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Launching the Hindu Student Association

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Photo Credit: Dithya Arkalgud

The newly formed Hindu Student Association of Ursinus College is taking on its first semester as an official organization, providing education about aspects of Hindu culture and religion and fostering a deeper understanding of Hinduism. Co-founders Dithya Arkalgud '26 and Antara Dabral '25 kick-started the association's creation in the spring of last year, pushing for the idea to become a reality for the upcoming 2024-2025 school year. After a recent first event exceeding the expectations of both Arkalgud and Dabral, the Hindu Student Association is excited and motivated by this opportunity to share *who* and *what* they really are with the rest of campus.

Giving students a sense of cultural belonging is one of the most important goals of this organization. Arkalgud shared this view, stating, "In a PWI (primarily white institution) there's not that many people of our sort of, niche ethnicity group, and it's just nice to have a sense of community." The Hindu Student Association was developed under RSL (Religious and Spiritual Life) and RSL's mission of, "Encouraging students to explore and develop their spiritual life as part of a liberal arts education." Having a chance to share different cultural connections within Ursinus is a shared goal of both the association and RSL as a whole.

The group has already taken strides

in collaborating with other associations and ethnic clubs on campus, and hopes to hold future events with the Muslim Student Association, in addition to their recent pair-up with club Desi Diaspora for their first annual Diwali Celebration. Desi Diaspora was another new addition to Ursinus this semester, after years of work to bring the club to life. The club's mission is "...to foster community between the South Asian diaspora students on campus while sharing our culture with our Ursinus peers." President Nethmi Ediriweera '25 expressed her love for the club, sharing, "The things our club is doing is making a space for South Asian students, at the same time spreading awareness about our culture

Launching the Hindu Student Association (con't)

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and having an opportunity to bring that culture into the campus." With Arkalgud and Dabral being in leadership positions for both organizations, having these groups work together to support one another in gathering engagement and awareness is crucial. "Desi Diaspora is kind of supporting them always. We will be there always for the Hindu Student Association, because it is also spreading that Indian, or South Asian culture," explained Ediriweera about the bond the organizations have fostered together.

On October 30th, the Hindu Student Association launched their first event in collaboration with Desi Diaspora to celebrate the second day of Diwali with students. Students and faculty alike came out to celebrate, bringing an exciting turnout for the group. Diwali is the Hindu "Festival of Lights," spanning a 5-day celebration period. In Sanskrit Diwali, also called Deepavali, means *row of lamps*.

The event itself took place on the second day of Diwali, Choti Diwali. Dabral started the event with a brief presentation sharing what Diwali is, what it means in different cultural regions, and an agenda of how the event would proceed. Following the presentation, the association had a craft section for attendees to paint clay lamps called diyas, in accordance with the standard celebration for the second day. Diyas are clay lamps that usually have oil, and a wick put into them in order to light, however, the group used tealights in order to safely conduct the event indoors. "We also had little canvases

to just paint on and we just had a little craft night with music going!" remarked Arkalgud. Once painting was finished the group took their diyas outside to light them, engaging in a prayer hymn while arranging the diyas in a row to fit the standard set-up of lights shared throughout Diwali celebrations.

Another highlight was Upper Wismer working with the organization to provide food for the event. They created dishes based off of recipes suggested by Dabral and Arkalgud. "It was very sweet of them. When Dithya and I went to them about food, we were not expecting much...like two or three dishes, that's it. They showed up with like six!" exclaimed Dabral. The Hindu Student Association expressed lots of gratitude towards Upper Wismer for offering their support so willingly for the event.

Currently, the Hindu Student Association has a small member list, but the group is eager to grow through different events and activities on campus! Dabral commented on the association's inclusive environment stating, "We are open to everybody joining us." Whether a student practices Hinduism or is just wanting to learn more about Hinduism as a whole, the group will accept them with open arms!

