

University of Idaho

November
2009

b1ot

Behind the
face of the
clock tower

Education through
outdoor recreation

Now what?
Grads back
to school

exploring campus diversity
Beyond black and white

From the editors...

Cheers Blotsters,

This year the Blot is back with a few veterans and some virgin members who've been working hard to bring you the best.

Our writers have been out on the prowl to find the more compelling stories offered by the University of Idaho's ever changing campus. We even branched out to include the post-graduate struggle to land a job in the midst of a recession. And also explore the depth of campus diversity, broadening the scope of discussion while noting one student's startling experience.

This issue showcases the talent of our photographers so be sure to check out their spreads in the student gallery.

Let us know what you think, shoot an email to blot@uidaho.edu.

Kayla DesJarlais
Supernatural

Behind the Scenes

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University of Idaho

Education through outdoor recreation

text by Whitney Schroeder
pics by Kate Kucharzyk

When Paul Singer moved to the Palouse two years ago, he knew no one. With an interest in outdoor activities, Singer decided to pick up a University of Idaho Outdoor Program pamphlet and went on his first trip, the Mount Adams climb.

"I would say more than half my friends today I wouldn't know if I hadn't gone through the outdoor programs," Singer said. "It connected me with a good group of people."

An avid mountain biker, climber, skier and paddler, Singer said he likes how the outdoor program brings people together.

"It gets students that would never think about doing these experiences out there," he said. "(It's) a huge confidence builder."

In many ways, that is the point of the program said Mike Beiser, who has been its coordinator for 27 years.

"We're here to improve lives now and introduce people to things they can do the rest of their life," Beiser said.



The primary mission statement of the program revolves around shared experiences and that the mind and body are one. Learning by doing and learning in the field by seeing, feeling, smelling and touching are key components of its programming.

Beiser said he helped create a strong leadership-training program that has taken off considerably in the past few years.

"A lot of these activities are best learned on a one-on-one basis with a friend. But if you don't have that, we're that friend," Beiser said.

Singer said he likes how the program makes participating in larger trips possible and the different demographics it brings together. The prices and variety of equipment at the Outdoor Rental Center have given Singer the opportunity to do and try many of the things that interest him.

Beiser said the program strives to add new activities and opportunities in order to maintain the interest of an ever-changing campus. This fall

Behind the face of the clock tower

text by Marcus Kellis

pics by Jake Barber



[small feature]

The Administration Building clock tower is a big room. Bigger than most would think, and the tower was meant to be 45 feet higher when it was designed.

The carillon — the bells, played with an organ console — is not in the Admin tower.

In fact, not much is in the tower, besides some facilities equipment and an ages-old motor running the clock's hands.

Instead, the carillon is tucked away behind the stage of the Admin auditorium. It was once something like an amplified glockenspiel, and it was once across the street in the Lionel Hampton School of Music building. For a while now, it has instead been recordings of bells, struck digitally.

University of Idaho's carillon is one produced by Schulmerich, with no physical bells. It is exceptionally modest to behold.

It looks like the robot of a meager imagination, circa 1975. The carillon is a beige-colored podium, with a small set of buttons and a display of the current time. Beside the carillon is a handsome organ with an unhandsome dust cover.

A drawer slides out to reveal an access panel, and sending a keystroke from the organ to the speakers atop the Admin requires two keys, just like a nuclear bomb. One goes in the carillon and one goes in the keyboard.

Susan Billin, an organist at UI and Moscow's First Presbyterian Church, is Idaho's de facto carillonneur. Billin landed the gig soon after she started instruction at UI's music school.

"(The campus carillon is) sort of comforting," she said. "It's the home tune ... I think it's something that the senses pick up for students who are on campus and it's something that makes them feel good.

"I think that sticks with you as a student and as an alumni. Obviously it matters to many alumni. They talk about it. They come back and they listen for it, and when people graduate they remember it playing at their graduation."

Billin plays the carillon live occasionally, and she is the player at graduation. Though the carillon uses an organ as an interface, it is a distinct instrument. Special considerations have to be made to adjust playing to its qualities: because the bells carry particular overtones, and because the sound takes longer to decay than other instruments, one must be austere and deliberate in playing. The volume amplifies both good playing and bad.

"When you play a carillon concert, if you make a mistake, everybody knows it," Billin said. "It's often a very humbling experience."

The carillon plays "Here We Have Idaho," both UI's alma mater and Idaho's state song, every evening and the traditional Westminster Quarters on the hour. Billin performed the rendition of "Here We Have Idaho."

The Administration Building, designed by John E. Tourtellotte following the loss of an earlier building by fire, is based on Hampton Court Palace in London. Specifically it bears a great semblance to Anne Boleyn's Gate at the palace: the gate and the Admin both have octagonal support on either side of the clock, both have rounded entrances and windows and both, naturally, are in the Tudor Gothic style.

Nels Reese, emeritus architecture professor at UI, is an example of the infrequent migration from support staff to faculty. Reese worked for facilities before joining the faculty of the College of Art and Architecture.

"I was an inspector on that roof, and I actually slept up on the clock tower a few nights in those days I had access to the tower," he said. "There was no bell up there at that time, so I just took my sleeping bag up and slept on top of it."

Even authorized visitors to the tower can no longer access the roof due to insurance regulations.

"The world has changed considerably since I was a young man," Reese said, "and I'm not convinced it's changed for the better. The kind of thing that has changed is that we're all worried people, as opposed to those days when life seemed a little simpler."

