

THE GUSTAVIAN WEEKLY

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ISSUE 13

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Mental Health: Exploring the Unacknowledged Civil Rights Journey

23rd Annual Building Bridges Conference tackles mental health



Caroline Probst
Editor-in-Chief

The 23rd annual Building Bridges Conference kicks off this Saturday, March 3, 2018. This year's topic: Mental Health: Exploring the Unacknowledged Civil Rights Journey.

This day-long conference will focus on mental health issues using an intersectional lens, aiming to dismantle the stigmas that surround mental illness, while also addressing the accessibility of mental health care and care in disadvantaged communities.

Conference Co-Chairs Quinn Andersen and Liz Toeben are most excited for a new addition to this year's schedule. Kicking off the conference will be a social justice chamber choir complete with a choreographed dance.

"We did our run through the other night, and I honestly started crying after they walked on stage and did that transition. It's a really beautiful and moving performance and that's right at the beginning of the day," Andersen said.

Following this there will be four workshops held throughout the day, followed by an Interpretive Walk Through and a Highlighted Panel. The Walk Through is an interactive experience through visual and performance art to explore the ways our culture perpetuates and normalizes mental health stigma and discrimination. This piece will simulate a museum experience as each classroom will have an exhibit. Conference attendees are free to walk through at their own pace, making it a unique experience for each individual. This experience will take place on the second floor of Beck Hall at 3:10pm.

Leah Ida Harris is the first keynote speaker will be giving her address in the morning. Harris is a mental health and suicide prevention advocate, as well as a speaker, writer, and social entrepreneur. She has spent the last thirteen years working as a grassroots advocate for

rights and access to support for individuals and families in crisis. Harris is a survivor herself of self-injury, suicide attempts, and multiple adverse childhood experiences. Harris will also lead one of the workshops, speaking From Punishment to Healing: Breaking Cycles of Criminalization.

Deborah Prothrow-Stith, M.D. will present a keynote address in the afternoon. Prothrow-Stith is currently the Dean and a Professor at Charles R. University College of Medicine in Los Angeles, CA. She is an internationally recognized leader in public health and has also been recognized as one of the creators of a nationwide social movement to prevent violence.

"Quinn and I both were talking about doing the mental health of refugees or looking at mental health within people from the LGBTQAI+ community. We kept coming back to the common theme of wanting to look at the mental health of refugees or looking at the mental health of the LGBTQAI+ community. It's not really fair to just do the mental health of a single community because there are so many other disparities that they're faced with and the discrimination that happens within that," Toeben said.

After announcing the theme in October, the Co-Chairs received an outpouring of support from the campus. Living on a college campus, students acknowledged that mental health is an everyday struggle for many and one that needed to be addressed. It really resonated with students, with many reporting that it just made sense.

"My favorite part about planning it has been working with marketing. They do so much to support us, help us, and make sure that we stay on track", Andersen said. "The image on the poster is a very evoking, beautiful image, and we're really pleased that they were able to give us something that I think fit with what we were going for, which frames and sets the tone for the conference so well."

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Campus Safety Report

Monday, February 19

- Campus Safety responded to a welfare check on a student of concern in Southwest Hall.

Tuesday, February 20

- Campus Safety responded to a drug violation in Norelius Hall. Case referred to the campus conduct system for possession of marijuana and paraphernalia.

Saturday, February 24

- An online report was submitted of a fondling that occurred in a campus residence hall.
- Campus Safety reported an unsafe student interaction with the Safe Rides vehicle and received a complaint about Safe Rides service.

Sunday, February 25

- Campus Safety responded to an alcohol violation on College

grounds involving one student and documented underage consumption, failure to comply with a College official, and threatening communications. Case referred to the campus conduct system.

- Campus Safety responded to an of-age alcohol violation in Sorensen Hall. Case referred to the campus conduct system.
- A Collegiate Fellow documented a candle

policy violation in Uhler Hall. concern in Southwest Hall.

