DelVal University partners with DCCC
By Shannon Adams
Special to The Communitarian

Linda Lefevre, the director of Continuing and Professional Studies Admissions at Delaware Valley University, is coordinating the efforts for its Degree Completion Program on DCCC’s Marple campus.

The Degree Completion Program is designed to help students, graduating with an associate’s degree from DCCC, earn their bachelor’s degree in a convenient and affordable way, while remaining on the Marple campus. The programs being offered are business administration, counseling psychology, criminal justice and media and communication.

I recently caught up with Lefevre to discuss the Degree Completion Program, its advantages, and what it is meant to accomplish here on Marple campus.

Q: What exactly is the Delaware Valley Completion program and how does it work to the students’ advantage?

A: The gentle glow of a desk lamp casts shadows across the award certificates and medical equipment that sit within the office of Elaine Karr, director of Emergency Management Services education at Delaware County Community College. The laughter of several people fills the hall just outside the spacious room, and the smell of warm soup permeates the air as lunch is served to the staff members. A man walks in wearing a Drexel University-branded fleece jacket over a navy “DCCC EMT Instructor” shirt — a symbol of his position within the college, and past accomplishments.

This man is Robert Hamilton, known to many of the staff and students as “Bubba.” His position as coordinator of paramedic education at DCCC is the latest role in his career that spans nearly 25 years. From a flight paramedic to a 911 medic — a job he still actively participates in — Hamilton has dedicated the last 19 years of his life to educating future first-responders through the Emergency Management Services program at DCCC.

On Nov 21 Hamilton, 43, was named “Educator of the Year” by the Pennsylvania Department of Health, Bureau of Emergency Services.

The award, where nominees are selected by their peers, was officially presented to Hamilton during a formal ceremony in which his “entire EMT family” was in attendance.

“I think I had the most support of anyone there,” says Hamilton. “It was the one thing that surprised me the most; that was the real award for me.”

Hamilton’s career as a first-responder began at age 13, as a junior member of his local volunteer fire department. During his tenure with the company, he was inspired by a fellow volunteer, an EMT named Mike Wilson whom Hamilton says he looked up to with great respect.

One day a young Hamilton experienced a seizure at the fire station, sent him to the hospital, where he was later diagnosed with a brain tumor.

Unplanned pregnancy impacts college success
By Shawna Daly

When Marina Perez was 21, she had her dreams interrupted by an unplanned pregnancy.

"Before all this happened, I wanted to be a chef,” says Perez, who dropped out of the Walnut Hill Culinary School halfway through college. “I worked as a barista through college.”

When Perez discovered she was pregnant, she realized it was because she wasn't using her birth control consistently. Since Perez had lost both of her parents, having a baby while in college was unrealistic, she said, adding, “I didn't want to be a number in a statistic.”

Perez felt unstable and needed to find her footing, so she left school.

She is not alone. Andrea Kane, senior director of policy and partnerships at the National Campaign, found that “seven in 10 pregnancies among single women in their 20s are unplanned.”

And unplanned pregnancy directly impacts college completion rates, experts say.

According to the National Survey of Family Growth, 6 percent of pregnant community college students don’t graduate, 65 percent higher than those without children while in college.

Everyone Policy Institute found that 38 percent of female community college dropouts say becoming pregnant was the cause.

According to Achieving the Dream, a national community college success organization, students with children face unrealistic expenses, such as child care, employment, student loans, and housing issues, all of which are impediments to academic performance.

A solution for many college students is to use birth control. An analysis at Florida State University found that access to birth control before age 21 was a critical factor in increasing enrollment rates for college women.

“The ability to delay and space childbearing is crucial to women’s social and economic advancement,” said...
Unplanned pregnancy impacts college success continued from page 1

DCCC counselor Ruth Campbell says that when female students confide in her about their sexual relationships, she recommends the course PST 205, Human Sexual Behavior.

PST 205 is a three credit course that highlights conception, contraception, STDs, and sexual life styles. However, PST205 has a prerequisite of PST 140 or SOC 110, preventing students from learning about the sexual behaviors they are most likely engaging in.

Campbell says that pregnant students have to drop classes or semesters to find childcare. And when credits expire, new mothers are too discouraged to return to college.

"Some pregnant students think that after nine months they can return to their life as a student and go on," Campbell said. "But they're changing their identity from a student to a young mother."

Campbell doesn't believe she has all the resources to counsel pregnant students on a regular basis. Occasionally, she will

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Whether they were taught about contraceptives and medical exams accessible for all demographics.

On Aug. 1, 2011, the Department of Health and Human Services announced, that under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), FDA-approved contraceptive methods would be available without copay.

Within the first year, women saved $483 million on birth control pills.

Planned Parenthood offers their workshops for the same reasons: including that contraceptive consultations, peer education programs, and presentations. They also provide tools to help schools teach sex education curriculums.

