

# The Daily Iowan

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2024

THE INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA COMMUNITY SINCE 1868

DAILYIOWAN.COM



Carly Schrum | The Daily Iowan

Nebraska gymnast James Friedman huddles with teammates during a men's gymnastics meet between Nebraska, Greenville, and Army in Bob Devaney Sports Center in Lincoln, Neb., on Feb. 17. The Cornhuskers won the meet with a score of 412.90. Friedman was a gymnast for Iowa before the program was cut after the 2020-21 season.

## SERIES: SPORTS CUT SHORT

# GYMNASTS STILL HOLDING ON

Athletes reflect after four years since their sport was cut at the University of Iowa.

**Matt McGowan**  
Sports Reporter  
matt-mcgowan@uiowa.edu

What was an unusual phone push notification became an odd meeting at Carver-Hawkeye Arena, which in a matter of minutes became the official death knell of four University of Iowa varsity sports.

Four years after former athletics director Gary Barta announced the University of Iowa was cutting four UI varsity sports, *The Daily Iowan* searched for the student-athletes whose NCAA careers were forced to move elsewhere or were stopped altogether. This story is the first of a four-part series documenting the lives of some of these athletes since that point, in which *DI* sports reporter Matt McGowan explores what the future of their careers looked like, and how the UI has fared since cutting these sports.

In the heat of the COVID campus shutdown, student-athletes and coaches of Hawkeye men's gymnastics, tennis, and both men's and women's swimming and diving received word on Aug. 21, 2020, of an urgent meeting at the practice

gyms inside Carver-Hawkeye Arena later that day.

Ten days prior, the Big Ten and PAC-12 conferences postponed all of their fall sports, including football, to the spring season. Meanwhile, the three other Power Five conferences affirmed football would occur that fall. In-person classes were set to start on Aug. 24, 2020, but many athletes had been training on campus in advance.

For Zac Tiderman, then a first-year gymnast in the Black and Gold, the lack of athletic department officials in the room for the first few minutes cast a net of unease for the then-masked-up athletes, leaving them warily glancing at one another.

"Something's not right here," he recalled thinking.

The intense silence was broken when then-athletics director Gary Barta entered the room. Barta announced he had good news and bad news: all four sports would compete during the 2020-21 season. The bad news quickly followed: after the season ended, those sports would cease to exist at Iowa.



Barta

Barta detailed how student-athletes who still wanted to play at the NCAA level were encouraged to transfer, and those who stayed at the university would still have their scholarships honored through graduation.

After providing the news, Barta then left the room, leaving representatives of the athletics department to field questions.

"It was just sad, I mean everyone was crying," Tiderman said. "Hopes and dreams were crushed in a matter of minutes, and you were just left there to deal with it."

In a press release later that day, Barta and then-UI President Bruce Harrelld explained the sports were cut primarily to save money, as the pair projected lost revenue of up to \$100 million and a \$60-75 million deficit that fiscal year because of the postponed fall season. On Sept. 16, 2020, the Big Ten announced it would play football, starting as soon as Oct. 23, but without fans in attendance. Barta said at an

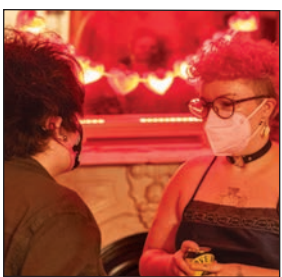
GYMNAST | 2B

## INSIDE

### Teacher pay bump could combat rising shortage

Iowa legislators advance bills increasing teacher pay; educators question if it's enough.

EPI | 5A



### Inside IC's 'Big Queer Dating Show'

Last year, the Big Queer Dating Show at PS1 was a hit in both the older and younger LGBTQ+ communities of Iowa City. This year's event was even bigger.

80 HOURS | 1C

## ONLINE

• See in-depth coverage of the Hawkeyes' senior night and Iowa vs. Ohio State women's basketball game at Carver-Hawkeye Arena on March 1 at [dailyiowan.com](http://dailyiowan.com).

• Listen to the latest episodes of *The Daily Iowan's* two podcasts, *Above the Fold* and *Press Box Banter*, where reporters cover the latest news and talk sports at [dailyiowan.com](http://dailyiowan.com).



Streamed live at 8:30 a.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Always available on [dailyiowan.com](http://dailyiowan.com)

# A new level of health for ROTC

UI students are teaching cadets about getting fit based on research.

**Shreya Reddy**  
News Reporter  
shreya-s-reddy@uiowa.edu

For Reserve Officers' Training Corps cadet and second-year University of Iowa student Kaylynn Lambert, being a woman in the ROTC can be challenging when it comes to meeting height and weight standards.

However, a new collaboration that began in the fall of 2023 between the ROTC program at the university and the university's Health and Human Physiology department has helped Lambert navigate this challenge by performing a series of body composition tests to measure and meet physical fitness requirements.

Body composition tests help determine what a person's total body mass is made up of, Lucas Carr, associate professor in the Health and Human Physiology department at the university, said.

The collaboration includes Carr and his students in the Health and Human Physiology department performing body composition tests for ROTC cadets. This has been beneficial for both groups and continues to help cadets understand their bodies on a holistic level.

The test measures how much of the body is made up of fat mass, lean mass, muscle tissue,

ROTC | 6A



Ayrton Breckenridge | The Daily Iowan

University of Iowa Army ROTC Cadets complete hand release push-ups during an Army Combat Fitness Test (ACFT) at the Iowa Army National Guard Readiness Center in Iowa City on April 27, 2022. The test consisted of deadlift, standing power throw, hand release push-ups, sprint drag carry, plank and a two-mile run.

# IC residents protest conservative speaker

Protesters raised \$770 for reproductive freedom during the YAF event. Vince Everett Ellison talked DEI legislation and abortion rights.

**Liam Halawith**  
Politics Editor  
liam-halawith@uiowa.edu

**Roxy Ekberg**  
Politics Reporter  
roxy-ekberg@uiowa.edu

As Iowa lawmakers consider legislation to codify the Iowa Board of Regents' efforts to reduce the number of diversity, equity, and inclusion offices in Iowa's public universities, anti-DEI speaker Vince Everett Ellison upheld the policies to the conservative student group Young Ameri-

cans for Freedom on Monday night.

Supporters and protesters packed a small event room in the Iowa Memorial Union Monday night to hear Ellison speak on DEI and abortion issues. The student organization expected a crowd of about 80 attendees. Peaceful protesters showed "Bigot Bingo" during the speech. Listed on the card were a plethora of conservative talking points that Ellison might cover. The organizer of the bingo game donated \$5 for every bingo to a local women's health clinic that was not disclosed.

Ellison is a self-proclaimed author, speaker, and "challenger," and is a member of Project 21,

an initiative of Black conservatives. He is a former Democrat and was born on a cotton plantation in Tennessee, where his parents were sharecroppers, according to the Young Americans Foundation website.

He said DEI harms Black students by admitting students not based on their skills but instead based on their race. He said Black students should be considered for admission and given accolades based on their skill and dedication, not because of their status as a minority.

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in June that

SPEAKER | 6A



**GYMNAST**  
from 1B

Iowa Board of Regents meeting on Sept. 23, 2020 that even with football played in the fall, Iowa would face a “still significant” deficit of \$40-60 million. He added that the four cut sports would save \$5 million annually.

“A loss of this magnitude will take years to overcome,” Barta and Harreld wrote in the release. “We have a plan to recover, but the journey will be challenging.”

**Gymnast Zac Tiderman now**

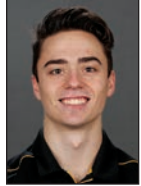
For nearly a minute, Zac Tiderman defied gravity. His hands coated in chalk, the Nebraska fourth-year gymnast looked like a windmill while situated just over nine feet in the air on the high bar — completing 23 rotations. One-handed, two-handed, or making a mid-air leap, Tiderman traversed each flip with a combination of power and grace at a tri-meet on Feb. 17. Off to the side, his teammates stood, arms wrapped around each other’s shoulders, bellying encouragement with each passing second.

When he finally let go, the Cornhusker soared forward, his arms locked against his sides as he navigated another flip before finally planting his feet on the mat below. Without flinching, Tiderman extended his arms upward in triumph. Above him, the crowd roared its approval, waving green flags to signal the perfect landing. The jumbotron above read, “14.650” — a program record.

Tiderman’s effort proved paramount in helping the Cornhuskers defeat Army West Point and Greenville University in the meet at Lincoln. As of 2024, only 15 NCAA schools offer men’s gymnastics — down from 79 in 1981-1982.

Four years ago, Tiderman never planned on landing in Lincoln in the first place. Nebraska recruited him out of high school, but the gymnast never went on an official visit. Instead, the Wilsonville, Oregon, resident committed to Iowa, where his collegiate career took a turn just weeks into his first year on campus with the announcement from Barta.

**Gymnast Reuven Anderson now**



Anderson

Former Iowa gymnast Reuven Anderson doesn’t give up hope, not when he’s responsible for the next generation of the sport he loves.

While Anderson’s own NCAA career was derailed after just two seasons, the now 23-year-old coach doesn’t damper any flames of ambition — the same fire he once felt at Iowa.

One of three coaches for the boys’ team at Mini-Hops Gymnastics Center in Plymouth, Minnesota, Anderson graduated from Iowa in May 2023 with a degree in industrial engineering, but instructing is his full-time job. Back in his home state, Anderson’s gymnasts range in age from 10 to 18.

“The odds of this happening are low, and maybe it’s not worth it,” I don’t want to tell them that,” Anderson said. “Any kid who has that dream, I think should have it. I had that dream, and I worked my butt off to get there.”

Even though Anderson’s freshman season was cut short because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the gymnast still took part in every competition for Iowa on the still rings. When the NCAA canceled all spring sports championships on March 12, 2020, Anderson shifted his sights toward the next season. Making the drive south from



Katie Goodale | The Daily Iowan

Iowa all-around Zac Tiderman hugs teammate James Friedman after competing on the pommel horse during a men’s gymnastics meet between Iowa and Illinois at Carver-Hawkeye Arena on Feb. 13, 2021. The Hawkeyes defeated the Fighting Illini, 402.00-400.50. Tiderman now competes for Nebraska after the Iowa men’s gymnastics program was cut after the 2020-2021 season.

Minneapolis on his way to campus that August, Anderson learned of Barta’s announcement. The news sent a jolt through the gymnast’s system, sparking a desire to set unattainable goals for himself.

During that season, Anderson “put a lot of pressure” on himself. He ended up suffering an overuse injury before competitions even began, forcing him to play catch-up as he sought to get back on the still rings, his specialty event.

Even with Anderson sidelined, the team still went 4-2 in the Big Ten and finished third in the conference championship — the best finish in program history since 2006. In the regular-season finale, Iowa hosted Nebraska, which



Friedman

worth the effort.

“There was no obligation to be in the gym like when you’re a part of an NCAA team,” Friedman said of GymACT. “So we all just wanted to be there and we had a lot of fun.”

With former Iowa gymnast Peyton Hobson filling in as coach for his senior season of college, the Iowa GymACT team competed that spring, practicing in Iowa’s Field House because they operated as a club team under recreation services.

Anderson said GymACT participation sometimes meant athletes would have to pay dues, but most

practices and that was that.”

While the timing may have been inconvenient back then, Chmelka has a different perspective today. “I think if we did not get that [facility] before COVID, then who knows?” the head coach said. “We were very lucky to get that gym then ... It’s better for our athletes and the longevity of the sport. [Nebraska] put a great commitment to prove that. ‘Yeah, you guys are going to be around.’ So now we got to go up and do well. I liked that challenge.”

Chmelka has been at the helm in Lincoln for 15 years and worked with four athletic directors, including a sudden change in June 2021 from Bill Moos to Trev Alberts. The head coach said that both men were “adamant” all sports would stay.

In addition to support from the higher-ups is financial stability. For Chmelka, this meant never spending more money than the university allotted. Any money that exceeds how much the program is given would have to be fundraised by the team.

“I’ve never gone over budget,” he said. “You can’t. To me, it’s just bad business. The [administration] doesn’t like that because [college athletics] is a big business.”

As Tiderman and Friedman exited the floor following the Cornhuskers’ victory on Feb. 17, they were each wrapped up in a hug from Army head coach J.D. Reive, their former head coach in Iowa City. Following the Iowa program’s final season, Reive became the general manager of Denver’s GymACT team but was forced to move his family three times before finally finding a home at West Point.

In hindsight, Reive said he never would have left the Hawkeyes had the sport not been cut. Now, all he can do is ponder the hypothetical potential.

“It was a while ago, but I talked to my [former] staff, and they were like, ‘Yeah we’d be so good right now,’” he said with a smile.



Chmelka



Reive

“The atmosphere is electric, especially when one of our guys hits a dismount. The whole place erupts. It’s loud, and everyone is passionate.”

**James Friedman**  
Former Iowa men’s gymnast

would later finish second in the conference. But that day, the Cornhuskers suffered a narrow defeat of just 0.05 points and were left with a lasting impression.

Sam Phillips is a fourth-year gymnast with the Huskers. Back in his first year on the squad, he bore witness to the Hawkeyes as they made a statement on their home turf.

“It was good to see [Iowa] take [being cut] with grace and say, ‘Hey, a big F-U, we’re going to make it rocking. We’re going to show why we deserved to stay,’” he said.

During that season, Anderson pondered transferring to a different school to continue his NCAA career. His engineering major wouldn’t allow him to transfer to Penn State, and just when he started talking with coaches at Minnesota, the Golden Gophers’ program was also cut.

Even with no outside options, Anderson didn’t want to abandon the sport he’d taken part in since he was 18 months old. Following their final season, Anderson and his Hawkeye teammates began the application to become a member team of the Gymnastics Association of College Teams, GymACT, and were accepted on Oct. 6, 2021.

