

The Independent Collegian

“Without a struggle, there can be no progress.” – Frederick Douglass

The Collegian was first founded in 1919, just three short years of a century ago. With almost a hundred years under our belt, we've made mistakes and learned from them.

We've started from humble beginnings as a newspaper founded by two university students to a fully-staffed editorial squad.

Now facing the next section of our life as a student newspaper, we wanted to travel back in time to see where we've been and what we've done.

Learning from our mistakes is part of the learning process and we're looking forward to the future.



The Toledo University-Teaser printed its first issue on March 5th, 1919. The weekly student newspaper, which was sold for five cents was started by students Samuel Steinback and Leo Steinem. Articles they covered and printed for the first issue included Bill Barber, a war hero teaching French at TU (Toledo University); a banquet held by the university commerce club, and Toledo's Founding Fathers. In 1922, the name of the newspaper was changed to The Campus Collegian and was shortened to The Collegian in 1962.



After many years as an official service of the University of Toledo, The Collegian staff negotiated a split with the university in 2000, moving from offices in the Student Union to off-campus headquarters and renaming the paper The Independent Collegian. Then, president Vik Kapoor wished to control what the paper published, which led to the split.

Hip-hop superstar Busta Rhymes brings show to Glass Bowl

Busta Rhymes will receive \$40,000 in compensation for his performance at the Glass Bowl...

'It's not meant to be a family show' Busta Rhymes said...

of the Glass Bowl to receive \$40,000 in a while, have pulled something like this off in the past after the show has gone...

Abella: Purge date still up in air

When the date of the purge is set, the Glass Bowl will have to be ready to receive the incoming...



Taft appoints new trustees

McQuinn will be announced as the new trustee of the Glass Bowl...

Decatur fills void, search begins for new president

Decatur will be filling the void left by the resignation of the current president...

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The Collegian declares independence

Student newspaper goes back to independent roots...

ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL

Local figures return from the campaign trail...

NEWS ANALYSIS

So the journey begins... The Collegian's journey...

Even though the IC is a college newspaper, following the national political trail isn't something new to us. As part of a known swing state, UT has been a stop on the campaign trail of many presidential candidates, including Al Gore and Joe Lieberman in the election of 2000.



On 9/11, UT students and the Toledo community were left reeling after the nation was shaken. This issue's front page was dedicated to national news about 9/11, as well as local takes on the issue.

Rocketing through time

College mascots across the country represent what it truly means to be a part of that school. The mascots are a symbol of school pride and spirit. This reasoning applies to our own University of Toledo and our favorite mascots, Rocky and Rocksy.

Ever since UT earned its nickname after the football team

played Carnegie Tech in 1923, the Rockets haven't stopped shooting for the stars. During the game, sports reporters from Pittsburgh were shocked to find out UT didn't have a nickname and asked a student to make one up.

"Though an underdog, Toledo fought formidably, recovering a series of embarrassing fumbles by favored Tech. Pittsburgh writers pressed James Neal, a UT student working in the press box, to come up with a nickname," the UT website states.

"Despite UT's 32-12 loss, the student labeled the team 'Skyrockets,' obviously impressed by his alma mater's flashy performance against a superior team. The sportswriters shortened the name to 'Rockets,' which has been used since."

Rocky and Rocksy, our trusty mascots, didn't just come from thin air – the UT mascot has had an interesting and ever-changing history.

This year is Rocky the Rocket's 50th birthday celebration, and fortunately enough, his birthday falls on the same week as the homecoming football game. A celebration on the actual birthday will be a part of Homecoming week events.

"Obviously, the golden birthday, the fiftieth year, is a huge deal. Rocky's been a big part of the University of Toledo for a long time," said Kevin Taylor, UT's events and licensing manager. "A lot of people's memories from their college experience, or anything within the community; a lot of it starts with Rocky. He's like face of the university."

Rocky the Rocket was first introduced during the 1966-67 academic year by the UT Spirit and Traditions Committee. It began as random students being chosen to dress up for the games as Rocky.

In the fall of 1968, the director of student activities, Dan Seemann, took Rocky under his wing, and the mascot began to take shape. Bill Navarre was the first official mascot. The

costume, made by the theatre department seamstress, was a wastepaper basket with a pointed rocket top made of paper-mâché.

Rocky's outfit has changed several times since then, thankfully.

In the 1970s, Rocky's outfit consisted of a tall metal rocket helmet that matched with different jumpsuits, including bell bottom pants.

In 1977, with the help of former astronaut and Ohio senator John Glenn, an authentic space suit, helmet and boots were donated to the University of Toledo by the NASA space center in Houston, Texas. The spacesuit was worn for football games, but a lightweight replica was made for basketball games.

The astronaut suits were used until 1980 when the Rocky costume was changed once again to take on a more futuristic look designed to look more like a space rocketeer.

Another Rocky costume was introduced in 1983. It was plush with huge feet, but was only used until 1986 when a bigger and bluer plush Rocky with smaller feet was unveiled.

Carlos Gary, an IC cartoonist in 1994, said that students were throwing marshmallows at Rocky during a football game and were yelling that Rocky looked like "a blue condom."

"This guy wasn't very marketable," Gary said. "You never saw Rocky on a T-shirt."

After a few years of modification, Gary had created a "Fightin' Rocket" and first came up with the idea of his female counterpart, Rocksby. It wasn't long before these new mascots were being printed onto T-shirts and sweatshirts and being sold in campus bookshops; about 300 items had been sold at that point.

A final change was made to Rocky's appearance in 1998 at the

rivalry Bowling Green football game. The old Rocky the Rocket stepped into a limousine and a new Rocky walked out to display the new Tower Blue and Rocket Gold costume, complete with a jetpack.

