



#GamecockStrong

# The Chanticleer

JACKSONVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY'S STUDENT-PUBLISHED NEWSPAPER SINCE 1934

inSIDE

One month later, Jacksonville tornado recovery continues, Page 4



WEATHER: Sunny, High 60, Low 37

Thursday, April 19, 2018

# A Gamble pays off

## Kasey Gamble elected SGA President

**Breanna 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 Ranger Rumrill, a graduating senior. Gamble has spent the past school year as the Vice President of the Student Activities (VPSA) for the SGA, has won the election and is now sporting the title of SGA President.

"I am so extremely blessed to be your new SGA President! Thank you SO much to those of you who voted today. I can't wait to start working for you!" Gamble wrote on Facebook following the announcement,

along with her hashtag, "#youtookagamble."

Kasey began her involvement in the SGA towards the end of her freshman year. Right off the bat she became the VPSA. She contributed even more by becoming a student senator. Kasey is extremely passionate about the entirety of SGA and thoroughly enjoys being a part of the Executive Team.

The SGA is known for being an active organization on campus that is all about interacting with the entire Gamecock nation. Gamble takes her responsibilities seriously, and has shared her immense pleasure in being one of only five students that are to represent the entire Gamecock family.

Kasey shares her many thoughts, ideas and plans for the SGA

for the upcoming 2018-2019 school-year in a series of campaign videos released in the week leading up to the elections. She plans to efficiently link a clear line of communication between students, the SGA and the administration. Kasey also plans to provide students the opportunity to voice their opinions, and she promises to keep the students up-to-date with the decisions and changes going on around campus.

"I want you to know what's happening with our SGA and our administration and how these decisions will directly affect you," Gamble said in her 12 video. "I also want to plan opportunities for you to connect with our administration. This way, you can tell your story and become more

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Matt Reynolds/JSU

Kasey Gamble was elected to serve as the SGA President for the 2018-2019 school year. Prior to her presidency, Gamble served as the Vice President of Student Activities.

# Southern culture

## Football reigns in the South while national numbers decline

**Brannon Cahela**  
Staff Writer

During my senior year of high school, a friend and teammate of mine received a concussion while playing football. He "got his bell rung," so to speak. He was a wide receiver, and I was an offensive lineman, so he was too far down the field for me to see, but I still remember the collective gasp of the crowd as his head hit the ground after he'd taken a hit.

After the whistle blew, everyone cheered as he walked off the field. Later, on the sidelines, as we

were going over plays for the next drive, my teammate looked at me and asked, "Hey, it's 42-14. How'd that happen? I thought we had only scored 21 points?"

I was alarmed. I asked him if he knew who were playing and where we were. He thought we were playing Gadsden City when, in fact, we were playing Lee Huntsville. I went to the trainer and told him something was terribly wrong, and a few minutes later my teammate was on his way to the hospital to be treated for a concussion.

That was more than five years ago. According to the National

Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS), since then (2013), high school football participation has declined nationally by roughly 35,500 students. Many point to a rising concern for safety as the reason for a decline in participation. Many parents are fearful of the long-term brain damage that can be caused over multiple years playing football, particularly if enough hits are taken during a child's early brain developing years.

While there is a decline among

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AJ Mast/AP Photo

Former Indianapolis Colts wide receiver lies motionless on the ground after being hit in a Dec. 19, 2010 game against the Jacksonville Jaguars. Collie suffered three concussions between 2010 and 2012.

# JSU raises fall tuition 5 percent

**Patrick McCress**  
The Anniston Star

Jacksonville State University officials raised undergraduate tuition by 5 percent on Tuesday to avoid a \$2.7 million deficit in the next fiscal year.

Students can expect to pay an extra \$15 per credit hour starting this fall from the price hike. University officials said the increase will cover rising operation costs and isn't tied to the March 19 tornado that damaged parts of campus.

The Jacksonville State University Board of Trustees approved the tuition hike during its regular quarterly meeting Tuesday.

"Costs go up naturally," said JSU President John Beehler. "People need raises and the cost of new technology goes up."

For in-state undergraduate students, the cost for a 12-hour semester of four classes will jump to \$3,893 from the \$3,708 that was charged last fall.

The board didn't increase tuition last year, unlike many other universities in the state, but did raise some fees.

"We were one of only two institutions in the state that did not have a tuition increase last year," said Chairman Ronnie Smith. "We always try to avoid tuition increases."

The tuition hike was included in the university's approximately \$133 million budget for the 2019 fiscal year, which the board also approved Tuesday.

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VISIT [WWW.jsu.edu/chanticleer](http://WWW.jsu.edu/chanticleer) for the latest in JSU NEWS

## TUITION from page 1

-day. University officials noted that even with the 5 percent bump, JSU will still operate with about a \$50,000 deficit in the new fiscal year. Also, projected tuition revenue was based on student enrollment remaining flat in the upcoming school year.

A 35-member committee that included faculty and students recommended the tuition hike to the board.

It also specifically recommended that tuition remain unchanged for graduate students.

Beehler said JSU graduate tuition was already relatively high compared to graduate programs at similar universities. Keeping the graduate tuition flat will keep the program competitive and hopefully help grow enrollment, he said.

Beehler said that the university will look for cost savings to help avoid more tuition bumps in the near future.