- A Collegiate Fellow documented a report of a drug policy violation in Norelius Hall.

Note: Case dispositions are available online by viewing the daily crime log on the Campus Safety web page: <https://gustavus.edu/safety/incidents/index.php>

Tip of the Week: How Scammers make you pay

Is this a scam? Whatever the "this" looks like, here's the FTC's best answer to that question: Did someone say you can only pay by wiring money, putting money on a gift card, or loading money on a cash reload card? If they did, then yes: that is a scam. Whether someone tells you to pay to claim a prize, help someone out of trouble, or deal with tax issues from the (so-called) IRS.

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Tennis and Life Camps receive \$1 million donation

Boy and Betty Toy give a lot of love to their former camp

Samantha Walters
Staff Writer

The Gustavus Tennis and Life Camps recently received a generous one million dollar donation from Boy and Betty Toy of Mounds View, Minnesota.

The donation will help with the renovation of the Swanson Tennis Center, including expansion and improvements to the tennis facilities.

Neal Hagberg, director of the camps, said that part of the money will be going into the staff developing fund, as the staff were really important to the Toy's.

Apparently, when the Toy's visited the camps for the first time in 1983, they were very moved by the camps, specifically the staff that Steve Wilkinson, who founded the Tennis and Life Camps alongside his wife, had hired.

When visiting 35 years later, they said nothing had changed; they were still just as impressed with the program as they were years ago.

"Our first attendance at

the Toys said in an article written by Gustavus Alumni Neal Hagberg.

The Toys donated every year to the camps because of the impression it left on them in 1983.

They were good friends with Steve and Barb Wilkinson and enjoyed giving back to what they have been a part of.

"They believe so strongly in what our mission is in the camp, which is to include all and to be able to focus on the things that are in our control: are attitude, effort, and sportsmanship," said Hagberg.

"Boy and Betty really wanted to honor Steve's memory, and to honor Barb, and recognize how generous they were to give the camps."

The Toys both endured life in China during World War II. They lived in small villages not far from each other before their parents immigrated to the United States.

Eventually, they met in Duluth, Minnesota.

"They've been together 60 years," Hagberg said.

"I even wrote them a song... and it was about their having



Submitted

Legendary Gustavus Tennis Coach and Tennis and Life Camps Founder Steve Wilkinson in 2003.



Boy and Betty Toy, Tennis and Life Camp Alumni and generous donors

camp gave us unbelievable mental and physical changes in our daily living. The bottom line is we not only learned how to play better tennis but also how to be better people in life,"

understood struggle and suffering. Because of that, being able to see other people suffering and then realizing what a privilege it is to be able to give back."

The donation in part will

go towards the Tennis and Life Camps' 40-Love Campaign, the goal being to raise four million dollars in 40 months.

"We've raised \$3 million with 2 years left to go," Hagberg said.

The money will also go towards staff development and renovation of the tennis bubble, as well as scholarships for students part of the camps.

"We're super grateful... they're rebuilding the bubble and it's going to be incredible," First-year tennis player Xavier Sanga said.

"The couple's gift will establish the Boy and Betty Toy Endowment Fund to support the Wilkinson Legacy Endowment, which seeks to fulfill the dream of late Tennis and Life Camps founder and former Gustavus Men's Tennis Coach Steve Wilkinson to continually upgrade the College's first-class tennis facilities by providing for court maintenance, improvements, and expansion," Hagberg wrote in his blog.

Wilkinson had spent 39 years in the Gustavus men's tennis program and compiled 929 wins, more than any other collegiate men's tennis team. He and his wife, Barbara Wilkinson, founded the Tennis and Life Camps in 1977 and continued changing lives until Steve's death in 2015.

"Steve and Barb [Wilkinson] are both wonderful and generous individuals who gave so much of their lives to create TLC so others can become better tennis players and more importantly better citizens of our country. We have a deep desire for continuous support of the organization," the Toys

said.