Quite a few changes have been made to Rocky the Rocket through the years, but one thing has remained true to the mascot throughout his 50 years of existence.

“I’ll say that, through my experience as being the manager of the mascot program, the one universal thing is that they all have a big enthusiasm and a love for the university. They want to get out there, they want to be in front of people. They want to interact with people,” Taylor said.

At this year’s homecoming football game, the Rocky’s of the past will be recognized on the field. According to Taylor, even the very first Rocky will be attending.

“When I first took over the position, I talked to some of [the alumni] just to get a sense of the program and everything that goes into it, since I was relatively new and hadn’t dealt with that before,” Taylor said. “So, I spoke with them and their thoughts on what works, what doesn’t work. Once you’ve been in the program, once you’ve been Rocky or Rocksy, you’re always invested, you want them to carry on the tradition that you put in for your college experience.”

The UT athletics website and Taylor said any student can try out to be Rocky in the spring semester for the following year. The only requirements are commitment, a fun personality, school spirit and the ability to communicate well through non-verbal communication.

“Whenever we have try outs, and I’ve been lucky enough to do a few of them, I always tell people I’m not looking for perfection,” Taylor said. “I’m just looking for somebody that has the right enthusiasm, and also somebody that’s willing to learn, and willing to just have the personality and take over

the character.”

This love and enthusiasm for the university is what Taylor and those at the athletic department classify as the “backbone” of UT, and is something that remains constant.

Every student is going to have some sort of interaction with our fantastic mascots throughout their college years at least once and should recognize that they can relate to Rocky and Rocky in some sort of way.

“Just take advantage of that they are the ambassadors for the university,” Taylor said. “They’re here to make that experience and to make that connection, and to really increase the positive experiences that students have on campus.”

Our decisions have consequences

“As a person grows older and taller in stature, the shadow he casts upon the earth grows longer. His impact on the world becomes more profound as he matures and succeeds.” Well, that’s according to Barbara Floyd, the library archivist at the University of Toledo. But how do we become successful and impact the world and the people around us when our foundations are weak? I think that the opinions and decisions we make determine our life chances in more ways than we think, and that’s why we should think intently before acting. I almost forgot to welcome you home, alumni. You make us proud. And hey students, keep the hustle going, for it’ll surely pay off.

Let me tell you something about decisions. Adolf Hitler’s Germany decided that exterminating Jews, Gypsies and members

of “inferior races” was a great decision to make the “master race” stronger. After all, their lives were more important than that of these people. These gravely immoral activities were decisions that people believed in. Then in the United States in the 1950s, Senator Joseph McCarthy and his friends used the institution of state to witch-hunt and trample the Constitutional rights of citizens and businesses in the name purging the country of communist subversives. Well, that was another strong decision and we know how that turned out.

The point is that decisions matter and we make them every day, either as institutions or individuals. But decisions also have consequences. Unfortunately, the consequences of ill-made institutional decisions are borne by generations who had no hand in how those decisions were made.

So in the light of this year’s homecoming celebration, I wanted us to look back at some of the decisions made in our university’s history and to imagine how they may have determined where we stand today. Barbara Floyd became very useful for this historical exercise in sharing both the good and the bad with me.

My first surprise was the knowledge that the University of Toledo could probably have been Carnegie Mellon University today and Carnegie is ranked 24th in the nation with 2015 endowments in excess of \$1.7 billion. In 1900, Andrew Carnegie made a huge financial donation to the UT Board of Trustees to turn the then-manual training school into a technical university. His fault? He requested anonymity. The Board misunderstood and misinterpreted his intent and rejected the offer, only to find out the donor was actually Carnegie, the industrial magnate, who later used the funds to start Carnegie Mellon in Pittsburgh. Well, UT isn’t doing bad today, but just imagine how much more could have been achieved if the Board thought differently and accepted the offer.

Then came 1961 and Ohio wanted to establish a Medical College.

The initial plan was for the college to be merged with and housed on the University of Toledo campus. In this situation, President William Carlson did all he could to see the merger go through, but politics won in the end. Governor James Rhodes and his newly-created Ohio Board of Regents established the college as an independent state university in 1964. Well, the city still won, as the college was located here, but did the two institutions benefit from the decision? History would judge this, as in 2006 the Medical College of Ohio eventually merged with UT. We would keep wondering what the two institutions could have achieved together if they started off as a merger.

Among UT'S presidents, Vik Kapoor was probably the most unloved. He was so enthused with transforming UT into the "crown jewel of Ohio" that he didn't realize that the institution was crumbling right before him. So many staff, faculty and even board members were laid off or resigned during his 17-month stint as president. But one of his most terrible decisions was to have closed the then 2-year community college system that was housed on the Scott Park campus. It was not long after that decision that community colleges rebirthed across the nation. And today, instead of reaping benefits from that campus, the university is still struggling to find out what exactly to do with it. Sometimes, the immediate profit motive isn't what's best for the long run.

Finally, in more recent history, president Lloyd Jacobs also decided to split the 100 year-old College of Arts and Sciences into three separate colleges. And although the decision was hotly contested among faculty, it was still implemented. This cost the school both money and time; it was also the cause of discontent on campus. Last semester, president Gaber decided on reconstituting that college again.

Decisions have repercussions and it is important to reflect deeper before making them.