**GymACT**

Tiderman, alongside former Iowa teammate and close friend, James Friedman, said they played pivotal roles in creating the team, filling out paperwork and sourcing sponsors. For Friedman, the work was well

funding would come from outside donors. Today, GymACT sports 15 squads across the country and, according to its website, the Iowa team collected more than \$6,300 for the 2022 season.

For Friedman and Tiderman, the desire to be back competing in the NCAA proved too strong to ignore. Tiderman had committed to transfer before the debut season, but still participated as the squad won the 2022 national title.

“I had so much invested in the Iowa GymACT team,” Tiderman said. “I really cared for those guys and the program we were trying to start there. So I think it was strange going to the GymACT nationals ... I totally invested in the Iowa program not yet ready to move on.”

After the 2022 season, the pair of Oregon-grown gymnasts ventured westward to Nebraska. Now seniors, the two had a preview of what the environment in Lincoln would be like when the Huskers hosted the GymACT team for an exhibition.

While the stands at Bob Devaney Sports Center on Feb. 17 had plenty of empty seats, the supporters made themselves known as soon as the team entered the arena.

“The atmosphere is electric, especially when one of our guys hits a dismount,” Friedman said. “The whole place erupts. It’s loud, and everyone is passionate.”

Just north of where Tiderman and Friedman performed on the Nebraska campus stands the Francis Allen Training Complex, a state-of-the-art 46,000-square-



Ayrton Breckenridge | The Daily Iowan

Iowa all-around James Friedman competes on the horizontal bar during a men’s gymnastics meet between Iowa and Penn State at Carver-Hawkeye Arena on Feb. 20, 2021. Iowa defeated Penn State, 398.850-393.550. Friedman now competes for Nebraska after Iowa’s men’s gymnastics program was cut following the 2020-2021 season.

**The Daily Iowan**

Volume 156 | Issue 31

**Newsroom**

319-335-6030  
daily-iowan@uiowa.edu

The Daily Iowan strives for accuracy and fairness in reporting news. If we’ve made an error or a report is misleading, let us know about it: daily-iowan@uiowa.edu.

**STAFF**

**Publisher**

Jason Brummond  
jason-brummond@uiowa.edu  
319-335-5788

**Executive Editor**

Sabine Martin  
sabine-martin@uiowa.edu  
319-335-6030

**Managing Editor**

Parker Jones  
parker-jones@uiowa.edu

**Managing Editor, Digital**

Jami Martin-Trainor  
jami-martin-trainor@uiowa.edu

**Managing Editor, Enterprise and Design**

Marandah Mangra-Dutcher  
marandah-mangra-dutcher@uiowa.edu

**Managing Editor, Visuals**

Ayrton Breckenridge  
ayrton-breckenridge@uiowa.edu

**Politics Editor**

Liam Halawith  
liam-halawith@uiowa.edu

**News Editor**

Alejandro Rojas  
alejandra-rojas@uiowa.edu

**Asst. News Editor**

Jack Moore  
jack-moore@uiowa.edu

**Sports Editor**

Kenna Roering  
mckenna-roering@uiowa.edu

**Asst. Sports Editor**

Colin Votzmeyer  
colin-votzmeyer@uiowa.edu

**Arts Editor**

Avi Lapchick  
olivia-lapchick@uiowa.edu

**Asst. Arts Editor**

Charlie Hickman  
charlie-hickman@uiowa.edu

**Opinions Editor**

Evan Weidl  
evan-weidl@uiowa.edu

**Visuals Editors**

Emily Nyberg  
emily-e-nyberg@uiowa.edu

**Cody Blissett**

cody-blissett@uiowa.edu

**Asst. Digital Editor**

Natalie Dunlap  
natalie-dunlap@uiowa.edu

**DEI Director**

Christie Cellman  
christie-cellman@uiowa.edu

**DITV News Director**

Ashley Weil  
ashley-weil@uiowa.edu

**DITV Asst. News Director**

Johnny Valtman  
johnny-valtman@uiowa.edu

**DITV Sports Director**

Michael Merrick  
michael-j-merrick@uiowa.edu

**DITV Tech Director**

Carson Ramirez  
carson-ramirez@uiowa.edu

**BUSINESS STAFF**

**Business Manager**

Debra Plath  
debra-plath@uiowa.edu  
319-335-5786

**Advertising Director/Circulation Manager**

Juli Krause  
juli-krause@uiowa.edu  
319-335-5784

**Production Manager**

Heidi Owen  
heidi-owen@uiowa.edu

The Daily Iowan (USPS 143-360),

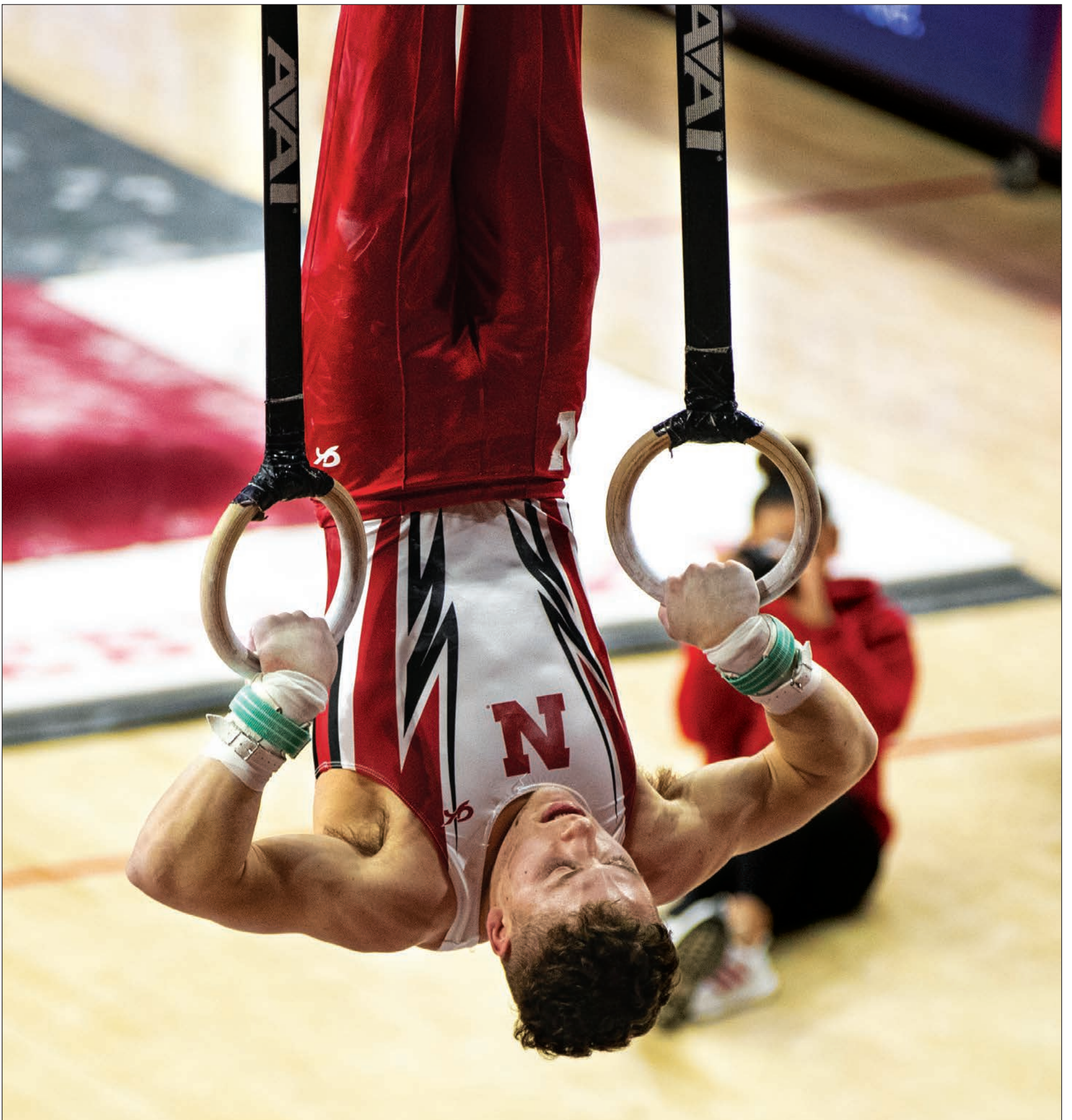
the student newspaper at the University of Iowa, is published by Student Publications, Inc., E131 Adler Journalism Building, Iowa City, Iowa 52242. Published in print weekly on Wednesdays during the academic year, Fridays of Hawkeye football game weekends (Pregame), and year-round on dailyiowan.com.

Periodicals Postage Paid at the Iowa City Post Office. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Daily Iowan, E131 Adler Journalism Building, Iowa City, Iowa 52242.

Subscriptions: Contact Juli Krause at 319-335-5784 or daily-iowan-circ@uiowa.edu for additional information.

Copyright 2024 Student Publications, Inc. All articles, photographs and graphics, both in print and online editions, are the property of Student Publications, Inc., and may not be reproduced or republished without written permission.





Carly Schrum | The Daily Iowan

(Top) Nebraska gymnast James Friedman flips on the still rings during a men's gymnastics meet between Nebraska, Greenville, and Army in Bob Devaney Sports Center in Lincoln, Neb., on Feb. 17. The Nebraska Cornhuskers won the meet with 412.90 points. Friedman scored 13.100 and placed second on the still rings. The gymnast hails from Oregon and was formerly on the University of Iowa men's gymnastics team before the program was cut after the 2020-21 season. (Above left) Friedman competes on the pommel horse during the men's gymnastics meet. He scored 13.200 on the pommel horse. (Above right) Nebraska gymnast Zac Tiderman talks with Nebraska head coach Chuck Chmelka before the high bar event at the men's gymnastics meet. Chmelka has been the coach at Nebraska for 15 years. (Bottom) Nebraska gymnasts celebrate after Zac Tiderman sticks the landing during a men's gymnastics meet between Nebraska, Greenville, and Army. He placed first and broke a school record with a score of 14.650. Tiderman is a former University of Iowa men's gymnast who transferred to Nebraska after Iowa cut its men's gymnastics program following the 2020-21 season.

### STATUS OF COLLEGIATE MEN'S GYMNASTICS

Collegiate men's gymnastics teams nationwide have dropped significantly in recent years. In 1981-82, there were 79 total teams in the NCAA compared to 15 teams in 2023-34.

	
<b>15</b> total teams 12 Division I teams 3 Division III teams	<b>5</b> teams 





# OPINIONS

DAILYIOWAN.COM

COLUMN

## All facets of health care at risk

The proposed Religious Freedom Restoration Act puts patients in Iowa at stake.



**Alex Belzer**  
Opinions Columnist

Religious freedom has a curious position as both a tenet of democracy and a frequent motivator to violate human rights.

The Iowa Legislature is deliberating the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), a bill intended to protect persons from infringement on religious expression. In a health care setting, this law would allow insurers, health care facilities, and individual providers to deny evidence-based care to patients. This would be on a religious or moral basis — likely affecting women and LGBTQ+ individuals most prominently.

Passing the act would interfere with individualized medical decisions and worsen Iowa's physician shortage, damaging health care for all Iowans. Plainly, the act would make living and practicing medicine in Iowa a nightmare.

Arming insurance companies with a legal pathway to deny reimbursement for care in the name of religious morals is incredibly precarious. While the precedent implementation would be denial of contraceptive and abortion care under a religious purview, a practice that has been hotly debated since the passage of the Affordable Care Act, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act's limits are ill-defined.

Regardless of your opinion on the bodily autonomy of women and transgender Iowans, giving a business that

profits directly from denial of care a path to open-ended justification for denial of health services means they will inevitably expand their denials. I tend to lament the 'slippery slope' argument, but profiteering knows only legal bounds.

Furthermore, around 40 percent of Iowa's hospital beds are Catholic-affiliated, among the highest in the nation. The act would confer disproportionate power to these facilities to deny care. Especially worrisome is that religion-affiliated hospitals are often the only option for rural Iowans, making 'shopping around' for a physician at a secular facility both costly and impractical, but the issues don't stop there.

According to 2023 data from the Association of American Medical Colleges, there are 227.5 physicians per 100,000 people in Iowa, which ranks 43rd among U.S. states and is well below the national average of 296.8.

As a medical student who has spent time in most specialties over the last two years, the shortage is glaringly obvious. Wait times to establish care with a doctor at UIHC vary widely by specialty, from six months in psychiatry to near-infinite in primary care. Johnson County is better served than most in Iowa. The Department of Health and Human Services reports the shortage is even worse in rural areas.

The act would also be a powerful deterrent to doctors practicing in Iowa. Constantly fighting an uphill battle to get patients the care they deserve will deposit another layer on an already taxing administrative burden. This also decreases physician autonomy, undoubtedly factoring into the decision to live here.

Evidence supporting this argument already exists. After abortion access was deemed not a constitutional right in 2022,



**Ayrton Breckenridge** | The Daily Iowan

Lawmakers sit in the house chamber during the first day of the 2024 Iowa legislative session at the Iowa State Capitol in Des Moines on Jan. 8.

the number of fourth-year medical students applying to OBGYN residencies decreased by 10.5 percent in states with abortion bans and only 5.3 percent in states without. In other words, significantly fewer physicians would practice in such a climate.

A 2023 report in the *Journal of General Internal Medicine* found that a large population of medical students, residents, fellows, and practicing physicians strongly preferred locations without women's health restrictions, regardless of if they were a current or future abortion care provider. Well over 60 percent

of respondents said they would not apply for a job in a state with an abortion ban.

An insurer could, for example, refuse to pay for ICU care by citing the immorality of needless extension of life, or not reimburse prenatal care for an unmarried mother. In both cases, this would leave the patient to foot the bill for medically necessary care.