For someone who may know close to nothing about UI, that "close to nothing" might be an image of the Admin. Reese said it stands alongside the Life Sciences building and the Memorial Gym as our best vintage buildings, and the university's marketing emphasizes the Admin and its lawn.

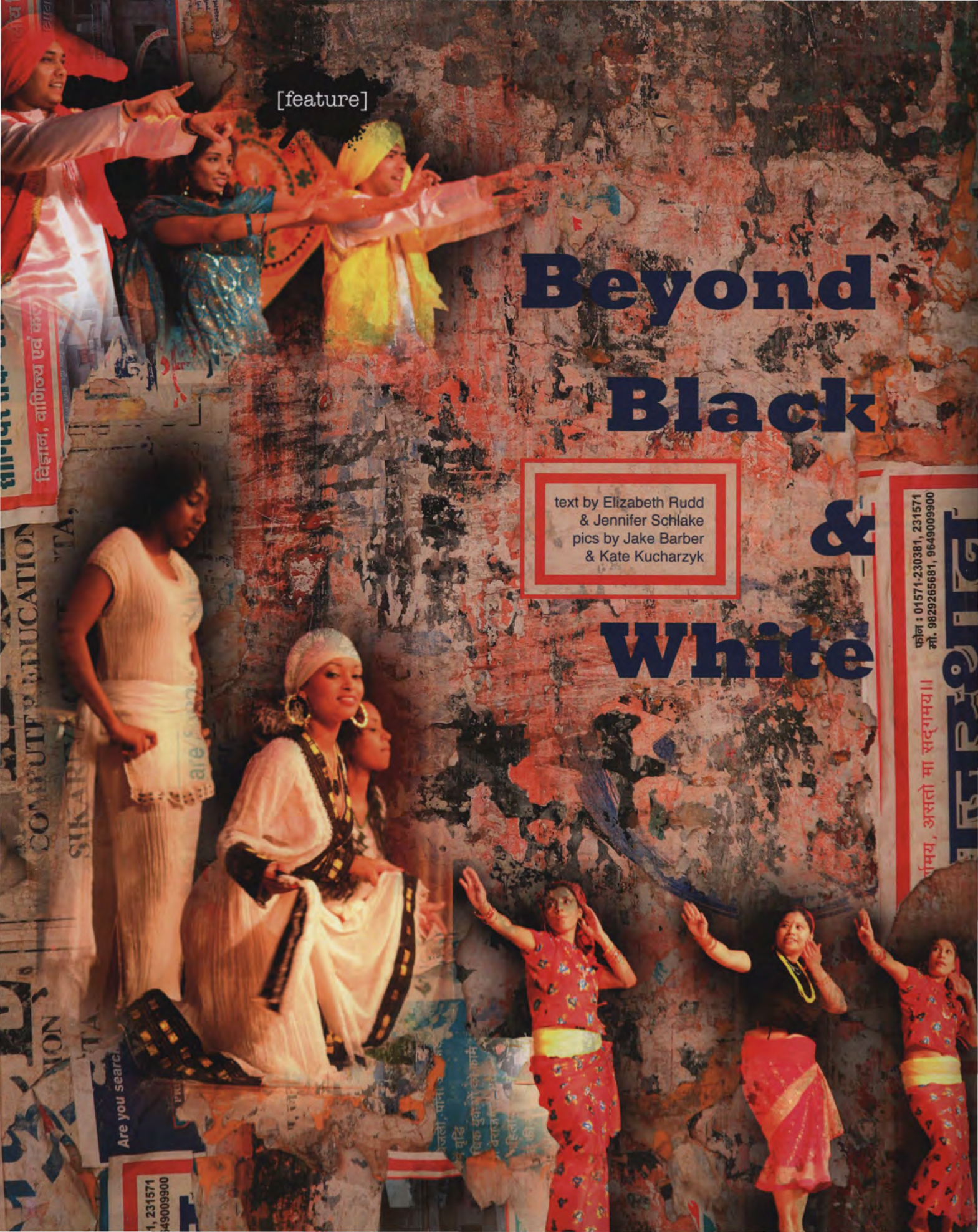
A quarter past five, daily, it announces "Here We Have Idaho." But it does so silently the rest of the day, too.

[feature]

Beyond Black

text by Elizabeth Rudd
& Jennifer Schlake
pics by Jake Barber
& Kate Kucharzyk

& White



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Three years ago someone taped a sign to a student's dorm room door listing the "Ten Rules of Being a Faggot."

But Robert Anderson, a member of the gay straight alliance, didn't let the situation anger him. Instead, he used the moment for empowerment.

"You can't ignore it — it's hard for people to understand what queer students are going through," Anderson said. "You just have to be comfortable with yourself."

All students are forced to deal with some form of discrimination, but for Anderson, other members of the gay community and students of different races and ethnicities, discrimination has only recently begun to slow down.

The diversity among people is both obvious and subtle, running deeper than skin, hair and eye color, deeper than height and weight and deeper than cultural behaviors.

Mark Edwards, Ph.D., director of the University of Idaho's Office of Multicultural Affairs, said when most people talk about diversity at an institution, the first group they refer to is the number of multiracial people enrolled, but now diversity encompasses many groups.

"We often focus on race, because race is one of those characteristics that when you see someone walk across campus you don't know what their sexual orientation is ... but you can tell they are a person of color," Edwards said.

For DeMaundry Woolridge, a black senior at UI, being a minority is obvious for him every day.

