



## HerCampus UWG Speaks on Women Empowerment



Photo Courtesy of SGRho

By **Brittany Shivers**

*Contributing Writer*

HerCampus UWG, the local chapter of a national magazine written exclusively by college women, partnered with the Lambda Epsilon Chapter of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority Inc. (SGRho) to host a women's empowerment discussion panel on Feb. 19. The discussion panel took place in the TLC from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. and featured four speakers: Amari Morrison, HerCampus UWG President; Deijah Atkins, HerCampus UWG Vice President; Cherith Moore, National Pan-Hellenic Council Vice President; and Christie Nance, International Second Grand Anti-Basileus for SGRho. The two main topics discussed at the open-forum event were self confidence and self love.

"With self confidence, it is about knowing your worth and knowing who you are intended to be. There is only one you," said Moore. "With self love, you have to love yourself first before anyone else can. And you have to do the things you love in order to achieve that self love that you want." The world has come a long way in terms of women's rights. But there are still some inherent aspects of 21st century culture that encourage women to

compete and tear each other down. Social media trends pit women against each other to see who can be best. Who can post the most appealing pictures? Who does this dance the sexiest? And who just doesn't make the cut? In many ways, it creates a toxic culture where people aren't human. Humans are only images on a pixelated canvas of unhealthy comparison. It is important that women build each other up despite societal pressure to conform. And it is imperative that each and every person love themselves first. "The event itself was eye opening for me because it made me realize that we as women have a lot of work to do to better ourselves," said Morrison. "And this is the first step to breaking down a copious amount of barriers. We need to destroy the stigma that women often put each other down rather than help each other because of our own insecurities. Once we achieve that, it will open opportunities for us to work together as women."

The event also emphasized a growth mindset. People have to start by looking at themselves to pursue growth. Once that process occurs, people can bring their growth into a group. If everyone brings their own personal growth into soci-

ety, then there is hope for drastic change in the current culture as a whole. "We thought it was a great idea to share a few messages on how powerful women are capable of being and how we have to take of ourselves at the same time in order to pursue growth," said Moore.

There is a stigma that when someone puts themselves first they are narcissistic and selfish. The panel discussion addressed this issue by stating that self love is a desirable characteristic and not one of greed. When individuals put themselves first, they are better suited to help others. Therefore, self love is not selfish but is selfless. The panel also discussed the ways that people's environments can impact their self concept negatively. "Sometimes if you are surrounded by people who don't support you, they can hinder the growth and well-being of yourself," said Moore. "Surround yourself with positive individuals who support and care about you and that can help your self-confidence as well." This concept was poetically portrayed in a Will Smith video played at the panel meeting. Smith spoke of how many individuals look to others to determine their own self concept, and it isn't healthy. "It's kind of like look-

### WHAT'S INSIDE

#### ART & ENTERTAINMENT

PAGES 2-4

Is There Any Point in Calling Hollywood Out Anymore?

By Cynthia Harris

The AmericasMart Holds the First Apparel Trade Show of 2020 in Atlanta

By Shelby Carroll

'Birds of Prey' Movie Review

By Haleigh Stone

#### SPORTS

PAGES 4-6

UWG Baseball Earns First Conference Win over Lee

By Amber Bell

The Difficult Truth of Athletics and Sexual Assault

By Justin Hodges

2020 Daytona Speedweeks Overview

By Damani Smith

#### LIVING WEST

PAGES 6-7

Mediterranean Carrollton

By Dabney King

For the Women: Innovation in Eyelash Care

By Ashley Moore

#### NEWS

PAGE 8

Can Little Changes Make Big Habits?

By Dominic Grimaldi

"I Didn't Take Lives. I Saved Lives."

By Mason Ayers

ing into a broken mirror," said Smith. "And then you change your face to try to look good in this defiled, busted, broken mirror."

All individuals can get caught in this trap of deception and lies, but it can especially impact women because of this culture full of facades, sexualizations and the empty satisfaction of outward beauty. The largest takeaway is that women need to learn to support each other to foster an environment of personal and societal growth. "We have to work harder to be successful in our lives," said Moore. "I think this is why some women feel the need to compete amongst each other because we push ourselves to be the best. However, that isn't what it should be. We should all support one another no matter what."



Is There Any Point in Calling Hollywood Out Anymore?

