Earlier this semester, September 5, Prairie State College named its very own Chris Kuchta as the new Director of Athletics. Kuchta has been serving as the Sports Information Director since 2010 and has loads of experience in sports.

In his earlier years, Kuchta played baseball for Chicago’s own Ridge-Beverly little league, ran track for St. Rita high school, and, during his collegiate years, was a member of Pella, Iowa’s Central College track team that was named IIAC champions three times in four years.

During those same college years, Kuchta also was sports director for his college radio station, a sports writer for the college newspaper, and an announcer for the Central College basketball team. “I wanted to be the next Joe Buck or Hawk Harrelson,” said Kuchta.

After college Kuchta spent a few years working as a sports writer for papers like the Daily Southtown and the Marshalltown Times-Republican out of Iowa, before landing the job of PSC’s Coordinator of Sports Information in 2010.

Kuchta has some big plans for Prairie State’s athletic program, “There are big things I’d like to do down the road, like get us caught up to the times on our soccer and baseball facilities.” He explains that these are long-term plans and that there are other more immediate concerns.

Some of these concerns are nearly alleviated, such as hiring a new baseball head coach. Unfortunately, these are not the only vacancies in the Prairie State athletic department, as both the Volleyball Head Coach and Sports Information Director, Kuchta’s old position, remain unfilled.

Even with handling both his old responsibilities as Coordinator of Sports Information and his new position as Director of Athletics, Kuchta knows that his first priority is the student-athletes. He tells any new student who is looking to participate in athletics, “They can come here [the athletic department] and talk to myself or Barb, our administrative assistant, or they can complete the Potential Student-Athlete profile sheet [found on PSC website].”

Kuchta is adamant that any student who wants to play for Prairie State College come in and talk to him or his staff, passionately adding, “Our level of competition here is pretty strong; it surprises a lot of people. We encourage people to come, and our games are free.”
The student government association or SGA is in place to promote education, student interests, student rights, and insure student representation.

Because the SGA serves as a student enabling organization it is an integral part of helping clubs and organizations with funding, giving them meeting spaces, and materials printed. With all the things that SGA does, how does it all work? The faculty advisor of the SGA, Helen Manley, had something to say about the matter. “People can support SGA by attending their events and club events. You can join SGA by being an officer or Senator.

Officer elections are in April and Senator elections are in September. You can attend Full Board meetings to see what is going on.”

The first Full Board meeting of the 2018-2019 school year occurred on Oct. 8, 2018. All the clubs and organizations recognized by the SGA were in attendance such as Film-makers Club, Phi Theta Kap-pa, All Latin Alliance Club, Alpha Beta Gamma, Black Student Union, LGBTQ+ Club, Nursing Club, Photo Society, Political Science Club, STEM Club, Trio, and The Pioneer.

However, before going around to each club and organization there were a few guest speakers seeking both help and informing clubs on certain matters. The guest speakers comprised of Dr. Kaliky Vice President of Student Affairs, Georges Sanon coordinator of Student Veteran Center, Officer Vargas representing Miss & Mrs. America Nation, Shannon Ueberfluss as Miss Chicago, Aiyah Janaye as Miss Cook County, Hyde Gonzales representing the American Cancer Society for Colon Cancer Awareness, and Deborah Smith Havighorst Executive Director, Institutional Advancement and the PSC Foundation.

After the guest speakers spoke on the issues they were covering, the President of the SGA, Rachel Eastman, gave a few words on the out look for SGA as well as giving the floor to all executive officers of the SGA to share their outlook. When the officers finished each club was able to state any issues or updates on the club’s status and to inform for any upcoming events for that club or organization. If anyone is interested in participating in the SGA, SGA meets every Monday at 2pm for their Executive Board meetings, and every 2nd & 4th Monday at 3pm in the Board room for Full Board meetings.

A club or organization does not have to be recognized by the SGA, however, they will not receive any of the perks or help that other clubs and organizations receive from the SGA. For that reason alone, that is what makes SGA an important organization. Helen Manley agreed with this by saying, “It is important to have SGA because they are the voice of the students. They represent students on various boards, so they can voice the opinion of the students and protect students’ rights.”
The Gravedigger: A Frankenstein Story

By Joseph Zettelmaier
directed by Dr. Justin Vidovic

Nov. 19
Barnes & Noble College Auditorium

SGA Sponsored show, FREE 2:30 p.m.
Evening show $5, 7 p.m.

