

CHANGE TO COME

Behrens, a 1992 graduate, to return to The Nest as principal



Eric Behrens won seven titles as basketball head coach.



Central High School Foundation

Katie Besancon
managing editor

From walking the halls as a student in the 1990s, to working as a social studies teacher and coach, a dean of students and now returning to The Nest as Central's 21st principal, Eric Behrens was named the succeeding principal to Ellisa Kirksey on Feb. 10.

Behrens graduated from Central in 1992 before coming back to work as a social studies teacher and coach boys basketball for 18 years, where he led Central to seven Nebraska Class A state titles, with a brief break in that time to coach at Peru State College. Behrens then returned to Central to work as a dean of

students before joining Westview High School in the school's first three years as the athletic director. After his time at Westview, Behrens moved to Marrs Middle School for the 2025-2026 school year, where he currently serves as principal.

When Kirksey's retirement was announced, Behrens felt thankful. "Thankful to her for so many decades of service, working with her role as assistant principal, activities director, she's put so much blood sweat and tears into that building, I just appreciate it," Behrens said.

Behrens didn't just know Kirksey as a colleague, but as someone who was instrumental in so many students' lives, including Behrens'

own kids, both of whom attended Central.

"She is just a great relationship builder, and I think Central owes her a huge debt of gratitude just for taking the principal position when she did, but also for her years of service," Behrens said.

Kirksey appreciated Behrens just as much.

"He was here as a student, he was here as a teacher, a coach, a dean, an athletic director and now principal. He has seen schools from all possible lenses," Kirksey said. "It's bitter-sweet, but I'm excited. Sometimes I look at stuff and get teary eyed, but it's going to be good, Central will thrive regardless."

Behrens said it didn't take long to decide

he was going to enter his name into the pool of applicants. There is a waiting period for the position to officially open at the district level, which allowed him a few days to mull over the decision. Once that position officially opened, his name was in that pool because "a job like Central doesn't come along that often," Behrens said.

In the hours following the announcement of his hiring as the new principal, Behrens said, "I heard from so many people I hadn't heard from in such a long time because it was my classmates, people I went to school with, former students, former staff members I had worked with all reaching out. It was pretty overwhelming."

"Behrens" on page 3

Students react to minimum wage decrease

Eduardo Torreblanca
staff writer

LB258, which was passed by the Nebraska Legislature, lowers the \$15 per hour minimum wage to \$13.50 for teens and goes into effect on Jan. 1 of 2027. It was passed on Feb. 5 and signed into law by Governor Jim Pillen on Feb. 9.

Four students were interviewed on their thoughts on LB258 and its potential impacts: senior Ella Shafer, who is involved in DECA, Nate Crump, José Arcos and Jakobi Williams, who are all currently in the workforce and are juniors.

When asked about their thoughts on the wage decrease, all four did not support the decrease, but three of the four have differing viewpoints.

Shafer said that prices don't change for a teen compared to an adult. When both go out to buy necessities, the teen has a lower minimum wage compared to the adult, which doesn't make sense because the teen is getting less money for what they need.

Crump, Arcos and Williams agree that the decision is bad but say that it isn't bad as it seems to be. "About the pay decrease, honestly,

it sucks, but I don't think that it's that much of a problem, because what are 15, 16, 17-year-olds really doing with their money?" Williams said.

He added he would love to stick to the \$15 per hour rate, followed by saying that \$13.50 isn't that bad for a teen.

"I also think that it's sucky, but also not really a problem, I really don't mind, as long as I still get paid," Arcos said.

When asked about the effects of the wage decrease, all said that there will be "outrage" among teenagers at this decision.

Shafer said that businesses are going to need more people than their current hire rate and try to advertise jobs with less pay which leads to them not finding anyone who is willing to work for less pay.

"Honestly, I feel like teens probably won't want to work until they're getting the minimum wage," Shafer said.

Arcos said that other teens will get mad because of getting paid less than before and he didn't know about the wage decrease but doesn't mind.

"I think a lot of other teens will be outraged. They think that this is unfair," Williams said.



Junior José Arcos

"It feels like it will give teenagers less freedom to do what they want and still doing the same work for less amount of pay, it seems unfair to them," Crump said.

Despite the negatives of LB 258, the

students felt there could be one potential positive: "The only thing I would say is maybe people would be more interested to be involved in the school if they're not getting as many jobs as much," Shafer said.

News

Race for governor heats up p. 3/ pagina 3

Republican Gov. Jim Pillen faces multiple opponents in GOP primary, as former State Senator Lynne Walz runs on Democratic side.

Opinion

Don't find a shore, build a bridge p. 5/ pagina 5

In a world full of rushing waters, students tend to find a shore. However, students should build bridges and become an active participant in life.

Arts & Culture

"Wuthering Heights" fails to stick true to book p. 8 / pagina 8

If you are reader, the movie will frustrate you. But if you ignore the source material and view it as its own story, you'll enjoy it.

Sports

New baseball facilities to open in time for the season p. 13 / pagina 13

Described as an "alternative universe," the new stadium and batting cages will help the baseball team gear up for the season.

Pillen introduces plan for TPUSA clubs in all Nebraska high schools

Steven Dickerson
editor-in-chief

Nebraska Gov. Jim Pillen unveiled a statewide partnership with the conservative nonprofit Turning Point USA on Feb. 10 to expand its Club America chapters in high schools across the state, saying the effort will boost civic engagement and free speech among students.

Pillen announced the initiative at a news conference at the Governor’s Mansion, where he pledged support for students interested in starting Club America chapters. Club America chapters are student-led organizations associated with Turning Point USA’s advocacy of limited government and conservative values. The governor’s office said the push aims for a presence in every Nebraska high school.

“Certainly, the goal is very, very achievable, that we can have a chapter in every school in the great state of Nebraska,” Pillen said at the conference. “So that we truly understand how great the United States of America is...and that we learn to have civil, civic engagement so that our voices are heard.”

Pillen did not take questions from reporters following the announcement. His staff later clarified that the initiative is not a mandate requiring schools to adopt the clubs, but rather a partnership that can assist students who want to organize them.

Turning Point USA is a national conservative nonprofit organization founded in 2012 by political activist Charlie Kirk, who was assassinated last September. The group focuses on promoting free markets, limited government and conservative values among students.

Turning Point USA said in its preview ma-

terials that Club America chapters are meant to educate students about civic responsibility and leadership. The organization currently lists more than 1,200 chapters nationally and about 40 across Nebraska high schools and colleges. That includes the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, whose chapter got attention after hosting a large vigil following Kirk’s death. Central does not currently have a chapter.

“No one has approached me to form a Club America yet,” said Jodi Dierks, Central assistant principal. To form a club at Central, a student interested must find a sponsor, have the sponsor fill out forms regarding sufficient student interest and meeting information, and then submit the forms to Dierks. She would then approve the club to begin meeting.

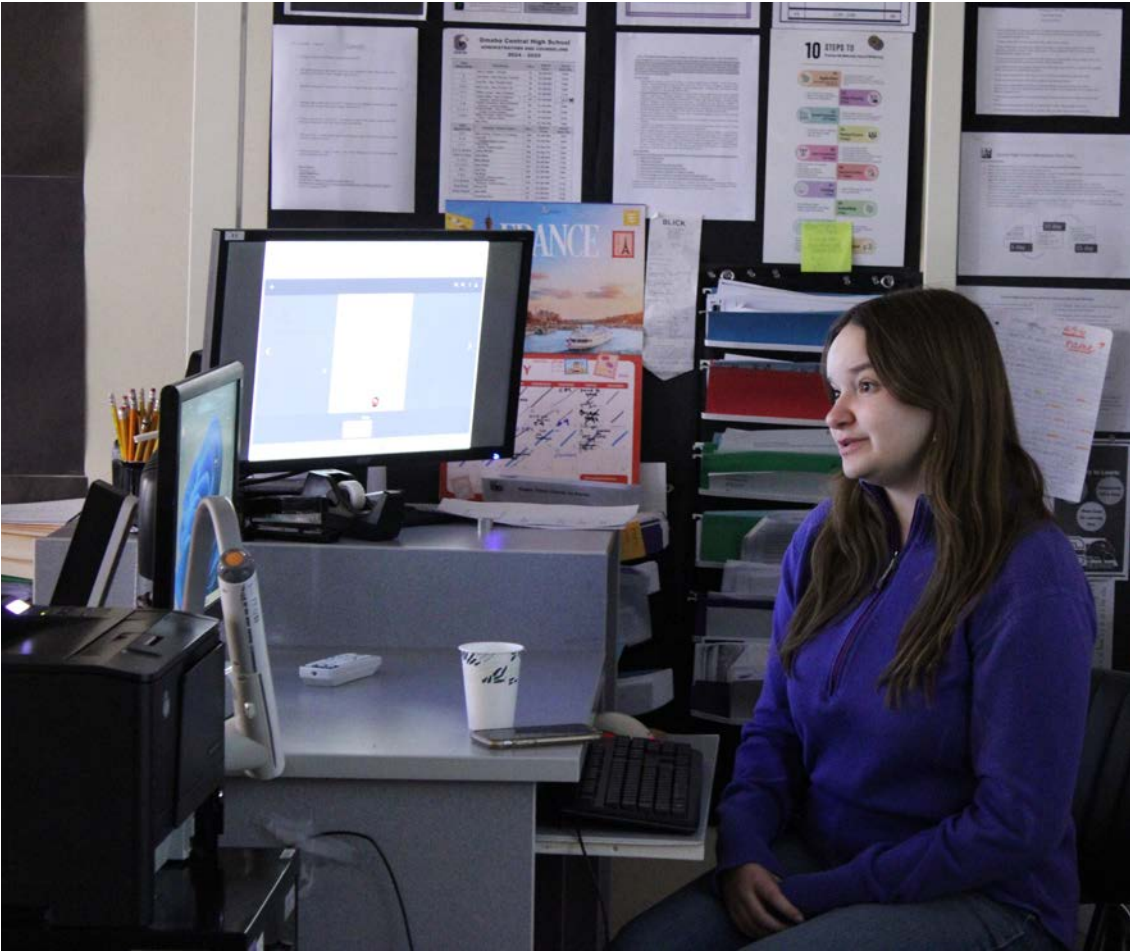
Pillen’s partnership drew criticism from some voices who argue that state involvement with a politically oriented organization blurs neutrality in public education.

“While I myself have my own opinions on Turning Point USA, I believe that a student should have the right to start one of these clubs, or something similar,” said Nora Wessel, president of Central’s Student Progressives club. “However, I do not understand why they are unable to do that now if they so wish...Governor Pillen’s initiative is a blatant example of government overreach.” Wessel added that she believes decisions about school clubs should rest with students.

The Nebraska State Education Association expressed concern about a statewide government-led push, saying decisions about student activities should be made locally by school boards, administrators, parents and students rather than through a statewide partnership. The union also reiterated that

public schools must remain politically neutral environments.

Supporters of the partnership say it reinforces students’ rights to free speech and engagement, pointing to the fact that students can form non-curriculum-related clubs based on interest.



Central Student Progressives club president Nora Wessel speaks to club members at a meeting on Feb. 25 discussing the Nebraska legislative session. NEVEAH WILSON | The Register

Juniors prepare for ACT test; seniors offer tips for success

Jazmin Mills
staff writer

On April 7, juniors will be taking the ACT at school while freshmen, sophomores and seniors have the day off.

The ACT is a standardized test used for college admissions and scholarship decisions across the United States. When looking for financial aid or getting admitted into a specific college, ACT scores can have a significant impact.

Common advice is getting a good night’s rest the night before, eating a hearty breakfast and arriving on time are good ways to ensure students are at their best for the test. On test day, it’s not recommended to bring a

backpack because students only need a handful of things. The most important things are a school ID and a watch (not a smart one) for pacing.

Test administrators provide admission tickets, No. 2 pencils, permitted calculators and snacks on the day of the test. Students can bring their phones; however, test administrators will collect them to ensure no cheating is going on.

Junior Asia Young is taking the ACT this year. In preparation for the test, Young’s math teacher assigns past ACT exact math questions that have been used on the ACT for homework. Young also plans to study with the ACT Prep app more consistently come March. “I would say I am very nervous. It’s the pres-

sure of not wanting to fail myself, family, or those around me,” Young said.

Though she is nervous, she will not stress over it. Young understands it’s an important test, but it isn’t worth straining her mental health.

“Even though it will be difficult, I do intend to study and try my best, but for my sanity, I will not stress myself too much, so good luck to me.” Young said.

Some juniors are anxious about the ACT and feel that it will be a horrible experience. But how do seniors feel about the ACT now after taking it their junior year?

Senior Laya Dorsey took the ACT last year and said it wasn’t as bad as she thought.

“To study I practiced on the ACT Prep app

and attended tutoring but was still nervous for the test,” Dorsey said.

Before the test Dorsey was anxious and also felt nauseous due to her nerves. However, after the test, Dorsey realized that it went better than expected.