But hey, as individual alumni or continuing students, we're not excused from this. We have allowed certain opinions to become more important in our lives than they deserve. We can all recall those times when we didn't sign up for classes because someone told us they were difficult or that the professors were hard graders. There were also those times that we thought we were too tired to study and ended up with less desirable grades. Then there were times that we decided we were not going to take up non-paying internships because we were either too poor for that sacrifice or that the situation was unfair. Don't forget about the many relationships that we destroyed because we thought they were not valuable or because someone fed us some negative opinions about these people. Yet, these decisions become the foundation for whatever success we're chasing in life

Whatever it is we decide to do in the end, we need to recognize that there are consequences and take our time to think through these decisions more intently. We'll be saved from a lot of trouble later on. It will make our foundation stronger, be more efficient and better our future.

Girl power at UT

Everyone on the University of Toledo campus knows what it's like to be a freshman. To be alone, and an adult, for the first time in your life. Especially for those of us who moved away from home, because even just a 45-minute distance from your family can feel like oceans. It wasn't easy for me as a freshman living on campus; I didn't know anyone and no one knew me. I was afraid of making friends, and constantly worried about how I appeared to others. I was careful about making first impressions and never strayed too far out of my

comfort zone.

Then I met a woman named Danielle, who used to work at the Independent Collegian as a million things, but most recently as the general manager. Here was someone I wanted to be like; a strong, confident and beautiful woman who couldn't be described as anything except as The Boss. It was one of the first times I met anyone in my life who really inspired me to be the best, most ambitious person I could be, so that's what I started to become.

That was three years ago. Since then I have accomplished so much, and I owe a lot of that to Danielle. But through my years at UT the one thing I have noticed is that we are not short on strong, confident, boss ladies. In fact, I have met more women who are successful in their fields and love their work, while I have been at this university than any other time in my 20 years of existence.

I even got lucky enough to see the induction of the very first female president of UT, Sharon Gaber. Gaber was able to reverse the six-year trend of declining enrollment in her first year, while simultaneously increasing this campus' diversity efforts and increasing our funding from outside donors. How could anyone not call her a bad ass? And she's not the only one.

Other examples include Jackie Layng, a professor of communication who designed the current broadcast curriculum that has won national awards, and is the executive producer of UT:10 News; Paulette Kilmer, another professor of communication at UT, who founded the banned book vigil 19 years ago and continues to work to organize the event every year on top of her multitude of publications and professional work; and as well as Senior Vice President for Student Affairs Kaye Patten Wallace who works tirelessly to provide students with everything that they need to achieve their education goals. How could you not be inspired by these women?

Even the Mayor of Toledo, Paula Hicks Hudson, is a true inspiration. These women send the message to every young girl in Toledo, to every struggling college freshman, to everyone that sees them, that you can accomplish anything.

We often find that the balance between successful men and women in any organization, especially an institute of higher learning, is drastically skewed to have a greater number of men. However, the University of Toledo has become a beacon of hope. I encourage all UT students to really pay attention to the amazing women you are surrounded by every day, and to be grateful for the opportunity to study at a University that gives you this opportunity, since so many lack it.

It's easy to take something for granted that you don't know others lack, but UT has gone above and beyond to create an environment where anyone, regardless of their sex, can excel. While there is always progress to be made, and I'm sure there still is, I applaud you, UT, and everything that you have taught me. And thank you to all the bad-ass chicks I got to meet along the way; you've all truly inspired me.

University Hall

From the barrel-vaulted ceilings to water-themed motifs to the gargoyles on the tower, there is so much to appreciate about the University of Toledo's oldest building, University Hall.

Crews started construction of the building in 1930 and finished about 11 months after they started. It is not a part of the Works Project Administration that was started to create jobs during the Great Depression. University Hall was created from the minds of architects and then-president Henry Doermann.

“It’s what we would call ‘institutional Gothic,’ which is very popular at many institutions across the country,” said Steven Bare, a graduate assistant in the Department of History. “So it’s really unique that in the first third of the 20th century, the University of Toledo would pick a really dated form of architecture for this building.”

Bare taught a public history practicum class last semester that researched University Hall and its history. The class found interesting tidbits about every part of the building, including its iconic tower and mysterious staircases.

“It’s known as the one true architectural gem on UT’s campus,” Bare said.

When Doermann created his idea for University Hall, he wanted students to be able to “reach for the sky” and thought a tower would be the perfect way to accomplish that. University Hall’s tower reaches a height of 205 feet tall and has a four gargoyles that sit on each of the corners. They are there to protect the campus and ward off evil spirits.

University Hall is a reflection of collegiate Gothic architecture, featuring a turret on the East side of the main entrance. Niches, common in Gothic architecture, can be found empty on both sides of the entrance into the building. These typically would have held a religious statue, but stand empty because UT is a state college.

The cornerstone was placed during the building’s dedication in 1930. Legend has it that there is a time capsule placed inside, containing UT student publications, a map of Toledo in 1930, the election board count, pictures of the groundbreaking ceremony, a copy of the commencement program and a copy of Doermann’s speech. But we will never know for sure, as it would surely ruin the building’s history to take a look inside.

UT’s bell tower lost its bells in 2006 when they were replaced

by a speaker system. The speakers toll the time every half hour, ten minutes before the hour and on the hour. The university fight song plays at noon and the Alma Mater plays at 5 pm each day. Even though the bells are gone, the clock on the outside still tells time. The minute hand is actually eight feet long and the hour hand is five feet long.

On the back of the building, you have probably noticed the large doors that lead to nowhere. These actually lead out of the back of Doermann theatre. In the original blueprints, these doors were meant to have stairs leading up to them, but the idea was dropped. Now their only purpose is to confuse students.

In the original building, the East wing held the engineering and architectural classes, while the West wing housed the sciences. The library was on the fifth floor, located where there is now a dance studio. Before the Student Union was built, there was even a cafeteria for students below Doermann Theatre.

