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The Grizzly, February 4, 2016

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Authors
On Feb. 3, Ursinus College will welcome author John Keene for a reading from his most recent collection of short stories and novellas, “Counternarratives.”

Keene hails from the midwest; he was born in St. Louis in 1965. He earned his Bachelor of Arts degree from Harvard and an MFA from New York University. After graduation, he became a member of the Dark Room Collective, a community of fiction writers and poets of color who came together not only to share their work but to also provide each other with support and mentorship. His earlier published works include a novel, “Annotations,” and a collection of poetry titled “Seismosis.”

Currently, Keene is an associate professor of English and African American and Africana studies as well as a professor of the Master of Fine Arts creative writing program at Rutgers University in Newark, New Jersey. Prior to his work at Rutgers, he held teaching positions at Brown, Northwestern, and New York University.

In May of last year, New Directions Publishing released Keene’s book “Counternarratives.” The collection of short stories and novellas combines facts about the past and includes historical figures, composers, and literary characters. The publisher’s description of the short
Companies and grad schools seek out Ursinus alumni

Will DiCiurcio
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Ursinus College seniors who are graduating this May are at an advantage for many different opportunities. Post-graduation can be an extremely stressful time for graduates as they search for different jobs or graduate school programs to attend.

Many different local companies and institutions place Ursinus students above other applicants. A number of employers have contacted students with opportunities.

Companies like Freedom Mortgage and graduate school programs like The New York Institute for Business and Finance are some of the opportunities that are available for Ursinus graduates.

These programs have expressed interest both in Ursinus students and the potential to hire students after graduation.

Freedom Mortgage is a New Jersey-based national leader in real estate financing for consumers and businesses.

The company is a premier non-bank real estate lender and is the seventh largest in the nation, according to officials from the company. The company offers graduates a one-year training program that in turn gives the trainee opportunity for more growth in the field.

“Freedom is very interested in talking with seniors and graduate students about careers in mortgage finance with a company that takes great pride in its 25 years of service to its customers, as well as industry-wide recognition as one of the fastest-growing mortgage lenders,” Henry Drennan, an official from the company wrote in an email.

The New York Institute of Business and Finance, located in the heart of Wall Street, is offering a summer program for graduates that will help them develop a deep understanding of business strategy, global management, international finance, and business law, according to a professor from the institution.

“Ursinus College has significant value to offer its students. We believe that at our institution, your students will grow willing to pursue the opportunities embedded in studying business and finance in New York City,” said the professor.

Chris Jablonski, a senior graduating in May, says it is a stressful time trying to figure out his plans for after graduation. Jablonski is in the process of applying to several different job openings.

When asked what the hardest part of the application process was, Jablonski said, “Preparing for the interview because each job and company is completely unique and different. In the interview, you never know what to expect.”

Many companies and programs in the surrounding areas are looking for Ursinus students to fill their openings. The values students gain during their time at Ursinus make them desirable candidates to many employers or graduate programs.

John Keene will be coming to campus on Feb. 3 to read some of his short stories. Keene is an associate professor at Rutgers University in Newark, N.J.

Keene continued from pg. 1...

The story collection asserts “Novellas and stories draw upon memoirs, newspaper accounts, detective stories, interrogation transcripts, and speculative fiction to create new and strange perspectives of our past and present.”

Anna Maria Hong, visiting professor of Creative Writing at Ursinus, says the novel contains perspectives from a variety of people living in the Americas, including a person escaping slavery in Brazil, African American soldiers in the Civil War, and even the literary character Huckleberry Finn.

With such a unique approach to conveying American history, the book, not surprisingly, has received commercial success. Hong, who saw Keene give a reading at “Thinking Its Presence: Race, Creative Writing, and Literary Study,” a conference at the University of Montana, said, “I was enchanted by his stories. He struck me as a really interesting person, so I thought he would be a great person to have read here.” She added, “I thought he would be great with relating to students since he is a professor at Rutgers.”

