



The GA-ZETTE

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**Black History Month
& Women's History Month
Edition**

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President Biden, Steelworkers Continue to Fight Sale of U.S. Steel

Editor's Note:
The following story was released, in part, by The Associated Press on Thursday, March 14. It also contains previous information officially released by U.S. Steel Corporation through its press office and by the United Steelworkers Union through press releases.
The GA-Zette will continue to report on this ongoing news story in future printed newspapers and on its online portal at sites.psu.edu/gazette.



An electric arc furnace at U. S. Steel Big River Steel Works. (Photo courtesy: U.S. Steel)

President Joe Biden is coming out in opposition to the planned sale of U.S. Steel to Nippon Steel Corporation (NSC) of Japan, saying in a statement, that the U.S. needs to “maintain strong American steel companies powered by American steelworkers.”
Biden added, “U.S. Steel has been an iconic American steel company for more than a century, and it is vital for it to remain an American steel company that is domestically owned and operated.”
The announcement, coming as Biden campaigned in the Midwest, could have ripples in his race against the presumptive Republican

presidential nominee, Donald Trump.
Biden has made the restoration of American manufacturing a cornerstone of his agenda as he seeks re-election, and he has the endorsements of the AFL-CIO and several other prominent unions.
The president of the United Steelworkers Union International, David McCall, has minced no words since Nippon, last Dec. 18, offered nearly \$15 billion to purchase the iconic steelmaker.
“To say we’re disappointed in the announced deal between U.S. Steel and Nippon is an understatement,” McCall said in a press

statement shortly after the announcement. “It demonstrates the same greedy, shortsighted attitude that has guided U.S. Steel for far too long.”
The United Steelworkers Union, North America’s largest industrial union, represents more than 1.2 million current and retired steelworkers in the United States, Canada and the Caribbean.
McCall added that the union would “fight with every tool at its disposal to protect good jobs, benefits and retirement plans.”
“Our union intends to exercise the full measure of our contract to ensure that whatever happens

next with U.S. Steel, we protect the good, family-sustaining jobs we bargained,” McCall said.
The Nippon Steel announcement raised concerns among community leaders and elected officials about what the transaction could mean for unionized workers, supply chains and U.S. national security.
The Mon Valley remains home to several U.S. Steel plants and operations, known as the Mon Valley Works. The Mon Valley Works is an integrated steelmaking operation that includes the Clairton Coke Works, the Edgar Thomson Plant and the Irvin Works.
(Continued on next page)

(Continued from page 2)

NSC President, Eiji Hashimoto, said, “We are excited that this transaction brings together two companies with world-leading technologies and manufacturing capabilities, demonstrating our mission to serve customers worldwide, as well as our commitment to building a more environmentally friendly society through the decarbonization of steel.”
“NSC has long admired U. S. Steel with deep respect for its advanced technologies, rich history, and talented workforce and we believe we can jointly take on the challenge of raising our aspirations to even greater heights. The transaction builds on our presence in the United States, and we are committed to honoring all of U. S. Steel’s existing union contracts,” he added.
President and CEO of U. S. Steel, David B. Burritt, said, “For our U. S. Steel employees, who I continue to be thankful for, the transaction combines like-minded steel companies with an



Finished coils at our Irvin Plant, part of the Mon Valley Works. (Photo courtesy: U.S. Steel)

unwavering focus on safety, shared goals, values, and strategies underpinned by rich histories. For customers, U. S. Steel and NSC create a truly global steel company with combined capabilities and innovation capable of meeting our customers’ evolving needs...the announcement also benefits the United States – ensuring a competitive, domestic steel industry, while strengthening our presence globally.
“Our shared decarbonization focus is expected

to enhance and accelerate our ability to provide customers with innovative steel solutions to meet sustainability goals,” Burritt concluded.

(Cover Photo Courtesy of: Melanie McGinniss)
Japanese cherry blossom trees, planted by the Pittsburgh Sakura Project, bloom beautifully in North Park from March through April (2023).