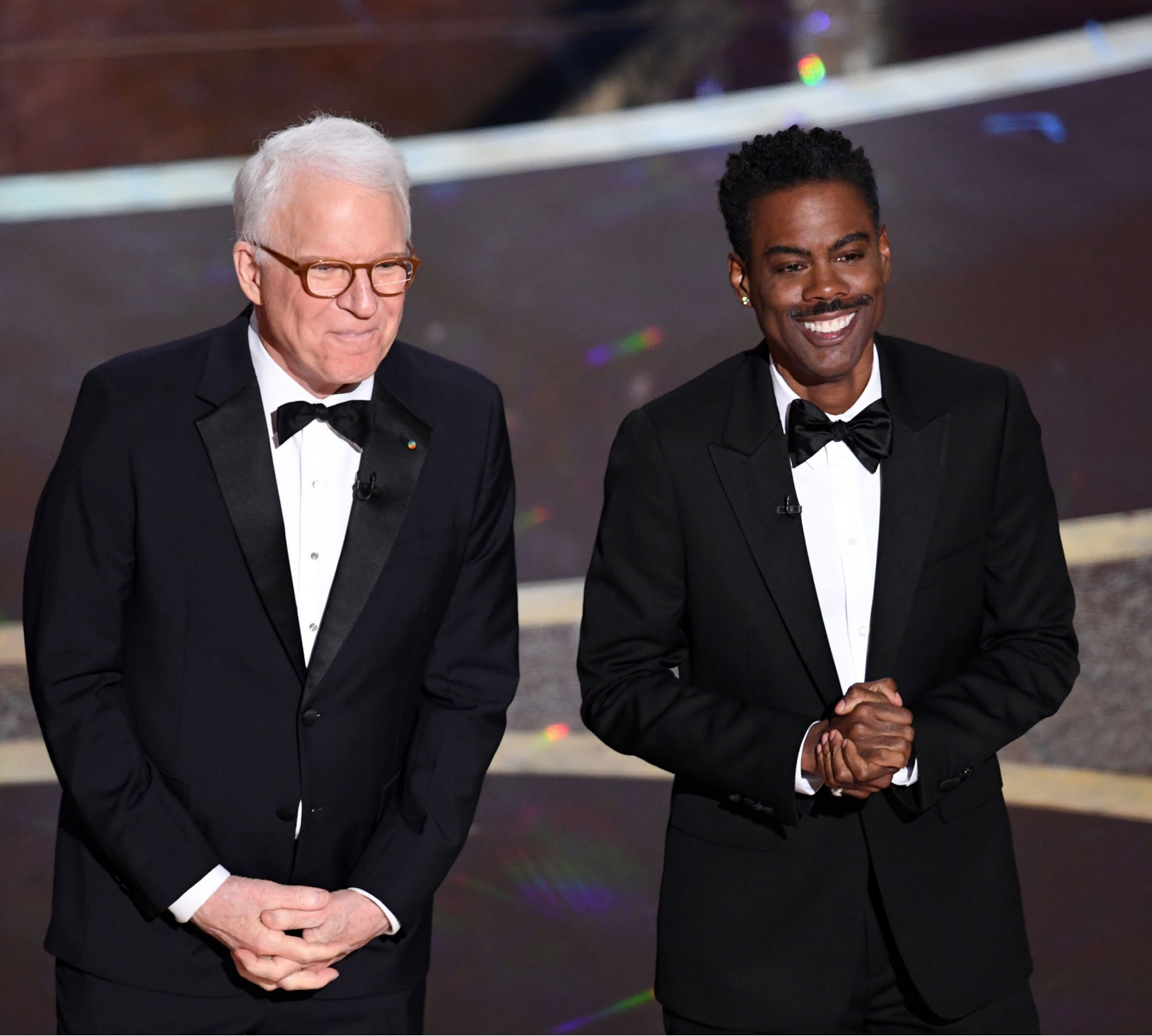


Photo Courtesy of Esquire.com

By Cynthia Harris  
Contributing Writer

The Academy Awards were once something so celebrated. A show meant to bestow honor upon outstanding performances in cinema. Not so much now however, because what the 2020 Oscars had in store was an opening monologue that aimed to call out Hollywood, but it fell flat.

There hasn't been a host in two years for the Oscars, so it is not surprising there wasn't much to expect from the once respectable awards show. But when it was revealed that Steve Martin and Chris Rock would be delivering the welcome, there was a little sliver of hope. That hope was to be quickly washed away. As soon as they issued out one joke together,

I just couldn't help but wonder why they should continue from that point. Because not only could I observe that the timing of the jokes was all over the place, it was clear to me Martin and Rock were not well matched together. Although they are both decent comedians, their comedic styles could not be more different.

As soon as Rock attempted to make a joke about the huge homelessness issue in Hollywood, Martin interrupted him by going on to talk about the mass amount of different stars at the ceremony. Not only did this emit serious laughs from the audience, it had me as a viewer shaking my head. What I got from that joke is that Hollywood knows of the darkness surrounding it yet

they have no intention of wanting to talk about it. For what it's worth, the message has always been that Hollywood is magic and can turn anyone into a star. If that's their image, why would celebrities want to hear anything about a homelessness problem, especially at the Academy Awards? It's pretty much a situation they can laugh at... which they did. As far as A-list celebrities are concerned, the only thing they want to hear about is themselves and their own talents. Everything else is literally a bad joke. The jokes about the lack of acknowledgment of diversity and race were the only ones that seemed to strike the nerve of anyone in the audience. Even with all of the #OscarsSoWhite controversy of a few years back, the only

black performance nominated this year was Cynthia Erivo for "Harriet". The joke that Cynthia was so good as Harriet Tubman that she managed to hide all the black nominees, went right over many audience goers' heads but it was still awkward to say the least.

Hollywood has so many unresolved issues involving everything from race to abuse, that telling the truth is not going to get anyone much of anywhere. That appears to be the main reason why Martin and Rock's opening did all but put everyone to sleep. It was untimely, not well done and ultimately not well received. The only question anyone could ask after was "Is there really any point in calling Hollywood out anymore?"