When asked who should come to the reading, Hong answered with an enthusiastic, “Everybody!” Although the reading will especially appeal to any person who is a part of the two major programs co-sponsoring this event, Creative Writing and African American and Africana studies, those interested in gender and women’s studies and English would likely be interested as well.

Hong added that students interested in the arts, history, and contemporary literature should also attend due to the subject matter and characters featured in Keene’s new collection of novellas.

At the very least, audience members can expect an entertaining evening, according to Hong. Hong described Keene’s talent as a storyteller, saying, “He is just a mesmerizing reader, so at the very least I think there will be a lot of enjoyment in hearing the story. His stories also appeal to me because they’re very thought-provoking, so I think people will come away with a deeper sense of American history among other things...The stories are informative as well as entertaining.”

Prior to the reading on Feb. 3, there will be a reception for Keene at the Writing and Arts House in Zwinger Hall on Main Street from 5:30-6:30 p.m. At 7 p.m., the reading will begin in Olín auditorium. Following the reading there will be a brief question and answer session and a book signing. The Ursinus bookstore will have copies of “Counternarratives” available for purchase at the reading.

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Letters to the Editor (grizzly@ursinus.edu)

All letters submitted to The Grizzly must not exceed 250 words in length, be emailed, and must be accompanied by a full name and phone number to verify content. The Grizzly reserves the right to edit all material for length, content, spelling and grammar, as well as the right to refuse publication of any material submitted. All material submitted to The Grizzly becomes property of The Grizzly.

Staff positions at The Grizzly are open to students of all majors. Contact the adviser for details.

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International Perspective

Cultural differences in parties

Jim Yichi Zhang
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I still remember the excitement I felt when I was told Ursinus College is a party school when I was picked up from the airport. To be honest, in China, people talk about how crazy the American parties are: drinking, dancing, and releasing stress and energy together all night long. These stories tempted my curiosity a lot. And finally, I had a chance to witness what these mysterious parties were really like.

The first big party I went to was the freshman dance party. Everyone was in formal dress and gathered on the dance floor. Some students were really hyper and dancing, some of them were just shaking their shoulders or swinging their bodies with the tempo, and others just stood there. “It seems interesting, but where are the crazy ones?” I thought.

I did try to join some groups, but as I did not know the people, I just could not let go and enjoy. However, someone just jumped into the center of the group and was waving and doing some incredible moves. “And here comes the crazy one,” I smiled.

I could not help but laugh as I saw his dancing, and I believe students around him also felt his energy. People were whistling, and a few more got into the center, doing dance combos with the guy.

It was amusing for me. Nevertheless, I left early. I listen to top chart songs a lot, but I did not know most of the songs played at the party. I could not be that open in front of so many strangers. People treat parties differently in my culture and American culture. American culture handles parties in a more appropriate way.

This is weird and I do not know why, but Chinese teenagers always hold parties in karaoke. For example, if I were going to have a party, the first thing is to figure out which karaoke.

And then I will send out a group message to inform my classmates or friends. We will sing songs one by one, and some may throw dice or play card games. Sometimes we will have dinner by sitting around a big table like a traditional Chinese dinner, or buffet.

But we will always be with people we are familiar with. In America, in the opposite way, it is common to hold a big party and let people who are interested in joining come.

What I want to say is Americans do not feel awkward in front of strangers, and make friends quickly and easily. I do not think a Chinese person or even an Asian can do that.

“I am glad that I have the chance to study abroad and get to know what parties really can be.” — Jim Yichi Zhang
Ursinus Freshman

A main cause of the differences could be cultural. Chinese people are timid and Americans are sociable due to different cultures and educations.

We do not usually say hi to strangers but Americans do a lot. Chinese people do treat people politely, but not very enthusiastically. American people are really kind, and when they talk, it seems they know each other for a long time.

When talking about parties, some old or traditional Chinese may have negative thoughts and think that it is all about wasting money on alcohol and sexuality. In fact, as an adult and high school graduate, we do drink a lot at parties.

