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**EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMALS** APPROVED ON CAMPUS MARIA JESUS MARTINEZ Contributing Writer

Skai, a 7-month-old Argentine Dogo, lives with her owner, Mackenzie Gresham, and Gresham's roommate on the campus of UWG. She spends her time playing with toys and being around Gresham. Her owner needs her around because she is an Emotional Support Animal.

An Emotional Support Animal, also abbreviated ESA, is a pet certified by a licensed healthcare professional that is capable of emo-tionally alleviating a person with a mental health

tionally alleviating a person with a mental health condition through companionship or comfort. "There was a guy that was giving away dogs at the Kroger parking lot near Car-rollton, and a woman caught Skai there be-cause she was running away," said Gresham. "When she saw me, she asked, 'Do you want a dog?' and I said, 'Of course, why not?"" At that precise moment, Gresh-am was going with her now ex-boyfriend and some friends to the grocery store to buy something for dinner. Her mind was not set on getting a pet let alone an Emotional Sun-

on getting a pet, let alone an Emotional Sup-port Animal, but life had not been easy for her. "I like to say that she came at the cor-

rect time, because I was really stressed and go-ing through a lot," said Gresham. "When she came she added more responsibility for sure, but she also helped me manage my stress as well. "A little after I found her, I broke up with the heavy weight becomes a breath of fresh air. "She has definitely improved my men-tal the heavy of Gresham "She has definitely improved my men-tal the heavy of Gresham" "She has definitely improved my men-tal health, my health in general and my life in the heavy of Gresham" "She has definitely improved my men-

Photo Courtesy of Mackenzie Gresham Gresham trained her dog at Petco and Skai was certified by Gresham's thera-pist to become an Emotional Support Animal. pist to become an Emotional Support Animal. The next step was to do the paperwork to let Skai live with her in her dorm. It was an easy process to get a letter written from her thera-pist that approved her pet of being an Emo-tional Support Animal. However, it was a little difficult when trying to get Skai on campus. "I had to figure out who I needed to talk to, that was the most difficult thing, be-cause I was using therapy off campus so I

talk to, that was the most difficult uning, oc-cause I was using therapy off campus, so I wasn't able to find someone in the counsel-ing center to help me," said Gresham. "Then I found out about Erin Williams, through a co-worker that had an ESA and he was able to give me her email and contact information.'

After some time with her dog in her daily life, Gresham noticed improvements in many aspects of herself and her habits. "I struggle with stress, anxiety man-

agement and seasonal depression," said Gresham. "Having a dog means that you have to get up the bed and walk the dog and that has forced me to come outside and inter-act with people when otherwise wouldn't."

Gresham notices a pattern when it comes to Skai. When Gresham is doing her homework or hurrying up to meet a dead-line, she would feel a weight on her chest. Ev-

sne also neiped me manage my stress as well. "A little after I found her, I broke up with my boyfriend," continued Gresham. "Whenever I would get sad about it, she would just come and lay in my lap as she knew that something was bothering me, so I was like 'maybe I should give her training to be an Emotional Support Animal."" She has definitely improved my men-tal health, my health in general and my life in general," said Gresham. "She keeps me active as I am the type of person who would stay in-side all day long if I could and she definitely gets me outgoing and talking to people, being an active part of society or my community."

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**Romance Writer Emphasizes** the Importance of Black Love **Through Books** By Samira Barnett

Ant-Man and the Wasp: **Ouantumania**; Phase 5 in Effect By Myles Williams

"We would like to discuss open-



said Akins. "ChatGPT is one among in research and educational settings."" many artificial intelligence (AI) tools. AI However, this does not mean can be used to augment learning and fa- that ChatGPT will allow students to cilitate student experiences in academia." abandon academic honesty as some

#### RACHAEL BROWN Contributing Writer

ChatGPT the has

"The rapid development of AI and other technologies is changing education and assessment, offering diverse ways of utilization," said Dr. Ralitsa Akins, Vice Provost at UWG. "The Provost's Office, UWG's Faculty Senate, and the Institute for Faculty Excellence (IFE) are engaged in conversations about the best way to include AI tools in teaching and learning."