The GA-Zette

AWARD-WINNING NEWSPAPER

2024 Keystone Media Second Place Awards

Carlin Whalen
Melanie McGinniss

2023 Pennsylvania Golden Quill Award for Excellence in Journalism:

Yousuf Ibrahim

2023 Pennsylvania Golden Quill Award Finalists:

Carlin Whalen
Melanie McGinniss
Shannon Reid

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The staff and management of The GA-ZETTE welcome letters to the editor by writing to rum31@psu.edu. Please include your full name, PSU email, address, and phone number to verify.
Missing contact information will result in non-consideration of your article.

Campus Update:

Commonwealth Campuses Expect \$54 Million in Budget Cuts for 2025-2026 Year

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In addition to the declining enrollment numbers, higher education in general is facing the struggles of rising costs and a lack of state support.

Because of this, Penn State President, Dr. Neeli Bendapudi, announced on Jan. 22 that the Commonwealth Campuses will face a \$54 million budget cut for the 2025-2026 fiscal year.

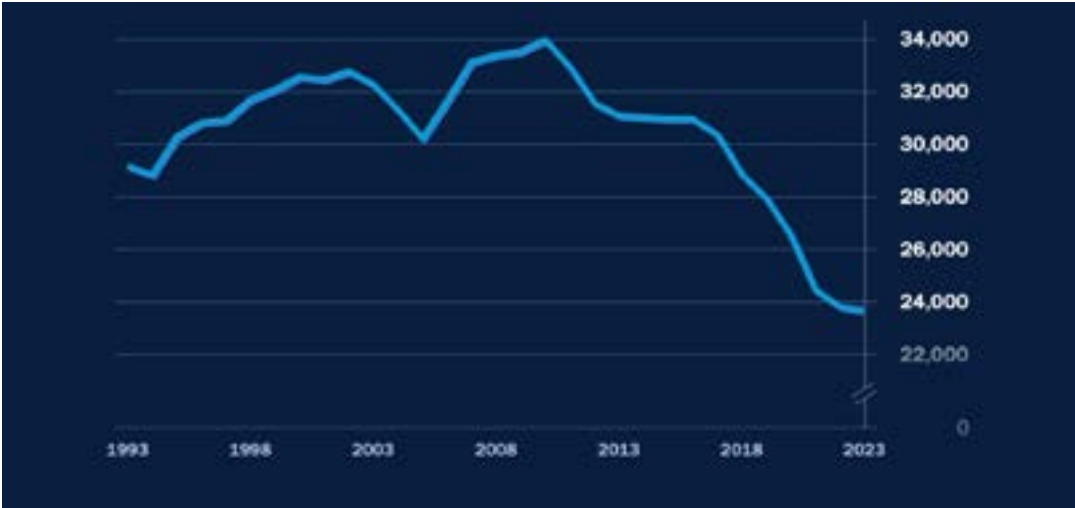
Penn State as a whole is looking at \$100 million in budget cuts.

“We’re not going to see any immediate changes,” Penn State Greater Allegheny (PSUGA) Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer, Dr. Megan Nagel said.

Until the situation can be fully assessed, Nagel emphasizes the campus’ dedication to its current students. “There should be no worries from a student end as to what their future pathway is like.”

While looking at creative ways to boost enrollment numbers, PSUGA is looking at how to more efficiently operate and drive revenue.

This could mean emphasizing continuing education, offering non-credit bearing courses



Commonwealth campuses are looking at a downhill slope for enrollment numbers.
(Photo from University announcements)

or renting the campus facilities.

The issue can be understood by looking at the demographic and financial challenges ahead.

The cost of healthcare is rising, so all universities are considering these costs along with their paid employees.

The predicted lowest point for higher education is 2030, just six years away. This being said, the issue does not fall on the shoulders of just University Park or the Commonwealth Campuses.

The campus needs to take into account adult learners or international students while creating programs that are desired.

“You can have the most fabulous program with the top scholars of the world,

but if it’s not something that students are interested in and engaging with, that’s a difficult sell,” she said.

Past recommendations have been made to plan for these kinds of declines in higher education, but this time is different.

