

Seniors prepare for graduation and post-collegiate life



Senior members of the Greenleaf Co-op **James Escobedo** (left), **Rose McIntyre** (middle) and **Lyes Benarbane** (right) discuss their plans, hopes and emotions about graduating on May 17.

BY TRAY LYNCH
STAFF WRITER

All the late nights spent in the library devoted to writing papers and studying for exams are over now.

You did it. You made it through college. There is an undoubtedly enormous emphasis on a student's senior year of college: a sense of pride that against all odds you made it to the finish line.

"Being able to walk across the stage after 16 pulse years of education feels good," said senior Phillip Smith.

"Graduating is one of the best feelings in the world, especially being one of the first males in my family to do it," said senior Nicholas Mearite. "The stereotype that black males are not smart and can't

finish college just pushed me to go harder and prove those people wrong."

Graduating from college is both exciting and terrifying, as students must make plans for their future.

"It feels good to be a senior, and it definitely feels good to have a plan after college," said senior Kevin Tiller. "I'm not nervous about graduation or life after school because I have been preparing for this. I'm definitely blessed to be continuing my education at Virginia Commonwealth University"

College seniors without preparation for the "real world" are much like deer in headlights. They are aware that life after school is much different from college life, but the fear of the unknown is terrifying.

"It feels good to be a senior, but it's bitter sweet," said Wayne Marsh. "It's good that

I'm graduating, but I'm nervous. It's a change from what I'm used to."

With the economy doing poorly, it's almost mandatory to have a college degree in order to get a good job. Although, a diploma won't necessarily guarantee a job for students after they graduate.

To improve their chances of employment, many students continue on to graduate school to refine their skills.

Regardless of the pride and sense of accomplishment you get from your diploma, it is essential that college graduates ask themselves the inevitable question: "what do I do next?"

"Senior year of college is one of the most important times of your life," said senior Lawrence Blake. "We always say how we have all our lives to do whatever we want to do, to be whatever we want to be, but

it isn't always good to look at it that way.

"If you look at it from that perspective you will not be prepared for the real world. I believe I took advantage of my senior year, and I made some job connections, which can guarantee a better future for me right after college."

This is a key point: job connections. Seniors don't necessarily have to continue on to graduate school immediately after graduation in order to be prepared for the "real world." Making valuable connections is another great way to prepare for the future.

There is no right or wrong plan to guarantee success after graduation, but it is very important for seniors to have one. Graduating from college is just a stepping-stone. The real work comes from finding a job in your profession and excelling at it.

Publication 'I Don't Do Boxes' explores queer creativity

BY ABE KENMORE
STAFF WRITER

The plate glass has been removed from the old storefront and the space once occupied by window displays now houses three swings. Behind this, in the old thrift store turned museum, the editors of "I Don't Do Boxes" — a publication focused on Queer Southern stories — discussed the newest issue.

"I like that it's queerly shaped," said one of the editors seated around a hodgepodge of tables, as he examined a mockup of the magazine the size and shape of a CD case.

The place is Elsewhere: a museum made from the collection of one Sylvia Gray, who practiced what Elsewhere calls "Hoardingculture" for over 50 years. The collection includes everything from electronics and musical instruments to buttons and zipper pulls. It is frequently re-arranged into art displays by resident artists or passing patrons.

In addition to the ever-shifting artwork, Elsewhere also has ongoing projects — such as the nightly co-op dinner and QueerLab, which works with LGBTQA youth to produce "I Don't Do Boxes."

The first issue was published last year, with 35 submissions from around the country; about half came from North Carolina.

This year there were more than 70, including some from the U.K. and Canada.

While there are no limitations to where submissions can come from, the magazine focuses on Southern stories.

In addition, the editors are all Southerners — something unique to "I Don't Do Boxes."

"Being from the North ... I kind of had a hard time adjusting (to the South), even though Greensboro is fairly liberal," said first-year Ellie Weiner, rising PRIDE officer. "It's good to have that place where people can share their stories, in (a place) where LGBTQA people aren't accepted as much."

At this meeting, the editors performed triage on the submissions of art, writing and music before gathering in the communal kitchen for Pad Thai and blondies.

"(Editing) is another creative outlet," said editor Allen Moore, a high school junior and former Elsewhere intern. "(It is) a way to view other people being creative."

Over dinner, Chris Kennedy, education curator at Elsewhere, shared some history of "I Don't Do Boxes."

A project of QueerLab and GSAFE — a Greensboro organization dedicated to LGBTQA youth — "I Don't Do Boxes" includes both what Kennedy described as the "typical coming out story" as well as a "cornucopia" of other works on being queer.

In the last issue, entitled "School's Out," a gay young man from San Francisco reflects on past girlfriends, a teenager from N.C. conducts a queer Tarot reading and an ACLU legislative representative who works on LGBTQA issues shares his inspiration.

Other articles explore queer Hip Hop music, give tips on safe chest binding for those who present as male and list ten ways to practice consent. The last was written by Eric Ginsburg '10, former staff reporter for the Guilfordian.

This diversity is different from other LGBTQA publications, which can "over-sexualize bodies and primarily cater to white men with privilege," said Kennedy.

"I'm just excited to have something that's focused on the creativity that comes out of the queer community," said sophomore Cara Messina, secretary of Guilford's PRIDE club. "People who aren't necessarily famous artists, poets or writers can still have their voices heard by a wider audience."

2014 issue of "I Don't Do Boxes" will be released June 7

Help support publication of new issue:

Farm to Table Dinner (hosted by QueerLab)
May 30 @ Elsewhere

Buy tickets or read last year's issue:

WWW.IDONTDOBOXES.ORG