"In times of great division in this country, Boy and Betty see unity at TLC. They see the diversity we strive for. They see inclusion of all. They knew what it was like being outcast as children. And they know what it is like to be embraced by people who appreciate them and celebrate who they are from the depths to the heights," Hagberg

wrote. "They're just amazing people... you can't help but be more generous yourself being around them."

Hagberg believes that the camps are not just a one-time fun event, its full of things students will take away and use for the rest of their lives.

They not only teach students about tennis, they teach them about life.



Submitted

Steve and Barb Wilkinson, Tennis and Life Camp founders

BlackOut Improv Comedy coming to Gustavus

Group aims to spark conversation about social justice issues



Submitted

BlackOut Improv Group performs all across the country at different colleges and charities, hoping to bring awareness about social justice issues through humor.

Laura Stickney
Staff Writer

On March 7, the Minneapolis-based BlackOut Improv Comedy group will stage a special performance in Alumni Hall from 7-8 p.m. This exciting, up-and-coming theatre troupe promises a show that strategically blends comedy and social justice, challenging viewers to think about serious issues rooted in our society today.

BlackOut, which features an all Black American cast, has staged multiple workshops and performances at colleges and charities across the nation, and the group's unique presentations of social justice have proved to be as entertaining as they are thought-provoking and relevant.

"Their form of advocacy works through their created dialogues that represent truths and stories of the Black American lives that we are often blind [to]," Campus Activities Board Culture and Diversity Executive Miho Iguchi, who is involved in hosting the event, said. "Conversed and played in a comical improv performance, it definitely makes serious topics more approachable, and physically experiencing something as such through our own eyes would be different to read off something off a book."

In fact, the group's unique use of comedy to spark serious conver-

sations about social issues is a large part of what gives its performances such startling originality. According to Professor of Theatre and Dance Michele Rusinko, this comedic touch may be what makes the group's performances so effective.

"We [Theatre and Dance] helped support this because we believe in performance as a means of working toward social justice and we believe Black Lives Matter," Rusinko said. "And, they are an improv comedy group -- sometimes comedy is the best teacher."

By hosting the BlackOut group here at Gustavus, the Campus Activities Board seems to be taking a fairly new and positive direction in terms of the kinds of events offered to the Gustavus community, according to Iguchi.

"Since CAB is a very entertainment-based organization, many serious events are often put aside of interest and importance, and it has been difficult to attract attention to conversations and discussions that need to be brought in light for many of our students on campus," Iguchi said. "This event was rather a new approach. Inviting an improv group -- particularly an all Black American cast group -- is what I believe allows both that serious conversation and entertainment aspect to come together in place."

While the performance promises to be a fun and engaging experience for those who attend, it is also hoped that the group's presence on campus will help boost

student attendance at events related to culture and diversity, which, as of right now, has been relatively low.

"The intersections of 'serious' and 'fun' is truly a bliss point that many of the organizations here on campus try to reach," Iguchi said. "To be honest, it is not easy, and student attendance and engagement for events of culture and diversity in general on this campus are poor. In that sense, I think BlackOut is that bliss point that I've been looking for. Nothing is promised at this point, but as for now I am very lucky to have this opportunity and to have them on our campus."

The show is open to the public and all Gusties are invited to attend. There will also be select BlackOut merchandise available for purchase on the day of the show for those who know of or wish to support the group. The Campus Activities Board strongly encourages everyone to come out and see this remarkable performance -- to laugh, to think, and be challenged in a truly original way.

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GUSTIE *of the* WEEK

Alexander Jensen

Emma Johnson
Staff Writer

Senior Alexander Jensen did not consider attending Gustavus at first. His grandmother attended Gustavus in the early 1960s, but it was not until he toured the college that he decided it was the place for him.

The opportunity to play football and a generous scholarship didn't hurt either.

"I'm very interested in progressive politics, and I care very much about making sure that all people have the resources and education they need to lead happy and healthy lives," Alex said.

