

| NEWS                                       | SCENE                                       | OPINION                                       | SPORTS                                        |
|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Creighton introduces new parking system 2  | Community comes alive at Skutt Shutdown 4   | Are you cooking or are you actually cooked? 6 | MSOC gathers national recognition at No. 23 7 |
| G.L.O.V.E. usage in Omaha public schools 3 | New Spider-Man movie dominates box office 5 | Modern brain rot and its true origins 6       | VB earns ranked wins in opening weekend 8     |

# \$10.9M grant fuels hearing research

SHELBY SEU  
Assistant News Editor

On Wednesday, Aug. 19, Creighton University’s Dr. Richard J. Bellucci Translational Hearing Center announced that it has been awarded a \$10.9 million grant renewal by the National Institute of Health (NIH) via Creighton News.

“The new grant funds a good chunk of the hearing center ... but it primarily funds our early career faculty that are just starting to build their labs ... So, the bulk of the grant goes to some of them grow their research programs, get data, get papers out and be competitive for their individual grants which then brings more money and research opportunities to Creighton,” said Associate Director of the Bellucci Translational Hearing Center, Allison Coffin, Ph.D.

Coffin also serves as an associate professor in biomedical sciences at the university. According to her, this grant, which is a part of the NIH’s Centers of Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE) program, is structured in three phases. In 2021, the university was awarded with Phase One that funded the initial five years. Aimed at providing funding to federally under-funded research institutions, Creighton was able to jumpstart the expansion of their program through new faculty, technologies and individual research programs pursued by the early career faculty.

“[The center] grew a lot ... This grew from ‘Oh yeah, there’s some cool hearing research going on at Creighton,’ to ‘This is one of the best places in the country to do it’ all in five years,” said Coffin.

Jemma Webber, Ph.D., member of the Bellucci Translational Hearing Center, and an assistant professor in biomedical sciences, says the purchasing of new technology during that time had allowed her to further advance her endeavors in investigating the signals that



PHOTO COURTESY OF UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

Creighton University’s Dr. Richard J. Bellucci Translational Hearing Center continues to advance their research on the causes of hearing loss and methods of prevention and rehabilitation on the biological level, helping improve treatments for patients with hearing loss.

control the development of the inner ear.

“I have personally benefited from the new AXR microscope that was obtained during the first award. This specialized microscope allows us to examine structures at very high resolution, which is particularly important for our work because some of the structures we study in the inner ear are incredibly small,” said Webber via email. “Before we had access to this microscope, we struggled to visualize these structures in enough detail. This new capability has already allowed us to identify a previously unrecognized phenotype in our model that we are really excited to investigate further.”

With this renewal, known as Phase Two, which is aimed at providing continued financial support to the research program through similar methods, Coffins and Litao Tao, Ph.D., an affiliate of the center and an assis-

TURN TO “Grant” PAGE 3

# OPD pulls shock gloves from schools

## ICE adoption raises questions about school use

KORA SMITH  
News Reporter

Electric-shock gloves are soon to be added to Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s (ICE) attire; consequently, the Omaha Police Department (OPD) is removing their use in schools due to questions of morality.

According to AP News, “At last week’s school board meeting, about 30 people spoke out against police using the gloves. Residents and board members alike said they were appalled at the practice. No one spoke in favor of it.”

These electric-shock gloves, more formally known as the G.L.O.V.E. or Generated Low Output Voltage Emitter, have been used twice during the 2025-2026 school year by the OPD. Bellevue police have also used them

twice in schools over the last three and a half years.

According to AP News, in reference to Bellevue schools, “The devices have been an extremely effective tool that sometimes make students cooperate on sight even without shocking a student.”

The technology is used by delivering an electric shock directly to the skin at up to 380 volts; a warning to the victim is supposed to be given before use. Officers are prohibited from using the gloves on the elderly, small children or pregnant women, and are told to avoid the head, neck, chest and groin.

“I think that’s kind of a crazy punishment. I feel it’s kind of cruel. I definitely don’t think they should be allowed on campus, or in middle or high schools,” College of Arts and Sciences freshman Maura Harrington said.

OPD made a request to purchase 40 pairs

of gloves for \$66,000 in May of 2025, specifically for their use in schools. 29 of the 34 school resource officers have been trained to use the gloves and work in Omaha public middle and high schools.

“I definitely don’t think that we should be using them in middle school or high school. They are way too young and might have no idea what’s going on. It’s also just bad for society overall,” College of Nursing freshman Peyton Kline said.

