A Gamble pays off

Kasey Gamble elected SGA President

Brenna Hill
Staff Writer

JSU held its annual SGA elections on Tuesday, April 17. At 4 p.m. that afternoon, the new SGA positions were announced.

Sophomore Kasey Gamble was elected president, replacing current president Rang
er Rummell, a graduating senior. Gamble has spent the past school year as the Vice Presi
dent of the Student Activities (VPSA) for the SGA, has the won elec
tion and is now sort
ing the title of SGA President.

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ly blessed to be your new SGA President! Thank you so much to those of you who voted for me to see, but I still re
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newly-elected SGA leaders are in order for all who follow the upcoming academic year. The board also agreed to open a $15 million capital campaign fund for the university’s capital projects. "We’ll have a consultant coming in to evaluate the structure and what level of employees and compensation we need across campus," he added. "There could be a substantial cost savings since employees account for a large portion of our costs."

Also during the meeting, the board approved a June 1 deadline for the Finance Department to complete the annual financial report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2017. The report will be presented to the Board of Trustees at the April 11 meeting.

Gamble is determined to make JSU feel like home for each and every individual that attends the University. "We offer financial aid to our students, because we want students to be able to afford to attend JSU and show that we believe in them. We want them to know that they are special, that they are loved here, and that they are bound to be a success with their education,” he said.

"The upcoming academic year is bound to be as successful as this year, if not more so," added Gamble. "With the new leaders we have in place, we are ready to make the most of this year and beyond."
After the storm, I hoped that the Communication building wasn’t damaged. I guess that makes me pretty self-ish.

A larger napkin should be called a sleepkin.

My girlfriend is happy if she eats Chinese wheat flour noodles. She’s pretty lo mein-tenaince.

They build true statements in a fact-ory.

If you purchase a circular rotating platform of plastic horses, it’s called Carou-buy.
ONE MONTH LATER

One month after an EF-3 tornado struck Jacksonville and JSU, the recovery process is still in the forefront of many residents’ minds. The Anniston Star covered the ups and downs of tornado recovery from a personal and political standpoint.

Four weeks after storm, some Jacksonville residents still waiting on debris removal to begin

Tim Lockette
The Anniston Star

Calhoun County officials on Monday said they believed every storm-damaged house had been visited by debris cleanup crews.

That came as news to some residents in the storm zone.

“Just stuff has piled by the street since the Saturday after the storm,” said Linda Beavers, pointing out a mound of trash in front of her home.

Monday marked one month since an EF-3 tornado struck Jacksonville, damaging more than 500 buildings in the city, most of them residences. The city has since settled into a new normal. Residents drive to school and work on streets lined by hedgerows of broken limbs, sharing the street with debris trucks. Streetscapes on fresh utility poles shine down on blue-tarp roofs. A month ago there was a hurry to clear driveways and patch roofs; now, for many residents, there’s a wait.

Gov. Kay Ivey on Thursday formally asked for federal assistance for four Alabama counties affected by the March 19 tornado outbreak. Ivey’s staff announced in a press release.

Officials have said many times that cleanup will take months, but the county’s cleanup contractor, DRC Emergency Services, was expected to complete its first sweep of the city by the end of last week. Every storm-damaged house, county officials said, could expect at least one load of debris to be taken away.

On Monday, county engineer Brian Rosenbalm said he’d received a text message on Saturday saying that the first pass of debris pickup was complete. “The first pass of debris pickup should be complete,” Rosenbalm said. He said that work might not be obvious to passers-by, because homeowners or piles of trash are being picked up. County officials have said that DRC can reach only the debris within 10 feet of the road, and will have to make multiple runs.

But for residents who’ve been looking at the same mounds of garbage for weeks, it’s clear that some streets haven’t seen a crew yet. "I saw them for the first time this morning," said Eighth Avenue resident Taylor Casey, "They picked up a recliner I had out there and moved it to the other side of the driveway." Casey said workers hadn’t touched the piles of limbs and branches in front of his house at all. Casey said he believed the recliner move might be a precursor to a pickup. City and county officials have been urging people to separate vegetation from demolition debris. Rosenbalm said DRC began picking up some demolition debris over the weekend, the first pass was just for trunks and branches.