His passion is what led him to major in Political Science with a minor in History. Alex's interests have also informed how he has been involved with his community, both on and off campus.

He said that he has served as treasurer for Building Bridges, a DLC Representative for the College Democrats, and a student representative to a few committees on student conduct and institutional advancement,

among many other things.

Alex has also worked as a Summer Organizing Fellow with Students for Education Reform (SFER) and a Campaign Assistant on Tim Walz' 2016 campaign. Furthermore, he volunteers with the Immune Deficiency Foundation as a Patient Advocate, often traveling to Washington, D.C. for the responsibility.

"I knew he was meant to be a grad student when I lent him one of my books and it came back with about 200 pink sticky notes marking parts of the book he thought were interesting."

—Katherine Knutson

His work and impact have not gone unnoticed. Sophie Leininger, a friend of Alex's, said, "He has certainly left his mark on this campus and the people around him."

Liza Long, another friend of Alex's, enthusiastically stated, "He is a joy to be around because you can tell that he is really present and cares about you."

Alex's academic work is equally impressive. Leininger told how, last semester on top of his course load, Alex completed his senior thesis for political science, writing thirty more pages than necessary.

Furthermore, as an undergraduate student, he has already had research published — quite a feat.

Area Coordinator Lindsay Henderson met Alex during CF interviews. "As soon as I met him I could tell what a great person he was and immediately wanted him to be a CF on one of my staffs," Henderson said. "He cares deeply about others and causes he believes in. His words aren't empty and he follows through on anything he says he will do."

Alex certainly does not regret his choice to attend to Gustavus. "The friends that I have made and the relationships that I've built with my professors at Gustavus are most important to me," he said.



Abby Anderson

Alex shows dedication to academics and his friends in everything he does.

However, it hasn't all been easy. "I've been blessed with a group of friends who have made the challenges that college presents worth the struggle," Alex said.

After graduating from Gustavus, Alex plans on pursuing a PhD studying the American government. He hopes to continue his political involvement

and advocacy for the issues that are important to him.

Professor Katherine Knutson first met Alex when he took one of her classes. She shared a telling story. "I knew he was meant to be a grad student and future professor when I lent him one of my books and it came back with about 200 pink sticky notes marking parts of the book he thought were interesting."

"He cares deeply about others and causes he believes in. His words aren't empty and he follows through on anything he says he will do."

—Lindsay Henderson

Though a PhD is not the end point for Alex. "I want to continue writing and researching, and eventually begin teaching at a college or university on topics of political behavior and the institutions of American government," he said.

Alex has already been accepted to a few PhD programs but is waiting to hear back from a few more before finalizing his decision. Even though, he still has most of a semester left to enjoy Gustavus.

"He is one of those people who make the world a whole lot brighter," Leininger said. No doubt the Gustavus community feels the same way about Alex having chosen to be a Gustie.



Abby Anderson

Alex has already published research and been accepted to multiple PhD programs to study political behavior and the institutions of American government.

Movies coming to campus this spring

Casey Miller
Staff Writer

With a new semester starting up we are all getting back into the swing of classes, homework, and being back on campus. We still have another couple months of cold winter to get through and the days might be moving slowly.

If you need something to look forward to or an escape on Friday nights, Gustavus Campus Activities Board (CAB) has another awesome set of films showing throughout the next couple of months.

Let's take a look at the movies CAB will be featuring this coming semester.

On February 16 and 17 CAB showed *Thor: Ragnarok*. In this follow up to *Thor* and *Thor: The Dark World* we follow, obviously, *Thor* (played by Chris Hemsworth), who is imprisoned on the other side of the universe.

He finds himself in a deadly gladiatorial competition wrestling against the Hulk, a fellow Avenger. Fighting for survival *Thor* ends up in a race against time hoping to stop the all-powerful *Hela* from destroying his home world and the Asgardian civilization.

This action packed film is directed by Taika Waititi and is the seventeenth film in the Marvel Cinematic Universe. It stars



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The Campus Activities Board presents multiple movies throughout the semester in Wallenberg Auditorium.

