



**inTHE NEWS**

## Trustees approve rec center and new degrees

**Daniel Mayes**  
Staff Writer

The Jacksonville State University Board of Trustees held its winter quarterly meeting on Monday, January 23 at 1 p.m. in the Houston Cole Library.

The major item on the agenda for Monday's meeting was the proposal for the new campus recreation center, and the board voted unanimously to approve

a resolution to authorize the university to move forward with the development of the 100,000-square-foot, \$39 million center.

The Board authorized the university to begin the planning phase for a new rec center in July 2016, and plans for the proposed new facility were submitted for the board's consideration on Monday.

The facility has a target completion date of January

2019 and will be financed by a \$190 mandatory student fee that will take effect when the new rec center opens.

The university believes that the facility will help recruit new students, improve the overall look of campus and increase students' desire to live on campus and stay over the weekends.

President John M. Beehler said that the new rec center will certainly be a

"great thing for our students [and] a great thing in recruiting students, but it's also going to be great for faculty and staff," and that he anticipates that the project will be "something that brings the university together."

Approximately 450 students will be able to use the rec center at a given time and up to 200 positions for student workers will be available in the new facility.

See TRUSTEES page 2

**Spring ECE Registration Now Open**

Spring 2017 ECE registration is now open. Students can register online through their MyJSU account. Registration will be open through Wednesday, Feb. 8 at 4:30 p.m.

**Accepted Students Day**

Accepted Students Day 2017 will be Friday, Jan. 27. High school seniors who have been accepted to JSU will be invited to campus to tour selected departments and see the university.

**Double Reed Day**

Ms. Eryn Oft of the David L. Walters Department of Music invites all students and faculty to attend Double Reed Day 2017. This all-day event will be held in the Mason Hall Performance Center. Admission is free to all.

**United Way Book Drive**

The American Democracy's book drive is still under way! Bring book donations to Academic Services in Martin Hall Room 107 by Friday, Jan. 28.



Aurora Police Department

The scene after James Holmes open-fired in a Century 16 movie theater during a midnight premiere of "The Dark Knight Rises" in Aurora, Colo. Twelve people were killed and 70 were injured in the shooting. Holmes was sentenced to 12 life sentences plus 3,318 years in prison on August 27, 2015.

## Aurora, Colo. police bring debrief on 2012 shooting to JSU

**Alexander Cooper**  
Staff Writer

On Friday, Jan. 20, 2017, Aurora Police incident commander Lieutenant Jad Lanigan and Aurora SWAT commander Mike Dailey held a debriefing of the shooting that occurred at the Century 16 movie theater in Aurora, Colorado. The debriefing was held in Stone Center on Jacksonville State's campus from 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. During the program Lt. Lanigan and Commander Dailey gave a detailed report on the events that unfolded on the night of the shooting and how the Aurora Police Department handled the active shooter incident.

The shooting occurred on July 20, 2012 in Aurora, Colorado at a midnight showing of "The Dark Knight Rises" at the Century 16 theater. Shortly after the premiere a man

in black clothes threw a canister of tear gas and opened fired into the crowd. The shooter was immediately apprehended by the Aurora Police Department upon leaving the theater, and identified him as James Holmes. Twelve people were killed and 70 were injured.

During their detailed debrief, Lt. Lanigan and Commander Dailey covered everything from the shooting itself, the police response to the theater, the response to the shooter's apartment where rigged explosives were found and the aftermath that followed the events. The description of how the event was handled by the police department and how the department reacted to the incident were the main focuses of the debrief. Lt. Lanigan was among the first officers to arrive at the theater and later assumed command of the scene. Commander

Dailey was the second command officer to arrive.

Much of the debrief was geared towards informing Criminal Justice students about how the department was trained to handle an active shooter situation and what an actual incident of that nature looks like in the field. Lt. Lanigan and Commander Dailey described how the department's active shooter training, but they also talked about how the officers handled the problems that arose during the event. The debrief also referenced the importance of those who worked at the Aurora hospitals and how the efforts there were instrumental in treating those who were wounded.

Lt. Lanigan and Commander Dailey also took some time during the debrief explain what that they felt the department handled well during the situation, as well as one or two areas that they felt could have

See AURORA page 2

## JSU graduate brings back Beowulf

**Rachel Read**  
Staff Writer

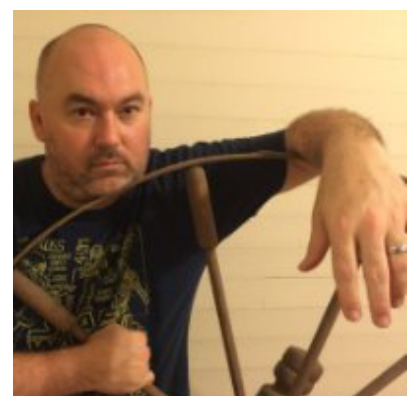
On Monday, January 23 at 3:30 p.m., a lecture was given by writer and poet, James Matthew Byers in room 234 of the Stone Center. An intimate audience gathered to hear Byers, a JSU alumnus and Alabama native, speak about his recently published translation of the Norse legend "Beowulf."