After ICE’s plan to use the G.L.O.V.E. was revealed, Omaha Superintendent Matthew Ray requested to stop use of the G.L.O.V.E. in schools, and Omaha residents agreed in the school board meeting on Aug. 17. However, the Bellevue Police Department and the schools they patrol will still use this technology.

The Guardian reported that a Department

of Homeland Security spokesperson said ICE is “constantly assessing the needs of our officers in the field” to ensure they have the necessary tools and equipment.

According to an Aug. 24 statement from the Department of Homeland Security, ICE has been awarded a \$16.7 million US contract from Compliant Technologies LLC, the company that makes the G.L.O.V.E’s.

“I feel like people who are targeted by ICE are already facing enough in Omaha, and I don’t think punishments like that should be added on top,” Harrington said.

ICE faced opposition for their decision to use the gloves. Some pointed out that ICE cannot be trusted to use them appropriately. However, they will move forward with the deal for 6,000 pairs of gloves along with supporting equipment and services over the next six months.

# CU tests new parking system

LILIAN GARDNER  
News Editor

Creighton University has implemented a new parking system for the 2026-27 academic year, changing how students park on campus and separating parking areas for residential and commuter students.

The changes include new parking lot signage, designated areas for first-year students, updated parking permits and new time restrictions for commuter parking. University officials said the changes are intended to improve parking availability, campus safety and navigation.

Jessica Weaver, the university’s parking technical specialist, said new signage is one of the most noticeable changes to the system.

Rather than relying on the previous lot-numbering system, the new signs identify lots using nearby buildings and landmarks to help drivers determine where they need to park. The signs are also about twice the size of the previous signs and are intended to be easier for drivers to see and understand.

The new system also separates campus parking into residential and commuter areas. Commuter permits are valid only in designated commuter parking areas or approved commuter garages from 6 a.m. to midnight. Overnight parking is not permitted with commuter permits, according to Creighton’s parking information.

“Most academic buildings close at midnight, so they should be leaving anyways,” Weaver said.

Weaver said the separation is intended to

improve daytime parking availability while allowing Public Safety to focus on residential areas where vehicles may remain overnight.

“It’s that safety initiative trying to empty out those lots and also turn them over in the morning so that it’s a fresh clean lot when people come in,” Weaver said. “So far it really has allowed us to open up certain lots each day because they kind of clear out at night.”

The university also used data to help determine which areas should be designated for residential parking. Weaver said Creighton identified areas that were more vulnerable based on statistics in the university’s annual report and issues reported by the Creightonian.

“Those were the areas we wanted to avoid putting vehicles that would sit for long periods of time without being checked,” Weaver said.

For first-year residential students, the changes mean vehicles are restricted to designated parking locations. First-year students living on campus may park only in the 30th Street Garage or the City Garage at 19th Street. They are not eligible to park in main-campus residential garages or surface lots.

“That’s more than 400 vehicles that are no longer competing with regular upperclassmen and commuting students,” Weaver said.

First-year students were placed in the garages in part because they generally use their vehicles less frequently than other students, Weaver said. The garages also provide protection from the weather, while Atlas and the city garage have patrols or coordination with

Public Safety to monitor the areas.

For some first-year students, however, the distance between residential parking and the center of campus has added time to their daily routines.

Brendan Reilly-Suarez, a first-year student in the College of Arts and Sciences who keeps a car on campus, said having a vehicle allows him to travel off campus and get to his job.

“It’s really annoying having to park so far away because I have to wake up like 20 minutes earlier than I would because I have to do a 15-minute walk to my car before I can even start driving,” Reilly-Suarez said.

Reilly-Suarez said he understands why the university has separated residential and commuter parking, even though he finds the distance inconvenient.

Although the garages are farther from the center of campus, Weaver said the arrangement is intended to reduce congestion and encourage first-year students to use other forms of transportation, including the Jay-Pass program. JayPass allows Creighton students to ride the Metro bus system at no cost with their Creighton ID.

The university also added approximately 35 parking spaces through a lease at Physicians Mutual. Weaver said the lot provides students with a secured parking area and a guaranteed space.

The new parking system also eliminates Health Sciences and perimeter permits. According to Creighton’s parking information, commuters are now treated the same regardless of which school they attend.

Steven Nguyen, president of the College

of Arts and Sciences Student Senate, said the new commuter classification does not account for differences among health sciences, undergraduate and professional students, whose schedules and campus needs can vary.