Chris Hemsworth alongside Tom Hiddleston, Cate Blanchett, Idris Elba, Jeff Goldblum, Tessa Thompson, Karl Urban, Mark Ruffalo, and Anthony Hopkins. Even if you missed this showing, it is definitely one to check out.

Up next this weekend is the new Disney film, *Coco*. Young Miguel dreams of being a musician just like his idol Ernesto de la Cruz. However, his family has a generations-old ban on music and will not allow him to pursue those dreams.

Hoping to prove his talent

he embarks on an adventure that leads him to the stunning and bright *Land of the Dead*. He teams up with a trickster named Héctor to try to find his way home, and along the way they hope to solve the mystery of Miguel's family history.

The film is based off the Mexican holiday *Day of the Dead*, and has won the Golden Globe for Best Animated Picture in 2017. It stars newcomer Anthony Gonzalez as the voice of Miguel along with Gael García Bernal, Benjamin Bratt, Alanna Ubach, Renée Victor, and many,

many more.

On April 13 and 14, *Star Wars: The Last Jedi* will be playing. Luke Skywalker's solitary existence is cut short when he meets a young girl named Rey, whom he believes to show signs of the force.

When she wants to learn more and practice the force he is required to make a decision that changes their lives forever. While this is happening, Kylo Ren and General Hux lead the First Order in an assault against the Resistance, hoping for supremacy over the galaxy.

It is written and directed by Rian Johnson and is the eighth main installment of the *Star Wars* franchise. It features a long list of popular actors such as Mark Hamill, Carrie Fisher, Adam Driver, Daisy Ridley, Lupita Nyong'o, John Boyega, and so many more.

Finally, on April 27 and 28, CAB will be playing *Pitch Perfect 3*. The Bellas are back in this third installment of the *Pitch Perfect* series. After graduating and going of into the workforce the Bellas soon find their job prospects weren't as great as they seemed.

Hoping to forget their unsuccessful careers and perform together at least one last time, they enter a competition for the USO tour. Come watch as they go on another hilarious adventure and make some more unforgettable music memories.

This laugh out loud comedy was directed by Trish Sie and written by Kay Cannon and Mike White. It stars Anna Kendrick, Rebel Wilson, Brittany Snow, Anna Camp, and Hailee Steinfeld alongside many others.

These films will all be presented in Nobel Hall's Wallenberg Auditorium at 8:00 p.m. Take a break from studying or sleeping to come and enjoy a free movie night at Gustavus with friends.

Gustavus Theater department performs 'Cabaret'

Marie Osuna
Staff Writer

As life proceeds as usual on the Hill, the theatre and dance building has been bursting with life for the past two months preparing for the latest Gustavus Musical, *Cabaret*. For a show like this, all kinds of talent need to come together in order to make the production run smoothly.

From costume designers to actors, directors to technicians, many students had their hands on this show.

The show takes place inside the infamous Kit Kat Club, where Sophomore Ryan Huxford, Senior Clay Sletta, First-year Elaina McRath, '21 and numerous ensemble members take the stage every night to forget their woes amidst pre-WWII Germany.

While the world may be in turmoil outside, life is beautiful in the *Cabaret* – right?

One factor that makes this show so incredibly alluring is the choreography, done by Senior Emma Hunt. This is the first show Hunt has done choreography for, which was a new challenge for her to tackle.

"It's been stressful to choreograph so many dance numbers for multiple different groups of people, some of which have never even danced before," Hunt said.

"I don't have theatre experi-

ence, so it's been difficult to immerse myself in a different kind of production that functions so differently from the dance side of the department."

While Hunt has been immersed in the dance aspect of the show, first-year Jenn Sorvick has been working as an assistant stage manager. The countless hours that she's invested have given her a deeper understanding of the show, and what theatre is like at Gustavus.