"We'll have a consultant coming in to evaluate our structure and what level of employees and compensation we need across campus," Beehler said. "There could be a substantial cost savings since employees account for a large portion of our costs."

Also during the meeting, the board gave Beehler the authority to seek engineering and architectural firms to evaluate the condition of Merrill Hall and make recommendations of its possible razing and replacement.

The tornado practically destroyed Merrill, which housed the finance, economics and ac-

counting departments.

"We're not trying to say that Merrill has any higher priority than anything else on campus, but we've all recognized the devastation of Merrill," Smith said. "We know that insurance issues have to be resolved, but we want to encourage progress on the project."

The board also agreed to open a \$15 million line of credit for 24 months with Regions Bank to help with immediate tornado recovery needs.

"This is cash flow management," Smith said of the credit. "We have expenditures that we have to make that we will get reimbursed for from insurance and other sources, but there's timing issues to that."

The board learned in a committee meeting Monday that the Federal Emergency Management Agency could approve JSU's request for disaster relief money as early as next week — money JSU might not get for at least a year. The university is facing at least \$11 million in out-of-pocket costs related to the tornado recovery that federal aid would cover, including tree removal and renovations of the former Kitty Stone Elementary to house the finance, economics and business department.

University officials also informed the board Monday that Pete Mathews Coliseum, also damaged by the tornado, will reopen on Nov. 1. And the tornado has further delayed the opening of JSU's new baseball stadium until June 30, the board learned Monday.

## FOOTBALL from page 1

football participation at a national level, could this decline be apparent throughout small southern towns like mine? Football is a big deal in Alabama. On Saturdays, everyone is pulling for the Tide or the Tigers. During the work week, fathers volunteer their time to coach their kid's peewee programs. On Friday nights, entire towns head to the local high school stadium to cheer on the home team. It doesn't matter if their child is on the team or not. In small towns there isn't much else to do. Football is ingrained into who we are as a culture.

Even though participation in football has declined steadily over the past few years, it would still take many years of consistently dwindling participants to dethrone football as the most played high school sport. There was a total of 1,059,399 students playing high school football in 2016-2017. The sport with the second highest number of participants—basketball—had a total of 600,136. That's still nearly 450,000 students away from coming close to football. So, is there really anything to worry about as far as the future of football is concerned?

Coach Cliff Mitchell has been an assistant football coach at Albertville High School for almost 16 years. He's seen a lot of things in his time as a coach, but he hasn't seen any decline in football participation. Albertville's roster has actually grown within the last few years.

"I don't think kids' interest in football has wavered at all," said Mitchell. "I just think that parents have become a little overly concerned with safety over the years because of the everything in the news." "Everything in the news" being concussions.

Due to social media, Coach Mitchell says that it's much easier for coaches to be in contact with parents. The increased contact has led to more questions, the most common being if teams have the proper protocol in place to deal with a concussion.

"Of course we do," said Mitchell. "Our athletic trainers are very well trained and experienced. If a kid gets a concussion, there is a series of tests that they have to pass before they can continue playing."

To concerned parents Coach Mitchell says this, "Safety is our number one concern. We all love football, but we all love our kids more, and we want to make sure that they're taken care of. We treat them like they were our own."

While the parents of high school athletes are more aware of concussions, the largest concern lies around children under 12, with many organization questioning if kids that young should even be allowed to play the game. Illinois and Maryland have both proposed bills that would outlaw full-contact football for children under 12.

"I think it should be up to a parent. I don't think any form of government should say what your kid can and can't do," said Mitchell. "I'm worried about the helicopter state of everyone hanging over us and trying to protect us. We don't need to live in a bubble. Sometimes you get hurt, that's part of life. Don't take something away that more than half of the country enjoys."

While no public official in the state of Alabama has called for any age limits on the sport, the Alabama High School Athletics Association (AHSAA) has enacted restrictions on how much contact can take place during the practice week. Players aren't going full speed every day like they did when I played. But do these restrictions cause more harm than they prevent? If players aren't used to tackling every day, are they going to be skittish in game situations, causing more injuries?

"I don't think so," said Mitchell. "Right now, it's about as good as it can get. Right now, we have plenty of time to get in a good practice and enough tackling. If there were any more limitation, though, I think that could lead to more injuries."

Restrictions on tackling have been implemented at all levels of football, from youth programs all the way up to the NFL. A study conducted at the University of Wisconsin-Madison concluded that after contact during the practice week was limited, there was a significant reduction in concussion rates.

Many argue that the life lessons football teaches boys greatly outweigh the risks of playing the sport.

"The thing with sports in general, and, especially football," said Mitchell, "is that it turns a lot of boys into men. They're all going to have tough moments in life, and football really teaches kids how to make it through them. The sport helps them to grown as human beings. It's a grind. It's like going to work. I think that you find that boys who play sports, and especially football, are a little more successful as men."

While football participation may be decreasing, at a national level, and even in Alabama. Football is still very much a part of small town southern culture. "I think we're a little tougher down here," said Mitchell. "It's just what boys do in the south; they play football."

## Got Questions? Contact your administration!

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*\*Because most Board members are private citizens, not all of their contact information is readily available.\**

## GAMBLE from page 1

than just an enrollment number."

Gamble is determined to make JSU feel like home for each and every individual that attends the Friendliest Campus in the South, and she is urging students to get more involved around campus. Gamble is thrilled to be the new President of the SGA, and is excited for the upcoming year. The SGA hopes to continue to grow and prosper under the direction of Gamble and the rest of the determined officers that make up next year's Executive Team.