THE WEST  
GEORGIAN

Justin Hodges  
Editor-in-Chief

Tre Wade  
Graphic Designer

Mathew Harvey  
News Editor

Brittany Shivers  
Feature Editor

Taylor Jackson  
Copy Editor

Jada Carswell  
Webmaster

Richard Shah  
Photographer

John Sewell, Ph.D.  
Advisor





Photo Courtesy of AmericasMart

# The AmericasMart Holds the First Apparel Trade Show of 2020 in Atlanta

**By Shelby Carroll**  
*Contributing Writer*

The AmericasMart held their first wholesale apparel trade show of the year in Atlanta, Jan. 27 - Feb. 1. The AmericasMart is a permanent wholesale clothing marketplace which first began in Atlanta and currently hosts up to 16 markets and shows a year. Related apparel markets are held annually at various locations across the United States in Georgia, Illinois, Texas, New York and Nevada. The Atlanta market serves as the nation's largest gift mart destination. All of the shows serve designers, specialty retailers and major buying groups from more than 70 countries and every state in the U.S. The first apparel market introduced an array of new Spring styles for this year. While gift markets and bridal shows are

held in the meantime, the next apparel trade show will take place at Atlanta's AmericasMart in April.

The existence of apparel trade shows and markets like these have given young women the opportunity to gain experience and education working in the fashion industry. While buyers and exhibitors must possess a license to buy and sell at events, employment opportunities are offered by vendors and given at their discretion. The markets allow young entrepreneurs the opportunity to be influenced by the fashion industry first hand, but also allows them the opportunity to influence the industry itself. Katie Paris is a college student that has worked with the company and show vendor By Together for the past four years. "Markets influence the fashion industry because they

introduce boutique owners to new things," said Paris. "They help them step out of their comfort zone and try new styles that they haven't tried before. I like pushing customers to do that. This really builds their business by showing them what's on trend this year and every new market!"

When markets are not taking place in Atlanta they continue on in their other show locations and convention centers across the U.S. The first apparel market of the year itself was held at the Dallas Market Center the week of Jan. 14. The second show of the year was the one held at the AmericasMart in Atlanta the week of Jan. 27. The third apparel trade show was held in Las Vegas the first week of February at the Mandalay Bay Convention Center. The fourth and most recent show took place at the Jacob Javits Center in New York City, Feb. 11-13.

AmericasMart in Atlanta keeps their show names simple and descriptive by sticking to the term "Atlanta Apparel." Other market locations have coined different names for their shows. The show in Chicago has been named Stylemax. The apparel shows in New York go by the title Fame. The shows in Las Vegas go by the name Magic.

Wholesale apparel markets and trade shows are a great opportunity for experienced as well as inexperienced individuals to find an active place within the fashion industry. If you are not interested in the entrepreneurial or business aspect, the shows themselves are always adorned with stylish decorations and filled with the latest trends. Whether you are a buyer, an exhibitor, or simply there for the experience, the apparel markets are events worth attending.



Photo: Shelby Carroll, *The West Georgian*



# ‘Birds of Prey’ Movie Review

By **Haleigh Stone**

*Contributing Writer*

“Birds of Prey: And The Fantabulous Emancipation of One Harley Quinn” is now sweeping the box offices nationwide since its release on Feb. 7. “Birds of Prey” is the first movie of the D.C. Extended Universe movies to be released with a primarily all-female cast. Harley Quinn is previously featured in the D.C. Extended Universe movie “Suicide Squad” which received harsh criticism by viewers and critics alike. Although “Suicide Squad” surpassed “Birds of Prey” in the box office, viewers and critics alike give the film an overwhelming thumbs up to Harley

Quinn’s newest release.

Harley Quinn is shown in a new light in “Birds of Prey” after her emancipation from her long time love the Joker. Ready to celebrate her new independence, Quinn is met with dozens of foes ready to pounce on her now that she is standing on her own, one of which being the Black Mask. After some smooth negotiations which are key to Quinn’s personality, she is given 24 hours to find the Bertinelli crime family’s diamond and the child pickpocket Cassandra Cain.

With a time crunch and a \$500,000 reward on both Quinn and Cain’s heads, the pair seem to become an unexpected duo with a mother and daughter like bond. With a steep

reward for the women, Quinn finds it hard to carry out her plan solo. Along the way, she makes some unexpected allies who are also ready to leave the shadows of the men who own them.

“Birds of Prey” does a fantastic job of switching up the narrative on female heroes and villains. Harley Quinn, The Huntress, Black Canary, detective Renee Montoya and Cassandra Cain make for an entertaining allegiance. All the women at the beginning of the film are either hidden in the shadows of the leading men in their lives or used by them. The main themes of the film shows that women are more powerful when they work together and that women too can be saviors without men.

The film had stunning graphics and well-composed fight scenes which were the perfect amount of gore. The fight scenes were married with just the right amount

of dialogue which ensured each deadly woman was understood in her own right. There are multiple mini climaxes which lead to an all-out brawl of the women vs Gotham. The smaller climaxes are key for character development and allow for viewers to see the growth in Harley Quinn which is what the film is all about.

Overall, “Birds of Prey: And the Fantabulous Emancipation of One Harley Quinn” is a hit and earns a 9/10. The combination of a badass female-dominant cast, top-notch action scenes and an all-female soundtrack help showcase a cohesive theme of female power throughout. Anyone who disliked and hoped for more from “Suicide Squad” would thoroughly enjoy this rendition of Harley Quinn. “Birds of Prey” has surely changed Harley Quinn’s role as a villain and evolved her into an anti-hero.

