

Opinion

Health Services: Behind the Counter

By Savi Swiggard, Staff Writer

Here on Meredith's campus, our health services are located on the first floor of Carroll Hall. The health center performs a range of basic medical care, such as screenings, checkups and other regular services. The health services fee is wrapped up in the residence hall room and board fee, but for students living in the Oaks or off campus, there is a \$200 fee per year. The health center on campus does not handle emergencies or specialized medical care, but it still provides numerous resources and programs for students and staff. Despite this, many Meredith students don't understand what the health center offers, and for Oaks students and commuters, paying the fee doesn't seem worth the hassle based on these misconceptions.

The range of student understanding about the health center is limited based on what resources that student has actually used, and students often remain in the dark about the other services unless they ask. Avni Chaudhari, a junior at Meredith and a commuter, said that due to having their own insurance, there didn't seem to be a point to paying extra for services. "I went once as a freshman," Chaudhari expressed; "it wasn't very helpful. I was just given like, cough drops and Tylenol." In general, this was the major experience echoed by many students in personal interviews at Meredith. An anonymous senior living in the residence halls stated that she wouldn't pay for it if she had the choice to be exempt. She goes on to say "It generally seems like when you get a cold at [your job],

they just toss you a pre-made bag of cold meds and tell you to go rest. The doctor isn't here much, and I'm not aware that they offer anything else." Similarly, an anonymous sophomore living in the residence halls complained that getting care for anything more severe than a cold was a waste of time. She continued, "I just don't see the point. I have medicaid, so only medicaid doctors can prescribe me anything. I don't



Photo by Laney Flaugher

have a car, so going to my own doctor is a huge pain, but it's all I can do." Overall, there were some students who thought highly of the health center, including sophomore Hannah Dudley, who recounted her positive experiences receiving care, but most students interviewed seemed to enjoy the staff working in Carroll more than the actual care.

So what does the health services department do? Doctor Mary Johnson is the director for Meredith's Health Services, which has been her position for the past three years. Unlike her predecessor, Johnson is medically trained with several degrees, including an undergraduate degree from Meredith. While her role in the health center is primarily as a general administrator, her doctorate of nursing practice from Duke means

achieve success and to get Kenyon's thoughts on the Moritz case. While watching Jane tell off catcalling construction worker and confidently call a taxi, Ruth realizes that the culture of a nation changes before its laws. She would have to argue change in a court of law that had already begun on the streets of America.

Finally given her chance, Ruth realizes the onerous task of legal representation is more difficult than it appears. She is initially turned away by Mel Wulf (Justin Theroux) of the ACLU, who tells her that sex discrimination isn't a civil rights issue, and is denied advice from Dorothy Kenyon (Kathy Bates), an activist frequently cited in Bader Ginsburg's lessons. She secures their support in the end, but not without her own trials and tribulations. Wulf heads a moot court to prepare Ruth for trial, which she fails miserably to the tune of sexist mockery of her abilities from her so-called friend and ally. Wulf demands Martin open

she is able to see patients when Meredith's doctor and nurse may be busy or not working. Her availability greatly extends the hours during which students can seek medical attention. Johnson described how she is in an ongoing battle with the state, trying to get medicaid licensure for the health center to make it easier on students like the anonymous sophomore. Johnson also revealed that the health center provides a wider array of services than most students realize, and that these services only cost extra if it's an expensive health test like a pap smear. Services such as STD testing and pregnancy counseling, walking students and staff through options and steps for more detailed care in the future.

Still Johnson lamented that she wasn't surprised at the negative or uninformed responses from Meredith students. "You never really look into a resource until you need it," she said, continuing on to explain that the health center provides a significant number of resources specific to women as well as general resources. These resources include pregnancy counseling tailored to what the student needs, a lactation room for students and staff to get privacy, and a transition program to help recent mothers reenter the academic life. Meredith has also begun to do a pill cleanup, beginning last year in April. Hosted at the Oaks apartments, the pill cleanup invites students, staff and community members to safely dispose of expired pills or dangerous narcotics by dropping them off with the Raleigh SWAT team. This service will be provided again this year, so keep an eye out for the dates.