Desi Diaspora also shares this open community and encourages people to attend their events if interested! The club's main events this semester have been Bollywood movie nights. "We try to incorporate a ton of different languages as well. We had a Malayalam movie night, which was our first one of the semester, and then our second

one was in Hindi - it was *Om Shanti Om*," Arkalgud mentioned. Their goal is to expose the campus to South Asian culture in an enjoyable way, with movies and snacks provided for everyone to enjoy! Ediriweera elaborated on this, remarking, "It is amazing how well our community is coming together and forming a beautiful group of people that are not the same ethnicity as well. Some people are from India, and then India is Northern India and Southern India, I'm from Sri Lanka, there's other people in the club who [are] from for example Pakistan, things like that. Even though it's not from the same country we have a shared sort of culture, and that gives us the opportunity to bond over that, which is amazing."

Both Desi Diaspora and the Hindu Student Association have so much more they are happy to share with the college and have expressed nothing but excitement for the events to come. Getting the chance to officially inaugurate both organizations at Ursinus was well worth the wait for Ediriweera. "We had the opportunity, and we seized the opportunity." The next movie night for Desi Diaspora will take place November 15th, so make sure to check it out if interested!

If you want to learn more information on the Hindu Student Association, feel free to email Antara Dabral - andabral@ursinus.edu, or Dithya Arkalgud - diarkalgud@ursinus.edu with any questions. Don't forget to keep an eye out for any upcoming events!



Photo Credit: Dithya Arkalgud



Ethical Bears

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With many new and exciting things on campus it is important to remember Ursinus's staples, such as the Bear Share program. The Bear Share program has undergone some exciting changes this year and is back and better than ever! Bear Share is a long-standing part of Ursinus's efforts to reduce the amount of waste on campus, as well as to offer an affordable way for students to get free and lightly used items. The first Bear Share event of this year happened on Friday, October 25th. Many students were able to take items they were looking for.

The Bear Share team wants to remind everyone that because they are always accepting new donations, students should come by more often! Additionally, Bear Share has more than just clothes. The program takes anything from books, clothes, and dorm supplies that are still in good condition. Bear Share is always looking for donations at their space in the Lower Level of the Myrin Library during their donation hours: Tuesdays from 5:00-6:30pm, Wednesdays from 5:00-6:30pm, or Fridays from 1:30-3:00pm.

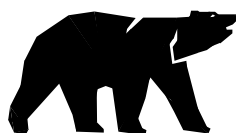
Every year before school ends for the summer, Bear Share conducts the Sustainable Move-out program, which typically lasts for five days in an outdoor tent. They collect unwanted and unneeded items that other students may be able to use. Kate Keppen happily explained to me how Sustainable Move-out works. In an email she states: *"This program was started about 15 years ago by faculty and students who would literally walk by the dumpsters and would see that they were full of items in good condition. Oftentimes students can find a friend who will take that unwanted minifridge or lamp, but not always. This cycle would happen every year when the academic year ended and not only was this letting valuable, usable items go to waste, but the college incurs costs via the number of dumpsters we use and the weight of our waste stream. Sustainable Move-out was created to keep those good items out of the waste stream, but what ended up happening was something far greater than I think anyone anticipated - people really valued having items come from their peers. It was a way for the community to pass on items to each*

other. A community of faculty, staff, and students would be built over those 5 days that we would have that tent up. So, having a space for this to happen on a year round basis is really great for sustainability efforts and the student experience."

Overall, Bear Share is a way for students to participate in creating a more environmentally friendly Ursinus, and reduce waste while still being conscious of the cost involved in doing so. The Bear Share team also encourages people to volunteer if they are able and states that they will have volunteer opportunities posted soon to the website. But in the meantime, those interested can reach out to bearshare@ursinus.edu. There will be other special events throughout the academic year that the team encourages you to look out for, including a repair *café* in the spring semester. So please head over to the library to pay Bear Share a visit. Maybe you'll even leave with your new favorite article of clothing!



Photo Credit: Ursinus Website



A Grizzled Editor

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No matter what building you go to at Ursinus, you will likely find a few copies of *The Grizzly* lying around. Whether it serves you as casual reading material or a source for all your Ursinus-related information, *The Grizzly* has been a mainstay in the Ursinus community in its current iteration since 1978. In the past forty-five years, countless members have taken up the roles within the newspaper to make it successful. Of the many, only a few have ascended to the most essential position: Editor-In-Chief. That is the exact position Kate Horan finds herself in.