Nevertheless, after I came to the U.S., I noticed that we can have an ice cream social party, a barbecue party or you name it, which have no alcohol, no sexuality, and no messing up involved. People go there just totally for fun, and I really appreciate it.

Chinese people consider that you must drink at a party, so they drink. However, the kind of parties mentioned above can also let everyone have fun in a very healthy way.

I came up with an idea for the misunderstanding of American parties and most Chinese. Most people do not have the time or money to come to America.

They can only get to know it by news and films and there is lots of negative news, or parties with drinking, smoking and sexuality in films.

Therefore, people begin to believe parties are all about alcohol, weed, sex, and that parties are bad, which now seems absurd and sad to me.

I am glad that I have the chance to study abroad and get to know what parties really can be.

However, it is unwise and stupid that people think they already know everything, and easily reject to know what party really is.

I would like to present this fascinating culture to them. There is no shame to party and enjoy your lives. Study hard and play hard.

Author bio:

Jim Yichi Zhang is from Suzhou Jiangsu, China. He is a freshman chemistry major. Jim is a member of SASA and enjoys cooking Chinese food on the weekend and playing the piano.

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Letter to the editor

Talking about depression with nuance

Following heart surgery in 2007, I obsessed over taking my own life. I couldn’t cross a bridge without thinking about jumping off it. After therapy and medication, I healed and became healthy again.

That is, until I decided to stop taking my antidepressants. After all, who wants to have to take pills? Every person craves the need to feel strong and independent, and taking pills, especially for mental health reasons, can chip away at those feelings of strength. After sporadically “self-unmedicating” for several weeks, my obsession with suicide returned and I couldn’t eat or sleep. Death seemed preferable to all the pain I felt inside, and I was torn between rejecting to take my pills at all and swallowing the whole bottle in order to reject life.

Six years later I’m not only accepting life but living it fully. For me, that means taking medication on a daily basis, not because of a lack of strength, but because of a chemical imbalance.

I applaud Maria Miller for sharing her story in last week’s issue (“Student Raises Funds to Prevent Suicide”). I also insist that associating the use of medication with a lack of strength has toxic implications. I’ve heard from too many people on this campus, including RAs and others who should know better, the “pull yourself up by your bootstraps” mantra of dealing with mental illness. I stand by Miller in her call for us to talk about mental health, but I ask that we carefully consider our choice of words in the discussion.

Jordan Ostrum is a Junior Spanish major at Ursinus.

Businesses offer student discounts

Jay Farrell
jafarrell@ursinus.edu

Looking for ways to save some cash for the spring semester? Currently there is a plethora of student discounts being offered in the Collegeville area for Ursinus students—everything from great food to getting your hair cut. Here are some deals being offered by local businesses:

Marzellas on Main Street offers $1 slices from 9 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Mint Hair Salon offers 20 percent off with a student ID.

McDonald’s offers 10 percent off with a student ID.

Shagun Indian Restaurant offers 20 percent off with a student ID.

The Collegeville Bakery offers 10 percent off with a student ID.

The Trappe Tavern hosts multiple promotion events, including “100 nights until graduation” for seniors.

Piccolo Amore offers 10 percent off for students and staff.

Fashionista’s Hair Salon offers 10 percent off with student ID.

Collegeville Yoga Bar offers 20 percent off of classes.

Several Collegeville retailers offer student deals. Marzellas, the pizza shop on Main Street, offers $1 slices from 9-10:00 p.m.

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WWW.URSINUSGRIZZLY.COM
The ups and downs of being an RA in Reimert

Maddie Mathay
mmathay@ursinus.edu

Reimert: It’s the place where the majority of the parties on campus are thrown on Friday and Saturday nights, and when the weather is nice you can see the occasional student spending time outside on Sunday.

However, for a small number of dedicated students, Reimert is a place to make sure that their peers are safe. These select few students are known as the Reimert resident advisors (RAs).