Planned Parenthood provides abortion services as well. According to Planned Parenthood, 30 percent of women in the United States have an abortion by the time they are 45 years old.

After being faced with an unplanned pregnancy, Perez says, "I was devastated. I was so young, and I didn't know how to take care of myself."

Seeing the pregnancy through and finding adoptive parents would have occupied a large part of her early twenties, Perez says, and her job during this time wouldn't have covered the costs of living plus medical expenses.

"I felt an early term abortion was my only option," Perez said. "It was painful, traumatic, and I carry that with me everyday. Who would my baby have been? Would my baby look like me?"

Despite dropping out of culinary school, Perez says she is proud of the accomplishments she's made since her unplanned pregnancy.

"I've been with Melodies Cafe in Ardmore for almost two years," Perez said. "Now I'm being trained for a management position."

Perez is continuing to build experience for her resume in a career field in which she feels comfortable. She is undecided about returning to school, yet feels confident in her leadership abilities.

"I felt it was time to go back to school, I would save some money and go to community college," Perez says. "I liked going to school, and I know not to make the same mistake twice."

"Throughout the process, I just always remember Mike being there," he says, "and I realized afterwards that I wanted to switch from being a firefighter to an EMT."

From there, Hamilton obtained his certification through the EMT program at DCCC while he was still a junior in high school.

In 2009, Delaware Technical and Community College used grant money to create an on-campus health clinic where students can receive birth control and the morning-after pill as well as general professional advice for health concerns.

Online classes with chat forums could also help students access credible information and conversation about preventing pregnancy. However, many colleges do not provide these services.

DCCC prof saves lives, teaches lifesaving skills continued from page 1

"I hope to grow the program with the help of The Communitarian," Perez went to Planned Parenthood.

Perez says that her abortion was the most difficult experience of her life, but it was also the only realistic option.

The environment is relaxed as the jokes and laughter over their most recent readings that slowly pan across the screen.

Accumulating a good level of knowledge is crucial to the process of providing patient care. Hamilton adds. "To be able to take someone into the room, answering questions from their last assignment and quizifying them at random. As the class progresses, Hamilton dimms the lights and brings up a simulation that0 the back of the room. The students are then challenged to name the condition of a patient's heart based solely on the electrocardiogram readings that slowly pan across the screen. Nearly every student answers correctly, and Hamilton smiles at their combined efforts to complete the quiz within the allotted time. As he finishes the last portion of his lecture, he turns the lesson over to a second instructor, who begins to load a PowerPoint presentation on toxicology.

As Hamilton makes his way out of the training facility, he bids the students "good luck" and says he'll be seeing them the following Thursday.

Although Hamilton teaches EMT training roughly six days of the week, he strives to work at least two 12-hour shifts as an on-call first responder.

His latest plans are to present a lecture on advanced cardiac life-support to third-year ER residents at Drexel University. Much of his pride, however, still lies in the current training program at DCCC, he says.

"If I hope to grow the program with the people who are the best at what they do," Hamilton adds. "To be able to take someone who barely knows how to turn on a heart monitor and be able to diagnose a heart condition at a glance it’s just amazing."
DelVal University partners with DCCC

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our degree completion programs.

Q: Why was there a need for the completion program?
A: The idea of the program was to make convenient and affordable bachelor’s degrees available to the graduates of DCCC.

Q: What about the program makes getting a bachelor’s degree more affordable?
A: We do a couple different things to make it affordable. We have a special tuition rate for our program at DCCC that is a rate of $425 per credit. That is a locked-in rate, so the whole time they are going through the program that is their tuition.

There’s no additional course fees. The other cool part is, we have a Core to Core agreement, which allows your core courses to come in and fulfill our core course requirements.

Thus, students do not have to take additional courses. Lastly, we will take up to an additional 12 credits of transfer courses from DCCC that apply towards the bachelor’s degree be Delaware Valley University courses at DelVal tuition, and the remaining additional credits towards the bachelor’s degree can be taken at the community college tuition.

Q: What makes the program more convenient?
A: It’s a part-time program that allows people to work full or part time while they’re going through the program. It’s one that has classes two nights a week, Tuesday and Thursdays, on campus.

The idea is that you know ahead of time what these dates are. The program can be completed in as little as eight consecutive semesters.

An important thing about this program is that it’s a cohort program. So we do have to have a certain number of students interested and admitted before we can get started.

Our psychology program might be starting up in the spring and then we have four other programs that we are building and have a lot of interest in that would start in the fall.

Q: Do you have this arrangement with other community colleges?
A: We are doing this with two community colleges, Bucks County Community College and DCCC. We’re calling it the Onsite Degree Completion Program and we are currently talking to two other community colleges to implement similar programs.

Q: Would students who do not have the aligned associates degrees qualify?
Sometimes we get students whose major was liberal arts and they have a lot of courses, but say they want to come for business or something. They can come into the program, but they may need to take a couple other courses to get up to speed and I’ll work with them.