Retold in meticulous rhyming iambic tetrameter and entitled "Beowulf: The Midgard Epic," Byers' translation keeps close to the original academic version of the tale. Byers' "Beowulf" attempts to stay within the boundaries of the truest translations and as close to the original Old English as possible while keeping the prose reader friendly. The story's format that takes "Beowulf" back to its' roots by putting it in rhyming verse, which is a nod to the methods of traditional oral recitation.

"Poetry is essentially life itself," Byers said. "When you read a poem, you're connecting to that person's life experiences." Byers has been published in poetry journals, as well as winner of the Prose Challenge for three poems, and currently has a poem set for publication in Weirdbook magazine.

Byers was also able to in-

See BEOWULF page 2



James Matthew Byers/LinkedIn

James Matthew Byers is an author, translator, poet and JSU English department graduate.





## TRUSTEES from page 1

The Board also approved the Jacksonville State University 2017-2021 Strategic Plan.

The plan outlines goals the university hopes to reach within the next five years and includes key initiatives like increasing enrollment and enhancing branding, marketing and university infrastructure.

The Board of Trustees approved proposals for two new degrees as well, including a Bachelor of Science in forensic investigations, which had previously been a concentration in the criminal justice major, and a Master of Science in occupational therapy. The respective departments must now begin the process of providing paperwork to the Alabama Commission on Higher Education (ACHE) in order to get state approval for the degrees.

Another resolution approved by the board was to recognize Dr. Earl Wade, the longtime Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences who retired earlier this month, and to recommend that the Honors House on campus be named in his honor.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the Board announced that the next meeting of the Board of Trustees will be held at Renaissance Birmingham Ross Bridge Golf Resort and Spa during the last weekend in April.

clude the Anglo-Saxon poem "The Wanderer" in the epilogue of his translation.

In addition to writing, Byers is also an artist. Nine of Byers' original illustrations, including the cover art, make appearances in "Beowulf: The Midgard Epic."

Throughout the lecture, Byers shared anecdotes of his literary journey, from his initial interest in sci-fi and fantasy to how the influences of authors such as Chaucer, Shakespeare, Seamus Heaney, J.R.R. Tolkien and Neil Gaiman and the poets Emily Dickinson, Edgar Allan Poe, John Donne, Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Sylvia Plath played impacted his writing.

When Byers was a young boy, the book "Mysteries of the Unknown World" by Carey Miller fascinated him. A myriad of folklore and mythologies captured his attention, but the 2-page spread of a picture of Grendel from "Beowulf" was one that stayed with him. He came to middle school with a knowledge of "Beowulf" that impressed his

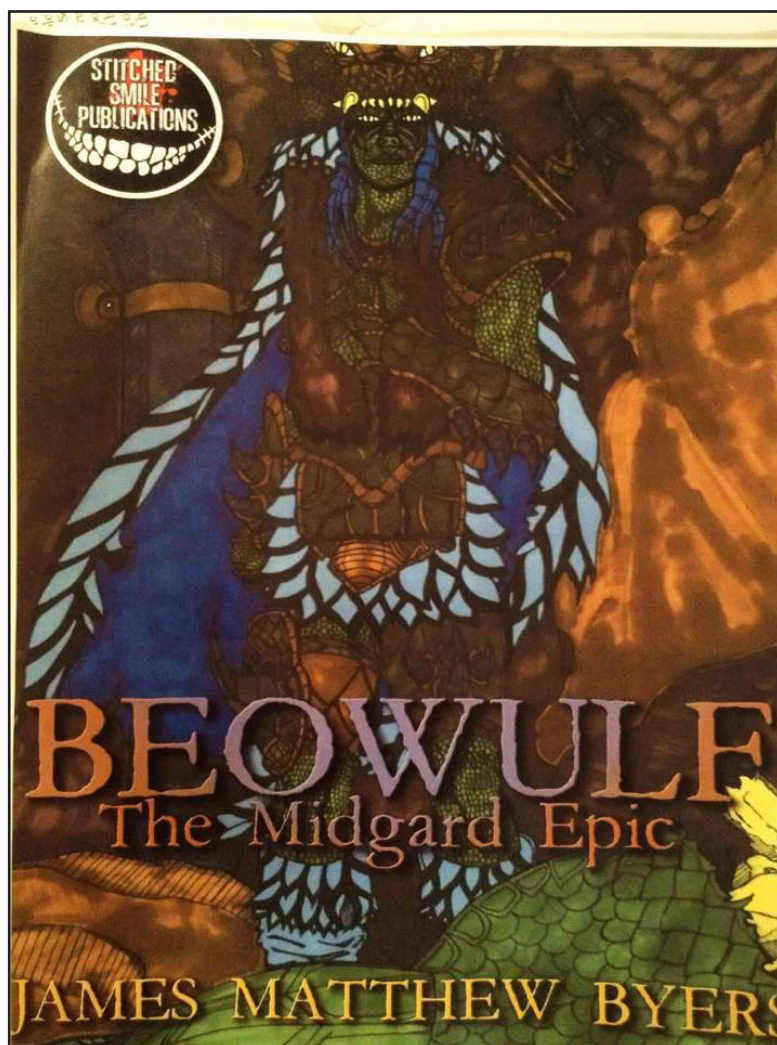
teachers. It was one of his teachers that first noticed Byers' keen talent for writing and further encouraged him to pursue writing more seriously.

