

# The Campus Chronicle

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STORIES

MARC DICKINSON

## REPLACEMENT PARTS

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REPLACEMENT PARTS

"Marc Dickinson writes beautifully."

—JAMES BAXTER, author of *The Sun Collective* and *Feast of Love*

explores [these characters] with heart and intelligence, helping  
the beautiful, redemptive struggle of the human condition."

## Inside:

DMACC English

Professor Marc Dickinson  
talks about his new book,  
"Replacement Parts"

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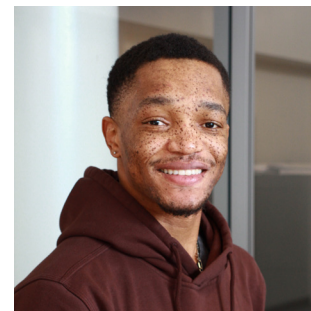
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## After 21 years as president, DMACC's Rob Denson announces 2025 retirement

**Lara Jones**

*Multimedia Editor*



DMACC President Rob Denson. Photo by Kennedy Ballinger, Chronicle archives.

On Wednesday, Jan. 29, Robert Denson, DMACC's fourth president, announced his retirement effective Dec. 30, 2025.

Denson's career has spanned many colleges. From Ames-based Iowa State, Santa Fe Community College in Florida, and North East Iowa Community College in Calmar. In 2003, Denson was hired as DMACC's president and has spent the last 21 years promoting and improving the school.

In an email to faculty and staff, Denson said he is proud of what he has accomplished and is optimistic for the school's future.

"I am incredibly proud of all DMACC has accomplished in its almost 59 years of

service," Denson wrote. "I am confident that DMACC's future is bright."

Denson's retirement will be considered by the DMACC board on Monday, Feb. 10. In the meantime, Denson said DMACC officials and the board will begin the process of finding another person to take over.

"I expect that the Board will soon start the search process. I know you will all support that process and DMACC's 5th President, when named," Denson wrote.

In his retirement, Denson said he plans to spend more time and focus on his children and grandchildren. "Thank you ALL again for your friendship and support."

The Campus Chronicle is the student newspaper for the Ankeny DMACC campus and is funded by Student Activities.

If you would like to send feedback or a letter to the editor, please email adviser Andy Langager at [ajlangager@dmacc.edu](mailto:ajlangager@dmacc.edu)

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We are located in Building 5, Room 1136

Chronicle layout by Kiofwe Kapepula.

# DMACC student by day, reservist sailor by weekend

**Dashae Engle**

*Contributing Writer*

Chronicle writer Riley Dickerson is a third-year journalism student at DMACC. Dickerson, 25, from Ankeny, spent four years on active duty in the Navy from 2018-2022. During that time, he was an undesignated fireman, and towards the end of his contract, he was an electrician.

He is currently serving in the Navy Reserve. Dickerson discussed his busy schedule, which he uses to balance Reserve duties and student life.

Dickerson enjoyed his time in the active Navy; however, joining the Navy Reserve was a new way to serve. "The way it's run is completely different. It's much more laid back [and] at your own pace," Dickerson said.

Dickerson found a new way to serve his country and make more money for himself. Being offered the ability to be a part-time Sailor, along with a hefty bonus, was a great opportunity for him.

"To be honest with you, the big thing was that they offered a \$20,000 bonus. The way it works is you get \$10,000 upfront, then at the end of the next fiscal year, you get five [thousand dollars], and then the end of the next fiscal year, you get another five," Dickerson said.



Riley Dickerson

His drill duties consist of one weekend a month, typically Saturday and Sunday, and 12-15 days in the summer for annual training, known as AT. The weekend training is eight hours a day and varies depending on the weekend.

"Every weekend is different. Sundays, you have your PT day, [which is] about two or three hours of physical activity. Last weekend it was kickball and football. I think people were playing beanbag toss. There's a lot of activities you can do, and then

after that, they dismiss you, and you go home," Dickerson said.

AT is important for reservists to get a feel for what it is like to be on active duty.

"I've already been on active duty before, and I know how it is. They want people to go there and be engaged in active duty activities and understand what it would be like if you had to mobilize. So, their whole mission is to be mission-ready 24/7," Dickerson said.

For most reservists, it is similar to a part-time job. "A lot of [us] have other obligations, and the reserves is just a way for them to be a part of something bigger than themselves. It's a part-time job," Dickerson said.

There is always a chance of deployment. There is no definitive answer to whether someone joins if they will deploy or not. "How likely depends on the rest of the world," he said.

It's not an easy job, but with the right mindset, it is doable.

"If you feel like something in your life is missing, you want to become something bigger than yourself and you can handle a heavy workload. The Navy Reserves will give you a sense of something larger than yourself," Dickerson said.

## Need some academic help? Head over to Building 6

**Katie Hirth**

*Staff Writer*

A not-so-hidden gem of DMACC is the Academic Achievement Center (AAC). The AAC is where staff are on hand to assist students in anything they could be struggling with. The best part? It is free.