I believe all Iowans deserve access to affordable, quality, individualized health care. The act would enable corporate entities to profit from direct interference with this and create a toxic environment for doctors, worsening care for all.

COLUMN

## Toxic positivity thrives on our social media feeds

The surge in positive quotes on social media apps creates a fake facade.



**Shelley Mishra**  
Opinions Columnist

When we mindlessly scroll through a social media app, such as Instagram or TikTok, we come across posts that say "Be positive" or "Good vibes only," which appear optimistic.

It is hard to pinpoint one post, but the online therapy app BetterHelp has compiled a list of everyday quotes such as, "It could be worse", "Happiness is a choice" and "Everything happens for a reason." At the surface level, they are brimming with positivity, but the message they send can have a toxic effect.

Toxic positivity is prevalent. A Science of People study revealed that nearly 70 percent of respondents said they experienced toxic positivity over the span of one week.

It is true that an optimistic mindset aids intrapersonal and interpersonal growth; concurrently, if a superficial level of positivity becomes a way to escape one's true feelings without evaluating them, then it may be a form of toxic positivity.

There is a stark difference between positivity/optimism and toxic positivity. The American Psychological Association defines optimism as "hopefulness or the attitude that good things will happen and that people's wishes or aims will ultimately be fulfilled" and optimists as "people who anticipate positive outcomes whether serendipitously or through perseverance and effort."

On the other hand, toxic positivity as defined by Psychology Today is "an act of avoiding, suppressing or rejecting negative emotions or experiences and insisting on positive thinking instead." This definition includes the word "avoiding," which is key because it translates into denial of one's true feelings.

Toxic positivity on social media creates a bubble of an unrealistic or rather utopian world. An article by psychiatrist J.R. Ram in *Telegraph India*, describes it as the "burden of being happy" because "TV and social media disseminate a form of propaganda by insisting on and showcasing shiny, creative, fulfilling lives."

Research links toxic positivity with the risk of developing bipolar disorder due to Positive Emotion Persistence (PEP) or the act of staying happy such that it fails to match the context.

An article in *The Scientific American* argues that negative emotions are vital parts of our lives because they are the body's natural response mechanisms for pain processing. The use of toxic positivity invalidates emotions, thus creating more unhappiness.

A study available in the National Library of Medicine correlates the risk of mortality with emotional suppression.

Denial of emotions, especially in young people, may cause chronic stress, cardiovascular diseases, and even cancer due to increased levels of the stress hormone cortisol and decreased immune response.

It is true that an optimistic mindset aids intrapersonal and interpersonal growth; concurrently, if a superficial level of positivity becomes a way to escape one's true feelings without evaluating them, then it may be a form of toxic positivity.

Exposure to toxic content on social media can be reduced by unfollowing accounts that exude toxic positivity thereby modifying the content on our feeds. According to research, sharing moments of both joy and disappointment on social media forms a support network to process emotions and demonstrates how social media may not be an accurate representation of reality.

At an individual level, the negative effects of toxic positivity can be countered by journaling which, as per studies, leads to acceptance, resolution, and healthy regulation of emotions. Mindfulness has long been used to observe one's thoughts and feelings in an unbiased manner and can help acknowledge emotions instead of suppressing them.

In an era of an influencer's perfect life and random positive quotes, simply saying, "I feel upset" helps us face the fact that "real" life has its own

COLUMN

## FAFSA is too complicated

The form needs to be more accessible for students to apply for aid.



**Kennedy Lein**  
Opinions Contributor

One of the most unnecessarily difficult parts of college is the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA, process.

Not only is the FAFSA application overly confusing to fill out, but it can cause students to dismiss college completely. The Hechinger Report stated that FAFSA is arguably one of "the most complex and convoluted higher education forms and documents."

For those who are unaware of the complexity of the form and why it is difficult for some to fill out, FAFSA determines how much aid a student is eligible for, which includes loans, grants, work study, and more. Therefore, the form includes a heap of financial information about parents or guardians that most high school students might not even know about.

I know what you might be thinking: Why don't the parents just fill it out or help fill it out, then? According to Inside Higher Ed and a survey done by The Education Consulting Company, 40 percent of first-generation students and 37 percent of low-income students fill out their own FAFSA, unlike the 11 percent of higher-income students. These are the students who are most likely to need the most financial assistance.

Forbes contributor Vinay Bhaskara wrote in a 2022 article that financial aid documents are very complex to fill out, which makes college less accessible for high school seniors.

A lot of students who aspire to head to college after high school graduation depend on some type of financial support to attend college. The fall 2022 Student Financial Wellness Survey from Trellis Research, which included data from 89 college institutions, found that almost three in four students experienced financial distress in that past year.

What we are learning is that financial suffering is prevalent among many universities and financial help is needed to get by as a college student. So why is getting financial aid and something as simple as filling out a form so difficult?

Because of the overwhelming steps in completing the FAFSA form, 40 percent of high school seniors end up not even finishing the form, according to Forbes Magazine. There should be no reason in the world that this form, which is rooted in helping students get to college, should stop them from getting financial aid.

FAFSA, which is not only making it nearly impossible for some students to get help with tuition costs, has also found itself in a bit of trouble lately due to aid delays.

As FAFSA digs itself further into a hole, we know that the complicatedness of financial aid is nothing new. This is why the system needs to be simplified, nearly free of mistakes and glitches, so that students can seemingly transition to college without having any financial distress.

### STAFF

**Sabine Martin** | Executive Editor

**Evan Weidl** | Opinions Editor

Columnists: **Aaron El-Kerdani, Jordan Coates, Shelley Mishra, Natalie Nye, Caden Bell, Alex Belzer**

Editorial Board: **Sabine Martin, Parker Jones, Marandah Mangra-Dutcher, Evan Weidl, Jordan Coates, Jami Martin-Trainor**

**COLUMNS, CARTOONS, AND OTHER OPINIONS CONTENT** reflect the opinions of the authors and are not necessarily those of the Editorial Board, The Daily Iowan, or other organizations in which the author may be involved.

**EDITORIALS** reflect the majority opinion of the DI Editorial Board and not the opinion of the publisher,

### EDITORIAL POLICY

**THE DAILY IOWAN** which has been serving the University of Iowa, Johnson County, and state of Iowa communities for over 150 years, is committed to fair and accurate coverage of events and issues concerning these areas. The DI is committed to correctly representing the communities it serves, especially those most underrepresented or marginalized. The DI welcomes any input on how our coverage can be improved to better serve our audience.

**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR** may be submitted via email to [daily-iowan@uiowa.edu](mailto:daily-iowan@uiowa.edu) (as text, not attachments). Each letter must be signed and include an address and phone number for verification. Letters should not exceed 300 words and may be edited for clarity, length, and style.

**GUEST OPINIONS** must be arranged with the Opinions Editor at least three days prior to the desired date of publication. Guest opinions are selected and edited in accordance with length, subject relevance, and space considerations. The DI will only publish one submission per author per month. No advertisements or mass mailings, please.

**READER COMMENTS** that may appear were originally posted on [dailyiowan.com](http://dailyiowan.com) or on the DI's social media platforms in response to published material. Comments will be chosen for print publication when they are deemed to forward public discussion. They may be edited for length and style.



# ETHICS & POLITICS

DAILYIOWAN.COM

## Teacher pay bump could fix shortage

Iowa legislators advanced bills increasing teacher pay; educators question if it's enough.

**Roxy Ekberg**  
Politics Reporter  
roxy-ekberg@uiowa.edu

Karry Putzy's father, a teacher himself, told her not to go into teaching — warning her about the extra stresses and challenges of being an educator — but Putzy didn't listen. Now, with 30 years of teaching experience behind her, the 52-year-old she has “been around the block.” Today, the high school Spanish teacher says she still struggles to find work-life balance.

With a master's degree and 23 years of teaching Spanish and Latin American studies at Solon Community Schools, Putzy is at the top of her salary schedule, earning \$86,000 a year. However, like many of her colleagues, Putzy was forced to work another job in addition to teaching until just five years ago.

“They always say you're not in teaching for the money — I get that,” Putzy said. “But you also need the money to be able to teach, right?”

While Putzy has persevered in the profession, other educators have opted to leave the profession for more lucrative fields. Low pay has exacerbated a growing teacher shortage in Iowa and across the U.S., experts say.

Iowa teachers earn on average \$57,581 a year, according to data from the National Education Association, the main teachers union in the U.S. The average starting pay for teachers in the state is \$39,208 — over \$12,000 less than the minimum living wage. Schools in the Iowa City Community School District can pay above this average, however, many school districts around the state fall below the average starting pay.

Experts say these low numbers are one of many factors that have contributed to a teacher shortage in the state. In Iowa, there are currently 1,000 vacant full-time positions waiting to be filled around the state. Nationwide, school districts have posted over 55,000 vacancies, according to data from a 2022 study conducted by the Annenberg Institute at Brown University.

States around the U.S. are working to find solutions to this teacher shortage. An obvious key piece to the solution is boosting teacher pay.

Iowa lawmakers continue to tweak legislation to increase teacher pay in hopes of building consensus on a proposal that Republican Gov. Kim Reynolds originally introduced in her annual Condition of the State Address on Jan. 9.

“We want younger Iowans to see the teaching profession as something to aspire to,” Reynolds said. “It's one of the highest callings one can have, so let's make sure that teacher pay sends that message.”

Legislators agree on the need to increase pay, but scuffle over how to enact the change as critics question if the initiative is enough to address Iowa's teacher shortage.



Emma Gutzman | The Daily Iowan

Karry Putzy works on her computer at Solon High School in Solon, Iowa, on Feb. 26. Putzy has been a Spanish teacher at Solon for 23 years.

with other states as they raise teacher pay.

However, lawmakers in the Iowa House killed the governor's teacher pay proposal, which was attached to an overhaul of Iowa's Area Education Agencies. The Senate version of the governor's bill is heavily amended.

Instead, House Republicans advanced their proposal that would phase in the salary increase to minimize the impact on school budgets and allow schools to plan for the impacts. It would start by increasing the minimum starting salary to \$47,500 in the 2024-25 school year, then jump to \$50,000 for teachers beginning on or after July 1, 2026.

The bill, introduced by Rep. Skyler Wheeler, R-Hull, also raises wages for education support personnel, including paraeducators and staff providing health, custodial, and food services to \$15 an hour.

Currently, the average hourly pay for a paraprofessional in Iowa is \$15.50, according to a Feb. 19 study by ZipRecruiter. With a high of \$22.58 and a low of \$7.90 an hour, the majority of Iowa's paraprofessional salaries range between \$13.56 to \$17.60.

On Monday, lawmakers on the Iowa House Appropriations Committee unanimously agreed to amend the bill to make it “more sustainable” by moving the \$22 million appropriation from the Department

of Education to the Teacher Salary Supplement Fund.

The bill advanced unanimously out of the Iowa House Education and Appropriations Committee and is now eligible for floor debate.

Wheeler said the House listened to feedback from the teachers' union, superintendents, and more as they wrote the bill to “responsibly raise teacher pay in a way that is workable for our school districts.”

“While there's no one solution that will be a silver bullet to solving teacher shortages, we know salaries are an important piece of this debate and this increase can only help,” Wheeler said in a statement to the *DI*.

The Senate kept Reynolds' bill intact, introducing an amendment heavily

adjusting the original legislation.

Sen. Lynn Evans, R-Aurelia, outlined a plan that would include reforms to Iowa's AEA programs, similar to Reynolds' bill, and proposed a lower minimum annual salary of \$46,251.

Senate File 2386 provides that the increase to teacher salaries will be supported by cost per pupil for a school district and supplemental state aid.

Evans said he does not think legislators have landed on a final proposal yet, but should advance a bill that's “best for education.”

“In the end, between the House and the Senate, we're going to come out with a very good plan that should improve services for kids across the state, as well as address the need to raise teacher pay,” Evans said in an interview with the *DI*.

Both bills survived the Feb. 16 legislative deadline and are eligible for floor debate.

**Potential disproportionate impact for rural Iowa**

Increases in teacher pay could affect urban and rural districts much differently. If districts have fewer students and the funding doesn't keep up with the mandated minimums, schools might have to reduce staff.

Urban districts already pay teachers more than the law requires and are more prepared to accommodate higher state-mandated salaries. Experts say some rural schools worry they lack the financial resources to sustain a pay bump for educators, though better compensation could fix their talent recruitment woes.

Margaret Buckton, a lobbyist for the Urban Education Network of Iowa and Rural School Advocates of Iowa — both registered in favor of the House bill — said about two-thirds of Iowa's districts are declining in student enrollment.

Buckton said the increase will be “a big shot of energy,” especially in rural and smaller districts where pay scales are lower. Buckton said many teaching positions are filled by people who are not yet credentialed because of a lack of applications.

Buckton said the increase will be “a big shot of energy,” especially in rural and smaller districts where pay scales are lower. Buckton said many teaching positions are filled by people who are not yet credentialed because of a lack of applications.

Lawrence Bice, director of Iowa State University's education preparation program, said until a few years ago, the teacher shortage had little impact on Iowa. Now there are shortages “across the board,” Bice said, and rural and isolated schools are particularly hit hard.

Bice said if Iowa can significantly increase beginning teacher salaries, it would address retention and recruitment issues in the field of education by attracting and retaining people in the profession. The boost to teacher pay could increase the number of people going into teacher prep programs in Iowa's colleges and universities, Bice said.

The challenge to lure talent to Iowa school districts is real for Solon schools. Solon currently has a high school math teaching position open and has been advertising since December, but has only received three applications.

Solon Community School District Superintendent Davis Eidahl said depending on the position, the small number of applications hasn't been uncommon in the past 10 years.