Byers also credited Dr. Joanne Gates and Dr. Carmine DiBiase of the English department for their input and guidance throughout his undergraduate and graduate school years at JSU. Byers graduated with a Masters in English from JSU in 2010.

"I used to tell people that I wanted to be a Dr. Seuss and J.R.R. Tolkien — [which is a] lofty aspiration, but I feel like I'm closer to it [now]," Byers said.

Byers also hoped that his recent success as a published author would be inspiring to others and humbly reflected on the rejection letters that came in the early days of his career. Byers said that he still has about "200 rejection letters in a shoebox," that he had accumulated since 2012 when attempting to publish his poetic translation of "Beowulf."

## BEOWULF from page 1



Rachel Read/The Chanticleer

The cover art for "Beowulf: The Midgard Epic" was also done by James Matthew Byers. "Beowulf" is Byers' second book. His first book, "Grecian Rune," an action/adventure fiction novel influenced by mythology, was published in 2004.

Byers said that he hopes to continue "to write prolifically, supporting anyone who wishes to place their hammering fingers to the keyboard anvil, becoming a polished wordsmith in the process."

After the lecture, a question and answer session ensued, followed by a reception

and book and poster signing in Stone Center's Writing Clinic.

"Beowulf: The Midgard Epic" is out now from Stitched Smile Publications, LLC and can be purchased for \$15 through Amazon.

## AURORA from page 1



CNN.com

The scene immediately following the Aurora Shooting on July 20, 2012. James Holmes wore full body armor into the theater where he killed 12 people and injured 70. The Aurora Police Department visited JSU to discuss how their team handled an active shooter situation.

been improved. Some of what they considered to go well that night was the rapid transport of victims to local hospitals for treatment and the quick response time of the police force which arrived at the theater less than two minutes after the 911 call. They also reflected on the aftermath of the shooting when the department implemented changes to improve first response relief and procedures to assist

victims further.

The debrief provided a thorough overview of the Aurora Shooting and gave a unique perspective of the events that unfolded from the point of view of the police and emergency response teams that worked to handle one of the largest mass shootings in recent history.

Facts provided by CNN.com in the article "Colorado Theater Shooting Fast Facts."

## Facts about the Aurora Shooting:

- Veronica Moser-Sullivan, age 6, was the youngest fatality.
- The shooter, James Holmes, was pursuing a doctoral degree in neuroscience until June 2012, when he withdrew from the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus.
- Police found Holmes' apartment booby-trapped with with homemade explosives.
- Holmes originally pleaded "not guilty by reason of insanity," but agreed to plead guilty to avoid the death penalty.



# STUDY BREAK



Artwork by Megan Wise

2017 is the Year of the Rooster in the Chinese Zodiac, but JSU is making it the #YearoftheChanticleer! Use the hashtag to help us see all the great things you do in 2017!

## Volunteers needed for Mimosa yearbook!

The Mimosa is looking for student volunteers! Be part of 120 years of history! Contact Kate Fleming (Mimosa Editor) at [jsumimosa@outlook.com](mailto:jsumimosa@outlook.com) if interested!

## Campus crime report: 1/12 to 1/18

**01/19/2017**  
Automobile accident  
Houston Cole Library parking lot

**01/20/2017**  
Violation of the Student Code of Conduct  
Jax Apartments

Unlawful breaking & entering of a vehicle  
Martin Hall parking lot

**01/22/2017**  
Unlawful breaking & entering of a vehicle  
Paul Carpenter Village

**01/23/2017**  
Information report--welfare check  
Martin Hall

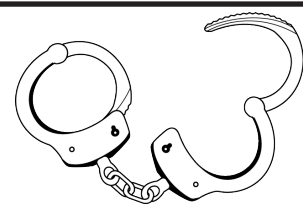
**01/24/2017**  
Unlawful breaking & entering of a vehicle  
Crow Hall parking lot

Automobile accident  
Stone Center parking lot

Violation of the Student Code of Conduct  
Colonial Arms

Violation of the Student Code of Conduct  
Colonial Arms

Unlawful breaking & entering of a vehicle  
Fitzpartick Hall parking lot



**Witness a crime?**

**For emergencies, dial 6000 from any campus phone.**

## CHICKEN SCRATCH

The funniest, realest, deepest, truest, best things you've said online this week!

#unpopular opinion: he is your president; that was your march; this is your circus; those are your monkeys

You know you're southern (and overweight) when your mom asks if you want bacon grease in the gravy for your biscuits and gravy.

Welcome to JSU, where they're quick to take your money but run around like chickens with their heads cut off when you confront them on why the h\*\*\* your refund check is taking forever to process.

Had a conversation with my waitress at Waffle House about her three pet rats...

I didn't know some of y'all were Falcons fans until a week or two ago.

I think this is why everyone is so fearful of Donald Trump...because we look at him and are faced with the image of our own true reality. He is currently the embodiment of American values. And while you don't directly subscribe to his morals, you promote them indirectly in your everyday actions.



# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



foxnews.com

## President Trump takes the White House

**JoAnna Mitchell**  
Staff Writer

Friday, Jan. 20, 2017 saw the peaceful transition of power from former President Barack Obama to the 45th President of the United States of America, Donald J. Trump.

The Inauguration Day schedule began at 11:30 a.m. EST. with the swearing-in ceremony.

