

Opinions

School names can be make or break

Blake DuDonis
Pilot editor in chief

Every college in the country, no matter how big or small, has one thing in common: a mascot with a nickname.

A nickname is the most important thing about a college, as it is the one thing that people associate with the school.

So the question arises: Which school has the greatest mascot name? The question is debatable, but let me take you on a journey through some of the best and worst names in the country.

Now, any school that has a dog, cat or bird mascot is eliminated. How boring is that?

Be honest with yourselves, people! If we all got serious, we would admit that we are sick of names like the Bulldogs, Wildcats or the Eagles.

I give Gardner -Webb credit for at least adding the word "Runnin'" to the front of Bulldogs, but come on, let's get real.

For this contest, exceptions to the above mentioned nicknames will be made if the dog, cat or bird is strange, rare, or made up all together. Take Southern Utah University, for example. Its nickname is The Thunderbirds. Now there is some creativity.

Another exception would be the Bloodhounds of John Jay

College of Criminal Justice-City University of New York (or JCCJCUNY for those who love acronyms.)

Not high on the bird? How about this: the University of California-Irvine Anteaters.

Amazing!

According to an excerpt from "Instant University" by Samuel Clyde McCulloch, the origins of this mascot go back to 1965, when two water polo players, Pat Glasgow and Bob Ernst, suggested the unusual name. Apparently, UCI had a sister campus and in honor of it needed to have a bear as a mascot.

Surprisingly, the anteater is actually considered an antbear. After voting, the nickname won over other candidates such as golden bear (UCLA's nickname), eagle (boring) and unicorn (seriously?).

Another of my favorites is Indiana Purdue University at Fort Wayne. The name is one that I have never seen anywhere else: Mastodons. The story of the name is a complex one, but probably one of the best I have ever heard.

A mastodon was a large mammal, about 10 feet tall, with a long trunk like an elephant, and it weighed roughly 10,000 pounds. The animals lived years ago near the Great Lakes region

of North America, and are now extinct.

In 1968, a farmer named Orcie Routsong decided to dig a pond. While doing so, some of the equipment got stuck, and upon digging it out, Routsong and his helpers found a large bone. After calling around, Routsong reached Jack Sunderman, chair of the IPFW geosciences department. After more digging, the men found two-thirds of the skeleton, which indeed was a mastodon. In addition to the skeleton, the men found a skull of a baby mastodon.

Routsong allowed the mastodon skeleton to be on permanent display at IPFW, and the baby mastodon skull is located in the hands-on, student-oriented science activity center.

Two years later, IPFW student body president Steve Pettyjohn wrote a letter to the editor of the school newspaper, ask the school to "...have the courage to be a little different." The following year, the school adopted the mascot and this rest is history.

Now, let us take a break in our search for best nickname and talk a little about the worst. A nickname, although represents the whole school, it directly relates to its athletic teams. That in mind, what was UC-Santa Cruz thinking when they began calling themselves the Banana

Slugs? The school Web site explains that the banana slug represents some of the strongest elements of the campus: contemplation, flexibility, non-aggressiveness and, perhaps above all, an iconoclastic challenge to the status quo.

OK, a few things about that. First off, non-aggressiveness is usually not something your sports teams want to affiliate themselves with. "Hey we play football, but we are definitely not going to tackle anybody." Second, there is no way iconoclastic is a word.

A few other poorly chosen nicknames are the Terrapins, defined as "any one of numerous species of tortoises living in fresh and brackish waters. Many of them are valued for food," as is the South Dakota State Jackrabbits (a small furry animal that runs when anything even thinks about chasing it), and the Stanford Cardinal. Stanford is interesting because if you notice, their name is Cardinal as in the color, not the bird. The school does not have an official mascot, but a large Christmas-tree looking thing with huge lips is its unofficial one. If you have never seen the Stanford Tree, you need to look it up immediately. I promise you will laugh until you cry.

I'm aware that this story is

getting long, so let me rattle off a few nicknames without going into detail about them: the Phoenix, the Zips, the Demon Deacons, the Horned Frogs and the Vandals. Another bad one is the Gorlocks of Webster University. The name was founded by combining two street names close to the college. Nice.

