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Chloe Platt

Seattle University

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Ode to Graduating Editors

Chloe Platt, Editor-in-Chief

Working in news, editors and designers and photographers alike acclimate to the inherently fast-paced nature of the news cycle. At times, the weeks blur into headlines and page designs and the heartbeat of everyday life becomes delicately intertwined with the rise and fall of the stories we tell. In the midst of timelines falling in and out of place, we must seek to remember that people move in time just the same. A whole year of articles published is a beautiful collection of living presently, and just as much a goodbye. So, to all the graduating Editorial Board members, I write for you. An Ode to Graduating Editors.



Jordie Simpson

Sam Bunn, Graduating Investigative Editor

Sam is one of the funniest people I have ever met. His unique wit and predisposition for all that is ridiculous lends itself to his infectious humor. I think majorly, however, his humor is a result of the manner in which he understands others. Sam listens and cares for all of those around him, sensitive to the beautiful facets of being human. And this sensitivity is nurturing, comforting in a manner beyond the bounds of his years, his positionality.

Sam approaches the drone of everyday life with unwavering whimsy. In his presence, you are reminded of the beauty of small things. At times, he has pointed them out, at others, he encompasses them with a knowing spirit, allowing you to draw your own understanding.

Sam is sunshine embodied.

When asked about how he feels his time at The Spectator will serve him as he moves into the next chapter of his life, he responded:

“I think The Spectator has given me a lot of confidence in exploring things that I don’t know very much about. Part of journalism is taking something that you want to learn more about talking to people who do and helping synthesize that information in a way that is easily communicable to other people. And I think all of those skills are so important for adults in the modern world today.”

Sean Alexander, Graduating Director of Photography

Sean is a storyteller at heart. It feels that each day he is revealing new mediums through which he has expressed himself: photography, ballet, break-dancing, singing, videography, script writing, building furniture and others. I think this is so much a testament to the depth of his emotions and curiosities. Holding all of that beauty in one person demands new ways to be told, to be felt.

As much as Sean is a storyteller, he is also a friend, in all senses of the word. Not just to me or to you, but to everyone he meets. Sean recognizes the particular intricacies of an individual and holds each distinct human property with care.

Sean is reasonable about life and practical in all the ways that matter, and yet, he manages to carry optimism for others. For what people are and can be.

When asked why he had decided to join The Spectator, he responded:

“I am a non-traditional student in that I’m almost 30. So socializing on campus isn’t really something I do a lot of. But The Spectator gave me an environment that was positive, and it will have some social interaction as well. I think we all produced really good work during my time there. So I would say all that kind of contributes to why I joined The Spectator was, I recognized it as being a helpful and positive community, and I wanted to be a part of it.”

Qasim Ali, Graduating Sports & Opinion Editor

Qasim is a phenomenal journalist, not due to his writing technique or stylistic comprehension (although his competency in both regards should be noted), but due to his dedication to listening to others. We are often taught that listening is what takes place when you are not actively speaking, but Qasim understands that listening is a holistic undertaking. That true storytelling is born from deep understanding and care. He embodies this notion in all that he does, all that he writes, all that he is.

And while embodying all of that understanding, Qasim manages a wicked sense of humor and calming presence. Conversation with Qasim is the remedy to a stagnant day. His words both energize and soothe; always a master at multitasking.

Qasim is the type of person who cares so deeply about something, it compels others to care for it too.

When asked about his favorite part of having worked at The Spectator, he responded:

“It was just I learned so much, and I’ve met so many people that I would not have if I wasn’t like out every week bothering people and trying to learn more. And so my favorite part has been becoming, in my eyes, becoming a professional in a lot of ways, learning how to handle situations professionally. But also just getting to know people and kind of personally coming out of my shell. I can talk to people a lot easier. I can send emails a lot easier. Everything feels a lot smoother. So my favorite part has been the self-growth, the professional actualization.”

Luca Del Carlo, Graduating Lead Designer

Luca has the rare gift of an open heart. They converse with friendliness and invite others to join in the conversation with gentle ease and familiarity. He is lively in all of his endeavors, adding masterful sound effects to the most tedious of tasks, making music of the mundane. Their joyful spirit is expansive enough to envelope others in its warmth.

Their light is seen in all of their creative works, each design intentional and engaging. Luca breathes life into every publication with their unique artistic perspective and care. He sees a world, too often painted in grayscale, in vibrant colors; so graciously sharing his dynamic palette with others.

Luca is an artist not only in what they produce, but in the way they treat and see others.

When asked what he was going to miss most about working at The Spectator, he responded:

“Probably seeing that we’re physically making something every week that gets distributed out to people, and people get to like, use it and see it and take it home and use it for new things. I have just seen people turn the paper into origami and stuff. You’ll just see it in places you wouldn’t expect them. And we’re repurposed, or like someone’s like, ‘Oh, I saved this!’ I go to people’s houses all the time, and I see people have copies of The Spectators. They’re like, ‘Oh, my God, I’m in this article!’ I don’t know. It feels very rewarding to see your stuff, get used by people and make an actual impact.”

Genny Sheara, Graduating Editor-in-Chief

Genny has a deeply gentle spirit. Gentility, not born from timidity or humorlessness, but from their genuine love for humanity. They interact with others softly, playfully, with meaning. Genny has the beautiful, innate ability to hold space for others. Walking into a room where Genny is, where they have been: you belong. You are seen. You are known, honestly, for who you are and who you may one day be. And while holding all of that love and openness, Genny gracefully carries the weight of an incredibly quick wit.

Their intelligence shines through all of the work they produce and their attentiveness to building nuanced conversations that are both reflective and prospective in nature. To speak with Genny is to know that after all of the words fall silent, you will be changed

in some manner.

Genny exists with beautiful purpose, deriving meaning from all of whom and with which they interact.

When asked what words of wisdom they would wish to impart on a future generation of Editorial Board members, they responded:

“Whatever you’re doing, however you’re moving through the world and through your life, do it with care and love for other people. I think, certainly for one another, it gets really fast-paced and a little chaotic, pretty stressful, especially those Wednesday night layout nights where you’re here until like 11 p.m. or 12 a.m., you know, and it’s really easy to get wrapped up in that stress. And you lose sight of the people you’re doing it with and the people you’re doing it for. The reason why we publish at all and the reason why we write articles on things isn’t because there inherently has to be a newspaper on campus, it’s because this is a community that we all care about and want to uplift. I would just say: don’t forget to care about each other.”