“We’re probably to a point where it’s really a bigger shift than we’ve had to make in the past,” Nagel said.

Previously, universities might have simply looked at closing programs, but here, Nagel says, there might be a much wider scale reorganization.

Because cutting programs can often mean cutting jobs, faculty will assess the current state of programs with the Academic Program and Portfolio Review (APPR).

“From a student perspective, that may end up opening more doors and opportunities,” Nagel said. Maintaining the student experience is at the center of all of PSUGA’s decision making.

This process started in February to ensure that the University is meeting students’ needs and interests.

According to statements from the University, initial data assessments are planned to occur during the spring and fall semesters of 2024, while implementation of methods will start in Spring of 2025.

Nagel sees this as an opportunity for the campus to put “the right programs in the right places.” She’s hopeful of how this pushes campuses to see each other as collaborators.

“From a student perspective, that may end up opening more doors and opportunities,” Nagel said. Maintaining the student experience is at the center of all of PSUGA’s decision making.

Grimes’ Goodbye to Greater Allegheny

From TV to IST

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From political science, to journalism then information technology (IT), Galen Grimes wore many hats in his career path that ended with his retirement last fall from Penn State Greater Allegheny (PSUGA).

An associate professor of information sciences and technology, Grimes started his studies at the University of Houston in 1974.

Initially looking to major in political science, he switched to communications/radio and television (RTV) and took on most of the broadcast journalism training courses at the university.

“I had a [good speaking voice](#) and I was initially interested in journalism,” Grimes said through an email. “I came along during the Woodward and Bernstein era [Watergate.]”

After working at KHOU-TV, a CBS affiliate in Houston, during his senior year, he was hired by KDFW, another CBS affiliate, and moved to Dallas.

“I worked there as a general assignments reporter, but also started doing medical stories,” Grimes said.

After another year of reporting, Grimes was hired by WTAE in Pittsburgh and worked there until 1982.

“I was the first medical reporter in the Pittsburgh market,” he said. “I was also the first reporter to interview Dr. Thomas Starzl, the liver transplant pioneer.”

It was after this experience that he learned more about himself and what he wanted to do.

“I realized I was not a journalist. I started in computers because I discovered while working at a ComputerLand retail store that I had an aptitude for computers,” he said.

Grimes then landed a job as a systems analyst at Comstock Engineering, Inc., where he worked for nine years.

He taught himself to program and learned about relational database theory and networking, which led to his interest in cybersecurity.

“I completed my B.A. in Communications at Pitt in 1987...then got my MSIS at Pitt, graduating in 1990.”

Grimes moved on to work for Mellon Bank as a project manager for six years. He spent the first three years building computer networks “in the downtown Mellon cam-



In addition to the IST program, Grimes helped to bring beekeeping and two hives to the Penn State Greater Allegheny campus.
(Photo courtesy: Melanie McGinniss)

pus, in Philadelphia, and in several smaller banks that Mellon acquired,” he said.

Finally, Grimes left Mellon in 1999 to make his way to PSUGA. “I was one of the initial instructors for the new IST program and developed several of the early IST classes,” he said.

In addition to his hard work in teaching, Grimes

left his mark on the campus in other ways.

With an interest in beekeeping, Grimes spent the past four years taking care of two hives, now located near the yellow parking lot, that serve a campus community apiary for everyone to learn about the significance of bees in the global ecosystem.

50 Years and Going Strong, THON Continues Fundraising Success; Greater Allegheny Students Needed to Participate in 2025

Thousands of feet, 46 hours of music and countless happy hearts and minds permeate Penn State every February when students from around the University meet for the annual THON celebration. Billed as the largest student-run philanthropy in the world, THON is a 46-hour dance marathon that is committed to enhancing the lives of children and families impacted by childhood cancer.