Starting teacher pay at Solon is set at \$40,567.

Eidahl described an increase in compensation for teachers as “long overdue.” He said it could create a wider pool of candidates for schools to pick from and top quality candidates either coming to Iowa to teach or staying in the state.

Eidahl, a fourth-generation educator, left the classroom to make a better living. In his first year of teaching high school science at Waynesburg, Eidahl made \$18,000 — roughly 30 years ago. Despite his love for teaching, Eidahl decided to pursue a master's degree and become an

administrator. For his first principal job 25 years ago, Eidahl earned \$50,000.

Eidahl said if the pay had been better, he would have continued to teach and coach, but the only avenue to increase his pay was to go into administration.

After receiving his master's, post-master's specialty degree, and doctorate, Eidahl received a base salary of \$160,000 in his first year as superintendent of Solon.

Setting a minimum standard would even the playing field as far as salary and would benefit rural schools that struggle to recruit teachers to their communities, Eidahl said.

A study by the Annenberg Institute reported 1,612 teaching positions filled by under-qualified individuals in Iowa in 2021-2022, meaning the position was filled by someone who is not fully certified by state standards or is certified but in a subject area other than their teaching assignment.

Buckton said increasing teacher pay will make the profession more competitive and provide schools with more choices in who they hire, allowing them to find the best fit for their school district and their students.

Ruthina Malone, president of the Iowa City Community School Board, said the district has not yet experienced a teacher shortage because it is ahead of competitors with starting salaries. Malone said Iowa City is one of the few districts in the state that can fill teacher positions quickly.

Most teachers in Iowa City schools receive salaries beyond or comparable to the increase proposed by the House and Senate. A starting teacher with a bachelor's degree receives a salary of \$43,070, according to Iowa City school's pay scale.

**Is increasing teacher pay enough to combat the teacher shortage?**

Experts and educators agree that increasing teacher pay is a strong start to addressing the teacher shortage in Iowa, but many factors have contributed to the dwindling numbers.

Bice, director of ISU's education prep programs, said other challenging issues exist that may keep people from pursuing the profession, such as long hours and the problematic behavior of students, but low teacher pay is a problem with clear data.

Rep. Sharon Sue Steckman, D-Mason City, said boosting Iowa teachers' pay is an excellent start, but if legislators are worried about attracting and retaining teachers, they need to treat educators with respect.

When Putzy started teaching in Solon, there was a regular flow of student teachers in foreign languages. In the past four or five years, Putzy said the school hasn't had a student teacher in foreign languages as fewer students go into teaching — not just foreign languages, but nearly every sector of education.

Putzy agreed that low pay is an issue, and the “all-encompassing” nature of teaching is a reason for fewer people entering the education field.

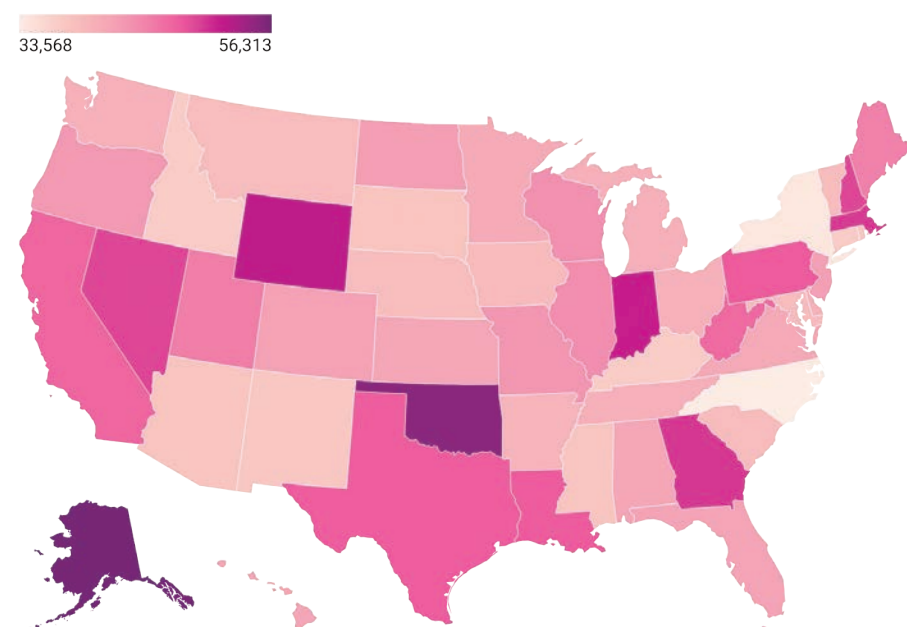
“At times it's like we're everything or we're expected to be everything, and that creates a really difficult work-life balance,” Putzy said. “I can never leave everything at school.”

Putzy said the people she knows who leave education now are exiting the field entirely, and she doesn't think a couple extra thousand dollars would get them to stay.

“We do have teachers who leave for other schools, and others leave just to leave,” Putzy said. “I don't know if raising pay will change that and I don't know that the teacher shortage is something that can change overnight.”

### STARTING PAY ACROSS THE NATION

Out of the 50 states and the District of Columbia, Iowa ranks 39th for starting teacher pay in 2023. Under a proposal by Iowa House Republicans, starting teacher pay would be raised to \$47,500.



Created with Datawrapper

Sourced from the National Education Association Infographic by Marandah Mangra-Dutcher | The Daily Iowan

### How lawmakers plan to boost pay, House adjust governor's proposal

Lawmakers' proposals differ on the details, but both the Iowa House and Senate are seeking to raise teacher pay from its current \$33,500 — a number set by lawmakers more than a decade ago — to \$47,500 in the House bill and \$46,251 in the Senate version.

Reynolds proposed increasing teachers' starting pay to \$60,000 and setting a minimum salary of \$62,000 for teachers with at least 12 years of experience. The proposal also adds \$96 million of new money to fund the increases and would boost Iowa into the top five states for the highest starting pay.

In a statement to *The Daily Iowan*, Reynolds said Iowa must stay competitive

ment of Education to the Teacher Salary Supplement Fund.

The bill advanced unanimously out of the Iowa House Education and Appropriations Committee and is now eligible for floor debate.

Wheeler said the House listened to feedback from the teachers' union, superintendents, and more as they wrote the bill to “responsibly raise teacher pay in a way that is workable for our school districts.”

“While there's no one solution that will be a silver bullet to solving teacher shortages, we know salaries are an important piece of this debate and this increase can only help,” Wheeler said in a statement to the *DI*.

The Senate kept Reynolds' bill intact, introducing an amendment heavily









- Hawkeye Updates
- Quote of the Week
- Stat of the Week
- Point/Counterpoint

MEN'S BASKETBALL

# Driveway hoops to college recruits

Payton and Pryce Sandfort are the latest set of brothers to team up for basketball.



Emily Nyberg | The Daily Iowan

Iowa forward Payton Sandfort fights for the rebound during a basketball game between Iowa and Alabama State on Nov. 10, 2023, at Carver-Hawkeye Arena. The Hawkeyes defeated the Hornets, 98-67. Sanfort scored 17 points during the game. Payton's brother, Pryce, also plays on the men's basketball team.

**Chris Meglio**  
Sports Reporter  
[chris-meglio@uiowa.edu](mailto:chris-meglio@uiowa.edu)

Only a handful of siblings have played Division I sports for the same team at the same time. The Iowa men's basketball program has done a good job making it seem regular over the last couple of years, with twin brothers Kris and Keegan Murray and head coach Fran McCaffery's two sons, Connor and Patrick McCaffery, in the black and gold.

Payton and Pryce Sandfort are also members of that unique group.



Payton Sandfort

"It's kind of what you grow up dreaming about," Payton Sandfort said of playing college basketball with his younger brother in June 2023 via Go Iowa Awesome. "Seeing [Pryce] walk into practice has been a little weird, but I'm getting used to it. It's been fun when we get

to play on the same team and get to do a lot of the different things that we've been doing since we were like five or six years old. So, it's been a ton of fun, and I'm happy he's here."

From Waukee, Iowa, the Sandfort brothers grew up with a basketball in their hands.

They've played the sport for nearly their entire lives, appearing in local rec leagues in the Des Moines area as early as five and six years old.

Payton Sandfort recalls playing against

women's college basketball superstar Caitlin Clark in the first and second grade.

"Well, it wasn't fun," Payton Sandfort said of playing against Clark. "Obviously, I was an emotional kid and wanted to win so badly. I remember they got us in the semi-finals of the tournament, and I was just devastated, and I was like 'Oh my gosh ... is this what all girls are like?'"

Pryce Sandfort backed up his brother's

**SANDFORT | 3B**

GYMNASTICS

# Confidence is key

Eva Volpe has grown stronger physically and mentally.



Emily Nyberg | The Daily Iowan

Iowa gymnast Eva Volpe performs on the beam during a gymnastics meet between then-No. 20 Iowa and then-No. 41 Southern Utah at Xstream Arena in Coralville on Jan. 26. The Hawkeyes defeated the Thunderbirds, 195.800 to 195.425. Volpe won Big Ten Freshman of the Week three times this season.

**Jake Olson**  
Sports Reporter  
[jake-olson@uiowa.edu](mailto:jake-olson@uiowa.edu)



Volpe

Competing as a first-year in Big Ten gymnastics can be difficult. For first-year Eva Volpe, her introduction under head coach Larissa Libby has been about trusting the process.

"We promised her to stay the course and it will be fine," Libby said. "She is the perfect picture of staying the course and just trusting the process because as a freshman, you don't. It is so hard, and she has done everything she can."

Hailing from Pearland, Texas, Volpe has learned and experienced more in her first season than she ever expected she would.

Volpe started the season learning from two-time All-American Adeline Kenlin in all-around.

After an injury to Kenlin after the third competition of the season, Volpe stepped in and filled the void.

"There is nobody on the team or on our staff that did not believe that she would merge into this role," Libby said. "I just think that her confidence level is coming up just slightly, and she is happy."

So far this season, Volpe has made a name for herself in the Big Ten. The first-year won Big Ten Freshman of the Week three times and is the only GymHawk to get recognized by the conference this season.

Volpe has also shown steady improvement at every competition, breaking her all-around score three times this season.

"The awards are nice, but honestly she is the most humble kid you are ever going to meet," Libby said. "It bugs her when we announce it in the gym. It is exciting for her, but I think she would trade that any day to win a team title."

**VOLPE | 3B**

BASEBALL COLUMN

# Equipped to compete

The Iowa baseball team will be a serious contender in the new Big Ten.



Brad Schultz  
Sports Reporter

As conference expansion begins to dominate the collegiate sports landscape, many sportswriters and analysts focused on the impact of major sports including football and basketball. Smaller sports, such as baseball and softball, can be left in the dust.

In the Midwest, college baseball is not normally the talk of the town, but the Iowa baseball program could reach that status this year. The Hawkeyes won 44 games and appeared in the NCAA regionals last season. They currently sit at No. 18 in the polls one week into the season. Many anticipate a deep postseason run, with some predicting a rare trip to the College World Series.

The Big Ten is regarded as one of the weakest baseball conferences because of its members playing in northern locations and lack of star power, but this could be the final season the league has to endure that stereotype. The additions of USC, Oregon, UCLA, and Washington puts the conference in a unique position — one that gives it some much-needed credibility.

Oregon, Washington, and UCLA have qualified for the NCAA Tournament within the last two seasons, and though USC has struggled recently, it has won 12 national championships in its history — more than any other team in the sport.

It begs the question: Can Iowa continue to have success in the new Big Ten next season and beyond? Though it seems the new conference is going to be a challenge, I think head coach Rick Heller and the Hawkeyes will be just fine.

Heller has built his program up with a foundation of mostly Iowa-born players and diamond-in-the-rough prospects filling out the rest of the roster, like longtime football coach Kirk Ferentz. This season, the Hawkeyes have tremendous depth in every aspect of the game, especially on offense.

Iowa hitters are known for their discipline at the plate, as well as their extra-base hitting prowess. Last season, the Hawkeyes hit .295 as a team while slug-

**BASEBALL | 3B**



**UPCOMING SCHEDULE**

- Men's basketball**  
Saturday, March 2  
At Northwestern  
4:30 p.m., Big Ten Network and Hawkeye Radio Network
- Gymnastics**  
Sunday, March 3  
At Sacramento State  
3 p.m.
- Baseball**  
March 1-3  
At Ole Miss  
SEC Network and Hawkeye Radio Network
- Softball**  
Wednesday, Feb. 28  
At Wichita State  
1 p.m., ESPN Plus
- Tennis**  
Saturday, March 2  
At Indiana  
10 a.m.
- Men's Golf**  
March 4-5  
At Wake Forest Invite
- Women's Golf**  
March 4-5  
At Momentum  
Transportation UNF Collegiate

**COLLEGE GAMEDAY**

ESPN announced Feb. 24 that College Gameday will air live at Carver-Hawkeye Arena on March 3 for Iowa women's basketball's matchup against No. 2 Ohio State. The show will run from 10-11 a.m., with tipoff slated for noon. It will be the final game of the regular season and senior day for the Hawkeyes — potentially Caitlin Clark's last home game. She is also points away from surpassing her next record. When Iowa played at Ohio State earlier this season, the Hawkeyes fell in overtime, 100-92. Ohio State is currently atop the Big Ten standings with a 14-1 conference record. College Gameday broadcasted live from Carver-Hawkeye Arena for the first time in school history last season when Iowa hosted No. 2 Indiana. The Hawkeyes beat the Hoosiers, 86-85, on a Clark buzzer-beating three-pointer, and the win propelled them to an NCAA title game appearance.



