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Showing how history can provide global optimism in terrifying times.

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The Bookmark | Kaitlynn Faber reviews "The Door of No Return" by Kwame Alexander.

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I K-State looks for 2nd upset of Iowa State.

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Veo to pause new e-scooter operations on Fake Patty's Day

JAKOB TWIGG
website manager

To prioritize rider safety on Fake Patty's Day, the micromobility firm Veo will temporarily pause electric scooter operations in Manhattan from 8 p.m. Friday to 6 a.m. Sunday.

Veo rolled out 250 scooters last weekend to Kansas State's campus and its immediate vicinity.

Aaron Madrid, Veo's policy and partnerships manager, said the City of Manhattan and K-State discussed Fake Patty's Day with the company before the rollout.

"We have new assets that we manufacture and bring to the area, and we, of course, don't want to see any damage happen to them



Photos by Grace Parks and Lilly Crist | COLLEGIAN MEDIA GROUP

Micromobility firm Veo released scooters on K-State's campus and surrounding areas over the first weekend of March.

because that would just reduce everybody's ability to keep using them in the future," Madrid said.

"After talking with the city, talking to the university and getting some feedback from the various law enforcement and safety groups ... we thought it would be best for us to restrict our operations next weekend while we get an understanding of what the City of

Manhattan sees during Fake Patty's Day."

Madrid said Veo app users are restricted from renting the company's Astro electric scooters in Aggieville or around the university this weekend.

"In the name of safety, it would probably be good to put some systems in place to make sure that we're not facilitating any bad decisions that could potentially happen next weekend," Madrid said.

Veo operations manager and K-state graduate Kevin Harvey said Veo prioritizes rider and pedestrian safety.

"When you download the Veo app, we have a bunch of safety guidelines that are there, as well as a quiz," Harvey said. "It's very

important that our riders take the time to attend to those safety tips ... specifically on campus. We have designated parking zones to help keep the area clean and make sure that the campus is looking as beautiful as when it started in 1860."

Madrid said Veo will work with the university and city to establish geofencing areas — a virtual geographical boundary — during major community events.

"When sporting events or major events happen, we'll put geofences in place to potentially restrict vehicles from accessing certain areas, slow them down, or require different types of parking behaviors," Madrid said.

SEE PAGE A2
"VEO"



SGA president and VP run unopposed



Photo Courtesy of SGA
Presidential candidate Brady Kapplermann and VP candidate Zoey Pudenz show their Wildcat Pride in SGA photoshoot.

LIBBY ZUCK
arts & culture editor

Kansas State's Student Governing Association held student elections this week, with Brady Kapplermann and Zoey Pudenz running unopposed for president and vice president candidacy, respectively.

However, all positions within the organization are up for election, including student senator, the Union Governing Board and the Collegian Media Group Student Advisory Committee.

According to the SGA website, it represents "the students of Kansas State University, united in the belief that the goals of a democratic community can be furthered only by the citizenship habits, attitudes, skills and knowledge acquired through experience."

SGA is composed of three branches: the executive branch, the judicial branch and the legislative branch. Each member within the branches has a different role.

SEE PAGE A3
"SGA"

Fired PHD student threatens to retaliate legally against K-State after Jan. 6 pardon

KYRA CASE
news editor

William Pope was one of hundreds of Jan. 6 defendants whose cases were dismissed by President Donald Trump. Now, he's demanding his job back.

"I won my case," Pope said. "The government

moved to retract all the allegations against me. Those are the allegations that the university had initially justified terminating me on, but now they've been withdrawn by the government."

Pope, a former graduate teaching assistant, sent a letter to Kansas State

President Richard Linton, requesting his job back after the case dismissal.

"I am writing to let you know the good news: I have successfully defended against these false allegations in Court, including both of the felony charges I faced, and I am ready to immediately return to working for Kansas State University as a Graduate Teaching Assistant," Pope said in his letter.

After sending the letter, Pope said K-State denied his request for his job back.

"I just received a letter from the attorney for @ KState which says they do not intend to make amends for wrongfully terminating me," Pope wrote in an X post.

SEE PAGE A2
"FIRED"



Photo courtesy of William Pope
William Pope (right) with his brother (left) stand at the Capitol on Jan. 6.

K-State department offers wide variety of language education

LIBBY ZUCK
arts & culture editor

According to K-State's Department of Modern Languages, the department serves as "a vibrant and dynamic place where we foster multilingual and multicultural awareness and a sense of belonging and identity that prepares students to become global citizens."

Studying another language is beneficial for one's education in a multitude of ways. Immersing in another culture through art, language and literature can expand ways of critical thinking and understanding in a classroom.

"There are so many reasons to study other languages," professor of Spanish and department head Jeffrey Zamostny said. "I see languages as windows to the world, with cultures that have different approaches to daily life up to complex ideas about art and literature. Learning to step outside of one's own culture and what you're accustomed to and see it

from a different perspective I think is a very valuable skill."

At K-State, the department has a range of languages for those interested, including Spanish, German, Chinese and Arabic, with plenty of others ranging from the 100-500s course level.

Studying a language and pursuing bilingualism can open up a plethora of doors within future careers, with society evolving and diversity becoming widely celebrated, the study of languages is becoming a required credit at some universities.

"Learning Spanish has created a pathway for me to be able to have the opportunity to become bilingual and have the skill set to serve and communicate with multiple communities within a criminal justice career," Sloan O'Sullivan, junior in criminology, said.

