10-15-2018

Crow's Nest : 2018 : 10 : 15

University of South Florida St. Petersburg

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Student refiles negligence suit against university

By Emily Wunderlich ewunderlich@mail.usf.edu

A former student who was accosted in the campus parking garage in 2016 has amended her lawsuit against the university after a Pinellas County circuit judge dismissed it “in part.”

The original complaint, filed in 2017 by a woman identified as L.E., contends that the university and its police department “failed to comply with state and county laws and ordinances” in their maintenance of the premises.

In its motion to dismiss the case, the university cited sovereign immunity — a long-standing tenet of English law that says it can do no wrong as an agency of state government.

The university held that its discretionary or “planning-level” functions were immune from liability and that L.E. “failed to pleat any basic facts” to show that USF owed a duty to protect her.

The amended complaint, filed Oct. 10, strikes this allegation but still charges two counts of negligence — one against the university and one against the university’s police department.

The university called that “a misleading form of the complaint” and said it expects to file a motion to dismiss it again.

L.E. is being represented by attorney Damian Mallard of the university’s Board of Trustees.

The suit seeks at least $15,000 in damages because the university “failed to provide adequate security” or warn L.E. of past and potential crimes in the area before she was “sexually assaulted” by a man who masturbated behind her in a parking garage elevator Feb. 22, 2016.

Rain or SHINE

By Kelli Carmack

This year, two more USF St. Petersburg students will join campus royalty when they become the next homecoming king and queen, but who will they be? The nominees are:

Jadzia Duarte: A junior environmental science and policy major, Duarte says becoming queen would be an opportunity to represent USF St. Petersburg, something she treasures.

“I want to be able to give back to this campus because it gave so much to me,” she said.

Duarte is the director of sustainable initiatives with Student Government, the Compass programming team leader and an orientation leader. She is the chair for the Clean Energy Resource and Conservation Commission, a voting member in the Student Green Energy Fund and an active member in the Student Environmental Awareness Society.

Duarte prides herself on being a voice of sustainability on campus. During campaigning, Duarte handed out daisy seeds in envelopes with her slogan, “Grow With Me” written on each one. She said she hopes that students see her love for the environment.

“I hope to make great strides in the natural environment,” Duarte said.

Zaryna Jasmin: Confident and caring — this is how Jasmin, a junior biomedical sciences major, describes herself.

This summer, Jasmin was a head orientation leader and is a peer coach. Jasmin said the main reason she’s involved on campus is because she loves helping people. She prides herself on constantly stepping out of her comfort zone.

“I want to represent this school in a good light … Voting for me shows that you think I’m fit for (being queen) and I really appreciate that,” Jasmin said.

Jasmin credits Shani Tracey, last year’s homecoming queen, as one of her motivating factors for running this year.

“She’s a really good mentor to me,” Jasmin said.

When asked what she hopes to accomplish before she leaves USF St. Petersburg, Jasmin said she wants to be known for being “a real individual … a real human being.”

Hannah Murphy: A junior criminology major, Murphy thought running for queen would be a great opportunity for her to get more involved on campus.

Loco for Hoco: The Majesties of Monte Carlo

By Kelli Carmack

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Hannah Murphy: A junior criminology major, Murphy thought running for queen would be a great opportunity for her to get more involved on campus.
Compass reorients its mission to focus on all students

By Dylan Hart
dhart4@mail.usf.edu

Compass is expanding its mission to include second-year and transfer students, as well as some support for juniors and seniors.

While Compass previously focused exclusively on first-year students, the transition will allow it to provide programming and outreach to all students, regardless of their year.

Director of Compass Carolina Nutt looked forward to Compass’ rebranding.

“Our mission for first-year students won’t necessarily change,” Nutt said. “The goal is that eventually we’ll develop programming for everyone. Every single student will have something to do on campus.”

Compass launched its second-year experience Oct. 11 with the “#faspromore” event at The Edge, providing free food, games and activities for second-year students. The programming board will continue to host events for sophomores, with most of the new events coming in the spring semester.

Compass has also designated two of its peer coaches, junior criminology major Cree Allen and senior undeclared major Tori Heaton, to assist transfer students.

The organization’s new focus also hopes to shift its success with first-year students onto incoming transfer students. Slogans imply, but junior Career Center, colleges within the university and Academic Advising, have formed a transfer advisory committee, which aims to find ways to support transfer students.

