

# FORWARD INTO THE FUTURE

Seniors gear up for commencement, reflect on favorite memories, offer advice to students

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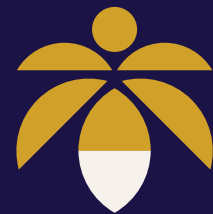
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**Nate Pappas | Staff Photographer**

Professor David Stairs pours water into a hole before planting a tree April 22, near Theunissen Stadium. Planting trees on Earth Day was a part of a graphic design capstone's final project which focused on climate change.

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CENTRAL MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY COMMENCEMENT MAY 6-7, 2022

# SENIORS SAY GOODBYE

Another academic year at Central Michigan University is coming to a close. Central Michigan Life spoke to nine graduating seniors about their experiences at CMU and what they plan to do after graduation.



**What is something you wish you knew as a freshman?**

"I wish I would have known how much work really goes into this. I really thought it would be a breeze and I'd just sit back and get it done. High school was a breeze, so I was like, 'I got this.' It definitely wasn't a breeze and it took a lot of work. I wish I would have known that getting involved in organizations and putting myself out there was something I needed to do right from the start. I was left with one year left and I had to do it all in that one year. It made it really challenging to get all the experience that I needed," St. Johns senior Hayden Klein said. He will graduate with a major in health and physical education.



**Do you have any final goodbyes to CMU?**

"I would like to say thank you to Central for getting me out of my comfort zone and supporting me in my future career and dream of becoming a healthcare professional," Cheboygan senior Karlie Trestain said. She will graduate with a major in biomedical science and a minor in psychology.

**Story and photos  
by Mckenna Golat**



**What is your favorite memory at CMU?**

"My favorite memory has been being in the Chippewa Marching Band. I played clarinet my first year and then switched to tenor saxophone for the past three years. (the marching band) were my friends right from the start. You come in as a freshman and you have no idea what's going on. Then I had this whole group of people that already knew each other and had my back. They're definitely some of the best friends that I've ever made and relationships that I'll have for the rest of my life," Brooklyn senior Taylor Gritzmaker said. She will graduate with a double major in neuroscience and psychology and a minor in sign language.



### What is something you wish you knew as a freshman?

“Mental health matters. It may just be within my major, but it’s really easy to get tunnel vision. I realized it’s okay to give myself a break, and I was like ‘Why didn’t I do this sooner?’ I was making myself suffer. Definitely give yourself a break. Make time to take a nap or go hang out with friends,” Macomb senior Yamila Zapata said. She will graduate with a major in biomedical science.



### Why did you choose to attend CMU?

“I decided to become a BCA majors because I had a really strong passion for telling people’s stories and shining light on issues that may not get the most media coverage. I wanted to be that agent of change. CMU has a really good broadcasting program. Also I got a full ride,” Ypsilanti senior Gena Harris said. She will graduate with a major in broadcasting cinema arts and a minor in advertising.



### What is your advice to incoming freshmen?

“My advice would be to take every opportunity that you can. There’s so many wonderful opportunities here. It helps you to become a part of a community and feel like you’re a part of a family when you take those opportunities,” Mount Pleasant senior Serene Newby said. She will graduate with a double major in English and Philosophy.



### What is your advice to incoming freshmen?

“Be aware of how much is offered here. I came into college thinking about the basics. Stuff like, biology, law and just the normal stuff. But there’s so much more that you can do and get out of this university than just the average surface level things,” Lake Orion senior Erykka Pea said. She will graduate with a major in psychology with a concentration in business and a minor in advertising.



### Why did you choose to attend CMU?

“I really fell in love with the (education program) here. My older sister went here in the education program, too. So family definitely helped the decision. I’m very excited just to start (my career) and be in my own classroom,” Heartland senior Ashton Refsell said. She will graduate with a major in health and physical education.



### What is your advice to incoming freshmen?

“I would say don’t pass up any opportunity that you have here. Some of those moments could be your favorite in college. So any opportunity to given to you, I was just want to say, you should pursue that,” Dewitt senior Russell Shellverg said. He will graduate with a major in broadcasting cinema arts.

The end to a “stressful” academic year at Central Michigan University is just days away. Over the last 12 months the university has made state-wide and national headlines over decisions about CMU’s future.

Just coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic, President Bob Davies now finds himself responding to concerns from all across campus. Students, faculty and staff have demanded for their voices to be heard when it comes to topics ranging from enrollment to diversity efforts to dining halls.

For Davies, it’s been a year of tough decisions. Regardless, he said he’s confident about CMU’s future and is “in it for the long haul.” He looks forward to improving communication with the campus community post-pandemic.

He said while CMU may look different five-to-ten years down the line, its commitment to providing quality higher education will remain the same.

*Read the full interview by visiting [cm-life.com](http://cm-life.com).*

### After Washington Commons received criticism, would you have done anything differently to present the project to campus?

I think there are some things we could have communicated a little stronger. But I want to make it clear that we have paused the project based on feedback we’ve received. Some aspects are moving forward like Lot 75 but it’s not a replacement for Lot 22.

When we think about Washington Commons, a lot of the discussions have been around affordability, parking, and safety – all of those are important to this project. One thing that often gets lost is that Kewadin Village and Northwest Apartments have outlived their useful lives. If we do nothing, in three or four years they will not be available at all. So we have to do something.

When taking public comments about Washington Commons specifically, every question gets logged. One thing that I do and that the president’s cabinet members do is we seek input from all stakeholders. Sometimes that’s town hall forums but we also have formal committees and workgroups and informal methods like having lunch with students and talking to campus community members.

### What have you been doing with faculty feedback? Has shared governance improved over the past year?

I think shared governance is different depending on the campus. I met with the faculty at the beginning of the year and I learned some things about our academic senate. Hopefully they also learned some things about my view on shared governance. I think they were surprised to learn that I do not vote on academic and curricular matters. I don’t think that’s my charge as president. At the same time, they encouraged me to be part of the debate on certain aspects – and so I’ve done that.

I think (shared governance) has improved. There’s steps that I’ve taken to engage shared governance in a different manner, I think others have as well.

Ultimately, we all have the same goal. We want to improve CMU. We want to maintain a rigorous and relevant academic program for our students. We all want to have additional students come to CMU. Do we always agree on how to get there? That’s part of the fun. That’s part of shared governance.

# Q&A



## Robert Davies

Central Michigan Life visited President Davies in his office for an all-encompassing, end-of-the-year interview. After multiple campus controversies, Davies said he’s had to make tough decisions but remains optimistic about the university’s future.

*Read the full interview at [cm-life.com](http://cm-life.com)*

**Michael Livingston** ■ Editor-in-Chief

### Name some specific examples of times you used student input to make decisions.

The consolidation of our residential restaurants and COVID policy was done with students in mind. I meet with SGA President Kate King regularly and she recently highlighted some issues with the food pantry that we were able to solve.

We have emphasized in our fundraising efforts, the need for the student emergency fund which also came from student interaction. We created the “Finish Up Chips” scholarship after I spoke with students about why they stopped attending CMU.

Shawna Patterson-Stevens is working with a group of students on our DEI efforts. The Diversity Symposium and Diversity Gala that are being held later this week is a direct reflection of some of that input.

### How do you keep institutional memory with high turnover in administration?

I work with a lot of faculty and staff who’ve been around a long time. There are times when I’m facing a decision, and I will call them and run things past them. I also go to the archives frequently and ask questions and get a sense of the past.

When a president comes in they try to get their team together. I’ve been very diligent about that. I wanted a team that works hard for their particular division and a team that works hard for everyone. I take ideas I’ve learned at other institutions but I never apply them directly at CMU. I take concepts, thoughts, and parameters and I ask, ‘how would this work here?’