The crew of Reimert RAs consists of RAs who live in Reimert because they realized the strong sense of community the dorm has.

“My favorite thing about being a Reimert RA is that I get to pick who I live with. RAs in other areas do not get to pick any portion of their residents,” Patterson said.

Veteran resident advisor Jordan Miller says she has learned a lot about herself while being an RA since her sophomore year. She spent her sophomore year as a Main Street resident advisor and has spent the last two years in Reimert.

“Being an RA teaches you a lot about yourself—what you’re good at, what you don’t like, where your strengths are—many that you didn’t even know that you had before. I learned that I’m really good in crisis and high emotion situations, but I can also balance that with my ability to talk to people and gain respect. I’m involved in a lot on campus, and Reimert is the place where all of that can come together,” Miller said.

Just like Patterson, Miller agrees on the sense of community that Reimert has, making it unique compared to all the other dorms on campus.

However, there are certain downsides to being a Reimert resident advisor. For Patterson, his least favorite aspect of Reimert is how loud it can get during the week because of music playing.

For Mikhail, it is the weekends she has to be on duty. “Going through parties to check the bathrooms is my least favorite thing. The parties become very loud and crowded, which makes them hard to navigate through,” Mikhail says.

Similar to Mikhail, Miller says that weekend duty can be stressful, especially if it is a difficult or busy night. “My least favorite part of being on duty is when students are rude or disrespectful to myself, my partner, or campus staff.”

The freshmen fifteen.

Gaining weight in college can happen for a variety of reasons, and one of them is poor eating habits.

This semester, some students are being more proactive by eating healthier and utilizing the services Wismer has to offer.

One of these services is Simple Servings.

Simple Servings is a station in the dining hall where food is served in smaller portions with the absence of unhealthy ingredients including gluten, soy, and wheat.

Freshman Julia Dorsheimer said, “Simple Servings makes it easier for me to eat better, and I try and get something from there as often as I can.”

Simple Servings is not the only resource students can turn to. Wismer also offers a vegetarian and vegan section. There is also a salad bar, and a yogurt and fruit station.

All of these stations in Wismer have been there since last semester, but some students are just now realizing their benefits.

“I decided to eat healthier this semester because I’m really busy and can’t always make it to the gym. I thought it was going to be a lot harder, but I have so many options that I didn’t even know about.” Dorsheimer said.

Short agrees that Simple Servings has helped her the most.

“The Simple Servings [station’s] selection is great because it’s better food, and it’s stuff that is good for you like vegetables,” she said.

Some could argue that Wismer can make it challenging to stick to eating healthier.

“I mean, it does get a little hard walking past the dessert section and all of the ice-cream, but you just have to remember why you started in the first place,” Dorsheimer said. “I would say what sometimes hinders me the most is stress-eating with snacks and stuff. I rarely have a problem with Wismer,” Dorsheimer said.

Short agreed, saying, “Late-night snacking is what gets me.”

Kristen Costello
krcostello@ursinus.edu

Jordan Miller ’16 has been an RA for three years and has worked in the Campus Safety office for two years.

Originally an RA on Main Street, Miller has found a new home as one of the 15 RAs who look out for the residents of Reimert Hall.

The crew of Reimert RAs consist of RAs who live in Reimert because they realized the strong sense of community the dorm has.

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Photo courtesy of Alexis Primavera

Wismi Dining Hall provides UC students with dozens of different dessert options each week. At the start of the Fall 2014 semester, the dessert station was placed next to the exit, which some students say makes them more likely to grab a dessert on their way out.
A new face on campus

Ursinus welcomes Shammah Bermudez to Center for Academic Support

Joy Jones
shjones@ursinus.edu

A little while ago, in addition to the flood of emails students usually get on returning to campus for clubs, campus events, classes, and deadlines, they all received an email from Shammah Bermudez. In the email Bermudez said he hoped students had a good winter break and introduced himself as the new interim assistant director of the Center for Academic Support.