Compass launched a pilot program this semester allowing transfer students to work with their coach if they want one. While Compass plans to focus primarily on first-year, second-year and transfer students, the organization wants to provide the same services to juniors and seniors in the future.

“We’re also providing (juniors and seniors) support if they need to be put in contact with offices to help them deal with their issues, so if they need help with careers or internships or applying for graduation, we’ll take care of that,” Nutt said.

The organization also plans to hire a Student Success Coordinator, which would replace the Academic Success Coordinator position under Academic Advising, a position vacated on Sept. 28.

Compass’ Student Success Coordinator, which was previously referred to as a “retention coordinator,” will focus on keeping retention up and making sure that students graduate on time.

The search to fill the position will close Oct. 19.

“As an institution, our priority is ensuring our students are successful throughout their four years here,” said Nutt. “I think our institution is being proactive and trying to really understand what our students need by putting services and opportunities out there.”

Corrections

Pakistani artist Haider Ali painted his “jingle truck” on the first day of the SHINE Mural Festival, Oct. 6. An article in the Oct. 8 issue of The Crow’s Nest mistakenly stated he would be painting the truck throughout the festival.

The position of academic success coordinator is intended to keep retention rates high, not low, as an Oct. 8 article incorrectly stated. The article also said that Althea Blake left the position abruptly. However, she told a Crow’s Nest reporter that she gave a three-weeks notice to Human Resources.

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Top on your computer and head to studentaid.gov to fill out your 2019-20 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The application, which opened Oct. 1, presents the opportunity for students to receive federal aid in the form of grants, work-study and loans. If your FAFSA is processed by Jan. 1, the priority deadline, you can also be considered for additional state, federal and institutional grants.

“Everything is based on an expected family contribution,” said Lynesse Crichton, financial aid adviser for loans and student outreach. An EFC is the measure of a family’s financial strength that is calculated into a formula made of taxed and untaxed income, assets and benefits such as unemployment or Social Security, according to Federal Student Aid.

A victim advocate said that filling out a FAFSA each year helps students receive tuition deferments. “That’s a huge thing because we get a lot of people getting dropped for nonpayment, especially in the fall,” she said. “So even if you’re not utilizing FAFSA for loans and you’re paying for college yourself, it extends your due date.”

The university’s privately funded scholarship applications also opened Oct. 1 and have an April 15 deadline.

USF St. Petersburg’s financial aid website lists the different qualifications for each grant, including GPA or a certain EFC. The website also has scholarship information and important deadlines.

Crichton also said that students should take advantage of FAFSA Fridays, which is an event held by the USF St. Petersburg Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships where financial aid advisers help students fill out their applications. “I can complete a FAFSA in about 10-15 minutes,” Crichton said. “We can make sure it’s correct that way.”

FAFSA Fridays is held on the 2nd Friday of the month in the Memorial Library from noon to 4 p.m. every Friday through Dec. 14th, with the exception of Nov. 23. Students need to bring their student I.D., a 2017 tax return for their parents and selves and their Federal Student Aid I.D.

By Whitney Elsfröm
welfstrom@mail.usf.edu

Oct. 15, 2018

What you need to know about FAFSA

Four Tips for Filling out FAFSA from the adviser:

1. Utilize FAFSA Friday for hands-on help from a financial aid adviser.
2. Use studentaid.gov to answer general FAFSA questions.
3. Go to usfsp.edu/financial-aid/ for information about scholarships and deadlines.
4. Stop by the Financial Aid office in Bayborro Hall Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and talk to Crichton or any other financial aid adviser.

The Crow’s Nest

As the fall semester winds down, a crowd of students has gathered to listen to a talk that could change their future

What is the talk about?

The talk, titled “Arthur Ashe: A Man Named Jim,” was presented by Jim O. Horton, a former professor and Arsenault’s friend in graduate school. He idolized Ashe, so to be part of this book is my closest association with what was later diagnosed as synucleinencephalopathy, he decided to write the book. So the book is dedicated to him, Arsenault said.

Arthur Ashe has history in St. Petersburg from his time as an amateur player. Arsenault recounted an experience he had at a local tennis court. He was a dead ringer for Arthur Ashe. He idolized Ashe, so to be around Jim was to be part of this cult of Arthur Ashe,” Arsenault said.

In his 35-year career, he’s written four books and co-edited the second one due in November, “The Sporting Life with Jeremy Schaap.” He still helped me get into a class of freshmen at the University of California Los Angeles, Ashe’s alma mater. The campus’ student health center is named for him.