Students can choose between annual permits and semester-only permits. Monthly and weekly printable permits are no longer offered. Heider residents also have an additional residential surface parking option at the secured Physicians Mutual lot. The hours for weekend-only permits have also changed. Weaver said weekend-only permits are valid from 4 p.m. to midnight on weekdays and from 6 a.m. to midnight on weekends. Previously, the permits were valid for longer periods.

“They used to be good the whole time,” Weaver said. “That is no longer the case.”

Naomi Kurtz, a sophomore in the College of Arts and Sciences who commutes to Creighton, said the drive to campus is short, but finding a parking space can significantly increase her commute.

“I only live 10 minutes away, but I have to spend a large amount of time searching for an open spot,” Kurtz said, “and even then, I am still not guaranteed a spot.”

Kurtz said she leaves at least 45 minutes early if she wants to find a parking space relatively close to campus. Kurtz said the cost of her commuter parking permit has also contributed to her frustration.

“I spent \$450 on a parking pass that is basically useless,” Kurtz said.

Nguyen also said the changes have reduced

**TURN TO “Campus” PAGE 3**



## Weekly Campus Safety Report

This is a selection of incidents chosen by the Editor in Chief and is not a comprehensive weekly report. The full report is compiled in the Daily Crime Log which anyone can access in the Public Safety office located at 2222 Burt St.

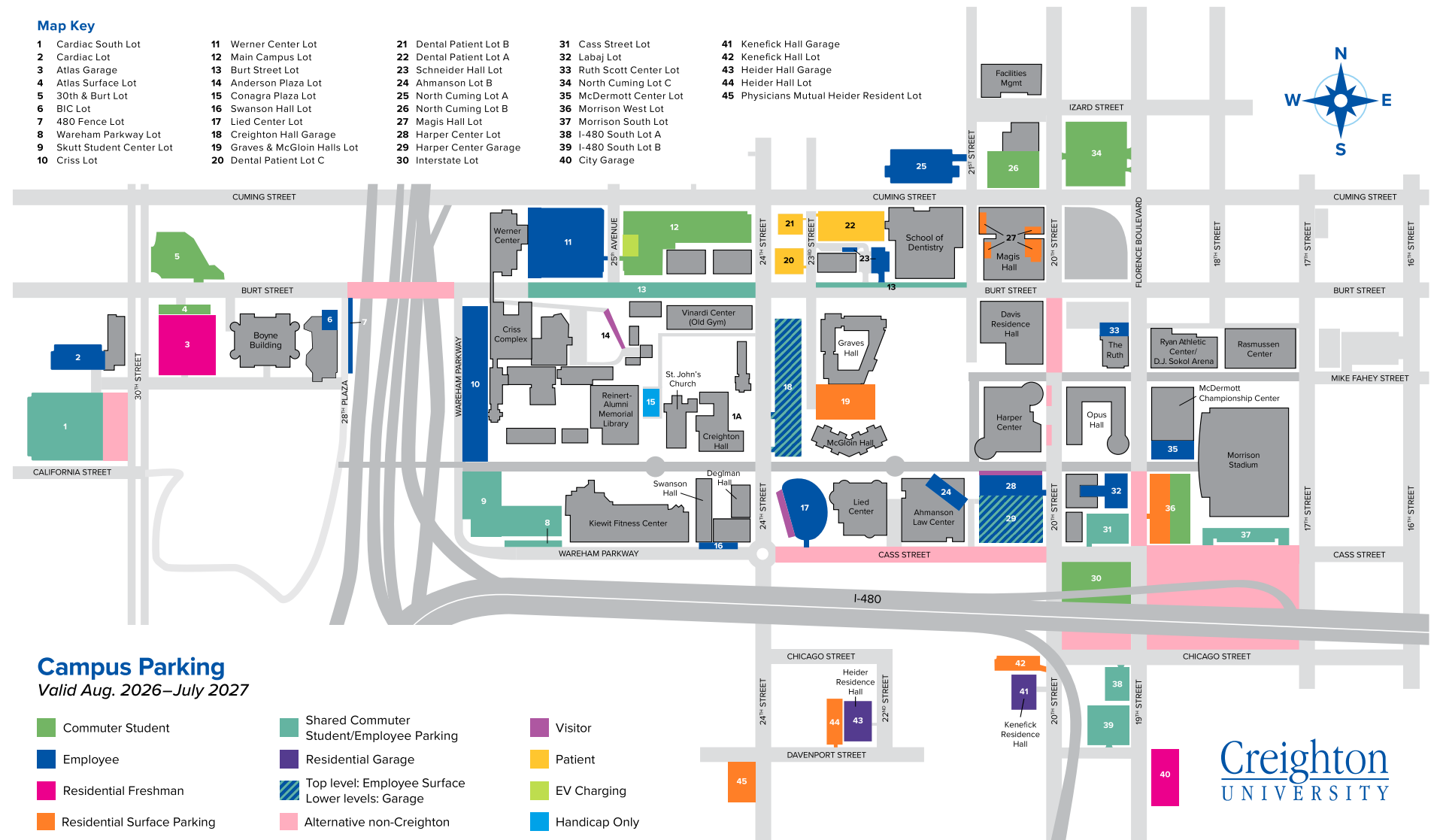
**1** August 8 - 12:55 a.m.  
A Facilities Management employee reported that a non-affiliate gained access to 2 Sodexo vehicles while they were parked at the Harper Dock.