The pandemic put a critical need on communication. I’m not going to say institutional memory was lost but the ability to have direct communication that really gets to the emotions has been a challenge.

### How long do you see yourself at CMU?

I’m 55 years old. I’m not looking for a fourth presidency. I want to stay here and continue to make CMU the best place that it can be. I have the support of the board of trustees. I have support from a lot of faculty, staff and students.

Do I have the support of everybody? No. When you make decisions, especially the decisions that we’ve made over the last two years, there’s going to be criticism. I’m in it for the long haul. I’m not ready for retirement. I have a lot more gray hairs than I did when I started but that’s OK. I am passionate about CMU. I’m passionate about the mission we serve. I’m passionate about the faculty, the staff, the students, the alumni, and the area.

### Can CMU be an antiracist institution and still use the Chippewa name?

We work closely with the Saginaw Chippewa Indian tribe, and we do things in tandem with them. It’s a very strong partnership. The tribe is very prideful in what we’ve been able to do, they point to a lot of benefits from it.

The tribe’s leadership gets invited to high schools throughout the state that are grappling with nickname and mascot issues. We’re using the name but do so in a very respectful way – and we will continue to do so.

We want to have a much stronger representation of Native American history and traditions on campus. Obviously, part of that is through the our local tribe but it would also be partnerships with other tribes throughout the state. I told the group who was working on this, I don’t want this to be just pretty pictures. We need to acknowledge the industrial boarding school that’s right in our backyard. Many people don’t know what happened there. To me, it’s about living our brand, communicating with the tribe and making sure all of their history is told.

# University names Reneé Watson as first vice president of student affairs

## Staff Reports

Reneé Watson has been named Central Michigan University's vice president of student affairs, effective Aug. 1.

Watson was a finalist in a nationwide search led by a 12-member search committee, which was led by CMU Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer Shawna Patterson-Stephen and included students, faculty and staff.

She was one of three finalists in the last phase of the search.

As the vice president of student affairs, Watson will provide leadership, vision and direction for the Division of Student Affairs.

The Center for Student Inclusion and Diversity, Counseling Center, Leadership Institute, Residence Life, Sexual Aggression Services, Student Activities, Student Conduct, Student Disability Services, Student Media, University Recreation and the Volunteer Center all fall under the student affairs division.

Watson has about 15 years of experience working in higher education and currently serves as the associate vice president for

Student Life at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas (UNLV).

Before joining UNLV, Watson was associate dean of students at Illinois State University and held student-focused positions at the University of Pikeville, Kentucky State University and the University of Texas.

Some of her accomplishments while at UNLV include avoiding layoffs due to budget cuts, revenue losses, reduction in state funds due to the COVID-19 pandemic and co-founding an Anti-Black Racism task force.

She completed a bachelor's degree in African and African American Studies at the University of Kansas and earned a Master of Education in Adult and Higher Education Administration from the University of Missouri at Saint Louis. She received a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership from Northern Kentucky University.

The addition of Watson increases CMU President Bob Davies' cabinet to 14 administrators.

"Reneé brings an incredible depth and breadth of knowledge and experience in the field of student affairs to CMU, and shares my excitement for continuing to expand upon



Courtesy Photo | Central Michigan University

New VP of Student Affairs Reneé Watson will begin her position Aug. 1.

our commitment to student success," Davies said. "I am delighted she has chosen to join our community of scholars and leaders, and I look forward to her partnership as we examine and improve our offerings."

When Watson visited campus April 14 for open forums, she highlighted boosting student involvement by conducting surveys to gauge opinions about programs and continuing to offer virtual options for remote students.

She also wants to expand counseling to help reduce mental illness affecting college students. She said this could be done by distributing more counselors in residence halls and buildings across campus, and also offering online counseling not only for Central Michigan University students, but also for their family members.

Watson hosts a podcast called, "Let's Talk UNLV" where she speaks to guests from different student organizations about campus highlights, programs and services.

"CMU is a vibrant, student-centered community and there is a lot of exciting promise here," Watson said. "I am looking forward to engaging with students, colleagues and stakeholders to create a strategic vision for student affairs at CMU."

# Vlachos takes over Chippewa O-line, looking to keep tough culture alive

## By Sean Chase

Staff Reporter

With offensive linemen, Bernhard Raimann and Luke Goedeke out of the picture, Central Michigan University football offensive line coach William Vlachos believes the program is in good hands.

"There is a rich tradition of offensive lineman here," Vlachos said. "I think that helps in recruiting, which is certainly part of this job. Yes, there is a lot to live up to. But the people before me have recruited good players, and we've got good players in that room."

On Jan. 18, 2021, news broke that long-time offensive line coach Mike Cummings was leaving the program for a similar position at the University of Cincinnati.

Head Coach Jim McElwain found Cummings' replacement in a familiar face.

"We had a close rapport when (McElwain) coached me," Vlachos said. "I know what the guy's about. I know what he stands for. I know what type of culture his team is going to have."

A member of Alabama's All-Decade team (2010-19), Vlachos played center for McElwain during his time as offensive coordinator.

Ultimately, he was a part of two BCS National Championships.

After beginning his career as an assistant at his alma mater, Vlachos was a part of two more National Championships. After a stint at Colorado, Vlachos received a call from Joe Pendry, his offensive line coach at Alabama.

"(Pendry) called me early in the morning on like a random Monday, and he said, '(McElwain) was trying to figure out if you'd be interested or not,'" Vlachos said. "I said, 'Well, tell him I'm interested.'"

Within a few hours, Vlachos phone rang once again. This time it was McElwain offering him the job. He accepted.

"His message to me was be yourself, be a team guy," Vlachos said. "Just get along with everybody and try to make this thing as good as we can make. he's given me a lot of leeway to do what I want relative to the offensive schemes I'd like to deploy."

"(McElwain's) also helped me become a professional. There are parts of the business that maybe I'm not an expert at, but he certainly is with the experiences he's had in his career. So it's a two-way street. And it's been a great experience so far."

Although he had prior knowledge of CMU



Courtesy Photo | Central Michigan University

CMU football offensive line coach William Vlachos was hired earlier this semester.

football's history, the energy around the program from people on campus has been an unforeseen perk of the job.

"People are all in about football," Vlachos said. "It's a football town. We've got kids driving from Wisconsin, Illinois, and all over the place, just to come for seven-eight hours to come to a junior day for three hours. You know, that only happens in parts of the country where football is king."

With the Chippewas experiencing turnover in multiple areas going into the 2022 season, no absences are as glaring as that of Raimann and Goedeke.

In their absence, Essexville Sophomore Brayden Swartout and Manistowic, Wisconsin redshirt Freshman Davis Heinzen are preparing to step up. Vlachos hopes to produce 'tough and smart' players.

"I believe in under-promising and over-delivering," Vlachos said. "I'm not gonna promise you the world relative to how we'll replace those two tackles. But I feel pretty good about the guys we've got in there. Swartout and Heinzen, as long as they can stay healthy, there might be a pro day or two, a couple of years down the road, with similar attendance."

# President's cabinet members have never gone through annual reviews

By Courtney Pedersen  
Investigations Editor

Each year, Central Michigan University employees receive formal performance reviews, which include self-assessments and an evaluation from their supervisor.

President Bob Davies has not conducted any formal performance reviews of the members of his cabinet while at CMU. The process is outlined in the university's Senior Officer Handbook.

"The evaluation process starts at the beginning of the fiscal year with the employee and their supervisor agreeing on primary responsibilities and goals for the following year," the CMU Senior Officer Handbook reads on page 12. "A mid-year discussion is encouraged. A year-end evaluation must be completed on all employees."