In August, Arsenault made appearances at the U.S. Open, this year being the 50th anniversary of the Open Era. Before the Open Era, only amateur players were allowed to compete in Grand Slam tournaments. Ashe won the first U.S. Open in 1968.

Last month, Arsenault was interviewed for the TV news program PBS NewsHour, National Public Radio’s Morning Edition and the ESPN podcast The Sporting Life with Jeremy Schaap. The New York Times, the Wall Street Journal and other major news publications reviewed the biography.

At 70 years old, Arsenault says this is his last book. “When I started it, I was pretty sure this would be my last book, or my last book with footnotes,” Arsenault said, referring to the book’s 71 pages of citations. “I want to continue writing, but I think I’ve done my last footnote. Killed enough trees, I think.”

He said his two grandchildren, the second of whom was born November, will take up this time in the future.

In his 35-year career, he’s written four books and co-edited four others. “Arthur Ashe: A Life” is the last book in a trilogy that Arsenault has written on important figures from the Civil Rights era.

Jim O. Horton, a former George Washington University professor and Arsenault’s friend, inspired the subject of this last book.

Mr. personal reason for writing this book is my closest friend in graduate school was a man named Jim Horton. Jim was a brilliant student without years. He was a dead ringer for Arthur Ashe. He idolized Ashe, so to be around Jim was to be part of this cult of Arthur Ashe,” Arsenault said.

Horton became ill in 2009 with what was later diagnosed as dementia and passed away in February 2017.

“He didn’t really live to see this book, but it was when Jim was contracting this disease, I decided to write the book. So the book is dedicated to him,” Arsenault said.


Arsenault’s book is the first comprehensive write-up of Ashe’s life.

For over a month, Arsenault toured the U.S. promoting the book. The Nelson Poynter Memorial Library hosted his first book talk, he spoke to a class of 50 students the day of his book release.

A victim advocate said that filling out a FAFSA each year helps students receive tuition deferments. “That’s a huge thing because we get a lot of people getting dropped for nonpayment, especially in the fall,” she said. “So even if you’re not utilizing FAFSA for loans and you’re paying for college yourself, it extends your due date.”

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Mural festival shines down on St. Petersburg
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October 15, 2018

the art to the Pinellas Trail, more traffic boxes were decorated and the public participated with a community mural.

By

Call winners for the festival were the other artists.

The community support, whether it be artist to artist, local business owners allowing artists to paint their buildings or people stopping by every day to see the progress, was echoed by everyone’s different version of how to skin a cat when it comes to tackling big walls.”

SHINE as free from political influence as possible, but cites how the over past seven or eight years the economy and culture have exploded to the point where the festival has raised a lot of red flags for people as far as gentrification.

For Open Call winner Melanie Posner, it’s the one time of the year where artists are out in the community, helping the city become more vibrant and beautiful.

In her eyes, it is everything St. Petersburg represents.

“The community has been so heartwarming,” she said. “It’s been really awesome. I didn’t expect the amount of outreach that we’ve gotten.”

“It’s fun, the last couple years I always came out to SHINE and always watched the other artists work, but to then have it happen to you, it’s really sweet.”

The community support, whether it be artist to artist, local business owners allowing artists to paint their buildings or people stopping by every day to see the progress, was echoed by every artist.

Mitch Cook, 29, praised his ability to “hear everyone’s different version of how to skin a cat when it comes to tackling big walls.”

Cook, who goes by Noirs One, moved here from North Carolina only a few months ago, but wanted to encapsulate the city in his mural.

“My work is mostly pattern-based, it’s things I find in the environment, like chain link patterns, barbed wire, patterns on sewer grates, in my apartment, the stairs. I used the colors of the St. Petersburg flag. With this piece, I’m just trying to show a little bit of St. Petersburg,” he said.

His canvas, at 500 Delmar Terrace S, is a federal wall that restricted his work to the abstract. It served as a new challenge for the artist, who commonly uses characters in his pieces. Justin Wagher, 19, said SHINE represents a movement of artists that have taken a route that wasn’t always looked highly upon.

Wagher attended St. Petersburg College briefly before deciding to focus all his efforts on his art.

“In his senior year of high school he did like 12 full-sized portrait murals of his girlfriend at the time,” Donnelly said. “It was incredible.”

Wagher said he met Donnelly and Sebastian Coolidge, another mainstay of the local art community, at 13 years old. He spent five years shaking cans, mixing paint, moving ladders for them and learning how to do everything correctly and efficiently.