Horan, a senior English major and MCS minor, has been with *The Grizzly* since her Sophomore year and has worn many hats: writer, Opinions Editor, Features Editor, and now Editor-In-Chief. Her role includes managing every step of *The Grizzly*, from pitching ideas to print release. "The job has a lot of moving parts," Horan stated. "It starts with pitch meetings, in which writers and editors present ideas for new articles and are assigned to write. I organize and run these meetings, prompting brainstorming of events and providing my ideas."

After pitch meetings, which are held on Wednesdays at 7 p.m. in Ritter 141, comes the part of writing for a newspaper that is most expected: writing. After submitting the articles, the section editors edit them before Horan and Dr. Doron Taussig, *The Grizzly*'s faculty advisor, approve and suggest their edits. As the most crucial stage of *The Grizzly* publication process, it is one of the most stressful for Horan. "One of the most common stressors is working with deadlines for articles," Horan admitted. "To use articles in Layout, articles must be turned in and must be edited and prepped for print. This timing is not always consistent, so each week is a new situation to adapt to."

Despite working as an editor for three years, one of the most challenging aspects of the job for Horan remains the weekly fight with Adobe InDesign,

the software used to format the newspaper during layout meetings. "Adobe InDesign can sometimes be an enemy to section editors and myself," Horan explained. "It is not an easy program to use and takes practice. I've worked with the program for 2.5 years and still struggle with it sometimes." Through the struggles of working with InDesign, Horan and the other *Grizzly* editors make the best of it. During one layout meeting, the staff laughed about their experience with a haunted house and posed different captions of a photo between Features Editor Caitlin Cunnane '27 and News Editor Renee Washart '26. On Thursdays, the printed copies are distributed.

Between the communication lines that need to be managed and the formatting that needs to be completed, the Editor-In-Chief position causes quite a bit of stress; this is true for Horan, who holds three other on-campus jobs and an internship with a publishing company. Horan still manages to keep her head held high, however. "I have had a lot of practice balancing various responsibilities," she said, "while I can try to say that it becomes simpler with time, it doesn't. It takes a lot of dedication and motivation, but those come naturally to me when I do things that I love. I don't consider my jobs only to be 'work.' I set myself up in positions where I am doing things that I enjoy. I don't know if I could successfully balance everything if I didn't love what I do."

Her efforts do not go unappreciated. Photo Editor Georgia Gardner '25 loves working under Horan. "Working under Kate is amazing," Gardner praised. "She is a great leader with natural talent that makes *The Grizzly* what it is today. She is kind and generous and brings out the best in everyone involved with *The Grizzly*. It is a pleasure to not only work for her but even

just to know her!"

In her last year at Ursinus, Horan has a last wish for her time with *The Grizzly*. "I want more students to participate in this *student-led* newspaper," Horan stated. "Every Editor-In-Chief will run the newspaper differently, adding their touch, but I think that one thing that should continue is the effort to get more students involved. While I love writing articles often, I want to hear more student perspectives and voices." She encourages students to get excited about potential topics in *The Grizzly* and not to let inexperience deter anyone from joining the staff. "If you aren't experienced with writing articles, that is not a problem," she explained. "That should not stop you from participating, and editors are here to ensure that writers are supported."

Although the school year still has a ways to go, talks of Horan's successor have already begun. "There is still much to be seen in this semester and next semester," she said. "No decisions have been made." Horan is certain about one thing: "I know this person must be very dedicated and passionate about *The Grizzly*."



Some Grizzly editors at the Activities Fair

Photo Credit: Kate Horan



Inside the Layout Room

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You've seen us around... you've read the papers... but what goes on behind the scenes? This week, we are giving you a little peek into the editing room, and hearing from the people inside!

Q: Favorite part of *The Grizzly*?

A: My favorite part is coming up with fun article topics that will both be of interest to students and educational, but also something people might laugh at and appreciate reading.

-Renee Washart '26 News Editor

A: The people I get to work with

-Georgia Gardner '25 Photo Editor

Q: Any drawbacks?

A: Lack of student engagement with the paper

-Georgia Gardner '25 Photo Editor

Q: Favorite Memory?