From math to writing, science, and speech, there will more than likely be someone there who can help you with your struggles. However, some subjects have certain hours that they are available. Make sure to check the schedule to see what is available. If you aren't sure when you can visit, check the DMACC website for hours of availability. To access the AAC you just need your DMACC ID number and you can walk right in.

Krista Vanderlist is the Tutoring Project Coordinator. Vanderlist said, "What I really think is unique is that it has a study hall feel to it where sometimes there are students who



Librarian Emma Adams poses in the library, located in Building 6.  
Photos by Katie Hirth.

come in and work independently, and other times there are groups of students working all together to figure things out."

The general availability for Spring 2025 is Monday through Thursday from 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. and Friday from 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Closed: Feb. 14,



40,000 books (both printed and online versions), 200 subscriptions, and 2,000 videos, you are sure to find something for you. Whether it is just a fun read for yourself, or material needed to help you in a class the library is sure to have it.

Emma Adams is a librarian and notes the availability of individual and group study rooms. Adams said, "These rooms are a quiet space to study that have whiteboards so you can write things out and are a great resource during midterms and finals week."

Check the DMACC website to reserve the study rooms ahead of time, otherwise they are first come first serve. Library hours are 7:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday, Closed Saturday and Sunday. The Ankeny Library is in Building 6 in the media center.

March 17-21. The AAC is in Building 6, Room 19.

Another resource that DMACC offers is the library. When most people think of a library, they just think of hundreds and hundreds of books. However, the DMACC library is more than that. From its massive

# Esports lounge levels up campus life

**Taysia Bettis**

*Contributing Writer*

Tucked away in Building 5 at the Ankeny campus is one of DMACC's many amenities that has been steadily gaining traction since last fall semester. The esports arena, open 2-7 p.m. Monday through Friday, is a relatively new addition to intramurals on campus.

It is currently a drop-in space with approximately 30 students visiting regularly, and growing. Students can reserve PC stations for an hour at a time, other consoles for 90 minutes at a time, and may continue playing if no other students are waiting. Andy Nelson, the Campus Recreation Coordinator, is in charge of all intramural activities on campus.

"It's a new space on campus, open to all DMACC students, faculty and staff, where you can sit and watch TV, play PlayStation, Xbox, or [Nintendo] Switch," Nelson said. There is a large list of games students can play, particularly on the PC.

These games include many popular titles, like Rocket League, Fortnite, Call of Duty, Super Smash Bros, and more. However, some of these games may require the student or staff to have their own personal account. In addition to drop-in video game hours, Nelson said there are many more activities they are coordinating for students.

Nelson said that the goal is simply to get students interested in the room

and intramurals as a whole. "This past Friday, we had an intramural Texas Hold 'Em tournament. The idea is to kind of use this space for some things like that. Like, we have a retro game night where we bring out the old Super Nintendo, Sega, stuff like that to create some interest in the room. . . We'll have a board game night," Nelson said.

With enough consistent interest, Nelson said he hopes that esports can expand to become a club sport. Nelson is also in charge of other intramural events, like the 5k glow run and volleyball tournament.

If none of the activities mentioned suit your interest, Nelson said that he tries his best to help organize events that students recommend as well. Any student who wants to coordinate something not already planned on the intramurals calendar can reach out to Nelson for a request.

For individual events, around eight to 10 people will need to express interest, but for larger tournaments or sports-oriented events, at least four teams (of variable sizes) need to be registered, which Nelson helps with recruiting students for. "We do our best to try and get it on the schedule for that semester, but it might be something that might have to wait a semester," Nelson said.

Regardless of the game, Nelson said his goal has always been to get students involved in some way. "I've always said intramurals are part of the total college experience . . . We don't have sports on



The esports lounge in Building 5. Photo by Taysia Bettis.

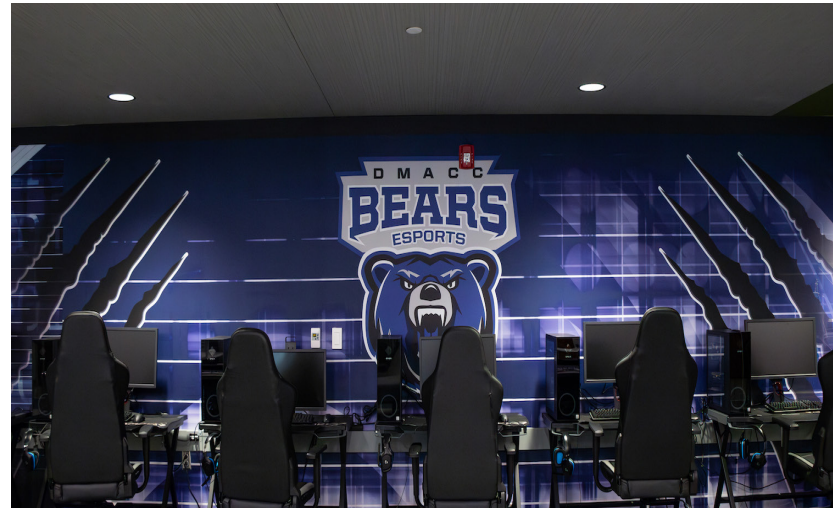


Photo by Taysia Bettis.

this campus, so I feel like intramurals are the next best thing where you can really meet a lot of people, especially with Trail Point being right here on campus. It's another great way to get involved. . . try something new, meet

somebody."