"One of the reasons why I love *Cabaret* is because the political tension in the show is just as prevalent in America today," Sorvick said. "The audience will reflect on what they have or haven't done to support causes that are important to them and what they can do to make an impact."

Additionally, Sorvick has found that the casting plays a heavy role on the show's overall tone.

"I also find it incredibly interesting that Amy Seham chose to double cast the emcee. Ryan Huxford and Clay Sletta have two completely different interpretations of the emcee, but they both provide stark contrast to some of the unsettling parts of the show," Sorvick said.

The musical started as a J-Term experience. Additionally, they worked after classes and during the weekends once Spring Semester began in order to finish the final details of the show.

The costumes in this show are just as fascinating as the story. Senior Georgia Bebler worked hard to design historically-accurate costumes for all the characters, right down to the bright red Nazi armbands. While the political undertones of this show are strong, the cast has remained optimistic and friendly.

"The cast is such a wonderful, diverse group of people who come from different majors and backgrounds and are coming together to create such a complex and exciting show," Hunt said.

"Every person sitting in the audience will enjoy this show, no matter their age, background, circumstances, and beliefs. It has something for everyone, and we've worked hard to make this the best production possible."

From a performers standpoint, this show is a unique experience in that it allows them to experience a different era in time, as First-year Emma Goebel saw.

"*Cabaret* is super interesting because it gives me an opportunity to basically be a part of a time that was very controversial," Goebel said.

Overall, Sorvick is proud of the work that the cast has done, both in their acting and making the historical background of the show as accurate as possible.

"The cast is incredibly hard-working and insightful. They've



Submitted

The show takes place in Germany before World War II.

done a lot of dramaturgy work to create characters that are true to the Nazi era, but relatable to an audience in 2018," Sorvick said.

Hunt also had great things to say about the show, and it's overall effect. "I would say the most difficult part of bring-

ing the script to life is creating movement and gestures that add something new and different without disrupting the intent of every line," Hunt said.

Cabaret runs in Anderson Theatre February 23-24 and March 2-3 at 8 p.m. and Feb. 25 and March 4 at 2 p.m.

Tales from Abroad

Lily Winter
Guest Writer

It is every college student's dream to go abroad, but very rarely does it come to be that our deepest hopes ever come to fruition. As us eleven Gustie girls sat on our third rumbly bus of the day, weaving through the streets of Chimbote, Peru, we sat in awe as the weightiness of these final moments before our official arrival at our host parish, Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

Partnering with Asociación Civil Apoyo Familiar (ACAF), we had jumped on the opportunity to visit the South American country in order to teach English to community members in Chimbote, finishing up our travels with a sightseeing excursion to Machu Picchu.

Chimbote was vastly different than the Peruvian countryside. While many houses were clearly worn, they were brightly colored—a small defiance to the dirty living conditions to which many people are bound.

This was a stark improvement to the housing developments on the long drive. Communities stretched up mountains as the growing communities gasped for air, and the houses were made by tightly weaving together durable materials, such as special kinds of plastics or woods.

In Chimbote, the houses on the main roads were constructed in a more traditional sense, although we were oblivious at the time of the conditions that existed beyond.

After settling into the parish and finalizing our English lesson plans, it was time to meet our students. Our professor, Darío Sánchez-González, divided us into three groups named after iconic Peruvian animals: puma, serpent, and condor.

We took great joy when we would find these animals about Peru, taking lots of pictures when we found all three animals together—once even cut into the grass at the base of an old Incan temple.

Each team was given two assignments which consisted of both a younger and an older age group. As part of Team Condor, we would be teaching 8-10 year olds in the morning, and young adults in the afternoon, and also expected to have a smaller class size due to the fact our team was smaller than our other animalistic counterparts.

This was our first lesson as new teachers, and would set the precedent for the entire trip—never expect the expected.

Twenty seven children accumulated in our classroom over the course of our two weeks in comparison to the fifteen we expected.