## SPORTS

# UWG Baseball Earns First Conference Win over Lee

By **Amber Bell**

*Contributing Writer*

The UWG Wolves baseball team won their first conference series in their 2020 campaign against Lee University this past weekend in Cleveland, TN. This was the third consecutive series win for the Wolves. Pitcher Taylor Boisclair, the senior out of Alto, GA, took the mound on Saturday for his third start of the season. So far in the 2020 campaign, Boisclair has thrown 16.1 innings and holds a 4.96 earned run average. Boisclair finished the game throwing six innings allowing three runs, while striking out six. As the Flames took a 3-0 lead, the Wolves finally scratched a run across the plate in the seventh inning on a Jermond Williams double, scoring Dan Oberst. Brandon Stuckenschneider came in during the sev-

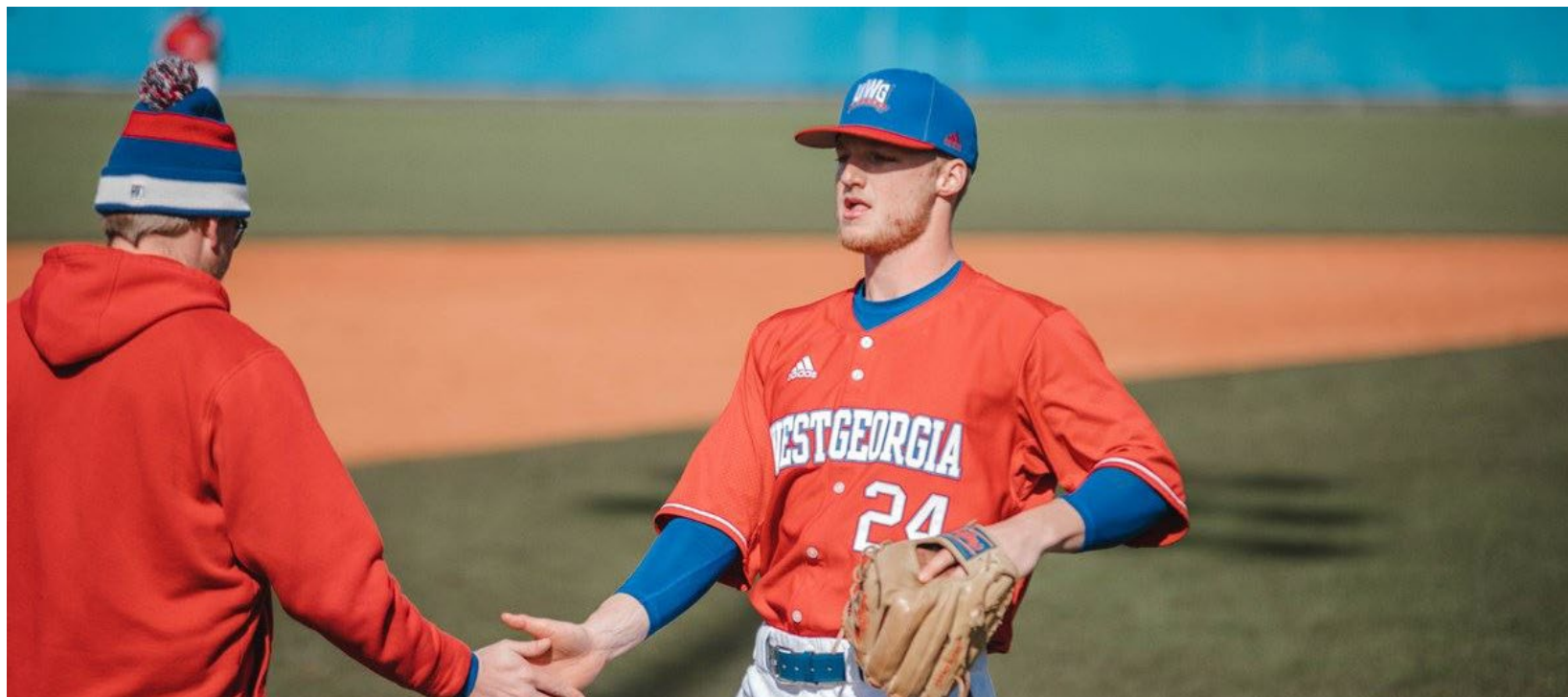
enth, inevitably allowing three earned runs in his inning. The Wolves ended up losing the first game of the double header 6-2.

The Wolves came out swinging right away in the second game, with the first three Wolves batters all reaching base. John Michael McRae started the game with a leadoff single, followed by two consecutive walks to Dylan Johnson and Collin Moore. Oberst drove in the first run of the game with a groundout and Williams would later knock a run in on an infield single, giving the Wolves an early 2-0 lead in the top of the first. Robert Coleman toed the rubber for game two. After surrendering a first inning home run and facing a bases loaded jam, Coleman was able to pitch out of it and limit damage. Coleman ended his day throwing three innings, only allowing two runs while punching out six.