To reserve a space in the esports arena, coordinate a tournament or event, or for any additional inquiries about intramurals, please reach out to Andy Nelson at [arnelson@dmacc.edu](mailto:arnelson@dmacc.edu).



Visit our website:  
[campuschroniclenews.com](http://campuschroniclenews.com)



Want to join the Chronicle?  
We meet M/W/F at 11:15 a.m. in Building 5, Room 1136



**DMACC Blades Fencing** - Coach Steven Behrends, in red, and Jasmine Bengston in black, showed us videos of their fencing team practicing here in Building 5; the club meets every Tuesday and Thursday at 6 p.m. Behrends said that the sport is “Physical chess” when asked what aspirants should expect. The club allows people of any skill level to participate in practice, with many of their most active members having fenced for the first time with the club. Bengston says, “We love the coaches here.”



**Future Business Leaders of America**-Accounting major Danielle Bayless, Competitive Events Officer, from Prairie City, AJ Horan, Club President, Business major, from Urbandale, Carter Sousa, Officer of Membership, liberal arts major, from Urbandale, all invite you to be a part of FBLA. FBLA is a nonprofit organization to help students in middle school through college prepare for careers in business. They hold meetings Tuesdays at 2:30 p.m. and Wednesdays at 3 p.m..



**Ag Club** - Ag Business majors Preston Daufeldt, from West Liberty, Jacon Fuller, from Osceola, and Amanda Ostrem, from Stanhope, are all part of Ag Club.

In Ag Club, you explore careers in agriculture. You attend conferences, events, and many more. You can use these skills in contests as they build skills for agriculture. If the Ag Club interests you, they meet every second Wednesday of the month in the FFA Enrichment Center, 2nd floor from 12:15-12:50 p.m.

# Spring into DMACC

**Derek Jensen**  
Staff Writer

**Jaedyn Henry**  
Staff Writer



**Insight Hub** - Club members work with data to gather and analyze it. As marketing is a trending job, analyzing data is a huge part of the industry, Insight Hub teaches members all about data. Swe Zin Hla Myint, from Myanmar, says “I joined this club to learn about coding and have enjoyed learning about it.” Austin Hosir from Runnells, majoring in Actuarial Sciences, is also a part of Insight Hub and said he loves working with data.



**StudentLife** - Erin Smith, Coordinator of Student Activities, says that the DMACC Student Activities Office is the place to go if you have an interest in starting your own club at Ankeny DMACC.

To start a club, reach out to Smith with the support of a full-time faculty member who works at DMACC to be the club’s sponsor. Your aspirant club will need five or more members who are current DMACC students and are in good academic standing.

Smith said the biggest reason that students should consider making their own club is to get “more opportunities to travel to conferences around your interest and to connect with other students on campus.”



**Study Abroad** - Jennifer Wojcik, professor of Biology, invites all students to look into studying abroad while at DMACC.

DMACC sponsors a trip to London, England every spring, and a trip to Belize, a nation just south of Mexico, during the summer.

Regarding the Belize trip, she said that there are two more open spots and that the trip is best with a full group. The trip would cost around \$4,000 and according to Wojcik, is worth it. “The best part is climbing the Mayan temples,” Wojcik said. Virtual meetings begin in February, anyone interested should reach out to Wojcik at [jlwojcik@dmacc.edu](mailto:jlwojcik@dmacc.edu).

# “Replacement Parts” examines characters in small-town Iowa

**Joyanna Huang**  
Staff Writer

Ankeny DMACC English Professor Marc Dickinson published his first book, “Replacement Parts” on Sept. 24, 2024.

Dickinson said the book focuses on multiple characters in a small fictional town called Dexon, Iowa. Each character tries to overcome the challenges of living in this small town and the obstacles that come from circumstances in their lives.

That is also how the book got its name. Each character is trying to replace the brokenness and loss in their life with something else.

Even though the characters in “Replacement Parts” are from the same town and are similar in the sense that they are each overcoming different challenges, Dickinson did not intentionally create them that way for the book. In fact, according to Dickinson, each story in the book was created separately, over about fifteen years.

“I wrote all these different stories, separately on their own time. It wasn’t until I started putting the collection together that I actually had a friend, a workshop partner, who was like, ‘You know, I see a lot of connections that are happening in these stories,’” Dickinson said. His friend pointed out that even though the characters were different, their lives all took place in a small town.