Although we will likely see "Students could use ChatGPT to genermore use of AI tools in the classroom, they will not replace teachers or other resources anytime soon.

"AI tools, such as ChatGPT, have their limitations and cannot replace the authentic experience that UWG students have in interactions with their professors,"

While many concerned are about the ways that ChatGPT can be Hazari, UWG Professor of Marketing, used to cheat, there are signs that it was one of the first to publish a book on jor shift in technology that has impacted can be used to help students instead. ChatGPT. '100 Useful ChatGPT prompts education, and it will likely not be the

"Instead of seeing ChatGPT as for Students, Educators, & Researchers' last. There has already been discussion a challenge, we can view it as a catalyst demonstrates 'how the ChatGPT mod- about how it will make a positive iminto the next age of higher education," el can be fine-tuned for specific tasks pact on students and educators alike.

There are many ways that this can have suggested. Although the AI tool poten- be accomplished. Akins is using ChatGPT has been famously used to pass exams tial to have a positive impact on to create authentic assessments and teach- and write essays for students, academ-UWG if students and teachers are ing assignments that will help students ic honesty is vital to students' education committed to using it responsibly. translate in-class learning to practical beyond simply earning a letter grade. "Academic honesty is a cornerknowledge that can be used on the job.

> "Assigning authentic assessments stone in academia," Akins said. "At UWG, and teaching assignments that require we value and uphold academic honesty as students to apply the skills and knowl- an important part of achieving one's acedge they develop in their courses to ademic degree. Faculty educate students real-world situations engages students on strategies to maintain academic integmore deeply in their learning by giving rity and encourage them to develop their them a sense of authority and encour-own skills and knowledge as a means of aging critical reflection," said Akins. both personal and professional growth."

ate ideas for an authentic assessment." It and often with students the ethical Mandi Campbell, Director of use of ChatGPT and other AI programs UWG's Institute for Faculty Excel-and tools," said Campbell. "By demonlence, also emphasizes the importance strating appropriate uses of such techof faculty educating students in this way. nology, we will be able to augment and "The ways in which ChatGPT facilitate the process of teaching and can support teaching and learning are learning. Learning from and alongcountless and will be ever-evolving," side professors and student-peers is a said Akins. said Campbell. "Impressively, Dr. Sunil powerful and authentic experience." ChatGPT is far from the first ma-

# LIVING WEST



students, off-cam-For some pus apartments may seem like a great alternative to university dorms. However, one student's experience might encourage some to fully investigate their prospective housing before signing a lease.

Linda Onwumbiko first noticed water damage in her apartment at The Reserves in Carrollton in Aug. 2022. What continued over the course of the following months led her through financial, physical and mental strife.

The UWG student reported a leak coming from her ceiling to the maintenance team at The Reserves after finding mushrooms growing in her bathroom.

"They took the bathroom apart, but they left it alone for two months," Onwumbiko said. "They said. 'just try to find somewhere to go." says maintenance Onwumbiko

attempted to fix the water leak and damage but did so with shoddy repairs that left her bathroom without a real wall. "The maintenance man told me,

'they won't give me enough money to do it the right way," Onwumbiko said. Months later, Onwumbiko found her

ceiling leaking again, and this time, mold enveloping the walls of the apartment complex. Onwumbiko visited the unit upstairs

to find the source of the water leak. While one point in time I thought maybe I was crazy.

the unit laid empty, black mold covered the Now I figured out mold does that to people." floors and she noticed the ceiling ripping apart from the weight of water damage. After that Onwumbiko found mold in her apartfurther investigation, Onwumbiko found her ment at The Reserves. While the property water heater closet engulfed in black mold.

"The manager told me, 'I've lived in worse places than this in the military," Onwumbiko said. "I said, 'you were paid to do that.' I'm paying to live in a safe environment. So, what do I do?"

