guard

By **JOHN STOWERS**
Student Reporter

Kennedy Hight, a 5-foot-8 guard, has been taking her season one game at a time.

Hight, a sophomore health and sports science education major from Perry, spent her first semester this season going through one of the toughest adversities an athlete can face: being sidelined by an injury. Her injury, however, hasn't daunted or deterred her.

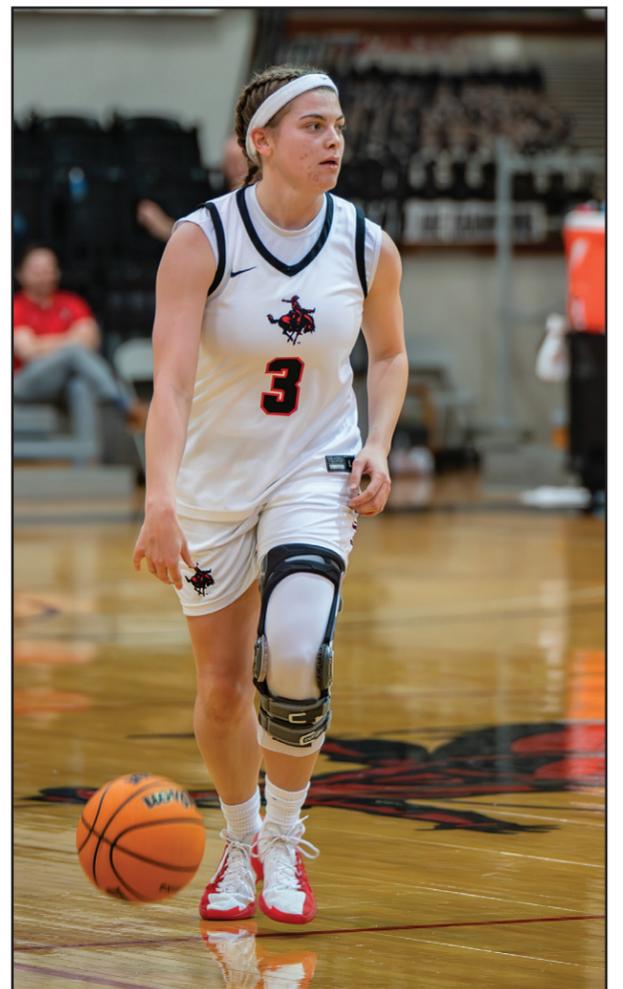
"Coming back has been exciting," Hight said. "It's been a blessing. It hasn't been easy just because this is my second ACL that I've torn and then having another surgery on top of that, it was a struggle. But I like to work and I like and enjoy fighting through adversity."

Kennedy Hight, No. 3, had to work to reclaim her role as a starting guard when she returned after an injury benched her at the beginning of the season. She ended with 165 total points.

Since she came back onto the court, Hight has been steadily reclaiming her role as a starter. At her most recent game, NWOSU vs. SNU, she scored 17 of the team's 48 total points, the second most points scored on either side of the ball.

Hight said her time on the bench helped her to get to where she is now.

"It really made me see things from a different perspective," Hight said. "At the beginning of the year I was on the bench and my job was to be my teammates biggest fan, and to help them with whatever I could and coach them when I saw things that I thought they needed help with. I think getting to sit back and watch has really helped me grow as a player, because I got to see the little things that matter."



Men end season with 2 losses, no tournament bid

By **OAKLEE FIELDER**
Sports Editor

The Ranger basketball season ended after two losses to Oklahoma Baptist and Southern Naz-

arene eliminated them from playoff contention despite the close battle in the standings.

The Rangers had been in the battle for the final playoff spots throughout the entire closing stages of the season. Despite the

close battle, they missed out on the playoffs.

The final two games were against difficult opponents. Oklahoma Baptist University is ranked number seven nationally, and Southern Nazarene were na-

tionally ranked at one point in the early stages of the season.

The Rangers lost to OBU 71-59 after an incredibly tight and scrappy match. The Bison were only up by three at the end of the first half. After time went by in

the second half, the Bison stepped up and put distance between them and NWOSU.

All in all, the season was not a failure, and the Rangers put up an amazing fight at the end of the season for a playoff spot.