University Communications Director Aaron Mills said there are no performance evaluations for any of the members of President Davies' Cabinet in CMU's online system because "President Davies handles reviews differently, as per the 'right to make exceptions or modifications to this handbook' "

statement from page 1."

According to an official university statement, Davies and his cabinet uses "a year-round coaching model." Within this framework, Davies and the cabinet vice presidents meet weekly "to discuss progress towards key strategic initiatives and goals."

"The president's view is that performance evaluations should be conducted regularly so that day-to-day progress can be measured more meaningfully than once a year," the statement reads. "These evaluations come in the form of open, two-way conversations about progress, challenges and issues—as well as support, mentoring, advice and candid feedback."

That was not always the standard practice for CMU presidents. President George Ross completed annual performance evaluations for his senior officers.

When *CM Life* submitted a Freedom of Information Act request for the annual performance reviews of Vice President of University Communications and Chief Marketing Officer John Veilleux and VP of Recruitment and Retention Jennifer DeHaemers, University General Counsel said that such records do not exist.

Veilleux started his position at CMU in Jan.



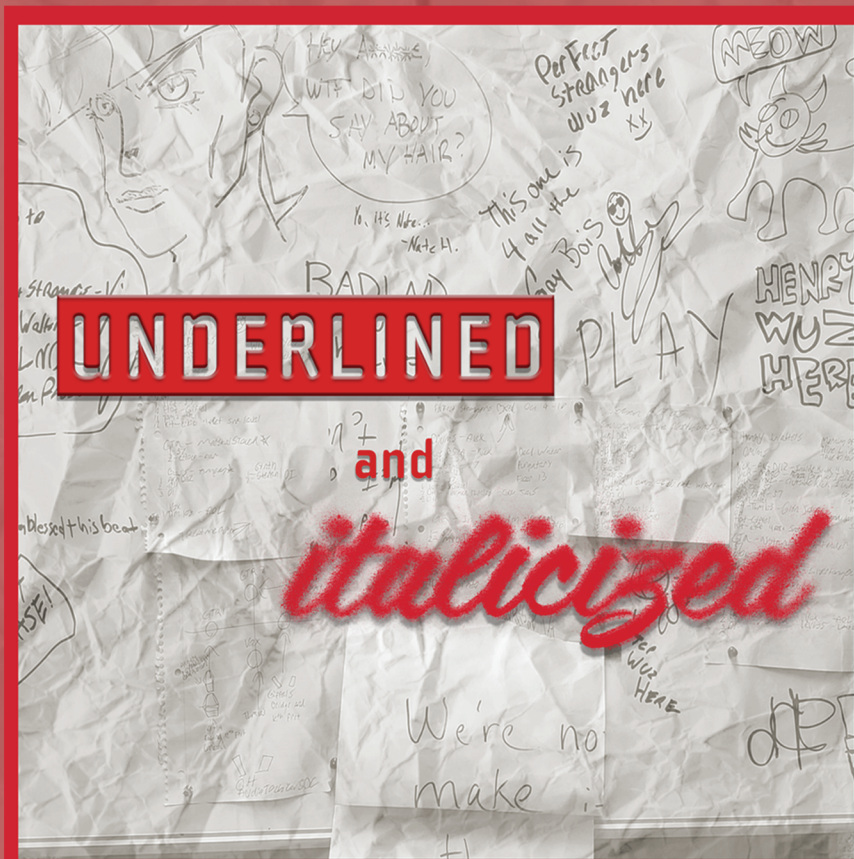
File Photo | Austin Chastain

CMU president Bob Davies at an introductory press conference for Athletic Director Amy Folan on Sept. 22, 2019 in Kelly/Shorts Stadium.

2020. DeHaemers started in June 2020.

However, after requesting the performance evaluations for senior officers under Ross, including former Provost Michael Gealt, former VP of Finance and Administrative Services

Barrie Wilkes, former VP of Enrollment and Student Services Steven Johnson and former VP of University Communications Sherry Knight *CM Life* received the unredacted files. See these reviews on *CM Life's* website.



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**2022 SAMPLER  
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**LIFE IN BRIEF**

## Mount Pleasant Chamber of Commerce welcomes new president and CEO

By Makayla Coffee  
News Editor

Mt. Pleasant Area Chamber of Commerce welcomes Liz Conway as its new president and CEO.

Conway has over 20 years of nonprofit and managerial experience. She has previously worked in roles such as the director of membership and underwriting for WCMU Public Media, as well as the executive director of the Mt. Pleasant Discovery Museum.

Conway has a bachelor's degree in management and a master's degree in public administration from Northern Michigan University.

Conway hopes that she can take experience from her different roles in the past to strengthen her work and connections within the community.

"I think that something that I have always tried to do was be a relationship builder," Conway said. "I'm hoping that some of those skills that I have learned from my past roles will help to make connections and ultimately support

businesses through relationship building and serving them and speaking for them with a collective voice."

Conway looks forward to helping impact not only the community of Mount Pleasant, but the businesses the Mt. Pleasant Area Chamber of Commerce works directly with.

"I've been in Mount Pleasant for nine years. It's a place I plan to be for quite some time," Conway said. "I think the chamber has the opportunity to make a greater community impact and (the opportunity) just really got me excited."

Conway's overall goal is to search and execute ways to help local businesses find success.

"One of the things I'd like to do is bolster programs and look for opportunities that meet the needs of our members and just to continue Mount Pleasant as a good place to work and to live," Conway said.

Community members may have the chance to meet Conway at its upcoming Spring Legislative Breakfast at Soaring Eagle Casino and Resort on May 6 at 7:30 a.m.

## Parks and recreation department to open farmers market for new season

By Gabriel Ohngren  
Staff Reporter

The Mount Pleasant Parks and Recreation Department is once again gearing up for the 2022 season of the Mount Pleasant Farmers Market.

The farmers market consists of both a Thursday market located at the Island Park South Shelter open from 7:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. and a Saturday market located on Broadway Street from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The Thursday market, which is the bigger of the two, will begin May 5 and run through Oct. 27 and will consist of a number of vendors selling a wide range of items such as Michigan-grown produce, flowers, baked goods and other home made and artisan made products.

The Saturday market will run from June 18 to Oct. 8 and will consist of many of the same products as the Thursday market, but will have fewer vendors overall.

"When I think about the market,

bright vibrant colors come to mind," City of Mount Pleasant Recreation Coordinator Carol Moody said. "Whether it's the strawberries or tomatoes or corn, it's fresh and in season. It comes from Michigan so it has less travel time to get to our market."

The city is searching for new vendors and is looking to fill certain product categories such as a coffee vendor or a pasta vendor.

Though the registration deadline has passed, the market will continue to accept applications all season. Interested vendors can reach out to the Mount Pleasant Parks and Recreation department directly or find the links to the application on the Mount Pleasant Farmers Market website.

The market also assists citizens facing food insecurity through a number of food assistance programs. Those who have Bridge Cards, Moody said, can use them to shop at the market.

For more information about the farmers market and its various programs, visit the city's website or the farmers market Facebook page.

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# 2022 UREC Student Banquet



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# Look Who's Graduating!

Congrats from your family & friends!

