



UWG HONORS MINORITIES FOR THEIR ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS

JEFF IGBOKWE
Contributing Writer

Last Wednesday the Multicultural Achievement Program (MAP) at the University of West Georgia held the 40th Multicultural Achievement Awards (MAA) ceremony at the Campus Centre. The MAA is given to minority students at West Georgia as a way to celebrate their academic achievements.

These awards are a tradition that have been around at the university since the 80's, and have since evolved to support the growing student population at the university. They were designed to enhance the wellbeing of minority and multicultural students through the support and encouragement of academic success.

"I feel that awards like these give students from multicultural backgrounds an opportunity to be praised because of their successes," said sophomore Solana James, a MAA student present at the ceremony. "It also provides an environment that uplifts them while also being surrounded by people that look like them. While it is great to integrate various backgrounds, it is good to stay in touch with your community and remind yourself that you belong in every aspect, whether that's socially, economically or academically. You can be multicultural and extremely intelligent."

The MAAs contribute to the success and retention of minority students by creating a positive environment which offers academic support services including major and career development, freshmen mentorship and cultural programs. These resources gear students up for

global competitiveness and creating communities of belonging.

"This award means a lot to me because high school was very hard," continued James. "I didn't win any awards and I didn't get honour roll, so to come to college and just become a superstar I feel really good about myself. Having been awarded with this achievement, I feel more motivated to work even harder than I have already been. Before receiving my MAA I achieved a GPA of 3.7, so I really went above and beyond."

To be eligible to receive the award, students must identify as a minority or international student, have an overall GPA of 3.3 or higher and must be enrolled for the Spring semester of awards programs.

The Helena Harbridge International Student-Athlete Award was also presented, which was awarded to Women's soccer midfielder Catherine Reeves. This award honors the international student-athlete with the best combination of athletic performance, classroom achievement, teamwork, team spirit and community involvement.

During the ceremony guest speaker and UWG alumna Anita Lamar spoke about how she was able to excel in her field as a black woman in law through hard work at UWG and Oklahoma City University School of Law, emphasizing the fact that the student's academic success will pay off.

"I think it is extremely important to honor multicultural achievements in an academic setting like how West Georgia has

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By Douglas Salter

done with its minority students," said James. "On a personal level it really shows me that my race and ethnicity does not dictate my academic journey and my success, however I also feel that it's great to show others how you can be something amazing regardless of your racial or ethnic background."

The MAP has made it their goal to inspire other students from racial and ethnic minority backgrounds to achieve academic success.

"I think the MAP will encourage people by showing them that there will be applauded for doing well," said James. "They will be recognised and work does not go unnoticed. You do matter even when you think that nobody is watching."

CURRENT IRON WOLF CHAMPION PREPARES FOR YEARLY COMPETITION

KESHAWN ALLEN
Contributing Writer

The sixth annual Iron Wolf competition this year will be held in the Campus Center on April 6 by the University of West Georgia's recreation center. This competition is to see who is the strongest person on campus.

West Georgia is home to many students and faculty members from athletic backgrounds. The on-campus gym is very popular among most on- and off-campus students committed to staying in shape, maintaining perfect health and gaining muscle mass.

"I heard about the Iron Wolf through the workers of the Campus Center gym and Game Room," said current Iron Wolf Champion Jahari Burns. "So last year was an honor to win the Iron Wolf. I had an amazing time lifting and competing with other strong lifters."

The Iron Wolf is one of the most competitive contests held on campus. Not to mention that the number of participants has increased since

the University brought back the competition after the COVID-19 pandemic. Competition against each competitor can vary because the strength of a person can vary, and strength can change over time.

"I feel like this year there will be competition because you can never truly know what your opponents will accomplish," said Burns. "I've trained pretty much heaving main lifts and high volume circuits to get myself ready for the Iron Wolf. I do this four days a week with a three day rest period."

The competition is set up in three categories to test strength: deadlift, squats and bench press. Both men and women can participate in the Iron Wolf competition. Each round is awarded to both male and female competitors who lifted the most weight in the category. It is also based on weight class to keep it fair amongst every participant with different body types and muscle mass.