**Clark**  
Clark's last

home game. She is also points away from surpassing her next record. When Iowa played at Ohio State earlier this season, the Hawkeyes fell in overtime, 100-92. Ohio State is currently atop the Big Ten standings with a 14-1 conference record. College Gameday broadcasted live from Carver-Hawkeye Arena for the first time in school history last season when Iowa hosted No. 2 Indiana. The Hawkeyes beat the Hoosiers, 86-85, on a Clark buzzer-beating three-pointer, and the win propelled them to an NCAA title game appearance.

**CLARK'S LOGO**

Thirty-three feet away from the basket inside Carver-Hawkeye Arena, you'll find a piece of history. Iowa unveiled a logo — CLARK spelled out in black with a 22 above outlined in gold — honoring Caitlin Clark's record-breaking shot against Michigan on Feb. 15 that made her the NCAA women's basketball all-time leading scorer. She recorded a career-high 49 points as the Hawkeyes beat the Wolverines, 106-89. The logo made its debut on Sunday against Illinois. The Hawkeyes beat the Fighting Illini, 101-85, behind Clark's sixth triple-double of the season and 17 three-pointers as a team. Clark is now 51 points away from surpassing Pete Maravich and becoming the NCAA's all-time leading scorer.

**QUOTE OF THE WEEK**

"Playing my heart out for Iowa and getting to represent my state every single day — that's what it's all about. I'm not really too worried about the future."

Iowa women's basketball star **Caitlin Clark**

**STAT OF THE WEEK**

**39.550**

Iowa gymnast Karina Muñoz posted a career-high all-around score at the Big Five meet.

**WOMEN'S WRESTLING**

# Regional champions

Fifteen Iowa women's wrestlers qualified for the national tournament.

By sundown, Cowles Fieldhouse in Indianola, Iowa, might as well have been painted black and gold.

The Iowa women's wrestling team sent 15 wrestlers to the NCWWC Regional on Feb. 22. All 15 earned berths to the national championships in March. Six Hawkeyes also claimed individual regional championships.

The Hawkeyes competed in Region Five, which was hosted by Simpson College. The bracket featured four ranked teams: McKendree, William Jewell, Wartburg, and Lindenwood.

Though team scores were kept, the real emphasis was placed on individual scores, with the top four wrestlers in each weight class qualifying for the NCWWC Nationals on March 8-9.

"These 15 qualifiers are a combination of the support from administration, the community, staff, family, and the workday in and day out from our wrestlers," Iowa head coach Clarissa Chun told Hawkeye Sports.



**Sahithi Shankaiahgari** | The Daily Iowan

Iowa's No. 1 101-pound Emilie Gonzalez wrestles Iowa's No. 2 Sterling Dias during the NCWWC Regionals at Cowles Fieldhouse in Indianola, Iowa, on Feb. 23, 2024. The Hawkeyes advanced all 15 wrestlers to the national championships and led the team race with 222 points. Gonzalez defeated Dias by decision, 7-0.

**Quarterfinals**

Iowa had no problems in the quarterfinal round, with each wrestler moving on to the semifinals. Twelve matches ended with technical falls.

Sterling Dias, Emilie Gonzalez, and Ava Bayless each dominated their opponents by wide margins. Brianna Gonzalez followed her twin sister Emilie by pummeling Rose Le of William Jewell to clinch a berth in the next round.

Felicity Taylor earned a hard-fought victory via fall in the 116 bout. Despite being down 8-0 at one point in the match, first-year Ava Rose came back to defeat Alexandra Waitsman of William Jewell, 11-8.

The thrilling victory seemed to light an even bigger fire under the rest of the Hawkeye squad; Emily Frost, Lilly Luft, and Ella Schmit responded with easy wins.

Reese Larramendy, Marlynn Deede, and Bella Mir continued the momentum with technical falls at 143 and 155 pounds, respectively.

Iowa ended the round just how it started, with Kylie Welker winning the 170 bout in 25 seconds and more technical falls from Haley Ward and Jaycee Foeller.

**Semifinals**

Emilie Gonzalez and Bayless secured their

spots in the finals with easy victories in the 101 and 109 bouts. Sandwiched in between them was Diaz in the second 101 match. Brianna Gonzalez punched her ticket to the regional finals with a victory over Quincy's Trinity Pendergrass.

Taylor advanced with a fall over McKendree's Julia Vidallon. Rose was defeated by McKendree's Shelby Moore in the 123 semifinals.

Frost and Schmit lost their respective bouts, but Luft earned her spot in the final round with a 5-0 decision over McKendree's Estella Gutches. From there, Larramendy, Deede, and Mir marched to the national finals with easy wins.

Welker and Foeller advanced to the next round and qualified for the national championships, but Ward fell in the 170 match.

**Consolation round**

All four remaining Hawkeye wrestlers punched their ticket to Cedar Rapids.

Rose earned a 7-1 victory via decision over William Jewell's Emarie Bolosan, while Frost knocked off Lindenwood's Cayden Condit with a fall 90 seconds into the match.

Schmit reached the finals with a fall over Lindenwood's Rebecca Strong five minutes into the match. Ward secured her spot in the

national finals with an 8-2 decision over Kas-sidee Savaria of Simpson College.

**Finals**

Iowa concluded regional action in the final round where six Hawkeyes earned regional championships. Iowa also took home the regional championship as a team, followed by McKendree with 193 points and Lindenwood with 106.

Rose, Larramendy, Emilie Gonzalez, and Brianna Gonzalez secured regional titles.

"I feel so grateful to be on this team because everyone on this team has one goal — to be a national champion — and that's what I want to be," Brianna Gonzalez told Iowa News Now.

Larramendy had arguably the biggest win of the tournament against U.S. World Team representative and top-ranked Emma Brunttil of McKendree.

Emilie Gonzalez defeated fellow teammate Sterling Dias for the crown at 101 pounds. Deede and Welker also claimed regional championships. Iowa earned five second-place finishes, two third-place crowns, and two in fourth place.

"This is our first year, but we've continued to grow and deepen our bond with each other as we represent Iowa," Chun told Iowa News Now.

**Q&A | NICK O'CONNOR**

## Iowa mid-distance runner talks goals



**Nick O'Connor**  
Fourth-year  
Mid distance runner  
From Tiffin, Iowa

**Mia Boulton**  
Sports Reporter  
mia-m-boulton@uiowa.edu

**The Daily Iowan: Do you prefer indoor or outdoor track and field season?**

Nick O'Connor: I would say outdoor. Coming into college, I liked indoor a lot because we didn't really have much of an indoor season in high school. It was just new to me. I also tend to get injured during indoor season more than outdoor.

**Did you play any other sports in high school?**

Early on in high school I played baseball. Throughout high school, I ran cross country and track, and then I also played basketball.

**Other than track, which sport was your favorite?**

Definitely basketball. Growing up, it was always my

favorite sport and what I thought I was going to do after high school.

**What made you choose to pursue track?**

It started out with my high school coach. He was the middle school cross country coach, and he pushed me to run track in middle school. Once we got into high school, he pushed me to run cross country too because I was a football kid in middle school. I just gradually progressed.

**What is on the top of your bucket list?**

Our team hasn't won Big Tens in a few seasons now, so I would say that is the overall team goal. We want to win Big Tens during outdoors.

**When you were little, what did you want to be when you grew up?**

Basketball was my favorite sport like I mentioned. So probably just playing basketball in college or

something. I feel like every little kid had a dream of playing in the NBA.

**What are you majoring in right now?**

Sports Recreation Management.

**What made you decide that [major]?**

I would say being around sports my whole life. I'm also just interested in the whole behind the scenes of college and professional sporting events along the lines of event management or athletic administration.

**Who has supported you the most throughout your career as a Hawkeye?**

Definitely my coach from day one. I went to a junior college my first two years of being a collegiate athlete, and I feel like he took a bit of a gamble on me. He's always had confidence in me and told me I can do it.

**POINT | COUNTERPOINT**

## How far can Iowa men's basketball go?



**Chris Meglio**  
Sports Reporter

**Sweet 16**

Those who have followed the Iowa men's basketball team this year will say a Sweet 16 appearance is "a stretch," let alone an NCAA tournament appearance, and that's because it is.

That doesn't mean it can't happen.

The outcome of a basketball game is determined by whichever team scores the most points by the time the clock hits zero. Iowa owns one of the most dangerous offenses in all of college basketball, sitting 17th in the nation and second in Big Ten play with 83.4 points a game.

The Hawkeyes also sit among the top in the nation with a 1.8 assist-to-turnover ratio (3rd); 30.6 field goals made per game (8th); 17.6 assists per game (13th); a 77.8 team free throw percentage (15th); 63.8 field goals attempted per game (17th); 9.8 turnovers per game (25th); and a 47.8 team field goal percentage (30th).

However, Iowa's defense this season has been underwhelming, to say the least, ranking 331st out of 363 qualifying teams with 78.1 points allowed and 28 opponent field goals made per game. The team saw multiple collapses on that side of the floor, including two blown double-digit leads against Maryland — one of those losses coming off a last-second shot at the rim.

Currently owning a 16-12 overall record and an 8-9 conference mark, the Hawkeyes must win at least two of its last three games for any real shot at the Big Dance. They will face the second-best team in the Big Ten in Illinois, the fourth-best team in the Big Ten in Northwestern, and Penn State, who had taken the first matchup against Iowa on Feb. 8.

Iowa has built momentum as of late, winning three of its last five games. Momentum is everything down the stretch of the season, especially in the NCAA Tournament. We've seen it with teams like Oral-Roberts in 2021, UMBC and Loyola-Chicago in 2018, and the famous run made by Stephen Curry-led Davidson back in 2008.

Momentum is everything down the stretch of the season, especially in the NCAA Tournament. If the momentum carries over, the Hawkeyes can make a Cinderella run.



**Brad Schultz**  
Sports Reporter

**Deep NIT run**

Though it's becoming a real possibility for Iowa to make the NCAA Tournament for the fifth straight season, I think the Hawkeyes just miss out on the field of 68 and qualify for the NIT, which would be their first appearance since 2017.

Before all the fair-weather fans start to complain about the team's potential destinations, playing in the NIT isn't a horrible thing, especially for a program in a rebuilding year. Obviously, it's still disappointing, but head coach Fran McCaffery will gladly take a postseason berth in a down year.

Throughout the season, Iowa's freshmen have slowly molded into key roles on this squad. Brock Harding provides big time energy off the bench and Owen Freeman has probably locked up the Big Ten Freshman of the Year at this point. Ladji Dembele is a tough competitor making big strides on both ends of the floor, and Pryce Sandfort, the

younger brother of third-year forward Payton Sandfort, has played with more confidence in the last few games.

All four players have high potential, but the Hawkeyes have also experienced the typical struggles with a young roster, with several blown second half leads and inconsistent play at times. However, the talent of this group along with future prospects should give Iowa fans plenty of optimism for the direction of the program.

Though I hope the Hawks can find a way back to the Dance, a deep run isn't likely, considering Iowa hasn't made it past the first weekend since 1999. This Hawkeye squad has felt like an NIT team throughout the conference season despite playing better as of late.

This team reminds me of the 2013 squad, which came within a game of making the NCAA Tournament but responded by advancing to the NIT Championship game. Following the loss, the Hawkeyes built on that momentum and qualified for the NCAA Tournament in 2014.

I feel Iowa's postseason ceiling is in a run in the NIT as the Hawkeyes continue to develop their young talent into what should be a bounce back 2025 campaign.



MEN'S WRESTLING

# Prepping for the postseason

Iowa men's wrestling's next task to grapple is the Big Ten Championships.

Isaac Elzinga  
Sports Reporter  
isaac-elzinga@uiowa.edu

After finishing the dual season, the Iowa men's wrestling team is turning its attention to the Big Ten Championships.

The Big Ten continues to be one of the deepest wrestling conferences in the country, with five of the top 10 teams in the latest NWCA Coaches Poll hailing from the conference.

Top-ranked Penn State has wrestlers who can contend for titles in every weight class. Nebraska, Iowa, Ohio State, and Michigan all have highly-ranked wrestlers scattered throughout their lineups, creating a deep field.

The most unpredictable weight class in the conference seems to be 125, with no clear favorite heading into March.

Six of InterMat's top eight wrestlers at 125 are in the Big Ten, with Iowa's No. 4 Drake Ayala among them. Purdue's No. 1 Matt Ramos headlines the weight class for the Big Ten, while Minnesota's No. 5 Patrick McKee, Wisconsin's No. 6 Eric Barnett, Nebraska's No. 7 Caleb Smith, and Penn State's No. 8 Braeden Davis are all in contention for the title.



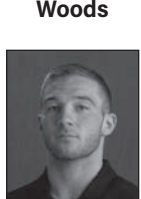
Ayala

Ayala wrestled Ramos and McKee earlier this season. Ayala lost to Ramos, 4-1, on Jan. 19 and beat McKee twice — 5-4 on Dec. 30 in the Soldier Salute semifinals and 8-5 during Iowa's dual against Minnesota on Jan. 15.



Woods

Iowa's No. 2 Real Woods looks to repeat as Big Ten champ at 141 pounds. Woods may have the opportunity to avenge his two losses this year with Penn State's No. 1 Beau Bartlett and Michigan's No. 10 Sergio Lemley among the top contenders at the weight class. Woods lost to Lemley, 14-2, on Feb. 2 and 7-2 to Bartlett on Feb 9.



Franek

Ohio State's No. 3 Jesse Mendez is another contender for the 141-pound title in the conference.

Woods said he is ready for the postseason following Iowa's win against Wisconsin on Feb 18. He said shifting into a "postseason mindset" has helped him on the mat the last couple dual meets.

Iowa's No. 5 Jared Franek won the Big 12 157-pound title with North Dakota State last year.