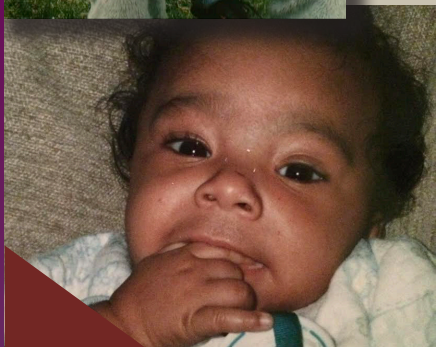


## D'Andre Jermaine Hudson

D'Andre,

I closed my eyes but for a moment and a man stood where a boy used to. You have given me so many reasons to be proud of the man you have become, but the proudest moment for me, is telling others you are my son!

Congratulations DMoney!  
I love you always-Mom ❤️



## Matthew Brock Chenette



Matthew;  
A kind and understanding man an assiduous person; persevering and diligent. A song in his heart gives a shoulder to lean on and a share of himself. He has a witty tongue that makes you laugh. Always thinking of new ideas and is very committed seeing them through.

Matthew, we are so proud of everything you have accomplished and the young man you are becoming.



# Look Who's Graduating!

Congrats from your family & friends!

## Russell Alan Vollick

Congratulations Russell!

You are and have always been amazing and I cannot wait to see what your future holds. I know you will achieve great things.

I love you!



## Kayla Dawn Harris



Congratulations Kayla!

You have designed a Wonderful life! It's been a joy to watch you grow and achieve so much. Your kindness, leadership and service have left lasting impressions for so many. Enjoy the journey in this new chapter of life. We will continue cheering you on!

We Love you,  
Mom, Dad, Brandon,  
Brooke and Kamryn



## Christine Gwisdala



Christine,  
Congratulations! We are SO PROUD of YOU!

Love,  
Dad & Mom





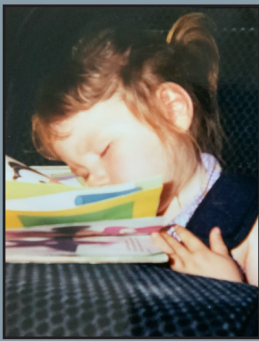
## Melvin Stevens III

Melvin we are so proud of you. May the Lord continue to Bless you in everything that you do in life. You can do all things through Christ who strengthens you!

We Love you !



### Raelyn Clare Aro



Impressive achievement, a Master of Arts in History degree! Early on you showed your love of learning. Enjoy working at SPLKA!

With love and much pride today and always, Mom, Dad and Anthony.

### Amanda Sue Bosch



We are so incredibly proud of you and your drive to succeed. We know that whatever you put your mind to do you will be able to accomplish. Continue to put God first in everything you do and take pride in how far you've come.

We love you so much!  
Dad and Mom

### Anna Lorrain Bredin



Congratulations Anna!

You did it! You've worked so hard to make your dreams a reality & did so with flying colors!

We are so very proud & happy for you.

Lots of Love,  
Mom, Emily & Grandma

### Nicholas Isaac Davis



Nick- We love you and are so proud of you! Congrats on graduating with honors. Looking forward to see what happens next.

Love- Mom & Dad, Vincent, Mackinac and family

### Eva Ciaramitaro



Congratulations Eva! We are so proud of you! We are so excited to see what the future has in store for you! You are going to amazing things!

We love you!  
Dad, Mom, Francesca, Lexi and Vanessa  
Xoxox

### Emily Naegelin



Congratulations, Emily!



## Janelle Irene Bublitz

Dear Janelle,

YOU'VE DONE IT!!! Your drive and dedication, ever electric energy and enthusiasm, and perseverance through problems and even pain are all to be commended! We are SO VERY PROUD of all you have accomplished, and most especially, of the person you are! CONGRATULATIONS HONEY! We Love You So Very Much!!!

Mom & Dad and our entire Bublitz Bunch



## Christopher William Mergner



Congratulations Chris!

We are so proud of you and your accomplishments. I knew when you started drawing dragons at such a young age that you were talented.

You are a truly amazing and talented young man and we can't wait to see what the future holds for you. We wish you a life of Laughter, Love, and Happiness.

Love, Mom, Dad, and Erich



# Sadie Leann Phillips



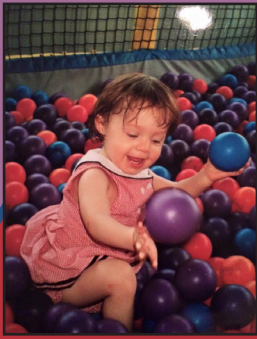
It's been a long journey,  
but you made it.  
Now on to shaping  
the young lives of the future.



We are proud of you.  
- "The Fam"



## Elizabeth (Lizzie) Dilg, CNP



From ball crawl to Discovery Museum - your infectious personality, charm, and intelligence have always made you stand out! I am proud of you and what you've already accomplished! Congratulations!

Love, Mom

## Lakiya Anisha Ealy



Yes, you did it and your whole family is proud of you. We love you and are hoping nothing but success. My first born, you did it now you can breathe lol.

## Samantha Hayes



Today is the day you have been waiting for. All the hard work, lessons learned, the memories and relationships you formed will impact your future. We love you and are so proud of you.

Mom, Dad, Sky, Jax and Milo

## Harrison Hinz



Congratulations Harrison! We're so proud of you! Very grateful and blessed to be your parents! Continue to believe in yourself, follow your heart, and enjoy the journey!

Love, Mom, Dad, & Taffy



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CON  
cla

# Alexis Marie Briggins



Congratulations! My beautiful Legacy I am so proud of you. Always believe in yourself as much as I believe in you. You can accomplish anything you set your mind to. I can't wait to see what you do next at IU.

Love you forever,  
Mom



# CONGRATS GRADUATES

Class of

# 2022

# Kayla M. Wallich

# Look Who's Graduating!

Congrats from your family & friends!



Dear Kayla,  
You have worked so hard,  
and we are so proud of you!  
Love,  
Dad, Mom and Marie



# Katelyn King

We are so very proud of you Kate! You have done amazing things at CMU and above all proven yourself a Leader! We are so excited for your graduate studies at Clemson!

Love Mom, Dad, Austin, Izzy and Jessie



# Brenden Louis Roth

Bren, you've worked so hard for so long and now today is all about you. Congratulations, Graduate! Enjoy it, and best wishes for the future! We are all so proud of you!

Class of 2022!!! Fire Up Chips!!!

Love Mom, Dad, & Family



# Ricky Nnaemeka Mbonu

We are so proud of all your accomplishments. Continue to shine brighter than the diamonds and may the grace of God be sufficient for you.

Love,  
Dad, Mom, Jason, Francis, & Angelica



# Sara M Glasgow

“Oh baby, you should see her now! She has grown into a beautiful, talented, smart, kind, successful woman and i couldn’t be more proud of her! As a daughter, i have been gifted and blessed beyond measure. Kudos to Sara M. Glasgow!”



# Emma Marie Davis



FIRE UP CHIPS!



Emma Marie, your beautiful & driven personality shines through in everything you do. We are so proud of you for achieving a double major and double minor all while working, spending time with your CMU friends and enjoying trips with your church. May God continue to watch over you as you begin the next chapter of your life.

Congratulations!  
We love you,  
Mom, Dad, Will and Reese



Larzelere Hall

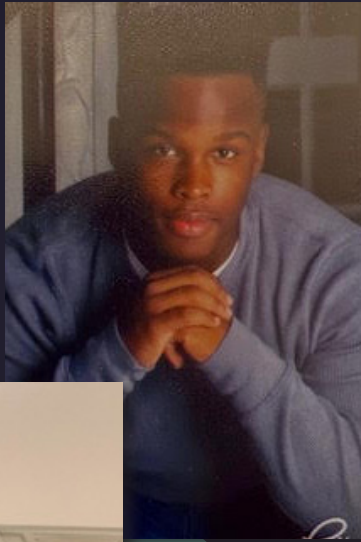
# Jalen D. Scott

Jalen,

I am so very proud of you. You stayed focus over the last year with everything you've been through. I know you will continue to succeed.