The ceremony included opening remarks from Sen. Roy Blunt of Missouri, invocations performed by Timothy Michael Cardinal Dolan, Rev. Dr. Samuel Rodriguez and Pastor Paula White-Cain and remarks from the Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer.

Associate Justice Clarence Thomas administered the Vice-Presidential oath to Vice President Mike Pence, followed by the Presidential oath which was administered by Chief Justice John Roberts.

President Trump then delivered his Inaugural Address followed by the benedictions delivered by Rabbi Marvin Hier, Rev. Franklin Graham and Bishop Wayne T. Jackson.

The ceremony closed with Jackie Evancho performing the National Anthem.

Trump began his address with a call for unity.

“We, the citizens of America, are now joined in a great national effort to rebuild our country and to restore its promise for all of our people. Together, we will determine the course of America and the world for years to come,” said Trump.

The new President said that this ceremony was unlike others in history.

“Today’s ceremony, however, has very special meaning. Because today, we are not merely transferring power from one administration to another, or from one party to another -- but we are transferring power from Washington, D.C. and giving it back to you, the American People,” said Trump.

In his speech, President Trump claims he will end the “American carnage” that many believe to be poisoning the United States. He promised to fight for the American people and to put America first in all the decisions he makes in office.

“America will start winning again, winning like never before,” he declared.

President Trump also promised to “buy American and hire American” vowing to build the country up by keeping a nationalist approach to all that he does.

Following the address, the President and Vice President stood with their wives as they reviewed the American Armed Forces as squads of soldiers from every branch marched past.

The two families then led the inaugural parade from the Capitol down historic Pennsylvania Avenue.

Even Alabama had its own representation in the parade. Talladega College, the oldest historically black college in Alabama, was invited to have their marching band perform alongside other bands and military personnel in the historic event.

The night ended in a series of inaugural balls attended by both President Trump and Vice President Pence.

The Liberty Ball and the Freedom Ball were held at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center and were open to the public. Tickets went at \$50 per person.

A Salute to Our Armed Services Ball was held at the National Building Museum and were free to attend, but by invitation only.

All three began at 7 p.m.

During the swearing-in ceremony, however, more than 200 people were arrested on felony rioting charges, according to CBS News.

The windows of a Starbucks, a McDonald’s, a Wells Fargo, and a Bank of America were all smashed open. A car was set on fire, and windows were broken out of a parked limousine.

Police resorted to using pepper spray and “sting balls” to control the rioters who were interspersed among peaceful protestors.



Christopher Gregory/Getty Images

## Mad Hatter Cupcake Shop

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# Esports: teaching gamers to 'Fear the Beak'

**Taylor Mitchell**  
Staff Writer

JSU has recently broken to a new type of sport: esports. Esports are a rather new invention. They are events where video gamers compete for prizes. Professionally, esports have grown to attract large crowds, corporate sponsorships and large monetary prizes.

From the popular League Championship Series and Dota 2 Championships to small Smash Bros tournaments, esports

has become a phenomenon. Even more recently this new sporting trend has been popping up at colleges, with companies like Blizzard sponsoring events like World of Warcraft dungeon races.

With the trend growing it was only a matter of time before it made its way to Alabama.

JSU Esports is one of these college organizations that have been cropping up. JSU esports is the brainchild of Trey Hilburn.

"I kind of forced

this into existence," Hilburn said. He decided that while JSU had videogame clubs on campus, none of them fit what he wanted to accomplish. To Hilburn, none of these options had the competitive emphasis he was looking for.

Hilburn decided to start an organization for other people who may have the same interest. Thus JSU Esports was born during the Fall 2016 semester.

JSU Esports currently has around 25 members. "League of Leg-

ends" (LoL), "Overwatch" and "Counter Strike: Global Offensive" (CSGO). These teams compete in the Collegiate Star League, an online league used for competition in multiple different games.

According to Hilburn, they did fairly well in the last split, and he thinks that the longer the group is together, the better they will become. Learning to work together is one of the hardest things for any team when first starting out, Hilburn said. The more the

team plays together the better it will become.

Hilburn is also very optimistic about adding more games to their list for competition but stressed that he would need interest from members before any such expansion could take place. His vision for JSU Esports is to eventually have actual facilities devoted to the organization. This would bring JSU up to par with universities like the University of California, Irvine. Hilburn said that that point would

only come after the group grows a bit more, however.

JSU Esports has also been in talks with the Electronic Gaming Federation (EGF), a new organization that wants to become the definitive organization for collegiate esports. EGF plans to set up a regional tournament that Hilburn said JSU already has a spot in. This may take some time due to complications on EGF's side. Either way, it is clear that JSU Esports has a bright future ahead of it.

# JSU welcomes new sorority

**Alissa Camplin**  
Arts & Entertainment Editor

Jacksonville will soon present the Beta Delta chapter of Sigma Alpha Omega, a national Christian sorority based off of the motto, "One in Christ Through Unity of Sisterhood."

The process to begin a chapter started nearly a year ago for seven charter members: President, Katelyn McGraw; Vice-President, Kendall Gullede; Treasurer, Erin Whited; Secretary: Makayla Isley, and other members Kayla Melvin, Abby Truxall, and Katie Grace Terry.

According to the SAO website, starting a new chapter typically takes one semester, although this has not been the case for the Beta Delta chapter.