Registration for anyone who may be interested in competing ends on April 3. To register for the Iron Wolf Competition, the form can be found on both the university website and the Campus Center website. Weigh-in's start at 8 a.m. and the competition begins at 9 a.m., and the event is free for anyone to watch and support the competitors.



THE CARROLLTON WRITERS GUILD PRESENTS: BOOKFEST 2024

EMMA SWALES
Editor-in-Chief



Carrollton Center for the Arts is hosting its annual BookFest, a literary event packed full of presentations from award-winning and local authors as well as several writing workshops on April 6 and 7. This event will be discounted for University of West Georgia students, providing the perfect opportunity for future writers to interact with professionals and learn more about literary arts.

BookFest is an annual event arranged by the Carrollton Writers Guild. It gives readers, writers and book lovers the opportunity to meet and interact with countless authors and adopt new skills. UWG students will be able to attend for only 10 dollars. To get tickets, students can show their ID badge at the door or pre-register at carrolltonbookfest@gmail.com.

“When we looked at everything this city does we realized the one thing that was missing was a literary event,” said Carrollton Writers Guild President Elyse Wheeler. “All of the activities and workshops that are offered at BookFest will be fun. We hope people come and learn a little more about the Writers Guild.”

The event will begin on Friday with multiple writing workshops featuring a variety of talented writers. These interactive workshops will give attendees the chance to hear from experienced authors who will share

tips and tricks on how to expand their literary skills and how to effectively write a book. The first workshop will present celebrated author Meg Leader discussing the impact of setting scenes when writing and how to build a world through words.

“The workshops host many accomplished speakers and for writers, it’s a chance to get to know other successful writers and learn the craft,” said Wheeler. “It also teaches them how to get out in the world and promote their work.”

There will also be a poetry workshop highlighting Dr. Robert Covel, Dr. Cecilia Lee and Dr. Eleanor Hoomes. These poets will join together to form a three-part presentation studying different forms of poetry and the publishing process. Friday will wrap up with author Bren McClain’s Master Writing Class, a short lecture detailing how to sharpen literary skills and a play performed by Carrollton County Community Theater.

“In the evening there is a play written by the Carrollton Writers Guild which is called ‘The Deadline,’” said Wheeler. “It’s a mystery about writers who are being murdered in the ways that they procrastinate. It’s a tongue-in-cheek, it’s free and open to the public.”

BookFest will continue with day two on Saturday with the headline speaker Rick

Photo courtesy of Carrollton Writers Guild

Bragg, a Pulitzer Prize winner and best-selling author. He will give a deep dive into the importance of writing books and how to establish it as a career. There will be several more local and highly awarded authors following the headline speaker, all furthering the discussion of literary art and sharing secrets on how to become an accomplished writer. Once the panel sessions finish, the day will conclude with an outdoor book fair, allowing attendees to buy books and get the chance to have them autographed by authors.

“A wise man once told me that people buy books when they like the author and get to know the author as a person and it’s not just words on a page,” said Wheeler. “For readers, BookFest is an opportunity to hear authors speak and hear their voices.”

“It’s just a chance to meet them, buy a book and get autographed,” Wheeler continued. “It always adds so much depth to the reading when you get a chance to hear the author talk about what it takes to put a book together.”

To find out more details about BookFest, visit carrolltonbookfest.com or email carrolltonbookfest@gmail.com.

SUMMER BEACH PROJECT PROVIDES COMMUNITY IN BOTH SPIRITUAL AND CAREER-BASED JOURNEYS

BREANNA TILLIE
Contributing Writer

Balancing a strong faith commitment with working a full-time job can be difficult. The demands of work often clash with the need for spiritual practices, creating a struggle to prioritize one over the other. Finding time for prayer, meditation or religious obligations may prove to be a challenge amid the hustle and bustle of the workday. Additionally, navigating ethical dilemmas in the workplace that may conflict with religious beliefs adds another layer of complexity.