Oberst led-off the third inning and started another rally, with the Wolves scoring a few more runs to build their lead. Brody Wortham would later double that inning, driving home both Oberst and Lane Griffith. Sawyer Steele and Cory Bartholomew would combine to throw the final four innings of the game, striking out nine of the last 12 batters they faced. The Wolves prevailed in game two by winning 6-3. Steele would pick up his first win of the season with his efforts in relief.

Ryan Parker gave the Wolves a solid start in game 3 of the series. He threw four innings, allowing no earned runs. Lee jumped out to an early 3-0 lead in the bottom of the first due to a couple Wolves’ errors. However, the Wolves started chipping away in the third inning. The offense posted a single run in

three consecutive innings, tying the game up at three a piece. They would later explode for three runs in the sixth inning. Wortham began the sixth with a laced single. Followed by a few scattered hits by Oberst, McRae and Fointno, the Wolves would take a 6-3 lead heading into the seventh inning. C.J. Fehrbach came on in relief, throwing three innings while giving up a run in both the seventh and eighth inning. Steele would later come in the final inning and close the door, picking up the save in the 6-5 game. The Wolves improved their record to 7-3 on the season. They will take on the University of Montevallo Falcons this upcoming weekend for a three game series at Cole Field, where they will look to keep the momentum they have built against the 7-3 Falcons.



*Photo Courtesy of Colton Lublink*



# The Difficult Truth of Athletics and Sexual Assault

By Justin Hodges

*Editor-in-Chief*

Athletes are some of the most influential figures across the world, serving as heroes and providing endless inspiration for many. So when we learn that our heroes are capable of horrible acts it's difficult to accept. In most cases, involving athletes with crimes of sexual and domestic assault fans own an option to just never accept it.

We live in a society where the reputations of our heroes are more vital than justice for those they harm. Any party involved, aside from the victim, wants imputations of rape and assault swept under the rug and for us regular folks to never know about it. Thankfully, social media provides an outlet for us to become aware of these heinous happenings and forces action and attention onto those committing the crime.

However, there will always be an easy out for the defendant in these cases: the notion of victim blaming. Leigh Gilmore's book "Tainted Witness" exposes how the court of law means to portray these female accusers as greedy, attention seeking and out for vengeance, when in reality this is a simple strategy of manipulation.

"Victim blaming seeks to degrade individual women's capacity to receive sympathy, understanding and justice by shifting focus and responsibility away from perpetrators and onto the victims," writes Gilmore. "Asking of women 'what did you do to deserve this?' falsely represents a woman's vulnerability to harm as willful choice or risk-taking behavior."

Given this notion, there are plenty of cases of fable in these sorts of accusations. I myself have been

in a relationship where my partner began spreading lies that I abused and assaulted her, and the reactions were devastating. There are plenty of innocent men in jail cells over false rape accusations, it is a side of this spectrum that we cannot ignore.

What we cannot allow is acting like the women are constantly lying, these instances are too sensitive and all circumstantial. Evil comes in many forms however there are blanketed cases such as Lizzy Seeberg. In 2011 this St. Mary's college student was raped by a Notre Dame football player. Lizzy went to the police to report the crime, and a friend of the player sent her a series of texts saying "Don't do anything you would regret, messing with Notre Dame football is a bad idea," according to the Washington Post.

Ten days after reporting the attack to campus police, Seeberg committed suicide. Investigators never interviewed the accused player until five days after her death, yet they were relentless in investigating Lizzy herself, going as far to debrief a former roommate at another school. Her close friend that inevitably found her was reportedly too afraid to even tell anyone, after witnessing what the university was putting Seeberg through in those ten days. The player was never convicted and never sat out a game.

Thankfully the media has done its part in exposing, and in some cases reminding us, that this is something that is just allowed to happen, that priority number one with these crimes is not to seek justice but to prevent exposure of it's happening. Because of this, those with appellate power bring war to these victims, excused by the notion that these sit-

uations are too catastrophic for the legacies of these celebrities and the organizations. But is it really?

Two well-respected and well-recognized figures in the game of basketball, Dallas Mavericks owner Mark Cuban and Michigan State head basketball coach Tom Izzo, are guilty of covering up harassment and assault in their organizations. An investigative report done by Sports Illustrated revealed an ongoing-series of workplace misogyny in the Mavericks organization. Then team President & CEO Terdema Ussery was exposed getting in elevators with female staff and uttering claims such as "You're going to get gang-banged, you're definitely going to get gang-banged this weekend."

The team's beat-writer at the time pleaded guilty to eventually dropped charges of beating his girlfriend to a pulp, never faced punishment from the team, dated a female colleague years later and eventually assaulted her as well, to which he still continued working for the team after. These were far from the only examples, with former employees labeling it "a real life Animal House" and having to accept that men in the organization were given the leeway to do whatever they pleased to these women.

Michigan State athletics are now notorious in this regard because of Larry Nassar, but he was far from the only spot of filth in the school's athletic department. Tom Izzo, who has won championships and is a deity of that campus, in 2011 was made well aware of a staff assistant named Travis Walton belligerently assaulting his partner numerous times and two of his players raping a freshman at her orientation. Nobody was

executed from the program and both of those players, Adreian Payne and Keith Appling, spent time in the NBA before the Detroit Free Press exposed them.