“After the test I felt relieved it was over and realized it wasn’t that bad. I was also proud of myself for getting through it,” Dorsey said.

To prepare for the ACT, Dorsey’s advice was to make sure to get a good night’s sleep the night before the test and study hard beforehand.

“You think it’s worse than it actually is, so don’t stress too much about it,” Dorsey said.



Central juniors prepare for the ACT during Eagle Time.

CHRISHYRA MARION The Register



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It is the goal of the Central High Register to represent the student body in issues affecting their lives as young people and students. If you feel that we are not covering an issue that is important to you, we welcome contributing writers who bring fresh ideas to the issues. If you would like to write a story for your student newspaper, please contact Broderick Hilgenkamp at broderick.hilgenkamp@ops.org or come to room 029 to discuss your idea.

Behrens to return to The Nest as principal for 2026-27

“Behrens” from page 1

Central staff are excited to have a former Eagle return.

“Whenever you talk about Eric Behrens, you think champ high, he’s a legacy here. You have a rich history from that, and with all of the change in the district there is a sense of comfort at a school like Central where we value tradition,” social studies teacher Casey Denton said.

“I’m excited for something new. Behrens will bring that institutional knowledge, the way we do things, or the expectation of teachers and students that he will try and reinstitute, I think that’s a good thing,” social studies teacher Jordan Boyer said.

Behrens said there was no hesitancy to apply, despite the 2025-2026 school year being his first at Marrs Middle. When he was applying

for the Central position, he had only been at Marrs for around six months.

“I felt like I had just gotten here. In terms of fairness to my staff and my students, now that was the only thing that I really had to think about, otherwise for me it was a no brainer,” Behrens said.

Within the Omaha Public Schools district, the resume to become a high school principal typically requires holding a leadership position within a school, whether as a dean, assistant principal, athletic director or department head. Behrens has three of those positions under his belt.

When asked if holding other leadership roles played in his decision to leave Central and go to Westview and Marrs, Behrens said, “It was in the back of my mind, but I wouldn’t say that I came to Marrs just because of that.” He had always been told, “You gotta go to grow,” and he

took that mindset with him.

“In order for me to get back full circle here, it was probably beneficial for me to go out and be an assistant principal,” Behrens said.

Some Central staff members were confident he’d return.

“When he left, we were all like, ‘We’ll see you in a couple of years,’” Denton said.

Central will be experiencing some changes alongside Behrens returning to Central, one of which is the switch from department heads to curriculum specialists, a system Behrens worked with for three years at Westview. He said the specialists he worked with were driving the instructional initiatives building-wide, working in the classroom with teachers and providing feedback and support.

“If things are aligned properly and use the position the way that it is meant to be used, it can be a tremendous asset to students and to

your classroom,” Behrens said.

He said he was most excited about reconnecting with old coworkers he had worked with for decades, the teaching staff, working with alumni groups, the Central High School Foundation and students.

“As a colleague, he was an excellent teacher, and I would argue an even better dean because of that calm presence, leadership, and ability to establish and follow through on expectations,” Denton said.

People being proud to come from Central is a main goal of everyone. “Making sure students graduating this year, next year, and following years are just as excited and proud of going to Central as we have been for 20, 30, 40 years,” Behrens said.

And now it’s his turn to lead the way.

“To go back, it feels like coming home,” Behrens said.

GOP primary race proves interesting; Pillen frontrunner

|Grace Sunseri
chief copy editor

Nebraska is gearing up for the 2026 gubernatorial race with the primary election on May 12. While there are only two Democrats putting their hat in, the Republican primary will be more competitive. Six Republicans have thrown their hats in the race, one incumbent and five challengers.

Any person who will be 18 by general election day, Nov. 3, is eligible to vote in the Nebraska primaries. They can register to vote online on the Nebraska government website.

Incumbent Gov. Jim Pillen is running for his second term after winning 59.9% of the vote in 2022 against Democrat Carol Blood. Pillen was a former University of Nebraska-Lincoln regent. In “The Pillen Playbook,” he outlines his big issues. These issues include to “fix Nebraska’s broken property tax system, grow our economy, and keep our kids here.”

Pillen has recently been navigating a scandal regarding a no-bid contract he gave to a lobbyist. He awarded a \$2.5 million no-bid emergency contract to a lobbyist he knew and had traveled with as part of state delegations. This rushed contract was found by State Auditor Mike Foley, who alleged that Pillen broke state law by not specifying the emergency that justified skipping the bidding step.

The contract was awarded to a business, GSD, with one employee, Julie Bushell. Bushell has ties to the agricultural and telecommunications business but also runs an agribusiness that uses sensors to connect farm infrastructure, like water, according



to the Nebraska Examiner. It is also known that Bushell has accompanied Pillen on state trips to Japan, South Korea, Washington D.C. and Milwaukee. The governor’s office denied playing favorites in a response to the Examiner.

Pillen has the endorsement of President Donald Trump and announced his campaign has raised over \$10 million going into the primary. Prominent Trump donor and former gubernatorial candidate Charles Herbster, who ran a close race against Pillen in 2022, announced March 2 that he would not be running.

The second Republican who is in the race is Sheila Korth-Focken. Korth-Focken is another farm-raised candidate from Randolph in northeast Nebraska. She attended the University of Nebraska-Omaha and currently lives near her hometown in the Sandhills with her family. According to KOLN, Korth-Focken has previously served as a city administrator, city treasurer and clerk.

Per her campaign website, her top two issues are “Protect[ing] Nebraskans” and “Cut Spending and Lower Taxes.” In addition to these, other issues she highlights are respecting the will of the voter, reducing abortions in Nebraska, defending the Second Amendment and enforcing laws to decrease crime.

According to the Cedar County News, Korth-Focken and her husband, Kurt Focken, who served as a city utilities employee, were “relieved of their duties” in April 2025. The Randolph mayor did not give any specifics on to why they were terminated, however “they had been recently dealing with a family



emergency that required them to both be absent from work to attend court hearings in Omaha.”

Korth-Focken and her husband began dating in September 2024 while they were both holding their former positions and were married two months later, according to Cedar County News. Korth-Focken alleges the mayor, Dwayne Schutt, “started treating her differently once she confirmed she was pregnant.” The Fockens told CCN they were, “contemplating legal action against the city for wrongful termination.”

The third and final candidate is Jacy Todd. Born in Alliance and raised in Grand Island, Todd served three years in the Army as a combat medic before re-enlisting in the Nebraska National Guard. He is a 100% Service Disabled Veteran and because of that he is a major proponent of the legalization of medical marijuana. He currently lives in York with his family. Some of his biggest issues, according to his website, are “Support[ing] our veterans,” “No foreign land ownership” and “Legalizing Cannabis.”

On Feb. 25, Todd was found guilty on 23 counts of official misconduct and one count of making a false statement under oath related to his notarizing of medical marijuana petitions in 2024.

He was accused of notarizing petitions on behalf of a paid circulator while that circulator was not in his presence. Todd’s attorney told jurors, “Todd didn’t know at the time that the notary and circular needed to be in the same place for a signature and stamp on each petition page,” according to the Nebraska Examiner.



Todd maintains his innocence, saying in a news conference March 2, “While I absolutely continue to maintain my innocence, what was unquestionably clear that what the state presented was nothing more than a series of paperwork errors.”

He is asking Gov. Pillen, Attorney General Mike Hilgers and Secretary of State Bob Evnen for an “instant pardon,” writing “Governor Jim Pillen is on record stating that paper errors do not constitute criminal charges,” referencing the explanation by the governor’s office as to why a section of his emergency no bid contract was left blank.

Many other candidates put their names in on the deadline to register but have yet to create clear running stances and websites at the time of writing. These Republican candidates are Sal Holguin, Gary Rogge and John Walz.

The frontrunner for the Democrats is Lynne Walz, a former state senator from the 15th district, which covers Dodge County and northwest Douglas County. On her website, Walz says, “Over a week-long trip through Nebraska...I listened to hundreds of Nebraskans at town halls...I took notes on the issues that concern Nebraskans the most.” She then developed eight “common-sense plans.” Some of these plans include respecting the will of the voters, addressing affordability and protecting freedom.

Walz grew up on a farm in Dodge County to working class parents. After years as a caretaker, Walz attended Midland Lutheran College, earning her degree in education. She worked at Fremont Public Schools and was elected to Nebraska’s Unicameral in 2016, defeating a Republican incumbent. She was re-elected in 2020 and left office in Jan. 2025.

The other Democrat running is United States Air Force veteran Larry Marvin. Marvin previously ran for U.S. Senate in 2020.

Ten seniors awarded the Nebraska Seal of Biliteracy

|Wren Bussing
contributing writer

Ten Central students received the Nebraska Seal of Biliteracy for their proficiency in two languages, Spanish and English or French and English, this school year.

The Seal of Biliteracy is an award recognizing the students in Nebraska who demonstrate proficiency in two languages, with four different medal categories: bronze, silver, gold and platinum.

Nine of the 10 were proficient in Spanish, with one, Scout Dollison, earning it in French. Senior Camila Dona-Trujillo and senior Jasmin Gutierrez Garcia are two recipients of this award this school year.

Dona-Trujillo has been taking Spanish classes to reconnect to her roots and her culture, and she would like to be a crime scene investigator or translate for victims. She earned this award by taking two years of both advanced English and advanced Spanish

respectively, and she earned a silver medal.

“Spanish is my first language, so it feels like I’ve done right with my culture,” Dona-Trujillo said.

Her word of advice to other students who would like to try to obtain this award is to believe in themselves.

Gutierrez-Garcia had recently discovered the Seal of Biliteracy through her teachers, who had recommended she apply to receive it. She also recieved a silver medal, and she would like to become a therapist to help a broader spectrum of people who are dealing with mental health struggles.

“I’ve never thought of it that way,” Gutierrez Garcia said.

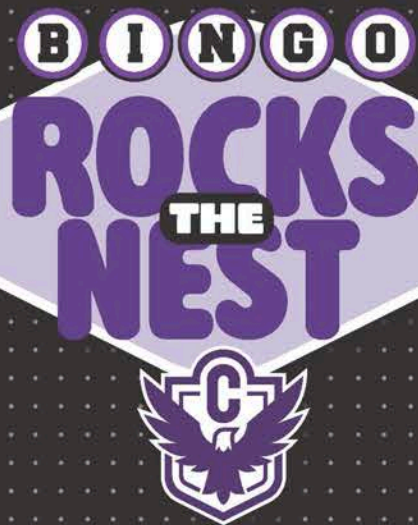
Her advice for students who want to strive to get this award is to go for it, and to keep going regardless of how hard it gets.

The other seniors who received the seal were Alexander Cruz, Anahid Brabo Garrido, Esperanza Castro Pastrana, Gaby Antunez, Josue Coronado, Justin Pineda Choto and Zury Salas Eloisa.



Cam Dona-Trujillo and Jasmin Gutierrez Garcia.

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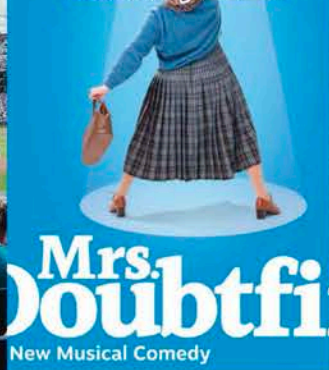
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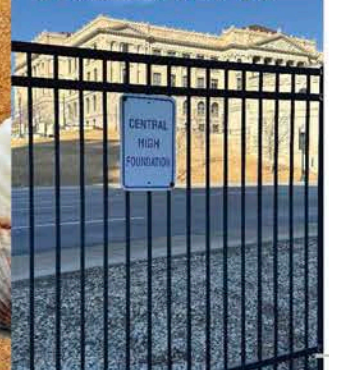
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A word of advice

Don't find a shore, build a bridge to those around you

Steven Dickerson
editor-in-chief

Walking into Central as a freshman can feel like being thrown into rushing waters. Stepping into this gigantic building four falls ago, I was that freshman. I didn't know where groups sat, how passing periods work, what bathrooms were crowded, what places to avoid. I was oblivious.

The hallways are loud, the classes are bigger, the social groups are different, and life changes so quickly it feels as though you're drowning. As a result, most find success by finding their shore, their spot to rest. This spot becomes your place, your people and your life for the rest of your time in high school.

Do not find a shore. Instead, face the waters and build bridges between the shores. Connecting circles is an adjustment, but it will benefit you. Find people to talk to who you've never met, go to events that stretch outside of your comfort zone, join clubs that sound even slightly interesting to you. Try to meet new people in the courtyard or socialize with people in the halls. Sit in the middle of the classroom and meet the peers you don't know. Join the student section at a game even when it is just a few kids. This is bridge-building, creating a multi-dimensional life for yourself.

This will not just change your life socially. You will meet people who can advance your

life experiences. You will learn more. You will see issues differently. You will feel less alone because your world gets bigger. Instead of watching school happen around you, you become part of what makes it work.