Summer Beach Project 2024 through Campus Outreach will take place from May 18 to July 12 in Panama City Beach, FL. This program offers students the opportunity to work a full-time job and be active participants of their faith on both a personal and communal level.

“I was in a house with 22 other girls,” said Sabrina Warner, a member of the Campus Outreach Impact team. “It was a lot at first, but over time you really get used to it. You meet a lot of new people, you make a lot of new friends and just have really good experiences. I actually really enjoyed it and I would love to go again.”

Most days at Summer Beach Project

include working a job during the day, and attending spiritual sessions or small group devotional meetings in the evenings.

“Part of the purpose of working the job is to offer a sort of ‘training’ for after college to show you that life still goes on,” said Warner. “Just because you’re working now doesn’t mean you have to change how dedicated you are to following Christ. Yes, you may work 40 hours a week at nine to five.

“However, you should still find time throughout your day to realize that Christ comes first,” continued Warner. “That was part of the reason that they had us working a job. That, and we still had bills to pay. It was a way of teaching us life lessons as

well as helping us with our bills at home.”

Attending the evening spiritual sessions at Summer Beach Project can positively impact the working experience.

“If we had down time at work, we would have good conversations about the sessions the next day,” said Warner. “The lessons about making Christ known, discipleship and learning how to plant spiritual seeds helped a lot. We were able to take that, bring it back to our jobs and better evangelize to people at work. It was intriguing seeing how our coworkers who weren’t a part of Summer Beach Project were still interested in what we were doing and what we were there for.”

No matter where someone is in their spiritual journey, anyone is able to attend the Summer Beach Project.

“I gave my life to Christ at Beach Project,” said Warner. “I spent a long time struggling. I knew who Jesus was and for the longest time I thought I was a Christain. But I was talking with my discipleship leader on the beach when I just broke down crying and gave it all to Jesus.”



Photo courtesy Sabrina Warner

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ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

KENNY CHESNEY'S NEW ALBUM "BORN" BRINGS GOOD TIMES AND GOOD VIBES

DOUGLAS SALTER
News Editor

Country singer and songwriter legend Kenny Chesney released his 19th studio album "Born" on March 22nd. The release comes just in time as Chesney prepares to go on his Sun Goes Down tour that begins April 11th in Hollywood.

The tour is going to feature several songs from the album. The album is about living life with the throttle on high, but also taking a moment to look back on the struggles that we as humans deal with no matter where we come from.

The run time of the album is just over 50 minutes long and features 15 songs including the title track "Born." Chesney released 3 songs prior to the album coming out which included "Take Her Home," "Thinkin' Bout" and "Just Say We Did."

The song "Born" begins the album and encompasses the message of the album. The song talks about how we

all come from somewhere and that no matter where we come from, how we all have the same experiences even if we come from different backgrounds. The song gives a sense of feeling alive, but allows the listener to ponder every experience we have lived for, like how life has its uncertainties, "we've all been livin' since the day we were born." This was the perfect song to not only start off the album but represent it as a whole.

Chesney, as always, gives his audience a feeling of being at the beach with his sounds and words. Some of the songs from the album are titled "One More Sunset," "Blame It On The Salt" and "One Lonely Island." All three songs have very fun moments that are destined to become favorites on his tour and become songs to highlight the summer. All three songs are about enjoying the little moments, but also learning

from the people and the experiences around you.

Chesney finishes the album with a song called "Wherever You Are Tonight." This song gets emotional. The song is about losing a loved one, but how they can live forever in the way we love. The lyrics, "you're not gone, just out of sight. You're here with me wherever you are tonight." This song became one of the most powerful songs that Chesney has ever released. In an album about how we've been livin' since we were born, concluding it by making a song about how life can carry on past death creates a profound message for audiences everywhere. It reminds us to enjoy the moments with our loved ones and even when they are gone, we keep them alive by keeping them close in our hearts.

After the last lyric falls, audiences everywhere still know that Kenny Chesney has still got it. It has been 30 years since his first album and four years since his last one. He still has that same vocal strength and command he possessed so long ago. Even long after his career is done, country music's pirate will live on forever because of all the moments he made since being "Born."