“When Wagher turned 18, he started painting murals by himself and participating in gallery shows.”

He’s the epitome of what it takes to make it in St. Pete,” Donnelly said. “He’s smart, resourceful and tries to do something a little outside the box.

“He really understands the area that he’s in. (He has) a passion and drive, he doesn’t really stop for anything.”

Wagher likes to work using darker tones, enjoying the ability to create more subtle transitions exemplified in his SHINE mural with black telephone poles contrasting a gray background.

Posner used to work in a green hue scale before moving into a full color spectrum. The more "grotesque" color scheme she focused on had a negative impact in her own live.

The five Open Call winners share the same stretch of conjoined businesses, showing the juxtaposition of each of their works.

According to Donnelly, there were more than 40 submissions for the Open Call, and only three winners were to be chosen. But he was able to influence the committee to add two more. Jake “Tasko” Jacquier, Michael Vahl and Sarah Page were the other artists from the Open Call.

Donnelly wants to keep SHINE as free from political influence as possible, but cites how the over past seven or eight years the economy and culture have exploded to the point where the festival has raised a lot of red flags for people as far as gentrification.

“It’s almost a necessary evil, but the change is scary for people, artists especially,” he said. “It’s a tourism economy, I don’t know how receptive a lot of people are to art when they were originally coming here for the beaches, but now it’s both.”

The growth worries him, but he’s still optimistic. He said that nothing but good things can come from this many artists working together.

He said the community engagement with the festival helps give people ownership over some of the culture which has grown beyond just the beaches.

“That’s the thing about murals, it’s something that’s for everybody but for nobody at the same time,” he said. “Everybody can enjoy it and observe it, but nobody can take it home.”
Women deserve to have a voice

By Alyssa Harmon
Senior English and writing studies major
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U

SF St. Petersburg will host a debate on abortion Oct. 25, with seven men standing behind us.

This event is free to anyone who wants to watch two men debate an issue about women’s rights.

Whether you are pro-abortion rights or anti-abortion, the fact remains that at this event, women’s voices are being silenced. We live in a country that is leaving women out of important decisions right now, and this debate is just another representation of that.

For example, when President Donald Trump was in office, he immediately re-established the MeToo City Policy, also known as the “Global Gag Rule.” This rule dictates that organizations that receive aid from the United States are not allowed to provide “information, referrals or services for legal abortions,” according to Planned Parenthood. If an organization breaks this rule, its funding would be cut off.

Trump signed the rule Jan. 23, 2017, with seven men standing behind him.

In March 2017, Vice President Mike Pence tweeted a photo of a room of all men, meeting to discuss the future of health care plans. They wanted to make it voluntary for insurance companies to provide maternity care in their policies.

With Brett Kavanaugh confirmed to the Supreme Court, there are now six men that have the power to overturn the Roe v. Wade decision, which would make it more difficult for women to have an abortion.

If the situation was reversed and women in government were making decisions for men’s reproductive rights, you could be sure that the men would be voicing their opinions and anger, and rightfully so.

If the situation was reversed and women were chosen to debate an issue that was related to men’s reproductive rights, they would be voicing the anger and upset, and rightfully so.

Women now more than ever need to put a megaphone to their voices. Women need to make sure that they vote on Nov. 6, because we need to make sure our voices are heard.

I don’t have an issue with the university hosting a debate on abortion; I think it’s good that they are trying to start a conversation. However, I do believe that women should be represented in the conversation.

For example, in an article titled, “What the guh-hyuk is up with Pluto”, columnist James Bennett III declared by the United Nations.

When Pluto has escaped in the past, he was swiftly captured by the character Pete and returned to Mickey. Who knows what sort of treatment Pluto has received from his master? My heart weeps for the soul of that poor defenseless dog.

How can Goofy even stand to witness the bloody and treatment his kin, much less align himself with Mickey Mouse? How could he betray the freedoms of another sentient life or accept this sort of world for himself and his son Max?”

I guess he’s just the Kanye West of the Disney universe. Thank you, Walt, very cool.

Then again, perhaps I’m being too fresh on the Disney corporation.

Sure, it has acted a little shady in past with anti семitic gestures such as Walt welcoming Leni Riefenstahl into his studio just one month after Kristallnacht, and 1941’s “Ivan the Terrible” in the controversial film “Song of the South” during the 1940s.

But that sort of behavior was consistent among all races or at least acceptable, back in the day.