Becoming an active participant in life is difficult, but it is worth it. The choices I made freshman year, while challenging to navigate at the time, have now impacted where I will be going with my life. At lunch, I would engage in conversations with people who I didn't know very well and tell them about my interests in areas like environmental advocacy. I ended up getting me a role in a local organization and becoming a sustainability champion because the people I met connected me.

Make those connections. Once people know your interests, they will share opportunities with you, and you can do



View of the Missouri River from the bridge with a sign about the river as a river of hope. JULIUS WAKOLE | The Register

the same for them. You don't have to have everything figured out, but having those connections makes whatever you do choose a whole lot easier.

It's tempting to play it safe as a high schooler trying to navigate new waters. The

shore is fine, and it will get you through the four years of high school. But what happens when your shore disappears, is damaged, or when you need to cross? That's where bridge-building, just being an active participant in your life experience, will change your life.

Advice from an immigration lawyer for contact with ICE

Charli Tobin
sports editor

For the last five years, Ariel Magaña Linares has been a senior attorney at the Center for Immigrant and Refugee Advancement. CIRA's goal is "to empower immigrants and refugees to live confidently through high-quality legal representation, resettlement and social work, while creating welcoming communities through education and advocacy," according to the CIRA website. The Register had a chance to interview Linares about what students should do if they encounter Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). The interview has been edited for clarity and length.

Charli Tobin

What are your basic rights?

Ariel Magaña Linares

Well, first of all, [the] right to remain silent is a big one. It's really important for folks to say that affirmatively. So, if folks are getting talked to by police, they can ask to either walk away or they can just tell the police, I'm not going to answer your questions. In the state of Nebraska, the only questions you have to answer are questions related to your identity and your address. So, you have to tell them your name and where you live if they ask for it, but that's all you need to say. You don't need to give them the country you're from or any of your immigration history or anything like that. So, the] right to remain silent is going to be the most important one. If you have access to an immigration attorney, make sure you have that information on hand at any given time so that you can ask officers to actually let you use that constitutional right as well to get in contact with an attorney. Finally, you also have the right to be free from unreasonable searches and seizures. That takes a lot more planning that I'm sure you're going to ask me about, but it's really important for folks to understand what are some of the spaces in their lives, like physical spaces, where police are restricted from going

in without a warrant.

Charli Tobin

What would your advice be if ICE showed up at your house or your place of living?

Ariel Magaña Linares

Yeah, so that kind of gets into folks' right to be free from unreasonable searches and seizures. So, what makes a search or seizure reasonable? Most of the time, it's when police have some sort of warrant. If you think about the home, the home is a very private place. And in order for you to keep that constitutional expectation of privacy, you generally need a warrant signed by a judge before ICE agents can go in there without your consent. A lot of people, unfortunately, give up that constitutional right by just freely consenting to searches in their home. But I would encourage folks to question law enforcement and respectfully ask them to produce a warrant signed by a judge that says that those officers can go into that home.

Charli Tobin

What would your advice be if you were pulled over by ICE?

Ariel Magaña Linares

You have less of an expectation of privacy when you're on the road, right? You're completely private in your home. When you're on the road, your life is very public, right? Anybody can approach you. Anybody can come up to you, ask questions, and you can tell them that you don't want to interact. The same case applies for law enforcement. So, because you have less of an expectation of privacy, you can still lean on your other constitutional rights, like your right to remain silent, the right to talk to an attorney, to expect due process. So, in the heat of the moment when you're on the road, don't get violent, right? Don't obstruct or resist any arrest or anything like that. The place where you're going to win the argument about whether your arrest was justified or not isn't going to be in the heat of the moment. It's going to be in a courtroom where you can actually assert your defenses.

Charli Tobin

What should you do if you encounter ICE at

a protest?

Ariel Magaña Linares

Protests are always scary situations because it's not just your behavior that you have to look out for. It's unfortunately the behavior of the rest of the group as well. And protests can get wild very quickly. In protest situations, you still have your other constitutional rights. However, there is a sprinkled adage there of a different constitutional right that a lot of people forget about, and that's your right to peaceably assemble. And so typically if a protest gets crazy and law enforcement needs to crack down on it with a legally valid reason, they have to give protesters an opportunity to peacefully leave the situation. They can't just round all the people up and treat them all as if they're part of a problem that's gone wrong. That's called kettling, and it violates the First Amendment.

Charli Tobin

If you are detained by ICE, what would be your advice?

Ariel Magaña Linares

Find an attorney. If you do not already have an attorney, find an attorney as soon as you can. Do not sign anything unless you run it by an attorney who can advise you about the consequences of different documents. Unfortunately, a lot of people feel pressure because it might be their first time in custody or because they don't understand their rights fully. And so, officers will tell them things like, 'We can make this all go away if you just sign this piece of paper.' Next thing you know, they've signed away all their rights to a hearing or right to assert certain defenses. So, before folks do that, make sure you run it by a professional. Also, here at CIRA, we do have a detainee intake line, so this is specifically for folks who have been detained and are in ICE custody here in Nebraska or in southwest Iowa, they could submit a detainee intake form to our office. Either they can have a family member complete the form and e-mail it to us or bring it in person, or they can call our detainee intake phone number. The phone number for that is 402-884-0876. They can call that detainee

hotline, and our folks will do intake on it. And we go ahead and review those individually as attorneys. And we also get together every two weeks to ensure that we haven't let anything slip through the cracks.

Charli Tobin

If you cannot afford an attorney, what would your advice be?

Ariel Magaña Linares

In Nebraska and in Southwest Iowa, it might be to contact our detainee intake. So that way we can take a look at the case and see if there's anything we can do on the bond representation front, on the immigration representation front, or if there's some sort of avenue for them to go into federal court if they're being denied a bond hearing so that they can seek a bond hearing. So, CIRA is always a good community resource. ACLU of Nebraska also does similar screening for those sorts of issues. And of course, there's plenty of private practice immigration firms that do it as well.

Charli Tobin

What would be your advice for a path to citizenship for anyone looking for that?

Ariel Magaña Linares

Yeah, there are so many different avenues for people to obtain some sort of lawful status and ultimately become citizens. The problem is that a lot of these avenues have bureaucratic bumps, if you will. There's other ways that I would characterize them, but unfortunately, while people can Google and find so many different paths that make sense on paper, in practice, these pathways effectively don't exist for a lot of people. So, asylum applications, unfortunately, are adjudicated at a very negative rate, especially here in the Omaha Immigration Court. For people seeking to immigrate lawfully, maybe they have a brother or sister who's a U.S. citizen and they want to come to the United States to join them. We're talking about wait times that exceed several decades. So, on paper, you can see there are probably multiple ways for somebody to fix their status in the US, but in practice, these options are quite limited.

The fall of an empire

Caprice McCoy
opinion editor

As the United States approaches its 250th anniversary, the milestone invites more than celebration. It raises a quieter question: what does longevity actually mean for a nation that has long defined itself through growth, expansion and global influence?

Historically, anniversaries of this scale tend to prompt reflection. For some rising powers, they symbolize stability and endurance. For others, they mark moments of transition when confidence begins to give way to uncertainty.

By most traditional measures, the United States remains a superpower. Its military presence spans the globe, its economy continues to shape international markets and its cultural exports dominate entertainment, technology and media. American influence is still deeply embedded in global systems. Measured purely by power, little suggests immediate decline.

Yet power and stability are not always the same thing. In recent years, public discourse has increasingly centered on division rather than unity.

Political polarization, declining trust in institutions, economic strain and cultural fragmentation have created a sense that the country is pulling in multiple directions at once. The question is no longer whether the United States is powerful, but whether it feels cohesive.

Historically, empires rarely fall because of sudden external defeat. More often, decline begins internally: through exhaustion, overextension or the erosion of shared identity. A nation's strength depends not only on economic or military dominance, but on a collective belief in its own direction. When citizens struggle to agree on basic realities or long-term goals, stability becomes harder to maintain, even when external power remains intact.

In its later years, the Roman Republic experienced deep political polarization, widening wealth inequality and a gradual erosion of democratic norms. Power struggles between elites became increasingly hostile, public trust in governing institutions



An American flag flies outside the U.S. Supreme Court in Washington, D.C., U.S., February 25, 2026.

KYLIE COOPER | Reuters

weakened and populist leader – leaders who have a political stand that emphasize the idea of the common people in opposition to the perceived elite – gained influence by positioning themselves as champions of a frustrated citizenry.

Figures such as Julius Caesar did not dismantle the Republic in a single moment; rather, they rose within a system already strained by internal division and political gridlock. While the United States exists in a vastly different historical and global context, parallels can be drawn in the form of intensified partisanship, economic disparity and growing skepticism toward institutions.

The comparison does not suggest identical outcomes, but it highlights a shared pattern: republics often face their greatest challenges not from foreign threats, but from prolonged internal fragmentation.

This tension is visible in everyday political and cultural life. Public debates increasingly frame issues in absolute terms, leaving little room for compromise or nuance. Social media accelerates this divide, rewarding outrage and certainty over complexity. As disagreement becomes identity, cooperation becomes

more difficult and governance becomes slower and more contentious. None of these developments signal immediate collapse, but they do suggest strain beneath the surface.

At the same time, it would be inaccurate to frame the current moment purely as decline. The United States has faced periods of internal conflict before and has often redefined itself in response.

The United States has navigated existential internal crises before. The most obvious example is the American Civil War—a literal fracture of the nation that ended with constitutional amendments redefining citizenship and federal power.

A century later, the Great Depression forced a massive restructuring of the economy through the New Deal, permanently expanding the role of the federal government.

The Civil Rights Movement again exposed deep moral and institutional contradictions yet resulted in landmark legislation that reshaped American democracy.

Even the unrest surrounding the Vietnam War protests and the constitutional crisis of Watergate scandal tested public trust — but ultimately reinforced checks and balances

rather than eliminating them. Economic innovation, demographic change and cultural adaptability remain defining features of the country. Moments of tension can also become moments of reinvention.

Whether the current era represents decay or transition depends largely on how these challenges are addressed moving forward.

As the nation approaches its 250th year, the conversation may be less about whether America is falling and more about what kind of power it intends to be. Empires are remembered not only for their dominance, but for how they changed when confronted with their own limits.

The United States still holds enormous influence, but longevity will depend on more than strength alone. It will depend on whether a shared sense of purpose can exist alongside disagreement.

The anniversary, then, is not simply a celebration of survival. It is an opportunity to ask whether the country's greatest challenge is external competition — or the ability to remain unified enough to sustain its own success.

It feels naïve to assume that everything will simply stabilize on its own. The level of polarization, institutional distrust, economic strain and cultural fragmentation is not minor turbulence, it is sustained pressure. History shows that prolonged tension does not quietly fade, it forces a reckoning.

Whether that shift comes in two months or two years, it is difficult to imagine the United States continuing on its current trajectory without some kind of significant transformation.

That does not automatically mean collapse. It means change. Empires and republics alike reach moments where the systems that once felt stable begin to strain under their own contradictions. The Roman Republic did not fall in a single dramatic moment; it eroded through division, consolidation of power and public disillusionment. America may not mirror that outcome exactly, but to ignore the parallels would be careless. The question is not whether change is coming — it is whether it will be intentional reform or reactive crisis.

AI takeover is out of hand

Isabella Smith
staff writer

Artificial intelligence has taken over every aspect of the internet. Social media, streaming platforms, and even the most basic search engines all have some form of this technology, but is it really doing any good?

When looking something up on Google, you'll get a Gemini AI overview on quite literally every single topic imaginable, sometimes showing false information. The AI takes its information from a wide variety of sources online, regardless of the veracity of the material, and it may register as factual to the average person.

AI chatbots are also a feature on pretty much every app right now including Snapchat, Instagram, X, Spotify and now TikTok, which had one added in a recent update. Its intended purpose is to assist users on these platforms and answer questions they may have without spending tons of time on research. Frankly, I don't know anyone who actually finds this technology helpful, and I've only ever seen people making fun of or getting annoyed by it.

Speaking of people getting annoyed by AI, this year's Super Bowl ads were filled with either AI generated content or content promoting AI usage, which no one found particularly entertaining. Even on Pinterest, arguably the least harmful social media platform, users are getting sick of every other pin being AI generated for no apparent reason.