Attempts to reach DRC for comment were not successful. Rosenbalm said it’s possible some streets could have been missed. “If there are citizens out there who have not seen a truck in front of their house, we’d like to hear from them," Rosenbalm said.

Debris-cleaning trucks weren’t the only thing that local residents were waiting for. Gov. Kay Ivey last week officially requested a federal disaster declaration, one that, if approved, could clear the path for federal disaster recovery assistance. In Calhoun County, that could mean assistance not only to governments but to individual people who saw damage from the storm.

Officials of the Federal Emergency Management Agency were reluctant Monday to talk about what that aid, if approved, might make available to Jacksonville residents. “One of the things we’re really trying to do is manage expectations,” said Danon Lucas, a FEMA spokesperson. “Nothing has been approved yet.”

According to FEMA’s website, the agency offers individual assistance to homeowners affected by a disaster for repairs not covered by insurance which are needed to bring a home up to a “safe and sanitary condition” — not to return a home to the condition it was in before a disaster.

The agency can also provide rental assistance for people who are displaced, or temporary housing units when no rentals are available.

Lucas said storm victims don’t have to wait for a disaster declaration to begin working on things they’ll need to do in the event aid becomes available.

“You don’t have to wait until you find out if it’s a yes or no,” Lucas said. “People should make sure they contact their insurance agent, document any damage and go ahead and begin cleanup.”

Volunteers from the Long-Term Recovery Committee, a group set up by local nonprofits, are expected to hit the streets next week for a door-to-door assessment of storm victims’ needs, said Shannon Jenkins, director of the local United Way. Those volunteers will also do interviews with residents at the local hotels that still house some storm victims.

Jenkins said he expected the group would find at least some uninsured storm victims who’ve lost their homes. The committee’s biggest need, he said, is money. A similar committee worked for three to four years after the April 27, 2011 storms, he said, though raising money is harder in months and years after a storm.

“We will exhaust whatever is in that fund, and it will all go to help people affected by the storm,” he said.

People can donate through the Community Foundation of Northeast Alabama at yourcommunityfirst.org, Jenkins said.

The committee will hold its first official meeting Wednesday [April 18] at 11 a.m. at the United Way office in Anniston.

It’s official: Alabama Gov. requests federal help for Jacksonville tornado

Gov. Kay Ivey made a campaign visit to Anniston Wednesday afternoon, April 11 to speak to the Cheaha Republican Women’s organization at a luncheon at Classic on Noble.

A Sunderland crew removes debris from Jacksonville Streets on April 2.

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Gov. Kay Ivey on Thursday formally asked for federal assistance for four Alabama counties affected by the March 19 tornado outbreak. Ivey’s staff announced in a press release.

State and local government agencies expect to pay $35.8 million in cleanup and rebuilding costs from the storms — including an EF-3 tornado that damaged hundreds of homes in Jacksonville and tore up much of the Jacksonville State University campus.

State emergency officials say much of the $35.8 million price tag is due to the damage at JSU.

“After seeing the damage firsthand, I believe that Alabama does qualify for assistance to help with the recovery from these devastating storms,” Ivey is quoted as saying in the press release. The governor said Wednesday, in a speech in Anniston, that she’d file the formal request. Local officials in recent weeks were worried that the damage for the storm would fall short of the $7 million threshold typically required for a federal disaster declaration.

As cleanup continues, so does spring weather. The National Weather Service predicted rain in the area again over the weekend [April 13-15], with a slight risk of strong storms which could include tornadoes.
The show must go on.

The performance will be able to Pia Oma-

The play was ten and produced by the student. Dr. Michael Stockmann of "Dorothy, "Dorothy Meets Alice") and Chibuzo

The poster for "The Giver" features Larry Mason as the Giver. The poster was designed by graphic design major and drama department intern Meghan Lee.

The show was a huge success and received positive reviews.