Love you so much!

Mom



# Collin Hunt

Congratulations Collin! You have demonstrated skill and determination. We are so proud of you! We know you will continue on doing great things.

God bless you. We love you!

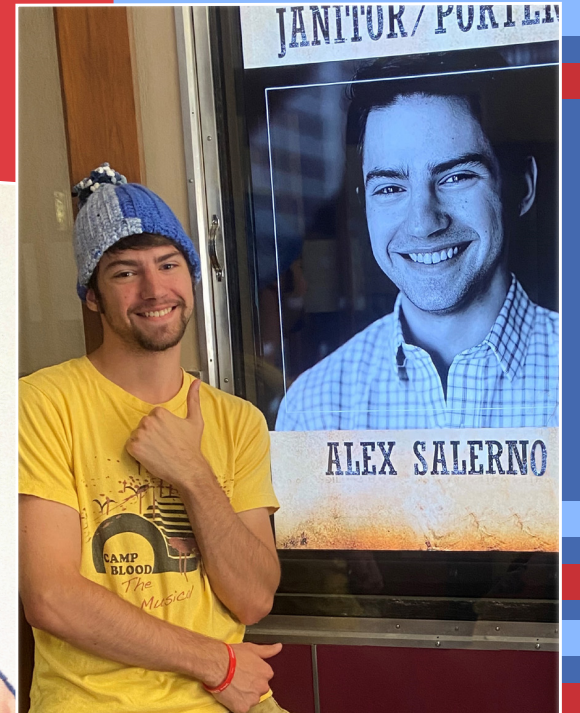


# Alex Salerno

Congratulations Alex!

Everyone deserves their happy ending. It is your time to go after yours.

Love, Dad & Rachel



## Paige Madison Kopczyk



Paige-  
How far you have grown these past 4 years. I'm so proud of you and all that you've accomplished. Blessed and honored to be your mom.

Love you so much.

## Jaclyn Marie Mannino



Jaclyn, We are so proud of and can't wait to see what other incredible things you accomplish in the future! Congrats!

Love, Mom, Dad, Leah, Drew, & Toby

## Christina Osborn



Congratulations!  
We are so very proud of you and all of your accomplishments. Can't wait to see the positive impact your creativity will have in the future. Know that you are loved.

Love - Mom, Dad, Ali, Ethan and Bryan

## Nathan Mathew Pfeilstucker



Congratulations Nathan!

I am so proud of you and can't wait to see where life will take you next. Love you to the moon and back!

Mom

## Kayla Sue Pung



Congratulations Kayla!

We are so proud of you!

Love, Dad, Mom, Nick, and Sam!

## Beau Raven Lee Badalamenti



We're so proud of you, peanut! Can't wait to see what you do in your next adventure!

Love,  
Mom, Adam, Dakota, Gramma & Grandpa

## Jonathon R Hittie

So proud of what you have accomplished and can't wait to see what happens in Act 2 of your story.

Love Mom, Dad, Grandma, Grandpa.



## Jordin Kennedy

Congratulations Jo!  
You worked so hard to get here. We are incredibly proud of everything you've accomplished and the person that you've become.

We love you so much Kiddo -  
Mom and Dad



# Look Who's Graduating!

Congrats from your family & friends!



## Jacqueline Helena Beatty



Congratulations on your well-deserved success, Jay Jay! We are so proud of you! We are so excited to see what you'll accomplish next!

We love you,  
Mom and Dad

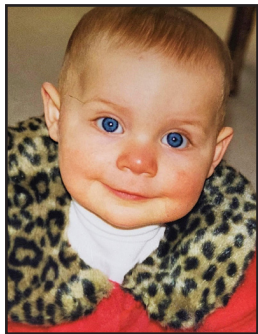
## Sarah Nicole Price



Sarah,  
Congratulations!  
We are so proud of your accomplishments at CMU! Wishing you the best! We are excited for your future!! We love you!! xoxo

Love,  
Mom, Dad & Nick

## Emma Kathryn Russell



Our gregarious girl is graduating. Reach for the stars—get a stool if you have to! We are so proud of you.

Love, Mom & Dad

## Isabella Sherman



Isabella,

I am so proud of you and all you have accomplished. I can't wait to see what your new adventures will hold. Your hard work and dedication has always amazed me. Congrats girl, Love you.

Mom

## Makenzie Shubnell



Congrats on your graduation Makenzie!! We can't wait to see where your path takes you next and we are very proud of all of your accomplishments. Fire Up Forever!!

With Love, Mom and Dad

## Kaitlyn Nancy Hixson



We are so proud of you and your accomplishments. You have become an amazing woman with a loving heart and unlimited potential. The future is yours.

Love,  
Mom and Dad

## Kelsey Cristina Sexton



Kelsey,

I'm so proud of your accomplishments! I knew you were destined for greatness! Never stop dreaming and achieving! Love, Mom.

## Shianna Joy Woodwyk



"A teacher's job is to take a bunch of live wires and see that they are well-grounded." Darwin D Martin

Bring on the live wires!  
So proud Shianna!

Love Mom, Dad,  
Grandmas, Grandpas  
and Aunt Kim



# Jeffrey McCarty

Congratulations Jeff. We are so proud of all your hard work! You're an amazing person and there's no limit to what you will do! We can't wait to see what's next.

Love you,

Mom and Keith





## Cody Alan Schneider

Cody, you make us very proud! It has been a privilege these last four years to watch you grow and overcome challenges to get to this momentous day. Congratulations on an impressive achievement! You are destined to do great things because of your perseverance and will to succeed. No doubt you will make a positive difference in the lives of others because of your compassion and unwavering faith. As you approach this next chapter, continue leaving a lasting impact and being hope for others. The world needs your light.

All of our Love and God's continued blessings,  
Mom, Dad, Shelby and Peyton



## Christian Michael Williams

Christian, it absolutely amazes me how quickly your time at CMU has come to an end. I am so incredibly proud of the man you have grown to be as a student and I'm even more excited to see the phenomenal man you will be in the workforce. Continue to strive for greatness and nothing less will come to you.

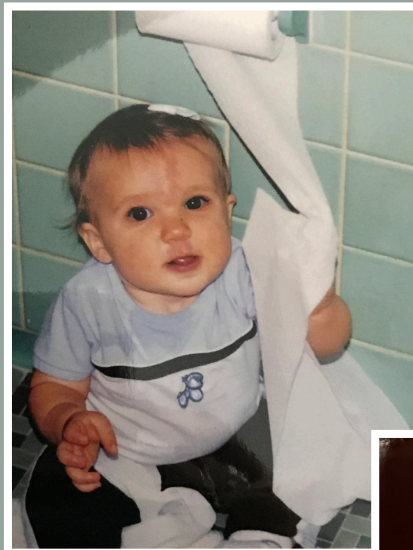
Love, Mom



## Kaitlyn Huber

Kaitlyn, We are so proud of you! You amaze us every day with your determination, strength, and courage to try new things. You light up our days with your happiness, laughter, and great hugs. We love you so very much! Congratulations

Mom, Dad, and Courtney



# Grace Catherine Busch

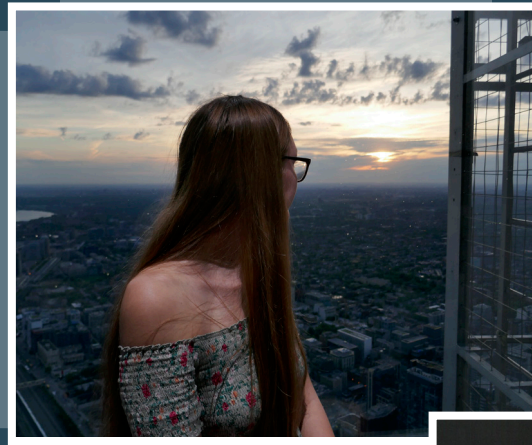


Grace,  
We are all so very proud of what you have accomplished. You had an amazing spring semester in Germany! Congratulations on your CMU degree and admission to Dental School!