In the SGA, there are four vice presidents that cover different aspects of the organization. For this upcoming school

year, the Vice Presidents are as follows: Laci Gurganus is now the Vice President of the Student Senate; Desmond Thomas is the VPSA; Ulises Herrera is the Vice President of Public Relations, and William Milner is the Vice President of Organizational Affairs. The following people will serve as SGA Senators: Mariana Alvarez, Kevin Barajas, Corvin Dixon, Tyler Elsberry, Gregory Heathcock, Nashby Fils, Justin Jones, Zavius Kidd, Adam McNeal, Devin Ogle, Brenden Perry, Brittany Sanders, Kathleen Seibert, Jerod Sharp, Madison Shearer, Taylor Smith, Olivea Taylor, Abigaile Warren, Kyra

Watral and Kemuel Williams.

Along with these esteemed leaders, other JSU students were elected by their peers to be known as Miss and Mr. Friendly and also Miss and Mr. Jax State. The 2017-2018 Miss and Mr. Friendly are Rilee Sitton and Gregory Heathcock, and the 2017-2018 Miss and Mr. Jax State are Rebekah Beasley and Ethan Jackson.

A sincere round of congratulations are in order for all who participated in the election. The upcoming academic year is bound to be a success with such an incredible, determined and intelligent group of young leaders.

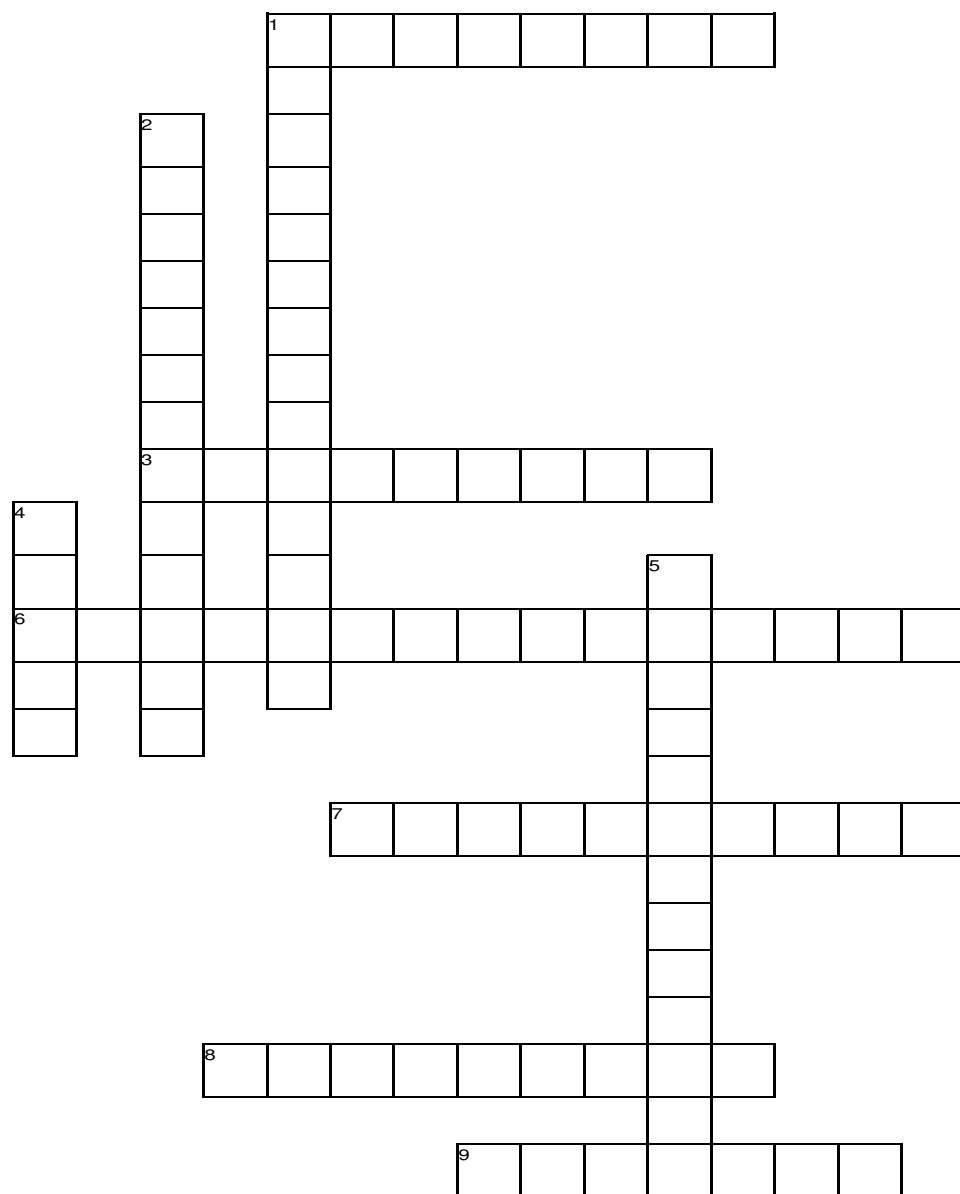


Laci Gurganus (@laci\_paige)/Instagram

Newly elected Vice President of Student Senate, Laci Gurganus (left) hands out donuts with friend Kaleigh Ferguson outside the TMB on election day. Gurganus' slogan was "Donut forget to vote for Laci."