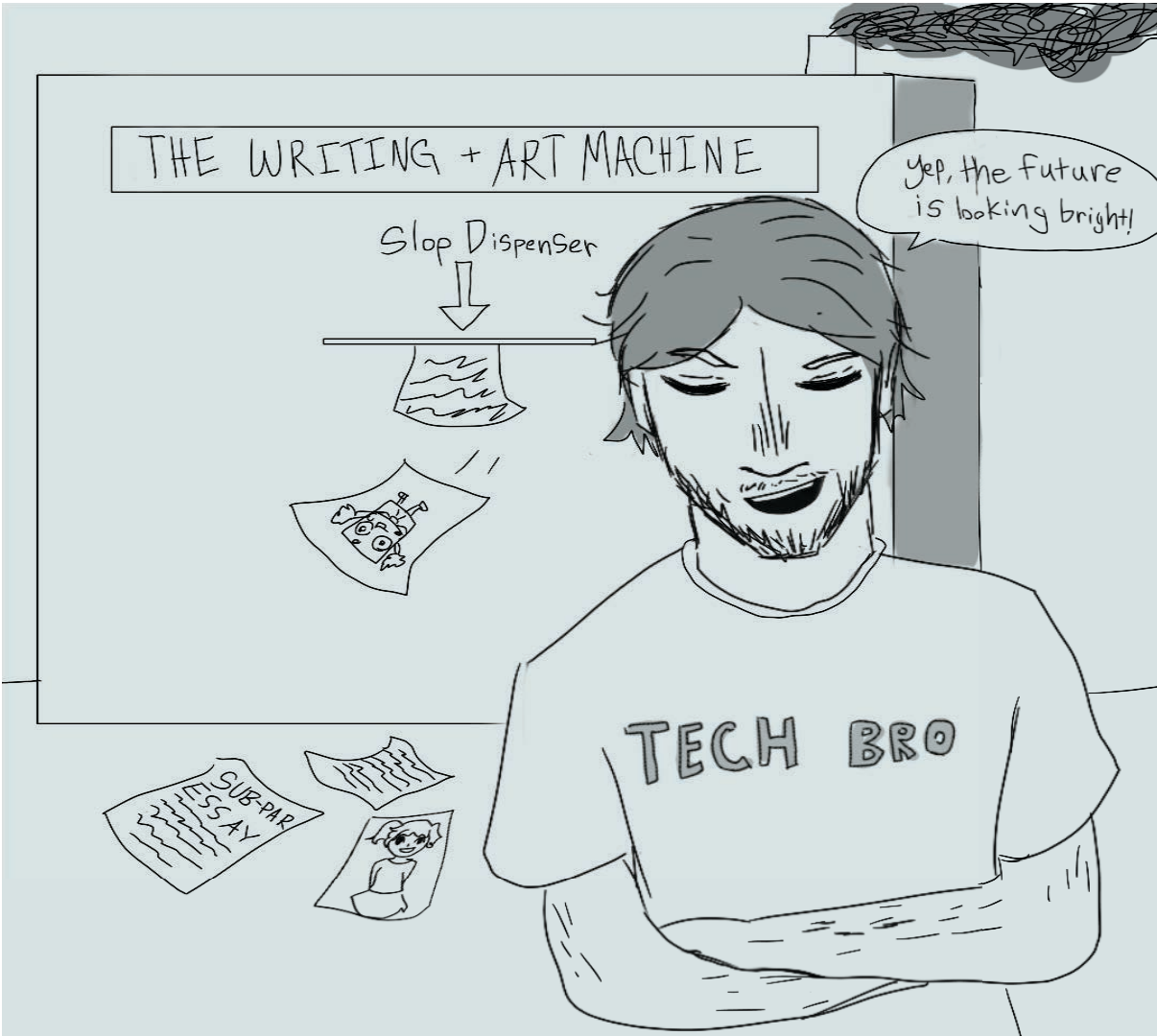
Looking at more serious impacts, AI has completely taken over students and the school environment overall. Almost everyone I know uses ChatGPT or some other form of AI to "help" with their assignments, but really, they're just

letting a robot do all the work instead. According to the College Board, "the percentage of high school students who report using GenAI tools for schoolwork is growing, increasing from 79% to 84% between January and May 2025."

This has led to so many negative consequences, but the most prevalent and concerning of them all is the decrease in literacy rates over the past couple of years. According to recent scores from the National Assessment of Education Progress, 32% of high school seniors scored below "basic," showing they could not decipher a text to find details crucial for comprehension.

Another consequence from AI in classrooms is assignments wrongfully getting flagged as AI by other AI systems. While for teachers it seems like a foolproof way to catch students who are cheating, but the reality is innocent students end up with their hard work diminished and no way to defend themselves.

Aside from all this, AI has the potential to cause irreparable damage to the environment. The amount of electricity needed for some AI models emit a ridiculous amount of carbon



CONNIE MOENNIG | The Register

dioxide while also putting unnecessary strain on local power grids. Mass amounts of water are needed to cool the hardware used for generative AI which can disrupt surrounding ecosystems or drain water supplies.

Every time I see AI now, I just get annoyed and wonder how much of this is actually doing any good. From my viewpoint, AI is more annoying than anything else and has more harmful impacts than good.

TPUSA’s half-time show was hot garbage

Esther Moennig
staff writer

Bad Bunny performed for this year’s Super Bowl just one week after winning album of the year at the Grammys. In an act of defiance, nonprofit Turning Point USA decided to host their own “agenda free” halftime show headlined by primarily country artists, most notably Kid Rock.

The message that was pushed in the official halftime show was that “The only thing more powerful than hate is love,” which you’d think anyone decent would agree with.

However, the right found the idea of Latino rapper and singer performing at

the halftime show threatening. With the current administration’s staunch backing of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and the heavy emphasis on deporting immigrants from Latin American countries, it’s not hard to see why people would find this performance controversial.

The possibility of the Trump administration and the United States government being criticized on one of the largest stages in the nation, would lead many conservatives away from the event.

Turning Point’s main goal was to offer an alternative to the official performance that would highlight “American culture, freedom, and faith.” When you see clips of the event

out of context, they seem to be straight out of a comedy sketch making fun of country music. Throughout the show the energy felt weak and uninspired at best, and at worst it felt cringeworthy and uncomfortable.

Even outside of it being a vaguely bigoted reaction to a Puerto Rican artist’s accomplishments, it was just plain awful. It lacked the essence of what it was supposed to be, or at least how it promoted itself to Facebook moms. A piece of art crafted to celebrate our country’s culture, something that was supposed to unify us as Americans.

In all honesty it felt a lot more meaningful when the “American Culture” that was being celebrated was all American

culture, not just the United States, but Central America, South America and North America.

TPUSA’s halftime show was a display of spite and insecurity. They came out lip syncing the worst rap music ever made, singing about kissing fish and shouting, “Hey! This is real America! None of the woke B.S!”

Give me a break. The whole situation proved the sentiment of the actual halftime show. Bad Bunny’s performance was an artful display of Latin American culture. TPUSA’s was a thinly veiled attack on that display. In the end they were about as successful as you might expect.

MINDFRAYS arises from class

Blaise Weyerman
contributing writer

Central students junior Byron Betancourt, senior Owen Conrad, sophomore Blu Gilreeder, junior Jeremiah Ridgebear and senior Elliot Schutt came together over the last few months to debut their rock band MINDFRAYS.

Stemming from their modern band class, these students create and practice music together as a group, not just for the grade but as a passion project.

In his Modern Band class, Schutt was the drummer for two different bands, and after meeting each other both bands decided to merge into one big band. Betancourt was the lead singer in a band with Schutt and Conrad, a guitarist. Through their Modern Band class they merged with Schutt’s other band with bassist Ridgebear and guitarist Gilreeder.

Once two separate bands, they credit Central’s music classes for bringing them together. Their music combines genres of sub-

rock, and they take influence from bands such as Nirvana, The Descendants and Titlefight.

“I’ve never been in any kind of band class before, and [my friend] Isaiah recommended me this class, and then I met all these people, and now I’m in a band just from knowing basic drum knowledge,” Schutt said.

Modern Band is a new, performance-based Central music class that focuses on popular genres like rock or pop. Students can create their own bands, practice, cover and even write original music.

“It’s basically a freedom of music. If there’s a specific genre of music you want to create, you can go and create that. There’s not like a set curriculum necessarily. It’s just what you want to create with others,” Ridgebear said.

Central band teacher Jeff Mount currently teaches Modern Band. In his first year teaching this class he has seen success and improvement across the board. Modern Band is for the most part student led, and Mount has noticed his students are very motivated.



From left, Owen Conrad, Jeremiah Ridgebear, Blu Gilreeder and Byron Betancourt jam out together during a rehearsal. Blaise Weyerman | The Register

“I rarely, if ever, see somebody just sitting around; they’re always doing something. Working on music, working on lyrics, researching bands they want to play, stuff like that,” Mount said.

The Modern Dating Rulebook: A practical guide to strategic romance

Caprice McCoy
opinion editor

Welcome to modern dating. It is not about connection. It is not about vulnerability. It is certainly not about “being yourself.” It is about strategy.

Somewhere along the way, romance evolved into a carefully managed system of signals, restraint, and calculated disinterest. No one wrote the rulebook down, yet everyone seems to know it. Success relies less on chemistry and more on execution. Feelings are optional. Timing is everything. Let us begin.

The Art of Nonchalance:

First off, we have nonchalance. If you want someone to like you, under react. Every time.

They tell you something vulnerable? “That’s crazy.” They ask you a deep question about your childhood, your dreams, or the socioeconomic state of the world? Shrug. “I don’t know. I just be chilling.” They say they find you interesting? “Lol.”

Enthusiasm is dangerous. Quick replies signal surplus availability. Detailed responses suggest emotional investment. Investment suggests imbalance.

Instead, maintain a response time that implies you are either fully booked or

mildly indifferent. Ideally both. Never double text. Never clarify too quickly. Use minimal punctuation. Too many exclamation points may reveal joy.

The less you reveal, the more mysterious you appear. If you provide nothing, they will project depth onto you. Emotional distance is not avoidance; it is intriguing. Remember: the person who cares less controls the dynamic.

Green Flags and Red Flags

Now that you have minimized your own personality, it is time to evaluate theirs. Modern dating is a screening process. We do not “get to know” people. We audit them.

Minor habits may indicate long-term catastrophe. They hesitate before answering a question? Red flag. They follow too many people online? Red flag. They follow too few? Suspicious. Their texting tone slightly shifts? Investigate.

Green flags are equally transactional. They say good morning consistently. They use therapy language. They validate feelings efficiently. Excellent. Add to shortlist.

Early elimination prevents emotional exposure. Swift judgment protects energy. Compatibility is not discovered over time; it is detected immediately through pattern recognition and mild paranoia.

You are not forming a relationship. You are conducting risk management.

“If They Wanted To, They Would”

This guiding principle simplifies the entire experience.

If they wanted to text you, they would. If they wanted to plan the date, they would.

If they wanted to understand your layered emotional history shaped by modern instability, they would.

Context is inefficient. Nuance wastes time. Busy schedules, conflicting responsibilities, social anxiety — irrelevant. The absence of action is an intentional action. Silence is clarity. Delay is a decision. Ambiguity is a rejection.

Under this rule, you never need to ask questions. You simply interpret behavior as the final truth and proceed accordingly. Emotional self-protection achieved through decisive oversimplification. Efficiency is peace.

Consulting the Algorithm

When confusion arises, consult the highest authority: short-form video platforms. Advice with dramatic background music and firm declarations carries the most credibility. Balanced perspectives receive limited engagement and are therefore unreliable.

Statements beginning with “Never let them—” or “If they don’t—” provide essential structure. The louder the certainty, the greater the trustworthiness.

Nuance reduces shareability. Complexity disrupts virality. Therefore, complexity must be discarded. If a 45-second video confidently explains your entire romantic situation, accept the diagnosis immediately. Reflection is outdated. External consensus is faster.

This rulebook promises clarity, protection, and control. It ensures you never appear overly invested, never tolerate imperfection, and never sit with uncertainty.

Yet if modern dating requires this much calculation — controlled response times, emotional suppression, strategic detachment, constant evaluation — it may be worth asking whether connection has quietly become performance.

Earlier models of courtship, though flawed in their own ways, relied more heavily on direct expression. Interest was stated. Intentions were declared. Feelings were acknowledged without strategic delay.

But clarity requires vulnerability. Vulnerability risks imbalance. And imbalance risks losing.

So, for now, continue perfecting. Curate your responses. Moderate your enthusiasm. Interpret swiftly. Detach efficiently. And if exhaustion sets in, simply remind yourself: Mystery is attractive. Detachment is power. Caring less is winning.

‘The Star-Spangled Banner’ was only the beginning of Puth’s future

Gaby Antunez
staff writer

Singer and songwriter Charlie Puth started Super Bowl LX on Feb. 8 by singing the national anthem, “The Star-Spangled Banner.”

Puth is a pop singer well-known for having a perfect pitch and the ability to hit many different high notes confidently. His top song “Attention,” released in 2017 proved how strong a vocalist he is.

Throughout the song he would constantly

add riffs, making it truly unique. He would confidently go from full-chest high notes into falsetto, giving it a heartwarming feeling. He wasn’t only singing the song, he was expressing the story behind the song.

Many like me would listen to Puth constantly throughout the late 2010s and finally seeing him back in the spotlight is truly amazing. I found out he would be the one singing the national anthem the day of the Super Bowl, and let’s just say my expectations were met.

The song did so well that he added his version to both Spotify and Apple Music, letting others stream his version. Before the Super Bowl, he pre-released three new songs off his first full album since “CHARLIE” four years ago, which helped bring more attention to his music.