For 47 years, University Hall was used without air conditioning. In November of 1978, cranes were used to place air conditioning units over the roof and into their current location.

The third floor of University Hall also showcases forms of Gothic architecture, including vaulted ceilings. The main stretch of hallway is a barrel-vaulted ceiling, while the two courtyard entrances are ribbed vaults. Plaster molds of alternating mermen and sirens adorn the ceiling. Bare said Doermann commissioned these molds to represent the university's closeness to Lake Erie.

The third floor, which contains the offices of the university president and other administrators, also showcases the seals of 55 different universities painted upon the wall. The seals represent the alma maters of faculty members in 1934. The

seals were painted as part of a WPA project. In early 2000, frames were installed to protect them for future generations.

As for the staircases, floating staircases can be seen in the West and East staircases. These ramps and stairs lead to sections of the old library, mainly what used to be the Stacks and Magazine rooms.

At the main entrance to the library, there are two doorways that used to lead right into administrative offices, including the president's office. The doors were sealed off to create more protection.

In today's money, University Hall would cost around \$35 million to build.

This is just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to uncover the secrets of University Hall. So go exploring with your friends or by yourself and find out what makes our university so special.

UT then and now

The cohesive collegiate Gothic architecture of the University of Toledo deserves appreciation. Not many schools can claim to be as aesthetically pleasing as ours. Walking onto campus is like entering a city all our own. Some buildings are original to UT and have been around for 80 years, while others much shorter. Yet whichever building you walk into, you get that surge of pride knowing this is definitely UT.

The University of Toledo was founded in 1872. Prior to constructing the current campus, classes were held downtown in schools and churches. Memorial Field House and University Hall

were the first buildings on campus.

Arguably, one of the best views of campus is seen when driving up Drummond Road when the sun has set and the moonlight hits U Hall just right. U Hall was built in 1931, meaning 85 years worth of students have walked up the steep stairs, confused about how to reach the sixth floor, already out of breath after the third flight.

“When I was here during my undergrad studies, I always did, and still do love U Hall. It was such a unique structure with crazy rooms, and hallways and courtyards. It was like a castle that had a secret to find every time you’d visit it,” wrote Nicholas Kissoff, associate professor and director of the Construction Engineering Technology Program and UT alumnus.

Kissoff earned three degrees from UT in 1980, 1983 and 1988. After graduating, Kissoff worked at SSOE, an engineering and architectural firm in Toledo, before returning to UT to teach. While at SSOE, Kissoff was on the team that designed the Glass Bowl renovation in 1991.

The Glass Bowl was built in 1937, making it 79 years old. It has since been renovated, but it is still the original building, meaning it holds lots of special moments for past and present Rockets.

“I have gotten to see quite a few great moments there over the years with UT football. I saw Chuck Ealey run around end vs. Miami to win the MAC in 1970 when I was 12,” Kissoff wrote.

Before the Student Union was built in 1959, Libby Hall served as the Student Union. According to Barbara Floyd, university archivist, in 1976 the SU went through a big addition, and again in 1993.

Among the dorms on campus, Scott and Tucker Halls are the oldest, built in 1935. The most recent dorms are Ottawa East and West, both built in 2005.

If your dad is a proud UT alumnus like mine, he will

absolutely remind you every time he is on campus that Memorial Field House used to be the basketball arena. FH was constructed in 1931 and served as the basketball arena until Savage Arena was built in 1975. In 2008, FH was renovated into the building it is today: a magnet for campus tour guides. Reasonably so, with its unique structure of exposed beams and high glass ceilings.

Before FH was renovated, it served as a storage area and was not well maintained. Floyd said there was a discussion of whether or not to tear the building down entirely, but it was eventually decided to instead renovate it and preserve such a historical building.

One of the biggest changes current students have seen are the Carlson Library renovations that took place this past summer. Carlson was constructed in 1973, and prior to this summer, the third and fourth floor of the library had not been updated since it was constructed. Renovations on the library will continue in January throughout the rest of the school year.

The engineering campus did not exist until 1995. The Health and Human Services building used to serve as the Engineering Science building. Bowman-Oddy Laboratories were constructed in 1966 and Wolfe Hall was added 30 years later in 1997. The first building on The Health Science Campus, the Educare Center, was built in 1965. The most recent building on the campus is the Center for Creative Education (the simulation center), built in 2014.

Whether it's the Instagrammable Bell Tower overlooking campus, the open concept of Field House's third floor, the grand steps leading into the student union, or the way Bowman-Oddy looks with a dusting, or 2 feet, of snow around it, each building has the stamp of UT.

Some buildings have 80 years worth of history and some have history yet to be made, but what all these storied buildings

have in common are the footprints they hold of future doctors, writers, engineers, educators, scientists, nurses, journalists and so many more.

UT vs BG

Throughout the career of every major person, team, country or company, there always seems to be that one recurring stain: a peer or counterpart that always seems to be a nuisance on your legacy, and they think the same as you.

Whether this ideology is rooted in reason or ignorance, the rivalry lives on. Hamilton has Burr, Enzo Ferrari has Ferruccio Lamborghini, TSM has CLG, and the University of Toledo has Bowling Green. Each and every one of these rivalries has a storied history, but since Lin-Manuel Miranda isn't here to sing about MAC football, we'll have to dig into what makes us hate the brown and orange with every fiber of our Rocket being on our own time.

To truly understand the gravity of the UT vs. BG antagonism, you have to travel back way past football, and into a time of disputed state borders and pen knives. Originally, when the Northwest ordinance of 1787 was set, it included the area that would be known as Toledo as a part of Michigan.