# Study Break

## Campus Crossword! Taylor Swift Edition

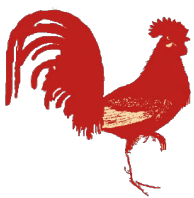


**Across**

- 1. Blood everywhere ...
- 3. I don't know about you ...
- 6. Taylor was in the band and a cheerleader ...
- 7. It's easy to write something when you have a ...
- 8. Her first single ...
- 9. Was the sound of slamming doors ...

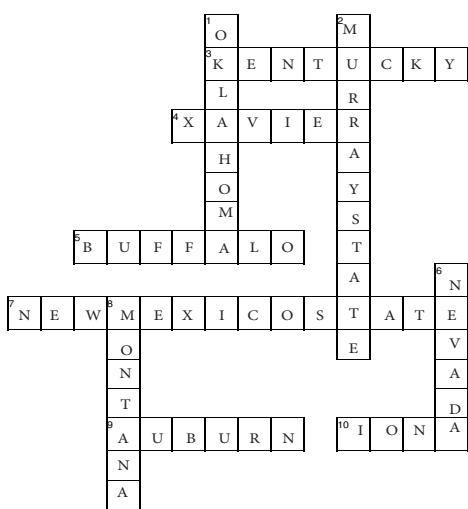
**Down**

- 1. Let's go back to the end of the year ...
- 2. First breakup song ...
- 4. James Dean reference ...
- 5. Say you'll remember her ...



**Editor's Hint: Google is still your friend, everyone!**

**March Madness**



**Across**

- 3. This team did not have a senior to honor this season for the first time since 1946
- 4. Bill Murray's son is an assistant coach for this team
- 5. This team scored 80-or-more points in 24 games, the most in the country
- 7. This team has only one starter taller than 6-foot-5
- 9. This team was not represented on the All-SEC first team
- 10. This team had eight different players score 20-or-more points in a game this season

**Down**

- 1. This team features the nation's leader in scoring and assists averages
- 2. This team beat JSU in the semifinals of the conference tournament
- 6. This team led the nation with 12 different uniform combinations
- 8. This team was one of only two teams to use the same starting lineup the entire season

**March 15th's Solution!**

### Chris' Random Fact:

**Taylor Swift performed in the basketball gym at Saks High School in 2007.**

# THIS MAYES IS CORNY!



... Puns from the collection of:  
**Sports Editor Daniel Mayes #shootpunsnotguns**

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.

"That stuff has been piled by the street since the Saturday after the storm," said Linda Beavers, pointing out a mound of brush in front of her 11th Avenue 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. Streetlights on fresh utility poles shine down on blue-tarped 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 assuring him that the first sweep 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 may be pushing new debris to the curb. 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



*Trent Penny/The Anniston Star*

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

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-clearing trucks weren't the only thing local residents were waiting for. Gov. Kay Ivey last week officially requested a federal disaster declaration, one that, if approved, could clear the area 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 spokesman. "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](http://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



*Trent Penny/The Anniston Star*

**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.**

**Tim Lockette**

*The Anniston Star*

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 first hand, 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 predict[ed] rain in the area again over the weekend [April 13-15], with a slight risk of strong storms which could include tornadoes.

# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

## JSU Drama has a lot to “give”

**Katie Cline**

*Editor-in-Chief*

The show must go on.

That has been the attitude of the JSU Drama Department since the March 19 tornado devastated campus. The department's home, Stone Center, was relatively unharmed by the winds and debris, but the building is still without phone and Internet access.

Nevertheless, the students, faculty and staff have been hard at work putting together three performances for the last three weeks of the semester.

### The Giver

The first performance will be Alpha Psi Omega's (APO) production of “The Giver.” Based on Lois Lowry's 1993 novel, Eric Coble's stage adaptation follows 12-year-old Jonas and his friends Fiona and Asher as they attempt to defy their black-and-white society.

APO is the national theater honor society. Each year, the members of JSU's chapter put on a main-stage production that is designed and performed by students. Graduating senior Alexis Robinson served as director for the show.

“We lost a week of rehearsal due to the storm, but compensated with cutting a few technical elements and moving the show dates back a week,” Robinson said. “I put a lot of my faith in my actors that they come back strong after such a long break. My cast and design team really pulled through for all of us and brought together a wonderful show despite the challenges we faced.”

Taking the stage in “The Giver” are new and old faces. Aaron Williams, who JSU theatregoers may recognize as Officer Brannigan from “Guys and Dolls” or Dr. Thomas Stockmann from “An Enemy of the People,” plays Jonas, a departure from his previous adult roles.

“Playing a child has been a real challenge, and something that I have never done before,” Williams said. “There is definitely a fine line between being absolutely ridiculous and authentically playing a child, and I think finding that has been the most difficult part.”

The titular character, the Giver, is portrayed by another drama veteran, Larry Mason, who has taken on such roles as Peter Stockmann in “An Enemy of the People” and Antonio in “The Tempest.”

The full cast includes Brooke Elam (Miranda, “The Tempest”) as Fiona/Rosemary and Eric Wilkerson (Nathan Detroit, “Guys and Dolls”) as Father, as well as students making their stage or speaking debut: Abbie Beatty as Mother/Chief Elder, Anna Marker as Lily and Noah Hudson as Asher.