The final point I want to make in terms of damaged reputation is a tale of the friendship between Kobe Bryant and Michael Jackson, who grew a great bond after Jackson got Kobe's number and reached out to him after being drafted. Both would face sexual abuse allegations around the same time in the early 2000's and we have believable evidence that both were likely innocent. This didn't change that the public perception of both was destroyed, and the world saw the King of Pop go off the deep end as a result. Kobe on the other hand, took the hate he knew he'd inevitably receive and became the Mamba. He embraced being hated, dedicated himself to self-improvement and became a cultural hero off the court and a true advocate for women's athletics.

If you take away anything from this, simply be aware that this is a legitimate issue in the world of sports and culture and the fact that these organizations will go to no end to make sure you're oblivious to it should feel like a slap in the face. Treat every instance of this kind as its own case, and don't let anything aside from your interpretation of the occurrence affect your thoughts on it. There are too many women falling helpless to the power of men because they are convinced that the truth will do nothing for them. We cannot tolerate domestic and sexual assault being treated as anything other than a purely inhumane crime suitably punishable by life in a box.



Image Courtesy of Mona Shafer Edwards



# 2020 Daytona Speedweeks Overview

By **Damani Smith**  
*Contributing Writer*

Every NASCAR season starts at the Daytona International Speedway in Daytona Beach, FL annually for Speedweeks, which is a series of events leading up to the biggest race of the year, the Daytona 500. The first major event is “The Clash,” which is a non-points paying race that is only 75 laps and is run on Sunday the week prior. Erik Jones won that event after being caught up in multiple accidents. The next race is run on Thursday night. The Duel at Daytona determines the starting lineup for the Daytona 500 and who misses the Daytona 500. Daniel Suarez, NASCAR’s only foreign driver and one of the most popular drivers, had to race his way in since his qualifying speed was not enough to get him into the big show. He was in a position to make it in the big shoe, until being caught up in an accident involving another driver, Ryan Blaney. Blaney took full responsibility for the accident, which cost Suarez

a chance to race in the Daytona 500. Ultimately, Joey Logano won the first 60-lap race, while William Byron won the second. The third race of Speedweeks was the NASCAR Truck Series 250-mile race. This race saw driver Ty Majeski end up on his roof after only 15 laps. He was okay, walking away under his own power. This event saw Natalie Decker, one of two female drivers in the race, finished fifth, which set a record for the highest finishing woman in the NASCAR Truck Series. Ultimately, Grant Enfinger beat Jordan Anderson in a photo-finish. The closest margin of victory in the Truck Series ever, .01 seconds, was a highlight that will go down in history as one of NASCAR’s greatest finishes. One of the biggest storylines was Anderson being the underdog who had little money to race a few years ago, and ultimately almost won the biggest race of his career. It is a true underdog story, since he runs his own team and has little funding and sponsorship

dollars, compared to the team Enfinger drives for. S a t u r d a y ’ s NASCAR Xfinity Series race saw many wrecks, a lot of action and a first-time winner. Last year’s winner, Michael Annett, was caught up in an early accident. He later went back in contention for the win until being caught up in another accident, ultimately resulting in an 11th place finish. His teammate Jeb Burton led the most laps, 26, before he as well crashed out of the race. Their other teammate, Noah Gragson, would end up grabbing his first career victory as Annett went airborne on the final lap and forced NASCAR to throw out a caution. With Gragson leading, this meant he was the winner of the race. Sunday saw the start of the Daytona 500. Prior to the green flag, President Donald Trump arrived at the track to speak to the fans, give the drivers the command to start their engines, and take laps around the track in the President’s vehicle. The race was pushed back an hour, starting

at 3:30 p.m. instead of the scheduled 2:30 p.m. start originally planned. The race was run for 20 laps before the rain came and delayed it to Monday evening. The Daytona 500 was set to go back racing at 4 p.m. which ultimately resulted in the completion of the race. Denny Hamlin won in a photo finish. He beat Ryan Blaney to the line by only a matter of inches. However, the race was overshadowed by a horrific accident involving 19-year NASCAR veteran Ryan Newman being spun at the start/finish line at the finish in an intense battle for the win. Newman went airborne, landing on his roof, and hit at about 200MPH by Corey LaJoie, who finished 8th in the race. Newman was sent to the hospital, underwent surgery and was released from the hospital on Wednesday, Feb. 19. Overall, Speedweeks was eventful and was nothing short of intense.

## LIVING WEST



Photo: Richard Shah, *The West Georgian*

# Mediterranean Carrollton

By **Dabney King**  
*Contributing Writer*

A new restaurant has just opened up in Carrollton. PITA a Mediterranean Street Food chain made its grand opening on this past Valentine’s Day from 6-8 p.m. where they gave away their best-selling menu items like gyros, chicken gyros and falafels. The grand opening was flooded with excited customers ready to try something new. The parking lot was completely full, and overflow had to park on the extra road beside the strip mall on the oppo-

site side of PITA. The line was out the door and snaked its way down the sidewalk in front of the building blocking the store fronts of Tropical Smoothie Café, and the soon to be open Five Guys. The kitchen area has a huge clear glass between customers and the workers cooking the food so you can watch as your food is getting cooked but also hear them shouting out other orders. The cash register is straight back to the wall where four TV monitors are all together in one big rectangle shape displaying their menu. Their menu consists of