But when Michigan applied for statehood, it was found that the area was surveyed wrong. This means the 8-mile strip of swamp infested land was in dispute, leading to what is now known as "The Toledo War."

The ensuing violence, second only to Gettysburg, left zero dead and Michigan Deputy Joseph Wood stabbed with a pen knife. Tragic.

This was enough protest for Michigan, and the Toledo strip was handed over to Ohio. This, however, was not good for the young town of Bowling Green, who now had to share a state with their

interstate rivals, Toledo.

This rivalry eventually transitioned out of politics and onto the football field. The teams first met in 1919, where Toledo took home the victory 6-0. The rivalry didn't last long at first. In 1935, when the teams took the field to face off for the 12th time, Toledo absolutely obliterated Bowling Green 63-0.

This loss caused the obviously mild mannered and sportsmanlike Falcons to storm the field in the wake of their loss, and start an all-out brawl between the opposing sides. The Toledo war returned again, and Deputy Joseph Wood rolled in his grave over nightmares of sharpened pens.

This brawl led to the game being suspended for 13 years, before the teams met yet again in 1948 to continue this historic rivalry. Despite the extended period with no football games, the teams seemed to pick up with the same levels of acrimony the had left with.

The harshness and bitterness came to fruition when the teams met yet again in 1951. Marked by harsh weather conditions, and even worse respect for the other teams, the game kicked off. The game was filled with dirty plays, horrible officiating and a deep hate for each other. After the end of the game, a seven-minute fight between the teams broke out, leaving with what witnesses say was a collection of scrapes and bruises, and up to 20 black eyes.

Toledo War part three didn't stop the rivalry, and the games raged on, all the way to today. Bowling Green leads the overall record for the rivalry, with a record of 39-37-4, but the Falcons haven't won a game yet this decade.

The wars and fights have died down over the years, with current punishments being more in line with the losing university president having to serve cafeteria food in rival school gear, but the roots of the rivalry lay within us all. So when the game this Saturday kicks off, remember the hard fight put up by the pen knife warriors before us, the fights fought in the 30s and the black eyes our veteran Rockets endured. But most of all, remember that, forever and always,

the Rockets are better than the Falcons.

Colleges 'diversify' in Ohio

The state of Ohio is home to many different universities of all different sizes and cultures and yet, they all share the same problem: diversity – or lack thereof.

“There are a lot of people who grow up without being exposed to diversity and the older generation mindset is all people see at a very young age,” said Bill Cohen, a graduate teaching assistant of engineering at The Ohio State University.

I researched and compared three different universities and their diversity and inclusion programs within the state of Ohio. Those schools include the University of Toledo, the University of Cincinnati and OSU.

I considered size, popularity, competitive programs and of course student representation, but chose to focus on these three schools due to the representation of the three different sizes of the typical universities in the state of Ohio.

UT has a total enrollment of around 23,000, while UC has 44,000 and OSU has a total enrollment of around 58,000.

In a list of 100 of the most diverse universities by Niche.com, only one Ohio university was represented: Case Western Reserve University.

That same publication released a list of the most diverse universities in the state of Ohio. Out of 61 schools, UT is ranked 32nd, one ahead of OSU and two ahead of Bowling Green State University.

In an interview, UT student Carter Steude and UC student Tyler Siebert both said that they did not see any issue with diversity on their respective campuses.

Each university offered many different programs and trainings to create a more welcome and inclusive environment, yet many students are not aware that they were even implemented in the first place.

“People don’t want to be educated on the subject,” Steude, a third-year education major, said. “They believe it is someone else’s problem and not theirs so they don’t do anything about it.”

At UT, the month of April means Diversity month. UT is offering different forums and events to engage and welcome students from all over the globe in addition to educating students on the subject of diversity.

Shanda Gore, chief diversity officer at UT, said that while UT is making strides, there is still work to be done.

“It’s important that we support one another and continue to have these conversations,” Gore said.

In addition to this new initiative at UT, UC has started inclusive workshops that are new for this school year in addition to holding different events, such as hosting guest speaker Jennifer Eberhardt.

The associate chief diversity officer at UC, Kathy Riehle, said the university stands by their mission to make campus environment inclusive and welcoming to students, staff and faculty. UC sits at number 14 on the list of most diverse universities in Ohio, doubling both UT and OSU.

“When you walk around campus, it sure doesn’t seem like there is an issue,” said fourth-year architectural engineer at UC, Tyler Siebert. “Almost everyone gets along and it comes right

from President Ono really.”

UC President Santa Ono has created a partnership with students and staff to refocus on diversity efforts around the university. Some of those include new diversity teams and committees, new strategic hiring efforts and holding different discussions on the topic of diversity and inclusion.

According to the rankings, the majority represents 80 percent of OSU’s campus with only 20 percent representing the minority. Like other universities in Ohio, OSU offers different inclusion workshops, diversity forums and hosts many different guest speakers to speak on the subject at hand.

“OSU is such a big campus with a large number of different students, anyone who wants to learn or know more can by just walking into the Office of Diversity and Inclusion,” Cohen said.

All universities are different but these three all still choose the same path towards a more accepting university. While many different outcomes come from given efforts, the university can only do so much.

“Everyone works incredibly hard,” Gore said. “Everyone is working from their own place to make sure students feel welcome and safe while studying at UT.”

To learn more about diversity at the UT, you can contact the university’s Office of Equity, Diversity and Community Engagement at 1-800-586-5336.

Asian Culture at UT

While the Asian community represents only 2 percent of the student population at the University of Toledo and are often clumped into one generalized category, the unique student groups on campus reflect the diversity and culture of each individual facet within the community.

