

THE VOLANTE

THE STUDENTS' VOICE SINCE 1887

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2020

VOLANTEONLINE.COM

SPORTS

'NOW IS THE TIME TO EDUCATE'

How a zoom meeting turned into a campus wide march to create community awareness



Isaiah McDaniels (center) was one of the students who led the Justice for Black Lives March on Wednesday, Sept. 2. The march was hosted by the Cultural Wellness Coalition.

Miles Amende | The Volante



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Participants in the march started at the DakotaDome and ended outside of Old Main.

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After discussing the idea of an awareness march on Aug. 27 the newly formed Cultural Wellness Coalition hosted the Justice for Black Lives March on Sept. 2.

The March began outside the DakotaDome and ended behind Old Main, where several group leaders spoke about racial issues.

The CWC formed immediately following the murder of George Floyd in May growing from conversations among the football team. The team and coaching staff met over Zoom to begin having conversations between Black athletes, coaches and those who felt strongly about being an ally.

"There was frustration, anger and sadness, but there was also a motivation to start a bigger conversation and a desire to create change here in Vermillion," Dante Warren, assistant football coach said.

Dante Warren and his wife Hailie Warren, Director of Public Relations and Brand Engagement at USD, created a Zoom call which began as a space for people to talk and share ideas. However, it quickly became a weekly call.

"The group quickly started to realize we have very legitimate ideas and plans that have the potential to make a lasting impact here," Dante Warren said.

The goal of the CWC is to further unite Vermillion and the USD campus through education, communication and action Dante Warren said. This goal is also paired with a proactive stance against the injustice that may occur in the community and standing up for what's right every day.

"In a town, so naturally racially homogenous we feel it is essential to the values of both this university and its athletic program to represent and support all members of its community," Dakota Smith CWC Vice President said. "We feel that to truly function at its full potential, we as a university have to strive to be the standard for how racial inequality is opposed and how inclusivity and equality can be attained."

The Justice for Black Lives March was just the beginning for the CWC, Smith said. The new student organization plans on being the voice for the Black community.

See **MARCH**, Page A3

VERVE (B1, B2)



Musical theater set to take stage virtually this season

Like all departments on campus, USD's musical theater department made adjustments this semester to provide a safe environment for their faculty and students. Read more about their upcoming performances on page B2.

NEWS (A1-A3, A6)

CWC HOSTS BLM MARCH

Chloe Fullenkamp and Miles Amende

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The Cultural Wellness Coalition hosted the Justice for Black Lives March on Wednesday, Sept. 2. Participants marched from the DakotaDome down University street and up to Slagle Hall, where CWC members spoke about the importance of the demonstration.

Marcus Destin, CWC co-president, said the rally was held to let the next generation know police violence will not be tolerated.

"This is for long after we are done in South Dakota," Destin said in his speech outside the DakotaDome. "Nothing has happened in Vermillion — not yet. But we must be a model community."

Ashley Charlie, Junior physical therapy major, led the chants during the march. Charlie said the number of people at the protest exceeded the expected amount.

"It felt more comfortable to communicate with the community. We are hoping for a better community moving forward," Charlie said after the march.

Leading the chants, Charlie said, initially made her nervous.

"In a way I was leading the whole pack, but seeing the reaction and the chants put more motivation in me," Charlie said. "It felt great to have the whole community behind me."

One of the marchers, Alice Lunardelli, carried a sign which stated "All Lives Can't Matter until Black Lives Matter." She said participating in a BLM march meant showing support to the USD community.

"It means that we love diversity here at USD and are not afraid to stand up for each other," Lunardelli said. "Carrying a sign (means) not being afraid of taking a stand. I want to support my community by showing that I have both courage and vulnerability."

Isaiah McDaniels, senior criminal justice major, said the organization has a great sense of unity, and that their next goals are to get more people involved.

"The perception of the issues we deal with are at the forefront. We have taken a huge step forward not only for USD or Vermillion, but for the United States," McDaniels said. "The next step is to have more people involved. We want to have more events for people to get involved with so we can grow as a community."

Destin said the protest could spark change in the community.

"We've got more work to do ... but I love this," Destin said. "This was amazing, this was a moment. It can change. If people take it into their own hands, it changes everything, it changes everything about the campus and the surrounding city."

Students' COVID-19 tests covered by CARES Act

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For students in need of COVID-19 testing in Vermillion, USD Student Health Services is offering tests paid for by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

Kevin O'Kelley, the head of USD's emergency planning group, said if students need or think they should be tested for COVID-19 they need to reach out to Student Health.

COVID-19 tests are paid for by the CARES Act, O'Kelley said. If a student goes through Student Health, their insurance may be charged, O'Kelley said, though it will be reimbursed.

As of right now, O'Kelley said there is no exact numerical threshold of cases that might cause students and staff to go home.

"President Gestring suggested we consider if our healthcare system becomes unable to manage the number of cases or if we're unable to deliver quality education in a safe manner," O'Kelley said. "If any on those two things became threatened then-President Gestring would have prepared to make very unpleasant decisions."

The University of South Dakota has 92 self-reported active cases among staff and students. There are at least 368 people who are overall in quarantine or isolation including

USD Numbers

Active Cases:

5 Employees
87 Students

In Quarantine:

368 Total
47 On-campus
(as of Tuesday, Sept. 8)

being at home as of Sept. 8.

Since Sept. 2, there has been a decrease of 156 self-reported active cases among staff and students and a decrease of 298 people quarantined or isolated at home, according to the USD COVID-19 Dashboard.

"We've flattened the curve significantly because of our compliance with what we've asked students and staff to do," O'Kelley said. "Social distancing, the wearing of masks, frequent hand washing, the sanitizing of surfaces and limited dining in the MUC — all of those things served to flattened the curve."



If students are in need of COVID-19 testing in Vermillion, USD Health Services is offering tests paid for by the CARES Act.

Lexi Kerzman | The Volante