Tickets $5

Questions, contact Justin Vidovic jvidovic@prairiestate.edu.
College is fun and exciting, but also challenging. Students are not only going to school, but some are working full time; others are having financial problems, family problems, etc. They have extracurricular activities and social lives. Consequently, mental illness is increasing among college students. One factor is stress. “Eight out of 10 college students report being stressed,” according to licensed counselor Shannon Word. “Students have so much pressure.”

Word says many freshmen are dealing with stressors such as adjustment disorder. It’s difficult for them to adjust to a new situation. For example, they get straight As in high school, maintaining a 4.0 average, but once they get to college they get C’s and D’s. This can be temporary, or it can be long term. Adjustment disorder can affect self-esteem and lead to depression.

Freshmen assume they can’t fit in. According to Word, everyone is different. There are some students who can adapt to college, and there are those who cannot.

Expert George S. Gates says not dealing with stress can lead to “poor academic achievement, conduct problems, eating disorders, anxiety, depression, and suicide.” Some alternatives to unhealthy coping mechanisms are time management, sleep, and/or talking to someone. Students can also go to a support group.

There is a common stigma with mental illness, especially suicide. People often don’t take it seriously. Those who are suicidal are often labeled “crazy.” They are judged by people who don’t understand, which makes them more alone.

Some people are ashamed and tend to ignore their feelings and not deal with them. Word says that when suicidal people lack support from family and friends, they proceed with the attempt.

Word likes to say, “Get your check up from the neck up.” She continues, “Mental health is serious...it is just as important as physical health.” Word does short-term therapy, but for those who need long-term therapy, she refers them out to the community for resources. Counseling services are free.

Word considers herself as the crisis counselor. “If a student is suicidal, we get them the help that they need.” She not only helps students with mental issues but with domestic abuse and academic support, which is for those who have a lot on their plate. For example, if a student has kids, works, and goes to school, she will help that student with time management by setting a daily schedule.

If you are stressed or suicidal or having any of these issues make an appointment with Shannon Word. Mental health is very serious; get treatment.

Mental health is very serious; find out ways to get treatment by contacting Shannon Word at (708) 709-3511
Sword@prairiestate.edu
Halloween Fun Fest Review  
Written by Esmeralda Manzo

The PSC Halloween Fun Fest that took place on Wednesday, Oct. 31, from 4-7 p.m., fell nothing short of a true success. Dozens of parents and children dressed in costume flooded into the PSC Prairie Center. Organized by Officer Vargas and presented by the PSC Police Department and over 30 volunteers, it's safe to say the event was well organized.

At the entrance, as parents and children walked in, they started their journey by picking up a “goody bag” and then got in line to pick up a bag of buttery popcorn, or they had a multitude of games and activities to choose from, which included: a bouncy house, “Trunk Toss,” “Hungry Hippo,” mini-golf, pinball, a face-painting stand called “Spooky Looks,” and more.

There was even a photographer to take pictures of the cute little ones posing in their costumes. A safe night full of fun and smiles, the turnout was great, and a good time was had by all.

Remebering & Giving Our Thanks  
Letter from the Editor in Chief

Dear Readers,

Fall 2018 is going by quickly, and it has been both a sad and exciting time. The election is upon us, and we want to welcome the new legislative season. Our school clubs and organizations have met their new members. New faculty has come to the school, and some faculty will be advancing within and/or outside of our school.

As we reflect on the many things for which we are thankful for, I want to take this opportunity to share just a few of them with you. We are thankful for our Pioneer students who come to school every day, eager to grow and learn. We are thankful for the support of the Pioneer teachers, assistants, secretaries, café members, administrators, custodians, etc. who really care about students’ achievements and show their best interests of the students at heart. We are thankful for our volunteers/donors who actively contribute so much to supporting our school and the students.

Even through the most difficult and challenging times, we see dedicated and tireless individuals going above and beyond to make sure that great things happen here at PSC. For this, we are ever so thankful. Because PSC will be closed for the holiday, NO CLASSES from November 21-25, I would like to wish all of you and your families a happy, healthy and relaxing Thanksgiving holiday!