SEE PAGE A3
"LANGUAGE"

WEEKLY CALENDAR

7	Boot Hill Jazz Night w/ Wabash City Brass — Auntie Mae's Parlor	7	"The Big Lebowski" — Wareham Hall	8	Dueling Pianos — Liquid Arts and Winery Estate
8	80's Pop Up with Sisters of Sound — Switch Wicked	8	Southall — The Hat	10	The Mikado - New York Gilbert & Sullivan Players — McCain Auditorium

"VEO"

CONTINUED FROM A1

"All of that's generally communicated through our app and different events that we might partner with the university or the city on to provide that information as well."

Manhattan assistant city manager Jared Wasinger said Veo's pilot program started with the core of K-State's campus but will expand

throughout the city.

"From a city perspective, we knew that students were going to ride scooters off campus," Wasinger said. "They're going to want to ride throughout the city and go to places like Aggierville and Town Center."

K-State's director of parking and transportation Adrienne Tucker said the e-scooters provide last-mile solutions for students.

"We really want to build out a robust micromobility program

that involves not just e-scooters, but e-bikes as well as normal bicycles and bicycle storage, well-lit pathways connecting to the city's bike lanes and pedestrian walkways that are well marked and well lit," Tucker said. "It's kind of like a whole ecosystem, and the e-scooters — and soon-to-be e-bikes — are going to be a part of that."

Harvey said Veo intends to help community members get "from point A to point B in a quick manner."

"I know plenty of times when I was on campus, I ran late going to the business building," Harvey said. "We're happy to be here and provide a service."

Madrid said Veo builds beneficial partnerships with its stakeholders.

"We were born on a university campus, so it's a market and an industry that we're very familiar with and comfortable operating in," Madrid said. "We've always been a partner first before anything else."



Illustration by Ashly Sites | COLLEGIAN MEDIA GROUP

"FIRED"

CONTINUED FROM A1

"This attack on Constitutional 1A rights is a bad mistake by the university that greatly damages KSTATE's reputation, and I will pursue legal action."

Pope said K-State communicated

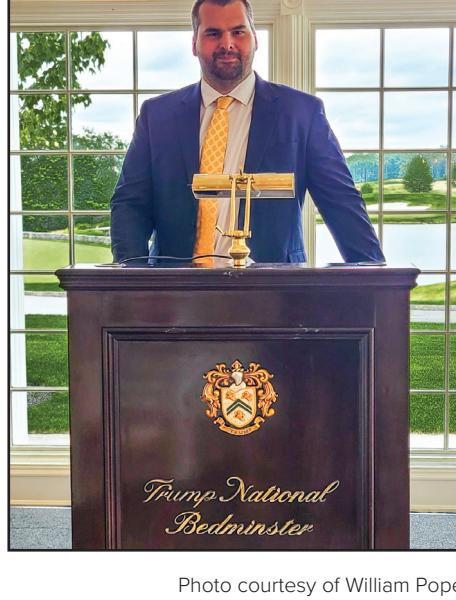


Photo courtesy of William Pope
William Pope plans to take legal action against K-State when he deems the time is right.

with him through attorney Blake Billings, the university's deputy general counsel.

"So when they fired me, they had the president at the time send me a letter, but now they're, I think, a little bit more worried about it," Pope said. "And so they're communicating through their attorney, so that's the only contact I've had."

K-State's spokesperson and director of news and communication services, Michelle Geering, said there was no one available to speak with at the university.

"I am able to share that qualified individuals who meet the requirements for graduate assistantships can apply to open positions, which can be found at <https://www.k-state.edu/grad-financial-support/assistantships.html>," Geering said in an email.

Geering made no further comment.

Pope said the charges against him were based on a misunderstanding. He said he and his brother decided to go to the Capitol on Jan. 6 to watch "the last speech the president gave." Pope said after arriving, he and his brother saw officers running into

the building and other protesters running out.

"[It was] kind of a curiosity got the cat type of thing," Pope said. "We walked up there to check it out, and we looked in there, and the hallway was just full of protesters and we had no idea what was going on. But a couple of minutes before then on the other side of the Capitol is when somebody had broken those windows ... [and] they opened the door and a bunch of people streamed in and then they went down those hallways."

Pope said he intended to help an officer who was keeping a protester out of the Capitol Building when he was pushed into it.

"I stood up thinking I was going to help the officer," Pope said. "At the same time, that guy who had gotten pushed out returned and he began, like, repeatedly shoving me in the back, pushing me into the Capitol Building. I couldn't tell who was pushing me at the time because he was like, I had my flag over my shoulder."

Pope was later indicted Feb. 17, 2021 on two felony counts and six misdemeanors.

"I've been fighting my case for the last four years," Pope said. "Last year, I beat two of the charges because the government couldn't provide specifics on them. Then another one got thrown out by the Supreme Court. So I'd already beaten three of the charges against me. ... the government moved to dismiss the remaining charges [on Jan. 20] and my judge granted the dismissal."

Pope wrote in his letter he expects "an immediate return" to his position along with "four years of backpay." He also said he "would be willing" to accept four years of backpay "and three years of equivalent future pay" to cover any educational expenses during the completion of his dissertation.

"Obviously, in addition to this, I am also seeking for the university to waive all remaining tuition and fees," Pope wrote.

As for right now, Pope said he will take action "at the right time."

"I've only been in contact with my advisor on my preliminary exam process," Pope said. "[I'm] moving forward on the academic side, and I will take other action on the employment side."

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The Collegian welcomes your letters. We reserve the right to edit submitted letters for length and style. A letter intended for publication should be no longer than 600 words and must be relevant to the student body of K-State. It must include the author's first and last name, year in school and major. If you are a graduate of K-State, the letter should include your year(s) of graduation and the city and state where you live.

For a letter to be considered, it must include a phone number where you can be contacted. The number will not be published. Letters can be sent to letters@kstatecollegian.com or submitted through an online form at kstatecollegian.com.