This year, a record \$16.9 million was raised. According to Jennifer Ross, nurse at the Penn State Greater Allegheny (PSUGA) campus and the advisor to campus THON, seven students from the campus travelled to University Park to participate, but fundraising efforts fell short of the \$7000 needed to be able to sponsor two students to dance. “They raised money through ribbon sales, chocolate sales, a (sports)

watch party, a volleyball tournament, and by volunteering at Hundred Acres Manor in the South Hills,” Ross said. “Even though we had no dancers, I want the students who worked hard to raise the funds this year to experience THON weekend and hope we raise enough for dancers next year,” she added. Because this is a fundraising event, next year’s dancers depend on this year’s fundraising, and it is \$3500 per dancer.

She also noted that, “some of the skills students develop through THON are leadership, organizational skills and marketing experience.” “Students can get involved by joining in August when the organization fair happens,” Ross said. Can’t wait? Students can reach out to Ross at her office in the lower level of the Student Community Center (SCC) or by e-mailing her at jur396@psu.edu.

New Faces in Familiar Places Welcome, Brad Kovalcik

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Brad Kovalcik is serving as Penn State Greater Allegheny’s (PSUGA) newly- appointed director of student affairs since the beginning of the spring semester. Kovalcik felt a familiar calling to PSUGA after graduating from Penn State Behrend and working for 11 years in Point Park University’s student activities involvement and leadership program. He received his doctorate from Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP) in

May 2023 after earning his master’s degree from James Madison University. Kovalcik recognized the importance of student involvement through his own college experience. “I used to be a big introvert...so I quickly realized I could either sit in my room...or I could push myself to join an organization,” Kovalcik said. He joined the Lion Entertainment Board at Behrend to bring bands and live music to the campus. Kovalcik realized along the way that this was

something he wanted, and could pursue as a career. “I want to give folks the experience that I was lucky enough to have.” Kovalcik recognizes and appreciates the close-knit community at PSUGA, so he is working hard to learn the culture before making any plans. “One of my passions is connecting the student experience and the co-curricular experience to things that help folks build career-readiness skills,” he said. Mirroring PSUGA’s initiatives for career readiness and student success,

Kovalcik is hoping to create a “cohesive pipeline” for students. He will make sure what comes out of student affairs fits together with the existing campus community and programs.



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Lt. Diane Grimm’s Salute to the Campus Another ‘Goodbye’ for Penn State Greater Allegheny



Lt. Diane Grimm posed with the Nittany Lion at Penn State Greater Allegheny.

1993—a pivotal year: following a blistering months-long newspaper strike from 1992.
o Bill Clinton was president.
o Seinfeld was a popular TV show.
o Pittsburgh was just getting back on track.

a field she loved and admired since she was a child because “I’ve always wanted to be out and about as far as a job is concerned and (I) wanted to do things that helped people,” she told *The GA-Zette* in an e-mail. Now, [as she prepares to retire](#) from Penn State and the Greater Allegheny Campus after 31 years, Grimm joins Professors Galen Grimes and James Pritchett who retired from the campus in the past 90 days.

Like Grimes and Pritchett, Grimm has good memories of her time at the University. “I worked for the State College police department, my first five years in law enforcement. Then I left the job for a couple years and started a family. Two years later, I

started at Penn State and continued my work at the University until the end of (this) March,” Grimm said. As she leaves the campus, Grimm encourages students, staff and faculty to keep the campus and themselves safe. “Be aware of the surroundings and trust instincts,” she said. “If they notice something unusual, or have a bad feeling about something, it’s better to just go ahead and report it because often instincts are accurate. Secondly, it’s important to be conscientious and thoughtful about where you’re going, knowing where you’re at and always be with somebody in unusual places that you might not be familiar with, as well as after dark.”

Scholarship Recognition Luncheon



From left to right: The Hon. Cynthia A. Baldwin and student Joy Sanderson. Penn State Greater Allegheny students with scholarships were recognized along with donors at a luncheon event at the campus Student Community Center on March 12. (Photos courtesy: Nick Trunzo)

Appreciating the African Diaspora Through Music, Poetry and Dance

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Communities around the world hold rich roots from the African Diaspora of historical migrations from the trans-Atlantic slave trade.

The global African Diaspora is highlighted during Black History Month to recognize Black history and culture that continues to influence the world today.