Love,  
Mom, Dad, Emma, Jen



# Allyssa Alessandra Shawboose



You always knew what you wanted to do with your life, since you were a young baby. We are so proud of you!!!

Congratulations

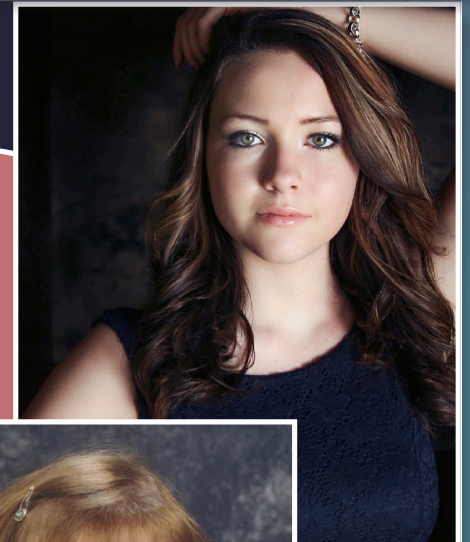
Love  
Mom, Dad, Sonny and gang



# Hannah Mae LaLone

Congratulations Miss Mae!!!

From your little years we knew you were a determined little girl and you have proven that through and through over the years, now what an outstanding young lady you have become with so many little blessings along the way you have accomplished your greatest goal! We are so incredibly proud of you!



# TO OUR SUPER TEAMMATES, Congrats, grads!



Back Row: Harlan Platek, Marin McDougall, Dylan Polcyn, Lillian Brown, Zach Kortge, Noah Wulbrecht, Michael Livingston; Front Row: Julia Springer, Ally Cole, Stephanie Chipman, McKenna Golat, Makayla Coffee, Courtney Pedersen.  
Not pictured: Russell Vollick

CENTRAL MICHIGAN  
**LIFE** 100 YEARS  
1919  
2019

WE ARE GOING  
TO MISS YOU!

#CMLife4Life

## OPINION

# Thank you for the ride, on to the next chapter

Said by many but understood by few at our age, “Enjoy your time while you’re here because it’ll fly by.”

The concept of the saying is simple. I thought I fully understood the meaning, I just wasn’t aware how true it was.

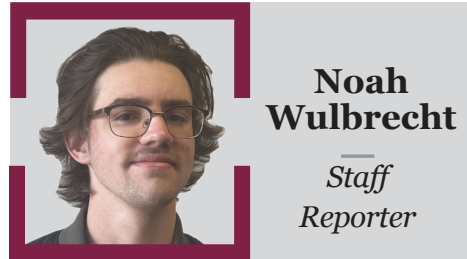
After four years of school, three years of socializing, and two and a half years at *CM Life*, I’m finally able to start life.

Am I ready? Probably not but, as my naïve self, I hope I can acclimate quickly.

When I first stepped foot on campus, I knew this was the place I was meant to be. Whether it’ll be the place for future students is to be determined, but it was good to me.

In my orientation I had accidentally walked into the journalism briefing. Turned out I liked what the presenter had to say and I took a chance and went for it.

Thankfully my gut was right, and I chose something I love. When I started writing for *CM Life*, I covered some University events but transitioned to the community beat. While I enjoyed what I wrote I had always been a sports lover at heart.



**Noah Wulbrecht**  
—  
Staff Reporter

I took another chance and asked, the then sports editor, Austin Chastain if I could come aboard. He agreed and set the foundation for how I cover sports to this day.

Once Chastain graduated, I was greeted by a former classmate of mine Mitch Vosburg. Under his watchful eye he refined my skills and the dedication needed for covering a sport.

After Mitch completed his time at Central Michigan University, I was relieved that the editor spot would now be filled by a sports reporting savant in Christian Booher. Now that my foundation and skills were in place Booher allowed me the freedom of trust in my

coverage.

While *CM Life* set the foundation for my future endeavors, I was first blessed with a great friend group and great roommates from the start.

I first met my college buddy, Alex Klein, at Mainstage my freshman year at the CMU Golf Club table and we instantly created a bond. Because of him I was introduced to so many people I now call friends and have made amazing memories over the past four years. He’s always someone I can rely on.

Alex’s roommate at the time, and still, was Brett Hobson. I still remember the first time we really hung out was a random trip to Wayside and had a blast. Since then, we’ve all lived together I especially grew close with Brett through playing a bunch of video games and staying up way too late.

Finally, we acquired our fourth roommate last year, Nick Morabito, Bito for short. He’s a military man and has a net worth more than yours. Yet, he has a heart of gold and will always have our backs when we need help.

Sam Miller, my girlfriend the past four

plus years, has always given me incredible support. While we spent a lot of time apart, because we attend different universities, when we have time to visit it’s always so great it feels like a dream.

But none of my college experience or life would be possible without my mom, Kelly and Garry, my dad, Jim Wulbrecht and my stepdad Greg Garry. They collectively provided an amazing life thus-far and I am extremely lucky and thankful for all they’ve done.

Since this is already too long, in no particular order, I am going to list some names of other equally as great people I’ve met and have affected me in my time at CMU:

Dustin Keel, Nic Hobson, Hannah Russo, Stacey Buckholz, Anna Pena, Chase Homer, Dylan Bone, Will Braun, Matt Dufty, Robbey Stafford, Mark Ellis, Tyler Saferian, Amanda VanNiejehuis, Jordan Williams, Justin Bowman, Sean Chase, Ashley Birkness, Megan Youngblood, Robbie Baron and Abby and Rachael Kniper.

I’ve loved my time here and everyone I’ve met, fire up forever!

## At CM Life, I found my people and my passion

One of the first classes I took at Central Michigan University ended with me in tears, eating lunch alone in my car.

As a transfer student, I struggled a lot to find my place at CMU. I felt like there was no one like me here. The college I earned my associates degree at was much smaller and I knew a lot of students already.

Coming to CMU was a culture shock that I was not prepared for. Living off-campus also made it really difficult for me to meet new people and become part of the campus culture. I saw my time at CMU, not as an experience, but as a stepping stone for building my future with my fiancé.

After my first few classes, I decided I wanted to get my degree and leave Mount Pleasant as soon as I could.

I did make a few close friends in the graphic design program, but it wasn’t until I came to *Central Michigan Life* that I realized there were actually a lot of people like me at CMU.

I spent two years holding CMU and my Mount Pleasant friends at an arm’s length because I was afraid to



**Stephanie Chipman**  
—  
Lead Designer

get involved, I was afraid to say yes. I made myself an outsider because I felt there was no place for me. Thanks to my friend Madison Skop, saying yes to *CM Life* showed me there’s a place for everyone here and it doesn’t have to be what you expected it to be.

I would have never guessed that accepting a job as lead designer at a student-led newspaper would give me more than just design experience. I found loved-ones and mentors here, allowing me to open up more to my friends in my graphic design capstone class.

I would have never guessed in a thousand years that I would be hosting

“Kreepy Kulture,” the horror podcast I share with my friend and coworker Tyler Clark. It helped me build the confidence and experience to help create a graphic design capstone exhibition I will be proud of for the rest of my life. This job gave me more than portfolio pieces, it gave me my own place at CMU.