“My favorite part about acting is probably really getting into my character,” Beatty, a freshman who had a non-speaking role in February's production of “Guys and Dolls,” said, “When you play a character onstage you get to react and do things as they would. It sounds kind of cheesy, but it's like you get to escape your own world and live in theirs for a while. It's also cool to see how every actor brings their own personality into their characters in a different way.”

Students also run the show behind the scenes,

too. Graduating senior Meg McCrina designed the costumes while Elizabeth Neese and Shelby Washburn were responsible for the set and sound design respectively. Brandon Clark (Sky Masterson, “Guys and Dolls”) serves as assistant technical director; Ansley Gayton is the assistant producer and projections and sound board operator, and Cheyenne Oliver (Drunk, “Guys and Dolls”) will serve as stage manager. Oliver has stage managed several JSU productions such as “An Enemy of the People,” “The Tempest,” and “These Shining Lives.”

“This show has a message for everyone,” Robinson said. “I am so honored to get to direct such a wonderful piece with a message that rings true at any age. Avid fans of the book will see most of their favorite moments portrayed on stage and I hope that we will inspire a few new Lois Lowry fans as well.”

“It is a beautiful story and has a message that I think is relevant right now and is important for people to hear,” Beatty added. “It is powerful, emotional, and thought provoking and I think our audiences will really enjoy seeing this story come to life on stage.”

“The Giver” will run April 20 and 21 at 7:30 p.m. and April 21 at 2:30 p.m. on the Stone Center main stage. Tickets are \$10.

### The Country Co-ed

Because the department opted to condense the remainder of its season rather than cut a show, many of the students are pulling double or triple duty as the semester winds down.

“As for balance, yeah, I've had a lot of trouble recently,” Williams, who is starring in another JSU production, said. “Feeling stretched thin is underselling it, but you sort of have to get used to that in theatre. You can be working on three or four shows at once, and you've got to keep them all straight.”

As soon as the curtain falls on “The Giver,” Williams must prepare for his next leading role as Harry Horner in “The Country Co-ed,” a modern, racy and radical adaptation of “The Country Wife” by William Wycherley. The play was written and produced by the students of Dr. Michael Boynton's Special Topics in Performance course and follows college students Horner and Dani Dickinson (played by Ebony Antoine-Hill) to see who can have the most sexual encounters by the end of homecoming weekend. This over-the-top sex comedy blends elements from the original



Jacksonville State University Drama Department/Facebook

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.

restoration classic with those of contemporary cinematic comedies like “Animal House” and “Bridesmaids” to create one witty and raunchy production.

This show is only open to audience members ages 18 and up due to highly offensive language and crude topics. It will be performed Thursday, May 3 at 8 p.m. on the Stone Center main stage. Tickets are \$5.

There will be one more performance of “The Country Co-ed” that Jacksonville audiences won't be privy to.

Boynton and his class—who have named themselves the Flying Bling Theatre Ensemble (FBTE)—will take the stage at the Capital Fringe Festival in Washington, D.C. this July.

According to the organization's website, “Capital Fringe is a catalyst for cultural and community development, and a destination that brings artists and audiences together. Capital Fringe thrives on amplifying the vibrancy of the DC's independent arts community and enriches the lives of those who reside, work and visit here.”

The festival embraces “diversity and a spirit of independence” and aims to “challenge perceptions and shake up the hierarchy, to be brave and unafraid and to serve as a launching pad for unseasoned to existing theatre artists.”

“Hundreds of companies apply to perform [at Fringe] each year, and not many of them get accepted, so it's a huge honor!” Williams said.

### Lillian Paula Carson

The winner of the 2017 Southern Playwrights Competition will be presented as a workshop production on Tuesday, April 24 and Wednesday, April 25 at 7:30 p.m. in the Stone Center Studio Theater, Room 338.

“Lillian Paula Carson” is a play not about one woman, but about three. It focuses on a 1953 meeting between social activist Lillian Smith, her partner Paula Snelling, and Southern writer Carson McCullers.

Playwright John Barrow imagines how Smith, the best-selling author of “Strange Fruit” and a strong opponent of segregation; her partner, Snelling and McCullers, author of “The Heart is a Lonely Hunter” and “The Member of the Wedding,” may have discussed the issues of justice, fame, commitment, love and mortality.

Barrow currently lives in New York City, but his southern roots are the setting for “Lillian Paula Carson.” The play is set in Clayton, Georgia, and Barrow grew up a few hours south in Cordele, Georgia.

Besides winning the Southern Playwrights Competition, Barrow has been awarded playwriting grants from the New York State Council on the Art and the Wisconsin Arts Board, and his plays have been performed on big and small stages alike, including companies in New York, Nashville, Key West and Atlanta.

JSU's production is centered on non-traditional casting and stars Ebony Antoine-Hill (General Cartwright, “Guys and Dolls”), Halima Kamara (Dorothy, “Dorothy Meets Alice”) and Chibuzo Harbor. It is directed by JSU's technical director, Nick Hoenshell.

Tickets for this production will be \$5.

Stone Center is without Internet service at this time, so all ticket purchases must be made in the form of cash or checks. Tickets for “The Giver” and “Lillian Paula Carson” can be purchased online prior to the shows.