Q: What kinds of advising and career services does DelVal provide?
A: A hallmark of our program is our Experiential Learning program. So the students in the Degree Completion Program will be taking two courses that will give them career readiness skills, and they are called DelVal Experience and Career Exploration.

We call it the E360 program. These are courses that give them experience. It could be an internship or similar experience. So these requirements are helping students to start to build their professional resume and to start building their network, like a transition.

These courses are required toward the end of the program, almost like a stepping stone from school into the world of work. We have our career center on campus and they have access to all of our resources.

A DelVal student is a DelVal student, no matter where they are taking their program, so they have access to all of our resources.

We can have someone come down if they need help, or an individual meeting, we can work out a lot of things though Skype or over the phone individually.

We have mock interviews, resume writing assistance, workshops on careers and getting prepared for entering the workplace. We also have an online job bank, where employers post positions and our DelVal grads and current students have access to reviewing.

It’s called DelVal Center for Student Professional Development Students will have access to all of those things.

Most students want things individually, but if there’s a group of students who are interested we could set something special up on campus.

Q: Who can interested students contact if they have any further questions about the completion program?
A: If students want more information they should go to the website, Delval.edu, but we are down on Marple campus a lot on Mondays and Thursdays, from 9:30 to 12:30 and on select evenings.

We’ll be there all through January and through May. Students can also get an updated schedule of our availability on the website and they can call me or come see us. You would apply through the application on the DelVal website.

The way we chose the program was that our institutions worked together and implemented a survey and everything we learned from that went into how we developed the program and structured it.

Q: Is there anything else you would like to add?
A: We’re happy to help [students] and review their transcripts and help them make decisions.
Islamophobia shuts doors for Syrian refugees

By Marwa Benahmed-Ali

One early Saturday morning I was waiting in line at the market to pay for my groceries. An older couple standing in front of me was making fun of every customer that passed by.

A Pakistani girl, with whom I went to Islamic Sunday school, walked towards me and said hello. She was wearing a traditional Pakistani Sari and a beautiful hijab to cover her hair.

The man in front of me turned around and gave her a dirty look. He mumbled rude remarks under his breath and looked at her from head to toe as she walked away. I spoke Arabic to get his attention and he also gave me a dirty look in return. I could tell from his eyes that he profoundly disliked foreigners, especially Muslims.

I never experienced such discrimination like I did on that Saturday morning. Yet, as a Muslim-American, I knew that discrimination against my people was profound.

Muslims have faced an abundance of discrimination since the Sept. 11 attacks. The horrific actions of several al-Qaeda terrorists have created a stereotype that all Muslims are terrorists. Islamophobia, which means prejudice against Islam or Muslims, is at its peak since the Paris attacks on Nov. 13.

Islamic extremist group ISIS, who has claimed responsibility for the attacks, is making war on Muslims. ISIS is terrorizing Islamic people by killing innocent civilians. ISIS members are murdering Muslims and destroying homes and stability in Syria.)

According to the UNHCR, political stability in Syria is almost impossible. Explosions are destroying homes and killing innocent civilians.

Syrians who are internally displaced do not have running water, electricity, or food. Refugee camps in neighboring countries are running out of food, according to World Vision.

Obviously, the situation for refugees is grim. Now neighboring countries and the European Union are struggling to manage the crisis and have started to say no to refugees.

Around 2,000 refugees have been granted acceptance in the United States since 2011, yet Republicans are doing their best to keep additional refugees out. Ridiculous Republican rhetoric has deemed refugees as a threat to the safety of the United States.

Republican Congresswoman Ann Wagner stated that Obama “stands for ISIS” by fighting Republicans on refugees. Although there is a possibility that some refugees could be terrorists, refugees in the United States have not organized attacks. Appropriate security measures can be made to avoid possible attacks, but saying no to refugees is not the solution.

Ten thousand refugees could be saved from their misery; instead, they are victimized by Islamophobia.

Republicans are violating the core values of the United States by neglecting Syrians who have an outstanding need for refuge. American citizens should consider voicing their opinion by speaking to local representatives and signing petitions to bring refugees to the states.

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Donald Trump's authoritarianism hurts immigrants

By Tom Ignudo

Since Donald Trump announced his presidential campaign, it has received Kardasian-like attention from not only his supporters, but also many Americans. Granted, his campaign is entertaining. He's currently leading all GOP members in the polls with 28.3 percent of the vote.

But Trump's authoritarian views aren't appealing -- except to the "off the spectrum" right wing -- especially his immigration policy. In particular, his comment "They're bringing drugs, they're bringing crime, they're rapists, and SOME, I assume, are good people," back in June sparked mixed emotions throughout the country.