Ayrton Breckenridge | The Daily Iowan

Iowa's No. 7 125-pound Drake Ayala wrestles Penn State's No. 2 Braeden Davis during a wrestling dual between then-No. 3 Iowa and No. 1 Penn State at Carver-Hawkeye Arena on Feb. 9. The Nittany Lions defeated the Hawkeyes, 29-6. Ayala defeated Davis by decision, 4-2.

Franek will have some tough rematches this year in the Big Ten's 157-pound bracket. He lost three matches during the conference schedule: 5-4 to Minnesota's No. 4 Michael Blockhus on Jan. 16, 2-1 to Michigan's No. 16 Will Lewan, and 12-0 to Penn State's No. 1 Levi Haines.

"I think there's a lot left in my wrestling game to piece together here before March," Franek said. "I'm looking to keep improving on that and peak when it's time."

Fellow North Dakota State transfer and seventh-ranked

Michael Caliendo hopes to be a factor at 165 for Iowa. Caliendo lost to the top two wrestlers in the conference earlier in the year — Penn State's No. 6 Mitchell Mesenbrink, 12-6, and Wisconsin's No. 5 Dean Hamiti, 14-11.

Top-ranked Aaron Brooks plans to add another title to Penn State's total, but Iowa's No. 11 Zach Glazier looks to avenge his lone loss of the season at 197 pounds. Glazier lost to Brooks, 5-1, but immediately responded with a 13-4 win against Josh Otto the following week.

SANDFORT from 1B

quote on being emotional, highlighting their fierce battles in the driveway when they were little kids.

"There's some funny videos of us playing basketball outside, and Payton gets pissed I score on him or something," he said. "[He would] just grab me and throw me to the ground. But there's sometimes where I'd be scoring on him a lot, and he'd throw the ball into the garage and dent the garage."

Their competitiveness against each other, along with their growth spurts, allowed them to improve as players and become national recruits by their high school years.

The two attended Waukege Community High School just outside of Des Moines. They played two seasons of high school basketball together, reaching the state semifinals in their first season.

With Payton approaching his senior season, a decision had to be made on where he would continue his basketball career. The three-star recruit had offers from Drake, Stanford, Utah, and Iowa, but ultimately chose to stay close to home and play for the Hawkeyes in October 2020.

"I just felt throughout the whole recruiting process, I've been really valued by Iowa," he said upon committing to the Hawkeyes, according to *The Des Moines Register*. "I'm going to have a chance to come in and play right away. I love the coaches. I love the campus. Carver-Hawkeye Arena had a

great atmosphere when I was in Iowa City."

After the deflating loss in the state semifinals the year prior, the Sandforts hoped to redeem themselves by securing a state championship in high school. The brothers lead Waukee to a 61-50 win over Johnston to capture the first state title in school history and ultimately put a happy ending to what would potentially be the siblings' last game together.

Payton went on to have a solid first season at Iowa, while Pryce continued to build his stock as a top-100 player in the country during his junior prep season. He had multiple offers by the end of the school year from Drake, Clemson, Davidson, Seton Hall, and Iowa.

On July 29, 2022, the four-star forward was getting ready to take his official visit to Iowa City.

He told his parents beforehand there was a zero percent chance he would commit after the visit.

The soon-to-be high school senior immediately felt at home. He told the coaching staff he intended to commit just two days after the visit. His older brother was supposed to find out the following Friday when he returned home to Waukee. Pryce Sandfort couldn't wait to tell his older brother he would be joining him, letting him know the next day.

"He didn't believe it at first," Pryce said via *The Des Moines Register*. "I FaceTimed him and showed him a graphic that someone made for me that said 'committed,' and he was like,

'Where'd you find that?' It didn't process for him at first, but then he was really excited."

Pryce Sandfort went on to have a stellar senior campaign that ended with him being named Iowa's Mr. Basketball, while Payton notched the Big Ten Sixth Man of the Year award.

Shortly after the 2022-23 school year, the Sandfort brothers practiced together as Iowa Hawkeyes for the first time.

Payton Sandfort said it's been weird to have to pick his younger brother up and drive him around showing him the city, but "it's been a lot of fun."

"Ten years ago, and five years ago, I'd absolutely love the position I'm in. So, when I'm having a bad day, it's kind of a good reminder. And that's something that we've always stressed ... Be thankful for the opportunities you do have."

Payton Sandfort

IU men's basketball player

VOLPE from 1B

An adjustment Volpe has had to make was switching from the club level to a more team environment in college. So far, Volpe hasn't had any struggles with this change.

"Club is mostly individual," Volpe said. "College is more of a team aspect, which I was really excited for, and I haven't felt like it is too hard to come to that. It is a really good feeling."

Libby credits the rest of her GymHawk team for giving Volpe the confidence she needs to compete at the highest level.

"I really think she has moved from 'I

think' to 'I know.'" Libby said. "The team has been very great to her in making sure she understands how great she is, not just as a gymnast, but as a human. They have lovingly pushed her into the spotlight because she doesn't like the spotlight."

Libby said that Volpe has physically gotten better in every competition, but her mindset and mental toughness have shifted the most.

"Her mindset on what she is capable of is what has changed," Libby said. "I think she knows she can stick a vault. Her training reflects that now. She allows herself to do less. That is the thing with freshmen we are trying to teach them. Quality over quantity."

they can compete with the nation's best. Last season, Iowa took down top-ranked LSU and defeated North Carolina twice in the NCAA Tournament.

Iowa has constructed a roster built to last for years to come, not for a one-time success story. Expect Heller and the Hawkeyes to continue to compete for the Big Ten Championship once the conference expands to 18 teams in 2025.

BASEBALL from 1B

ging 70 home runs. Though there will be some roster turnover next season, capable bats such as Ben Wilmes, Raider Tello, and Sam Peterson could return in 2025. Iowa's defense is also strong and potentially features several key returning starters next season.

The Hawkeyes have already shown

Classifieds 319.335.5784 | ADS ALSO APPEAR ONLINE AT DAILYIOWAN.COM/CLASSIFIED-ADVERTISING

PETS

**KING CORSO BULLY MIX**  
Taille cut, dew claws done, all shots up to date. Adoption fee \$350. (319)423-4343 text interest in puppies.

TAX PREPARATION

**TAX PREPARATION AT REASONABLE PRICES**  
Specializing in taxes for **Faculty and International Students.** Evening and weekend hours available.

**TAXES PLUS**  
509 Kirkwood Ave. Iowa City (319)338-2799

EDUCATION

**MID-PRAIRIE MIDDLE SCHOOL,** situated in the community of Kalona, is seeking a dynamic and motivated Special Education Teacher with Strat II certification to join our team. Please visit Employment on our website at <https://www.mphawks.org>

**CALL THE DAILY IOWAN CLASSIFIEDS**  
daily-iowan-classified@uiowa.edu

APARTMENT FOR RENT

**Know your rights. DISCRIMINATION IS AGAINST THE LAW!**  
CITY OF IOWA CIVIL & HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICE

**We** Enforce anti-discrimination law in Iowa City in the areas of employment, housing, education, credit and public accommodations. Investigate, at no charge, complaints alleging unlawful discrimination. Provide trainings on discrimination law and related issues. 410 E. Washington St. Iowa City, IA, 52240 M-F 8-12 & 1-5 [www.igov.org/humanrights](http://www.igov.org/humanrights) [humanrights@iowa-city.org](mailto:humanrights@iowa-city.org) 319-356-5022 @iichumanrights

HELP WANTED

**LANDSCAPERS NEEDED** Country Landscapes, Inc. North Liberty Year-round & Seasonal positions available. Novice or experienced. Must be reliable, have strong work ethic, be 18 or older, have valid driver's license. Competitive wages. EOE. Contact Curt at (319)321-8905.

REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONALS

**LOOKING TO BUY OR SELL A HOME? Terri and Andi will lead the way!**



Terri Larson 319.331.7879 [stlarson77@gmail.com](mailto:stlarson77@gmail.com)  
Andi Miller 319.359.9385 [andimillerrealtor@gmail.com](mailto:andimillerrealtor@gmail.com)  
2346 Mormon Trek Blvd Ste 2000 Iowa City, IA 52246  
**LKR** LICENSED REALTOR  
Licensed to sell real estate in the State of Iowa. The Way Home

HELP WANTED

**MID-PRAIRIE HIGH SCHOOL,** located in Wellman, is seeking applicants for a Custodian. The hours would be 3 p.m. to 11 p.m. Monday through Friday. Please visit Employment on our website at <https://www.mphawks.org>

HELP WANTED

**LUCKY PAWZ DOG DAYCARE & BOARDING** Get paid to play with dogs. Part-time dog handler, flexible scheduling. \$12.75/hour. Apply online at [www.luckypawz.com](http://www.luckypawz.com)

## SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESS

**WE'VE MOVED!**  
**HOT SPOT TATTOO & PIERCING**  
119 1/2 E. Washington St., Iowa City (next to Target)  
319.339.TAT2 (8282)  
[hotspottattoo.com](http://hotspottattoo.com)

**DODGEST**  
Oil changes • Alignments  
Computer Diagnostics  
Air Conditioning Service & Repair  
Electrical System Diagnosis & Repair  
Brake System Repair • Tune-ups  
Cooling Systems Service & Repair  
Scheduled Maintenance  
Muffler Service & Repair and More!  
605 North Dodge St  
337-3031 • [dst-ic.com](http://dst-ic.com)

Sandwiches • Salads  
Soups • Wraps • Coffee  
Catering Available  
**nodo**  
[nodoiowacity.com](http://nodoiowacity.com)  
Northside • 600 N Dodge St  
(319) 512-5028  
Downtown • 5 S Dubuque St  
(319) 359-1181

No Boring Stuff Allowed.  
**artifacts**  
Open Every Day!  
331 Market Street • Iowa City  
319-358-9617

**Ready to move when you are!**  
23+ YEARS REAL ESTATE EXPERIENCE  
• Residential Sales & Listings  
• Relocation  
• First Time Buyers  
• Moving UP or DOWN Sizing  
Buyers & Sellers  
• New Homes  
**KATHY FOBIAN**  
Realtor, ABR, CBR, ASR, Broker Associate  
319.321.6550 | [kathyfobian.com](http://kathyfobian.com)

TECHNOLOGY ASSOCIATES, INC.  
Apple Authorized Service Center  
**Macintosh and iPhone Repair Center**  
356 S Clinton Street  
319.338.3735  
[www.tech-assoc.com](http://www.tech-assoc.com)

APARTMENT FOR RENT

[www.barkerapartments.com](http://www.barkerapartments.com)

**Scotsdale**  
210 6th St. Coralville  
351-1777  
351-1777  
2 Bedrooms  
Now Renting

- Quiet Settings
- 24 Hour Maintenance
- Off-Street Parking
- On Bus Lines
- Swimming Pools\*\*
- Central Air Conditioning
- Laundry Facilities
- Smoke Free
- Water Included

**Seville**  
900 W. Benton St. Iowa City  
338-1175  
1 & 2 Bedrooms  
Now Renting

**Parkside Manor**  
12 Ave. & 7th St. Coralville  
338-4951  
2 & 3 Bedrooms  
Now Renting

One Bedroom: \$810-\$865  
Two Bedroom: \$835-\$955  
Three Bedroom: \$1180-\$1230  
Hours:  
Mon-Fri 9-12, 1-5  
Saturday 9-12

**PARK PLACE**  
1526 5th St. Coralville  
354-0281  
2 Bedrooms  
Now Renting

Call us for information on spring sublets



# RISING UP FOR REGIONALS

Fifteen Iowa women's wrestlers qualified for the national tournament after strong performances at the NCWWC Regional on Feb. 23.

**Sahithi Shankaiahgari** | The Daily Iowan  
**(Top)** Iowa's No. 1 155-pound Marlynn Deede wrestles Lindenwood's Ryan Garthoeffner during the NCWWC Regionals at Cowles Fieldhouse in Indianola, Iowa, on Feb. 23. The Hawkeyes advanced all 15 wrestlers to the national championships and led the team race with 222 points. Deede defeated Garthoeffner by technical fall, 10-0. **(Beside top)** Spectators watch the NCWWC Regionals at Cowles Fieldhouse in Indianola, Iowa, on Feb. 23. During the quarterfinals, 12 matches ended with technical falls. **(Beside bottom)** Wrestlers grapple during the NCWWC Regionals at Cowles Fieldhouse in Indianola, Iowa, on Feb. 23. Six Hawkeyes earned individual regional championships. Iowa also walked away with five second-place finishes, two third-place crowns, and two in fourth-place. **(Bottom)** Iowa's No. 10 130-pound Emily Frost celebrates during the NCWWC Regionals at Cowles Fieldhouse in Indianola, Iowa, on Feb. 23.

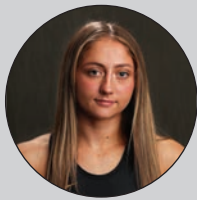


## IOWA TITLE WINNERS

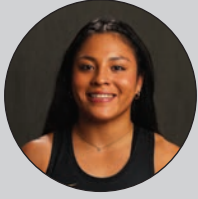
SIX IOWA WRESTLERS WON INDIVIDUAL REGIONAL TITLES.



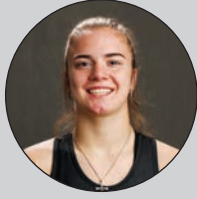
101 pounds  
**Emilie Gonzalez**



109 pounds  
**Ava Bayless**



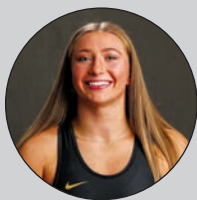
116 pounds  
**Brianna Gonzalez**



143 pounds  
**Reese Larramendy**



155 pounds  
**Marlynn Deede**



170 pounds  
**Kylie Welker**





# 80 Hours

ARTS & CULTURE | WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2024



## Inside IC's 'Big Queer Dating Show'

The Big Queer Dating Show at PS1 was a hit in LGBTQ+ communities of Iowa City.