"The diversity is kinda lopsided," Woolridge said. "That's just the honest truth — anyone with eyes can notice that."

Campus diversity was limited when UI opened its doors in 1892. The school started classes with 40 students and one professor. The four students of the first graduating class consisted of two men and two women, according to Carlos Schwantes' "A Brief History of the University of Idaho."

Paul Peterson, the author of "The Politics of School Reform 1870-1940," said during this same period of time, unequal access to public



schooling dominated the minority experience with American education. He said blacks and other minorities continually pressured local school officials to provide decent facilities for nonwhite students for more than a century. Peterson also said despite the efforts, the upgrade in minority education was minimal.

UI has come a long way since then, although some days it might not seem like it. Looking at the population numbers there is a predominating group: heterosexual, white people. However, the campus has increased diversity, especially in the past two years.

When Woolridge would walk across campus and say hello to people, he said he was just expressing his Southern culture of simply being friendly, but some people would look at him like he was a "creepo." But this instance is rare, even for Woolridge, and he said it doesn't affect his experience on the campus.

"They figure most of us just play a sport," Woolridge said. "Everyone still welcomes us with open arms."

But Edwards has more to accomplish than increasing the awareness of multi-cultural diversity.

"When I first arrived here two and a half years ago, I was asked about what we were trying to accomplish in terms of diversity," Edwards said. "If we allow students to come to the University of Idaho and stay here for four or five years and when they leave they haven't learned anymore about people that are different than they are, we have done them a disservice."

UI's plan for diversity, according to its Web site, is to transform and broaden diversity in every respect as it relates to the campus and climate. Edwards said the main goal is to create a welcoming and safe community that makes people feel included and believe they make a difference and make the institution better as a whole. Edwards also said he is receiving faculty support to increase campus diversity. He said the majority of the faculty he has met in his time at UI have asked questions and understand it is an important step for the future. Edwards said they are reaching out for help and trying to help pass the message along.

"People here are friendly and outward, they want to know where you're from, what kinds of foods you eat, that kind of stuff," said Ashish Upreti, a senior from Nepal.

Othman Alenazi, a sophomore from Saudi Arabia, said he also thinks the people on campus and in Moscow are friendly and helpful. He said he also likes getting to know people from different countries and it is interesting to learn about their cultures.

"When I talk to someone from India, I learn more about Indian culture," Alenazi said.

Although these are important aspects of increasing awareness of diversity on campus, Edwards



said diversity has to be bigger and more than just a celebration. He said when thinking about diversity in these terms, people fall into what he refers to as the “three F’s — fun, food and festivities.” Edwards said he and his associates are trying to figure out how to educate the majority, showing them how they could benefit from a deeper knowledge of diversity on campus and how it could enhance their educational experience.

“Trying to find some way to encourage the majority to understand that there is real value in learning about people that are different than you,” Edwards said. “It increases your knowledge base and that is what this experience is about.”

Alenazi and Upreti both said they think the majority group could get more involved by participating in cultural events, such as India Night, Nepal Night, Africa Night and Cruise the World. They said they thought if more people participated in these types of events, that people would learn and understand the different cultures from around the world.

“Just being a person from a different culture isn’t enough to bring in diversity, they have to show what they’re from to bring out the diversity,” Upreti said.

But for other groups under the diversity definition, it is harder to show their culture or lifestyle.

Rebecca Rod, LGBTQA (Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning, allied) program coordinator said being a gay or lesbian person is to be pretty much invisible in the realm of diversity.

“Somebody might think, ‘Oh, I think she’s lesbian,’ just by looking at them,” Rod said. “But for the most part, people would be surprised and that’s an interesting position to be in.”

The struggle to accept gay and lesbian diversity is still new to the campus. The LGBT office wasn’t created until 2005, when faculty members and administrators wanted to bring more awareness to the “safe-zone” program and expand it.

“Once there was this kind of position on campus, suddenly there became all kinds of ways for this position to do advocacy and service to not only students, but to faculty and staff,” Rod said.

While most gays and lesbians are an invisible population, Rod said LGBT issues are more out there in the culture. Still, people are fighting about it, people are working for it, people hate them, and people love them, Rod said. She also said for gays and lesbians to be given the right to marry will be a step toward acceptance.

“When enough states decide that we should be able to marry, then there is going to be some point when the federal government will say this is just the right thing to do,” Rod said. “That sort of speaks volumes about where we should be culturally. If the gay people can get married just like anybody else, then we become a little more like everybody else. It’s a big step — a visible move.”

As Rod has been in her position for four years now, she said she has seen the acceptance grow. As Moscow is already fairly liberal, Rod said she has a fairly good atmosphere to work in. Already having an LGBT office on campus has increased the awareness to students that this group does exist.

“With awareness comes acceptance,” Rod said. “I feel the awareness is bigger and the acceptance is higher.”

For many gay and lesbian students on campus, their diversity has not always been welcomed.

Gay students who come to campus will experience forms of discrimination like they’ve never experienced before, like what Anderson, a junior and secretary of the GSA, experienced when he found the sign on his door.

The GSA strives to provide an inclusive environment between straight and gay people on campus. Anderson said the LGBT center is essential to bridging the gap between straight and gay people.