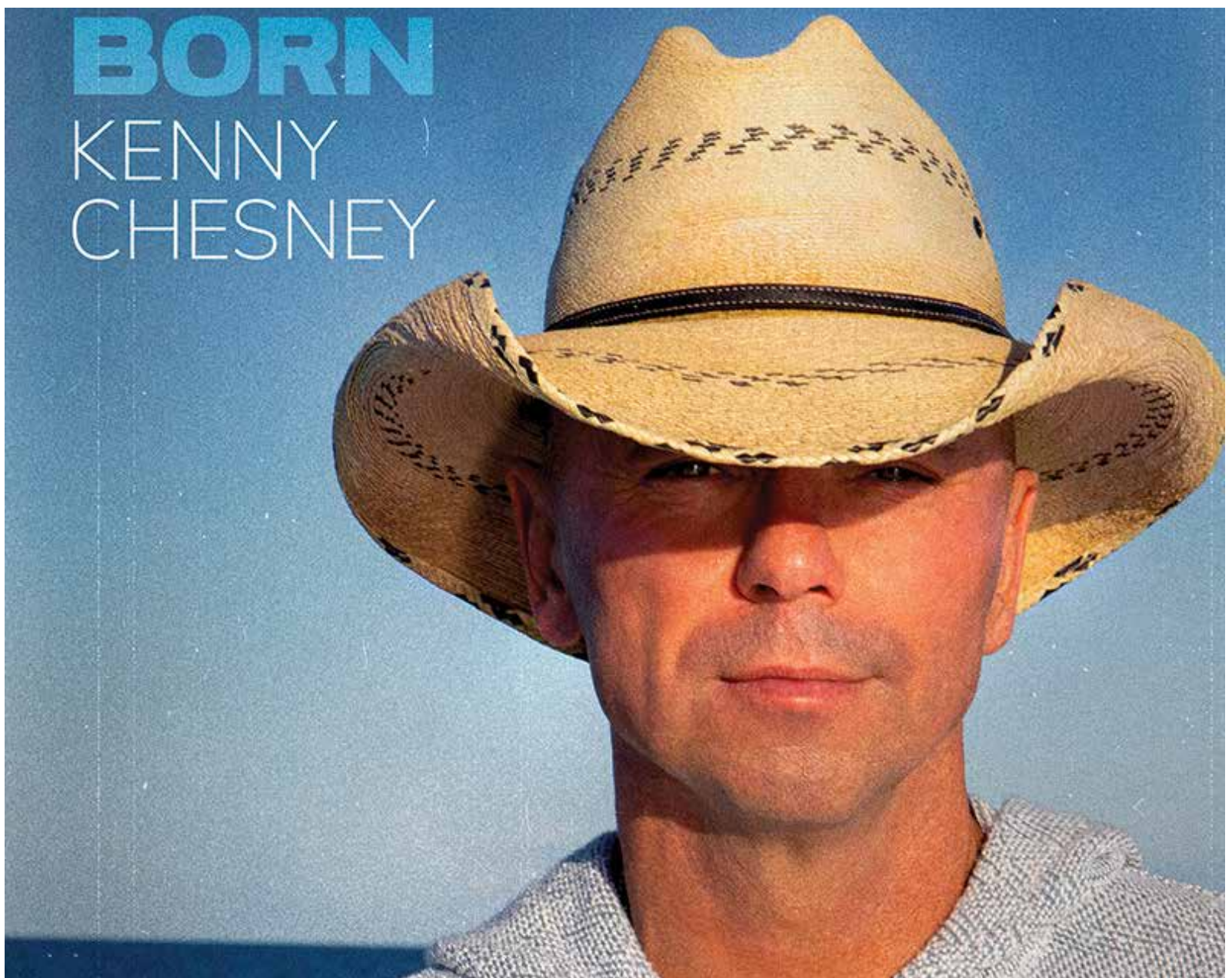


Photo courtesy of Kenny Chesney