The best nickname? That obviously that is up to you. But as I close, I will leave you with one nickname for each letter of the alphabet, some good, some bad, just so you have a few more names to go off of.

Antelopes, Billikens, Catamounts, Dustdevils, Evangels, Flying Dutchmen, Gauchos, Humpback Whales, Inferno, Jumbos, Keelhaulers, Leathernecks, Marauding Eagles, Northern Lights, Oaks, Phantoms, Running Eagles (wait... what?), Student Princes, Threshers, Utes, Vulcans, Wahoos, (No nicknames that start with X), Yeomen (woman's team called Yeowomen), and last but not least, the Zias.

So there you have it; some of the coolest, strangest and funniest college nicknames in the country. There are hundreds of other not included on this list; go find your favorite name for yourself.

Until next time, happy mascot hunting!

Walk away from violent relationships

By Sean Barrett
Pilot staff writer

For the past month and a half one of America's favorite tabloid headlines has been the Chris Brown and Rihanna dispute.

Both of these popular performers have been given the bad end of the stick when it comes to celebrity tabloids after reports surfaced that America's favorite couple weren't so perfect after all.

Los Angeles police found Rihanna beaten, abused by her then-boyfriend Chris Brown.

That's opened a debate about young women and violence in relationships, thank goodness.

I believe that teen/young adult dating violence is so common that it's scary. Yet it's been taboo to talk about.

Statistics have shown that one in every three girls will be abused at some point in a relationship.

Tomorrow when you go into your classroom, count any three girls in there, and, statistically, one of them will be abused in a relationship. Abuse can be physical, emotional or verbal.

Dating violence is defined in the state Department of Justice as: "The perpetration or threat of an act of violence by at least one member of an unmarried couple on the other member within the context of

dating or courtship."

In dating violence, one partner tries to maintain control over the other through some kind of abuse. It crosses all economic, racial and social lines.

Most dating violence victims are women, who are at higher risk for serious injury.

I believe that women - including lesbians - need a dating safety plan.

Teen dating violence often is hidden because teenagers are typically inexperienced with dating relationships; want independence from their parents; or they are pressured by peers to be in a dating relationship.

Teen dating violence is influenced by how the abuser looks at him/herself and other people.

Masculinity is often associated with physical aggressiveness. Young men may believe they have the "right" to control their female partners using any means necessary.

They fear they may lose respect from their male friends if they are attentive and supportive of their girlfriends.

I know of a young woman here at Gardner-Webb University who was physically abused by her boyfriend in high school.

She asked to stay anonymous for this story.

When I asked her why she stayed in an abusive rela-

tionship, she said, "I felt like I could cure my boyfriend's problem, and when he abused me, afterwards he'd be like the perfect boyfriend."

"Plus, I felt like nobody could help me, and I didn't want to get him in trouble."

Many abused partners stay in relationships because they believe the other person really loves them, and he/she always promises never to hit again.

But typically, the abuser does it again.

I also asked my friend how often her ex-boyfriend hit her. She thought for a few seconds and said, "Whenever, he felt I did something wrong ... maybe once a month."

"He tried to not hit me in the face, because my parents would see it. But he'd choke me and punch me in the stomach."

My last question was, "When did you figure out it was enough?"

She took another deep breath and said, "When he started hitting me in the face, and started to threaten more than just me, but my family. That's when I'd had enough."

"There was times when I thought he was really going to kill me, and I wanted to stop being afraid of my life. So I told my parents about it, and they got me out of that abusive relationship."

Here are a few tips you might want to consider when

dating, to be as safe as possible:

In a new relationship try double-dating for the first couple of dates.

TRUST YOUR INSTINCT; if you feel a gut feeling something isn't right, get out.

Follow your gut, because it will never steer you wrong.

Don't hesitate to check his/her dating history. Sometimes it's OK to call an ex to find out if their relationship included abuse.