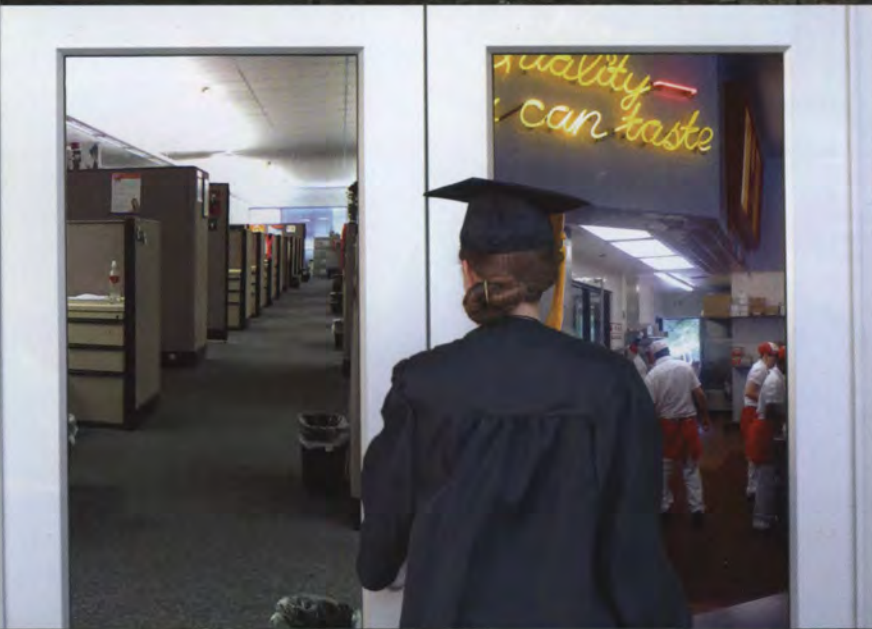
But bridging that gap has taken some time and Anderson and Rod agreed there’s more time to wait.

“People can’t accept us because they aren’t mean,” Anderson said. “They are just uneducated and they just don’t understand.”

Hoping to bring in education to this invisible community, Anderson said he hopes people will learn that gay is, instead, something physical and tangible.

“People are actively saying, ‘I hate gay people,’ because you can’t see them,” Anderson said. “Having classes would help awareness lead to acceptance.”

Student members of each group said they felt more



In these times, change has been the word on everyone's tongue and mind. Change in leadership, in national policy, in economy. This resurgence in the desire, and often need for change, has altered the way people live in a faster and more dramatic way than in past years.

Yet the change so many hoped and voted for has not been entirely positive. With the economic recession and vicious competition in the job market, students are adapting the way they learn, the degrees they seek and the jobs they apply for.

Aaron Powers graduated from the University of Idaho in the spring of 2009 with a bachelor's degree in psychology and a minor in business. Though he planned on a career in the medical field, he currently buys and sells used cars for Edmark Superstore in Nampa, Idaho. Powers feels lucky to have a job in the current economic climate and enjoys his work, but is considering graduate school.

"I have found my business minor to be more useful than my psychology degree," Powers

Now What?

text by Ivan Solotov
pics by Jake Barber



[small feature]

"I didn't expect the economy to have as big of an effect on me as it has."

said. "It's extremely difficult to find a career in psychology with only a bachelor's. And since I don't really see myself being in the car business for the rest of my life, I am considering enrolling in health science."

As a returning student, Powers emphasized the idea that college should be a time of exploration for students and a period to find what inspires and motivates them, because the only way to survive working 40 hours a week is to do something enjoyable.

"Get involved. Don't be afraid to explore different areas before you decide what field of work you want to pursue. I know it sounds cheesy but follow your heart," Powers said. "Don't think too much about what is going to make you money, or what other people are doing.

Many financially successful people hate their lives, and anti-depressant medication isn't cheap."

Manfred Bekeris is another graduate who experienced a rough transition from school to work. Bekeris left UI with a degree in management and human resources. He returned to his birthplace of Vilnius, Lithuania and spent the next 11 months unemployed. According to Bekeris the recession has hit Lithuania even harder than the U.S.

"I didn't expect the economy to have as big of an effect on me as it has," Bekeris said.

He is now employed by Rimi-Baltic, which owns a chain of retail stores in Eastern Europe. Bekeris is being trained as a store

manager. Though he admits it isn't his dream job, he is realistic about the process he has to go through.

"To be frank, like any business major I envisioned doing crap work for three to five years, and then making other people do crap work," Bekeris said.

As graduates enter the workforce they find themselves competing against experienced professionals. These professionals may have held executive positions five years ago, but are willing to take whatever is available now. Often that means entry level jobs usually reserved for the recently graduated. Facing these odds, students are extending the length of their studies, enrolling in graduate school to wait out the limited employment opportunities.



Education through outdoor recreation continued

skydiving was so well received that a wait list was created. Next on the list is a campus ropes course, an activity Beiser said he is working on.

The program's offerings and current headquarters are quite different than when it first started in 1973. James Rennie started the outdoor program out of a basement closet of the Student Union Building. With the completion of the Student Recreation Center, came the realization of a dream for the outdoor program. Now more visibly located just inside the SRC entrance, the program has room for equipment and a casual, inviting space for students, faculty and community members to explore its many options.

"It was just a place for gear and getting people off campus," Beiser said. "Now it's a brick and mortar operation that involves high risk."

Some of the program's trips put students in potentially dangerous situations, but Beiser believes in proper training to put students in the hot seat and integrating all experiences. While fun, the trips are structured to also challenge attitudes and behaviors. The hands-on activities provide involved problem-solving, risk taking and team and trusting building exercises. Each participant is responsible for their own personal safety and level of participation.

