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Looking at the Leftovers: Stories We Missed This Year

Andru Zodrow and Genny Sheara

In the days following Thanksgiving or Christmas, it is common practice to raid the fridge for anything that may have been left over from holiday celebrations. For the last issue of 2022, The Spectator is looking back at important stories we were unable to cover that are of significant student interest.

Seattle U College of Nursing Lawsuit

According to reporting from King5, a group of three former and one current Seattle U nursing students were working on their doctorates at the college when they were informed that their program had not been approved by Washington's Nursing Commission. They would therefore not be able to obtain the Masters in Nursing which they were under the impression they would be receiving. Those students were awarded a Bachelor of Science in Nursing instead.

Stritmatter Kessler Koehler Moore, the law firm representing the aggrieved students, argues that they filed the suit because the university knowingly received payment for a service they knew they could not provide.

"The Stritmatter Firm filed a lawsuit against the Seattle University College of Nursing for advertising, enrolling students, and accepting tuition for a master's degree the school was neither accredited nor licensed to offer," a Nov. 17 press release said.

In a press release responding to the lawsuit published Nov. 18, Seattle U acknowledged the concerns of students while denying any illegal activity or wrongdoing.



Jake Nelson

“Although the university regrets the way information was communicated to doctoral students in 2020 about the proposed MSN degree, any allegation that the university marketed or advertised the degree with an intent to deceive students is categorically false,” the statement said.

The suit is ongoing, posing a challenge to the College of Nursing which will also be navigating a transition to a new Dean after Kristen Swanson leaves the post at the end of the 2022-2023 academic year.

President Peñalver Speaks at Saint Thomas More Center at Yale

President Eduardo Peñalver visited his alma mater on May 1, 2022 to give a speech at the Saint Thomas More Chapel and Center at Yale University entitled “A Christian Approach to Systemic Racism.”

Peñalver’s roots in Catholic social teaching are not just a part of his academic work, but also his family background. He describes his father deciding to become a Franciscan if he was released from prison from the Castro regime in Havana.

“During the Cuban Revolution he was supportive of the efforts to overthrow the Batista government, but as a devout Catholic he was not sympathetic to the communist turn the revolution took after 1959,” Peñalver said.

Standing against communism led his father to being imprisoned by the Castro government, during a time in which many were executed in jail.

“He formed an intention to enter religious life if he were ever released,” Peñalver said.

His father made good on that intention. After his father relocated to the United States and decided not to continue with his religious formation, he eventually met Peñalver’s mother, who was a former Franciscan sister.

The full talk, which can be found here, is a fascinating exploration of Peñalver’s Franciscan roots, his outlook as a Catholic and the way he approaches racial justice issues given that background.

Seattle U Reacts to Colorado Shooting

Five were fatally shot at a Colorado Springs LGBTQ+ nightclub in the late evening of Nov. 20 before occupants tackled and subdued the gunman. Though separated by distance, numerous members of the Seattle U community felt the pain of violence against the LGBTQ+ community, which has risen internationally in recent years.

Several of the university’s department leaders shared statements with their programs regarding the tragedy. In an announcement shared to the Seattle U website and their Instagram page, the College of Arts and Sciences wrote that they stand in solidarity with their LGBTQIA+ community members. Arts and Sciences Dean David Powers emphasized the intersectional oppression and violence that queer people of color face.

“This is a moment when the Jesuit value of cura personalis, care of the whole person, resonates most strongly. We must work together to uplift and center the experiences of those who are at the margins,” the letter from Powers read.

Similarly, the department of social work released a statement offering the campus community the opportunity to meet with a faculty member to help process feelings of grief and mourning. They also condemned the rise in anti-LGBTQ+ rhetoric and legislation and its influence on nationwide politically motivated violence. As the Colorado Springs, Seattle U and national queer community take time to mourn and heal, some groups within the university look for ways to continue to support and uplift marginalized LGBTQ+ voices.