Onwumbiko failed to get The Reserves management to act until she posted the photos of her and the upstairs unit's moldy walls on Twitter on Feb. 1. The post garnered over 48,000 views and 149 comments with some students sharing similar experiences at the apartment complex.

"They kind of brushed it off until I posted the video," Onwumbiko said. not respond when asked for comment. "And they came over with spray paint."

Onwumbiko attempted to get out of her current lease but was met with another hurdle. The management team offered her a contract to exit her lease if she agreed to keep quiet about the mold.

"It wasn't until the post started getting views that they offered me this," Onwumbiko said. "I'm not going to sign it because that's not fair to me and my rights. They do that to college students because they want you to hurry up and sign something."

Onwumbiko sought outside help from environmental specialists to assess the damage. They found the unit tested for over 75% of mold growth and have advised Onwumbiko to throw out most of her belongings due to mold damage on them.

"I never knew why I was losing weight and throwing up," said Onwumbiko. "I had high blood pressure for so long. Even at

This incident is not the first time was under different management, she was able to move to a different unit within the complex. Now, she wonders whether all the apartments in The Reserves have mold.

The student plans to keep fighting for herexitoftheleaseas well as the truth to be told. "I just want them to care about their residents and actually put them in better environments and not just try to take people's money and sign leases," Onwumbiko said. "Since this has been happening, I've had so many people reach out and tell me the same thing has happened to them." The Reserves apartments did



Photo Courtesy of Linda Onwumbiko

### BEHIND THE SCENES OF SOCIAL MEDIA ASSADOR MARIA JESUS MARTINEZ Contributing Writer

Ananda Jones, also known as @uwg wonderfulone on Instagram, is one of the 12 Social Media Ambassadors that promotes the University of West Georgia online. She joined the communications and marketing team in the summer of 2022 when it was created from scratch.

"They really wanted to show-

"When you think about college expe-|for a second time and fell in love with it. rience, you should think about West Georgia, because that's what it is."

Nonetheless, being a Social Media Ambassador is not the only job Jones ued Jones. "It just helped me be haphas. She is also a Resident Assistant at the Village for the House and Residence Life, as well as a member of Alpha Xi Delta Sorority. At the same time, Jones is studying mass communications with a minor in political science to become either a podcast or radio host, a political commentator, a campaign manager or her now-boss Meghan Gross, which anything that combines her two passions.

"It has helped me meet people and helped me become sure of myself, my opinions and my beliefs," continpier in a way like, whether I am on campus or I go to class, I am genuinely happy to be there because I know that I am going to have a good time."

The idea of becoming a Social Media Ambassador was not from Jones, but an invitation from she immediately applied for. She Regardless of what seems hopes to continue being a Social Me-

case a student experience to a students eyes because you can look on the website, you can take a tour and you can go to the preview showcase, but all of that only shows you a glimpse," said Jones. "With this program, you really get to see their everyday lives and you get to see what they are doing on campus."

Jones posts on her Instagram account at least once a week with videos, insta stories or reels and sometimes she lip syncs to funny audios and relates them to the university. Specifically, she shows content of her everyday student life in the different opportunity to get the college experience corners of campus, from going to a basketball game to attending her classes.

Jones In addition. in at least two campus events per week. With every Instagram post as a person and become a better version Jones makes she wants to show a of myself," said Jones. "In high school more visible way of being a student.

"I want to show that the Uni- ally put myself out there that much." versity is not only a school, but also a When she was choosing between community. It's actually fun and really studying at the University of West Georan on and on experience," said Jones. giaoranothercollege, Jones visited UWG

like a tight schedule, Jones doesn't dia Ambassador until she graduates. feel like being a Social Media Ambassador is taking her "What I love about being a Social Media Ambassador is that it is realmy other jobs I am also doing the Am- help them in a lot of ways," said Jones. bassador job," said Jones. "Whether it's doing my other job and taking pictures

of it, showcasing that on my page, going to events or planning events. It's not a job that takes away from doing my other jobs, it's one that I can do along with it."