Notably, during the Fox Business Network & Wall Street Journal debate Nov. 10, Trump referenced a deportation plan used by former president Dwight D. Eisenhower.

"Let me just tell you Dwight Eisenhower moved a million and a half illegal immigrants out of this country," Trump said at the GOP debate Nov. 10. "Moved them just beyond the border. They came back. Didn't like it. Moved them way south. They never came back."

Even though Trump cited Eisenhower's plan, he never actually said the name of the plan, probably because he would have received immediate backlash during the debate.

In 1954, Eisenhower's plan "Operation Wetback" deported 1.3 million illegal immigrants, including American citizens, according to the Immigration & Naturalization Service. However, Trump articulated the plan as a flawless process.

He dismissed the significant amount human rights violations of "Operation Wetback," like the seven deportees who drowned attempting to flee from a boat.

Trump said he would have all 11.5 million estimated illegal immigrants out of the county within two years. That's 958,333 moved per month and 31,944 moved per day.

In other words, Trump plans on raiding, capturing, deporting people faster than they can say, "I'm a U.S. citizen."

But Trump's plan is not only is based off "Operation Wetback." It echoes another deportation era of American history: the Mexican Repatriation.

The Mexican Repatriation took place during The Great Depression and lasted throughout the 1930s. While jobs were scarce during The Great Depression, "illegal immigrants," or even Mexican-American citizens were forcibly removed from their homes and families to open up jobs for Americans.

Sound familiar? About 60 percent of the 2 million people deported were U.S. citizens, according to Francisco Balderrama, co-author of the book, "Decade of Betrayal: Mexican Repatriation in the 1930s."

The deportation was done without due process, which is unconstitutional and doesn't mirror the values we consider to be "American."

They may have looked the same and spoken the same language, but in reality, the deportation split families and created an everlasting problem at the U.S./Mexico border.

How many people do you think re-entered the country after The Mexican Repatriation, who were actually U.S. citizens?

The same goes for Operation Wetback, and even for the current border problems we have today.

Trumpargues that illegal immigrants are "hurting us economically," but his deportation policy would cost the economy five times the amount illegal immigrants do.

According to the American Action Forum, a non-profit center-right policy institute, the federal government would have to spend roughly $400 to $600 billion to deport 11.5 million illegal immigrants.

Not to mention, in today's age of surveillance, imagine the inhumane videos of raids that would surface on the Internet as a result of Trump's policy.

Trump's immigration plan also features building a wall on the U.S./Mexico border.

"We need borders," Trump said. "We will have a wall, the wall will be built, the wall will be successful, and if you think walls don't work all you have to do is ask Israel."

First off, Israel is the size of Lake Michigan. Once their wall is completed it's set to be 403 miles.

The U.S./Mexico border is 1,954 miles, and stretches from California to Texas. Furthermore, Trump plans on making Mexico pay for the wall, which makes zero sense economically, and Israel's border houses members of its military.

According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Israel killed 2,220 Palestinians in 2014, including 1,492 civilians.

Trump's plan implies that he's willing to use the same force on the border as Israel, especially since he wants to triple the number of Immigration and Customs Enforcement Officers.

Trump's plan is to "Make America Great Again," but this policy would only violate the liberties shared by U.S. citizens.

Overall, our borders need to be secured, but Trump's plan would alienate our communities and profile U.S. citizens based on their ethnicity, resulting in repeating America's previous dehumanizing deportations.

Contact Tom Ignudo at communitarian@mail.dccc.edu
By Shannon Adams
Special to The Communitarian

"Playing the Assassin" saw its eighth showing on the Delaware Theatre Company stage on a rainy Wednesday afternoon in Wilmington, Del. Oct 28.

Written by DCCC English professor David Robson, "Playing the Assassin" is a stage play inspired by the real life story of Jack Tatum, a player for the Oakland Raiders, whose tackle left Darryl Stingly of the New England Patriots paralyzed in 1978.

Though "Playing the Assassin" is based on actual events, it by no means is hindered by them, for Robson doesn’t neglect emotional language or the politics of the game, instead, he convincingly molds them into one.

The audience responded most to moments of high tension and emotion. In one such scene, the Oakland Raiders safety Frank Baker (played by Ezra Knight) tells Lewis Turner, a CBS segment producer (played by Garrett Lee Hendricks), the emotional story of how he once went to the man he had paralyzed.

The play lasted approximately 90 minutes without intermission and was followed by a short Q&A with DCCC students before concluding with an even shorter meet and greet with the cast and playwright.

During the opening of the play, Lewis sets up a meeting with Baker to discuss the possibility of a CBS special that would air on Super Bowl Sunday.

In the special, Baker would have to apologize to Lyle Turner, the man he paralyzed during a game.

The two men discuss football for a short time, as Frank has a game playing on his hotel room television when Lewis arrives. The conversation leads into dinner, money and the real reason Lewis has come: to talk about the CBS special.