The founding members were set to be initiated in the November of 2016,



Katelyn McGraw

The seven founding members of Sigma Alpha Omega pose for a photo. (Top L-R) Kendall Gullede, Katelyn McGraw, (bottom L-R) Abby Truxal, Katie Grace Terry, Erin Whitehead, Kayla Melvin, and MaKayla Isley.

but busy schedules pushed that date until January of 2017.

Member Abby Truxal views this setback as a blessing instead of a hindrance, though, and says that God had a reason for the delay.

"...We are even more grateful for

this organization and what it is becoming," said Truxal.

This obvious value of patience and diligence is a common thread throughout the organization. "There have been many things that have slowed us down, but it showed us how to

be patient and persistent when it comes to accomplishing God's will," said President Katelyn McGraw.

The members of SAO wish to achieve a main goal of giving Christian girls a community that encourages spiritual growth, and still has a strong

base of sisterhood. The sisters want to make it easier for Christian girls to find a place that they "fit in" on campus.

Truxal is most excited to get to know potential new members and to follow God's will for the sorority, although she

said that she believes it will become more real when the charter members accept their Alpha class.

If interested, the sisters of SAO would love to have any woman with the desire to be a part of a Christian sisterhood to join them for their recruitment events.

They begin next week with the following schedule:

- January 31:** Cookies and Coffee
- February 3:** Ice Cream Social
- February 6:** Engage JSU Table
- February 7:** Java Jolt
- February 9:** Chapel Night

All and any updated information will be posted on their Facebook page, "Sigma Alpha Omega at JSU" which can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/sigmaalphaomegajsu>

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# OPINION & EDITORIAL



“The future is scary but you can’t just run back to the past because it’s familiar. Yes, it’s tempting, but, it’s a mistake.”

My name is Kristin and I am a graduating senior this semester. I am terrified. Yes, you read that correctly. I. Am. Terrified. Not in a general ‘I feel like something bad is going to happen’ kind of way, but more in a ‘I have no idea WHAT is going to happen’ kind of way. For someone like me who has made it through college by planning her butt off, not knowing what is going to happen is pretty scary. However, as I look back on my five long years here at Jacksonville State University, there’s a lot to be thankful for and a lot that I’ve learned. Throughout this

semester the faithful readers of this newspaper will be seeing a lot from me as I look back on my time here at JSU and, hopefully, I can leave you all with a little wisdom when I go.

I came to JSU in the fall of 2012 with some rather large dreams and with a focus in psychology. After spending my entire freshman year devoting my hours to my general requirements and strict psychology classes and spending the whole spring semester with a pigeon in the Behavior Analysis Lab that absolutely hated my guts, I realized that as much as I loved psychology, I didn’t want to spend my life working in it. So then, I was faced with the life altering decision of

picking a new major. I finished out the semester and spent the majority of the summer researching what on earth I could possibly do with the rest of my life. I know most of you have been in those same shoes, and for a 19-year-old, that’s a really big decision once the first option (that seemed perfect) gets nixed. So, I started with what I knew I was good at and with what I enjoyed: people. I researched what kind of jobs and majors concerned people and I came up with communications.

(Now let me tell you, trying to change your major over the summer is not smart. Trying to figure out what classes you have to take by yourself with

absolutely no help from an advisor is not smart. Do not do what I did. If you must change your major, just don’t do it alone. Always seek help.)

But, surprisingly, it worked out. I changed my class schedule by myself and showed up to my first communications class that fall and was dreadfully confused. I decided to focus on Public Relations and four (we’ll say short—HA!) years later, graduation approaches! I know the future can be scary, especially when plans don’t initially work out, but if you persevere and can figure things out, it’ll be okay. The light at the end of the tunnel is not a train coming at you, I promise.

*This is the first article in Kristen’s “Reflections” series.*

## Spring 2017 ECE registration open

**Katie Cline**

*Editor-in-Chief*

Registration for the Spring 2017 English Competency Exam (ECE) is now open. The ECE will be given Monday, Feb. 20 from 6-7:30 p.m. and Tuesday, Feb. 21 from 3-4:30 p.m.

The ECE is a graduation requirement for all students and must be successfully completed one semester prior to a student’s graduation. It is free to register, and registration is done through your MyJSU account. (Go to “Registration” and select “Spring ECE 2017” as your term.)

So, what do you need to know? Having just taken (and passed!) the exam last semester, I’ll let you in on a few of the tips I was given—the good ones, obviously.

- **NO LATE REGISTRATION.** If you need the ECE this semester, register NOW.
- **If you’re nervous, go to a workshop.** Workshops will be Monday, Feb. 13 at 6 p.m. and Tuesday, Feb. 14 at 3 p.m. in SC 125
- **You’ll need a BlueBook, (don’t wait to pick one up right before the exam) and a photo ID**
- **Know which room you’re in.** It’s awkward if you have to walk the halls reading each roster.
  - **Bring multiple pens.**
  - **It’s okay to scratch words out.**
- **It’s not so much WHAT you write as whether or not you write it WELL, so don’t stress over your prompt.**
- **Go to the bathroom before the exam starts, because they WON’T let you back in.**
  - **Aim for a C-level freshman paper.**

**WE WANT TO HEAR YOUR VOICE!**

**Do you want to write a weekly column or opinion article? Contact The Chanticleer on Facebook or at [chantynewstips@gmail.com](mailto:chantynewstips@gmail.com)**



# SPORTS

## Muske leads rifle at Withrow Invitational

MURRAY, Ky. – The Jacksonville State rifle team finished fourth at the annual Withrow Invitational at Murray State over the weekend.