**Avi Lapchick**  
Arts Editor  
[olivia-lapchick@uiowa.edu](mailto:olivia-lapchick@uiowa.edu)

**Isabella Nekvinda**  
Arts Reporter  
[isabella-nekvinda@uiowa.edu](mailto:isabella-nekvinda@uiowa.edu)

There's a general trend seen in modern dating shows: straightness. From shows like "The Bachelor," where several women are vying for the attention of a single man, to "Love Island," where stereotypically hot men and women resist getting together, queer representation is limited.

While there's sometimes a tokenized LGBTQ+ relationship in these shows, this cookie-cutter template is a frequent occurrence.

The LGBTQ+ Iowa Archives and Library is changing that trend.

Public Space One was transformed into the set of the

bachelor as rose petals covered the floors, the walls lined with heart banners, and red ambient light filled the room.

Based on corny television programs, like "The Dating Game," the show had a host, a bachelor or bachelorette, and three potential suitors. The twist at this event? All the contestants were from the LGBTQ+ community.

"To me, what I think of what it means to actively build a community, it's the same way you go about making friends: What do you want to do with your friends on a Saturday night?" Finn Angelos, a LIAL volunteer, said. "The most fun thing we could picture is the queerification of stupid TV."

The music throughout the house at Iowa City's "Big Queer Dating Show" played upbeat bedroom pop before the show began, supplementing the romantic ambience.

As volunteers for the LGBTQ+ Iowa Archives and Library, an Iowa City-based organization dedicated to preserving the LGBTQ+ history of their community,

Kat Bonny and Angelos are firsthand witnesses to what they cite as a lack of uplifting, queer-oriented spaces in Iowa.

They noted that, most often, LGBTQ+-focused gatherings come in the form of either protests or vigils.

"This is a time when we really need to establish a community and establish a safe space for all ages," Bonny said. "There's a giant queer community outside of the university that doesn't [attend] those events because they don't want to hang out with a bunch of 18-year-olds."

Additionally, Bonny noticed the safe spaces are usually only occupied following tragedies within the queer community.

"There's more than one way to protest," Bonny said. "Celebrating queerness openly and publicly is a form of rebellion that creates optimism. We need to be reminded what we're fighting for."



**80 HOURS**  
from IC

Zachary Morris, the outreach and programming coordinator for the LGBTQ+ library, highlighted another issue they feel affects the queer community at large: The lack of inclusive spaces has led to a culture of online dating that doesn't foster long-term connections.

"LGBTQ+ history is so vast and expansive, it is so important to bring together people of diverse gender and sexuality to have a safe space and commemorate it."

**Case Fenner**

UI student and show attendee

"I've been [in Iowa City] for five years and I was on dating apps for a long time," Morris explained. "They're very based on looks and sex."

Last year, Angelos brought an idea to Morris they felt had the potential to both decentralize the largely digital queer dating scene and increase attendance at the LGBTQ+ library's events: A dating show they named "The Big Queer Dating Show."

The show's concept was among the first of its kind in the LGBTQ+ community, let alone within Iowa City.

"We don't have this kind of thing as queer people. We don't have prom, we don't have dating shows," Angelos said. "It's not something we have access to in the way straight people or gender-presenting people do."

When Morris and their team piloted the event in November 2023 with a "Devils and Angels" theme, they weren't sure what to expect. At one point before the event started, Angelos and Bonny, dressed head-to-toe in eccentric costumes, worried no one would show up.

However, to their complete surprise, people did — and tenfold.

"People started filing in. Then more people came in," Angelos said. "Then Zachary came in and told me there's a line around the block."

As active members of many LGBTQ+ spaces in Iowa City, Angelos, Bonny, and Morris were shocked when they looked out onto the sea of nearly 100 attendees and saw at least 50 new faces.

This year's event was a similar success, hosted on the night of Feb. 24 at Public Space One's Close House.

The event began around 8:30 p.m. By then, 50 people had already turned up to watch the dating show. The show event brought in people of all identities and all

ages, a feat uncharacteristic of most queer events in Iowa City.

"Surely many genderqueer people exist in Iowa, but a lot of them are hidden or hide themselves because of the political climate," Bonny explained. "So to see everyone in their truest form, respecting everyone's pronouns, sexualities, and lifestyles — it was really beautiful."

Before the event began, however, they noticed that older individuals were weary, glued to the back of the Public Space One Close House and mingling only among themselves, while the younger attendees occupied the front where the action was happening.

The space felt fractured, Angelos shared, as it so often did in other queer spaces.

They came prepared, however, to challenge this divide.

Instead of relying on audience members to nominate themselves as contestants, they drew all consenting attendees' names at random.

Through a combination of upbeat energy, raunchy humor, and a genuine emphasis on finding true connection, the dating show became an instant hit in the community.

"At the end of the night — I swear to God — everyone had known everyone," Angelos said.

The room had four chairs set up in the front with one chair separated from the other three by a cloth screen.

When the show began, three contestants were chosen: Two were picked beforehand and one an audience member. Then, the main bachelor was guided out while their eyes were blindfolded so they could not see who the contestants were.

Angelos and Bonny started asking three contestants a variety of comedic questions, which ranged from "What would you make the bachelor for breakfast?" to "What is your most recent porn search?"

The bachelor then gave a rose to who they thought supplied the best answers to the questions.

"I had no idea what to expect, but it felt like a party," said UI student and contestant number three, Brianna Bowers, who was picked from the crowd at random.

Applauded consistently for their quirky quips and one-liners, contestant one was deliberately chosen by the bachelor.


"It went really well, it felt like a celebration, and everyone was having fun with it," Bonny said, reminiscing after the show had ended. "We sure hope to do the [Queer Dating Show] again next year."

**Ava Neumaier** | The Daily Iowan  
**IC PHOTO:** Eventgoers mingle during the "Big Queer Dating Show" at Public Space One on Feb. 24 in Iowa City.

**2024 IOWA WOMEN'S BASKETBALL BOOK**

An immersive photo and essay book that chronicles this celebrated Iowa women's basketball season — from The Daily Iowan and the School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

For more info or to pre-order, visit **DAILYIOWAN.COM/BOOK**



**INTO THE WOODS**

Music and Lyrics by **STEPHEN SONDHEIM**  
Book by **JAMES LAPINE**

Originally Directed on Broadway by James Lapine  
Orchestrations by Jonathan Tunick  
Directed by Stephen Thorne

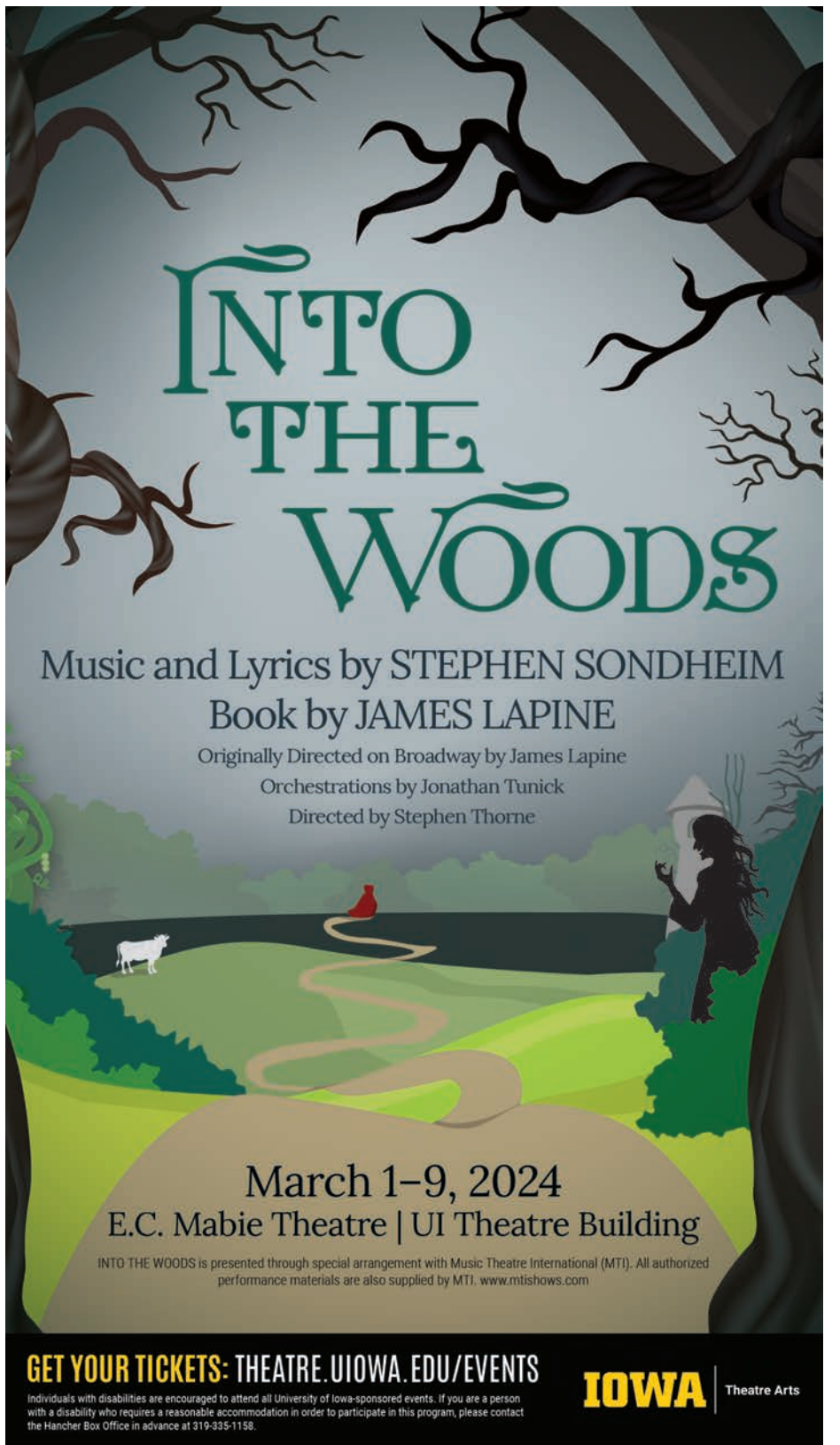
**March 1-9, 2024**  
E.C. Mabie Theatre | UI Theatre Building

INTO THE WOODS is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI). All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI. www.mtishows.com

**GET YOUR TICKETS:** THEATRE.IOWA.EDU/EVENTS

**IOWA** Theatre Arts

Individuals with disabilities are encouraged to attend all University of Iowa-sponsored events. If you are a person with a disability who requires a reasonable accommodation in order to participate in this program, please contact the Hancher Box Office in advance at 319-335-1159.



**THE BREAK**

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS ON 2A

**The New York Times**  
Crossword

Edited by Will Shortz  
No. 0124

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14						15					16			
17						18					19			
20				21							22			
23			24		25						26			
27				28							29			
30							31	32	33				34	
				35		36					37	38		
39	40	41			42						43	44	45	46
47			48	49							50			
51						52	53	54	55		56			
57						58					59		60	
61						62					63			
64						65					66			
67						68					69			

- Across**
- 1 Some water bearers
  - 6 "M\*A\*S\*H" co-star Alan
  - 10 Dressed
  - 14 "Kate & \_\_\_\_\_" (1980s sitcom)
  - 15 Tandoori chicken accompaniment
  - 16 "In time we \_\_\_\_\_ that which we often fear": Shak.
  - 17 First American to orbit the earth
  - 19 Littlest speck
  - 20 Born
  - 21 Flinch, say
  - 22 Made a choice
  - 23 Fancy "so"
  - 25 Selma march leader who served 17 terms in Congress
  - 27 Pageant prize
  - 29 Not learned
  - 30 Introductory course?
  - 31 Throws in
  - 34 Its HQ is sometimes called "Crypto City"
  - 35 Winter underwear ... or what appear four times
- Down**
- 1 Refrigerator decorations
  - 2 Largest country in Africa
  - 3 Bootleg, e.g.
  - 4 Goose egg
  - 5 Oracle
  - 6 Yearly record
  - 7 Jousting weapon
  - 8 Italian poet who wrote "Nature is the art of God"
  - 9 \_\_\_\_\_ Taylor
  - 10 Contribute
  - 11 Like some Hmong
  - 12 Bears witness
  - 13 Its shores have the lowest land-based elevation on Earth
  - 18 Fish with "snowflake" and "sawtooth" varieties
  - 22 Have title to
  - 24 Unwritten
  - 26 One might be made on a birthday
- Inputs are true**
- 68 Dry run
  - 69 Like many bathroom floors
- Down**
- 19 Only U.S. president elected under the Federalist Party
  - 21 Event with a royal court
  - 23 Barber's razor sharpener
  - 25 Talk to shrilly
  - 26 Dawg
  - 28 Norse god portrayed in film by Chris Hemsworth
  - 30 Bronco QB who won back-to-back Super Bowls
  - 32 Bridle strap
  - 34 "The Clan of the Cave Bear" heroine
  - 35 "How about that!"
  - 36 Logical operators that output "true" only if both

**IOWA RESIDENTS**

ENTER TO EARN A

**\$1,000**

**SCHOLARSHIP FOR COLLEGE**

45 SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

Register by March 29 at: [www.IowaStudentLoan.org/Hawkeys](http://www.IowaStudentLoan.org/Hawkeys)

**ISL** EDUCATION LENDING




- 28 Kerfuffle
- 31 In the past
- 32 CD players?
- 33 .
- 36 Sports org. with more than a thousand members
- 37 Sports org. in which five members have bird names
- 38 "How rude!"
- 39 2019 Brad Pitt sci-fi movie whose title means "to the stars"
- 40 Pagan
- 41 iOS alternative
- 44 Court failure
- 45 "Hallelujah!"
- 46 Siberian sled dog
- 48 Decorates
- 49 Fist bump
- 52 "Baloney!"
- 53 Busy places at Christmas
- 54 Food fight sound effect
- 55 Old saying
- 59 Nincompoop
- 62 Make a fast stop?
- 63 See 50-Across

数独

Create and solve your Sudoku puzzles for FREE.