In any case, if Americans are so keen to turn a blind eye to the fact that we still idolize slave owners, why not ignore the shady past of Florida’s favorite superhero as well?

Let’s say, for argument’s sake, that Mickey is not the ringleader of some oppressive hierarchy and that Pluto has willingly subjected himself to a life of slavery and chained servitude.

This brings us to my next theory. Pluto might just be the kindest Disney character of all time. I’m talking kinicer than Prince Charming, the Cinderella character with a foot fetish.

Is Pluto really just a full- blown BDSM enthusiast?

Everybody seems to be pretty cut off to Pluto’s kinship with Mickey like a real dog while Goofy acts like an anthropomorphic human.

Keep in mind that almost nothing is portrayed as anyone’s perspective and you’ve got yourself a party. Whatever the case may be, and I certainly hope that Disney’s lawyers don’t feel inclined to spell it out for you, you have to admit that the distinction between Pluto and Goofy feels at least a little wrong.

So far, their fickle creators have little to offer other than the fact that Goofy is a dray. Disney’s term for Pluto’s anthropomorphic nature, while Pluto is a regular dog.

Perhaps they’ve kept the purpose for their distinction modelled to the creative process. Perhaps they did it to make the world feel a little more magical.

Then again, they might just be trying to shield innocent children from the disturbing imagery or at least acceptable, back in the day.

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Online News Association offers hands-on experience

By Amy Diaz
amydiaz@mail.usf.edu

Lovely referred to as “the academic spackle” of the journalism department, the USF St. Petersburg Online News Association fills in the gaps of digital media education. The USF St. Petersburg student chapter of ONA, a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting journalists, was founded in 2015. The club explores issues related to the creation and consumption of online media through workshops, research, events and group projects.

President and founder Lorien Mattiacci will graduate in December with a master’s degree in Journalism and Digital Communication. Mattiacci spent her graduate school career creating and maintaining ONA and ensuring that it meets the needs of students interested in digital media.

“I think the digital communication skills are necessary 21st century-worker skills in any career,” Mattiacci said. “Sometimes it takes institutions like higher education a while to catch up with the current needs of students so I want students to have a place where they can do that.”

Mattiacci envisions ONA as a place where students can study new skills, practice them and hang out with other students who also “geek out” over digital media topics.

Ideally, a student would come in with a specific interest. For example, drone journalism. “There’s not a drone journalism class here at USFSP. And so then we would go to our advisers, and we’d be like, ‘We need a drone,’” Mattiacci said. “We need someone who knows how to operate it, and we need to start networking to see how many drone journalism experts we can get in here.”

In the past, students have formed groups to study micro-topics including video storytelling, broadcast journalism and podcasts. In addition to specific focus groups, ONA hosts events and brings in professionals to speak on topics related to digital media and journalism.

In 2016, ONA brought in Adam Playford, the Tampa Bay Times deputy editor overseeing investigations, to speak about data journalism at the “Data Playdate.” Playford worked on the Pulitzer Prize-winning investigative story “Failure Factories.”

The club has also invited Alexios Mantzarlis, an internationally recognized fact-checker from The Poynter Institute, to speak. Students who have graduated from the journalism program and began their careers in the field have also spoken at meetings and events.

“A lot of the speakers are experts on certain subjects, so they’re almost like leading a workshop in their own way and offering their expertise on a certain subject,” said ONA Vice President Graham Colton. “The main reason we bring in speakers is to have an authoritative voice on a certain topic from their field to show us how it’s done.”

In addition to having speakers come to them, ONA members have gotten to travel and work with professional journalism groups as well.

Earlier this year, seven ONA members travelled to Chicago and served as the digital newroom covering the American Copy Editors Society annual national conference. The conference welcomed over 800 editors and writers, including people from publications like National Geographic, the New York Times and BuzzFeed.

Students covered the three-day conference in a variety of ways, producing a total of 18 posts consisting of 10 text-based posts, five videos and three podcasts. The team also posted on ACES’ Twitter, Instagram and Facebook accounts.

“It kind of replicated the real world fast-paced newroom experience of meeting the deadlines and collaborating with your teammates, so I found it to be very beneficial experience,” Colton said. The team got experience, but also had the opportunity to work with professionals in the field and gain exposure.

“No not only are you practicing and honing your craft, but the people with whom you’re doing it are these editors at these legacy publications,” Mattiacci said. “And the people you’re doing it for are these editors of these legacy publications.”

Mattiacci has been able to make connections for jobs and internships for students in the association.

