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HARDING
UNIVERSITY

TWO HARDING STUDENTS PUBLISH THEIR FIRST BOOKS

written by Guest September 28, 2023



Written by Camille White // Photo by Macy Cox

This past summer, two Harding students published their first books. Senior Kayln Epperson wrote a children's book, "Hello Hospital," and graduate student Karrisal Neal wrote a poetry book, "The Things I Never Said."

Epperson, a senior child life major and president of the Family and Consumer Sciences Student Association, said she started writing her book in May, and it was published July 29. "Hello Hospital" is an informational book for children. It includes pictures, graphics and descriptions of common medical equipment and personnel they might encounter in the hospital.

"I did a practicum this summer, which is like a mini internship, and there were so many kids that I would talk to and they would be like, 'I just don't know what's going on,'" Epperson said. "The next thing I know, the Lord is having me writing all these thoughts down, and next thing I know I was writing a book about how to explain the hospital to children."

Epperson said she used Canva Pro to design and Amazon to self-publish her book. Additionally, she said that her next book, "Hello Jesus," is already written, and she is currently working on a children's book discussing diabetes.

Neal is a graduate student pursuing a certification in project management and serves as the program coordinator for the Mental Health and Wellness graduate program. Neal said she began writing "The Things I Never Said" in February of 2023. It is the first book in a three-part poetry series. Additionally, she said she is planning to release her first novel in December of 2024.

"The idea for the novel was what really kickstarted everything, and then I had ideas for different things," Neal said. "This wasn't the first poetry book idea I had, it was just the first one that went through every process."

"The Things I Never Said" discusses body image, relationships and reconciliation.

"I literally was trying to look at it from the point of view of like me kind of talking to my 16-year-old self," Neal said.

Assistant professor of English Paulette Bane, who published in 2022 both a poetry collection called "Wading Through Lethe" and an additional 25 poems in the anthology "Wild Muse: Ozarks Nature Poetry," shared her advice on writing.

"If you want to be a writer, you have to write," Bane said. "You have to make time. That includes silencing the inner critic long enough for you to get words on the page. You can invite the critic back at a later stage, but during the writing phase just get to work."

HARDING COUPLE BUILDS HOUSES TOGETHER

written by Guest September 28, 2023



Written by Emma Fields // Photo provided by Kennedy Hix

Current Harding students are not only building houses but a future together. Junior Kennedy Hix and graduate student Jonathan Wall, who met during Chapel two years ago and have since worked on several housing projects together, are newly engaged and looking forward to their shared life ahead.

Kennedy Hix's father owns a company in Lafayette, Tennessee, called "Dale Hix Construction." She and her five siblings worked with their father every summer starting at age 12, and by 18, they were allowed to build their own houses.

Kennedy Hix's brother, sophomore Noah Hix, has built close to 50 houses with his family and has one house that is on the market. He said there are many rewarding aspects of building houses.

"I love that my dad loves it," Noah Hix said. "We'll be at Disney World and he'll still be working because he loves it so much. We love building homes for other people. It makes us happy to be a part of people starting to build a family."

Wall said that Dale Hix is well-known in their community.

"He's working on a subdivision right now and has probably built over a third of the houses in town," Wall said.

Kennedy Hix has three houses in her name but has assisted in the completion of over 60. One of her houses was put on the market last week. When asked about her most rewarding and challenging experiences, she said building her first house was a combination of both. She said the house sits atop a hill and has a wonderful view, but before construction took place, the land was entirely rock and covered in trees.

"It's a wonderful view, but clearing it and putting in a driveway took forever," Kennedy Hix said. "We actually broke a mini-excavator and Bobcat in the process. It was nice to see it finally done and cleared."

Over the summer, Kennedy Hix and Wall worked together on two housing projects. For these projects, the Hix family went through a multiple-step process involving working with real estate agents to find land, applying for loans, having surveyors ensure everything was up to code then finally bringing in teams to build the house from foundation to completion.

Wall said their building team faced several problems over the summer.

"The framing truck was down and the delivery guy couldn't deliver the wood for a week straight," Wall said. "We lifted all of the wood for three houses. We unloaded three houses by hand."

Part of Wall's involvement in the project was clearing out trees on the property. He has his own tree business called "Cut Her Down Tree Service" which he started in Fort Worth, Texas, though he does occasional tree work in Searcy. He said his business helped pay his way through college.

Kennedy Hix and Wall said couples who want to start building houses together should avoid building large houses and instead start on a small scale with small pieces of land. Both noted the impact the house-building process can have on a relationship. Kennedy Hix said couples can learn conflict management from the process. Wall said building a house together can affect a marriage.

"If you can build a house together, you can be married forever," Wall said.

HARDING FOOTBALL HAS BEST START SINCE 2016 AFTER ROAD VICTORY

written by Guest September 28, 2023



Written by Eli Dean // Photo by Morgan Pickering

The Harding football team started the season strong and continues to rise in the Division II rankings. After a 27-16 victory over 20th-ranked Henderson State University (HSU) this past weekend, the Bisons came home ranked 10th in DII. The Bisons now have the sixth-highest-scoring offense. This is the first year since 2016, the best season in program history, that Harding has opened to a 4-0 start.

Head coach Paul Simmons said he is impressed with the start his team has had so far.

“We’ve got a long way to go before we play our best game, but certainly we’re off to a great start,” Simmons said. “It’s a group that has really high expectations. We’ve just got to fight for every inch, stay together and love each other and see what happens.”

Junior defensive lineman Gage Price said he is encouraged by the start but wants to keep himself and his team focused on the games ahead.

“We take things one week at a time,” Price said. “To go 11-0, you must go 1-0. That’s how we can keep it going. Just by finding ways to continue to get better and not let complacency kick in.”

Given HSU’s strong defense against the run this season, the game was going to be a challenge, but Simmons said the uniqueness of how the offense was run helped create more opportunities for success.

“It was certainly a way more difficult game than what we’ve been in, but that’s part of what makes the offense so good,” Simmons said. “It’s extremely different from what anyone else does, and you basically have to change the way your team plays defense if you’re going to have a chance, so the uniqueness is part of what makes it great for us.”

Another aspect of the win came from the defense. The team held HSU to its lowest offensive showing of the season, including making a stop on the one-yard line in the second quarter, which kept the Bison deficit at 3-0.

Senior linebacker Zach Strickland said he hopes the defense will continue to get stronger as the season progresses.

“As a defense, we came into the season with the goal of getting back to our roots and being the number one rush defense in the nation,” Strickland said. “We’ve done a pretty good job of that as a defense so far, but I would love for that goal to come to fruition and continue to move up in the nation.”

Harding’s next game will be a home game against Great American Conference opponent Southwest Oklahoma State University, who have a 0-4 record.

Strickland said he hopes the pattern of success continues for both the team and for himself on defense for the rest of the season.

“We need to continue to create turnovers as a defense, and as an offense continue to manage the clock and take care of the football,” Strickland said. “If we do that as a team, we are going to have a ton of fun this season.”