Dickinson said that over time, they started finding links between each of the characters and the whole world that they were in. “It’s not just a collaboration of random stories. It’s a collaboration of linked stories,” Dickinson said.

Dickinson said it is important that readers keep in mind that the book is not just filled with random stories. Each story is connected to another, and readers should pay attention to those connections.

Despite “Replacement Parts” being a collection of short stories, the stories’ connections make the book feel like a novel. Some characters will pop in one story and then a few stories later, they will show up again. Readers will be able to see some characters in the book grow up and transform throughout the book.

Each of the characters in Dickinson’s book experiences a struggle they must overcome. According to Dickinson, those struggles often deal with their



The cover of English Professor Marc Dickinson’s book, “Replacement Parts.”

identity. Dickinson said that he tried to center those struggles around a transformative moment in their life that is meaningful to them.

When asked which character he resonates with the most, Dickinson mentioned a little boy and a girl named Hannah who he has starting and ending the book. He resonates with the boy because he is a father and appreciates the boy’s point of view of life in the book.

“Some of these stories are gritty, some of them are a little... heartbreaking. I just love the joy of his point of view, this kind of innocent point of view, while he’s dealing with real-life issues,” Dickinson said.

Even more than the boy, Dickinson resonates with Hannah because, at the beginning of the book, she is trying to figure out who she is and find her way after the passing of her parents. When readers get to the end of the book, they see that Hannah has found her way and figured out who she is.

“I was trying to think about the working-class life, the rural life... they feel replaceable, and maybe they feel voiceless in the world. So, my job is to really give a voice to that.”



DMACC English Professor Marc Dickinson at a book signing event at Beaverdale Books. Photo provided by Beaverdale Books.

Dickinson said that he has always had a passion for short stories but what sparked him to write this book goes back to DMACC. When he first began teaching, he started at the campus in Newton, Iowa. During his time there, Maytag closed in Newton, leaving all of the factory line workers out of a job.

However, each worker was given a scholarship to go back to college and get an education, so that they could build themselves a better life. Dickinson said that at first, it was intimidating being a new teacher with older factory workers but it was inspiring because they were proud to

be in college.

Finding inspiration from this experience as a young teacher was not difficult for Dickinson. “I always found my way back into these small-town stories and really tried to humanize that small-town experience away from the stereotype that we often think about with small towns or the working poor,” he said.

Before that, Dickinson also said, “I was trying to think about the working-class life, the rural life... they feel replaceable, and maybe they feel voiceless in the world. So, my job is to really give a voice to that.”

As far as what message he wants readers to walk away with from the book, Dickinson said that he does not want to dictate that too much but he does want them to feel like they have read something that speaks to them in their life. He said that he would love for readers to know what happens in Iowa and see how it is more complex and interesting than people in Iowa like to think it is.

# Independent bookstores foster connections

**Dashae Engler**  
Contributing Writer

In a time where companies like Barnes & Noble and Amazon make it more convenient to shop for books, going to a local bookstore has become less to do with being convenient and more to do with community, culture and connection.

That is where independent bookstores come in. They allow people to find like-minded people and build a community. Although Barnes & Noble and Amazon are technically in the same industry, their cultures differ from those of local bookstores.

The Little Book is an independent Highland Park bookstore on Euclid Ave. Its vibrant colors and warm atmosphere give it a child-like charm, appealing to its core demographic of children and young adults.

The owner of The Little Book, Bethany Fast's goal is to be much more than a place where people can just buy books, "We really want this to be a place where families of all different kinds feel comfortable coming in, sitting down, reading and playing in the back."

Fast added that supporting local businesses benefits not only the business but also the community around it. When you buy locally, you create jobs and bring money into the community.

"It's so easy to hop online and go to Amazon, just click to your cart, and it shows up magically at your door. What you're doing when you shop locally is you're helping a small business owner pay our incredible employee, who also lives here. You help us be an employer in the community," Fast said.

In return, these stores can invest back into the community. "[This helps us] spend the money that we make on things like health insurance for our employee. We try to spend as much money locally as we can. We also have some local books as well, but especially some sideline and stationery items are from local creators," Fast said.

Fast also has an Artist of the Month, where a local artist can hang their art for free, and people can buy the art and pick it up at the end of the month.

The Des Moines area has many options for groups and events for book lovers. Finding ways to make book reading a group-based activity rather than something you do independently

is appealing to people.

The Silent Book Club of Des Moines is an open-to-the-public book club run by four women. The group reads silently for an hour, after which you can socialize or keep reading your book. They have hosted events at Little Book Store, Secret Admirer, and Slow Down DSM.

Erin Dohlman, one of the founders of SBC DSM, said via email, "Silent Book Club creates a community for book lovers by creating a space where we can get together in a public space, support our local community, and hang out with similar people. So often, reading is a private activity done at home, so this offers a more social alternative."