Play Sudoku and win prizes at: **PRIZESUDOKU.COM**

The Sudoku Source of "The Daily Iowan".

**Medium**

	3	8				5		4
	1	7			2		3	
					6			
8		2		7				
7			4		3			8
				2		1		9
				7				
	7		8			4	6	
1		3				9	8	

© Puzzles provided by sudokusolver.com



# CALENDAR WEEKLY EVENTS

## THURSDAY

FEBRUARY 29

### • THAT 1 GUY AT GABE'S

One-man band, That 1 Guy, returns to Gabe's Iowa City for a night of unique music performed with homemade instruments.

8 P.M. | GABE'S IOWA CITY  
330 E. WASHINGTON ST.

## FRIDAY

MARCH 1

### • DUELING PIANOS AT THE VUE

The Vue's sing-along monthly musical comedy show returns with Felix and Fingers on the rooftop.

THE VUE  
328 S. CLINTON ST.

### • TRACK ZERO: GLITTERER W/ GLIXEN AND DOLLIVER

Englert Theatre presents this special presentation of local band Dolliver, rock band Glitterer, and grunge band Glixen at Gabe's Iowa City.

GABE'S IOWA CITY  
330 E. WASHINGTON ST.

## SATURDAY

MARCH 2

### • GATHE RAHO

Presented by the Indian Student Alliance, the 16th annual South Asian A Cappella Competition is being held at the Englert. Free for students, this night of vocalized music is sure to get anyone dancing.

6:30 P.M. | ENGLERT THEATRE  
221 E. WASHINGTON ST.

## SUNDAY

MARCH 3

### • PIANO SUNDAYS AT THE OLD CAPITOL

Piano Sundays return for the first free concert of the year at the Old Capitol Museum. Pianist Doreen Lee will be joined by UI collaborative pianists.

1:30 P.M. | OLD CAPITOL MUSEUM  
1 N. CLINTON ST.

## MONDAY

MARCH 4

### • ROBOT DREAMS

Refocus Film Festival's opening night film, "Robot Dreams," returns for one night only at FilmScene's special screening. The critically acclaimed film is now nominated for Best Animated Film at the Academy Awards.

7 P.M. | FILMSCENE AT THE CHAUNCEY  
404 E. COLLEGE ST.

## TUESDAY

MARCH 5

### • BONNIE JO CAMPBELL

National Book Award Finalist Bonnie Jo Campbell will read from her empowering novel which tells the story of the fierce women of a small town battling for its soul.

7 P.M. | PRAIRIE LIGHTS BOOKSTORE  
15 S. DUBUQUE ST.

## WEDNESDAY

MARCH 6

### • CURATOR GUIDED TOUR WITH ERIC ENSLEY AND EMILY MARTIN

Co-curators Eric Ensley and Emily Martin present a guided tour of the UI main library's "Making the Book: Past, Present, and Future" exhibit. This free event offers a deeper, inside look at the library's most recent exhibit.

4 P.M. | MAIN LIBRARY GALLERY  
125 W. WASHINGTON ST.

# 'Underdog' a decade in the making

The documentary took 10 years to film and is showing at FilmScene.

Grant Darnell  
Arts Reporter  
grant-darnell@uiowa.edu

Tommy Hyde's directorial debut "Underdog" is an independently financed documentary following the story of Doug Butler, a Vermont dairy farmer chasing his dog-mushing dreams in Alaska.

Filmed over the course of a decade, the documentary seeks to portray Doug's intimate and emotional story with a unique documentary vérité style. Hyde is taking his film across the U.S., and showed the film in Iowa City at FilmScene on Feb. 26.

Hyde and producer Aaron Woolf spoke with The Daily Iowan about the film.

### The Daily Iowan: Why did this project require a ten-year shoot and what was that process like?

Hyde: Two big reasons: Number one, I had never really held a camera or made any movies until I met Doug, so it took a long time to figure out how to capture content that was [both] compelling and usable. So a good four years of that was just bringing a camera over and learning very slowly. The other reason is that you start blending into the wallpaper at a certain point. Doug and his family, to much credit to them, grew to trust me with their story and began confiding in me things Doug hadn't told anyone but his dogs. His family would feel free to interact as they would if I wasn't there.

### How did you choose where you would screen this film and why was Iowa City chosen?



Isabella Tisdale | The Daily Iowan

Filmmaker Aaron Woolf speaks to a crowd during a Q&A after a viewing of "Underdog" at FilmScene on Feb. 26.

Woolf: This film is entitled "Underdog." The main character is a true underdog and the film itself is kind of an underdog. It's less and less normal for a documentary to find a theatrical release. If you're going to be a documentary that gets a theatrical release, you know, it better be about Jimi Hendrix, Taylor Swift, or Tom Brady. The fact that this is about a dairy farmer in Vermont is an underdog situation.

Hyde: It's also like a second home for us with this other project we've been working on in Iowa. We spent a lot of time in West

Des Moines working on another project and it's just become a second home. One of our collaborators is out in Iowa City; so many of the themes that are felt in the film will resonate with that audience.

### More online

Read a longer version of this article at [dailyiowan.com](http://dailyiowan.com).



# Anime fans debate live-action adaptations

UI students voice excitement and concern for Netflix's "Avatar: The Last Airbender," released last week.

Grant Darnell  
Arts Reporter  
grant-darnell@uiowa.edu

The much-anticipated live-action adaptation of "Avatar: The Last Airbender" was released this month, but before it hit Netflix's homepage, the prospect of the series sparked debate among fans over the nature of anime adaptations.

Initially developed as an animated series that aired from 2005-08, the 2024 live-action remake was not the first. In 2010, director M. Night Shyamalan brought his adaptation, "The Last Airbender," to the big screen — much to fans' chagrin.

The live-action film saw record-low ratings from both critics and fans alike, sparking online discourse about the necessity of live-action remakes of beloved anime series. After its release, highly-regarded film critic Roger Ebert responded to the title of the film in his review: "Let's hope it is."

However, Netflix is riding high on the success of the live-action adaptation of "One Piece" released last year, which was deemed by The Verge as "the rare anime adaptation that gets all of the important things right." Following its success, many anime fans hope that the new "Avatar: The Last Airbender" adaptation continues this trend.

Brad Vu, a University of Iowa fourth-year student and president of the university Anime and Manga Club, has eagerly awaited the release of the adaptation.

"I am a big fan of the original work, so I have high expectations for it," he said.

Vu said the remake allows newer fans to experience the franchise for the first time and revive the hype that followed the first release nearly 20 years ago.

But live-action remakes of anime properties have a historically uneven track record with its fanbases; this is something that Vu acknowledged as the root of some of his hesitation.

"I feel like a lot of studios can make them very well, whereas some don't," he said. "A lot of them are just kind of made [...] to get people invested in the original work."

UI fourth-year student and fellow club member Matthew Windus likewise voiced apprehension about anime adaptations.

"It can be a very difficult balance trying to capture the same spirit but not scare [people] away with how emotional everyone is," Windus said.

His comments speak to a fundamental issue that many take with live-action adaptations: Live-action is meant to replicate reality, whereas animation is a naturally exaggerated medium that forces audiences to suspend their disbelief. Thus, the transition between the two forms of media is less than seamless.

Still, Windus admits that there is potential value in retelling old stories in a new medium.

"Everyone's heard of Aesop's Fables, and [you can] retell them by either re-reading them or using those stories in different tales or finding new ways to tell this kind of moral or lesson to people now who may not look at [older media]," Windus said.

Ad Stratton, a UI third-year student and club member, said in theory, adaptations are a good idea.

"In practice, a lot of them haven't gone very well," Stratton said.

Stratton said adaptations are often strongest when the original creator is involved. In the case of Netflix's "Avatar: The Last Airbender," this is potentially an area of concern as original creators Bryan Konietzko and Michael Dante DiMartino stepped away from the project during production, citing creative differences.

"When it's things like creative differences that are making an original author walk away, it means that [the producers] are trying to change fundamental parts of the story," Stratton said.

## REVIEW

# 'One Day' pulls viewers into a tragic ending

The Netflix series is an adaptation of David Nicholls' 2009 novel of the same name.

Sophia Connolly  
Arts Reporter  
sophia-connolly@uiowa.edu

In Netflix's mini-series adaptation of "One Day," I was wholly engaged while watching the main characters grow together, then apart, then back together until the finale, which features one of the most twisted, heart-breaking endings I've ever had the displeasure of watching.

The British television series is the second adaptation of the highly-acclaimed 2009 novel of the same name written by David Nicholls. The first adaptation, directed by Lone Scherfig and starring Anne Hathaway, was released in 2011 and follows the same gut-wrenching premise.

The newer adaptation follows star-crossed lovers Emma Morley, played by Ambika Mod, and Dexter Mayhew, played by Leo Woodall, from the first night they met in 1988. After agreeing to stay friends after that one fateful night, each of the 14 episodes then follows the pair over the next 20 years of their lives.

While Emma and Dexter live out their own lives and follow passions separate from each other, their lives remain intertwined through their semi-annual — sometimes planned, sometimes unintentional — rendezvous over the years.

However, the format of the new limited series allows for more depth during each of the character's meetings, making the build-up to the finale much more impactful than its 2011 film counterpart.

The series pulls viewers into both Dexter and Emma's relationship and their personal lives. Its episodic format allows them to witness the characters' genuine, intense struggles in incredible depth.

Viewers realize from the beginning that Dexter and Emma's friendship will follow the cliché "will they or won't they" plot, but this series does it right; each episode had me genuinely wondering when — or if — they'd ever finally realize they were each other's soulmates.

The series does change one key aspect of the novel, though. While the Netflix adaptation opens with Emma and Dexter's meet-cute, the book leaves their first meeting at the very end. The decision for the characters to meet at the beginning of the series was a necessary introduction to the dynamic between the characters and was helpful when callbacks were made to their first meeting in later episodes.

Despite small directorial differences between adaptations, the lesson is always the same grim reminder that there is no time like the present, so love everything and everyone like they're already gone.

"One Day" is now streaming on Netflix.

## CARTOON



Cartoon by Avi Lapchick | The Daily Iowan




# THREE ELECTRIC PERFORMANCES

FEATURING UI STUDENTS AND FACULTY. ONE VIBRANT CAMPUS WITH CREATIVITY AT ITS HEART.

This semester, join us for brilliant, diverse, eclectic artistry celebrating students, faculty, and staff across the performing arts.

Dance students working with Professor Stephanie Miracle and Professor Eloy Barragan will take to the Hancher stage with the iconic Martha Graham Dance Company. Theatre Arts students will bring a beautiful play to life under the direction of Professor Caroline Clay. And School of Music students will perform a new opera at Hancher with music composed by Professor William Menefield, who will also direct.

Each performance is emblematic of what's possible on a campus committed to collaborative, transformational arts experiences for artists and audiences alike.



## MARTHA GRAHAM DANCE COMPANY

### GRAHAM100

PRESENTED BY HANCHER AUDITORIUM WITH SUPPORT FROM UI DEPARTMENT OF DANCE

**Friday, March 29 / 7:30 p.m.**  
**Hancher Auditorium**

An indispensable dance company celebrates 100 years, bringing its founder's classic works to the stage alongside new work by contemporary choreographers. Martha Graham—an icon among 20th century artistic icons—radically expanded the dance vocabulary, and her work has captivated audiences worldwide while influencing generations of artists.

**TICKETS**  
Adults \$65 / \$45  
Students & Youth \$10



## IN THE RED AND BROWN WATER

By Tarell Alvin McCraney  
Directed by Caroline Clay

PRESENTED BY UI DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE ARTS

**Friday–Sunday, April 12–14**  
**& Wednesday–Saturday, April 17–20**  
**Theatre Building**

San Pere, Louisiana: Oya runs fast, but her collegiate future is placed on hold to care for her mother. Inspired by Federico García Lorca's *Yerma* and Yoruban cosmology, Tarell Alvin McCraney's *In the Red and Brown Water* is a lyrical offering at the intersection of ancestral myth and ritual about a young woman's coming-of-age navigating lovers, community, and her chosen path.

**TICKETS**  
Adults \$20  
Students & Youth \$15  
Youth & Non-UI Students \$10  
UI Students \$5



## FIERCE

Music by William Menefield  
Libretto by Sheila Williams  
Directed by William Menefield

PRESENTED BY HANCHER AUDITORIUM, PERFORMING ARTS PRODUCTION UNIT, AND UI SCHOOL OF MUSIC

**Friday & Saturday, April 26 & 27 / 7:30 p.m.**  
**Hancher Auditorium**

An opera for the 21st Century, *Fierce* follows four teenage girls finding identity and purpose in the world as they write their college essays in a high school writers' workshop. The young women face striking internal challenges—the difficulties of high school popularity and social media, the weight of parental expectations, personal loss, and unstable lives at home—but come together to find community, self-empowerment, and the confidence to embrace new chapters.

**TICKETS**  
Adults \$20  
Youth & Non-UI Students \$10  
UI Students \$5

PERFORMING  
ARTS AT IOWA

SCHOOL OF MUSIC  
DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE ARTS  
DEPARTMENT OF DANCE  
HANCHER AUDITORIUM  
PERFORMING ARTS PRODUCTION UNIT

→ MORE INFO AND TICKETS AT  
[PERFORMINGARTS.UIOWA.EDU](https://performingarts.uiowa.edu)

IOWA