Singing at the Super Bowl boosted his career because many know his name but don’t listen to his music anymore. So, taking this opportunity to put his name back out there truly helped his new album “Whatever’s

Clever!” become more anticipated. The songs that got pre-released from his new album are “Changes,” “Beat Yourself up” and “Cry,” which features Kenny G. The full album will be released on March 6.

Shortly after he announced the “Whatever’s Clever! World Tour,” which will last from April 22 to July 30 and have 48 different concert dates. Some dates close to Omaha are Kansas City, Missouri on May 13 and Rosemon, Illinois on May 15.

Fan-favorite romances

Wuthering Heights Review

Paula Gutierrez Martinez
news editor

Ever since Margot Robbie and Jacob Elordi were cast as Catherine Earnshaw and Heathcliff, “Wuthering Heights” has faced controversy after controversy. Critics were quick to point out that Robbie is decades older than Catherine, and Elordi, a white man, plays a character repeatedly coded as non-white.

The structure of the film has also garnered significant controversy for much of the same reasons the casting did: it is unfaithful to the original 1847 novel. Director Emerald Fennell, whose past directorial projects include “Promising Young Woman” and “Saltburn,” makes several changes to the Gothic tragedy by Emily Brontë, which deals with not only love and revenge, but class and race. However, Fennell only engages with the former themes.

Fennell has been explicitly clear about her decision against a faithful adaptation since the beginning of the movie-making process, stating that she wanted to “try and recreate the feeling of a teenage girl reading the book for the first time.” This idea is frankly insulting to young women everywhere, as it suggests they are incapable of grasping any of the book’s other core themes except for romance.

Since the movie’s harshest critics have been the book’s most die-hard fans, it is surprising to learn that Fennell, too, is a fan of the book, who has described being “obsessed” and “driven mad” by Cathy and Heathcliff’s story when she first read it as

14-years-old. She defended Elordi’s casting because he “looked exactly like the illustration of Heathcliff on the first book [she] read.”

Given these facts, it is clear that “Wuthering Heights” is an excuse for Fennell to bring her teenage fantasies to the big screen. Her adaptation says a lot about either her media literacy (or lack thereof) or her complete disregard for the original material.

It’s a version that can be best described as a sexual romantasy fanfiction. Nevertheless, one that should be judged by its own merits.

“Wuthering Heights” is a movie that has clearly set out to shock audiences, yet it falls short of any novelty. The end result is an entertaining film that will have you leaving the theater slightly bewildered. It is good the way hearing a particularly good piece of gossip is good.

The first official teaser for “Wuthering Heights” makes it clear that it is a film that is out to provoke people, with sensory shots of bread dough being kneaded by glistening hands, yet another pair of hands fingering egg yolks and yet another pushing her finger into a fish’s mouth. But the film is neither as dark nor shocking as it sets out to be. Its more provocative moments merely make you cringe in embarrassment for anyone involved.

Although Robbie and Elordi seem like strange choices for Cathy and Heathcliff, and an even stranger pair, their fantastic acting makes up for the lack of organic chemistry between the two.



“Wuthering Heights” movie poster showing Margot Robbie and Jacob Elordi

JULIUS WAKOLE | The Register

Charlotte Mellington and Owen Cooper, who play young Cathy and Heathcliff, respectively, are scene-stealers in the first part of the movie, and their acting is on par with that of Robbie’s and Elordi’s.

Overall, the acting is strong enough to pull some discordant elements together. Individually, these elements seem like they would make a good movie: Robbie and Elordi are prestige actors, Charli XCX is an, ahem, X-cellent songstress, and Fennell has proven herself to be a popular director through reception of her past projects. But there is something about these components that do not work well together.

The visuals are gorgeous, and reminded

me somewhat of “Frankenstein,” which Elordi starred in last year. “Wuthering Heights” and “Frankenstein” are alike in many ways: both are classic Gothic novels that were adapted into 21st century movies less than a year apart. The directors of both adaptations took some creative liberties with the movie. But where “Frankenstein” director Guillermo del Toro managed to retain some of the original message, Fennell loses it completely.

If you are a devout fan of the book, the movie-watching experience is bound to be frustrating for you. But if you ignore the source material and view Fennell’s “Wuthering Heights” as its own story, you’ll be bound to feel some enjoyment.

‘Bridgerton’ able to adapt, is back better than ever

Grace Sunseri
chief-copy editor

Dearest Gentle Reader, the newest season of “Bridgerton” has finally been released in full, and it dazzles in a way the previous season struggled to achieve. After season three, which followed Colin Bridgerton and felt weighed down by excess subplots, the show’s runners appear to have found the perfect balance. As a reader of fan of the Julia Quinn novels that inspired the series, I was nervous going in it would be a repeat of season three.

Season four follows Benedict Bridgerton (Luke Thompson). Just like a classic Cinderella story, he meets a dazzling young woman at a masquerade ball, but before he sees her face she must leave, but not before forgetting her glove. He becomes hell bent on finding this young woman, but months pass and he is unsuccessful.

It is later revealed to watchers that the mystery woman is a maid, Sophie Baek (Yerin Ha). Sophie, the illegitimate child of her titled father and maid mother, works for no pay, for her ruthless stepmother and two stepsisters.

Bridgerton is only successful as a show if the chemistry of the two main characters of the season have a strong, palpable chemistry, and this season nails it on the head. Thompson and Ha are flawlessly able to navigate their characters’ complicated journey, their constant push and pull. This yearning, evident in lingering looks, hands touching in passing and constant heavy breathing, heightens the ever important sexual tension that is a hallmark of Bridgerton.

This season is reminiscent of season two for me (the best season) not only through the chemistry and sexual tension, but also the character development. Similar to his older

brother, Benedict is forced to confront his true feelings and overcome his aversion to love and marriage. He is no longer a “rake,” a wealthy gentleman of promiscuous habits, but a man on a mission chasing what, or who, he wants.

And similar to Kate Sharma, the female lead in s2, Sophie is initially reluctant to a relationship with their respective Bridgerton, but is not forced into the relationship. She is able to choose for herself whether she wants to pursue the relationship, which she chooses in the end (obviously). She evolves from a shy, reserved ladies’ maid to a confident woman of society, one who belongs there.

Alongside their evolution, the season follows the stories of many other siblings and family members. Last season, I felt the numerous subplots and side characters majorly overshadowed the true story viewers were there for, Colin (Luke Newton) and Penelope (Nicola Coughlan). But, in this season it feels more necessary and cohesive.

Matriarch Violet Bridgerton (Ruth Gemmell) is exploring her own romantic relationship after being widowed nearly a decade earlier. It also follows the newly married Francesca (Hannah Dodd) and her trials and tribulations of being a young wife. They are seemingly setting the stage for her own spotlight. Although, I hope the next season follows Eloise (Claudia Jessie), resident independent sister, hell bent on being a spinster.



Yerin Ha with Luke Thompson in the newest Bridgerton season poster.

|NETFLIX

‘No Other Choice’ finds darkness in modern work culture

Suri Alvarado Villegas
staff writer

If you love Korean movies that are just a beautifully filmed reminder that capitalism is a horror genre, then you need to watch “No Other Choice” by Park Chan-wook.

Chan-wook is known for dark, visually detailed films like “Oldboy” and “Decision to Leave,” where he blends beauty with disturbing themes. Released in 2025, this film focuses on economic survival.

With main character Yoo Man-soo (Lee Byung-hun) we watch a man pushed into a spiral of survival after losing his job at a paper company. The pressure to stay afloat financially starts to blur into something much darker. It’s essentially about what happens when society backs you into a corner and tells you that there’s only one way out, financially, socially or emo-

tionally.

Visually, it is an absolute feast for the eyes, with its absurdly creative transitions and sharp angles. At times it almost feels too beautifully shot and polished for how grim the story is, making it even more unsettling when you compare it to today’s world.

The system can make survival feel like humiliation. It shows the struggles of finding employment in today’s climate and the lengths people will go just to secure a job in a world where workers are slowly being replaced. The ending feels close to a near dystopia, not because the world collapses, but because it doesn’t. Everything still looks normal, people go to work, offices stay open, and the city keeps moving but something about it feels deeply broken. By the final scenes, survival no longer feels human; it feels robotic. The main character’s choices show how far someone can be pushed when their

worth is measured only by productivity and success.

The film talks about how the system doesn’t need obvious violence to control people. It controls them through fear: the fear of unemployment, debt and being left behind.

What makes the ending disturbing is how calm it feels. There’s no dramatic explosion or clear villain being defeated. Instead, there’s a quiet acceptance that this is simply how things work. That normality is what makes it feel dystopian. It’s not a futuristic world taken over by robots; it’s just a society that looks almost identical to ours, just slightly more extreme. And that’s what makes it unsettling, because this might be somebody’s reality right now.

The way it talks about capitalism is done very well compared to what we are used to. It’s not the normal “eat the rich” type of symbolism. Instead, it focuses on what feels like regular

people turning against each other just to be the last person standing.

When I was watching the movie, I realized why it was called “No Other Choice.” The character truly believes he has no other choice but to see other humans as obstacles or tools to climb up the ladder. What stood out to me was the difference in how the film seemed to be received. From what I saw, many reviews from South Korea connected to it in a way that felt close to home, especially because of the intense job competition and economic pressure shown in the story. In the West, however, it felt more distant, almost like a dark thriller instead of a reflection of reality. That cultural gap may be one reason it received zero nominations at the Academy Awards despite the critical acclaim it was given, with some people calling it “the biggest snub of this award season.” The themes hit differently depending on where you are standing.

Central students attend ITS festival

Serenity Dawson
contributing writer

After three days of performances, competition and workshops, Central High drama students returned from the Nebraska Thespian Festival with an impressive third place ranking out of 28 schools. The annual event held Jan. 8 through 10 in downtown Omaha, gathered drama students from across Nebraska to showcase their talents and grow as performers.

Central students earned superior rankings in several performance categories. Senior Tessa Priesman and junior Tommy Melone-Reynoso received superior ratings in Solo Musical Theater, and Charlie Gaillard, Melone-Reynoso and Priesman earned

recognition in Ensemble Musical Theater. Several students also received callbacks for their performances, giving them the opportunity to perform again at the festival.

Technical theater students also stood out. Junior Ashton Fischer received a superior ranking in Scenic Design after presenting a miniature diorama and design portfolio to a panel of judges. Jack Wilderman-Nielsen earned a superior ranking in Sound Design, and William Wisneski received a superior ranking in Lighting Design.

“I designed the set by myself and brought a miniature diorama and a PowerPoint with my photos,” Tessa Priesman said. “It was really validating to know that I’m doing good work.”

The Central improv team placed third

overall in the state, and the backstage challenge team earned second place statewide along with first place in the props shift competition. CHS Drama was also awarded the Nebraska Thespian Silver Troupe Honor Recognition Award and received honors for Best Festival-Themed Banner and Best Festival-Themed Display.

While the awards were significant, students said the experience itself was just as meaningful.

“They brought in a guest teacher who showed us how to prepare for auditions — resume, headshot, all that stuff,” Ashton Fischer said. “It was really cool to hear from someone actually working in theater.”

Students also described the festival as an opportunity to grow both personally and

professionally.

“I was pretty nervous, but I felt prepared,” Tessa Priesman said about performing. “Just getting the practice of performing in front of people was super helpful.”

Others said the festival helped them see their future more clearly.

“It really shows me, yes, I can do this as my future career,” Tessa Priesman said. “Seeing what other people are doing makes me want to do it too.”

Students met peers from other schools, talked with colleges at display fairs, and learned directly from industry professionals.

“If you’re really interested in theater, it’s definitely something that you should do,” Ashton Fischer said. “There are so many opportunities there.”

New Bruno Mars album doesn’t disappoint

Gaby Antunez
digital editor

Well-known artist Bruno Mars released his new album Feb.27, titled “The Romantic.” This is his first solo album since 2016. With the help of a familiar crew of co-writers and producers like Brody Brown, Philip Lawrence, James Fauntleroy and D’Mile.

His last solo album “24K Magic” was released almost a decade ago, and it now has 7.7 billion streams on Spotify. To say the expectations were high was an understatement.

The album has nine songs that truly fit Mars’ discography. When I first listened to the album, the first thought that crossed my mind was how Mars can truly do it all.

“Risk It All” is an incredibly romantic song, very slow and vocally based. It has a very Latin pop sound with the beginning and

chorus having a salsa or light mariachi sound to them. The lyrics are very touching and the way he sings expresses the meaning behind them very well.

“Cha Cha Cha” begins with a jazz mix, with backup vocals that complement the main vocals. It is a very beautiful beat that gets complimented by the maracas.

It’s more upbeat than the last track but still subtle. Near the end, the beat increases and becomes more of a danceable song, and the vocals are always still beautiful with harmonies mixed in.