Even though Jones is seizing the at its fullest, she used to be another person.

"I think that coming to UWG assists was the best decision I've ever made and it really allowed me to grow and change I was very shy, reserved and didn't re-

"I wanted to give back to UWG time. by showing college life from my student perspective because I think genuinely that coming here is the best decily what you make it, so while I am doing sion anyone will ever make and would



Photo Courtesy of Ananda Jones



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# LIVING WEST

### UWG COUNSELING CENTER CAN HELP YOU MORE THAN YOU THINK

#### RACHAEL BROWN Contributing Writer

unfortunate The students have ception is only for it

Dr. Benedict Ezeoke, Executive Director for Health Services, or insignificant for the Counsel-Counseling & Accessibility, encourages students to come by the UWG Counseling Center, even if they think you want to talk to somebody, you As a part of the university process,

are very, very sick," said Ezeoke. center, to know that these services are there for them. They can come around and ask questions and seek advice. You don't have to be suffering from schizophrenia or manic depression to come around."

Ezeoke also said that students

"The most important thing



we do is to create health and well-|the importance for students' menness consciousness in every stu- tal health to try extracurricular dent and encourage them to seek activities or connect with others. help," said Ezeoke. "If you feel "Be part of the universithat things are not normal, if you ty process," said Ezeoke. "Unifeel overwhelmed, we encourage versity is not just for academics. you to come around. Some stu- Do other things so that you don't miscon- dents think that the only time you just pass through the universiabout need to seek help is when you are ty, you want the university to pass the Counseling Center is that incapacitated, but what we encour-through you. That will help you to emergencies. age them to do is to seek help." be a formidable adult ready to face

No issue is ever too small the world after your graduation." ing Center to help students with nity allows students to avoid feel-

Being a part of the commu-"Even if you feel lonely, if ings of isolation and loneliness.

their problems are not a big deal. can come around and speak to us and students should also remember that "We don't want our students maybe from that conversation, other all of the services and resources on to only visit the center when they things will come up," said Ezeoke. campus, such as the Counseling Other than this, many stu- Center, Health Services and Acces-"We want them to be part of the dents do not know about the sibility Services, are here for their wide variety of services that the benefit and that they are complete-Counseling provides. ly welcome to use them. These Center "Specifically, the Counseling services are free or discounted be-Center offers individual counseling, cause they are included in tuition. group counseling, outreach to ed-"Students have so many reucate people about mental health, sources, and they have the right to case management, and training for use them because those resources are have a tendency to minimize prob-staff," said Ezeoke. "We can also there for them," said Ezeoke. "They lems and do not admit to themselves do some relational things to help should own them and know that or to others that they need help. students go to the right place, help they are their own. Even if it means This is why it is important for stu- them plan their life and their financ- coming around and asking quesdents to learn about what problems es, and help them approach their tions, just know that you have the can occur and how they can lead to studies. It's a holistic approach to right to do that, and people are here more serious issues down the line. health and wellness that we apply." waiting for you to assist. Nothing is emphasized stupid. Come and ask questions." Ezeoke also

> For my main course, I decid- They were nothing special. There was ed to go with their famous pub sand- no seasoning and barely any salt. The wich. The Bread Pub had many good fries were soggy and fell apart. To top looking sandwiches, including the it all off, they were cold before I could Blackened Salmon Sandwich and The even finish them. If I come back, I am

If you're looking for old taste French Dipper. The French Dipper is certainly picking a different side dish.