Penn State Greater Allegheny (PSUGA) celebrated Black History Month on Feb. 22 with a Diaspora Celebration event in the Student Community Center (SCC) commuter's lounge.

Students were invited to join the event to ignite education and awareness of Black influence through music, food, poetry and dance.

Dr. Michael Vicaro, associate professor of

communications, brought out a klav, a riq and a tambourine to show musical roots and explain differences in counting music. From Arabic, to Colombian to Turkish, Vicaro discussed the diasporic instances around the world.

Associate Professor of History, Dr. Johnathan White, powerfully read a poem for everyone, followed by several student readings and one

from Resident Life Coordinator, Kenneth Williams.

Listeners put their comfort food down to applaud.

The campus' dance team gave a lively performance to conclude the event, which engaged students and made for a nice end to the night on campus.



Penn State Greater Allegheny students and faculty gathered in the Student Community Center to share and learn about the Diaspora of Black culture.
(Photos courtesy: Melanie McGinniss)

Black Female Legacies in the Arts Women of Visions Share Some Perspective

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The Dr. Edna B. McKenzie Branch of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) held a virtual discussion on Feb. 10 with Women of Visions (WOV), a collective of Black female artists in Pittsburgh.

Lynne b., Janet Watkins, Marlana Adele Vassar and Penn State Greater Allegheny's Associate Professor of English, Dr. Mildred Mickle showcased their works and experiences, making for a creatively inspiring and empowering presentation.

Ronald B. Saunders, chairman of the board of the National Black Political Caucus, began with a reflection on Black life and accomplishments

and ASALH's mission to research and disseminate it all to the world.

The ASALH is a nonprofit organization that was founded in 1915 by Carter G. Woodson to inaugurate the celebration of Black History Month. It now carries the legacy of Woodson and the institutionalization of Black History Month in school districts, churches and community organizations across the country.

Rev. John C. Welch, senior pastor at Six Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church, gave an invocation before the playing of the Black National Anthem, "Lift Every Voice and Sing."

Vice President of Media Relations for the Dr. Edna B. McKenzie Branch, Anita Russell, hosted the rest of the virtual event.

The Dr. Edna B. McKenzie branch was founded in 2012, named after the first Black woman to earn a doctorate in history from the University of Pittsburgh and who was a trailblazing journalist for the New Pittsburgh Courier..

The city has since benefitted from the organization through its programs, initiatives and projects.

Mickle first spoke for



Women of Visions hosts art and music events at MOKA on Soho in Squirrel Hill.
(Photo courtesy: Melanie McGinniss)

contemporary artist Vassar, following along with a video showing her progress and eclectic use of artistic mediums. Vassar has created public projects around Pittsburgh and has also had her work featured in museums like the August Wilson Center for African American Culture and the MOKA Gallery.

Mickle then spoke about her own artwork, primarily in watercolor studies. She has had many of her works displayed at museums such as the Hermann Museum, the Spinning Plate Gallery, Bunker Arts, Brew House

Association, and the Carnegie Museum, all in Pittsburgh.

Lynne b. followed with a walkthrough video of the WOV art gallery display at the Carnegie Museum. Lynne is a mixed-media painter who assembles found objects into socially and emotionally aware displays.

The final speaker was self-taught ceramic and mosaic artist, Watkins. She started her art journey after she retired from the Federal Reserve Bank. Her work is displayed in galleries in and out of Pittsburgh.



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Women’s History Month

Advocates for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

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This month is for the ladies; most importantly, the women who made history and broke barriers. Since 1987, the month of March has been celebrated as [National Women’s History Month](#). The month long honor started as an internationally celebrated day (March 8) in 1911, officially turning into a week in 1980. It started in Sonoma County, California and gained popularity across the country as a week-long celebration.

The 2024 theme celebrates “Women Who Advocate for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion,” and the official colors for Women’s History Month are purple, green and white. The Penn State Greater Allegheny (PSUGA) campus is offering an array of literature from female authors, in the Kelly Library, to raise awareness of the contributions and significance of women in American history. From books, to arts and activism for gender equality, there are plenty of things to appreciate about women from all around the world this month.