The Center for Academic Support handles first-year support, academic probation, general problems, and tutoring at Ursinus. It is located in the basement of Myrin across from Tech Support.

Bermudez specifically handles accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Prior to working at Ursinus, Bermudez worked at Delaware County Community College for six years. Delaware County has 14,000 students, 600 of whom came through Bermudez’s offices.

He worked not only on the main campus but also at five or six branch campuses.

Jan Levengood, a co-worker and one of the people responsible for hiring a new interim assistant director, had nothing but good things to say about her new colleague.

“We struck gold…In a short time [Bermudez] has made incredible brain injuries. He has assisted with reintegration back into the community, job coaching, and daily life.

“I love working with college students. I work with students who have documented disabilities…we ensure students have access to the campus, to programs, to classes, to the education experience,” he said. “We work with students to help them be successful, to ensure their experience at Ursinus is fully accessible.”

Along with helping students, Bermudez is a big fan of the University of Notre Dame football team.

He’s also looking forward to seeing Ursinus athletic teams in action.

“I am looking forward to going to the different games, the different events on campus, student programs, concert events… I know that Ursinus has a great basketball team, football team, and women’s [field] hockey team,” he said.

Bermudez enjoys his life and his job. He said he wants the best for the students on the campus.

“It’s really important to get out and support, to get involved. Not just to see the students in the office, but to get on campus and go to the games, interact with students…It’s a great way to support the students and be a part of the Ursinus community,” he said.

Word on the Street

What new options would you like to see in Wismer and why?

“More tacos and churros because tacos and churros are awesome.” — Katherine Clark, 2016

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“More roasted veggies in Hometown/Vegetarian. They are always dripping in oil or have salt/pepper spices on them, and all I want is plain vegetables.” — Madeline Troutman, 2016

“Brin back the waffle maker!” — Jordan Miller, 2016

“Bring back the normal coffee creamer!” — Maddie Mathay, 2017

“Breakfast all day!” — Sophie Snapp, 2017

“Late night Lower again!” — Nicole Pacera, 2016

Happening on Campus

Thursday

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPINT Brainstorm</td>
<td>Ursinus Founders Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session</td>
<td>Day Celebration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bear’s Den</td>
<td>Wismer</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 p.m.</td>
<td>4:30 p.m. - 6 p.m.</td>
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Friday

Saturday

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<tr>
<td>Resident Advisor</td>
<td>SPINT Brainstorm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Applicant Individual</td>
<td>Olin Auditorium</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>Blackbox Theater</td>
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<tr>
<td>Residence Life Office</td>
<td>Lower Wismer</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 a.m. - 4 p.m.</td>
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Sunday

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Super Bowl Party</td>
<td>Lower Wismer</td>
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Monday

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dan-El Paddilla</td>
<td>Olin Auditorium</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peralta to Speak</td>
<td>Blackbox Theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 p.m.</td>
<td>7 p.m. - 8 p.m.</td>
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Tuesday

Wednesday

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The elephants aren’t in the room

Poll probes pupils on pressing politics

Andrew Tran
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According to the Ursinus College Communications Office, the student body is comprised of about 1,600 students from 12 countries and 35 states. Seventy Ursinus students were polled for this article regarding their political practices and choices in the upcoming election. Forty percent of those polled were currently registered as Democrat, while 12.5 percent were registered Republican. Of those polled, 29 percent were people of color (POC), and 71 percent were white; no POC said that they would vote for any of the Republican candidates, whereas only white people polled said that they registered as Republicans.

Of the people who identified as women, 31 percent registered as Democrat and 9 percent as Republican. Forty-one percent of people who identified as men were Democrat, 17 percent as Republican. Similarly to POC, queer or LGBTQ+ people, who made up 7 percent of the polling body, were of various political affiliation (Independent, Democrat, Green), but none were registered as Republican.