If I had any advice to a freshman or transfer student starting here I would tell them to say “yes.”

Even if an opportunity doesn’t work out, just try it. You never know what you can find by just trying something new. I never thought working with a bunch of journalism students would change how I thought about this university.

I never knew I was surrounded by potential friends that I wouldn’t even give a proper chance to. Let this opportunity be just that, not just a stepping stone to the next thing. I started my time here wishing for it to be over and now I’m in tears, knowing how much I’ll miss everyone I met and everything I built here.

Take the time to say yes to your adventure and your potential friends here, because you’ll blink and it will be over.

### WHAT’S YOUR OPINION?

All letters to the editor or guest columns must include a name, address, affiliation (if any) and phone number for verification. Anonymous letters will not be printed, except under extraordinary circumstances. *CM Life* reserves the right to edit all letters and columns for style, length, libel, redundancy, clarity, civility and accuracy. Letters should be no more than 450 words in length. Longer guest columns may be submitted but must remain under 750 words. *CM Life* reserves the right to print any original content as a letter or guest column. Submission does not guarantee publication.

# CM Life helped me learn how to be tenacious

With my *Central Michigan Life* application in one hand, camera bag in the other and new backpack strapped high on my shoulders, I walked out of Merrill Hall at 7:30 a.m. on the first day of my freshman year.

After climbing the three flights of stairs to the fourth floor of Moore Hall, I gave my application to someone in the *CM Life* office and took a seat outside of my classroom with a few other students already waiting.

At 8:03, the instructor came out into the hallway and said he couldn't believe none of us tried to open the door. When we got into the classroom, he continued by saying if we wanted to be journalists, we needed tenacity and clearly none of us were tenacious if we couldn't even try to open the door.

I spent the rest of the day terrified all of college would be that way. By the time 8 a.m. on Wednesday rolled around, I made sure to be inside the classroom. The instructor told us that after telling the story to his family, they told him he needed to apologize to us all.

Although I knew the definition, I didn't



**Courtney Pedersen**  
—  
*Investigative Reporter*

know what it meant to be tenacious. Now, thanks to four years at CMU, I finally do.

Throughout my time here, I have seen faculty, staff and administrators we students love get laid off while President Bob Davies received a raise that is more than some professors make in a year. The programming and classes that influenced my choice of CMU, are gone.

Since I joined *CM Life*, I have closely covered the university and have seen how tone-deaf the administration really is. As a senior about to graduate, I am able to conclude that CMU is an awful university. The administration only cares about profit and marketing, not students.

The Department of Journalism has

been in shambles since June 2020 and no one in the administration seems to care.

When our media law instructor was forced into retirement, he was replaced with a real estate lawyer that has received multiple complaints from students.

Eight months later, when they put the *CM Life* adviser on administrative leave, nobody made an effort help us do our jobs.

Regardless of all the lack of compassion shown from the university, I do believe CMU was the right decision for me. I have learned how to deal with many curve balls, how to properly use the Freedom of Information Act and developed a deep love for uncovering the truth. CMU has also given me some amazing articles for my portfolio, much to their chagrin.

In addition to my professional growth, my time at CMU has made me grow as a person and has given me some of my best friends, most of whom I met through bonding about hating the university.

Every time I considered transferring

throughout the past four years, *CM Life* was the one constant thing keeping me at CMU. My support system may have changed to new a combination of co-workers every year, but I wouldn't have made through without all of them.

For the past four years, every time I needed someone I could go into the *CM Life* office and talk to anyone else in the room.

Now, as I pack up my apartment and desk at *CM Life*, I have the newsroom to thank for the person and journalist I am today.

When I unpack my AP Style Guide and crisp new reporters notebooks, it will be at a desk 1,300 miles away at the *Beaumont Enterprise*.

As an 18-year-old, the 130 mile move from Kalamazoo to Mount Pleasant was terrifying but I knew it would help me grow as a person. Now, as I'm leaving even more friends behind to move to Beaumont, Texas, I know they will all just be a phone call away.

With my newly realized tenacity in on hand, my CMU diploma in the other and my fellow CM Lifers behind me, I am ready to start my new journey.

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**THE VILLAGE AT BLUEGRASS**

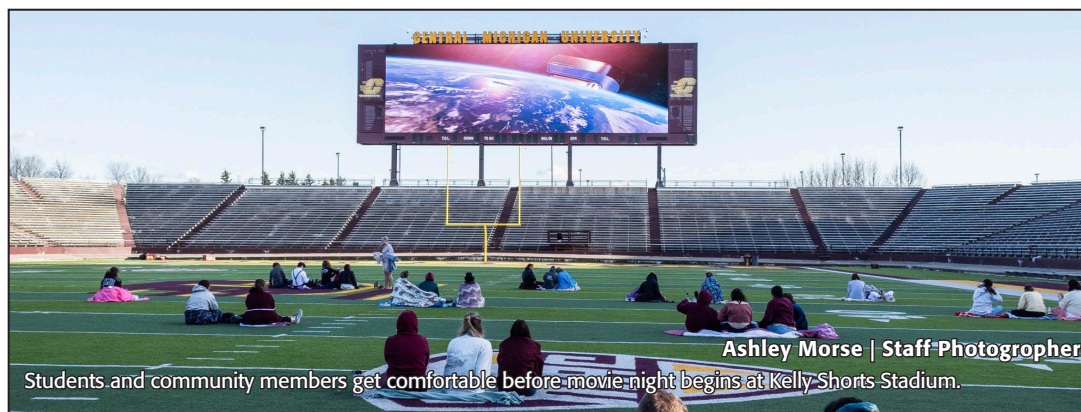
**Ashley Morse | Staff Photographer**

A student grabs sweet potato fries at the Flame Station to side with his beef barbacoa slider in Dine & Connect, November 11.



Layla Blahnik-Thoune | Photo Editor

Students protest to save parking lot 22 from becoming new housing Feb. 17 outside the Bovee University Center.



Ashley Morse | Staff Photographer

Students and community members get comfortable before movie night begins at Kelly-Shorts Stadium.

**STAFF****EDITORIAL****EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**

Michael Livingston

**NEWS EDITORS**

Aurora Rae

Makayla Coffee

**SPORTS EDITOR**

Christian Booher

**INVESTIGATIVE****EDITOR**

Courtney Pedersen

**PHOTO & VIDEO****EDITOR**

Layla Blahnik-Thoune

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Mike Gonzalez

**DESIGN EDITOR**

Stephanie Chipman

**DESIGNERS**

Caroline Sharbaugh

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**ADVERTISING****MANAGER**

Ainsley Young

**ASSISTANT MANAGER**

Russell Vollick

**PROFESSIONAL STAFF****DIRECTOR OF STUDENT PUBLICATIONS**

Dave Clark

**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF STUDENT PUBLICATIONS**

Kathy Simon

*Central Michigan Life*, the independent voice of Central Michigan University, is edited and published by students of Central Michigan University every other Thursday during the fall and spring semesters. The newspaper's online edition, *cm-life.com*, contains all of the material published in print, and is updated on an as-needed basis.

*Central Michigan Life* serves the CMU and Mount Pleasant communities, and is under the jurisdiction of the independent Student Media Board of Directors. Dave Clark serves as Director of Student Media at CMU and is the adviser to the newspaper. Articles and opinions do not necessarily reflect the position or opinions of Central Michigan University. *Central Michigan Life* is a member of the Associated Press, the Michigan Press Association, the Michigan Collegiate Press Association, the Associated Collegiate Press, College Newspaper Business & Advertising Managers Association, the Mount Pleasant Area Chamber of Commerce, Central Michigan Home Builders Association, Mount Pleasant Housing Association and the Mount Pleasant Downtown Business Association. The newspaper's online provider is SN Works.