This leaves Baker, who is still troubled by the man he left paralyzed on the field all those years ago, asking if he can trust Lewis, a young man who attends an Ivy League School, the “smarest Negro in the room,” Baker says.

Next, their conversation falls from that of numbers and sports to what lies beneath the game of football and if Frank did, in fact, intend on apologizing to Turner for what he had done to him.

When he refuses and his explanation is not what was expected, Lewis attempts to hash things out with him and have him reveal why. He gets no further than before, causing the older man to raise his voice and insult him.

Then the two men begin to drink and it is revealed that Lewis is not a CBS representative, but the son of Turner and the meeting is a setup, prompting surprised gasps from the audience.

The plan was to get Baker’s signature and show his father that he could be a good son before it is was too late. Lewis had attended the game that left his father paralyzed and while watching, wore Baker’s game jersey. This leaves Lewis unable to hate Baker or to forgive himself.

He isn’t met with acceptance and another string of arguments begin, ending with Baker showing Lewis how he would hit other players back when he played football for a living.

"The game is about f—king people up,” Baker explains, while punching a fist into his hand.

The two continue to argue, and eventually Lewis stands over a defenseless Baker lying on the floor. This leads to Baker signing the artificial CBS special contract. He then tells Lewis to show his father before it is too late.

Lewis thanks him and leaves for home. Baker is left alone in his hotel room, watching the game from earlier on in the show. As he cries, the lights go up.

At the conclusion of the play, Knight and Hendricks bowed to enthusiastic applause, then left the stage to take a small break before returning for the Q&A.

Students asked questions, such as how did the actors stay humble and what made them want to pursue acting as a career.

When asked what makes “Playing the Assassin” intriguing for them, Knight said Robson wrote such a good script. “It’s just easy to go back and forth because it makes sense,” he said.

The Q&A lasted about 15 minutes and the following meet and greet about eight minutes. A few students rushed to shake hands and learn names first, while others couldn’t get to the front of the line in time.

“Playing the Assassin” was performed for the final time at Delaware Theatre Company Nov. 8, but Robson attended English professor Liz Gray’s creative writing class Nov. 2 to discuss “Playing the Assassin” and his creative process.

“I would hope people don’t just see it as a play about football,” Robson said. “It’s about far more than that.”

Email The Communitarian at communitarian@mail.dccc.edu

Former NFL player Frank Baker (Ezra Knight) excitedly relives his glory days in David Robson’s play “Playing the Assassin.”

Photo by Matt Urban, Mobius New Media, courtesy of www.delawaretheatre.org

Frank Baker (Ezra Knight) and Lewis Turner (Garrett Lee Hendricks) reenact the way Frank delivered hits during football games in David Robson’s play, “Playing the Assassin.”

Photo by Matt Urban, Mobius New Media, courtesy of www.delawaretheatre.org
Jumbo-sized iPad Pro Lacks Purpose

By Troy Wolverton
San Jose Mercury News
(TNS)

When Apple released the iPad in 2010, it sought to fill a niche in the computing industry. The company perceived correctly as it turned out that there was a need for a device that was larger and more powerful than a smartphone, but more portable and easier to use and manage than a laptop computer.

The iPad was for casual computing, of that power. Despite having a screen that's nearly the size of a sheet of copy paper and a battery that lasts all day long, it's remarkably thin and lightweight at least when it's used without a cover. It's less than a millimeter thicker than the iPad Air 2 and it weighs about the same amount as the original iPad, which had a considerably smaller screen.

Speaking of screens, the one on the new iPad Pro is beautiful and sharp. And in some ways, I loved how large it is. Digital comic books look glorious on it. Reading a Web page on it was like reading a real magazine because the text and pictures were at their full size. Games look stunning.

And the thing is superfast. Apple claims that the chip inside the iPad Pro is comparable to those used in regular PCs, and benchmark tests back up that assertion. You could soon see a range of games and other apps that take advantage of that power.

The problem is that the device is just so big that it's unwieldy. It's no longer really a handheld device. It's too big to comfortably hold in one hand and too hefty particularly with its cover on to hold while watching a movie.

The iPad Pro does have some promise as a kind of tabletop computer. Apple designed its touch-screen interface to work with a new kind of stylus the company calls Pencil that is specifically intended to be used for drawing and similar purposes. You can use it to doodle on a notepad, help make architectural sketches or mark up documents.

Pencil works really well, and there's not a lot you can do with it just yet. It only works with the iPad Pro, not other iPad models. And only two apps that come with the iPad Pro—Notes and Mail—support it, and the only thing you can do with it in Mail is to annotate attachments.

That's more, there's no obvious place to put it when you aren't using it. Apple didn't design a slot in the iPad into which you could tuck Pencil, nor did it include a loop on the covers it designed for the iPad Pro in which you could stow it.