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OPINION | The Cuban Hope

PAETON MCCARTY
staff writer

Current global events paint terrifying images. People watch helplessly as Russia continues its assault on Ukraine. Tensions remain high between Israel and Gaza. Rhetoric between these militaries include the use of nuclear weapons. Unfortunately, this threat is more realistic than it has been in decades. It's terrifying to consider the unleashing of weapons of mass destruction, but despite the tremor there is hope. Governments in recent history were confronted by similar circumstances.

In October 1962, the world experienced a historical

event — one that defined the 1960s as a decade and is still taught in universities today. This time is the closest humans have come to nuclear catastrophe. After viewing Soviet missile storage in mainland Cuba, U.S. President Kennedy was encouraged by military generals to invade the island nation. Thankfully, he refused the offer and instead implemented a blockade for any incoming Soviet ships.

This encounter was one of many political and military confrontations between two global powers: the U.S.S.R. and the U.S. This conflict was not only fought out in places like Nicaragua, the Congo, Korea and, most notoriously,

Vietnam. Instead, it was also an ideological war where the pair fought for global dominance. Both wanted to set the tone for the future.

Despite the high stakes, a little-known historical figure can be credited with averting nuclear catastrophe. Soviet naval officer Vasily Arkhipov left a legacy of military heroism that can be ingrained into our minds even in today's society. While deployed in a Soviet submarine, this officer was the only thing standing between the world and nuclear annihilation.

As American sailors dropped depth charges trying to force enemy subs to rise, Arkhipov's submarine, according to The

History of the Cuban Missile Crisis, believed World War III had begun. To further complicate, they were too deep to reach Moscow by radio. Considering that, both the commander and third in command agreed to launch a nuclear torpedo.

Fortunately, the deployment of the torpedo required a unanimous yes from all three men. Arkhipov refused, telling his comrades they must wait for further orders. He showed his foresight by preventing conflict without denying a direct order. Failure to comply would be a mutiny against the Kremlin and warrant court martial and imprisonment. In the end, his actions saved not only the U.S. and U.S.S.R., but the globe from nuclear catastrophe.

In our present day, we find ourselves combating a similar threat. With North Korea, Ukraine and Israel, tensions are high. But when confronting this we can remember one thing: Not even the worst scenario could bring man to nuclear war. Not even poor communication at the worst time could take the world by storm.

Now that younger generations have reached voting age, nuclear and foreign policy can easily be on the future ballot. I think we should be grateful and optimistic for our global futures. Despite recent events in North Korea, Ukraine and Israel, we can hold steadfast that leaders can still maintain their humanity.

Recipe | Dairy-Free Raspberry Chipotle Black Bean Dip

JAKOB TWIGG
website manager

So Long Saloon's Raspberry Chipotle Black Bean Dip is arguably the top contender for the best appetizer in Manhattan. Unfortunately, half of my family is lactose intolerant and they cannot enjoy this delicious app. This week, I decided to make a lactose-free version of So Long Saloon's world-famous dip that my whole family can eat. If you would prefer the original recipe, simply substitute the non-dairy ingredients for their dairy counterparts. The best part about this recipe is that leftovers — you won't have any — can be kept if covered in the fridge. Just simply reheat and enjoy!

Raspberry Chipotle Black Bean Dip

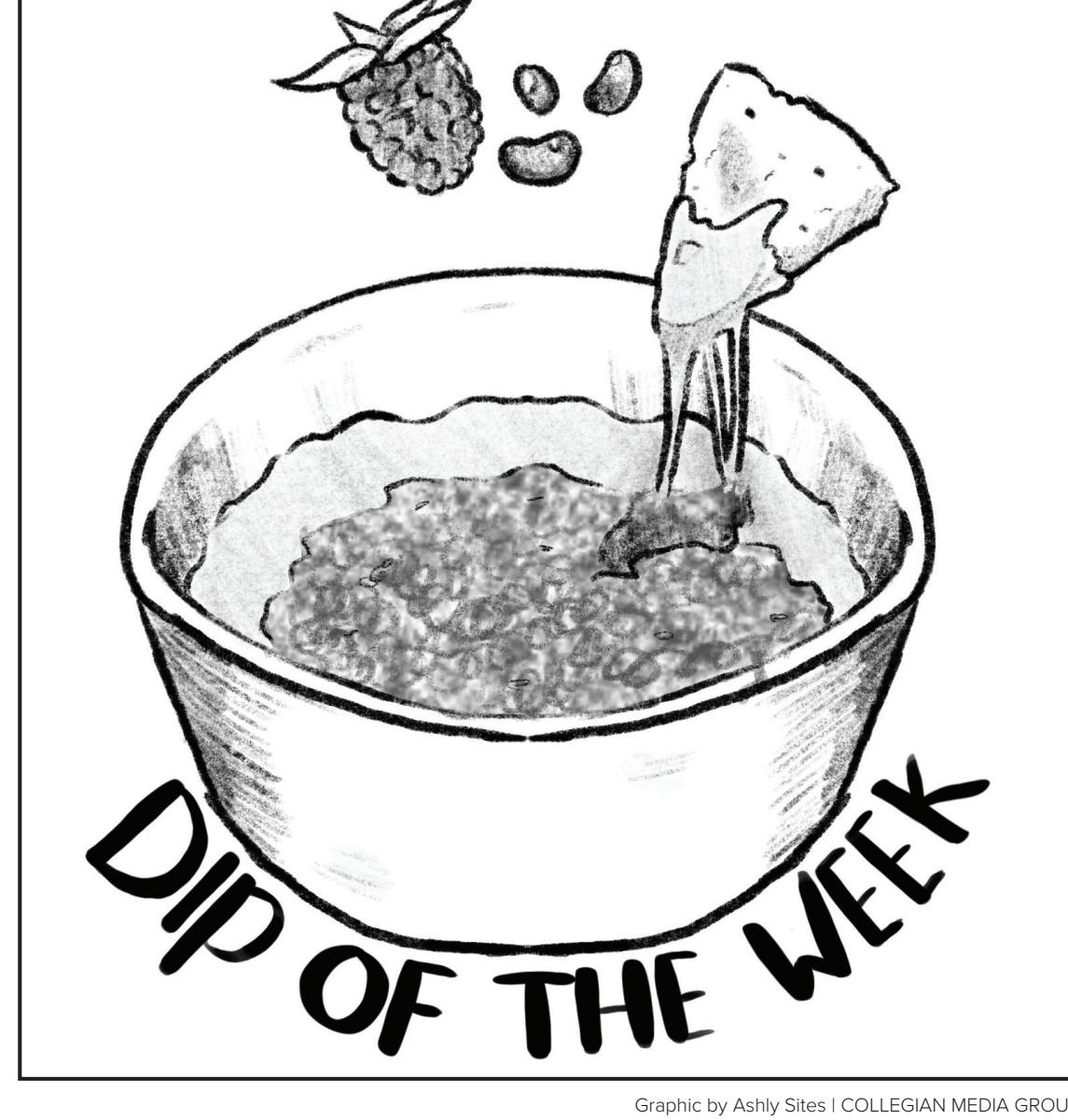
Ingredients:

