

# Students seek to solidify their summer plans

Service, learning and adventure lead students across the globe

by Max Minogue

With summer closing in, students are finalizing adventurous summer plans.

The common factor for these trips is students reaching out to past connections.

Senior Ike Nierman will be traveling to New Zealand and staying with a friend that he met while working as a camp counselor.

"I'm gonna arrive at the end of his finals, and then we'll mellow out and check out the city of Christchurch for a little and see what college life is like there," Nierman said.

"He lives on a farm there. I'll meet his family, work a little, then we'll hit the road and drive around the country."

Junior Bizzy James discovered her summer experience through the local Kenilworth Union Church Impact Youth Group, which will be taking her to Kingston, Jamaica.

"We're working with a high school and a church doing some building projects along with helping out the school."

This is the second trip James will take with the group, as she went to Guatemala this past summer.

"Originally I decided to join youth group because all of my cousins did it and loved it, and it was a great opportunity to give back to the world and strengthen my religion," James said.

Meanwhile, junior Rachel Skolnik plans on spending two weeks in Hungary through the Szarvas Fellowship program.

"Every year they select 20 Americans per session, like 50 people total, to go to this camp and be the American ambassadors. There are Jews from all over Europe, Israel, and then the 20 of us from America."

Adding to the diversity of summer plans, senior Cristiano Rotolo will be continuing his Senior Project by working on Bridge Initiative as the Chicago Director. Bridge Initiative is a nonprofit founded by high school students.

According to their mission statement, "The Bridge Initiative is a nonprofit organization that connects these individuals [with disabilities] to long-term employment opportunities."

Rotolo will be working with high school students throughout the country to create a network of relationships between local businesses and programs or residencies for people with disabilities.

"We'll also research by doing job shadows and volunteer work with local organizations to find the best way to differentiate ourselves as a company and to best utilize our skill set to be the most impactful for the people we are trying to help," Rotolo said.

Still, summer is months away and many students have not decided on what they're doing.

For service, there is the Winnetka Volunteer Center, which can get interested students in touch with a wide variety of organizations.

To simplify it even further, under Naviance there is an Enrichment Programs section which provides a list that can be refined to any interests. All programs are handpicked by Mary Washelesky, who works in the career center.

For students who need help finding and forging new connections, Susan Thorngren, the coordinator of the New Trier Development Program, went in-depth on the personalized opportunities that can be found through the post-high school department;

"I can work with students to make a list of opportunities that suit them."

Thorngren went on to say that there were opportunities to be found in nearly every interest area: engineering, humanitarian, medicine, the arts, education, language, technology, and business.

"You don't have to grow up and

have a career, but you do need to think about how you spend your time.

What's important is passion and doing what you enjoy." There are opportunities to live at and experience a college, go on service trips around the world, and real life internships with professionals, among many other options.

Of course, many options can be expensive, but expense is not always a deciding factor for a good summer.

Thorngren talked about Career Exploration courses that run through Oakton Community College, three week courses with professionals that cost the same as a New Trier summer school class.

Thorngren's main point is that time spent over the summer is, and should be, different for everyone.

"It's important that students use their time wisely. For some, it's camp; for others, summer school, or a job, an internship, an intensive one week program, or just spending time with family. The important thing is to not remain sedentary."

## "Dawn of Justice" pleases fans

Despite its negative reviews, "Batman v. Superman" appeals to the comic fans

by Arjun Thakar

Zack Snyder's "Batman v. Superman: Dawn of Justice" isn't so much a dawn of the Justice League as it is a glimpse of it along the horizon, and despite negative critical reception, the film has a wide appeal to avid comic book fans.

"Dawn of Justice" is a continuation of 2013's "Man of Steel," in which Metropolis is devastated by the fight between Superman (Henry Cavill) and General Zod (Michael Shannon).

The discovery of these godlike aliens sparks a worldwide debate regarding what should be done with the seemingly all-mighty Kryptonian.

The movie begins with Bruce Wayne (Ben Affleck) experiencing firsthand the consequences of their destructive battle. He prepares to fight against Superman with the reluctant help of his former guardian and technical expert Alfred Pennyworth (Jeremy Irons).

Irons is a delight to watch as a cynical assistant who criticizes Bruce instead of serving him tea as a butler.

Seeing DC's Trinity together on the big screen is still hard to believe for hardcore fans of the comics.

Cavill's Man of Steel is less of an over-achieving Boy Scout and more of a hesitant and superhuman being.

This works within the framework of the film, but he is vastly undercut by Affleck's comic accurate interpretation of Frank Miller's Batman in the graphic novel "The Dark Knight Returns."

Miller's Batman is a veteran at crime fighting and more physical than past incarnations. Affleck shines both as the philanthropic Wayne and skull-cracking Batman.

Gal Gadot's Diana Prince is a mysterious side player in a larger conflict, but her portrayal of the fierce Amazonian Wonder Woman is impressive, especially in a genre where leading female superheroes are severely limited.



With a \$160 million opening weekend, fans have flocked to see the film | DCcomics.com

"Batman v. Superman" assumes that audiences have a basic knowledge of the history of these characters, wasting no time for explanations.

With this being only the second film in DC's cinematic universe, the plot seems a bit rushed at times. Certain characters needed fleshing out, and as Snyder fails to expand upon plot points, several characters may come across as somewhat underdeveloped.