One of these groups is the Chinese Student and Scholars Association. Yuan Hu, the president of CSSA, said that the organization is all about supporting and providing resources for newly arrived Chinese students, scholars and their families, all while promoting the culture and building connections with other student organizations.

Hu also said that it is important for students to understand other cultures in order to get to know them better. Cultural differences in how people relate to one another can often lead to misconceptions or misunderstandings, according to Hu.

“Chinese people are very friendly – they like to make friends with other people, but sometimes they are shy – it is because of the culture,” Hu said. “Sometimes American students think we are silent and do not have much eye contact with the other person. It is not because we are impolite, it is because of Chinese culture. We are trying to adapt to American culture.”

In order to promote their culture, CSSA hosts several events throughout the year both to celebrate within the community as well as to raise awareness with those who may not be familiar with Chinese culture.

“We assist Confucius Institute to hold some culture events. We also have our own culture activities, Chinese Spring Festival gala, carnival or other events,” Hu said.

In addition to interacting with student organizations, language is an integral and defining part of any culture. At

UT, there are currently six Japanese instructors, one of them being Joseph Hara, the Director of the Japanese Studies Program.

Hara was born and raised in Japan and came to America about 45 years ago.

“I have been teaching the language and culture at UT for the last 26 years,” Hara said. “[The] study abroad program in Japan that I developed has been continuously active for the last 17 years and we have 26 UT graduates working in Japan today as the result.”

Students in Hara’s classes have always been interested in the cultural aspect of what he teaches, which is why Hara said that he tries to incorporate as many aspects of Japanese culture in the classroom as he can.

“I have Japanese Culture and Civilization courses every semester and they are always full in enrollment. It is an indication of how much students are interested in learning about the culture,” Hara said. “I usually cover not only historical aspects on cultural development such as diet, fashion, festivals, religions and different view point based on philosophical background.”

Hara said there are many non-Asian students who participate in things like CSSA and take the Japanese language courses, whether it’s to gain more knowledge of the culture, or to learn a skill that will increase their career opportunities.

“Students who are taking Japanese language courses as well as culture courses are from all areas of disciplines. I would say a good number of students have some exposure to Japanese anime before showing their interest in the Japanese culture. Also a majority of students seem to think of future job opportunities after graduation,” Hara said.

Hara said that he feels that the Japanese culture is well

represented on campus, due to the fact that the Japanese section of the Foreign Language Department is the second largest behind Spanish.

Hu also feels this way about the Chinese culture, and all cultures in general.

“We can see different culture events in every semester. UT provides them as much as it can, it promotes every culture event, it makes us feel at home,” Hu said.

[From Birmingham to Ferguson](#)

Not much can stay the same over 50 years, and civil rights activism is not immune to change – but what’s the difference between Black Lives Matter and the plain old civil rights movement? Is it really just a hashtag?

University of Toledo history instructor Jason Jordan said it’s not so simple. Jordan said both movements have groups of people with overlapping opinions, but not necessarily identical opinions.

“We tend to think of the civil rights movement as this monolithic thing where everybody is on the same page, everybody has the same goals, they agree on the same tactics, and it really couldn’t be further from the truth,” Jordan said. “Some people go as far as saying there wasn’t one civil rights movement, but [many] civil rights movements ... because there was such a diversity of thought.”

Jordan said activism battles before 1960 were mostly fought in the halls of government. Think of *Brown v. Board of Education*, the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act. However, when

activists at the time lost their faith in the ability to make change from within the system, action-oriented groups started popping up.

“People started to realize that real change in society wasn’t going to come solely from the courtrooms,” Jordan said. “Take for instance all of the student activism that you see across the country today ... a lot of that ... reminds me very much of the types of young-person- or student-led activism that you saw in the mid-to-late [1960s].”

Jordan said he sees similarities between different movements, even across generational lines. He said the surge of young adults in the Black Lives Matter movement reminds him of the 1960s Black Power movement.

“It tends to be younger, college-age students who are kind of cynics, tired of banging their heads against [the] brick wall holding them back,” Jordan said.

One brick wall in the way of progress is the belief that race issues are a thing of the past, which Jordan said can slow things down.

“[Activists] kind of get frustrated with what they see as this slow pace of change in American society, and just kind of a general apathy to issues having to deal with race,” he said. “So there’s a lot of frustration, there’s a lot of anger, there’s a lot of discontent that you can see bubbling to the surface.”

Now, the slow march of progress may be upping the tempo. In the 1960s, activists had to deal without the advantage of tweets or viral videos, a luxury the Black Lives Matter movement enjoys.

David Young, director of the Office of Excellence, which operates an educational program for underprivileged youth, said social media brings advantages to an activist movement.

Raising awareness about social issues and documenting evidence of incidents like police killings is much easier with the help of modern technology.

But every coin has two sides, and Young said social media is no exception. The lightning-fast speed of social media means both successes and mistakes are amplified to an unprecedented level.

“We just always have to remember to be responsible in sharing ... just as exciting as this instant news is, and instant awareness is, there’s a level of responsibility that has to come with that as well,” Young said. “As their tweet goes out, the judgment of the tweet is just as instantaneous.”

UT is no stranger to activism or the Black Lives Matter movement. On Martin Luther King Jr. Day in 2015, a group of 30 protestors interrupted the annual Unity Celebration by approaching the stage and chanting, “Hands up, don’t shoot!” The protest lasted several minutes before the ceremony could continue.