A: My favorite memory was the first article I had ever written for *The Grizzly*. It was published on October 3, 2022, and was titled "A Bear Worth Knowing: Laura Cunningham." It was my Sophomore year, and I was the Opinions Editor at the time. I was petrified of writing an article because I thought that there was no way that my writing would be good enough to be published and I thought surely I would be embarrassed. I finally worked up the courage to write this article, and Doron left a comment on the article that said: "this is REALLY well done. Kate has been holding out on us." I honestly think that I can pinpoint this moment, that comment, as one of the reasons that I have gained so much confidence in myself, as both a journalist and as a person willing to take risks."

-Kate Horan '25 Editor-In-Chief

Q: Favorite articles you've written or edited? Favorite photos you've taken?

A: My favorite articles to write and edit were the ones in the Halloween edition!

-Renee Washart '26 News Editor

A: Favorite photo I've taken for *The Grizzly* are any of the sports ones I've done because they aren't my usual style so it's fun and shakes things up!

-Georgia Gardner '25 Photo Editor

Q: How did you get started?

A: The EIC last year recruited me to write an article for *The Grizzly* in the spring and I completely fell in love with writing for *The Grizzly* and wanted to continue doing so!

-Renee Washart '26 News Editor

A: I was going into my junior year and wanted to be more involved in college and I emailed Doron asking if they needed anyone to take photos and after a quick interview, I was the Photo Editor.

-Georgia Gardner '25 Photo Editor



Trust the Science

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Chiropractics. Detoxes. Carnivore diets. The world of health, mental and otherwise, is dense with “alternative medicines” that, when scrutinized, lack a scientific backbone; it is, of course, anyone’s choice to pursue these practices for themselves, and their freedom shouldn’t be infringed upon. However, an issue arises when those whose opinions carry greater weight advocate for these treatments; we expect our public health professionals to work in accordance with facts and provide us with accurate information about our health and options. It’s confusing and potentially dangerous when an informed professional promotes an opinion without a body of evidence behind it.

The Health Promotion Office’s Hive recently invited astrologer Natalie Levin to speak with students and introduce the broad strokes of astrology. In an email announcing the October 3rd workshop, Levin’s bio described how she combines “...psychic talents... Jungian analysis, Gestalt couples’ therapy, and trauma therapy...” in her work and her ability to “...connect with what is beyond the veil of the three-dimensional to offer insights and wisdom from the stars.” Naturally, I was curious about how the event would frame astrology, so I went. It was a fun, low-stress evening, and Levin was kind, bubbly, and funny.

However, I saw several reasons for concern.

First of all, I feel that Levin’s attitude on mental illness was problematic for an event held by one of Ursinus’ health resources: she discussed her belief that both mental illness and addiction are rooted in astrology. For example, she explained that those

with many water signs in their charts—Cancers, Scorpios, and Pisces—can attribute mental illness and addiction to the unstable energy of water and the sheer amount of psychic energy they receive from the universe. As a student who has struggled with mental health issues, it was uncomfortable to hear, and I can very easily imagine that narrative having stood in the way of my pursuing effective therapy.

Secondly, Levin discussed at length her beliefs concerning spirits, psychic abilities, and psychic energies, going so far as to tell one student that, because of their star sign, they may be an extraterrestrial from the future and another that they may be a medium. Obviously, both of these claims are entirely unsubstantiated and lean heavily into the spiritual, and, in my opinion, have no place at the Hive.

When asked about the session, Director of Health Promotion Katie Bean explained that the Hive’s goal is to “build community and offer various coping strategies for students to find what works for them,” and noted that the topic of astrology was requested by a student. Student worker Payton Fritz added that “[events by the Hive offer] a wide range of programming throughout the semester that [promote] healthy recovery of mental illness and substance use disorder.” However, isn’t it the responsibility of Health Promotion to filter out requests that don’t meet reasonable evidentiary standards?