- 1 15-ounce can black beans loosely rinsed and drained
- 1 pinch sea salt
- 1 pinch black pepper
- 2 tsp cumin
- 1 tsp turmeric
- 2/3 cup diced red onion
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 5 tbsp raspberry chipotle sauce (I used Hungry Hobby's recipe by Kelli

- Shallal
- 1 8-ounce container non-dairy cream cheese
- 1/3 cup non-dairy shredded monterey jack cheese
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- Cilantro for topping
- Chips for serving

Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees.
2. In a saucepan, heat the beans along with salt, pepper, cumin and turmeric. When the mix is heated, adjust the seasoning mixture to taste.
3. Add olive oil to an oven-safe skillet over medium heat. Add onions and a pinch of sea salt and stir frequently. Cook until soft — about five minutes.
4. Add minced garlic to the skillet and cook for two more minutes.
5. Remove the skillet from heat, pour mixture into a bowl. Add cream cheese and stir.
6. Remove from the stove top, add the cream cheese-onion mixture back to the skillet. Place it in the center and make a well.
7. Add the black beans around the outside of



Graphic by Ashly Sites | COLLEGIAN MEDIA GROUP

- the cream cheese and pour the raspberry chipotle sauce in the center.
8. Sprinkle the cheese evenly over the top and
9. Remove from the oven

bake for 12-15 minutes or until warmed through and bubbly and the cheese is melted.

and top with a bit of additional cheese and fresh cilantro. Serve immediately with either chips or a side of your choosing.



Photo by Erica Merz | COLLEGIAN MEDIA GROUP
Built in 1951, Eisenhower Hall houses modern languages, international and area studies programs and pre-health professions within the College of Arts and Sciences.

"LANGUAGE"

CONTINUED FROM A1

"Bilingual police officers are needed across the country, and being in the modern languages department at Kansas State has provided an incredible foundation for me to pursue my career."

Learning a language takes patience and is time-consuming, between learning verb conjugations and correct diction, it takes time to grasp. Professors at K-State offer opportunities for students to get help and immerse themselves in the culture of their choosing. Including Café Olé, tutoring at the Kirmser Language Center and office hours, professors at K-State want to see their students excel while attempting to speak another language.

"One of the things I enjoy about

teaching Spanish is not only teaching the language, culture and speaking skills, but you're also teaching a lot about how to commit to doing something that is difficult and requires time management skills," Zamostny said.

With Spanish becoming a largely-spoken language within the nation, becoming bilingual is a quality many establishments look for in new hires post-grad. Not only is this a positive for a future career, but also day to day communication.

"I think it is incredibly important to be bilingual in today's age," O'Sullivan said. "Spanish is the second most spoken language next to English within the United States. Communication is key in my future career, and being able to take that to the next level with bilingualism is going to expand the ways I can help my community as well as carry out my service to the next level."

"SGA"

CONTINUED FROM A1

"SGA's main mission is to advocate for the student body," Kappleman said. "I think that is what makes it so special. From the Senate, the executive branch, the judicial branch, the legislative branch, all of us are working towards one goal, which is helping students."

The student body president and vice president are elected by the K-State student body and serve a one-year term. This year, all voting was done digitally through a Canvas notification. Kappleman and Pudenz are running unopposed, with a write-in as the only other option.

This duo is involved in multiple areas across campus, so their kinship was inevitable, SGA vice presidential candidate Zoey Pudenz said.

"Back in April, Brady approached me about running for student body vice president alongside him, and I think this adds to all the different experiences I have had at K-State," Pudenz said. "Whether that is being a tour guide, serving as president for Gamma Phi Beta and being on the Student Alumni Board, all of these positions have served me greatly during my time at K-State."

Pudenz said she hopes to expand her perspective in her role as student body president.

"What I am looking forward to mostly in this role is hopefully hearing more student experiences,"

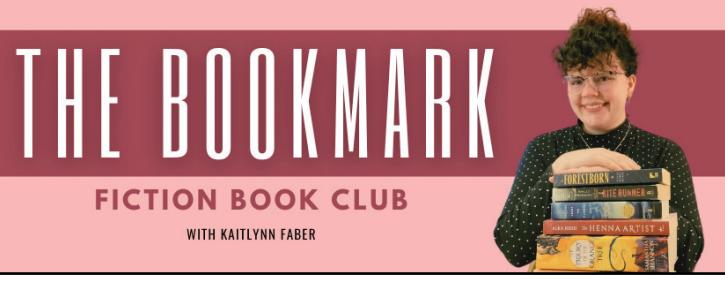
Pudenz said. "We realized early on since we are involved in the same areas of campus, we had a set perspective on student life, so what we have tried to do is meet with students from various areas across campus, seeing what their perspective is and understanding the challenges and issues some of them face."