The university has started to utilize this part of the program. Groups across campus, from the International Programs Office to fraternities to college departments, are using the outdoor program to facilitate team building and strengthen group camaraderie through "adventure catering."

Elizabeth Powers came to UI from Montana for graduate school in the College of Natural Resources. An outdoor enthusiast interested in paddling, mountain biking and skiing, she immediately became active in the outdoor program.

"It's a great way to check out Idaho," Powers said. "You learn new skills and come out making new friends as well."

Powers said she feels one of the strengths of the outdoor program is its experience with group dynamics and leadership.

"They like teaching," Powers said. "They are good people and very patient."

A comfortable setting in which to learn somewhat intimidating tasks is something Powers said she feels the program really creates.

The outdoor program is multi-faceted and open to the whole community. This fall activities include hikes into hot springs, backpacking, snowshoeing, cross country skiing, along with kayaking, skydiving, mountain biking trips and surfing on the Oregon coast.

The program's relocation to the SRC has dramatically increased its visibility, improving what it has to offer. Yet many students aren't aware of the program and what it can do for them.

"Just go in and talk to them," Powers said. "Mike loves to talk."

The opportunities available could lead to kayaking or scaling a mountainside.



CAMPUS RECREATION



Beyond black and white continued

education and involvement on the majority's behalf would help them to understand the differences on campus.

"We need to grasp the idea that it's bigger than folks of color," Rod said. "It's gay and lesbian folks, it's folks that are differently able. It's boring for us to be some kind of mono-culture."

One struggle Rod sees for the LGBT students on campus is within the multi-cultural groups to also accept gays and lesbians as part of the diversity on campus.

"There are people of color that sort of struggle with the idea," Rod said. "But when you think about it, we don't have full rights, we have people who think it's just perfectly fine to go out in public and call us down and denigrate our lives — just like folks have in the past for black people."

Edwards said there are different racial and ethnic groups who have different views about homosexuality from their culture.

"In some cultures it's more accepted," Edwards said. "And in other cultures, it's not so much accepted."

Although, the diversity within the multi-cultural groups is more obvious, Rod and Edwards said growth in acceptance of other diverse groups has improved.

"I think we've made substantial progress over the last two and a half years," Edwards said. "We have more support for what we're trying to accomplish ... I think we will continue to get better but to say we will be at a place to where we won't need to really focus as much on these type of issues, no, we won't be there."

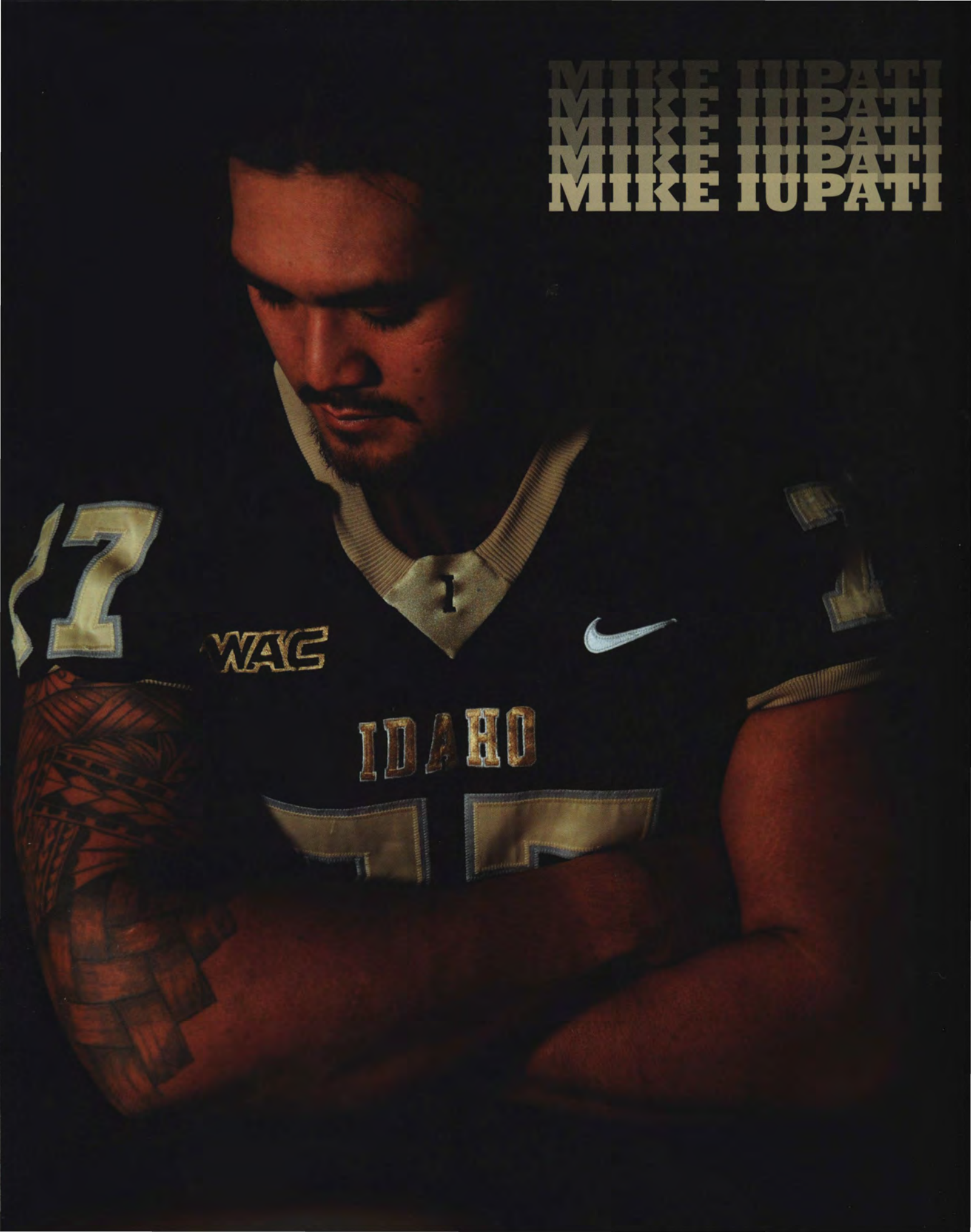
But Rod said it's important for the LGBT program to continue growing and she's more hopeful now than she's ever been.