“I just might” is much more upbeat compared to past tracks. It is a more danceable song with more upbeat instruments; this album started from calm to now energetic. Including a solo for his vocals while the beat slows down truly emphasizes the power behind his vocals.

“Something Serious” has a very contagious beat that everyone can clap their

hands too. The spotlight on the vocals shows how big of a role it plays to the song, starting to get more upbeat rather than a clapping hands beat.

The song has a beautiful way to use the silent part and shows “Something Serious” truly proves how well Bruno can focus on both his vocals and the instrumentals of his music, almost like an early Elvis Presley song.

“Dance With Me” starts with very powerful vocals, almost like a final ending to a book. It has a super slow beat compared to previous tracks, although the vocals are making up for it.

It’s a beautiful goodbye song with two beautiful meanings. The meaning of not wanting the album to end and also not wanting the relationship to end. He’s almost apologetic yet understanding his lovers’ decisions; vocals are incredibly focused on in this song.



WHITMAN RUTLEDGE | The Register

Baby Keem’s album reviewed

Noah Sipe
staff writer

Ca\$ino” is the second studio album of hip-hop artist Baby Keem released on Feb. 20. After his debut album in 2022, “The Melodic Blue,” which peaked at number five on Billboard and won Keem a Grammy, he was absent from the music scene until the release of “Ca\$ino.” Roll out for “Ca\$ino” dropped, teasing a personal driven album, with him as a baby on the album cover.

He packs a 36-minute, 11-track album with loads of content and vulnerabilities, while keeping the same energy he is known for.

The first track, “No Security,” is a short, slow tempo song which kicks off the message this album will tell. Keem goes on to mention that early in his career his mother was homeless and in and out of jail and how that affected him. It’s an amazing heartfelt intro to kick off the album.

“Ca\$ino,” the second track, blasts in

with a rapid paced beat. One of the best things about Keem is how he can make a beat switch to make a song sound brand new, while conveying the same message. It’s done with perfection. Keem mentions the struggles he had when his grandmother died, who he was raised by and credits for his upbringing.

“House Money” is the first and only track with a snippet, featuring Kendrick Lamar. This track delivers one of the best choruses on the record and was the most anticipated track on the album. “House Money” is drawn from the gambling term, a feeling of having nothing to lose. This song conveys Keem’s striking confidence in the music industry.

In the eighth track, “Highway 95 pt.2,” Keem opens up about running away from home when he was 13 and sleeping under highways to escape abuse and poverty. The title symbolizes his journey during this time, since it references the actual Highway 95. This track, while carrying such a heavy message, is



WHITMAN RUTLEDGE | The Register

a vibe. It’d be the perfect song to put behind a scene if there were to be a movie about Baby Keem.

“Dramatic Girl” stands out on the album for not having the same heavy hip-hop sound as tracks before it. It leans towards a refreshing pop sound, showing versatility in

Baby Keem’s art.

The industry’s habit of comparing Baby Keem to Kendrick Lamar shouldn’t stop you from enjoying this album. For any hip-hop and rap fan, this is a must listen. You will be immersed in the music.

Central starts early stages of production for 'Totally 80's Prom'

Isabella Smith
staff writer

Central High's performing arts department has started its early stages of production for the spring play, "Totally 80's Prom." The showings will be one Friday, April 10 at 7:00 p.m. and two on Saturday, April 11 at 2:00 and 7:00 p.m.

The play is something unique for Central and theater as a whole, as it will be an interactive, improv-based performance with a prom murder mystery the audience gets to help solve.

"It's a different type of show, fully improv, a variety of different styles, there are some scripted lines in the show that some characters have to memorize, but there's also some lines that we're going to be creating through improvisational acting," said Scott Mead, the director of this play.

"In most shows, the audience sits and watches, and in this one, the characters from the show are interacting with the audience," Mead said.

At this point in the production's early stages, the plot itself is being curated and finalized by the director, cast, and crew. As each cast member discovers more of their character, the play will come to life.

Since his production is also almost entirely improv-based, each performer must create their character's personality and responses to both cast members and the audience.

"You can't really figure out what they're

going to say, you kind of have to make those decisions, and so figuring out what you think your character would say is harder than people might think," said Audrey Fischer, a sophomore who is playing Sarah Social, the senior class vice president.

Another element of this show will be the performance itself involving the crew being on stage for the audience to see, allowing them to be recognized in a way that usually is unheard of. "I'm excited to bring all these pieces together," Mead said.

During the third week of February, students auditioned for the play, one of which being Fischer. "We had to prepare a monologue for one of the characters on the list and perform it based on what we thought our version of the character was best," Fischer said.

"Totally 80's Prom" will be different from a lot of other productions Central has seen in the past, one factor being the audience participation. Audience members will be able to interact with the characters in the show, vote for the prom king and queen, and vote for who they think the murderer is.

Throughout the next month, they will be working to make this production come to life.

"We're in our first week of rehearsals right now, and bam, they are jumping into this full energy, full enthusiasm, and creating some good characters already," Mead said.

"Come ready to dance, come ready to party, boogie on down to the "Totally 80's Prom!" Fischer said.



Audrey Fischer walks to their spot playing "Clap, Yes, Go." REEGAN MEREDITH | The Register

Spring activity suggestions as the weather warms up

Chloe Schwartz
staff writer

The weather in Omaha has been frosty and bitter continuously for what has felt like forever. Recently, however, we have had some warmer days, which are well-timed for spring! Due to spring arriving we need some enjoyable activities to get out and enjoy the warmth.

Here are seven fun activities perfect for spring in Omaha

1. Visit the Zoo
The Henry Doorly Zoo is known as the one of the world's best zoos for having the largest indoor desert and largest indoor rainforest. There is also the coolest butterfly

- exhibit that one can walk through.
2. Visit wildlife safari park
The Wildlife Safari park is a four-mile drive through North American wildlife experience in Ashland, Nebraska, and there are some places to stop and hike but most of the park you drive through slowly and look at the wildlife.
3. Have a picnic
Spring is the perfect weather to have a meal outside, not too cold, or too hot. Grab a blanket or tarp to lay down on some grass or find a park table, take a seat, and enjoy some food. Invite some friends or family or enjoy the weather by yourself, read a book, or listen to some music.

4. Visit a farmer's market
Much like a craft show, farmer's markets have homemade items such as food, crafts, drinks, and much more. These markets have great communities and the coolest different art and food types. This is a fantastic way to try new things and meet new people and find a new hobby or interest.
5. Plant a garden.
Planting a garden can be a very peaceful activity, especially during spring! Grab some seeds for fruits or flowers, grab a shovel, and start digging and planting! Do not forget gloves. Water it and take care of it and within weeks or even days you will have your fruits or flowers to show your family and friends!

6. Go on a nature walk or bike ride!
Connect with nature by finding a public hiking trail and taking a walk through or even bike through, enjoying the slight breeze with the right amount of sun peeking through the trees. Look at the berries and flowers around you. Admire the sound of the birds and see the squirrels and enjoy the weather while we have it!
7. Gene Leahy mall
Located in the downtown area there are swings, a little water park, a playground, big slides, and a huge stage in the middle of it all. So much to do there alone or with friends. There are food trucks that surround the park some days.

Pep band gives band bonding opportunity

Lyla Cramer
contributing writer

Central High School's Pep Band performed at home basketball games and brought the energy, hype and school spirit to the crowd.

Miriam Brown said Pep Band was a terrific way to bond with her fellow bandmates and get more practice with her instrument. She said her favorite thing at basketball games is playing the fight song. "It's fun to play and helps the crowd get hyped," Brown said.

The band teachers are also especially important to Pep Band. They help keep things organized and make sure the songs are fun to play and bring good energy to every game.

Band teacher Jeff Mount said in an email that there are amazing students and experiences involved. He said his favorite part of pep band was "The energy the band members bring to games."

He also said the main goals of pep band saying his goals was to "promote sportsmanship, show up to the games you signed up for and have fun."

Mount said the band has had important experiences contributes to the school community and in showing students a Central that "pep band is cool at CHS."

"We have had fans from opposing schools (and a referee) give us compliments on our performance," he said.

Overall, Mount had great goals for his students and has had many enjoyable experiences with pep band students and enjoys taking part in the school community.



Pep band performs during a basketball game in winter. Lyla Cramer | The Register

‘Afrique en Cirque’ wows Central freshmen at Orpheum Theater

Imtiaz Hussain
contributing writer

Central’s freshmen class attended “Afrique en Cirque” at the Orpheum Theatre in an exclusive showing on Feb. 4.

“Afrique en Cirque” is a theatrical representation of daily life in the African nation of Guinea, with the show being in the context of a circus. Actors portrayed performing daily activities such as cooking, speaking and traveling. These actions, however, were dramatized and coupled with flips, acrobatics

and stunts. The show also featured elaborate costumes, brightly colored scenery and loud music that added to the real yet whimsical feel of the show.

“Afrique en Cirque” was created by Guinean artist Yamoussa Bangoura, and was first shown in Montreal, Canada. Due to local popularity, the show was later expanded to other cities in Canada, and eventually the rest of the world. Currently, the show is on a world tour, with Omaha being one of the many cities visited.

The specific showing at the Orpheum The-

atre for Central’s freshmen class was a good one and was generally seen as a positive experience for the students involved. Students were filed onto busses around 9:30 a.m., with the show beginning at 10 a.m. The Orpheum Theatre is a large and historic venue, and many students were able to experience it for the first time, free of charge.

The show itself was enjoyable as well. No audible or technical errors were present during the show, leaving it void of disruptions. The youthful audience, comprised of an age range that is notoriously inattentive to

long-form shows and media, was engaged and interested during the entire showing, reflecting the show’s quality.

Personally, I enjoyed the show. It was a stellar performance, and the music, sets and actors all cohesively created a very immersive experience. At the same time, seemingly mundane acts being blown into a larger-than-life performance made it feel very surreal. The actors did a fantastic job portraying their characters using stunts and show evoked real emotion.



cast of “Afrique en Cirque” perform onstage during a freshmen field trip to the Orpheum Theater.

IMTIAZ HUSSAIN | The Register

7 Brew in Omaha: is it worth the traffic? Yes!

Linzee Gatzemeyer
contributing writer

Founded in 2017 in Rogers, Arkansas, 7 Brew has quickly become one of the most popular drive-thru coffee spots in the United States. It is best known for radiating kindness, fun drinks and quick service.

After seeing all the rave reviews on TikTok, I was extremely excited when the company announced it was opening its first location in the Omaha area. The original opening date was set for Dec. 8, but after being pushed back several times due to various construction issues, they officially opened Jan. 19.

When I said, “most popular drive-thru spot,” I meant causing significant amounts of traffic levels of popular. There was chaos near its location at 180th and West Maple on opening day. People eager to get a taste were lined up along Maple Street and wrapped around the building.

Do not get me wrong, I too was yearning to try what everyone was raving about online, but I personally chose to not wait in that line. Instead, I waited a few days after the craziness and the line was much more peaceful.

Even with the freezing cold temperature and the staff still training new employees, I got my order taken very quickly. The 7 Brew

crew are known for their genuine kindness and uplifting attitudes.

When I went, they lived up to their reputation. The two girls taking my order were pleasant toward me. They asked me questions about how my day has been and if I had any plans for the rest of the evening. The two of them seemed genuinely engaged in the conversation.

Another pleasant surprise was the price of my drink. The coffee rang up to \$6.97, after tax, for a 24-ounce drink. This is a much cheaper alternative compared to other popular coffee chains that charge more for less coffee.

From iced energy drinks to unique flavors

of coffee, 7 Brew has so many funky drinks to try. Even though it was a tough decision, I landed on ordering an iced banana bread blondie made with oat milk. Let me tell you, the drink was perfectly acquired to my taste buds. The Blondie is a 7 Brew original with tastes of their signature espresso, sweet vanilla, buttery caramel and exclusive breve.

Their drinks are known to be extremely sweet for some, but the banana bread syrup combined with the creamy oat milk made the sweetness just right. Overall, the experience of the new 7 Brew in Omaha was excellent, and I now understand what all the chaos was for.



Packed 7 Brew drive-thru in Omaha Ne



LINZEE GATZEMEYER | The Register

SHOWING SUPPORT

Swim team creates posters for Special Olympics athletes



Central girls and boys swim teams gather before the 2026 state meet to create posters for Special Olympics swimmers.

Photo Courtesy of CECILIA TAYLOR

Katie Besancon
managing editor

Every year the Nebraska School Activities Association (NSAA) partners with Special Olympics Nebraska to feature unified swimming races during the state meet at the Bob Devaney Sports Center in Lincoln, Nebraska.

It was during Head Coach Kristoff Berzins's first year coaching that a swimmer approached him and explained that his sister was a part of special education and the Special Olympics organization. The swimmer asked if the state swim team would be willing to create signs for those Special Olympic swimmers

competing to encourage them during their race.

Swimmers make the signs the Wednesday prior to the state meet. They then take the signs down to Lincoln with them to then sit alongside the pool deck during their race acting as faces of encouragement and finally presenting the posters to the swimmer's post-race when receiving their medals; it is a production.