DMACC English professor Marc Dickinson, the author of "Replacement Parts" and the coordinator for the Celebration of Literary Arts Festival, regularly collaborates with local bookstores.

"We've had, like, a 20-year relationship with Beaverdale Books, and now, in the last five years since [COVID-19], every time we have a reader coming through our literary festival, we usually have eight or ten a year, we always offer the reader a chance to either get, like pay, like a stipend or an honorarium, or to go for like a book buy," Dickinson said.

A book buy occurs when the author forgoes payment to the school, allowing the school to buy the book in bulk and give it away for free. "They almost always go for the book buy," he said.

When asked why he doesn't work with big corporation bookstores, Dickinson said he doesn't know for sure; however, he doesn't believe he can get the same experience with one.

"I feel like it would be so corporatized... I feel like that was a huge part of Beaverdale books is that you serve in a community, there's a huge loyal fan base of Beaverdale books that we can depend on," he said.

Dickerson said he has enjoyed his experience as an author as well. He believes that going to your local bookstore is a good starting point for newly published authors or niche authors. There is more flexibility for the sake of art.

"I don't know about chains and what their value systems are, but I just know local people buy and run local independent bookstores because they are book lovers. They love the written word. They love writers.



Bethany Fast, owner of The Little Book in Highland Park.  
Photo by Dashae Engler.



A view of The Little Book from the main entrance. Photo by Dashae Engler.

There's something personal about that. When you talk to them, they're pro writer," he said.

Dickerson said a mutualistic relationship exists between the independent bookstore and the customer.

"There's also this advocacy, I think, that works not just within the community, but also within artists itself. You go to the local bookstore, and I'll do a reading. I will come to your reading because you came to my reading. [Which creates] a self-made community that is a nucleus, is the local bookstore," Dickerson said.

While the corporate stores don't have that connection with their customers, it is more about accessibility, such as getting a book and going home. Dickerson believes both serve their

purposes in society.

Dickerson said, "I love Barnes & Noble, it's fine, but when you go there, nobody's talking to each other... It's like going to Walmart. Everyone is separate in separate aisles, and there are no conversations happening."

Right now, store owner Fast said she doesn't think the Des Moines metro is oversaturated with indie bookstores, "What's unique about the book industry is that we all, even though technically they may be competing businesses, care about each other so much, and we all do touch base to make sure that we are all succeeding as a unit."

# DMACC prepares for spring musical

**Jayden Park**  
Staff Writer

As the spring semester begins at DMACC, the drama department is preparing for its next production, "Ride The Cyclone."

Carl Lindberg, the professor of theatre and acting, has been teaching full-time at the Ankeny campus since 2018. He is excited about this play and hopes many students attend.

Lindberg states that "Ride The Cyclone" is a musical about a group of teens from Canada who die in a roller coaster accident and then are in purgatory with Karnak, a fortune-telling machine. They have a journey of songs that are really popular among high school and college kids. These songs lead them to try to figure out how to get back to life.

"When we're choosing plays, we're trying to choose things that we think students will think are cool, like to work on and to see [...] It's always the first thing that crosses our minds, will students like watching this? Will students like working on this? We want the material to not be dry or boring, but for people to be like, 'You know, this is actually kind of cool.'"

Lindberg talked about a few storied alumni who have been through the program and achieved their Acting Certificate through the DMACC transfer program. Students can take acting classes through DMACC and be better prepared for a future in the acting industry. One student who graduated went on to have a small role in "The Family Plan" on Apple TV, which features Mark Wahlberg. Another alum just recently made her Broadway debut last fall in 2023 working backstage.

Auditions take place on January 27 for anyone wishing to participate in the show. Lindberg said, "We are moving towards a more professional model. If [students] are able, they will bring in a short monologue, 60 seconds or less, and a short cutting of a musical theater song that shows what they can do in the style of the show. If students have an interest in auditioning, but don't know how to prepare a monologue or a song, we do have materials that they can pick up and do a reading from the play."

If this sounds interesting to you, take yourself down to the Black Box Theatre located in Building 5. There will be seven performances taking place from April 4 through April 13. There is a system for reservations as there are many people interested in this upcoming show. Tickets to get into the play are free and all DMACC students are welcome and encouraged to come. You can reach out to Lindberg through email at [celindberg@dmacc.edu](mailto:celindberg@dmacc.edu) or head to the DMACC website for more information about the play and auditions.

## AUDITIONS

For:

### RIDE THE CYCLONE

Book, Music & Lyrics by  
Jacob Richmond & Brooke Maxwell

Monday  
January 27  
6 - 9 pm  
Black Box Theatre  
Sign-up today!

Callbacks:  
Tuesday, January 28





Past DMACC Theatre productions.





# Students react to TikTok's uncertain fate

Isaiah Cardines

Staff Writer

## The end of an era?

That's what the future may hold for one of the world's most popular apps and for millions of users.

Since its launch in 2016, the video-sharing platform has grown worldwide and has led to the rise of various trends and cultural movements as one of the top social media apps today.