With such a large screen, the iPad Pro seems to be obviously gunning for another market laptops. Toward that end, Apple offers something called a Smart Keyboard, a cover for the device that turns it into a quasi-notebook computer.

The keyboard is fairly sturdy. I usually find thin keyboard covers like this unworkable when trying to type with the device propped on my lap.

But the Smart Keyboard actually worked in that context. And the magnet was strong enough that I didn't worry that the iPad might fall or become unbalanced.

But here again the accessory and the iPad itself fall somewhat short of the mark. For one thing, the Smart Keyboard is pricey. If you add its $170 price tag on to the $800 base price of the iPad Pro, you're nearly into the $1,000 range you'd spend for a very nice lightweight laptop.

Only, the iPad Pro makes a poor laptop. The iOS software that underlies the iPad doesn't support pointing devices like mice and trackpads, so to precisely place a cursor on a screen or navigate the iPad's interface you have to constantly be touching the screen.

Ergonomically, that's uncomfortable to do, especially if you have to do it repeatedly, as when you write a report.

With the latest version of iOS, Apple introduced split-screen technology, which allows you to divide the display between two apps.

That's useful, and the feature works well, but it's nothing like what you can do on a laptop, where you can view multiple windows on the screen at the same time.

And unfortunately even this limited version of multitasking is frequently unavailable because it's only supported by some apps. For example, I couldn't work in Google Docs and keep my inbox on the screen at the same time.

Apple also doesn't support multiple user logins in iOS, so it's hard to share a device among multiple users without giving them access to all of your files and apps.

Add all this up, and I'm not sure where the iPad Pro fits or its target market. I don't see it displacing either my laptop or my tablet and its not well suited enough at either function to reasonably replace both.
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Losing one's grip: a spiraling addiction

By Megan Milligan
Special to The Communitarian

Reid, who prefers to be known only by his first name, said his drug problem started when he was 16. He found an old prescription of 5mg Percocet from his dad’s desk drawer. He took four from that batch.

According to Reid, that was all it took to send him looking around the house for more painkiller prescriptions.

“After a year and a half I [looked] every prescription in my house, replacing them with Tylenol or something,” Reid said.

Before that, he was a well-rounded high school student. He played every sport his school had to offer and received good grades.

According to Reid, he was from an upper-middle class family, with both parents at home. He didn’t have any more strife than any of his friends.

“At normal teenage stuff,” he said. At first, he said, his drug use was recreational. But when he moved away to college things changed. He had found a dealer. By age 20 he had spent $20,000 on Oxycotin alone.

After realizing he was heading down a bad path, Reid decided to stop using altogether.

Then his best friend Meghan died after being stuck by a vehicle. After a three months of sobriety, Reid relapsed and was worse off than before, he said.

“One day my dealer didn’t have Oxy, and only had heroin. I didn’t really want to get it because I was scared as f- of heroin,” Reid said. “But when you’re at rock bottom you do dumb shit—I, I guess, ’cause I’m a weird person. I was trying to find my way, I was as high as I could be. It was just, like, ‘WTF?”

Soon after, he saw a friend shooting up Oxycotin, and he began shooting up as well. He spent a majority of his senior year in college shooting up, until he ran out of money.

Reid’s story is not uncommon. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, painkillers are the most commonly abused drug in America.

Their research suggests that painkiller addiction is an open door to heroin abuse.

“Addiction is an open door to heroin abuse. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, addiction can be treated with ‘evidence-based interventions’ that help people to stop using drugs. Treatment is not a cure, thus, and only consistent treatment can help addicts gain control of their life,” Reid said. According to NIDA, treatment begins with detox, or the body clearing itself of the drug. Since drug detox can be extremely painful for the patient, it is often done in a hospital setting, with doctors administering various medications.

After the detox process, it is recommended that the patient stay in a long-term rehab facility.

“During the treatment process, drug addicts undergo therapy treatments that help them to find the roots of their drug use, and to find new ways to cope with stressors in their life,” Reid said.

The NIDA website explains that people cannot stop using drugs on their own because “repeated drug use changes the brain,” including the part of the brain that enables one to exhibit self-control.

Even if a person desires to quit, the rewiring of the brain makes quitting alone very difficult.

NIDA also lists steps on how to find affordable treatment, not before stating that the first and most important step is asking for help.

Eventually, Reid, 23, realized he couldn’t keep going on the way he was, so he asked his parents for help. Afraid of the stigma, he didn’t admit to his parents that he was addicted to heroin, opting instead to tell them it was painkillers.

He felt as though his parents didn’t understand his problem or have the resources to help him, so he decided to do it on his own. He quit cold turkey. Reid described the withdrawal as his “soul getting ripped out.”

“It’s something I never want to experience again,” Reid said. After 70 days of sobriety, he relapsed after his father left his painkiller prescription on the kitchen counter. Reid ingested the entire bottle.