"I started beginning to be aware of gay and lesbian groups and actually lesbian couples that have made a relationship for a few years and it's like, 'Oh, this can be done. This can work,'" Rod said. "I think it has improved — it's got to have, right?"

If UI were to go out and recruit multi-cultural students, Rod said they might not be quite ready to directly recruit gay and lesbian students. But she said she would like them to take brochures and other resources about the LGBT office and the "safe-zone" program — signals to potential students this is a welcoming place.

"When you bring in people from other cultures, other backgrounds, then it's going to change the landscape, the way we think," Edwards said. "It's going to have an impact on our curriculum — slowly it will impact every facet of the institution."

MIKE IUPATI
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MIKE IUPATI



From the rugby pitch to the football field

text by Theo Lawson
pic by Nick Groff

As a senior at Western High School in Anaheim, Calif., offensive lineman Mike Iupati was considered a two-star recruit by Rivals.com, one of the most recognized high school and collegiate recruiting Web sites in the nation. Four years later the same Web site has the 6-foot-6-inch, 330-pound University of Idaho senior ranked as the ninth-best interior lineman in the country.

Born and raised in American Samoa, Iupati found football after his move to the U.S. He was 14.

"I was in my P.E. class sophomore year and the football coach saw me and noticed my size. He asked me to play for the team," Iupati said.

Western High football coach Toby Howell recruited Iupati.

"Mike actually didn't come to our school until his sophomore year and he was very inexperienced," Howell said. "However, even though he didn't know what he was doing at first, he picked up things very quickly."

With his lack of experience in football, another sport helped him in understanding the foreign game.

"He had an understanding for the game that helped him make an immediate impact. Maybe it was because he used to play rugby in his native Samoa," Howell said. "I didn't know what his future would be, but I knew he would be successful."

The turning point of Iupati's newly acquired career came shortly after the beginning of his first year on the team.

"Mike took a huge step in game three of his sophomore year," Howell said. "Our two best linemen, Marcus Pedro (who played for Idaho), and Fili Moala (attended USC, now plays for the Indianapolis Colts) both had season-ending injuries on the same day of practice after our second game. This gave Mike an opportunity to start that week. We were playing a great team ... Mike stepped up and helped us to a 33-7 win that catapulted him to greatness from then on out. The rest is history."

By his senior year Iupati had played in two regional California Interscholastic Federation Championship games and had been selected to all-conference and all-state teams.

However, struggles arose during the recruitment process and Iupati didn't initially plan on playing NCAA Division I football. He received offers from Arizona, Texas El Paso and Idaho. Iupati hadn't committed until Idaho offered him a Proposition 48 scholarship, something Arizona and Texas El Paso hadn't. Proposition 48, adopted in 1983, requires athletes to maintain specific academic requirements to receive athletics aid and compete in any Division I sport. To qualify, athletes must have attained at least a 2.0 grade point average on a scale of 4.0 in a core curriculum and must score at least 700 on the Scholastic Aptitude Test or 15 on the American College Testing

"Originally, I just planned on going to a (junior college) for the first couple of years because I wasn't NCAA eligible," Iupati said. "Idaho offered me the Prop 48 so I decided to play for them."

Iupati's college football career hasn't disappointed fans, and he has received personal awards and honors. In 2008, he recovered from an off-season shoulder surgery to start eight of the ten games he played and earned end of the season All Western Athletic Conference second-team honors.

[athletic radar]

Prior to the 2009 season, Iupati achieved national recognition when he was named to the preseason watch lists for the Outland Trophy and Lombardi Award. Concerning college football players, the Outland Trophy is awarded to the best interior lineman, and the Lombardi Award to the best overall lineman — offensive or defensive.

In addition, Iupati is considered a top offensive line prospect entering the 2010 NFL Draft.

Rob Rang, a senior NFL analyst for NFLDraftScout.com, rates Iupati as the elite senior offensive guard in the country.

"Iupati has a rare combination of size and athletic ability," Rang said. "He is a classic mauler in the running game, utilizing great upper body strength to knock his opponent to the ground, clearing lanes for the ball-carrier. He has shown the ability to step up his level of play when facing elite competition, which bodes well for his jump to the NFL level."

Although Rang maintains that Iupati lacks certain skills, such as balance and lateral agility, one aspect of his game proves he is NFL worthy — his intelligence.

"The dedication Iupati showed in getting his academics in order to compete at the collegiate level has not gone unnoticed by scouts," Rang said. "To be successful at the NFL level, players have to be intelligent enough to handle a great deal of information and apply it to the football field. Iupati has, thus far, shown the intelligence and work ethic to make the successful jump to the NFL."