ONA adviser Casey Frechette said this kind of opportunity is rare.

“I think that’s one of the most exciting things for students who get involved, the connections and the connectivity to a lot of different groups and professionals including people that are in the top of their field,” Frechette said.

This Thursday, ONA will have Shannon Gazdacka, a USF St. Petersburg graduate and former ONA member, speak about videography in room 107 of the Peter Rudy Wallace building. Mattiacci is currently working on putting together a speaker series for the future.

The organization filled its board positions for the fall semester, but there will be three openings in spring for vice president, treasurer and secretary. Students interested in joining the board can shadow current board members this semester to learn about the position.

Students from all departments are welcome to join. The organization can be found on PetSync.
Artist sheds new light on migrant experience

By Juliet Di Preta
dipretamailusf.edu

There were certain points in the viewer's journey. On the wall, beneath two rows of photographs, is a quote from Kiefer, which offers insight into his thoughts behind the project. It reads: “I'm presenting these deeply personal objects in a way that is reverential and respectful.”

Diane Morton, executive director of ArtsXchange, worked tirelessly to bring the thought-provoking and nationally acclaimed exhibit to the Tampa Bay community. She believes certain works of art are so compelling that once seen, they alter your perspective and remain in your conscious long after viewed.

“The photography in Tom’s ‘El Sueño Americano’ exhibit lingers and asks the viewer to pause for contemplation on the human experience behind the word ‘immigrant,’” Morton said.

Kiefer hopes his project may offer another side to the stories and news coverage about immigrants who come to the U.S.

A

toy whistle, children’s toothbrushes, medications, Bibles, rosary beads.

These are just some of the everyday and deeply personal items that were confiscated and disposed of from migrants. Kiefer was working at the U.S. Customs and Border Protection processing facility in Ajo, Arizona, for four years when he began to take notice of what CBP agents were deeming “non-essential” or “potentially lethal” items: baby shoes, a sweatshirt and keys.

The result is “El Sueño Americano” (The American Dream), a photographic project that showcases these personal, storied items that Kiefer, in good conscience, couldn’t let remain buried in garbage.

“I think, for me, to see these objects thrown away like trash, just felt wrong. The wallets with personal identification and credit cards still intact, the medications, toy cars, rosary beads, Bibles, and other religious artifacts, they just seemed too important to be at the bottom of a dumpster,” Kiefer said in a press release.

Not yet knowing what he was going to do with them, he began taking the objects home, creating a stockpile.

“But then the art began to unfold, and it felt like these confiscated, discarded belongings were telling deeply personal and heartbreaking stories about the people crossing our borders,” Kiefer said in the release.

This project that launched Kiefer into fame is currently on display at ArtsXchange, 515 22nd St.

There you will find 68 of Kiefer’s photographs lining the walls, telling the chilling stories of the people who were either detained or deported and the choices they had to make to continue their journey.

El Sueño Americano is on display at the ArtsXChange until Nov. 3. The gallery is open Thursday-Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tickets are $10.

One small step for man, one giant leap for filmmaking

By Bryce Lawson

Oscar-winning “La La Land” director Damien Chazelle and actor Ryan Gosling team up again for the film “First Man.”

The movie portrays the life of Neil Armstrong leading up to the Apollo 11 moon landing.

Although he was the first man on the moon, Armstrong faced many trials and tribulations in his life, which are shown masterfully through Chazelle’s direction.

There were certain points in this film where I thought, “This is one of the best-directed films I have ever seen.”

The film mainly consists of close-up shots, which allows the viewer to read the actors’ faces. This style of filmmaking fits perfectly for Gosling, an actor who conveys his messages using his face rather than with over-the-top method acting.

Throughout the film, Armstrong comes off as a cold man looking to complete the mission, but as the audience learns more about his past and the pain he holds inside, he becomes a more relatable character. Gosling’s performance will probably land him an Oscar nod.

Claire Foy delivers a standout performance as Janet Shearon, Armstrong’s first wife. Foy’s role is crucial to the story; she grounds the film with a down-to-earth quality that can easily be overlooked with all the talk of space travel.

This film shows the huge risk involved with space travel. The physical and mental toll it can have on a person is shown like never before in a space film. The space training and moon landing sequences are some of the most realistic space travel scenes in film history.

If one or two of the space conference sequences were cut, the film would flow smoother. “First Man” is the best film I have seen so far this year. If you are looking for a heartfelt true story with groundbreaking space effects, definitely check out “First Man.”

4/5 stars

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