The poster creation happens between school and practices for about 45 minutes in 342 with markers, pencils, stencils and a lot of chatter from there. They are then taken down to state with the athletes where they will stay until it is time to sit

poolside.

"Personally, I am not the best artist, so it is incredibly chaotic attempting to make the poster as best as possible in such a short amount of time," said senior swimmer Cecilia Taylor.

Each year coaches are able to enter their Special Olympic athletes into the state meet, from there Central students pick a swimmer to make a poster for. "There is usually some argument over who gets whom," Taylor said.

A day of sign making to show support for a fellow swimmer's sister has now turned into a 14-year tradition amongst the Central state team that continues to leave an impact on swimmers.

"I thought it was so sweet as a freshman. It wasn't until junior year that I realized how much of an impact it had on the Special Olympic swimmer participating," Taylor said.

Berzins uses the tradition to remind swimmers, "They are a part of a larger community, and it feels good to give back," he said.

"When the posters are delivered, the swimmers see their names and run over following their podium awards. They're smiling and say, 'thank you'. It's easy to tell how happy and incredibly grateful they are because of the photo shoot that occurs in the following moments," Taylor said.

Miles Severe comes back to Central as assistant coach of the e-sports teams

Usama Muhannad
contributing writer

Omaha Central has a really big esports team now. They have 77 students and 19 different teams. They are currently ranked 25th in the country, and they have a 75% win rate, which is a big deal for a school sport that doesn't use a ball.

One of the reasons they are doing so well is because of Miles Severe. Severe graduated in 2024, but he didn't truly leave Central.

He came back to be an assistant coach to help the head coach, Jonathan Franta.

Franta said that having Severe around is "very helpful" because Severe has already "experienced everything" and knows what the students need.

Severe says there is a big difference between being a student on the team and being a coach.

"You've got to be more direct as a coach," Severe said. "You've got to have them listen to you. Sometimes they don't, and you've just got to put your foot down."

"Sometimes it is hard for the students to see him as a coach since he was just a student

so soon. But he said it's all fine because they are working through it," Franta said.

They either see me as a friend or someone who doesn't have that much authority," Severe explained.

Franta said that Severe has "evolved" as a coach.

"At first, he would just play the games with the kids, but now he stands back and tells them what they need to fix," Franta said.

Severe is great at breaking down a play, like when he tells a student, "You had a combo there, you missed this last one, why'd you miss it?"

Severe also likes seeing how much the students improve. He mentioned one student who "was not good" as a freshman but is now the "best player on our Smash team."

Severe says he didn't really want to leave Central because he likes the environment and seeing his former teachers as colleagues.

He also helps the kids see that there is a future in gaming after high school, like in college competitions.



E-sports coach Miles Severe, a Central graduate, smiles as students play in the background.

ISAAC PERCIVAL | The Register

Central baseball opens new stadium

Charli Tobin
sports editor

For years Central baseball has been playing at Boyd Park, which did not have the best reputation. But now Central is opening up a new baseball stadium for the team.

Coach Gerald Kreber spoke about the new facility, “to go to a multi-million-dollar complex with three indoor batting cages is... well, it's almost like an alternative universe,” Kreber said.

Senior Bo DiLorenzo, a pitcher, led the team last year with 41 strikeouts and had one

of the best ERAs, with an ERA of 2.29 only behind junior Grant Hamil who had an ERA of 1.63.

“I'm very excited. We've had a pretty crappy situation for a lot of years, and we probably have the best facilities in the state now, so this is awesome,” DiLorenzo said.

The field is set to debut for the first game of the year on March 24. Kreber confirmed this.

“There was just some odds and ends that they were working out today, so we're scheduled to get on it soon,” he said. “The

team is quite small this year,” Kreber said, “we don't have a lot of guys. So, this is going to be a small, tight-knit group. We can't have any injuries. We got to have really good team chemistry.”

Of the players, the best returning hitter is Oscar Yuhas-Vining, who had a batting average of .321. Another player that excelled is junior Luke Neujar with a batting average of .253.

Neujar said he feels good about the smaller roster.

“I think we have really good team

chemistry, so I think we're all going to play together and do pretty good,” he said.

DiLorenzo reaffirmed this saying, “We have a smaller team than last year, but not too much. We got some experience, I think we're going to be as good, if not better. I think a lot of people have been disrespecting us because of the place we come from, the place we live, the facilities we're coming from. But I think we're going to have a really good year,” he said.

Girls tennis opens season, team culture a priority for leaders

Violet Lightner
contributing writer

Girls Tennis started off on March 2 with a bang as the team welcomed new players to the team.

“We're just kind of forming a new team and getting new chemistry on the court,” senior captain Sienna Maskin said.

She has played tennis for four years at Central and is excited to take on new responsibilities this season as captain. She is prioritizing sharing a strong friendship with her teammates on and off the court.

“I think definitely my goals are to foster a really good team culture,” Maskin said.

This was echoed by sophomore Luna Escalera. “Whether it's for tennis stuff or just like personal stuff we're always there for each other and it's really nice to have that sort of team,” Escalera said.

Everyone works hard everyday to improve as a team throughout the season.

“Seeing how the girls progress is pretty cool. Some of them have been on the team since freshman year,” tennis coach Mellisa Kuskie said.

Additionally, the team is also focusing and working to prepare the girls for state tennis on May 21 and 22.

Tennis can come with many challenges one being the mental side. “I just try to turn my brain off and trust myself that I can do this and that I've been doing it for a while,” Escalera said.

The dynamic between returners and underclassmen is also a strong aspect of the team. Strong leadership is valued on the team but so is effort and positivity. This mentality is instilled in the girls by Kuskie whether it is during weights in the morning or practices the girls put in the hard work that pays off in their matches.

“The older girls can help mentor the younger ones and we have good leadership,” Kuskie said.



Tennis team members practice at Dewey Park.

JULIUS WAKOLE | The Register

Varsity girls soccer begins season with new slate of leaders

Lashell Harlan
contributing writer

The girl's varsity soccer team lost a lot of seniors last year but is now working to improve its team performance. Now that young players are coming into the season with more experience, they hope to lead younger players.

Sophomore Jane Parker said, “Everyone

was super welcoming [last year],” and said the team is a genuine safe spot for new players. Partnership is needed for these types of teams, so it is less scary for people who have never played for school or for any public team.

Another sophomore, Angeline Smolsky, said the seniors last year, like Hattie Moeller, Hudson Palu and Jasmyn and Brooklen Hollenbeck, were good role models. “The people on the team were good leaders and

good people to look up to,” Smolsky said.

Parker and Smolsky each had one goal last season, and the Eagles finished the season 4-10 and lost to Elkhorn South in the first round of the district tournament.

As for this coming season, Smolsky said, “We lost a good number of seniors, and my confidence is a little low but if I believe in myself and my teammates I know I can do it.”

Smolsky has lots of hope for the team and

herself. This year a new group of experienced players joined the team which gives a lot of their teammate's confidence in their performance.

The team's first game for the current season was a 4-0 loss to Papillion-La Vista, and they also had a game Tuesday against Mercy. The team's next game is Friday at Elkhorn South.

Central boys soccer has high hopes for the upcoming season

Noah Sipe
Staff Writer

Boys Soccer season kicked off at Central on March 19th. Central finished with a 7-7 record in the 2025 season and look to improve immensely for 2026.

Coach Nicholas Webster is optimistic in his group for improvement. “They show up on their own. They wake me up out of bed early on Saturday mornings 'cause they want to get some extra work in,” Webster said. “They get active man, it's a scrappy and physical group.

“This team is going to be ready for anything, they're like the chihuahuas at the humane society, you know they get all active and get to barking and want to come after you,” Webster said. The team will bring a different energy.

Webster is prepared for a competitive season. “We did a lot of work in the offseason that prepares us to play a competitive schedule,” Webster said. “I want to see how the boys respond to playing some of the top talent in Nebraska and even in Iowa.

Assists leaders Senior Delphin Majawila and Junior Kevin Platero will return from the 2025 season. Platero and Majawila had both had seven assists and in 2025 season.

“This is a very important season to us,” Platero said.

Alongside goaltender Junior Luke Farrington, who had 57 saves in 2025.

Central's home opener resulted in a loss 3-0 against Creighton Prep.

Next match vs Columbus was a win against Columbus led by a Farrington shutout. Alongside goals by Zaakir Vance, Abase Lujendo and John Kerry Lucien



Sophomore Gustave Johnson, right, kicks the ball during a game versus Creighton Prep on March 19.

BRADLEY SMITH | The Register

Girls track returns more than 30; 21 new athletes join the team

Arianna Detisch
contributing writer

Girls track is under way, and the team is ready to start on the right foot.

Head coach Todd Hunter, who has been coaching for 10 years, is ecstatic for this season to start and ready to condition the team with intention, structure and focus.

The team has 21 new runners and 31 returning runners. Hunter believes this season has a good run ahead of it and wants to enable a supportive and disciplined environment for the team as a whole this year. The coaches create a very supporting environment by having a team theme of “improvement is our movement,” and having common goals for the team to share.

Hunter said when coaching, he strives to form a positive team environment and cohesiveness all together. “I view training as a system rather than just hard workouts. I value detail, performance improvement and preparing athletes to run faster and to be great human beings,” Hunter said.

Sophomore Mariluna Reyes McGovern, who was a state qualifier last year in sprinting, said she chose to start indoor track conditioning in September. “It’s the best way to prepare for the season, to prepare my body for the best,” McGovern said.

Sophomore June Yamamoto, who was one of the team’s top distance runner last year, said, “The track season is pretty short, time is limited, so it’s important that I condition before to prepare.”

The long-distance side of track is welcoming a new assistant coach Bridget McGill, who is currently a D1 runner at University of Nebraska Omaha.

McGovern says she’s excited to see what this season can bring for her, especially their 4x400 team with incoming new freshman joining the team. Yamamoto has a similar goal to the 4x800-meter relay team.

Freshman Violet Lightner is ready to learn from the upperclassman and their dedication for her first year here at Central. “I’m excited to be apart of the team and run with Centrals girls track for the first time,” Lightner said.



Sophomore Mariluna Reyes McGovern runs down the track at a track meet at College of Saint Mary on March 21.

BRADLEY SMITH | The Register

Hunter hopes their can be a smooth transition in adding many new runners to the equation.

“Our goals this year are to put our young ladies in the position to fight for individual

and relay team state titles,” he said.

The first track meet of the season was March 21 at College of St. Mary, and the second will be Friday at Doane University.

OC broadcasting wraps up winter season at state basketball

Jagger Hansen
Contributing Writer

OC Broadcasting wrapped up the winter sport season with a bang by broadcasting at the Nebraska State Basketball games in Lincoln.

The first games were on March 4. There was some stress involved because the game being such a big deal. Sam Oberst, a sophomore who helps with the play by play of each game said, “I felt a little pressure because there was going to be a lot more people in the audience, not just the Central people.”

Even though the broadcasting team was a little nervous, it was an amazing opportunity for them to take part in such a big event. Also, the broadcasting team at Central spends a lot of time preparing for these types of events. Ben Boeckman, the broadcasting sponsor, helps with a lot of the organization process. He said there was some stress but knew the team was prepared for these big moments.

“Broadcasting is a really cool opportunity to have our students get involved and practice skills that they may not normally do, as well as providing service helps both the Central families and opposing teams families watch

their athlete compete,” Boeckman said.

Right now, broadcasting is only a club at Central, but they are hoping to expand it into a class or more. Broadcasting is one of the many ways at Central to meet new people and try something new.

Graciela Sitting Eagle, a sophomore, said “This year has been pretty fun, I have learned new roles like directing recently.”

With Students being involved in something as important as broadcasting it is an amazing way to represent central as a school. Some students, like Oberst, hope for this to be their full-time career.

“I would love for this to be my full-time career, like a job at ESPN or something similar,” he said.

Central is able to provide this opportunity for the students thanks to the NFHS Network and the supports of those involved. Central has been broadcasting for around 13 years with the help of the NFHS Network and hopes to only continue to grow as the school grows.

“We don’t only represent Central as a school, but we are representing an organization known as the NFHS Network and we want to make sure we are able to keep getting this opportunity,” Boeckman said.



From left, sophmores Graciela Sitting Eagle and Stella Henriquez run a camera during a basketball game.

BRADLEY SMITH | The Register

Step team ends season strong

Kate Nipper
contributing Writer

The Central Step Team had a strong and successful season during the 25-26 school year.

Step is a type of performance using one’s hands and feet to create a rhythm. The team performs during basketball games and the Roadshow. The step team coach, Deborah Corell, said the season so far is “very chaotic, because this year the Roadshow and basketball games are at the same time, so we’re having to miss some of our basketball games.”

Despite the craziness, the team has grown and improved throughout the season.

“At first, during practice and performances they weren’t going full out but now they’re practicing with more confidence,” Corell said.