Kappleman and Pudenz emphasized the idea of shaping the student body collectively, hearing testimonies from students in different campus organizations.

"For me, I am a first-generation K-State student, so I have really gotten to grasp and immerse myself in this experience," Pudenz said. "Meeting with students and families every day through the admissions office or the recruitment office, I have gotten a good perspective of all K-State students, and I hopefully want to take that knowledge into my next term."

As the president and vice president elect, Kappleman and Pudenz hope to give back to the university that shaped them into the people they are today.

"Being at K-State the last three years has been such a blessing to be a part of because of the great university, the great friends I have met, the opportunities to grow in leadership and myself," Kappleman said. "I am just so thankful for all K-State has given me. I see the student body president role as the best way for me to give back to the university that has given me so much."



KAITLYNN FABER
staff writer

In one of my high school history classes, we skipped studying the continent of Africa entirely, because it was "too complex" and "changes too frequently" to be considered worth our time on the curriculum.

So when I made a list of books for this column, I purposely chose some books that made me nervous to review, because their history might be "too complex."

I've read a lot regarding the history and brutality of slavery, especially through the English curriculum at Kansas State, but almost nothing about the lives of Africans before reaching the Americas.

I chose "The Door of No Return," by Kwame Alexander,

largely because it's a young adult book. It was written as a doorway for audiences who probably don't know a lot about colonization and the slave trade in Africa, but most importantly, the story starts in West Africa, not the countries where people were being enslaved.

It follows 11-year-old Kofi, growing up in 1860 Upper Kwanta — now Ghana — 14 years before the country was considered a British colony and slavery was prohibited. He's a smart kid who fiercely loves his family, friends, storytelling and swimming, but it's all threatened when an accidental death occurs during a festival between rival villages, sending Kofi on a harrowing journey through a door of no return.

Book Review | "The Door of No Return" by Kwame Alexander

In his author's note, Alexander says this is one of the hardest stories he's ever written, and after reading it I can see why. It's gut-wrenching and deeply moving, offering a violent history through a gentle voice.

I listened to this story through an audiobook, narrated by Kobna Holdbrook-Smith, along with reading it, and it was one of the best narrations I've ever heard. Oral tradition and storytelling was such a strong theme throughout the book, and the narration brought that to life. Even though this is historical fiction, this story is based on the real history of the Asante people, and the narrator's emotion and dialect was a steadfast reminder that these events were happening to

people, not just characters.

Another thing I loved was the use of water in the story, especially its role in unity and division. The Offin River specifically, who Kofi is named after, is a place of immeasurable joy and agony throughout the story. Notably, it becomes a recurring prompt for metaphors, especially involving family and appreciation.

The prose is poetic, written in novel-in-verse format with brief, introductory stories at the beginning of each chapter. Kofi's narration was obviously that of an 11-year-old for the entire book, which I appreciated, alongside the frequent, snarky commentary that comes with that youth.

If I could only describe this story with one word, it would be "vivid." Every

chapter was rich with storytelling, metaphors, culture and history even when despair was high.

I would give this story 4.8 stars out of five, only knocking a few minor points off because the ending felt abrupt.

I don't know how I would have reacted to the heavy parts of this story when I was younger, but I know that it was a healthy read for me at today's age. It gently reminded me that history does not begin with the parts that impact me, and that the only way to gain new perspectives is to expose myself to them. Stories like these remind me why storytelling is so important, because it gave me the footing to learn more about my own subconscious thresholds and who people are beyond it.

STARTING NEXT WEEK | UPCOMING BOOKS I'M READING AND REVIEWING

MAR 21	MAR 28	APR 4
THE POPPY WAR R.F. KUANG	THE HANDMAID'S TALE MARGARET ATWOOD	THE KITE RUNNER KHALED HOSSEINI
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historical Military Fantasy First in a Trilogy War, Vengeance, Power and Magic Inspired by 20th Century China A Story About Mad Gods and How Ruthless Humans are Capable of Being 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fallen Young Woman Through Colonization in Totalitarian Government Toturistic Dystopian Individuality and Freedom Author Based Events on History Lost of power over identity, freedom and fertility Cautionary Story 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follows a young Afghan boy from Wazir Akbar Khan, Kabul Historical Fiction Guilt, Redemption & Betrayal Story of love, family and friendship amidst destruction and war Politics and Society

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WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

@ Big 12 Tournament — March 5-10 — ESPN+

B1 Selection Sunday Show — March 16 @ 7 p.m. — ESPN

MEN'S BASKETBALL

vs. Iowa State — March 8 @ 12:30 p.m. — CBS

@ Big 12 Tourn. — March 11-15 @ 6 p.m. — ESPN+

BASEBALL

vs. William & Mary — March 7-9 — ESPN+

@ Creighton — March 11 @ 6 p.m.

Sports

Friday, March 7, 2025

Senior Spotlight | Looking back at K-State MBB forward David N'Guessan's career

BRAYDEN MESEKE

staff writer

When David N'Guessan committed to Kansas State, not many fans had heard his name or were familiar with his game on the floor.

Head coach Jerome Tang had just been hired and had to assemble a team, and one of the earliest players he earned a commitment from was Virginia Tech transfer N'Guessan.

After a limited role at Virginia Tech, N'Guessan arrived at K-State looking to make an impact for a fan base that was deprived of competitive basketball for a few seasons.