Part of artist Kyle Holbrook’s “Freedom and Liberation Wall” in Homewood, PA displays historical Black Female figures.



Books from female authors are displayed in the middle of Penn State Greater Allegheny’s Kelly Library. (Photos courtesy: Melanie McGinniss)

Kennywood Announces A-Peeling New Ride, Named “Potato Smash”

Fifty-year-old fries? Oh my! Well, not exactly, Kennywood Park announced, thanks to tens of thousands of votes from its fans, the old bumper car ride has been renamed Potato Smash. The rebranding coincides with the park’s 50th anniversary and most popular food — Potato Patch fries.

A Kennywood press release noted that the new cars will also resemble an order of the iconic fries as they come from the “potato patch”—with red



Kennywood’s new ride was voted to be named Potato Smash. (Image courtesy: Kennywood)

and white container, an order of fries and cheese on the bumper cars, and a fork to complete the order.

The park has been undergoing a multi-year transformation and this rebranded ride is part of

that plan. The park will open its doors and rides again on Saturday, April 20.

After 65 Years of Business, McKeesport’s Elbow Room Closes its Doors

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The local landmark of McKeesport, The Elbow Room, opened its doors for the last time with a farewell party on Feb. 11 after nearly 66 years of business on West 5th Ave.. The restaurant and bar was founded by John “Jack” Brusick, who passed away in 2016. Holding down the fort after the loss, the remaining staff took a hard hit from COVID-19 lockdowns.

The business announced the closing on Facebook, along with a

“thank you” to the McKeesport community for the memories and support. “Though our doors may close, the spirit of community and camaraderie that thrived within these walls will live on in our hearts forever.” The party lasted from 3 p.m. until the last person was gone. Afterwards, they made another thankful post to Facebook: “Ending on a high note is a great way to honor Jack’s legacy, achieving success and leaving a positive impact.”



The back of the once lively, community hot-spot, Elbow Room, which closed its doors after 65 years. (Photo courtesy: Rosemary Martinelli)

Remembering Officer Sean Sluganski

Renzie Park Dedication and Memorial Service

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“Tonight we get to honor officer Sean and dedicate this hockey rink in his memory,” Mayor of McKeesport, Michael Cherepko, said.

The McKeesport community and first responders gathered at Renziehausen Park on Feb. 6 to honor the life of the late McKeesport Police Officer, Sean Sluganski.

The dek hockey rink at the park was named after Sluganski, fitting with his love for hockey. Additionally, a permanent monumental bench facing the rink was unveiled.

It was a year ago on the same day that Sluganski was shot and killed in the line of duty after responding to a domestic call.

“We are forever indebted to him for his heroic act and we will never forget him,” Cherepko said. He thanked the community and surrounding communities for supporting Sluganski’s family and colleagues.

Pastor William B. Meekins of the McKeesport Area Shared Ministry, spoke of Sluganski’s legacy and the sacrifices that law enforcement make for the community.



McKeesport dedicated the Memorial Dek Hockey Rink to Officer Sean “Slug” Sluganski, memorializing him one year after the deadly domestic call.

McKeesport Police-Chief Officer Mark Steele spoke of the fun memories with Sluganski and his appreciation for the community’s support of the department and other officers.

“I cannot thank everybody enough for showing up for this community support,” Steele said.

McKeesport officers

raised a flag for Sluganski before the official dedication, showing their respect for his three years of service.

The crowd moved to the rink where Sluganski’s mother, Terri Sluganski, made the first drop of the puck on the rink.

Former Chief Officer, Adam Alfer, and Chief Steele took the face-off,

then hugged Mrs. Sluganski to conclude the event.

“This is just a small token of just how much we appreciate what Sean did,” Cherepko said.

The scoreboard for the rink also reads “Officer Sean ‘Slug’ Sluganski,” making the most out of the one commemoration.