Reid began to understand that chronic pain, which heroin has numbed him from, has made it difficult to stop using. After receiving the diagnosis for his chronic pain, he was able to manage it properly and stopped using drugs.

When he was using, he attributed his drug use to “just liking to get high.” After detox, Reid says he is learning more about himself and his addiction.

He has since learned that it wasn’t about “just liking to get high”, instead, drug use was due to his depression and issues with low self-esteem, he said.

“I was just so broken, and I still am to a degree, that I couldn’t see the truth,” Reid said.

On day 11 of sobriety he decided to get a shot called Vivitrol from his doctor. It made him incapable of being drunk or getting high.

He now goes to a rehab group once a week while he finishes his business degree in graduate school. He also attends therapy, and while he still has his ups and downs, he does not see himself using anytime soon, he said.

Now 79 days clean, Reid said he just wants to move on with his life. “I won’t let heroin addiction ruin my life for good,” Reid explained. “I won’t give up. I just want to be happy and enjoy my life.”

Contact The Communitarian at community@eocalc.edu

Veterans return to the classroom

By Raymond Porreca

Conventional wisdom dictates that “the third time’s the charm.” But for DCCC student William Burke, it’s four that is the lucky number.

Burke, a military veteran with more than 10 years in the army and navy, is currently knee-deep in his newfound role as a full-time student.

Unlike his first name, said his drug problem started when he was 16. He found an old prescription of 5mg Percocet from his dad’s desk drawer. He took four from that batch.

Burke is one of thousands of veterans who have returned from the armed services and embarked on a journey to further their education. According to a 2014 report by the National Conference of State Legislatures, more than 800,000 veterans are receiving education benefits through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

And with so many veterans returning to the school in pursuit of an education, many different services and programs have been created that provide veterans with the resources necessary to adjust to their new lives.

In November, DCCC was recognized by Victory Media for one of the top “Military Friendly” schools in the nation. According to Victory Media, the award is presented to schools and trade schools doing the most to embrace military students.”

One of the ways that DCCC has fostered and encouraged veterans is through its ability to offer credit for military training and knowledge. For many veterans, this transfer of experience to credit is very beneficial when enrolling in college.

Financial aid programs, including benefits from the GI Bill, are one of the ways that veterans can attend college for a considerably more affordable cost.

While there are governmental programs to help fund education expenses for veterans—and academic institutions that go out of their way to provide aid—Burke is positive he has the resources necessary to adjust to their new lives.

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One of the ways that DCCC has fostered and encouraged veterans is through its own research that painkillers are the most commonly used drug among teenagers. “One in 10 high school seniors in the United States admits to abusing prescription painkillers,” the organization reports.

Furthermore, doctors and rehabilitation therapists report that prescription painkiller abuse is one of the most difficult addictions to treat.

The Partnership for a Drug Free American explains that The Medicine Abuse project is a five-year national action campaign aimed to prevent half a million teens from prescription drug abuse.

They published a story about a fictional girl named Katie, who is addicted to painkillers and turns to heroin to feed her addiction.

“The story, which also comes as an infographic, is a tool which uses statistics and facts about prescription drug abuse to help parents, educators and communities understand the plight of prescription drug abuse,” NIDA also lists steps on how to find affordable treatment, not before stating that the first and most important step is asking for help.

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As a full-time student and the father of a young child, Burke said that despite his best intentions, making the time for schoolwork can be difficult.

Burke had a difficult time transitioning from what he was used to in a school setting before the military.

“The hardest part of returning to school was its structure,” Burke said. “Coming out of the military, it was a shock to see students on their phones or talking during class. That was a weird hurdle to overcome.”

DCCC invites veterans to visit Room 4260 in the Academic Building or call 610-359-2356 to learn more about veteran services.

Contact Raymond Porreca at community@eocalc.edu
Texas state officials are threatening a local refugee resettlement agency with legal action should it continue aiding Syrian refugees.

Texas is home to the country’s second-largest population of Syrian refugees, with 242 resettled within its borders since 2012.

This weekend, the state threatened to take legal action and terminate the contract of the Dallas office of the International Rescue Committee, which resettles refugees on behalf of the U.S. government.

The group receives federal funding and operates through the state’s refugee resettlement program within its Health and Human Services Commission.

“The governor believes that accepting refugees from Syria is incompatible with an absolute commitment to the safety of Texans,” wrote Chris Traylor, executive commissioner of the state agency. Failure of your organization to cooperate with the State of Texas as required by federal law may result in the termination for your contract with the state and other legal action.”

Traylor’s letter followed one last month from Gov. Greg Abbott to President Barack Obama saying that “Texas cannot participate in any program that will result in Syrian refugees—any one of whom could be connected to terrorism—being resettled in Texas.”

And yet, more are being resettled in Texas.

Despite Abbott’s order, refugees and advocates in North Texas are preparing for the arrival of a Syrian family that is supposed to join family members living in Richardson, north of Dallas.