But over the past four years, controversies have popped up that have brought about calls for the app to be restricted or even banned. Worries about national security, bias, and overall privacy have put TikTok at the center of a heated political debate, with U.S. lawmakers pushing for its Chinese parent company, ByteDance, to sell the app or otherwise face a nationwide ban.

Eventually, a bill was approved by Congress and signed by then-president Joe Biden, thus creating an uncertain future for the app in the United States. A mass exodus of "refugees" quickly ensued in search of other options, including RedNote, as a form of protest against the act.

This all came to a head on January 18; at around 9:30 p.m., when TikTok suspended operations and services for all U.S. users. Those using the app faced an error message that their service was not available. At the same time, it was taken down on Google Play and Apple stores.

Recently, a couple of students shared their reactions to the ban. Evelyn Paucar, 19, from Johnston, is currently majoring in cybersecurity. She said that she had TikTok, but deleted it when it got banned.

"I didn't really care too much, to be honest. I feel like nowadays every app has its short-form content, even LinkedIn." She goes on to say, "I know people use it as their way of expressing their creativity and such, I thought it [TikTok] was good."

Jared Rockwood, a 19-year-old studying engineering at DMACC had similar thoughts:

"It was more, for me, just like, 'It is what it is,' kinda thing. I have other means of social media and stuff, but a lot of friends were freaking out about it, they were very upset."

But, just under 24 hours later, Trump indicated that he would restore TikTok operations as long as it was distributed to an American company, paving the way for the app's return. This was the case as those who still had the app found their service resumed. Consequently, on the first day of his second term, Trump signed an executive order that delayed the ban for 75 days.

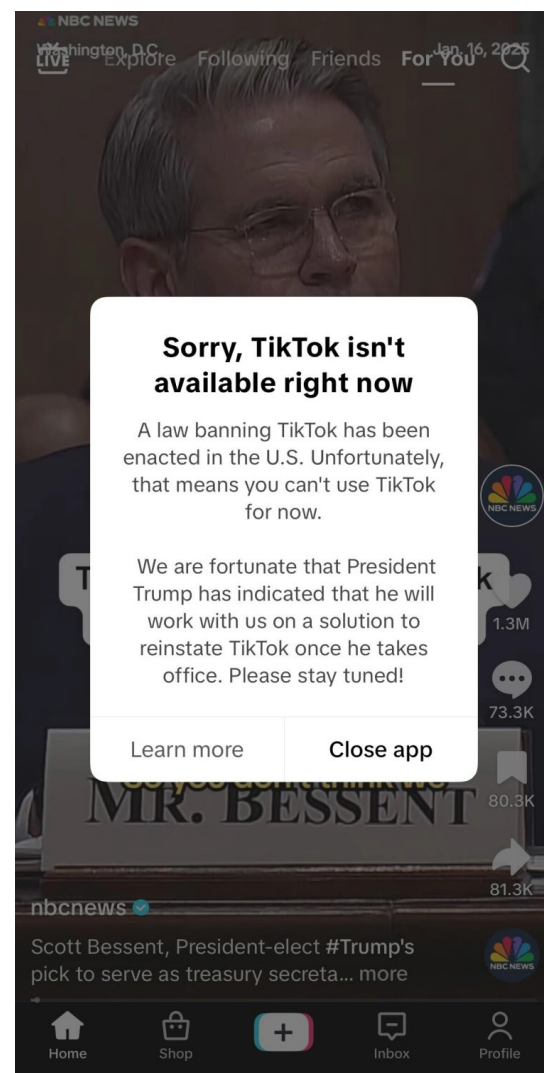
As of writing this story, however, it and similar ones under the ByteDance name have not been available again on app stores, barring future attempts to re-download the app.

"So sad, but it's fine," Paucar said. "I do think someone's gonna bring it back. I don't know, some billionaire [...] The videos I watched, at least, were mostly motivational and things like that. I know there's a lot of brain rot there [...] but, then again, it has its perks."

Rockwood went on to say that security concerns are important in general, yet when it comes to TikTok, he doesn't see it as a major concern in the bigger picture of information security.

"I think it'll be fine," he said. "It's annoying and it sucks for a lot of people, but it's not gonna be the end of the world if it does happen. We lived without TikTok before, we'll be fine without it again."

As TikTok's future in the U.S. remains uncertain, its impact on digital culture is undeniable. Whether through a sale, legal issues, or the possibility of new competitors, the outcome of this could reshape the social media landscape for years to come. Only time may tell what happens next.



TikTok users were greeted by the above message on January 18. Services were restored by the next day.



## The Campus Chronicle Podcast

## Find us on iTunes and Spotify.

# Need a little exercise? Check out these spring intramurals at DMACC

**Jaedyn Henry**  
Staff Writer

With the spring semester underway, are you wondering what activities you can do around the DMACC Ankeny campus?