and classic favorites, look no further roast beef sauteed in au jus, covered in In general, The Irish Bread Pub than Carrollton's local Irish Bred Pub. provolone, and served on a hoagie roll. is a great environment, but the food can Ultimately, I decided to go with be hit or miss. Some of my food was in-The Irish Bread Pub has been located in downtown Adamson Square for de- the Lucky Bird Sandwich. The Lucky credible, while other parts of my meal cades, serving up good food, cold beer Bird Sandwich is grilled turkey breast, were disappointing. Additionally, the and friendly service to the Carrollton bacon and cheddar cheese. The sand- pub could be a little overpriced for the area. The Pub has a decently large menu wich also included Guinness BBQ average college student. My sandwich featuring sandwiches, burgers, bowls, sauce, and is served on a hoagie roll. I came out to be \$13.20 and including famous pub entrees and more. I ven- got an insider from a friend in the kitch- my appetizer, side and drink my total tured there last week with some friends en who said the turkey is the best meat was around \$25, plus tip. Overall, when to enjoy some fellowship and food. they cook and he was not wrong. The comparing the environment, food and

For my appetizer I started with turkey was fantastically grilled and ev-price I give The Irish Bread Pub a 7/10. some chips and queso. The chips came erything mixed so well together in the My advice is to take account of the spein a variety of colors including red sandwich. The bacon was juicy and cifics on the menu. This is certainly a and green. They are served with some crispy, and the cheddar cheese was per-place I would not pick, but I would not white queso dip. The chips were bland, fectly melted. However, the Guinness complain if someone asked to go there.

so I added some salt to give them BBQ sauce is what made the sandwich. some flavor. Interestingly enough, The sweet and tangy sauce ensured the each chip tasted slightly different be-turkey did not go dry and it went well cause of the food coloring. The queso, with everything it touched. The hoagie however, was creamy and delicious. roll was nicely toasted and encapsulat-It was a very thick cheese and gave ed all the flavors of The Lucky Bird. However, the biggest disapthe chips some extra layers on top for a pretty good taste. It was noth-pointment of my time at The Pub was ing special, but nonetheless, the chips the fries. I ordered a serving to go with and queso made for a good appetizer. my sandwich and I made a bad choice.

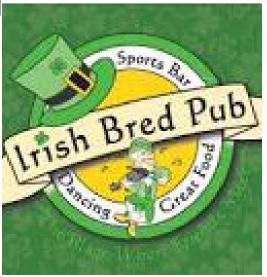


Photo Courtesy of the Irish Bred Pub

# **ENTERTAINMENT**

### **ROMANCE WRITER** EMPHASIZES THE IMPORTANCE OF BLACK LOVE THROUGH BOOKS SAMIRA BARNETT News Editor

is well-known for her books about Black that all stories are needed," said Valdez. love. Valdez's books emphasize the importance of self-love as a Black individual, as well as the love as a Black couple.

When Vadez was 11 years old, she started writing occasionally. She composed some poems in high school and in 2020 she finally started to take writing seriously with her debut book, "Everything I've Wanted All I've Needed," released in 2021.

Valdez was always driven to share her work with the public, entering in different poetry contests. Her poetry fundamentally served as the inspiration for her writing's theme and her poetic style also transferred to her books. Her poetic style thematically demonstrates the difference in African American love than what is usually shown through either books or television is what distinguishes her work from others.

"Writing has always been an integral part of my life, a form of expression for me," said Valdez. "When I first discovered that I loved writing, I found that I could convey my feelings better through writing than speaking."

published several others in recent years, including "The Beginning of Forever: A Sunshine + Ace Story" (a duology to the first), "A Worthy Love," "Colliding with Fate"

and "Snow King Catches His Snowflake." |Instead, in her writing she transforms the Her goal with each book was to center the loss into a loving and joyful theme, all while concept on women and to create charac-retaining the realistic hardships of life. ters that are similar to her and her husband.

authors out there, but I just wanted to AE Valdez, a self-published writer, put my spin on things because I think

> It is difficult to suggest that the words will have an impact on the reader as a romance writer or an author in general. It's a matter of hope that people will enjoy your work. A book can take readers on a journey that stops time and transports them to another world; it is her job as an author to create the best fictional world possible. ican love can be achieved and magical,

"It has been a very humbling and rewarding experience for me," said Valdez. "I have this space to help my reader see life in a different way. I know it is fictional but all my themes apply to real life."

self in order to create a theme for each book. The goal of her book is to create a narrative that informs readers that life is hard, but there is light at the end of the tunnel, and it begins within.