Sincerely,
Ti Aun Donald
Prairie State College Foundation | A letter from the Editor

Readers,

A recent dynamic event hosted by the Prairie State College Foundation truly inspired the meaning of what it is to support the dream of students’ desire to learn. The Foundation created scholarships, supported by those in attendance, to ensure several students get the opportunity to attend prestigious Prairie State College.

I had an opportunity to meet with several people who shared their experiences with us regarding being recipients of the Prairie State College Scholarship. Here is what they shared about their experience:

Benedict Shogunle

“This has brought the opportunity for students to have hope; [this is] from a Prairie State College Foundation attendee who has contributed what they have to bring for the next generations to become students of Prairie State College.”

Samuel Carbajal

“I have been awarded the scholarship from this Foundation that makes me feel hopeful for future students who will be attending this school. They will benefit greatly from this scholarship as I have.”

Semone Lewis

“People have given generous donations who want the future generations to ensure that they will be able to be a student of this school.”

This is what makes the Prairie State College Foundation’s heart beat; they acknowledge the hardships that students are going through in life and their needs of an education to improve themselves. Knowing that the PSC Foundation exists goes to show how much the community wants you to be part of unlimited possibilities, to give you the platform where you can soar with ease for your future.

Heartedly by,

Jason Berry
Veterans Day
Honoring all who have served

Thursday, Nov. 8

Missing Man Table
Memorial 8:30 a.m., Atrium

Veterans Day Celebration
Featuring State Representative Al Riley
11 a.m., Barnes & Noble College Auditorium

Welcome Home Vietnam War Commemorative Ceremony
2 p.m., Barnes & Noble College Auditorium

Nov. 6 - Dec. 6

Service: works by US veterans borrowed from both
the Pritzker Military Museum & Library and the
National Veterans Art Museum
Christopher Art Gallery
Artists’ Reception on Friday, Nov. 9, 12-2 p.m.

Saturday, Nov. 10

Richton Park Veterans Parade
10 a.m., starts at Southland College Prep

Tuesday/Wednesday, Nov. 13 and 14

Rise Above Exhibit
Open to the public 3-5 p.m. each day
PSC Conference Center/Parking Lot D

Thursday, Nov. 15

Women and Men's Basketball Game Veterans Night
5:30 p.m., PSC Fieldhouse

Tuesday, Nov. 20

Retirement of Missing Man Table
2:30 p.m., Atrium

For more information, contact Georges Sanon at (708) 709-3567 or gsanon@prairiestate.edu
The Illinois Tollway is encouraging customers to mount an I-PASS in every car that uses the Tollway in order to receive a 50 percent discount on tolls.

Here's what customers need to know:

If you are an I-PASS customer who uses the Illinois Tollway with a transponder mounted in the car you are driving and keeps your I-PASS account in good standing, nothing changes for you.

Drivers who regularly use the Tollway without a transponder mounted in the car they are driving run the risk of losing the 50 percent discount and paying the cash toll rate.

QUESTIONS WE HEAR

Can I move my transponder between my cars?
Transponders can be shared between cars and motorcycles registered to the same I-PASS account, but the transponder must be properly mounted in your vehicle whenever you drive on the Tollway.

Sharing a transponder puts you at risk of forgetting to move the transponder. Be safe, and put a transponder in every vehicle. No transponder, no discount.

Do I have to have a balance for each of my transponders?
No, I-PASS Shared Balance allows all transponders to draw from the same, single prepaid account balance.

This means each transponder does not need to maintain a separate balance.

If multiple vehicles are sharing a single transponder, each vehicle must be registered to the I-PASS account.

I-PASS customers can use online account management to add a vehicle by visiting the “About I-PASS” section of the Tollway’s website, illinoistollway.com.

How do I know if my transponder is being read?
The transponder should be secured to your windshield using removable mounting strips. These strips are available at no cost at all Customer Service Centers and every manned plaza.

Ways to test your transponder:

- Drive through a tollbooth lane at a manned plaza – the toll collector will raise the gate if there is a successful read.
- Drive through an I-PASS Only lane on a ramp. If there is a blue or yellow light that blinks, your device is working.
- Drive through an automatic coin machine lane – the green (THANK YOU) lights will let you know that the device is working.

For more information about your I-PASS, visit the Tollway’s website at illinoistollway.com.

Updated: 09/27/17