### The Giver (adapted by Eric Coble)

April 20 & 21 at 7:30 p.m. and April 22 at 2:30 p.m.  
Stone Center main stage; tickets are \$10

### Lillian Paula Carson by John Barrow

April 24 & 25 at 7:30 p.m.  
Stone Center Studio Theater (Room 338); tickets are \$5

### The Country Co-ed by Michael John Boynton and the Flying Blind Theatre Ensemble

May 3 at 8 p.m.  
Stone Center main stage; tickets are \$5

*\*this comedy was, written, directed and produced by students as part of DR485 and is rated R for its raunchy, over-the-top sex comedy style\**

**\*\*Because of the March 19 tornadoes, Stone Center does not have Internet, and the JSU Drama Department will only be able to accept at-the-door ticket payments in the form of cash or check. Tickets for “The Giver” and “Lillian Paula Carson” can be purchased online.\*\***

# OPINION & EDITORIAL

## Peace with Autism

Taylor Mitchell  
Special to the Chanticleer

Last year, in the name of Autism awareness, I wrote an article about how the video game “To 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 disorder didn’t define me, 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 B. Mitchell, and I have high functioning autism; here is why that is great.

When I mention my Autism, I get a lot of people who tell me, “You don’t really seem autistic.” Moving past the horrible stereotyping of that comment, I always

tell them I got very good at acting. This is half a joke and half a cold, hard fact. This brings us to the first reason knowing I was autistic helped: I finally knew what I needed to learn to cope with. When I was a child I was never able to relate to others. Most of the time I couldn’t even tell what they were really thinking or feeling. This led to me often having the exact opposite reaction than I probably should have.

Even when I picked up on 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 special education counselor began giving me special lessons on this kind of thing. She would talk to me about the importance of actively listening to people and trying to understand what they were feeling. Learning these skills that people take for granted in a detailed manner helped me more than I can accurately express. At the same time I was learning how to process and cope with my own emotions, which had often been too complex in my childhood for me to control with no real frame of reference. Learning these skills, skills most people are born with, helped me become the person

I am now. I learned strategies and skills I still use to communicate with people. Without my diagnosis this kind of assistance had never been attempted since no one really knew how to help me. Which brings me to my next point.

Just knowing really helped me more than anything in the world. Imagine living your life being “off” somehow, never knowing why but with everyone you knew being aware of it. Eventually you begin to be horribly aware of how different you are and how isolated and disliked that has made you. The entire time you are aware that something is wrong but completely obli-

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 diagnosed, and things changed. It’s easy to not see where this would make a difference, but it did. I finally knew what was wrong.

With that information I could understand my own condition. I researched it vigorously, and came to better understand it. Knowing what was the cause for 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 autism helped me realize that being me is okay. It helped me find the peace that I have now.

Autism had isolated 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. I may have resigned myself to it before, but I never will again. I now know that I am different; yet in that difference I am not less than anyone else. Realizing that made all the difference.

## Don’t pit Zerrick and Zion against each other

Chris Allen Brown  
Associate Editor

Scroll through the Twitter feed. Rewind those highlight tapes. Talk to them after practice.

You’ll see the praise. You’ll see 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 the seniors during halftime.

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 Jacksonville State in January. Look at the replies on Twitter to ClemsonTigerNet, who tweeted Cooper was in Clemson last weekend, and you’ll see nothing but positivity.

Webb, who is a redshirt freshman out of Central-Phoenix City, has been in the system for over a year now and came to Jacksonville



Katy Nowak/JSU

Zerrick Cooper (left) and Zion Webb (right) both bring lots of talent into the JSU backfield.

as a highly-touted recruit. Many consider Webb a steal after most schools backed off the 6-foot, 200-pound quarterback after suffering a season-ending injury during his junior year of high school.

According to Jacksonville State head coach John Grass, both Cooper and Webb “bring something different and similar to the table” in terms of helping the Gamecock offense.

“Both of them throw the pass accurately and both have good arms and both of them can run the football,” Grass said after JSU’s non-traditional J-Day Spring Game last Thursday night. “But both have different kinds of styles running. However, both of them are being leaders and commanding the offense really well.”

Webb signed with JSU after hundreds of thousands watched former

All-American Eli Jenkins set numerous records over the last four years. Having the same skill set as Jenkins, fans and alumni automatically assumed Webb would be the guy, which is no knock on All-OVC performer Bryant Horn, for years to come.

Then Cooper announced his intentions to transfer and many took to social media to express their interest and desire in the 6-foot-

2, 220-pound quarterback.

But here’s the thing — don’t pit the two in a competition because they’re different guys trying to achieve the same goal, which is helping Jacksonville State back to the FCS National Championship Game.

“They both do their own thing because they each have their own thing they’re good at,” said JSU quarterback coach Cody

Wells. “I think both are doing a great job of leading the offense 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 everything time and don’t be upset if Grass and company roll out the two-quarterback system to start next season because these are two guys who can play.