Faez, a Syrian refugee who spoke some English, confirmed to the Fort Worth Star-Telegram that family members who are in Jordan are scheduled to arrive in Texas this week. He said there is an apartment awaiting his family members.

Anne Marie Weiss-Armush, president of DFW International, a network of internationally focused groups in the Dallas-Fort Worth region, said her organization’s Refugee Support Network has helped furnish the apartment and stock the kitchen.

She said the family includes Faez’s half-brother, a sister-in-law, a 7-year-old and Faez’s parents.

Weiss-Armush said that if the family arrives, it will test the “authority of a governor to challenge the State Department refugee policy.”

She also questioned the legality of the Abbott’s policy.

“The policy that violates our Constitution and the rule of law—that’s exactly how I feel,” she said.

Others agree. “The bottom line is, refugee admission is a federal matter, reflecting our values as a nation,” said Terri Burke, executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Texas. “Texas and other states don’t have veto power in this area.”

In fact, on Nov. 25 federal officials with the Office of Refugee Resettlement sent their own letter to Texas resettlement agencies. “States may not categorically deny ORR-funded benefits and services to Syrian refugees,” wrote Robert Carey, the office’s director.

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission refused to comment about a letter or the resettlement program, with spokesman Bryan Black writing in an email that “at this time, we are letting our letter do all the talking on this issue.”

Abbott’s spokesman, John Wittman, said the governor supports the agency’s letter but wouldn’t comment further.

This weekend’s letter from Traylor came in the wake of a request by state officials that the International Rescue Committee disclose whether it is expecting any Syrian refugees, said Donna Duvin, the executive director of committee’s Dallas chapter. The committee’s answer was yes; the Dallas office plans to welcome several families of Syrian refugees over the course of the next couple weeks, she said.

And her organization plans to continue its work despite the state’s action, she said.

Although the International Rescue Committee receives its funding through the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, that money comes from the Office of Refugee Resettlement at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, according to the refugee office.

“We have a cooperative agreement (with the federal government) that mandates our services,” Duvin said. “We will continue to do our work within the bounds of that agreement, and certainly that includes Syrian families.”

Attackers in San Bernardino mass shooting were heavily armed, police chief says

By Rory Appleton
The Fresno Bee
(TNS)

Police Chief Jarrod Burguan said the two suspects killed following a mass shooting that has claimed 14 lives were armed with more than 1,500 rounds of ammunition and that a search of their home nearby revealed thousands more rounds of ammo.

In a news conference Thursday morning, Burguan said Syed Farook and his wife or fiance, both killed in a shootout following their attack at a county building, had 1,400 rounds of .223-caliber rifle magazines in vests they wore or in the Ford Expedition in which they were riding. They also had 200 9mm rounds for handguns they possessed.

Burguan said the woman suspect fired at officers from the back of the Ford; 76 rounds were fired at officers. Officers fired 180 rounds at the couple.

At the house in Redlands, investigators found 12 pipe-bomb-like devices, as well as 2,000 9mm rounds, 2,500 .223 rounds, and several hundred long-rifle rounds, Burguan said.

Burguan said the death toll from the shooting earlier in the day at a holiday banquet at San Bernardino County’s Inland Development Center stood at 14. The number of those injured rose from 17 to 21. Of the injured, one officer was shot in the leg and another had cuts from glass or shrapnel.

The attackers fired as many as 75 rifle rounds at the scene and left behind three rigged-together pipe bombs with a remote-control device that apparently malfunctioned.

The chief said Farook did not have a criminal record. Burguan added authorities do not believe other threats remain to residents in the region.

David Bowdich, the FBI’s assistant director in Los Angeles, said investigators don’t yet know a motive for the shooting at the regional center, which aids people with developmental disabilities.

“There oblivously was a mission here,” Bowdich said. “We don’t know if this was an intended target or what triggered him to do this.”

Bowdich said Farook, a U.S. citizen, returned to America with his wife or fiance in July 2014.

Meanwhile, presidential candidates continued to react to the mass shooting.

Speaking at the Republican Jewish Coalition, Marco Rubio said: “We don’t know all the facts yet, but we have certainly learned some facts that are concerning.”

Donald Trump told the same audience that the shooting “probably was related, it always happens when I heard about it I figured probably not, but it turns out it probably was related to radical Islamic terrorism.”

Trump also blasted President Obama for refusing to use the term. “There’s something going on with him we don’t know about,” Trump said.

On the floor of the U.S. Senate, candidate Ted Cruz said the attack was probably related to Islamic terrorism, though he added not all the facts were known.

Texas classes with refugee agency over Syrians

By Eleanor Mueller and Diane Smith
McClatchy Washington Bureau
(TNS)

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission refused to comment about its office’s director.

McClatchy Washington Bureau
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