The Gamecocks posted an aggregate score of 4646 after combing a 2301 in smallbore and 2345 in air rifle.

JSU finished behind the host-Racers (4706), Kentucky (4679) and North Carolina State (4659).

For the second consecutive outing, JSU was led by senior Brandon Muske, who finished eighth in the overall standings, which was bolstered by a second place mark in air rifle.

Muske, who was one mark off of a perfect score of 600 last weekend at Air Force in the air rifle

portion, turned in another terrific score in air rifle as the Brenham, Texas native accumulated a 596 at MSU.

In the smallbore, Muske registered a 576 to finish the weekend with a final tally of 1172.

Sophomore David Sink posted a top-25 overall finish, including a 12th-place finish in smallbore after recording a 580.

Sink was three marks better in air rifle with a 583.

Freshman Zach Schmidt and sophomore Bentley Santrock placed in the top-20 in air rifle with marks of 586 and 585 respectively.

The Gamecocks will prep for the 2017 Ohio Valley Conference Rifle



JSU Sportswire

**Brandon Muske turned in a near-perfect score of 596 in air rifle at Murray State's Withrow Invitational.**

Championships next weekend, traveling to Memphis.

The OVC Rifle Championships will be held on February 4-5 in Morehead, Kentucky.

**-JSU Sportswire**

## Basketball improving season to season

**Rebekah Hawkins**  
Staff Reporter

This time last season the men's basketball team was 5-15 overall, and had won only three conference games and had lost four on their way to an 8-23 overall record, the bottom of the OVC East.

Of course that was last year.

The men have made quite a turnaround this season, and have already won twice the amount of games that they had won by this time last year, and they have only lost two conference games.

Right now they sit second in the East standings just behind Belmont who is undefeated in conference play.

In the same manner the women's basketball team, while not quite as improved as the men, have still made strides this season, and are currently 8-11 which, if you think about it, is already better than last year when they were 10-18 overall.

If they could win a few more games they'd break even.

They're still not quite there on conference games, only winning one so far this year.

Of course last year they only won five, so I would say they're about right on track.

The women were at the bottom of the conference last season and they're in the same place again this year.

To be fair, the women's team they are replacing the talent of Destiny James who had been essential to them.

Briana Benson has taken the reigns well.

Last year Benson was the team's leading scorer with 326 points on the season.

This year she's got 236 points barely halfway through the year.

She's not the only one who has stepped up though.

Gretchen Morrison has 201 points this year, 26 shy of what she ended the season with last year.

I don't want to count the women out just yet, but I don't foresee them making a championship run this year.

I don't claim to be an expert or anything like that, and I'll take full responsibility for being wrong, but I just don't quite see it.

The men, on the other hand, could make a run for it, exceptionally well in conference play.

They've only lost to Murray State and Belmont.

The first of those leading the west division and the latter the east.

They get another shot at Belmont on Feb. 9 at home so we'll see what happens.

## Gamecocks picked to repeat as OVC softball champions

BRENTWOOD, Tenn. – Fresh off the best season in Ohio Valley Conference history, the Jacksonville State softball team has been picked to repeat as champions in 2017.

The league office released the preseason poll on Thursday, when the Gamecocks received every possible first-place vote in the poll.

The conference's head coaches and sports information directors voted JSU atop the poll, just ahead of SIU-Edwardsville, who fell to the Gamecocks in last year's tournament final.

Jax State went 43-17 and posted a perfect 26-0 record in league play last season to extend the longest active conference win streak in Division I to 30 games.

The Gamecocks wrapped up the season with their fifth regular season title and its fifth OVC Tournament title.

The Gamecocks swept the OVC's major awards, with Jana McGinnis win-

ning the OVC Coach of the Year honor and Whitney Gillespie earning OVC Pitcher of the Year accolades.

JSU's lone senior position player last year, Ella Denes, was the OVC Player of the Year.

Gillespie returns for the 2017 season as a junior that led the league in earned run average (1.13), shutouts (9) and opponents batting average (.163), while striking out 127 batters.

She led the Gamecocks to the championship game of the NCAA Auburn Regional before falling to the national runner-up Tigers one game shy of the Super Regionals.

Also back for the Gamecocks are catcher Jamie McGuire, center fielder Emily Woodruff and designated hitter Emily Church, who were all First Team All-OVC players a year ago.

Taylor West returns to the circle after earning Second Team All-OVC honors.

The Gamecocks get a veteran presence back in infielder Cadi Oliver, who started every game at shortstop for over three years before an injury abruptly ended her 2016 season.

Oliver returns after receiving a medical red-shirt and will join sophomore Anna Chisolm in the race at short after Chisolm claimed OVC All-Newcomer honors last season.

JSU opens the season on Feb. 10 in the Sand Dollar Classic in Mobile and will open its home schedule against Southern Miss on Feb. 25.

Fan Day is scheduled for Feb. 5 at 2 p.m at University Field.