# SPORTS

## JSU Sports Upcoming Events

### Friday, April 20

Baseball  
Game 1 vs. Belmont\*  
5:00 p.m.  
Nashville, TN

Beach Volleyball  
vs. Austin Peay  
8:00 a.m.  
Clarksville, TN

Beach Volleyball  
vs. Lincoln Memorial  
2:00 p.m.  
Clarksville, TN

Men's Tennis  
OVC Championships\*  
Nashville, TN

Women's Tennis  
OVC Championships\*  
Nashville, TN

Women's Track  
War Eagle Invite  
Auburn, AL

### Saturday, April 21

Baseball  
Game 2 vs. Belmont\*  
2:00 p.m.  
Nashville, TN

Beach Volleyball  
vs. Spring Hill  
8:00 a.m.  
Clarksville, TN

Beach Volleyball  
vs. Carson-Newman  
1:00 p.m.  
Clarksville, TN

Men's Tennis  
OVC Championships\*  
Nashville, TN

Women's Tennis  
OVC Championships\*  
Nashville, TN

Women's Track  
War Eagle Invite  
Auburn, AL

Softball  
vs. SIUE\*  
1:00 p.m., 3:00 p.m.  
Edwardsville, IL

**Bold = Home contest**

\* = OVC contest

Visit  
**JSUGamecocksports.com**  
for complete coverage of  
JSU Athletics.

## Gamecock Women complete 2018 class

JACKSONVILLE—

The 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 some of the top talent from Mississippi, Tennessee, South Carolina and Alabama.

"All three of these young ladies, as well as the two 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 Lexington, Miss., product will have two years of eligibility remaining for



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the Red and White. She led the HCC Lady Bulldogs to an 18-9 record last year, reaching the semifinals of the Region XXIII 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 steal and record one block per contest.

"Brittany is a capable, strong, physical post player who is quick and fast enough to defend on the perimeter."

Willis hails from the Baylor School in Chattanooga, Tenn. The Southern Starz club player, was a dual sport star at Baylor. She was crowned state 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 Sport's Writers Association.

"Jutoreyia is an elite athlete with length who can play point guard or wing. She possesses the ability to hit the three-point shot as well as attack the basket. She is an exceptional track & field athlete as well."

Lastly, Johnson is a six-foot guard out of Lexington, S.C. She spent three seasons at Gray Collegiate Academy, before enrolling at White Knoll

High School for her senior campaign. Last year, Johnson averaged 25.2 points per game, earning South Carolina High School League (SCHSL) 2-A All-State honors and a spot on the All-Midlands Third Team.

"Yamia can score the basket ball from 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 Regan Dargan and Karleigh Sledge, to complete Jax State's 2018 signing class.

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## Four Gamecocks honored on All-OVC Women's Golf Teams

Four Gamecocks were honored at Monday's Ohio Valley Conference Women's Golf Championship Banquet.

Jacksonville State juniors Valentina Giraldo and Paula Vega were named to the All-OVC Team, while freshmen Valentina Curet and Ana Perez Altuna earned All-Newcomer Team honors. The awards were handed out 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 year while Vega, Curet and Altuna were each honored by the league for the first time.

Giraldo has had a career year for the Gamecocks in 2017-18. The native of Ibague, Colombia, 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 Moberly of Eastern 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. Only 10 times this season 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 Angie Green in 2001-02. She is tied with Green for most wins in a career with her five this season. In addition to her five wins in nine events, she also has finished 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.

Vega grabs her first career All-OVC honor

in her second season with the Gamecocks after transferring from Lindenwood University in Belleville, 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 75.9. She carded two career-best rounds of 70 this season, the first coming at the Pinehurst Challenge in October and the second at the Edwin Watts/Kiawah Island 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 selection. Her 77.2 stroke average entered the OVC Tournament as the ninth-best among all OVC players and the lowest among newcomers in the league.

A native of Santiago del Estero, Argentina, Curet has four top 20 finishes this season and led the Gamecocks with an eighth-place finish at the Jacksonville University Amelia Island Collegiate in February.

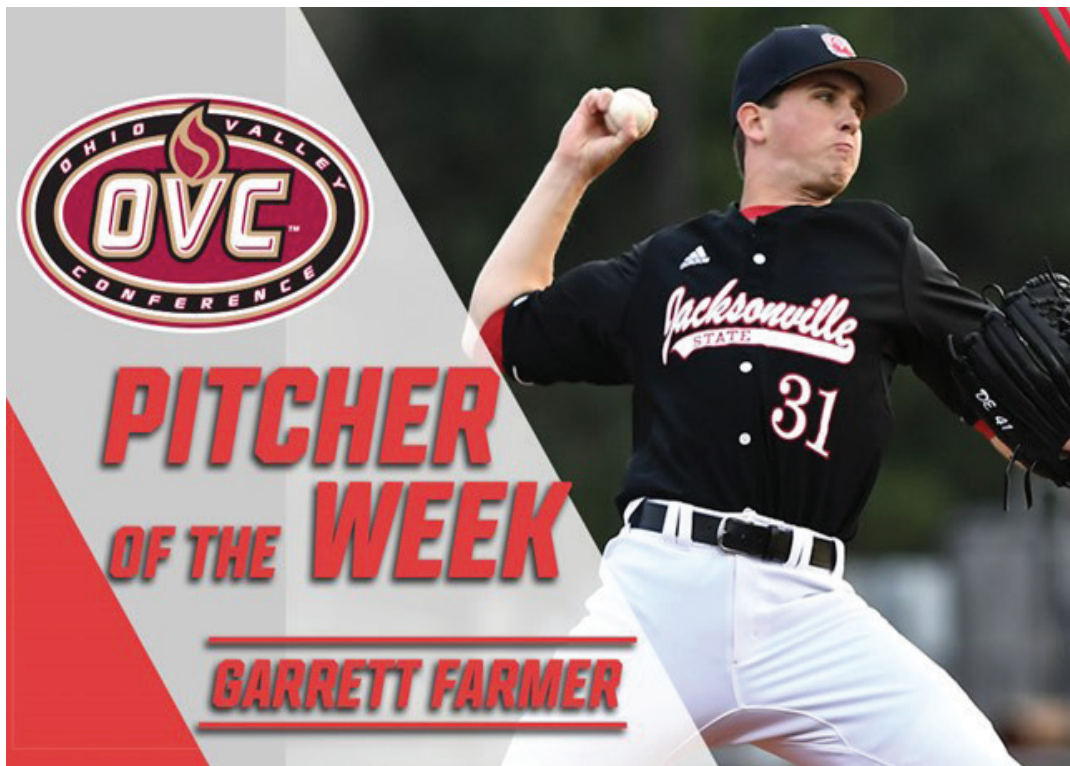
Altuna played 17 rounds in her first collegiate season for the Gamecocks. She entered the OVC Tournament with a 78.5 stroke average, good enough to rank her in the top 25 among all players in the league.