The Chanticleer

JSU Drama has a lot to "give" this spring with the production of "The Giver." The play is based on Lois Lowry's 1993 novel, Eric Coble's stage adaption follows the story of a young girl named Fiona, or speaking debut: Abbie Beatty as Mother/Chief

The full cast includes Brooke Elam (Miranda, "The Country Co-ed") and Chibuzo

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Last year, in the name of Autism awareness, I read an article about how the video game “Tis the Moon” taught me that being autistic was okay right after I was diagnosed— thanks to its autistic character, River. In that article I said my newfound acceptance of who I am, and I stand by that statement. Yet finding out I had the disorder did change my life, in some ways for the better. My name is Taylor Mitchell, and I have high functioning autism; here is why that is great.

When I mention my Autism, I get a lot of reactions. Once, that Zerrick Cooper and Zion Webb are good at a lot of things.

Cooper was in Death Valley last Saturday for Clemson’s Spring Game and was honored alongside several other redshirt freshmen.

Stop and think about that. Cooper, now a sophomore, spent two years at Clemson — including his redshirt season — and did things the right way so well that he was honored despite transferring to Jackson State in January. Look at the replies on Twitter to Clemson’s Spring GameNet, who tweeted Cooper was in Clemson last weekend, and people actually see something but positivley.

Webb, who is a redshirt freshman out of Central-Phe nix, has been in the system for over a year now and came to Jacksonville State at the start of the 2016 season. As a high school athlete, he was good at football, basketball and baseball. In college, however, he was only good at football. Despite his lack of success on the gridiron, he continued to excel in other areas of his life.

Two years ago, when Cooper first arrived on campus, he was unsure of what to expect. He had heard stories about the challenges that come with being a student-athlete, but he was determined to make the most of his time at Jacksonville State.

Roll through the Twitter feed. Rewind those high- light tapes. Talk to them after practice. You’ll see the praise. Even when I picked up things and reacted appropriately it would come out stilted or awkward. I was often said to mumble and speak in monotone even after some early speech therapy. Yet, after my diagnosis in high school, my spe- cial education coun- selor began giving me special lessons on this kind of thing. She would talk to me about the importance of learning to cope with people and try to understand what they were feeling. Learning these skills that people take for granted in a detailed manner helped me more than I can ac- curately express. At the same time I was learning how to pro- cess and cope with my own emotions, I had other, too complex in my childhood for me to control with no real frame of reference. Learning these skills, most skills people are born with, helped me become the person I am now. I learned strategies and skills I still use to commu- nicate with people. Without my diagnos- is this kind of assist- ance had never been attempted since no one really knew how to help me. Which brings me to my next point.

Just knowing re- ally helped me more than anything in the world. Imagine liv- ing your life being “off” somehow, nev- er knowing why but with everyone you knew being aware of it. Eventually you begin to be horribly aware of differ- ent you are and how isolated and disliked that has made you. The entire time you are aware that some- thing is wrong but completely oblivi-ous to what was the cause. That was my life for 17 years, and it drove me to a very dark place. I was depressed and lonely, but then I was diag- nosed, and things changed. It’s easy to not see where this would make a differ- ence, but it did. I fi- nally knew what was wrong.

With that informa- tion I could under- stand my own condi- tion. I researched it vigorously, and came to better understand it. Knowing what was the cause of my isolation put me in the right headspace to begin working on dealing with my own limitations. Yet, in a way, it was a tad more complicated than that. I finally knew about a part of me I had been blind to before. I gained an understanding that was important to me, and, with that, I was able to realize I wasn’t some crazy freak. I am me and knowing I had au- tism helped me real- ize that being me is okay. It helped me find the peace that I have now.

Autism had isolat- ed me as I am sure it has many others, but learning to cope with it and understand it made me no longer wish to continue that isolation. May have resigned myself to it before, but I never will again. I now know that I am differ- ent; yet in that differ- ence I am not less than anyone else. Re- alizing that made all the difference.

Chris Allen Brown Associate Editor

Don’t pit Zerrick and Zion against each other

“Both of them throw the pass accu- rately and both are after most hits and both of them can run the football,” Grass said after JSU’s non- traditional 1-Day Spring Game last Thursday. "But both have dif- ferent kinds of styles running. However, both of them are being leaders and commanding the offense really well." Webb signed with JSU after hur- dles of thousands of fans watched former All-American Eli Jenkins set numerous records over the last four years. Hav- ing the same skill set as Jenkins, fans and alumni auto- matically assumed Webb would be the guy, which is no knock on All-OVC performer Bryant Horn, for years to come.