The impact he had was even bigger than his head coach imagined. N'Guessan scored 21 points against Colorado on Sunday, including reaching his 1,000th career point. "I don't know if you would have told him when he transferred after two years at Virginia Tech, 'You'll go and score 1,000 points in your career,'" Tang said. "I think that's pretty cool that we were able to help him do that, and he's put in the work to develop to get there."

N'Guessan, now after almost three seasons, leaves many great memories in the minds of K-State fans, even from positions you wouldn't expect a 6-foot-9 forward to succeed in.

These include his fade-



Photo by Haylee Haslett | COLLEGIAN MEDIA GROUP

K-State senior forward **David N'Guessan** yells with excitement after dunking the ball. The Wildcats defeated West Virginia 73-60 on Jan. 25 at Bramlage Coliseum.

away 3-pointer against Michigan State in the 2023 Sweet 16 — or the step-back buzzer-beater jumper before half against KU this season, helping lead the way to his perfect 3-0 mark at home in the Sunflower Showdown.

However, perhaps the play that encompassed N'Guessan perfectly came this season when he fouled Arizona State's Jayden Quaintance at the end of the game instead of giving up the dunk.

"Jayden Quaintance is flying through the air," Tang said after the game. "I'm saying to myself, 'How did that happen?' I'm thankful that David N'Guessan didn't give up on the play and fouled him."

K-State was up by one at the time, and Quaintance went on to miss both free-

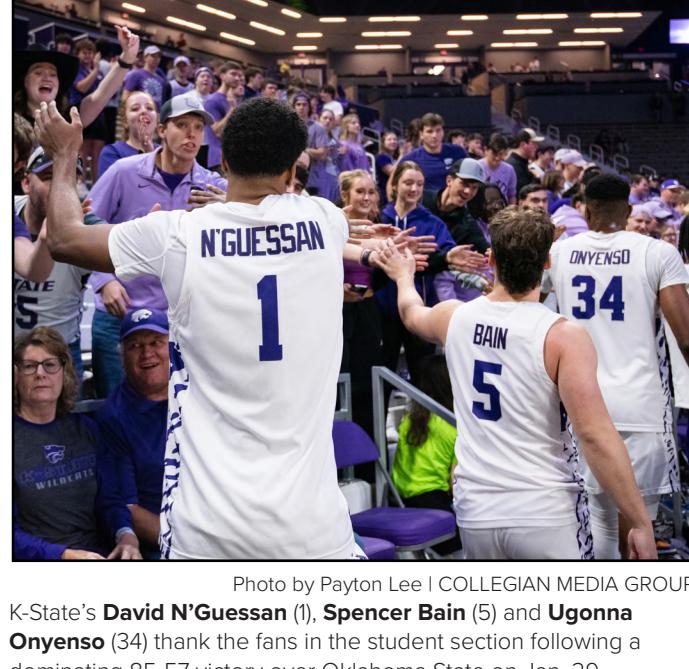


Photo by Payton Lee | COLLEGIAN MEDIA GROUP

K-State's **David N'Guessan** (1), **Spencer Bain** (5) and **Ugonna Onyenso** (34) thank the fans in the student section following a dominating 85-57 victory over Oklahoma State on Jan. 29.

throws, resulting in a K-State win in the middle of its six-game win streak.

That week, N'Guessan was named Big 12 Player of the Week, averaging 21

points on 70.8% (17-of-24) shooting with 7.5 rebounds in 34.4 minutes per game

in victories over the Sun Devils and Jayhawks.

SEE PAGE B3
"N'GUESSAN"

Cash Invasion | How private capital is reshaping the Big 12 and the NCAA



Archive photo by Avery Johnson | COLLEGIAN MEDIA GROUP
Big 12 Commissioner **Brett Yormark** gives an opening speech at the Big 12 Tipoff on Oct. 17, 2023 at T-Mobile Center in Kansas City, Mo.

JON GROVE
contributing writer

With the SEC and Big Ten dominating the college athletics landscape, at least in terms of revenue share, there is pressure for other conferences to do what they can to secure more resources.

Many leagues will not be able to keep pace, but a cash infusion can go a long way in ensuring that they do not fall far behind in this rapidly changing industry. The Big 12 is close to making such a move.

"Big 12 presidents & ADs today reviewed bids from three finalists in the league's pursuit of a capital partner, sources tell @YahooSports," college football reporter Ross Dellenger posted on X. "Firms are proposing to infuse

millions to schools. RedBird Capital has emerged as the leader. A decision is expected in the coming weeks."

Strategic Investment Partner

Founded in 2014 by Gerry Cardinale, RedBird Capital Partners manages more than \$10 billion in assets. The firm has a diverse portfolio in the sports sector, including ownership stakes in A.C. Milan, Toulouse FC, and a share of Fenway Sports Group. RedBird focuses on strategic partnerships and long-term value creation in sports, media and entertainment.

In May 2024, RedBird, in collaboration with Weatherford Capital, launched Collegiate Athletic Solutions. This initiative aims to provide capital and business development support to university athletic

departments across the U.S. CAS offers investments ranging from \$50 million to \$200 million to select universities in exchange for a share of future revenues. The goal is to help athletic programs improve their facilities, operations and overall competitiveness.

Dellenger clarified that the proposal in question is of the capital nature and not equity. The Big 12 Conference did pursue a private equity deal with CVC Capital Partners last summer, but no arrangement was ultimately procured. Additionally, Commissioner Brett Yormark had his sights set on selling the naming rights of the league to insurance behemoth Allstate. While no partnership has come to pass as of now, it is clear that the Big 12 is considering every possible avenue as it seeks immediate spending power.