Iupati recognizes that everything he has achieved can be lost if he doesn't keep working hard.

"There is big pressure and I don't want to upset," Iupati said. "I try to maintain playing ability and fight through the adversity that comes my way."

As a team captain, Iupati values the Vandals' success above his own.

"I always put my focus into the team," Iupati said.

This leadership trait is nothing new.

"Mike was successful on and off the field because he was a great leader, a great worker and a great friend to everyone. Those qualities are what champions are made of," Howell said.

**Iupati is considered
a top offensive line
prospect entering the
2010 NFL Draft.**

German legs set Idaho records

text by Lisa Short
pics by Nick Groff



Paul Dittmer



Paul Dittmer gets home from track practice and sits on the couch with friends and teammates Sam Michener and Mike Carpenter. They play the new Halo, eat, do homework, and watch movies or a combination of those while mumbling through thoughts and random conversations. "Airforce?" Michener says randomly. They all burst out laughing.

While hanging out one time Dittmer couldn't distinguish all the words in a conversation and so he just sounded them together and asked, "Airforce?" when the sentence had nothing to do with word. Now, the three use the saying for anytime Dittmer misses the meaning of something, or if he wants to joke with them.

"Paul is one of a kind," Michener said, "and his laugh is so loud and ridiculous it makes us laugh."

Dittmer was born in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and raised in Hanstedt, Germany where he has participated in track and field since he was a toddler. Dittmer has been a member of the men's sports club track team for 19 years, spending his younger years running around and having fun, then progressing into serious competition as he got older. As a 20-year-old Paul was asked to run for the University of Idaho and has been on the track team since.

Dittmer, 22, has accomplished great feats in the men's high hurdles. His proudest accomplishment is making it to the world semi-championships in the under-20 age division in Beijing. He has also won the German Nationals under-18 and under-20 divisions, took second in the German National all age category, eleventh in the under-20 world championships and ninth and tenth in the European Championships in the under-23 division. Last year Paul took first in the Western Athletic Conference, finished sixth in the regional meet and seventeenth at nationals.

"Paul is an outstanding student-athlete who excels both in the classroom and

on the track. He's very competitive and very amusing to have at practice," said Wayne Phipps, UI track and field coach.

Dittmer's personality is hard to miss but so are his accomplishments. He holds the school's men's 60-meter indoor hurdles record of 7.84 seconds. His record for the outdoor 110-meter hurdles is 13.87 seconds, and although he has ran a 13.78, a school record time, it wasn't with UI and therefore doesn't count. This year he plans to improve his time in both events.

"It doesn't matter who you compete against, you always compete against yourself — the only competition you can never beat," Dittmer said.

Although a talented and driven athlete, Dittmer notes he is not the strongest or the best, but he focuses on efficiency, in racing and in life. With class assignments he tends to focus more on getting a good idea rather than worrying about the length or the size of the project. Some call it procrastination but he thinks with a little pressure he works better, just like in a race. With racing he knows he isn't the strongest and is actually surprised at how strong most Americans are, but he just focuses on doing what he needs to do.

Although different from the life he would have back in Germany, Dittmer enjoys most of his experiences here.

"The speed limits are stupid," he said, being use to driving on the Autobahn. Traffic and transportation being one of the biggest differences he notes being in America.

"There are so many trucks everywhere," he said with such enthusi-

asm, aspects Americans wouldn't normally think about as being a big deal.

It's the subtle details that make it a different atmosphere. Like traveling for track and going to a different state is much farther than he would ever have to travel in Germany.

"That's such a long trip, it's like I would be in Spain right now if I was home," Dittmer said about a drive from Idaho to Colorado.

Dittmer spends a lot of his spare time on the computer and sometimes considers himself, "a nerd." His favorite classes are any of the digital or virtual design classes. Dittmer is working on a Bachelor of Fine Arts in studio art, but isn't sure what role it will play in his future.

During winter break Dittmer will head back to Germany to take a test to be an air traffic controller. If it goes well he will be moving back home to pursue that dream. Otherwise he is not sure about the next few years but doesn't plan to give up running anytime soon. He can still compete in the all-age category back in the men's sports club in Germany. His passion for track translates in any language.

He said he loves this sport because everyone is "trying, trying, trying, trying" to do the best they can.