If you are already in a relationship, here are the signs of a potentially abusive partner: extreme jealousy; controlling behavior; mood swings; alcohol and drug use; explosive anger; isolating you from friends and family; the use of force during arguments; blaming other for his problems or feelings; and verbal abuse.

Help is available for young people involved in an abusive relationship.

Call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 800-799-7233.

If you'd like to read more about domestic abuse and teen dating violence, visit Safetyouth.org.

You need to remember that no one deserves to be abused or threatened by someone who supposedly cares about them.

Like Oprah says, "Love shouldn't hurt."

Reorganize thoughts for less stress, better grades

By Jake Goldbas
Technician, N.C. State
UWIRE

Final exams are coming up, and I found myself in a bind and stressed out about school work and other engagements.

I felt like a Duke student who had recently scored too low on a test and had to do some sort of ritualized shame practice in front of a board of post-doctorate assistant-teacher's assistants.

Or worse - a University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill student who stresses about all the work he has to do when he really is just doing liberal arts (also known as YouTube).

When YouTube got boring, however, I hit up WebMD and got some classic tips, just for you.

Here's what the doctor site said: Write. Let your feelings out. Do something you enjoy. Focus on the present. Meditate. Use guided imagery.

Ways to relax your body:

Exercise.

Try techniques to relax. Breathing exercises. Progressive muscle relaxation.

The problem with these, however, is that they are all distractions from stress instead of stress-fighters.

In a book by Dan Garrett about Baruch Spinoza, a philosopher, I read about how he got rid of stress from knocking out the passions.

Garrett said, "The constraint or removal of affects - including harmful ones - depends on the occurrence of opposite and stronger affects. An affect is ... more powerful if we imagine its object as possible rather than merely contingent."

Everybody is going "huh?" so let me put this a different way.

Spinoza said we have to fight fire with fire, but not just any fire. He was talking about getting rid of a basic passion with a stronger passion.

Spinoza would first have us realize that we are stressed.

Then, he would make us think about our goals and our grades.

Then he might have us think of our passion to be distressed.

If it's not harmful and crazy stress, then it might be good.

But if it is bad, we can knock it out with our bigger passion to de-stress, or our bigger passion of studying.

Some of us might already do this or have done this in the past.

Besides the normal stress-awareness tips, I'm using Spinoza to say this: When you realize that you are stressing, try to overcome it with a greater passion.

How do you get your greater passion?

Spinoza's got the basic set up written above: It's got to be opposite and stronger. The passion of studying can knock out a lot of stress about studying (stress here being lesser passions, like thinking about studying; worrying about

tests; and procrastinating.)

When people study, it's impossible to worry about tests and think about what they're studying at the same time.

This is what Spinoza means by having something "present rather than past or future."

We should take "its object as being in the near" to think of how our tests are in the future, but the stress itself is now.

The larger, nearer passion that we can use to cancel this one out is concentrating on studying.

By focusing on the act of studying rather than the conflict between studying and not studying, I think you can eliminate stress.

But by studying alone, instead of thinking about the act of studying, you might get rid of even more stress.

Ironically, when you do de-stress, you position yourself to get better grades, which would be the only point of stressing in the first place.

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New SGA leader has plans for change in group, GWU

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issues are addressed successfully by taking care of them "step by step."

"A broad topic that has always been touched on in SGA has been the issue about food," she said.

"Instead of completely changing the food in the caf, we take that issue and change it little by little. People want change."

Although Gill-Sadler would like to keep traditional SGA activities, like the blood drive and Homecoming, she would also establish new traditions.

Why does she want to take on the stress of leading SGA?

"I have received a lot of good opportunities that motivates me to want to give other people that same opportunity," Gill-Sadler said. "I want to give them the chance to be a good leader. I like to show what I have learned and demonstrate it to people, in order for them to learn."

She would like to work with the Student Senate members to make them better leaders.

"I want to encourage each class president to get more involve with their class and in Homecoming, developing leaders within their class," she said.

"SGA can be a stressful but any leadership can be stressful. It's like a trade off with the awards, which pays off all the stress."

"I am looking forward to next year."