"I think it's harder to receive things when we don't love ourselves," said Valdez. "I think self love is so important first because realistically we cannot look to other people to fill voids for us.

"You have to feel those feel-Along with her first book, Valdez has ings before you expect someone else to give them to you," continued Valdez. Her goal is to provide stimulation

other than sadness and loss, which are commonly associated with African Americans.

"We don't see that [Black love] in "I know there are a lot of Black the media or anything," said Valdez. "It's so important to see black people get a happy ending because we are so often told we don't deserve it or should expect that."

Valdez is currently working on the second book for the Three Kings trilogy, with 'The Snow King Catches His Snowflake" being the first book. Her goal is to have this upcoming book released in late April or early May. She plans to continue this theme of love, telling the story of how African Amerwhether within oneself or another person.

Valdez networks and promotes much of her work on TikTok and Instagram, where she goes by the handle @a.e.valdezwrites. Follow to stay up to She creates a theme within her- date on new releases and book information.



Photo Courtesy of the Amanda Valdez

### ANT-MAN AND THE WASP: QUANTUMANIA: PHASE 5 IN EFFECT MYLES WILLIAMS Contributing Writer

he was a villain working for Kang, even though she was one of the main M.O.D.O.K was a threatening yet hi- characters who caused everything to larious character you couldn't help happen in the first place. Each time but laugh at in certain moments due she was on screen it felt like she was "Ant-Man and the Wasp: Quan- to his witty banter with Cassandra there just to be there and nothing else.

tumania", is the newest Marvel movie and his reunion with Scott and Hank. She wasn't terrible, but in all hones-

to kick off 2023. Released on Feb. 17, The comedic moments didn't feel too ty I think the film could've worked this film is the third movie for the hero forced to where you felt like it wasn't best if I felt her emotion a lot more. Antman and this adventure would push funny. Scott had his moments as well My favorite scenes featured him to his limit as a hero and father. from his own self narration of his own Kang and showcasing how danger-

The film follows Scott Lang book and his banter with Kang. It gave ous The Conqueror truly is. From (PaulRudd), CassandraLang, HopeVan me a little bit of a laugh, genuinely showing us his vast army, to his fu-Dyne (Evangeline Lilly), Hank Pyme because Scott is a funny character. ture technology, and even his fight (Michael Douglas) and Janet Pyme Most actors in the film played with Antman it definitely didn't dis-(Michelle Pfeiffer) as they are shrunk- their roles amazingly, while some felt appoint me. Seeing him in comics en down into the Quantum Realm. very monotone. Jonathan Majors, who and Cartoon adaptations compared to

The film wastes no time in played Kang The Conqueror, was phe- the big screen was truly a sight to see. thrusting viewers into the plot of the nomenal. Each time Kang appeared, Overall, the movie was avermovie by slowly revealing the antag-people could feel that he was truly a age. It's definitely a movie you don't onist. The pacing of the movie felt threat to everyone who inhabited the have to watch immediately. Even the very moderate. The film did a good Quantum Realm. Majors was cal- end credit scenes that Marvel are nojob of balancing between the sto- culating, devious, arrogant and con- toriously known for did not move me rylines of Hope, Hank and Janet try-fident when playing Kang, all traits and that's saying a lot because those ing to find Scott and Cassandra while that describe Kang in the comics and scenes are what get the fans excited avoiding detection from Kang the was properly portrayed in the movie. for the next movie. Ant-Man and the Conqueror and his plan for revenge. On the other hand Kathryn Newton, Wasp: Quantumania is the second

This wouldn't be a MCU film who played Cassandra, was medio- movie out of phase five and for it to if Marvel did not add any come- cre at best. Newton's acting felt like be just a mundane movie that you can dic moments and Corey Stoll who she was reading the script without skip in the MCU. It raises the question played M.O.D.O.K definitely was a any type of emotion or energy. Her on the direction of where the MCU will great comedic character. Even though acting made me feel less invested, be headed and if it will be good or bad.