Johnson's work to rebuild

the case to build confidence in the defense, which he reluctantly takes after realizing that though Ruth is passionate, she is unskilled due to being denied many a position as a practicing lawyer.

Though she struggles to gain traction in her first round, Ruth manages a swinging comeback the second time she defends Mr. Moritz in the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals. Her rebuttal is so strong, the judges allow her to go past her last allotted four minutes, and her argument ultimately wins her the case. The film closes with a transition from footage of Felicity Jones walking up the US Supreme Court steps into footage of the actual Ruth Bader Ginsburg finishing the ascent.

Overall, the movie has received positive critical acclaim. There was, however, some kickback from the Jewish community surrounding Felicity Jones, a non-Jewish actress playing Bader

the students' understanding of the on-campus health services generally goes unseen, but since she began at Meredith, the staff has increased to three members, the wellness programs have grown from three events a year to an astounding 42 events a year, and the social media outreach has been created and expanded. Ultimately, Johnson can improve the center only so much due to limited finances. The center is funded almost exclusively from resident students' fees.

"Why don't commuters and Oaks students want to pay the health fee?" she asked.

Johnson wanted to know for the sake of future improvement, "What can we do differently?"

When asked what the best thing students could do for the health center was, Johnson replied that self-care, informed advocacy and positive psychology were all fiercely important to her and to helping the students and staff live happier and healthier lives.

Ultimately, many students remain in the dark about what services the health center provides. As Johnson pointed out, we don't look into resources until we need them, and often students will assume the health center doesn't provide a service simply because they don't consider the health center as a primary resource. It can be helpful to get a general checkup on campus, and students may be directed to specialists depending on the severity of the problem. Per Johnson's recommendation, take some time to read all the services provided by the health center. You never know when you might need them, and it doesn't hurt to know they're there.

continued from page 3

a forefront in the world around her, Bader Ginsburg begins to question how to fight sex discrimination and if it is possible to even prove such a thing exists. While Ruth despairs over her inability to do anything but teach, her husband Martin entices her with a tax law case that includes an opportunity to claim sex discrimination against a man. This immediately grabs Ruth's attention and begins her journey into building a case in favor of the defendant, Charles Moritz (Chris Mulkey).

While Ruth struggles for success and validation, Ruth's daughter Jane (Cailee Spaeny) is embracing the new feminist dogma, often butting heads with her mother's perceptions of how women's successes should be achieved. This at first causes a schism between mother and daughter, but later brings them together. Ruth decides to take her daughter with her to consult an experienced discrimination activist, Dorothy Kenyon, to show her daughter how a woman might

Ginsburg. In an article discussing Jones's offering of a more culturally consumable beauty standard in the portrayal, Hey Alma writer Anna Miriam writes, "the irony of altering the appearance of a historic figure in order to make her more conventionally attractive in a movie about her combating sexual discrimination is almost too rich to put into words."

In the end, *On The Basis Of Sex* is a movie that takes an inspiring woman's story and reminds its viewers that every legend was once a mighty challenger to the status quo. Throughout the film she is portrayed as intelligent and capable, but challenged by the frustrating society into which she was born. She is shown as a human being who struggles to make her mark on a difficult world, but succeeds through the support of her loved ones. Her journey truly embodies what Meredith showcases as Going Strong.

STAFF

Sarah Kiser, Editor-in-Chief. Mimi Mays, Associate Editor.

Caroline Garrett, A&E Editor. Abby Ojeda, News Editor. Rebecca Dowdy, Opinion Editor. Olivia Slack, Features Editor.

Micah Clark, Cartoonist. Cro Owens, Social Media Coordinator. Nikki Wertz, Layout Designer.

Staff Writers: Hannah Brittain-Dubois, Kathleen Daly, Huma Hashmi, Haley Ivey, Ashleigh Murr, Ell Shelp-Peck, Ashley Ricks, Yajaira Ramos-Ramirez, Savi Swiggard.