Of course, all students deserve to feel supported and celebrated in whatever beliefs they may hold. As Ursinus senior Tre Dunlap puts it: “I’m glad that they’re trying to appeal to all kinds

of healing, I guess. It’s important that we all feel in any way healthy, whether that’s spiritually or mentally.” But, Dunlap observes, “I don’t exactly agree with this. I don’t think there’s ‘healing magic’ in astrology.” Spiritual health is an important part of wellness. The problem comes when students see unsubstantiated beliefs being promoted in a wellness context by the same office running programs like UCrew, our online wellness education, and All-Recovery Meetings.

Perhaps something like this could be more appropriately handled by the Office of Religious and Spiritual Life. With the Hive being a part of the Wellness Center, it’s vital that students feel they can trust that any information they receive is backed by science and constructive towards their personal needs. Pseudoscience concerning mental health can erode that trust and steer students away from evidence-based, potentially lifesaving care.

It’s too easy to read this program as the Hive supporting the mixing of the pseudoscientific and the type of care it provides. The promotion of evidence-based self-care would better serve Ursinus students. In the future, it should be clear when a Health Promotion Office speaker is focused on mental health versus spiritual health and evidence-based versus personal beliefs so that we, as students who trust the Wellness Center with our care, may know how best to use the information being given to us and where that information is coming from.



Payton Fritz '26 (left) and astrologer Natalie Levin (right)
Photo Credit: Nathaniel Nerone



Much More Than Wins and Losses with Bobbi

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In today's world, where wins and losses often define success, Bobbi Morgan, the head women's basketball coach at Ursinus College, stands for a different viewpoint, one rooted in the value of relationships, personal growth, and the journey shared by both player and coach. After a prominent career at Haverford College and with USA Basketball, where she led the U16 team to a gold medal, Coach Morgan remains as passionate and competitive as ever, though her approach to coaching has evolved. "I'm just as competitive as I was when I first started," she said, "but now I see the bigger picture. It's about enjoying the moment and the journey we go through together - players, teams, coaches."

Morgan's path to coaching began unexpectedly after her college graduation. With no job lined up, she volunteered with the newly formed Narberth Summer Basketball League. It was there that she met Bill McDonough, a major figure in the local basketball scene, and found her first coaching opportunity. "I didn't know it at the time, but coaching would become the passion of my life," she recalls. "From the start, I loved helping people believe in themselves and succeed."

Her approach has always centered on fostering genuine connections with her players. "I try to give my teams ownership and challenge them to find their own voice. It's not just about basketball, but helping them grow as

people," she explains. This philosophy is rooted in the advice her parents gave her: "Be yourself and make sure people know you care." She reflects on how that guiding principle has shaped her coaching style. "The older I've gotten, the more I care. Unless you've coached, that might be hard to understand, but your team becomes an extension of your family."

After leading Haverford to three championships, Morgan made the difficult decision to move on in 2021. "I didn't feel like athletics was being valued at Haverford the way it once was," she says, explaining why she left. A call from Ursinus head coach Kevin Small changed her trajectory. "I was sitting on the beach with my family when Kevin called, and one thing led to another." With her youngest daughter, Reilly, already a junior at Ursinus, the opportunity felt like the right fit. "I felt good about recruiting to a place that had been so good for my own family."

One of the most meaningful moments in Coach Morgan's career came during her time at Haverford. A player, Dominique Meeks, whose mother was battling ALS, carried her mother on and off the bus so she could attend a tournament in Boston. At the end of the tournament, Dominique was named MVP, and the team presented the championship trophy to her mother, Libby. "That moment will always stay with me," Bobbi reflects. "The team grabbed the trophies and gave them to Libby."

That's what it's all about - people, family, and caring. Her experience coaching internationally with USA Basketball was equally transformative. "Coaching the best young athletes in the country, girls who will be in the WNBA soon, was incredible," she shared. Despite their immense talent, she found that coaching these players involved the same core principles of coaching: building trust, instilling belief, and focusing on the process. "But to be honest, other than them being bigger and more athletic, coaching at that level to the collegiate level is very much the same. You are trying to put people in the right spots, give them the tools they need to succeed and try to make sure they believe in themselves."