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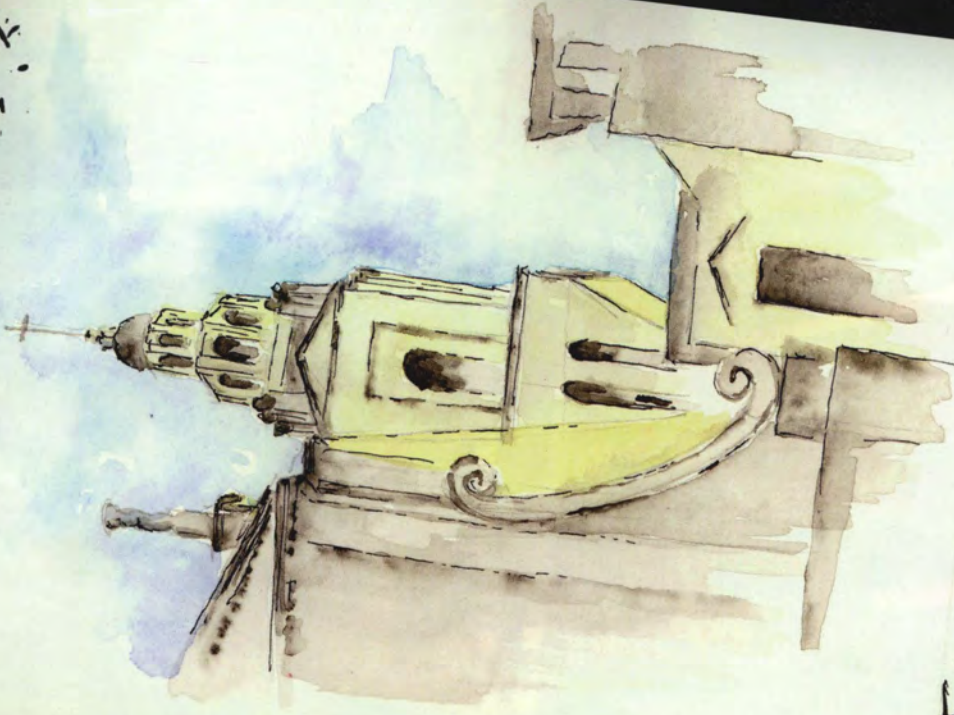
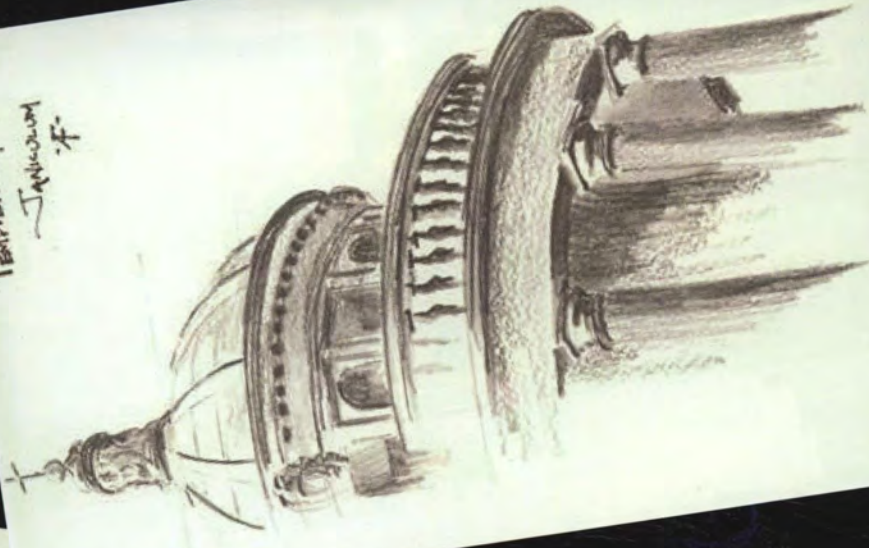
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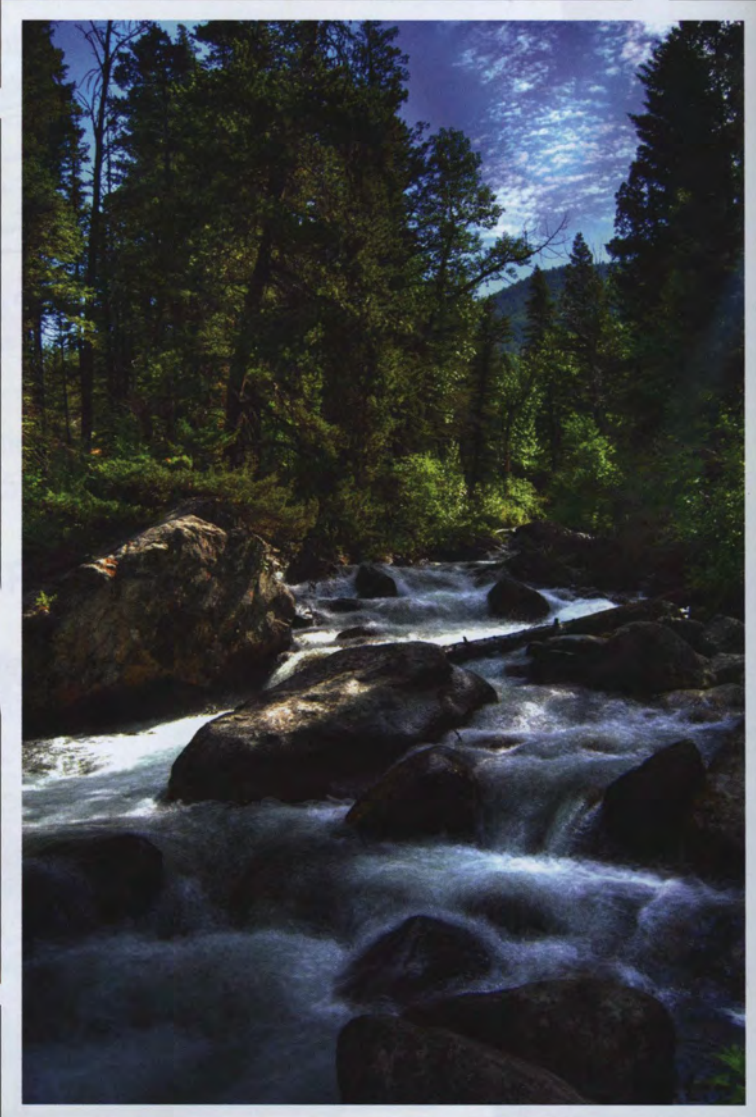


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