Then Cooper an- nounced his inten- tions to transfer and many took to social media to express their interest and desire in the 6-foo- 2, 220-pound quar- terback. But here’s the thing — don’t pit the two in a competi- tion because they’re different guys try- ing to achieve the same goal, which is helping Jackson- State back to the FCS National Champs- ionship Game.

“One thing they both do is that they’re very good at getting their own thing. It’s like, ‘Okay, we’re not going to do this. We’ll do that,’” JSU junior quarterback Covy Wells said. “I think both are doing a great job of leading the of- fense when it’s their opportunity. I think, at times, we still have places to grow and things to get better at, but they’re moving along in the right direction.”

Just give every- thing time and don’t be upset if Grass and company roll- over the two-quarterback system to back up next season because these are two guys who can play.
Jacksonville State women’s basketball team welcomed three new members during spring signing period.

The Gamecocks, who signed two players during the early signing period in November, will add incoming freshmen Jutoreyia Willis and Yamia Johnson, along with junior college transfer, Brittany Webster. Head coach Rick Pietri’s staff was charged with the task of replacing five departing seniors from last year’s 19-win team. In all, they rounded up talent from several sources, including two from Mississippi, Tennessee, South Carolina and Alabama.

“All three of these young ladies, as well as the three we signed early, make this a recruiting class that we are very proud of,” added Pietri. “We look forward to the contributions this group will make when they arrive on campus.” Webster is a 6-foot-1 center out of Holmes Community College. The Edwardsville, Ill., product will have two years of eligibility remaining for the Red and White. She led the HCC Lady Bulldogs to an 18-9 record last year, reaching the semifinals of the Region XIX Tournament. The inside threat played in all 27 games, starting 17, en route to averaging 5.9 rebounds and 5.7 point per game. She also grabbed a rebound and recorded one block per contest.

“Brittany is a capable, strong, physical post player who is quick and fast enough to defend on the perimeter,” Webster said. Willis hails from the Baylor School in Chattanooga, Tenn. The Southern Star club player, was a dual sport star at Baylor. She was crowned champion in the triple jump event at the 2017 track and field championships, outside of her accomplishments on the hardwoods. She was recently named to the Division II-AA All-State team by the Tennessee Sportswriter’s Association. “Yamia can score the basket, play good defense on the wing, she’s extremely long and has a very smooth game, and is an exceptional three-point shooter.”

The three newest Gamecocks join JSU’s November signees Reegan Dargan and Karleigh Sledge, to complete JSU’s 2018 signing class.

Four Gamecocks honored on All-OVC Women’s Golf Team

Four Gamecocks were honored on the All-OVC Women’s Golf Team. Jacksonville State junior Valentina Giraldo and sophomore Yamia Johnson were named to the All-OVC Team, while freshmen Valentina Curet and Ana Perez earned All-Newcomer Team honors. The awards were presented at the annual banquet that was held at The Shoals on the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail following Monday’s first round of the OVC Championship.

Giraldo earned all-conference nods for the third straight season. She was Moreover her All-OVC berth, Curet was also each honored by the league for the first time.

Giraldo has had a career year for the Gamecocks in 2017-18. The native of Cali, Columbia, entered this week’s conference tournament with the best stroke average in the league by over two strokes. Her 72.5 stroke average is better than second-place Elsa Mohler of the University of Kentucky’s 74.7 that is second in the conference. Giraldo’s current stroke average is well on pace to break her own school record of 74.06 that she set last season. Over 10 times this season this has an OVC golfer shot 68 or better, with Giraldo recording five of those. She has already broken the school record for wins in a season with five in nine tournaments this season. The five wins easily sets a new school mark, more than doubling the previous record of two set by Ana Green in 2002-03. She is tied with Green for most wins in a career with five this season. In addition to her five wins in nine events, she also has reached second, fifth and eighth this season. She was made the All-Newcomer Team as a freshman in 2016 and was an All-OVC pick last season.