street pitas, rice bowls, loaded fries, Greek fries, mezza spreads, pita platters, salads, desserts, a kid’s menu and some extras you can order as well. The vibe of the restaurant was very casual, but it was almost like going to Pita Pit or Moe’s Southwest Grill. The food was delicious, and they were very fast about getting it out in a timely manner. The signature street pita with a side of fries and a fountain drink was phenomenal. The fries were thin little steak fries like you can get at Steak N Shake almost right across the street, but

they actually season their fries which were delicious. The lamb in the pita was cut into thin slivers with an extra crunch. The white sauce or cheese type stuff they added on top was a perfect addition along with the tzatziki sauce they cooked the meat in. As far as price range goes it is more on the pricey side with the meal being about \$13 altogether, but they have daily deals throughout the week that are cheaper options without breaking the bank. If you have a few extra bucks to spend it is definitely an excellent choice to nourish your body.





Image Courtesy of Glam House & Co.

# For the Women: Innovation in Eyelash Care

**By Ashley Moore**

*Contributing Writer*

Female executives have been on the rise these past couple of years. Women are now opening boutiques, firms and practices. Whether it is online or in-store, the #GirlBoss feminine success has led to an empowerment among women like never before. Some women are even utilizing their business to spread a message of empowerment, reminding fellow women to embrace who they are.

Having worked as a Jules & James Boutique employee, Allie Smith developed a passion for interacting with others and instilling confidence in women. She had a vision of someday opening a formal dress store, but the costs associated were higher than expected. Smith then decided to open a business that specializes in safe eyelash extensions, which she brought to Carrollton, GA, as Glam House & Co., on Aug. 16, 2019. Glam House & Co. also offers spray tans, eyebrow shaping and makeup services.

Smith became interested in eyelash extensions when she heard about them from one of her peers. Smith got her eyelashes done often but was not aware of the consequences of having them. "I didn't know anything about eyelashes, so I had no idea. I went to a girl that was not licensed and did it out of her house," said Smith. "I didn't think that that really mattered. I just figured she knew what she was doing, and then I didn't have any eyelashes."

Upon realizing the damage it caused to her natural eyelashes, Smith understood that the individual putting them on her was not a licensed

professional. Although her eyelashes were damaged, Smith was still interested in the concept of eyelash extensions.

One of Smith's co-workers had a friend who owned a lash studio in Texas. The owner suggested that Smith should open a lash studio in Carrollton, since it seemed like an ideal location. However, Smith was once completely opposed to the idea of opening a business.

Smith gradually began to acknowledge that eyelash extensions were a concept worth pursuing. Eyelash extensions were the only service Smith originally planned to offer clients, but she did not know where to begin. At minimum, Smith knew that licensed professionals, customer service and eyelash safety were crucial.

Smith went back to her former employer, Alison Grooms, and pitched an entire business plan. Grooms then gave insight on how to make Smith's vision become a reality. The process of opening Glam House & Co. was more difficult than Smith imagined, especially as a 22-year-old female.

"I was 22 and most of the people that I interviewed and tried to employ were older than me. And I feel like a lot of times it's harder for someone younger to be in charge of someone older," said Smith. "I have had to learn and grow a lot in that aspect. I am very tender hearted and compassionate, so it's like a give and take of that, trying to find a happy medium."

Smith was not aware of the legal logistics required to start a business, nor where or how to begin that process. Grooms had a sister-in-law, Leah,

James, that worked from the legal standpoint of her business. Leah joined the Glam House & Co. team and helped Smith launch her business.

"Honestly, Glam House wouldn't be here if it wasn't for Alison and Leah, because we all three bring different aspects to the table," said Smith.

In the process of opening, Smith realized that she could go beyond offering eyelash extensions at Glam House & Co. Smith had a licensed cosmetologist who took courses on microblading to expand Smith's services. Smith's sister knew how to do spray tans, and Glam House & Co.'s services quickly began to expand.

Smith created an Instagram account for Glam House & Co., which developed a heavy following much quicker than she expected. Smith began posting for hires that could provide an 'over the top' experience for her future clientele. Finding employees was more difficult than Smith originally anticipated.

"Employees, that was a hard thing for me. I had a good bit of employees when we first opened," said Smith. "But the thing is, it's hard to find lash techs that know what they're doing, can apply extensions properly without causing damage to your lashes, that have good customer service skills... that know how to keep their area clean. There are a lot of aspects that go into it, and I am really thankful for the girls that I do have." Smith initially planned to open in mid-Spring or early Summer 2019, but she was constantly waiting for government documentation and verification.

"Our social media did take off pretty fast,

but I just wish I would've known the timeline better. You know, instead of it being two months before we actually opened and opening had stuff to even show people," said Smith. "We had initially planned for a sooner opening, but with the government it is a lot of 'hurry up and wait.'"

Since Aug. 2019, Smith's business has continually been on the rise. She is now planning to expand the amount of space available at her business in Carrollton and offer several new services. Some of these services include, but are not limited to, teeth whitening, makeup classes, facials and a dry bar. Smith also has a goal of opening multiple locations in college towns.

Although the entrepreneurial experience for Smith has been rewarding in terms of her client and social media base, she says customer service is the greatest achievement of Glam House & Co.