Amy Adams' Lois Lane usually only serves to push the story forward, and Jessie Eisenberg's unstable and manipulative Lex Luthor is never given a proper introduction.

Those who are well-versed in the comics' lore, however, will find a plethora of references and teases that are sure to keep them anticipated for sequels.

Snyder's DC Universe is more bleak than the average live action comic book movie. There are some light-hearted moments, but unlike the Marvel Cinematic Universe, Snyder's gritty interpretation is meant for more serious fans.

Those expecting an inspiring superhero flick with jokes throughout will likely be somewhat surprised by the darker cinematography that Snyder strove for.

While the title of the movie is "Batman v. Superman," indicating a large and epic battle between the two, it should have been called "Batman Scuffles with Superman." The marketing for this film hyped up a major confrontation, but it is only a minor part of a very long film.

The first half is very exposition-heavy and features heavy political drama that didn't sit well with critics. Currently holding a 29 per-

cent on Rotten Tomatoes, the false expectation is what has sparked critics to completely denounce this film as a disaster.

Moviegoers have shown their disapproval of these uninformed ratings. The \$170 million made opening weekend indicates that most fans who resist critical opinions and still appreciate the characters and the comics will still find something to enjoy from the film.

This is in part thanks to the movie's superb and expensive visual effects. Snyder has shown his mastery behind the camera in his previous works, and this film is no exception.

Filmed in Detroit and Chicago, the movie's action sequences are satisfying and present the fights with a believable intensity.

The movie's visuals are complemented by a riveting soundtrack. Superhero soundtrack veteran Hans Zimmer teamed up with Junkie XL to compose original music for the film. These tracks often add additional excitement to the already tense fight scenes while producing a lighter mood for the more emotional scenes.

In conjunction with the visuals, they add to the experience, but alone, the soundtrack may sound out of place.

"Batman v. Superman: Dawn of Justice" isn't afraid to take a risk. Instead of making a movie that would appeal to general audiences, Snyder crafted one that most fans will be grateful for.

While the film may have failed critically, its fan appeal and successful effects are sure to excite viewers for the upcoming Justice League movie.

## Think before bragging about spring break adventures

"Staycationers" may feel left out during spring break chats

by Carina Brendl

While there seems to be a universal perception that most students travel to expensive places over spring break, discussing vacation plans in advisory and class remains controversial among students and teachers.

"If you didn't do anything as exciting as other people, you can feel kind of left out or bad," senior Michelle Cheng said about discussing spring break plans. She explained that this can be particularly bothersome in advisory, a place where break plans are often shared.

Cheng thought there's a perception that many students at the school travel to expensive locations over break, even if that might not be the case.

This perception forms when your entire friend group is traveling somewhere and you're the only one staying behind, she explained.

Senior Amrita Krishnan agreed with Cheng, adding that social media serves to amplify this mindset. "Everyone posts pictures of their destination on Facebook and Instagram, so becoming a staycationer almost has a stigma attached to it."

Because of this issue, art teacher and adviser Gardiner Funo O'Kain is careful not to turn spring break conversations into a compare/contrast situation where everyone is forced to talk.

Funo said that for other advisories with different dynamics this may be different, but feels that her advisory requires more of a supportive environment "where people can appreciate whatever anybody's doing and see that whatever you're doing has its merits."

Junior Connor Warshauer, on the other hand, thought that talking about spring break is not that big of a deal. He understood why staycations might make some kids feel excluded, but explained that because you can still have a lot of fun at home, talking about it is fine.

Junior Griffin Dunne agreed, explaining that students can enjoy themselves and do interesting things

even if they stay home. Dunne himself stayed home for spring break for the last three years without feeling left out, because he always had a great time.

Spanish teacher Tonya Piscitello agreed with Dunne and Warshauer that contrary to popular belief, staying home does not mean being bored.

"You could have done really exciting things, like what if you stayed here and went to a Blackhawks game?" Piscitello said. She added that some kids will answer that way, but most don't.

Piscitello said about talking to students who stayed home, "It's consistent, it doesn't matter what break it is, immediately they say, 'Well, I just stayed here.' And immediately the tone and everything about it tells you that there's this air of 'I didn't do something as exciting.'"

Funo agreed with Piscitello that students who stay home over break usually throw in the word "just" or say that they did "nothing." "It does seem like maybe they have an internal expectation that they're supposed to live up to some kind of fantastic spring break," she said.

Piscitello thought that a possible reason for this phenomenon is our drive to always do something.

"I try to help students see the value and worth of sometimes doing nothing. The problem is, we aren't programmed to do nothing," she said.

Junior boy's adviser chair, Gregory Segó, disagreed. "As educators, as people who care about young people, we want to see kids engaged in something," he said, referring to spring break.

Segó added that this does not necessarily mean academics. Especially nowadays, kids can use the Internet to explore their interests and expand their horizons, he said.

Segó explained that teachers often ask students about spring break plans out of genuine interest. On top of that, they ask in an earnest attempt to get to know their students better.

"As a math teacher for 20 years, I wanted to get to know my students beyond their math abilities. I feel like those appropriate and respectful connections help to build and support a mutual, respectful and professional working environment," Segó said.