Is the Big 12 navigating a dangerous terrain?

Partnering with RedBird Capital through CAS could provide the Big 12 and K-State Athletics with a financial boost, enabling member schools to invest in infrastructure, coaching and athlete development. This capital infusion is crucial as the conference tries to compete financially with the SEC and Big Ten.

However, the move also raises questions about the growing influence of private equity in college sports and the potential long-term impact on the traditional collegiate athletics model. As the Big 12 navigates this decision, the outcome could set a precedent for similar partnerships, reflecting a broader trend of private equity's increasing presence in the sports industry.

The Big 12 is trying to get ahead of the game and thrust the sport into a future that others think is inevitable. But does anybody actually want to be the one to open that door? Either way, the clock is ticking, and the stakes have never been higher.

Baseball's Martin, Sheffield earn Big 12 honors



Photo courtesy of K-State Athletics
K-State shortstop **Max Martin** gestures at his teammates on second base during the Wildcats' win over Nebraska at the Frisco Classic.

TREY THOMAS

staff writer

Kansas State baseball shortstop Max Martin was officially voted the Big 12 Player of the Week after the Georgia State transfer put on an impressive weekend.

Martin carded a team-best five runs and a total of five RBI at the Frisco Classic, leading the Wildcats back over .500 with a 2-1 weekend. The shortstop earned All-Tournament honors with a 1.404 OPS. The Wildcat offense which Martin led out-scored opponents 28-17.

Martin ranks second overall in the Big 12 with a season average of .467 and was slugging .800, which ranks third best in the league.

A product of Edgewater Park, New Jersey, he stepped up big for the Wildcats in filling the shoes of MLB first-round shortstop Kaelen Culpepper.

Martin is the second Wildcat to take home Big 12 honors, as pitcher Lincoln Sheffield took home the Big 12 Co-Newcomer of the Week award last week.



Photo courtesy of K-State Athletics
K-State left-handed pitcher **Lincoln Sheffield** hurls a pitch toward home plate during K-State's win over Nebraska in the Frisco Classic on Sunday.

Sheffield was awarded the accolade for his dominant performance in K-State's defeat over No. 22 TCU at the Amegy Bank College Baseball Series, a 3-0 weekend against Top 25 foes.

Sheffield was named the Flo-Sports Player of the Game, tossing seven complete innings and allowing just one run.

The left-hander, who carried a two-hitter into the seventh, ended his second outing of the season with a season-high eight strikeouts. He allowed just five hits in seven innings with one walk.

Sheffield struck out the side to set the tone early in the first inning. He allowed a leadoff double in the second but quickly settled in and retired nine consecutive batters, helping the Wildcats build a lead and capture a 10-2 victory over the Horned Frogs.

More recently, Sheffield turned in his second consecutive quality start in a Wildcat uniform, holding Nebraska to two runs in his 6 1/3 inning start on Sunday. The 2-1 lefty earned the win with seven strikeouts and six hits.

Due to weather conditions, K-State's 2025 season opener against Creighton on Wednesday was canceled. On Friday, the Wildcats (6-5) will take on William & Mary (4-8) in a three-game series at Tointon Family Stadium.

KNOW YOUR OPPONENT

K-State men's basketball looks for 2nd upset of Iowa State on Senior Day

NUMBERS @ AMES

K-STATE

3-POINT %

50%

(10-20 3PT)

REBOUNDS

39 reb.

(25 DR - 14 OR)

T/O'S

18 T/O's

IOWA ST.

3-POINT %

44.4%

(8-18 3PT)

REBOUNDS

29 reb.

(18 DR - 11 OR)

T/O'S

18 T/O's

BRAYDEN MESEKE
staff writer

K-State (15-15, 9-10)

Kansas State knocked off Iowa State last time the pair played in Ames, snapping the Wildcats' 15-game road losing streak. In the 80-61 win, it appeared the Wildcats had figured the Cyclones out. K-State can get another signature win this season with an upset on Saturday.

Forward David N'Guessan upped his scoring output with Coleman Hawkins injured. N'Guessan

has been relentless on the defensive end and glass all season. His all-out effort on senior night should inspire his teammates to do the same.

Guard Brendan Hausen had 15 points last time against Iowa State, including going 9-9 from the foul line. It doesn't seem likely he will shoot that many free throws again, but a big performance at the 3-point line will be helpful for the 'Cats to keep pace with the 'Clones.

Iowa State (22-8, 12-7)

Iowa State comes off a double overtime loss at the hands of BYU. While the Cyclones aren't the best 3-point shooting team overall, they have streaky shooters that can get hot. They also are one of the best defensive teams in the nation and rebound well, making them hard to beat.

Forward Milan Momcilovic was out during the first meeting of these teams, and the Cyclones missed him.

Momcilovic is Iowa State's best shooter and gives the team the ability to stretch the floor so others can attack. The sophomore has great length, making him a solid defender as well.

Guard Tamin Lipsey proved himself as one of the better point guards in the Big 12 this year. Last time against the Wildcats he had 20 points but was out-dueled by K-State's Dug McDaniel. Lipsey will look to return the favor in this contest.

DAVID N'GUESSAN



Photo by Lilly Crist | COLLEGIAN MEDIA GROUP

12:30 P.M. SAT., MARCH 8

WATCH LIVE ON CBS

Page by Toby Hammes | COLLEGIAN MEDIA GROUP

WHO TO WATCH:

K-STATE: F David N'Guessan, G Brendan Hausen

IOWA ST.: F Milan Momcilovic, G Tamin Lipsey

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K-State forwards **Mobi Ikegwuruka** and **David N'Guessan** celebrate together as the Wildcats continued their winning streak to 6 games with a 73-70 win over Arizona on Feb. 11 at Bramlage Coliseum.