Looking to the future, Bobbi Morgan hopes to continue fostering a winning culture at Ursinus and dreams of a Centennial Conference championship. But her ultimate goal? "I want my players to remember that we cared about them as people. That's what lasts." In a time of intense competition, Coach Morgan stands out for her unwavering commitment to her players and her sport, offering a model of leadership that goes beyond just wins and losses. "I've been lucky to coach amazing people and work with awesome assistants," she said. "At the end of the day, it's always about the people."

**Coach Morgan at this
year's FIBA World Cham-
pionships!!**

Photo Credit: Ursinus Website



From Club Sport to Cheer-ocracy

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The Ursinus Cheerleading Team has become a club as opposed to a club sport. To learn more, I sat down with Teresea Nadeau '25, one of three captains of the cheerleading team, as well as a psychology and music major.

In regards to how this came about, Nadeau says that in around July of this summer, the two coaches of the cheerleading team quit. This came after the team was headed by a series of temporary coaches. The opportunity to have a new temporary coach was presented by the school, but the team declined, not looking for a temporary solution. Since the cheer team may have some potential involvement in choosing who will lead them, Nadeau says that they would like to find someone who is going to stick around, for "an extended amount of time." During the search for a more permanent coach, Nadeau and her fellow captains Gabriella Price '25 and Gianna McCarthy '25 stepped up for the task of creating choreography and teaching routines.

The lack of a coach means that the team cannot perform cheerleading

stunts, which are maneuvers where cheerleaders are lifted into the air, due to the liability risks. However, Nadeau highlights that this has given the team the opportunity to have a lot more cheers in the line up, and that it is "still a good season." The leadership of the three captains is especially impressive, considering how late they received the news of their coach quitting. This meant no summer cheerleading camp and essentially just jumping into action at the beginning of the semester. Despite this, Nadeau expresses another positive aspect, which is that the environment is lower-stress and lower-stakes. "I want everyone to feel comfortable, and I feel like I can actually impact that," says Nadeau.

The change has also fostered a sense of community and democracy amongst members, giving them the ability to collectively debrief on what they can do better. "We look to make everyone comfortable," expressed Nadeau. "This is a team...this is a family." In fact,

the decision to be coachless for the rest of the season was left not only up to the captains, but also to the members who agreed it would be best for the present.

Despite the club taking a series of big losses, they show no sign of slowing down. They have adapted and overcome, especially killing it at Homecoming! We are looking forward to seeing what the rest of the season holds for them!

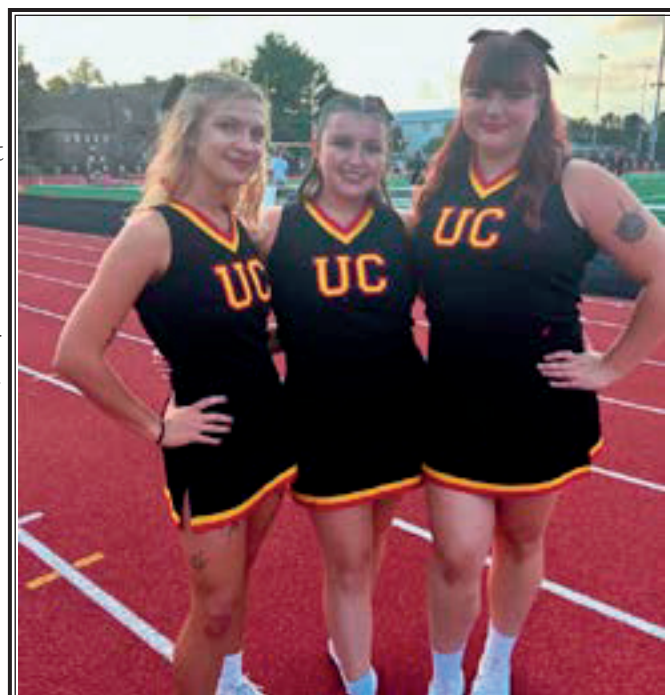


Photo Credit: UC Cheer Team

Performance of the Week

With a brutal schedule of back-to-back meets, Ursinus Women's Swimming faced a serious test this weekend. The team passed with flying colors, dominating both Widener and Bryn Mawr to tally 3 straight wins on the year!

Photo Credit: Elliot Schott