Season tickets are available for purchase now by calling the JSU Ticket office at 256-782-8499 or by going online to [www.jsugamecock-sports.com](http://www.jsugamecock-sports.com).

Fans 18 and under receive free admission for all JSU home softball games.

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### 2017 OVC softball predictions

1. Jacksonville State (22 first-place votes) - 242
2. SIUE (Two first-place votes) - 205
3. Eastern Kentucky - 201
4. Eastern Illinois - 173
5. Tennessee Tech - 159
6. UT Martin - 151
7. Murray State - 135
8. Morehead State - 94
9. Southeast Missouri - 83
10. Belmont - 71
11. Austin Peay - 47
12. Tennessee State - 23

(Schools were not allowed to rank their own team. 11 points awarded for a first-place vote, 10 for second, etc.)

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**RIGHT: Coach Jana McGinnis hopes to lead the Gamecocks to their sixth OVC Championship**

### Gamecock Side Bar

#### Upcoming Gamecock Action

1/26  
- Man's Basketball vs. Eastern Kentucky "The Pete" 7 p.m.

1/28  
- Rifle at Memphis

- Men's Tennis vs. Gadsden State vs. West Alabama Jacksonville 9 a.m. 1 p.m.

- Men's Basketball vs. Morehead State\* "The Pete" 11 a.m.

- Women's Tennis vs. West Alabama Jacksonville 1 p.m.

- Women's Basketball vs. Morehead State\* "The Pete" 1:30 p.m.

1/29  
- Track and Field at UNCG

2/1  
- Women's Basketball vs. SEMO\* "The Pete" 11:30 a.m.

-Men's Basketball vs. SEMO\* "The Pete" 7 p.m.

BOLD = Home Event \* = OVC Event

OVC Men's Basketball		
School	OVC	O/R
EAST		
Belmont	7-0	13-4
<b>Jacksonville State</b>	<b>5-2</b>	<b>13-9</b>
Morehead State	5-2	9-11
Tennessee Tech	4-3	8-14
Tennessee State	3-4	12-8
Eastern Kentucky	1-6	8-14
WEST		
Murray State	5-2	11-10
UT Martin	4-3	14-8
SEMO	4-3	9-13
Austin Peay	3-4	7-14
Eastern Illinois	1-6	9-11
SIUE	0-7	5-16

OVC Women's Basketball		
School	OVC	O/R
Belmont	8-0	16-5
Morehead State	5-2	15-5
Murray State	4-2	12-7
Eastern Kentucky	4-2	7-12
Austin Peay	4-3	10-10
Tennessee Tech	4-3	7-13
Tennessee State	3-4	8-9
SIUE	3-4	7-13
Eastern Illinois	3-5	7-13
SEMO	2-5	8-12
<b>Jacksonville State</b>	<b>1-6</b>	<b>8-11</b>
UT Martin	1-6	4-16

### NCAA Rifle Top 15

1. Texas Christian
2. West Virginia
3. Murray State
4. Air Force
5. Kentucky
6. Ohio State
7. Alaska Fairbanks
8. Nebraska
9. North Carolina State
10. Nevada
11. Memphis
12. Army
13. Ole Miss
14. Jacksonville State
15. Navy



# Gamecocks Ride Hot Shooting to Victory over Tigers

**Grant Benefield**  
Staff Reporter

It's no secret that the Gamecocks are deadly from downtown this season, and on Saturday they showed just how dangerous they could be in their OVC match against the Tennessee State Tigers.

The Gamecocks (13-9, 5-2 OVC) made an astonishing 9-for-11 3-point attempts in the first period, contributing to their 44 first period points against the Tigers (12-8, 4-3 OVC).

Guard Malcolm Drumwright led the way in scoring, going 4-for-5 from beyond the arc in the first period alone.

Drumwright would finish the game with 20 points on 5-for-8 shooting, go 6-for-7 from the free throw line, and earn three assists.

Center Norbertas Giga would not play most of the first period after getting in

foul trouble early.

Guard Greg Tucker also contributed to the 3-point shooting in the first period, going 2-for-3 on 3-point attempts.

The hot first period shooting would give the Gamecocks a healthy 44-32 lead at the half.

Although the Tigers would never lead in Saturday's match, they gave the Gamecocks a run for their money.

The Tigers went on a 12-4 scoring run to start the second half of play, bringing the score to within 4—the closest margin of the night.

Tahjere McCall and Delano Spencer would lead Tiger scoring, scoring 19 and 17 points respectively.

JSU would pick up the scoring again and not look back.

Forward Christian Cunningham would collect 8 points in the second period, finishing with 13 total.



**Malcolm Drumwright (LEFT) led the Gamecocks with 20 points in their win over Tennessee State on Saturday. Christian Cunningham (RIGHT) Chipped in with 13 points. He also earned eight rebounds and had five assists.**

He would also collect 8 rebounds, 5 assists, and 3 blocks.

Guard Erik Durham would shoot perfect in the game, going 2-for-2 from 3-point range and 4-for-4 from the free throw line.

Durham would also grab



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two rebounds.

Giga would finish with 13 points on 5-for-9 shooting and go 3-for-4 on free throws.

Giga would also collect three rebounds and a steal.

The Gamecocks shot very well from the free

throw line in the second period, going 24-for-28.