There are many opportunities for you to choose from, one being intramurals this semester. There is currently a volleyball league about to start. If you would like to create a team, reach out to Andy Nelson, coordinator of wellness and recreation services, his email is [arnelson@dmacc.edu](mailto:arnelson@dmacc.edu).

Nelson is searching for more involvement within the intramurals. There are many options this semester such as 4 v 4 volleyball: registration ends this Wednesday, January 29. There are many other options for intramurals such as esports.

Nelson said, "I am trying to grow the esports team and would love to have more participants." If this is something that interests you feel free to

reach out to Nelson. There are many other special events & tournaments coming up which are shown down below.

Intramurals aren't the only activity you can do to work on your physical well-being. There are many amenities in Prairie Trail. Prairie Trail is located in Building 5 and all full-time DMACC students can get a membership for free.

Prairie Trail has an indoor track, the latest in strength and conditioning equipment, a full-size swimming pool, a robust lineup of personal training and group fitness classes, a golf simulator, a new functional workout room and so much more.

Physical health is something super important to keep up with, you have many options here at DMACC but there are many more including going on walks outside, running outside, even just connecting with nature helps with your physical and mental health.



Event:	Registration Deadline:	Play Begins:	Play Ends:
Spikeball Tournament	Wednesday, January 29	Tuesday, February 4	Tuesday, February 4
Friday Night Series- Billiards Tournament	Friday, January 31	Friday, February 7	Friday, February 7
Ping Pong Tournament	Wednesday, February 12	Tuesday, February 18	Tuesday, February 18
DMACC Madness	Monday, February 24	Monday, March 3	Monday, March 3
Glow in the Dark Dodgeball Tournament	Wednesday, February 26	Wednesday, March 5	Wednesday, March 5
Friday Night Series- Giant Throw Throw Burrito	Friday, February 28	Friday, March 7	Friday, March 7
Kickball Tournament	Wednesday, March 5	Tuesday, March 11	Tuesday, March 11
Pickleball League	Wednesday, March 26	Tuesday, April 1	Tuesday, April 29
Best Shot Golf Tournament	Monday, April 14	Monday, April 21	Monday, April 21
H2O Battleship	Wednesday, April 16	Wednesday, April 23	Wednesday, April 23
Friday Night Series- Mario Kart Tournament	Friday, April 18	Friday, April 25	Friday, April 25
Bowling Tournament	Monday, April 21	Monday, April 28	Monday, April 28
3 v 3 Basketball Tournament	Wednesday, April 23	Wednesday, April 30	Wednesday, April 30

# Review: “The Brutalist” is an absorbing experience

**Isaiah Cardines**  
Staff Writer

“The Brutalist” is one of the last movies to close out 2024 and certainly made its mark into 2025. Brady Corbet’s period drama film stars Adrien Brody as a Holocaust survivor who emigrates to the United States in search of the American Dream until a rich client opens an opportunity for him.

The film is a bold view of art, exile, and the emotional toll of creative ambition. With its balanced, methodical storytelling and stark cinematography, the film mirrors its portrayals of the architectural movement it’s named after.

From the start, Corbet establishes an uneasy mood. The film’s cinematography, handled masterfully by cinematographer Lol Crawley, bathes the world in shadows, evoking a sense of isolation and oppression. But at the same time, the lighting works in tandem with the architecture, bringing signs of beauty within struggles. The visuals alone make “The Brutalist” an absorbing experience, but its power lies in its emotional depth as well.

Adrien Brody delivers a moving performance, portraying architect László Toth as a man both blessed and dragged down by his ideals. His journey is not just about creating monumental architecture as a way to process his trauma, but also about



proving his worth in a society that doesn’t fully understand and embrace his vision.

Harrison Van Buren, portrayed by Guy Pearce, is confident, yet snobbish, ultimately jealous of Toth’s artistic innovation. Marion Cotillard, playing Toth’s wife Erzsébet, brings warmth and quiet strength to the role, helping to balance out László’s intensity.

The screenplay, co-written by Corbet and Mona Fastvold, is carefully structured with precision, like the various scenes of architecture present

throughout the film. Dialogue is few and far between but meaningful, with long pauses that allow the weight of the characters’ struggles to settle in. Some viewers may find the pacing slow, which may be because of the nearly 3-and-a-half-hour runtime, but this is a film that demands patience, rewarding those willing to engage with its themes on a deeper level.

At its core, “The Brutalist” is a commentary about sacrifice; what it takes to leave a lasting mark on the world, and whether that price is ever

truly worth paying. Like the brutalist architecture frequently depicted, the film is not conventionally beautiful, but it has a raw power that hangs around long after the credits roll.

It is not for everyone, but for those tuned in to slow dramas, “The Brutalist” stands as a towering achievement, currently in the running for 10 awards and accolades, including Best Picture and Adrien Brody as Best Actor, at the upcoming Academy Awards on March 2.