"Enhancing beauty, embracing confidence, and empowering women to be who God called them to be is our mission statement," said Smith. "I want to create a relaxing experience for women who are continually on the go."

Smith strives to give women a confidence boost and empowerment through Glam House & Co. She is aware that her clients have busy schedules. However, Smith is determined to make the experience memorable and relaxing for anyone that comes through Glam House & Co.'s doors. "At the end of the day, all of the money or Instagram followers does not fall into our greatest achievements," said Smith. "It's how we serve other women."



## Can Little Changes Make Big Habits?

By Dominic Grimaldi

Contributing Writer

New Year's resolutions, we all either love them or hate them. The turning of a new year often inspires us to implement some radical form of change. This could be anything from working out weekly to reading a new book every month. The goals we set are all over the place, often both unrealistic and unreachable. However, James Clear, the author of *Atomic Habits: An Easy & Proven Way to Build Good Habits & Break Bad Ones*, has something to say about this. Clear is a highly accomplished businessman and speaker. He has been featured in organizations including the New York

Times, Time, Entrepreneur, and CBS This Morning. Based off of the principles he teaches in this book, Clear has founded the Habits Academy, a leadership training organization.

He speaks often at Fortune 500 companies, and his strategies are used by several teams in the NBA, NFL, and MLB. His book, published by Penguin Randomhouse, makes a radical claim. Improving your habits by 1% every day is vastly more useful than setting goals at all! The message is simple. The easiest and most effective way to create good habits is to set a small goal to begin with. If you are able to stick with and improve this goal by 1% every day, you will start to see marked habitual dif-

ferences. The purpose of *Atomic Habits* is to show you how to create and sustain good habits and kill off bad ones. Clear breaks this down into several specific examples as he moves through each chapter. In this book, you will learn how to create a system for improving by 1% every day. From there, the book will cover breaking bad habits, common mistakes made when changing habits, overcoming lack of motivation or willpower, developing an identity, creating new habits, creating 1% changes, getting back into a habit after losing it and application to real life. *Atomic Habits* is an amazing book about powerful, basic changes we can make in our own lives. The book is both affordable and readable and is great for any student looking for easy and clear insight into self improvement. *Atomic Habits* is one of the best self improvement

books I have ever read. The strategies Clear introduces are simple, effective, and easily implemented. I have been following his 1% change guideline for only one month, and I have already witnessed an incredible difference.

The sections on motivation and willpower. Instead of just forcing ourselves to do things, Clear claims that restructuring our environments is the better thing to do. Changing our environment in small ways alters our entire perception. Doing 10 pushups every day will most likely be more effective than setting unachievable goals. If you want to read a book every month, place the book on your pillow every night. I guarantee you'll read it, more often than not. After reading *Atomic Habits*, I hope your New Year's resolutions will not be quite so daunting.

## “I Didn’t Take Lives. I Saved Lives.”



Photo Courtesy of Dewey Ayers

By Mason Ayers

Contributing Writer

In war, there are no second chances. Split second decisions make all the difference between life and death. One misstep or one bad move could prove to be catastrophic. There exists no time for joy and there exists no time for miscalculation.

Once a person has decided to commit themselves to war, their life changes forever. This was the experience of Dewey Ayers Sr. as he joined the U.S. Air Force on his 18th birthday. Initially planning on joining the Army, Ayers was redirected to the Air Force due to his high test score. There, he became a member of the U.S. Strategic Air Command, as well as, Air Force Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting in the Korean War.

Serving as a rescue in the Korean War for three years, Ayers made it a point never to fire his weapon. At times, he found himself in the middle of the line of fire. Even in the hostility of war, surrounded by bloodshed, Ayers still didn't shoot his gun. He felt it was his duty to save people, not harm them.

“There were times we had to get under the firetrucks because of the fights between the soldiers,” said Ayers. “Many times, we had to crawl under the trucks to keep from getting shot in the middle of the cross-fire. We had weapons. We had carbines, but we never used them. The only time we used them was to clean them. They never got dirty, but we cleaned them. In Korea, we had Marines back us up. They did the fight-

ing. We did the rescue.” Along with the war overseas, Ayers faced a constant battle at home as well. After dedicating himself to fighting for his country, Ayers took on a new fight. As a black man in the 1950s, he felt it was time to dedicate himself to fighting for his people. “I’ve served my country,” said Ayers. “Now, I’ve got to serve my race. So, I never quit. I went from one fight to the other. I went into service for the country, because I felt like I was needed. When I got out of the service, I fought for rights. I was very, very active. We were always involved in demonstrations. As far as going to restaurants, we would do sit-ins. Buses, we did a lot of things. I think, maybe, the military made me more active. We never drew a line as far as race

was concerned. You were an American. It wasn't about black or white, we were Americans.”

Today, Ayers still receives medals and honors for his service. He has an Ambassador for Peace Medal from the Republic of Korea, as well as, a Defense Exceptionally Distinguished Service Medal from the Secretary of Defense. He also has an exceptional duty and honor Certificate for Distinguished Service from congress, as well as, a signed birthday letter from President Barack Obama, just to name a few.

“A lot of people would ask me about how many people I shot and killed,” said Ayers. “Well, let me tell you. I didn't kill anybody. I didn't take lives. I saved lives. My whole career was saving lives. I didn't ever shoot anybody.”