They would finish the game with 27-for-33 (81.8 percent) free throw shooting.

The Gamecocks would drain two more 3-point attempts in the second period, capping the game total at 11-15, shooting a remarkable 73.3 percent from 3-point range.

After some very slow minutes at the end of the game, the Gamecocks would claim the 86-79 victory over the Tigers.

With the win, the Gamecocks improve to 4-1 on the road in the OVC and 5-2 overall in the conference, tied for second in the East division with Morehead State.

Tennessee State now falls to 3-4 in the OVC and fifth in the East division.

The Gamecocks will host Eastern Kentucky tonight at 7 p.m.



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## Defense unable to hold Tennessee State

**Daniel Mayes**  
Staff Reporter

The Jacksonville State Women's basketball team dropped their fourth straight road game in Nashville against the Tennessee State Lady Tigers Saturday evening by a score of 64-51.

JSU has yet to record a road conference victory, and their lone OVC win came on January 1 at home against Austin Peay.

Despite the loss, a bright spot for JSU was the play of Tyler Phelion.

The 6-1 junior from Mobile tallied her second double-double in conference play this season with 10 points and 12 rebounds, and she also led the team with three assists and two blocks.

Three Gamecocks, Phelion, Lacey Buchanan and Rayven Pearson, all scored double digit points, but the JSU defense

was unable to contain the Lady Tiger offense.

TSU dominated the Jacksonville State Gamecocks in both points in the paint and fast break points, posting totals of 34 to JSU's 20 in the former and 14 to 4 in the latter.

The Gamecocks started the game strong however, as seven first quarter points from Pearson led JSU to a 14-13 advantage at the end of the opening period.

Jacksonville State surrendered a 7-2 run to begin the second quarter that allowed Tennessee State to gain the lead, and the Lady Tigers took a 28-24 advantage into the locker room at the halftime break.

The Gamecocks used their own 7-2 run fueled by 3-point baskets from Buchanan and Briana Benson to take back the lead in the early third quarter

at 31-30.

TSU quickly regained the lead, however, and pushed their advantage up to 44-39 entering the fourth.

The Lady Tigers took advantage of some Jacksonville State turnovers to get easy baskets throughout the fourth, quickly building a double figure lead.

TSU scored 8 points off of turnovers in the fourth quarter alone, and the Lady Tigers shot 62% from the field in the final period.

Jacksonville State's deficit grew to 10 with 6:20 left, and the Gamecocks were unable to cut the Tiger lead back to single digits throughout the rest of the game, and the game ended with the scoreboard reading a score of 64-51 in favor of TSU.

Following the loss, the Gamecocks' record stands at 8-11 overall and 1-6 in OVC play.

## Beach volleyball gears up for its second season

**JACKSONVILLE** – A cool, late-January afternoon saw the Jacksonville State beach volleyball team begin its preseason preparation for the Gamecocks' 2017 season.

JSU will begin its second season of beach volleyball, the newest varsity championship approved by the NCAA last year.

In 2016, JSU played a shortened 13-dual schedule during its debut season.

The Gamecocks were the only institution from the Ohio Valley Conference to field a team in the sport's first year, and one of only two Division I schools from the state of Alabama along with UAB.

NCAA beach volleyball is played with 10 players from each school competing in five best-of-three matches between two-player teams.

Individual games are played to 21, with the tiebreaker third game played to 15.

Each match victory between pairs counts as one point, with three points required to win the overall dual.

Beach volleyball consists of a smaller 16x8 meter court, compared to the 18x9 meter court used during indoor volleyball.

The Trojans of Southern Cal won the inaugural NCAA beach championship in Gulf Shores, Ala., on May 8, 2016.



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According to the NCAA, there are 53 Division I beach programs at the start of the 2017 season.

This includes fellow OVC schools: Austin Peay, Morehead State and UT Martin who recently added teams.

The Gamecocks' beach team is primarily composed of indoor student-athletes and coached by the same staff.

Head coach Terry Gamble's initial 2017 roster includes 11 members from the indoor squad as well as three beach-only additions to make the 14-player squad.

Katie Will, a transfer from Carson-Newman University's beach team saw action last fall on the indoor team.

She's joined by Jae-Lyn Visscher and Hailley Hughes who will make their JSU debuts in the sand this spring.

"I'm excited about our beach season," said Gamble.

"We have a schedule which will challenge our players as we play several top-10 caliber opponents."

As part of JSU's challenging 2017

slate, the Gamecocks will face powerhouses Georgia State and Stetson who both made the inaugural NCAA Beach Tournament last season, as well as LSU, Tulane, South Carolina, Florida International and Florida Atlantic which all ended 2016 with top-20 national rankings.

In addition to Will, Visscher and Hughes, Jax State will also see beach debuts come from indoor freshmen: Sadie Anderson, Maddie Cloutier, J'Nae Fraser, Kaylee Frear, Kennedy Powell and Shayla Schmidt.

The combination of Hannah Kirk and Charis Ludtke broke through for JSU's first-ever single-match victory last season as the duo scored four wins overall in 2016.

JSU is coming off an 18-win season in the fall and a return appearance in the OVC Tournament.

Jax State's season gets underway on March 3 in Birmingham with duals against UAB and Mercer.

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**WHERE YOU'RE GOING.**