The native of Buenos Aires, Argentina, played in six events during the regular season for the Gamecocks as a true freshman. She posted her first career top 20 finish at the Murray State Jan Weaver Invitational to close her freshman campaign.

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JSU Pitcher Garrett Farmer led JSU to a shutout over Southeast Missouri in their opening game on Friday, earning him OVC Pitcher of the Week honors.

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

Grant Benefield  
Staff Sports Writer

After taking a tough sweep last weekend against Tennessee Tech, JSU baseball got back on track with a series win over OVC opponent Southeastern Missouri.

The Gamecocks (18-14, 8-7) kicked off the series against the Redhawks (16-20, 11-7) with a double-header on Friday, winning the opener easily behind a dominant start from Garrett Farmer, then finishing the day in walk-off fashion to secure the series.

Farmer was masterful in

the Gamecocks' 7-0 victory, tossing eight dominant innings of scoreless, ten strikeout baseball, earning the win and improving to 4-0.

Farmer would be named OVC Pitcher of the Week for his career performance on Friday.

Shortstop Isaac Alexander led the way at the plate, going 2-for-4 with three RBIs and a walk. Hayden White also contributed with a pinch hit two-RBI double in the seventh.

Game two wouldn't come as easily for JSU, with the Gamecocks needing a walk-off home

run from Cole Frederick in the bottom of the eleventh inning to finish off the Redhawks 7-6.

Alexander continued his successful day the the plate with a two-RBI single in the first to give the Gamecocks the early 2-0 lead.

A sacrifice fly from Andrew Naismith and three runs from the Redhawks would see the game tied 3-3 in the fourth inning.

The visiting Redhawks saw their first lead of the day after making the score 4-3 in the top of the fifth, but the Gamecocks quickly jumped back out front with a two-run blast from

Nic Gaddis in the bottom of the inning.

Two more runs from SEMO and another from JSU would have the game tied 6-6 in the seventh, and that score wouldn't change until Frederick's walk-off in the eleventh.

Christian Edwards earned the win in relief for the Gamecocks, tossing the final 3 1/3 innings to the tune of eight strikeouts and no runs.

The Redhawks grabbed a win in the final game of the series a Saturday. The final game proved to be a pitcher's duel between JSU's Colton Pate and SEMO's Carlos Vega,

with the two arms going 8 2/3 innings and 9 innings, respectively.

Each offense managed one run each on the opposing starter, but the Redhawks broke through the Gamecock relief pitching for three runs in the tenth inning to earn the 4-1 victory.

Gamecock center fielder Taylor Hawthorne managed the lone run for the Gamecocks, a sacrifice fly that scored Frederick in the fifth.

Back on the winning track, the Gamecocks now look forward to their next OVC series at Belmont starting this Friday.

## 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 Championships. Playing for his native Slovakia, he averaged 10 points and snagged 8.4 rebounds per game. He scored in double-figures three times and posted a double-double in the sev-

en-game tournament. His tournament-high was 16 points against Lithuania and 13 boards 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.

Zeliznak is the second signee to this year's class, including 6-foot-6 guard Cam Jones. Jones, from Whitehaven High School in Memphis, Tenn., signed with the Gamecocks on Nov. 20, 2017 during the early signing period.

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Katy Nowak/JSU

JSU Head Coach John Grass looks on at new Gamecock quarterback Zerrick Cooper (6) during Jacksonville State's spring scrimmage on Thursday.

## Unorthodox spring camp comes to conclusion with untraditional J-Day

Chanticleer Staff

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

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

"It was a pretty physical scrimmage tonight,"

Grass said. "It wasn't our typical show for the crowd. It was an actual scrimmage and guys actually fighting and battling for position. I saw a lot of good effort and a lot of good things."

After the tornado struck the community of Jacksonville and JSU's campus, players practiced, conditioned and watched film in the morning before adventuring out and assisting in the clean up around town. This assistant prevented the Gamecocks from fulfilling 15 practices, which the NCAA allows, as Thursday'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, Jacksonville State will open the regular season in Montgomery in the Guardian Credit Union FCS Kick-off against North Carolina A&T, who comes off a 12-0 undefeated record capped with a win the Celebration Bowl last season, on ESPN.