Curet gains her first career honor in her second season with the Gamecocks after transferring from Lindenwood University in Riverdale, Ill. It isn’t her first all-conference honor, as she was an honorable mention selection by the American Midwest Conference in 2016. So far in her junior season at JSU, the native of Medellin, Colombia, is second on the team and sixth in the OVC in stroke average with a 73.9. She led the team in most events this season with 70 this season, the first coming at the Pinchot Challenge in October and the second at the Edwin Watts/King Edward Spring Classic. She had four top 10 finishes this season, including a career-best fifth at the Chris Banister Golf Classic in September. Curet has been one of the best freshmen in the OVC in her debut season in Jacksonville and parlayed her play into an All-Newcomer Team honor.

Johnson’s 72.7 stroke average earned her a spot on the All-Newcomer Team. She has played in six events this season at JSU, the nation’s seventh-best average of Medellin, Colombia. She has four top 20 finishes this season. The five finishes this season have included second, fifth and eighth this season. She was made the All-Newcomer Team as a freshman in 2016 and was an All-OVC pick last season.

Giraldo and Curet are each looking to defend on the perimeter.

Johnson has made 49 of 77 three-point attempts this season (.641) and has scored 143 points this season. She is currently tied for 10th in the league with five 3-pointers in a game.

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Gamecocks return to winning ways, take two out of three over Southeast Missouri

Harper adds Zeliznak to 2018 recruiting class

JACKSONVILLE — Head coach Ray Harper announced the signing of Maros Zeliznak to a national letter of intent on Friday.

The incoming freshman is a 6-foot-11 center from Kosice, Slovakia where he plays for head coach Julian Betko at Get Better Academy in Prague, Czech Republic. This season, Zeliznak is averaging 12 points and 10.1 boards per game, while shooting 50 percent from the field and 50 percent from 3-point range. The talented GBA squad has four Division I signees on its roster.

Zeliznak spent the 2017 summer competing for the FIBA 18U Champions-
ships. Playing for his native Slovakia, he averaged 10 points and snagged 8.4 rebounds per game. He scored in double-figures in eight of 11 games, including 13 points and 8 rebounds against Latvia.

"Maros is a really good player," Harper said. "He brings great size and physicality, and I can see him competing for playing time from day one. He's very versatile and the sky is the limit for him. He has unlimited potential."

The 215-pound center received interest from a number of schools before choosing Jacksonville State over offers from Old Dominion and Hofstra.

Unorthodox spring camp comes to conclusion with untraditional J-Day

Chanticleer Staff

What a crazy spring schedule for head coach John Grass and the Jack-
sonville State football team.

Following an EF3 tor-
dado that left hundreds of JSU students displaced, in-
ccluding countless athletes, the Gamecocks concluded their spring camp with a non-traditional J-Day Spring Game last Thurs-
day night. JSU opted to go with a two-hour open practice with a 90-minute situational scrimmage that allowed coaches to evalu-
ate the team and certain positions.

"It was a pretty physi-
cal scrimmage tonight," Grass said. "It wasn’t our typical show for the crowd. It was an actual scrimmage and guys actu-
ally fighting and batting for position. I saw a lot of good effort and a lot of good things."

After the tornado struck the community of Jack-
sonville and JSU’s cam-
pus, players practiced, conditioned and watched film in the morning before adventuring out and assisting in the clean up around town. This assis-
tant prevented the Game-
cocks from fulfilling 15 practices, which the NCAA allows, as Thurs-
day’s practice was just the 14th.

However, Grass was pleased with what he saw Thursday night.

“I saw good competition and good effort,” Grass said. “There are always things that you see that are really good and there are always things that you have to clean up. We have a lot that we have to work on over the summer, but overall it was just a good ending to the spring.”

Like last year, Jackson-
sville State will open the regular season in Mont-
mour in the Guardian Credit Union FCS Kick-
off against North Caro-
lina A&T, who comes off a 12-0 undefeated record capped with a win the Celebration Bowl last season, on ESPN.