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*Central Michigan Life's* editorial and business offices are located at 436 Moore Hall, Central Michigan University, Mount Pleasant, MI 48859, telephone (989) 774-3493 or 774-LIFE.

# BETTER LUCK NEXT YEAR

*After a rough two semesters, take the break to rest and recuperate*

A very interesting year at Central Michigan University is ending. It's time for some reflection.

This year saw some much-needed relief from COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. Vaccination and testing programs helped keep the campus safe. Now, we're seeing a much-needed, hard-earned return to normalcy.

Some other highlights include a historic win at the Tony the Tiger Sun Bowl, CMU being nationally recognized for its sustainability and civic engagement efforts and a long-awaited development project being completed downtown – offering a new place for residents to live and to shop local.

This year also saw CMU being thrust into the national spotlight for its very public mistakes and poor leadership from administrators and the board of trustees.

Enrollment saw another year of decline making it the forefront of conversations about CMU's future. In January, 58 prospective students received a message saying they had won the Centralis Scholarship by mistake, resulting in the university offering full-tuition scholarships to all of them.

Many more incidents led to backlash from students, faculty and staff.

CMU switched campus food providers from Aramark to Chartwells and absolutely botched the rollout. Students complained about the quality of the food and lack of dining choices and hours. Staffing shortages persisted leading to some dining halls closing early or indefinitely.

Students had to navigate a broken website when they returned to campus after holiday break. Reports of missing content, dead links and crashes flooded social media.

## EDITORIAL

Faculty repeatedly claimed a lack of shared governance at Academic Senate meetings regarding COVID-19 protocol, budget cuts and more.

Their concerns were echoed by students when the board of trustees attempted to move forward with the Washington Commons residential halls project without much consultation from the campus community. The board has delayed the approval of the residence halls but has moved forward with other aspects of the project.

Administrators continue to hold townhall listening sessions for this and other topics on campus – but it's debatable how much listening they are actually doing at those sessions.

Trustees also conducted a performance review of President Bob Davies. Its 25-question survey completed by less than 200 “university stakeholders” resulted in overwhelmingly positive results for Davies.

Chair Rich Studley called Davies' performance “outstanding” before awarding Davies a \$35,000 base salary increase and a \$75,000 one-time bonus.

However, when *Central Michigan Life* surveyed the campus community (receiving 501 responses from people with *cmich.edu* emails) with the same questions used by the board, results were overwhelmingly negative toward the president's leadership.

In April, a “fact-finding” report about the beleaguered Honors Program and the problems that took place last spring was released with little context or

detail. Last year, the removal of then-Honors Program Assistant Director Judy Idema resulted in a protest by many honors students. The Faculty Association stated problems with the program, and pressure from their union, resulted in the forced resignations of Provost Mary Schutten and Associate Provost Julia Johnson in the fall. That also failed to make it into the report.

It seemed like everyone whose livelihoods depend on a healthy CMU had to contend with a campus controversy. And the campus watched as many good CMU employees either left the university or were asked to leave.

After a tumultuous year, it's certainly time for a well-deserved break.

But as you pack your bags it's important to remember how much you matter here. You've shown it by engaging with *CM Life* – the voice of the student body.

This year, *CM Life* published many letters to the editor and guest columns submitted by students, staff and community members – the most we have received since before the pandemic.

Engaging with student media amplifies your voice and sends a clear message to those in power: “We will be HEARD; We will not be IGNORED.”

Use this summer to prepare to come back to Mount Pleasant and make the most out of another year at CMU. For those who are graduating, you will certainly do amazing things. Take the lessons you learned here and work to make the world a better place.

From all of us at *Central Michigan Life*, thank you. We can't wait to see you again in the fall. Until then, we'll be watching campus while you are away.

We've got you covered, CMU.

# LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Send to editor@cm-life.com

## CMU Administration, why aren't you helping?

### TO THE EDITOR:

This week, at the Academic Senate and the Board of Trustees Student Liaison Committee, I delivered a statement, on behalf of Honors Program students in response to the Honors Program Report.

The entire CMU community should be concerned about what has taken place in the Honors Program since new leadership took over in June 2020. The question I pose today is, where is the help?

For over a year, grave concerns about Honors Program leadership were made known to senior officers.

Concerns raised included intimidation of Honors Program staff and students, creation of a hostile work environment and toxic office culture, flagrant university policy violations, retaliatory actions, neglect of students and director duties and the deterioration of a nationally recognized program.

The Honors Program Report falsely leads readers to believe that only minor misunder-

standings occurred and that all problems have been addressed. Those who have experienced these transgressions firsthand, however, know there is more to the story.

For nearly two years, administrators knew what was happening and did not take action to help the students, faculty and staff who were pleading for help. In fact, the administration never reached out one-time to help.

Today, I call on the CMU administration to believe our stories, right the wrongdoings that have taken place and take immediate steps to restore our program to what it was.

Where is the help from the president and provost?

When I posed my questions at the Academic Senate to President Davies on Tuesday, April 19, Interim Provost Dr. Richard Rothaus said my statement was "awfully fast and awfully long" and was given at an inappropriate forum.

He offered to meet with me in a private setting to explain the report's findings.

Chair of the Academic Senate, Katrina Piatek-Jimenez responded to Rothaus's comment.

"Every single question that Senator Idema has just read off are questions I've heard at least a dozen times from members all over the CMU community," she said. "These are not questions that Senator Idema has, these are questions that every single faculty, student and staff that has ever touched the Honors Program have."

Members of the Academic Senate then called for a public open forum to take place before the end of the semester to address all the questions raised or to consider forming an Academic Senate ad hoc committee to do its own investigation.

President Davies stated that many of the concerns I raised were already addressed in the report, even though hardly any of them were answered, much less included in the report, and provided no further insight.

Where is the help from the Board of Trust-

ees?

I spoke again during the Board of Trustees Student Liaison Committee meeting on Wednesday, April 20, and raised the concerns. However, when the committee report was given to the entire Board of Trustees on Thursday April 21, Trustee Regine C. Beauboeuf did not mention my comments at all even though my comments took up most of the committee meeting.

Where is the help for the honors students, staff, faculty, and alumni who have been directly impacted by the misconduct of Honors leadership?

On behalf of the Honors students, I am calling upon the university administration to act.

*(Read Idema's full statement to the Academic Senate and the Board of Trustees at cm-life.com)*

**TAYLOR IDEMA**

President, Student Government Association  
Central Michigan University

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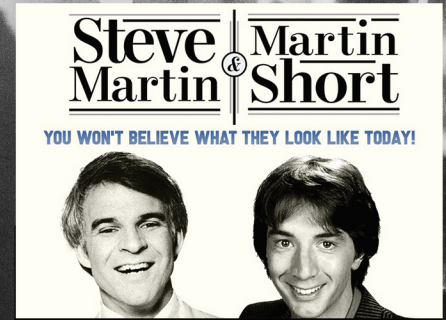
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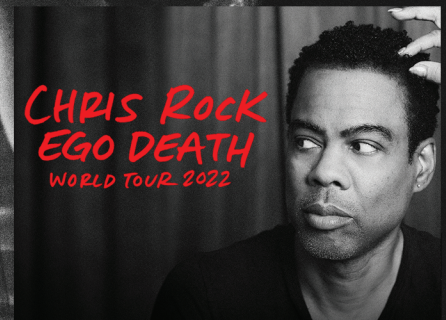
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