McKeesport officers raised a flag for Sluganski in silence to show their respect of the fallen officer. (Photos courtesy: Melanie McGinniss)

2024 LUNAR NEW YEAR

So long to the year of the rabbit, and hello to the year of the dragon.

Feb. 10 marked the 2024 Lunar New Year, this year landing on the zodiac of the wood dragon, based on the Chinese lunisolar calendar.

“The year of the dragon is actually a very good one,” Chairman of the Pittsburgh Chinese Cultural Center, Dave Jiao, said in an interview from the 2024 Lunar New Year Celebration Gala. “We all hope in the year of the dragon we can have that good luck, as well.”

The Chinese Lunar New year ran from Feb. 10 - 20, ending with three days of preparation before the Lantern Festival on Feb. 24.



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Send to:
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22 Years of Unity through Art with the Moving the Lives of Kids Community Mural Project



The MLK Project made a mark near the "Freedom and Liberation Wall" on Kelly St. in Homewood, PA. (Photo courtesy: Melanie McGinniss)

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Hard to miss, muralist Kyle Holbrook's works are blended into neighborhoods and woven with diverse activism and historical significance.

Since 2002, author, designer, filmmaker and Executive Artist of the Moving the Lives of Kids (MLK) Mural Project, Holbrook has been connecting and empowering communities through art.

In over 96 cities across the United States, Holbrook, a Wilkesburg native, has created collaborative and public art that engages youth and families of all backgrounds.

Holbrook's mission has even reached the

Caribbean and South America, making large and colorful marks across seas.

Holbrook was inspired by poet Dr. Maya Angelou who told him, "If you're going to say something, say it loud."

The next beautification project for the 2024-2025 year is planned near the 16th Street Bridge area of the Allegheny Arts District.

The MLK Project hopes to enrich the two-block long area with a mural museum, painting murals on shipping containers. Having space on the inside too, the containers could eventually be used for pop-up events.



The MLK Project plans to bring new life and community attraction to the 16th St. Bridge area with murals. (Photo courtesy: Melanie McGinniss)

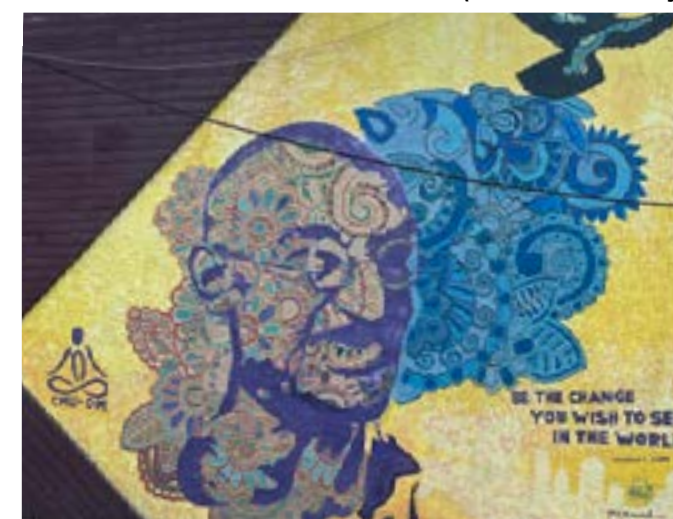
In addition to sights for the public, the MLK Project offers educational opportunities for youth artists. Selected artists can assist professional artists in their projects or even go through an arts training program.

Holbrook said on the [MLK website](#):

"Let us strive for love and acceptance, not only in our art but in our hearts, fostering a global community bound by respect, empathy, and compassion."



The "Freedom and Liberation Wall" on Kelly St. in Homewood. (Photos courtesy: Melanie McGinniss)



Mohandas Ghandi painted on a wall by MLK Project artist Adelaide Cole, in Squirrel Hill.



An August Wilson tribute painted on a wall by Kyle Holbrook, in the Hill District.

CONGRATULATIONS

Men's and Women's Basketball!

**(From left to right):
Jeremiah Miller, Christopher Killings, Tomisha
Pierce and Bryce Phillips**



(Photo courtesy: Nick Trunzo)

**for reaching 1,000 points
in this year's season.**