Corell has been the step team coach for

eight years, starting when girls on the team asked her to join.

“At first, I didn’t know anything about it, and I had to research it,” she said.

Raven Brye, a senior on the Step Team, had important goals for the season.

“The goals I have for the season are to just perform, have fun with my friends and make good steps at the performance,” Brye said.

Brye also shared how important the team’s collaboration is.

“I love being a part of a community. Everybody is so nice and so kind, and we get to collaborate every day,” Brye said.

Brye was inspired to join step team at freshman jumpstart when they performed in front of everyone.

“It was way different from cheering, since you learn beats with the hands and feet. I thought this was really cool, and I’d love to try it, and here I am, for all four years.”



From left, senior Raven Brye, junior Reegan Meredith, sophomore Gi’Anna Shine and junior Serenity Butler perform during a basketball game.

KATE NIPPER | The Register



Junior Jesus Hernandez-Lorenzo, right, gets hyped up during a game versus Creighton Prep on March 19.



Senior Delphin Majaliwa tries to kick the ball up versus Creighton Prep on March 19.

Track Gallery



Junior Martin Aringu runs down the track during a meet at College of Saint Mary on March 21.



Sophomore Gregory Fong, center, and junior Deun Hagen, right, cheer on junior Martin Aringu during a relay at College of Saint Mary on March 21.



Sophomore Reality Mapp looks up at the board to check her time after a race at College of Saint Mary on March 21.



Sophomore Usama Muhannad participates in a race at track meet at College of Saint Mary on March 21.

PREGUNTA Y RESPUESTA CON ABOGADO

Conociendo tus derechos es importante

Charli Tobin
editor de deportes

Durante los últimos cinco años, Ariel Magaña Linares ha sido un abogado sénior en el Centro para el Avance de los Inmigrantes y Refugiados (CIRA en inglés). La meta de CIRA es “a empoderar los inmigrantes y refugiados a vivir en confianza por representación legal de alta calidad, repoblación, y trabajo social, mientras creando comunidades de bienvenida por la educación y el apoyo,” según el sitio web de CIRA.

The Register tuvo la oportunidad a entrevistar Linares sobre lo que estudiantes deben hacer si se encuentran con el Servicio de Inmigración y Control de Aduanas (ICE, en inglés). La entrevista fue editada para claridad y extensión.

Charli Tobin: ¿Cuáles son tus derechos básicos?

Ariel Magaña Linares: Pues, primero de todo, el derecho a premanecer en silencio es muy importante. Es realmente importante que la gente lo diga afirmativamente. Entonces, si la policía está hablando con la gente, pueden pedir que se les deje ir o simplemente pueden decirle a la policía: “No voy a responder tus preguntas”. En el estado de Nebraska, los únicas preguntas que tiene que responder son las relacionadas con tu identidad y su dirección.

Así que tiene que decirles su nombre y dónde vive si se lo piden, pero eso es todo que tiene que decir. No tiene que darles el país del que viene ni ninguno de sus antecedentes de inmigración ni nada de eso.

Así que el derecho a premanecer en silencio va a ser el más importante. Si tienes acceso a un abogado de inmigración, asegúrese que tener esa información a mano en cualquier momento para que pueda pedir a los agentes que le permitan ejercer ese derecho constitucional para ponerse en contacto con un abogado.

Por último, también tiene el derecho a no ser objeto de registros e incautaciones irrazonables. Eso requiere mucha más planificación sobre la que estoy seguro de que me vas a preguntar, pero es realmente importante que la gente que entiendan cuáles son algunos de los espacios en sus vidas, como los espacios físicos, en los que la policía tiene restringido a entrar sin una orden judicial.

Charli Tobin: ¿Cuál sería su consejo si el ICE se presentara en su casa o su lugar de residencia?

Ariel Magaña Linares: Sí, eso se relaciona con los derecho de la gente a no ser objeto de registros e incautacions irrazonables. Entonces, ¿qué hace que un registro o incautación sean razonable? La mayoría de las veces, es cuando la policía tiene algún tipo de orden judicial firmada por un juez antes de que los agentes del ICE pueden entrar allí sin si consentimiento.

Mucha gente, desafortunadamente, renuncia a ese derecho constitucional simplemente consintiendo libremente los registros en su casa. Pero yo animaría a la gente a la gente a que interroque a las fuerzas del orden y les pida respetuosamente que presenten una orden judicial firmada por un juez que diga que esos agentes pueden entrar en esa casa.

Charli Tobin: ¿Cuál sería su consejo si el ICE le detuviera?

Ariel Magaña Linares: Usted tiene menos expectativas de privacidad cuando está en la carretera, ¿verdad? Usted es completamente privado en tu casa. Cuando está en la carretera, su vida es muy público, ¿verdad? Cualquiera persona puede acercarse a usted. Cualquiera puede acercarse a usted, hacerle preguntas, y usted puede decirles que no quieres a interactuar.

El mismo caso se aplica a las fuerzas del orden. Entonces, como tiene menos expectativas de privacidad, todavía puede apoyarse en sus otros derechos constitucionales, como su derecho a permanecer en silencio, el derecho a hablar con un abogado, a esperar el debido proceso.

Entonces, en el calor del momento, caundo está en la carretera, no se ponga violento, ¿verdad? No obstruya ni se resista a ninguna detención ni nada por el estilo. El lugar donde va a ganar la discusión sobre si su detención estaba justificada o no no va a ser en el calor del momento. Va a ser en un tribunal donde realmente puede hacer valer sus defensas.

Charli Tobin: ¿Qué deberías hacer si encuentras con ICE en una protesta?

Ariel Magaña Linares: Las protestas siempre son situaciones aterradoras porque no solo debes tener cuidado con tu propio comportamiento, sino también, desafortunadamente, con el comportamiento del resto del grupo.

Y las protestas pueden volverse muy salvajes rápidamente. En situaciones de protesta, aún conservas tienes tus otros derechos constitucionales.

Sin embargo, hay un adagio esparcido sobre un derecho constitucional diferente que mucha gente olvida, y es tu derecho a reunirte pacíficamente. Y así, típicamente, si una protesta se vuelve loca, y las fuerzas del orden necesitan tomar medidas enérgicas con una razón legalmente valida legalmente, deben dar a los manifestantes la oportunidad de abandonar pacíficamente la situación. No pueden simplemente reunir todas las personas y tratarlas todos como si fueran parte del problema que ha salido mal. Eso se llama “kettling”, y viola la Primer Enmienda.

Charli Tobin: ¿Si eres detenido por ICE, ¿cuál sería tu consejo?

Ariel Magaña Linares: Encuentra un abogado. Si aún no tienes un abogado, busca un abogado lo antes posible. No firmes nada a menos que lo consultes con un abogado que pueda asesorarte sobre las consecuencias de los diferentes documentos.

Desafortadamente, mucha gente siente presión porque podría ser su primera vez bajo custodia o porque no entienden completamente sus derechos . Y entonces, oficiales los dirán cosas como ‘Nosotros podemos hacer todo esto que se vaya si tu solo firmas este pedazo de papel.’ La próxima cosa que sabes, ellos renunciaron todos sus derechos a una audiencia o el derecho a hacer valer ciertas defensas.

Por lo tanto, antes de que la gente hace eso, asegúrate de consultarlo con un profesional. También, aquí en CIRA, nosotros tenemos una línea de ingesta de detenidos, entonces esto es específicamente para la gente quien fueron detenidos y están en la custodia de ICE aquí en Nebraska o el suroeste de Iowa, ellos pueden mandar una forma de ingesta de detenidos a nuestra oficina.

Pueden que un familiar completa la forma y mandar por correo electrónico o traerlo en persona, o ellos pueden llamar nuestro número de teléfono de ingesta de detenidos. El número de teléfono para eso es 402-884-0876.

Pueden llamar esa línea directa de detenidos, y nuestras personas hará la admisión. Y nosotros revisamos eso individualmente como

abogados. Y también nos juntamos cada dos semanas para asegurarnos de que no hayamos dejado pasar nada por alto.

Charli Tobin: ¿Si tú no puedes pagar por un abogado, que sería tu consejo?

Ariel Magaña Linares: En Nebraska y el Suroeste de Iowa, eso podía ser a contactar nuestra línea de ingesta de detenidos. De esa manera nosotros podemos a tomar una vista al caso y ver si hay algo que nosotros podemos hacer en la frontera de representación de bonos, en el frente de la representación de inmigración, o si hay algún tipo de vía para que vayan a la corte federal si se les niega una audiencia de fianza para que pueden buscar una audiencia de fianza. Por lo tanto, CIRA siempre es un buen recurso comunitario. ACLU de Nebraska también hace similares exámenes por ese tipo de problemas. Y por supuesto, hay muchas firmas de abogados de inmigración de practica privada que lo hacen.

Charli Tobin: ¿Qué dirías que será tu consejo para un camino a la ciudadanía para alguien buscando para eso?

Ariel Magaña Linares: Si, hay muchas diferentes avenidas para la gente a obtener un tipo de estatus legal y últimamente convertirse en ciudadanos. El problema con eso es muchos de las avenidas tienen baches burocráticos, por así decirlo.

Hay otras maneras que puedo caracterizarlo, pero desafortadamente, la gente puede googlear y buscar muchos diferentes caminos que tienen sentido en teoría, en practica, estos senderos efectivamente no existent para mucha gente. Entonces, las solicitudes de asilo, desafortadamente, son arbitraron a una taza negativa, especialmente aquí en el Corte de Inmigración de Omaha.

Para la gente buscando a inmigrar legalmente, posiblemente tienen un hermano o hermana quien es un ciudadano estadounidense y quieren a venir a los Estados Unidos a estar con ellos. Estamos hablando tiempos de espera que exceden muchas décadas. Entonces, en teoría, tu puedes ver hay probablemente muchas maneras para alguien a arreglar su estatus en los Estados Unidos, pero en practica, esas opciones son limitadas. *-Traducido por Eduardo Torreblanca-Hernandez*

No busques una orilla, construye un puente

Steven Dickerson
jefe de redacción

Entrar en Central como estudiante de primer año puede sentirse como ser arrojado a aguas turbulentas. Al entrar en este edificio gigantesco hace cuatro otoños, yo era ese estudiante de primer año. No sabía dónde se sentaban los grupos, cómo funcionan los periodos de clase, que baños estaban llenos, qué lugares evitar. Yo era ajeno.

Los pasillos son ruidosos, las clases son más grandes, los grupos sociales son diferentes y la vida cambia tan rápidamente que se siente como si te estuvieras ahogando. Como resultado, la mayoría se encuentra el éxito encontrando su orilla, su lugar para descansar. Este lugar se convierte en tu lugar, tu gente y tu vida por el resto de tu tiempo en la preparatoria.

No encuentres una orilla. En cambio, enfréntate a las aguas y construye puentes entre las orillas. Conectar círculos es un ajuste, pero te beneficiará. Encuentra personas con quien hablar que nunca hayas conocido, ve a eventos que se extiendan fuera de tu zona de comodidad, únete a clubes que te parezcan incluso un poco interesantes. Intenta conocer gente nueva en el patio o socializar con la gente en los pasillos. Siéntate en medio del salón y con-

oce a tus compañeros que no conoces. Únete a la sección de estudiantes en un juego incluso cuando solo haya unos pocos niños. Esto es construir puentes, crear una vida multidimensional para ti.

Esto no solo cambiará tu vida socialmente. Conocerás a personas que pueden mejorar tus experiencias de vida. Aprenderás más. Verás los problemas de manera diferente. Te sentirás menos solo porque tu mundo se vuelve más grande. En lugar de ver la escuela suceder a tu alrededor, te conviertes en parte de lo que la hace funcionar.

Convertirse en un participante activo en la vida es difícil, pero vale la pena. Las decisiones que tome en el primer año, aunque fueron difíciles de navegar en ese momento, ahora han impactado hacia dónde voy con mi vida. Durante el almuerzo, entablaba conversaciones con personas que no conocía muy bien y les hablaba de mis intereses en áreas como la defensa del medio ambiente. Terminé consiguiendo un puesto en una organización local y convirtiéndome en un campeón de la sostenibilidad porque las personas que conocí me conectaron.

Haz esas conexiones. Una vez que las personas conozcan sus intereses, compartirán oportunidades contigo y podrás hacer lo mismo por ellos. No tienes que tengas todo



El Río Misuri del puente con un letrero hablado sobre con el nombre alternativa Un Río de Esperanza.

resuelto, pero tener esas conexiones hace que cualquier cosa que elijas mucho más fácil.

Es tentador jugar a lo seguro como un estudiante de preparatoria que intenta navegar en aguas nuevas. La orilla está bien y te ayudará pasar los cuatros años de

la escuela. Pero ¿qué pasa cuando tu costa desaparece, se daña o cuando necesitas cruzar? Ahí es donde la construcción de puentes, el simple hecho ser un participante activo en tu experiencia de vida, cambiará su vida. *Traducido por Bri Martinez*