Unity Celebration organizers and attendees were not upset by the demonstration, but more intense demonstrations across the country have received criticism for being too disruptive. Jordan said it’s hard to draw the line between reason and excess, especially when many protestors believe disruption is necessary for change.

Young has his own experiences in student activism to draw from. He was involved in the campaign to ask UT to divest from the South African apartheid in his college years. Looking back on his involvement, he said it’s important to strategize.

“You’ve got to be prepared, you have to do your research, it has to make sense, you have to make sure that you’re well-informed,” Young said. “And sometimes there’s a tendency to move out of emotion rather than real understanding of what the situation is, and what the problem is, and students have to

guard against that.”

Bridging the cultural divide

Thinking about diversity makes you distinguish some very personal and intricate details about yourself. It makes you really look at your identity and realize it isn't just a plain account your experiences and surroundings. Rather, you realize you are bigger than just you; you are a converging point of different cultures and histories. At UT, we have an unusual, but predominant, culture of students that are a product of a complicated combination of cultures. These are the first-generation Americans and the international students.

Being on a university campus you realize that genetically inherited features or socially inherited habits no longer completely embody the entire structure of a person. This is because what we have now have are first-generation Americans who have immigrant parents but habitually Americans, juxtaposed with international students or immigrants who have come to America for higher studies and are merging with the American culture, but who are essentially a product of their homeland.

Student organizations that represent this diversity hold events showcasing unique features of the different cultures, which are so knowledgeable and enriching, and definitely exciting as the SU is adorned galore with fliers advertising some cultural event or the other at UT throughout the year.

I feel a sense of pride and uniqueness when I educate others about the history and ways of my people, the Bangladeshis. On the other hand, I enjoy learning more about the surrounding American ways and inherent American characteristics and

traditions. Keeping these in mind, I've come to realize a very important quality about myself. Having been in the US for almost a decade now, trying to learn and integrate myself with the American culture to better adjust to the new land, I have increasingly become somewhat "American" too. It is a sentiment many internationals say as well.

Starbucks has become my coffee, Walmart my grocery store, pasta the go-to dinner and I have other such American additives integrated into my cultural background, which make me a non-genetic, non-historically and a non-traditionally American. Thus, while I still identify primarily as a Bangladeshi and enjoy educating people about the Bengali way of making "bhaat" (rice) and "daal" (lentil soup), I believe the staple American burger and fries has become an integral part of my being as well.

The cultural events showcasing the unique traditions of particular culture are inclusive, but on a very superficial level. Other than educating others on food and traditional performances distinctive to their particular country, there is very little else these events do. While these events can provide internationals with some sort of nostalgia or feelings of solidarity with their country people, it doesn't do much else. It is important to talk about these events, because they are one of UT's primary ways to showcase diversity on campus. But there is an important part of the UT population who don't obtain the inclusion or identification promised at UT. These are the first-generation Americans.

A huge portion of the first-generation Americans feel very disconnected from their history, simply because their backgrounds are not even identified as a culturally distinct existence. They are a combination of two different cultures, and while you'd think that because of the two cultures to choose from they'd have more space for inclusion, it is exactly the opposite.

The social events that the student organizations, representing different countries, often have little impact on the first-gen Americans. They feel like they aren't able to connect with internationals from their parental birth-country and don't really get to understand the ways and language of the people. UT never holds discussion of issues related to first-generation Americans. Getting that real feeling of solidarity and identification with a non-American culture is difficult. Despite these feelings of isolation, UT does not have system to address these issues.

I have asked first-gen and international students from the same cultures to talk about their feelings about how they feel their cultures are represented at UT, and if they feel a good sense of belonging and inclusion because of their backgrounds. The answers I got were surprising.

All of the first-generation Americans I have talked with for this article have expressed how eagerly they want to learn about their parent's cultures and incorporate it into their lives. A lot of the time I didn't even think it really mattered to first-generation Americans where their parents hailed from; I thought they were not even concerned about identifying as anything other than Americans. However, that was not the case.

Both first-generation Americans and internationals have expressed how high schools often have little diversity and so they rarely got a chance to know about their parent's ancestral heritage. When they came to college, they expected to be properly integrated and understand the values and traditions their ancestors have. They want to know and feel connected to their parents' cultures, since that is also, despite them never being having grown up there, an essential truth of who they are. However, this group or "culture" isn't something that isn't acknowledged, despite the fact that their sentiments are actively being ignored as they are denied their historical and cultural values.

It was surprising to find that it was the international students who felt integrated into the American culture and found people from their own countries to share new experiences and with. On the other hand, the first-gen Americans felt left out of this side of their identity. They often just had their American identities to rely on, and some people felt left out even then, as at first glance, their genetically inherited appearances weren't American.

Meeting at a single event, where all you see are some food and clothing from your parents' country, don't really solve issues of inclusion. The interaction and ability to really identify as an American-Korean, or American-Bangladeshi or American-Indian, aren't addressed. From personal experience, both internationals and the first-generation Americans are left feeling like another American who just learned about a new type of food or new type of dance.

UT needs to address the issues of first-gen Americans. As the administration increases efforts to improve diversity on campus, they need to understand that the correct way to make them feel integrated and at home and at one with the ancestral heritage for their own personal identification, is to actually increase personal interactions between the first-gen and people from that culture. It is the only way to clearly visualize those lines that converge to form your unique racial identity.

The White Student Union

How exactly would you define white heritage?

This is the question Ronald Pheils, the man who is organizing a student group that aims to "celebrate white culture and

heritage” at the University of Toledo, is attempting to answer.

“There is no ‘white heritage.’ There is no one thing we can point to,” Pheils said.

Despite that lack of concrete common heritage, the group is seeking to unite around cultural celebration and defense against accusations of racism.