# Nostalgia keeps the memory alive



**Samantha Russell**  
Staff Writer

Nostalgia is a powerful force. When it hits, it makes you feel good and fuzzy inside. The memories of our youth rushing in when we see something that reminds us of those innocent years, it’s

an awesome feeling. One that brings about happiness and sadness, often at the same time.

And the holidays can trigger some rather unpleasant feelings of nostalgia. Like the loss of loved ones for example. And this can lead to Happy Holidays being not so happy and having a sad feeling attached to them. In my case, I lost my grandmother around Thanksgiving. I always feel sad when I see her in my memories.

Sometimes, all it takes is an old photograph to have a nostalgia trip. A picture from a family vacation, a family gathering during the holidays, even just a pic from some random event the family did during a random weekend. It will hit you when you least expect it and it feels good when it does.

Well, most of the time. Sometimes,

nostalgia hits when you are reminded of something that isn’t made anymore. Or, something you can’t experience again. Like the memories of loved ones and the realization that you won’t have more time with them. It can make you feel sad and wish you could go back to those times to relive that memory or spend time with that loved one again. I know I feel that anytime I see something from my past that I won’t experience again.

One day this past year, I picked up a small container of Play-Doh. The wave of nostalgia rushed over me. I remember playing with Play-Doh as a child. The soft, squishy feeling of the Doh in my hand, and making all kinds of different shapes with it. And the smell of new Doh when you open a new can of it. I don’t care what anyone



says, it’s always a fun time, no matter how old you are. Plus the things you can create with it are literally limitless. Just like LEGOs.

Nostalgia is how our brains and our minds keep the memories of our past alive. Though we can’t go back and relive those memories again, we still keep those events alive by remembering them.

# Opinion: Are we in the era of scripted sports?



**Jayden Park**  
Staff Writer

The Kansas City Chiefs and Patrick Mahomes just won another AFC championship and look destined to go for a three-peat, something that has never been done before in NFL history. However, TV ratings and viewership have been on a steady but sure decline over these past years not only in the NFL but also across other major sports in the world. Leagues like the NBA, MLB, CFB, CBB, and even MLS have seen notable declines in viewership and a major falloff. Why is this happening you ask? Let's dive into the reasoning.

The Kansas City Chiefs have been in five out of the last six Super Bowls, have won three already, and look to be going for a fourth in their 'three-peat era.' However, throughout their journey, they have gained a lot of haters and a lot of criticism due to some questionable referee calls and how they nearly found a way to escape with a win no matter the circumstances. This year alone, the Chiefs are 12-0 in one-score games and have now won 17 consecutive one-score games. You may say this is just luck or they are really clutch in these moments. Now this may be correct, but it's just the way



that these games play out and come to an end that surprises many people and makes you question if the NFL and sports world in general is scripted and if they already know the outcome.

In the NBA, viewership is down as well. There is still this major problem with the referees. Players have been getting ejected and saying some crazy things postgame to referees this season in particular. This season, the events that have happened have been wild and the players have every right to feel this way. The referees feel like they are superior beings in the world that rule over everything and everyone. In truth, they are human beings just like you and me.

These referees sometimes have an ego and "know" that their call is right, but then get bashed by the NBA players and media. The NBRA (National Basketball Referee Association) later

came out the next day and stated that the call was incorrect and it should have been called differently. However, this doesn't do anything to punish them and can't change the past of what happened, but these players get fined HEAVY amounts of money for even mentioning the referee or the calls. If they do one wrong thing in the game, they are likely to get a technical foul or be ejected. The referees can just come out with this statement and they get off the hook and are on to the next game. I believe they should be held accountable and receive punishment just as the players do. They should get fined for incorrect calls or actions and potentially be suspended or fired for too many incorrect calls or suspicious behavior.

These days, it seems like in the biggest moments and at the end of many games, these calls diminish the

games and end up deciding the game. Incorrect call or not, referees should let the players decide the outcome of the game. There shouldn't be so many calls in the games unless they are blatant and every ref agrees on the call as this slows the game down and takes out the player's and team's momentum.

Not every referee is like this and there are many good referees out there. However, these couple of referees that make these bad calls and have these large egos ruin the games and diminish the aspect of the game I used to know and love.

With all this in mind, there has been increased speculation and conspiracy theories on whether these games are scripted or not. The sports community is starting to believe these refs are being trained to 'follow the script' to bring 'more excitement' and follow what the commissioner wants to happen every season. They make questioning calls throughout the game to help these teams and players have an increased chance of winning.

It is up to you, the reader, to decide if these speculations are true or not. In the end, you decide what to believe or not. Who knows? Maybe these referees are betting on these games and they need their parlays to hit by the end of the game. Nonetheless, I might boycott the Super Bowl this year along with other fans calling for a boycott after seeing the same Super Bowl matchup from two years ago (still watching that Kendrick Lamar halftime show featuring SZA). I just might stop watching major sports in whole and take my talents to the NHL and watch the fights or maybe watch some esports in the meantime.



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