Bright shiny faces, the kids came with notebooks and lunch boxes decorated with Disney characters, no different than any child in the U.S, although when I tried to sing songs from *Moana* or *Tangled*, they stared at me blankly. "What's her name?" I asked a little girl, pointing at Rapunzel. "Barbie."

She responded, pointing at her friend's notebook which sported an equally as blonde



After two weeks of teaching English in Chimbote, the group traversed the country to get to Machu Picchu. Submitted

and blue-eyed girl. To combat Barbie, many girls toted around goods which featured a Latina girl, the protagonist from Disney's *Soy Luna*, although Luna still happened to have blue eyes and skin as light as mine.

"Begging for the words we had learned, they relished in how tongue and teeth formed to create 'my turn', 'play', 'girl', 'love', 'please', 'don't', 'leave'."

Our adult class was fruitful as well, with longer attention spans to focus on verb-forms and vocab lists, but it was our children with whom we built the closest connections.

Team Condor grew particularly close to a group of cousins

in our morning class after the youngest girl was burned on one of our first days teaching. Because the water in Peru is not potable, families are constantly boiling water for consumption so they don't spend hard-earned soles on bottled water.

Thirsty, the little girl began to drink from the family thermos, not realizing the water within was still at a boiling temperature. Scalded, she dropped the thermos, propelling the water down her chin and chest.

Her mother, at one of the afternoon adult classes, was called quickly home. Education or child protection. She could not afford both. Burn victims are not uncommon because of the difficulty to obtain safe water.

Another student in our class came only two times because of the long commute to school, but her dedication to her schoolwork was amazing because of her difficulty writing.

At six years old, she fell into her family's vat of boiling water, ruining her hands forever. Doctors sewed some of her toes onto what was left of her arms, granting her the ability to write and hold objects, even if painful.

While this particular girl lived far from the parish, we were able to connect with the other burn victim's family, fortunate enough to even witness their home situation.

Delivering beds in the community one day, we were shocked as our lead social worker mentioned the names of the four cousins. Their house was next on our list. The brightly colored stable buildings we were accustomed to seeing on the main streets of Chimbote faded away, and we began to walk past houses that resembled the shoddily built shanties that stretched up the mountainside on our drive to Chimbote.

Our previous bed delivery had been heart-breaking. The father had died recently, and the sons, so close to graduation, were pulled from university, halting their education and forcing them to become street vendors instead.

With a third crippled son and three younger children, the mother was grateful for the bed,

but regretful she couldn't move a pole which was hindering our movement in the household. Had she moved the pole, the entire house would have fell down.

It was hard to see, but this was harder. Knowing the little children who slept in the bed we carried out of the house made it so much worse. The mattress they had been sleeping on was almost non-existent, but instead, giant wet clumps of foam.

These four children were some of the hardest working in the class. They would ask for clarification on pronunciation, writing their own keys so they could practice at home in their own free time, and the little girls refused to let to boys take over the active games outside as they so often did.

We would play after school, and the games we had learned flowed from their bodies, and other little children would join, running their bodies through the motions of the Hokey Pokey, What-Time-Is-It-Mr-Fox, Colors Colors.

Begging for the words we had learned, they relished in how tongue and teeth formed to create 'my turn', 'play', 'girl', 'love', 'please', 'don't', 'leave'.

Tunnels are a part of a sacred practice in both Spanish and Incan tradition. It takes trust of those around you, of a power above you, and a power inside you to make your way through the dark and enter the light on the other side.

Living in the U.S, we can leave the tunnel any time we want. Snatch a plane ticket, show the status of our citizenship, and we're safe.

The people in Peru are still struggling for basic resources like good housing and clean drinking water, and personal empowerment as girls carry around backpacks decorated with standards of beauty determined by ethnicity.

These dark tunnels exist in all places, but we don't have to travel abroad to help. One can learn more about A.C.A.F, a program kick started by Father Jack Davis, graduate of St. John's University, at <https://acafchimbote.com/>.



Peru was an eye-opening experience for students, teaching poverty, corruption, history, regrowth and hope. Submitted