"N'GUESSAN"

CONTINUED FROM B1

The foul may be overlooked, but it won K-State the game. Throughout his career, he consistently made the winning play, and the tremendous effort he gives won a lot of 'Cats fans over.

In N'Guessan's first season with the 'Cats, he played in 29 games, including 18 starts. Four starts came in the NCAA tournament when the Wildcats went on their Elite Eight run — which N'Guessan was a big part of as a junior.

During their run in the tournament, N'Guessan scored double figures twice against Montana State and Michigan State. In the all-time classic game against the Spartans, N'Guessan had 11 points and went a perfect 5-5 from the field.

N'Guessan averaged a team-best 70.6 field goal percentage that sea-

son and averaged 6.4 points per game. He was the perfect role player to complement teammates Markquis Nowell and Keyontae Johnson.

However, with those two players graduating, N'Guessan knew he would have to step up his leadership in his next season in the Little Apple.

N'Guessan, a native of the Netherlands, played for the Dutch National team in the summer of 2023, which helped N'Guessan improve his play and made him a better leader.

When he returned to K-State for his first senior season, the hard work and effort paid off, and he quickly became a fan favorite as opposed to a role player.

N'Guessan had a career-best in almost every single offensive scoring stat that season, averaging nearly eight points per game — a steady improvement from last season.

However, after being a top 25 team for most of his first year, the Wildcats sat on the bubble for most of the season and ended up falling



Photo by Payton Lee | COLLEGIAN MEDIA GROUP

David N'Guessan signs a young fan's shirt and poses for photos after the Wildcats defeated No. 16 Cincinnati, 70-67, in K-State's Big 12 opener at Bramlage Coliseum on Dec. 30, 2024.

short of the NCAA tournament.

After the last home game of the season, students and fans were aware that N'Guessan could come back for a super senior season and chanted to him, "One more year."

N'Guessan did decide to play one more season and wanted it to be at K-State. In the era of the transfer portal, staying loyal to a school is rare, but N'Guessan chose Manhattan — even after the expectations for the season fell short and many of his teammates transferred.

In his fifth and final season, N'Guessan once again upped his play, showing that the hard work he put in was paying off.

"I feel like he's one of the very few guys in the country that understands his role and excels at what he does best," guard Dug McDaniel said. "It's evident in the work he puts in; he's in the gym every day, so everything he's doing is not a surprise for me. His consistency and leadership are

going to help us finish strong."

N'Guessan averages a team-high 13 points per game this year and has brought his game to an entire new level. While the Wildcats' season was a roller coaster, N'Guessan was consistent all year.

Now, he looks to lead the Wildcats to a senior day upset win over Iowa State. Then the Wildcats will be off to the Big 12 tournament in Kansas City. The 'Cats have shown they can get hot and win multiple games in a row, which it will take to win the tournament next week.

"I'm just trying to enjoy it as much as I can and finish strong," N'Guessan said. "I want to win, and then we can go make a run in the Big 12 tournament. I'm just trying to take it all in and have as much fun as possible, and that comes with winning."

K-State finishes the regular season with Iowa State at home on Saturday, looking to position itself in a decent seeding spot at Kansas City.

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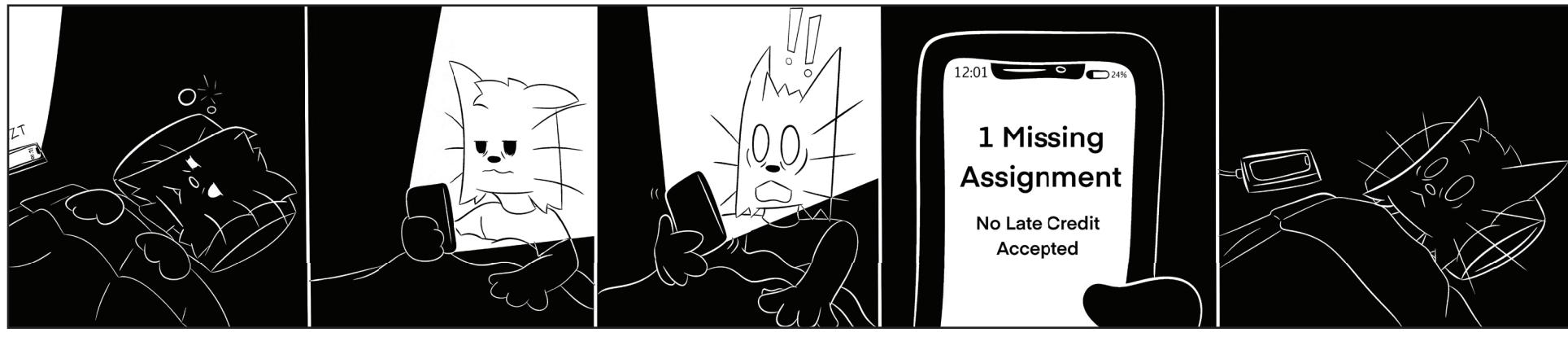


Illustration by Jacob Bush | COLLEGIAN MEDIA GROUP

SUDOKU

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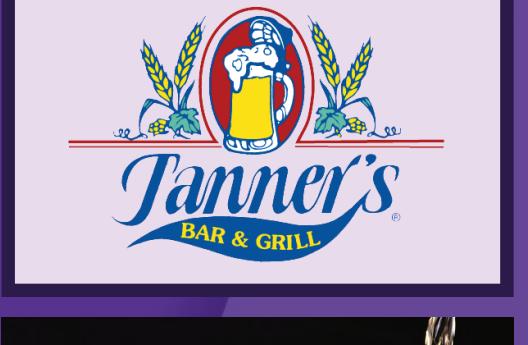
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