“We don’t believe any race is superior to any other ... we aren’t all white radicals,” Pheils said.

For now, the group has operated under the name “White Student Union,” a name that harkens back to decades of controversy and racial tension across the U.S.

WSU groups are not new. They have formed on campuses like OSU, Penn State and Michigan State.

In December, a UT White Student Union page appeared on Facebook, sparking controversy. They have since deleted that page, but the group is still organizing and working to form a recognized UT student organization.

According to Pheils, the group wants to form based on the premise that there is not a space for white students to celebrate their culture and heritage. As a matter of free speech, Pheils believes it is important to organize. Pheils also said that since there is space for other minorities to meet and celebrate their culture and identity, there should also be space for white people to do the same.

He shares this opinion with dozens on college campuses across the U.S., as official and unofficial White Student Union groups begin to appear on a dozen other campus across the U.S. Pheils is the unofficial president of the group at UT and was one of the administrators on the UT WSU Facebook page.

“There are white student unions on other campuses.

Unfortunately some of them have gone to the extreme,” Pheils said, emphasizing that it is important to distance themselves from the radicals.

Pheils said many of these groups resort to Facebook organizing because it is easy to remain anonymous via the social media’s “Page” function. The creator of the UT WSU Facebook page used that anonymity. Pheils did not create the group, but joined one created by an anonymous Facebook user going under the pseudonym of Themistocles Pierre.

The reason Pierre said he wishes to remain anonymous is to protect himself from threats of violence.

“Too many people already think they know who I am,” he wrote via Facebook. “I’ve heard so many threats of violence, you wouldn’t believe. If I can even be connected to a friend, or friend of a friend, I might be in danger. And naturally, I don’t want to put myself or others in danger.”

That fear of danger is what Pheils said is part of the reason why there have been problems with WSU’s becoming an official UT student group. They have not turned in an application to become an official group yet, according to Kaye Patten-Wallace, the senior vice president for student affairs.

“If they meet the criteria to become a recognized student organization, they would have the same rights and privileges of any other recognized student organization,” she wrote in an email interview.

According to Willie McKether, special assistant to the president for diversity, any group is able to organize as long as they do not spread hate and intolerance, which is what Pheils said was a concern brought to him from Dean of Students Tamika Mitchell.

Pheils and Pierre both said they do not condone hateful speech, racism or racial violence. They actually want to

distance themselves from organizations that promote racism, like the KKK.

Despite these beliefs, both individuals said they fear being labeled a racist because of the color of their skin. Pheils and Pierre cited the Jan. 24 incident with Rayshawn Watkins as what they perceived to be an example of falsely labeling whites as racist by jumping to conclusions too quickly.

Pheils said he can acknowledge the historical perspective of racism, and he understands that white privilege exists, but he said things are starting to shift.

“It’s almost starting to turn now, now [whites are] starting to be persecuted,” Pheils said. “Now we are starting to be perceived as the bad people if we do have an opinion. I’m the last person that would be a racist, you know. I was honestly one of the biggest Ben Carson supporters out there, I was still a Condoleezza Rice fan.”

The “persecution” Pheils mentions includes being left out of the ongoing conversation on race, and even being targeted by it. This is why Pierre said many white student union groups have begun.

“White Student Unions, and other pro-white activism, is the natural consequence, and logical extension, of identity politics,” Pierre wrote.

Pierre questions the notion that, if other cultures and races are allowed to have pride in their identity, then why is it wrong for whites?

“I don’t want people thinking that pride equals hate,” Pierre wrote. “I don’t hate anyone. In fact, I agree with some of what I’ve heard from Black Lives Matter protesters. We should all have pride in our identity, without hating anyone.”

What Pheils said he does not want is white heritage to be

labeled as automatically racist. "What we don't want is the incident that happened in a fraternity house several months ago to automatically be pointed [sic] as the white guy is the bad guy," Pheils said.

Pheils said that if the student group actually organizes next year will probably go by the name "European Student Union" as an effort to distance themselves from the perception of being hate group.

Regardless of the efforts to organize as a group solely dedicated to European culture and heritage, Lance Price, president of UT's Black Student Union, said he still does not understand the group's claim.

"I fail to see the need in having a 'White Student Union,'" Lance Price wrote in an email interview. "We attend a university where white students are already the majority."

In a speech to the university two weeks ago, President Gaber presented the racial demographic of campus, which showed that whites make up more than 50 percent of the student population.

Price said he would encourage the White Student Union to reach out to other campus cultural organizations to increase dialogue, but "if the 'White Student Union' continues to take the path they are currently on, I doubt we'll be welcoming them with open arms."

Pheils said he would rather work with BSU and the Latino Student Union, rather than fight with them.

"I don't want to create a war with BSU or LSU," he said. "I have great friends and great leaders from the past that have been presidents of those groups, and I have talked to them and they thought it was a great idea, if we stay on the path of an open dialogue."

However, Price said he thinks that forming a WSU "misses the

point” about white privilege, while Pierre said he thinks skin color has less to do with privilege.

“There is a disconnect between theory and practice, if I am supposedly privileged, or not, based merely on skin color,” Pierre wrote. “When someone assumes you are privileged, without knowing your personal circumstances, it shows that they don’t care about you as a person. They don’t want to hear my story. They don’t care. They’ve already made up their mind, without needing to know anything about me.”

Pheils said this is the crucial problem they hope to address, to avoid being labeled and grouped as privileged or as racists. He said that these labels target and hurt overall relations and that they make all white people out to be against other races.

“Really, the biggest thing is we are not anti-anybody, we are not,” Pheils said.