Ryan Zeitzer, a senior classics and chemistry double major, intends to vote for Sen. Bernie Sanders. Zeitzer says that he is hesitant to believe that Sanders will bring about great change, but is willing to place his faith in him as a potential presidential contender. “The fact that you are starting off with a campaign which is focusing on smaller donations, almost entirely coming from individuals, as opposed to corporations...it’s a step in the right direction. [Sanders] is not going to solve everything, but if he gets success then it might at least cause a shift in how politics work in America.” Fifty percent of students polled stated their interest in Sanders.

In contrast, approximately 3 percent stated that they would vote for Donald Trump in the general elections. A senior business and economics major explained, “He’s an a**hole, but at least he’s honest and isn’t really into bullshit****ing people. I want Trump to become president because I feel like he would actually make a difference. Too many presidents have come and gone without trying to upset everyone. Effectiveness should replace political correctness, and I think this is the kind of change America needs.”

However, perhaps most relevant, as shown in the chart above detailing the potential votes of the student body, is the second highest figure: a full 30 percent of students either aren’t sure or are indifferent about which political candidate to vote for. In the poll, approximately 31 percent of students are not registered for any political party.

In places like college campuses, once hotbeds of political action and activity, political inactivity may now be the norm. Ursinus College is no exception.

The political fervor emanating from media outlets can be felt from the national level to the local as the upcoming presidential elections take the nation’s, and indeed the world’s, attention. With the first major nominating event, the Iowa caucus, held on Monday, February 1, and the first presidential primary vote happening in New Hampshire on February 9, each of the various presidential candidates have been stepping up their campaigns in anticipation. Presidential debates and candidate rallies are some of the most-viewed events in the United States.

Though to some the mania surrounding the upcoming elections may seem ever-present, the enthusiasm is not long to last. And in places like college campuses, once hotbeds of political action and activity, political inactivity may now be the norm. Ursinus College is no exception.

 Sometimes there are reasons why an individual is choosing not to vote for elected officials. Juan Lopez, a junior politics major registered with the Socialist Workers Party, said that he would not be interested in voting in the upcoming primary or general elections. “As a radical leftist, I believe in equality for everyone,” says Lopez, “and I believe that the only way to truly achieve that is through the dismantling of the capitalist bourgeois state. Thus, engaging in bourgeois politics goes against my values, and against the revolutionary ideals which I espouse.”

To be frank, most undecided voters aren’t as distinct in their views as Lopez, and it often comes down to political indifference. Especially among students, who often lead lives of high academic and social stress, the grand scheme of democratic politics in the United States may not exactly be the highest priority.

This poll refers to the presidential general elections every four years; voting for the chair of your local county isn’t as “sexy” as the leader of the United States of America. Whether or not the political activity of the campus should be changed is another topic of debate, but it can be certainly said that Collegeville, Pennsylvania, isn’t holding a Democratic or Republican National Convention anytime soon.

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Paul Cottam ’19 is one of three international players on the men’s basketball team. His teammates, Patrick Mekongo ’17 and Remi Janicot ’18, are from Cameroon and France, respectively.

He joined a recruiting website to get his name out to American universities, and he was contacted by many junior colleges and prep schools, along with Division III schools such as Ursinus College. When Cottam was talking to different coaches, he said the Ursinus coaches stuck out to him as they made the emails personal and wanted him to be a part of their squad.

“I could tell when coaches just plugged my name into a general email, and the Ursinus coaching staff didn’t do that,” Cottam said. “They talked about my stats and film, so I could tell it was personalized and they did their research on me. That really made me interested in the school.”

“We were interested in Paul the first time we saw his film,” said Kevin Small, the head basketball coach at Ursinus. “The athleticism that he showed was very unusual for a guy his height, and his potential is through the roof,” Small said.

Since arriving on campus, Cottam has experienced the American way. The hardest obstacle that he has had to overcome is being away from his family, as he left behind three siblings in England, including his twin brother. “It’s hard to be this far away from my family, especially for this amount of time,” Cottam said.

However, there are many aspects he likes about his new home. “The facilities that are available here are incredible,” said “Tall Paul.” “And the food is much, much better over here,” he said with a chuckle. Cottam is now also able to watch the NBA without having to stay up until the wee hours of the night.

“Back home if I wanted to watch NBA games I had to stay up until 2-3 a.m. because of the time difference,” Cottam said. “There were many nights that I ended up sleeping on the couch trying to catch the end of the games.”

Being able to watch professional basketball players more often and having the facilities that are on campus available to him, Cottam has felt his game improve. He can be seen in the gym by himself, working on his game.

He is waiting for his time to shine in a game, and he knows that his time will come. For now, he is focused on getting better and taking in the whole experience. “Not many kids get the opportunity that I have, and I am not going to waste it,” Cottam said.
Christian and Keven Hoogheem will both look to make their mark during the Centennial Conference Championships, held Saturday, Feb. 13, at McDaniel College.

Dynamic Duo

**Wrestling twins continue to succeed on and off the mat**

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“They are a coach’s dream,” brags Ursinus wrestling coach Bill Racich. When the class of 2016 arrived on campus in August of 2012, very few people knew who Christian and Keven Hoogheem were. Since then, things have certainly changed. Today the twin wrestling tandem are prominent members of the campus community. From the biology labs to leadership of the campus community, Christianity and Tall Paul, that he discovered what his true calling was. As he grows to be 6’4” by the time he was 14 years old. He didn’t have many options for shopping and had to go to Big and Tall for his clothes. “They were one of the few stores that had clothes that actually fit me,” Cottam said. When the store put an ad in the newspaper saying that it would give a 100-pound voucher to the tallest person to attend a basketball camp, Cottam thought it would be a great opportunity to get 100 pounds for his next shopping trip. “I never played basketball before, so at first I was going solely for the voucher,” Cottam said, with a laugh. “After playing for a while, I realized I liked it, so after that I didn’t miss a practice.” He couldn’t get enough of it. He was constantly working on his game, mostly in the post, as his 6’9” frame allowed him to tower over most of his opponents. When he wasn’t in the gym, Cottam was watching film or putting together his highlight tape in order to get looks from college coaches across the Atlantic.

From across the Atlantic

Freshman basketball player waits for his time to shine as he becomes acquainted with the game

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Paul Cottam patiently waits for his shot. With his elbows resting on his knees and hands folded, he sits on the edge of his seat in the Floy Lewis Bakes Center. After each basket for the home team he quickly rises and applauds. He can be seen from anywhere as his 6’9” stature makes him the tallest in the building. He sits back down and assumes the same position. Each word of encouragement is heard along with his smooth British accent by his teammates who make their way back to the bench.

For the kid that came to America to play basketball, his opportunity has not yet come, but his enthusiasm hasn’t wavered. “I love the game of basketball, and I have a great opportunity to learn,” said the 19-year-old. Learning is what Cottam had always been the tallest kid in his neighborhood, growing to be 6’4” by the time he was 14 years old. He didn’t have many options for shopping and had to go to Big and Tall for his clothes. “They were one of the few stores that had clothes that actually fit me,” Cottam said. When the store put an ad in the newspaper saying that it would give a 100-pound voucher to the tallest person to attend a basketball camp, Cottam thought it would be a great opportunity to get 100 pounds for his next shopping trip.

“I never played basketball before, so at first I was going solely for the voucher,” Cottam said, with a laugh. “After playing for a while, I realized I liked it, so after that I didn’t miss a practice.” He became addicted to the sport and couldn’t get enough of it. He was constantly working on his game, mostly in the post, as his 6’9” frame allowed him to tower over most of his opponents. When he wasn’t in the gym, Cottam was watching film or putting together his highlight tape in order to get looks from college coaches across the Atlantic.

“I hung out with friends here and there, but I really focused on basketball and worked hard to get my name out there,” Cottam said.