**2** August 18 - 4:31 p.m.  
A student reported the theft of his bicycle’s wheels while it was secured to a picnic table on the west side of the Dental School.

**3** August 20 - 4:58 p.m.  
Public Safety received a call about a student’s tire being stolen from his vehicle while parked just north of 17th and Burt St. A report was made with OPD.

**4** August 23 - 2:33 a.m.  
Public Safety responded to McGloin for multiple intoxicated students. 23 students were identified, and one student was transported to CHI-CUMC. Entry into the TRACC Program was made.

# Campus reshaped by parking system



## Continued from Page 2

parking availability for faculty and staff, shifting the burden of limited parking rather than addressing the underlying shortage.

“Senior leadership is the one that makes all of the policy decisions,” Weaver said. “So, Deans levels are brought in, VP levels, then ultimately they’re the ones that make the decision. We give input.”

The university has also identified parking areas that are sitting empty, although some

are farther from the center of campus. Weaver encouraged students and employees to plan ahead and allow additional time to find parking.

“If you have a 10:00 [a.m.] class, maybe come and study before class,” Weaver said, suggesting students arrive early to avoid peak parking congestion.

“There’s space. You just might have to go a little further,” Weaver said.

Nguyen said the new system also places more responsibility on the Juttie, which he

described as historically unreliable and understaffed, in hopes that less cars will come to campus.

Creighton is also exploring technology that could help students, employees and visitors locate available parking spaces. Weaver said she is working with Information Technology on a potential parking guidance system that could eventually allow users to find open parking spaces through an app.

The project is still in its early stages, and the university has not determined which

technology or program it will use.

Nguyen said the university should use objective data and direct student feedback to evaluate whether the new parking system is improving parking on campus. The College of Arts and Sciences Student Senate works with the Creighton Student Union and university administration to advocate for changes.

# Funding helps Creighton hearing center

## Continued from Page 1

tant professor in the Department of Biomedical Studies, emphasized the importance of its funding toward faculty salaries. Tao, when he initially joined the center in September 2021, gave credit to the NIH COBRE grant for allowing him the ability to conduct his hearing research at Creighton.

“I would say without that COBRE, I [wouldn’t have] been able to join Creighton, because this COBRE grant allows the center to make new recruitments. So, we can recruit new investigators like me five years ago, and now we are going to recruit more new young investigators. So, I would say without it, [I’d] probably [be] somewhere else.”

Especially when it comes to collaboration, Tao also stated that the consistent recruitment of new faculty has helped researchers gain access to expertise across various fields.

“With the center grants [and] with the COBRE grants, we are able to have a collection of expertise and make our life much easier. So, instead of shooting [an] email to someone [or] scheduling a meeting, I can just knock on someone’s office door and say, “Hey, I’ve [got] a question for you. Can you help me with that?”

As for Coffin, she also has found herself benefiting from the expansion of faculty as, she stated, that the flow of ideas within the center has extended far beyond the lab setting

as well.

“I was heating up my lunch earlier today talking to Dr. Tao’s colleague ... [and] we had a five-minute conversation where he was helping me think through how to do it better because he’s an expert in this technique. You don’t find that a lot of places and so that’s really what drew me here and, I think, what drew so many of us, is the ability to work with each other and bounce ideas off each other and collaborate in a way that’s just not possible in the hearing world and in most other places.”

In addition to funding new faculty members, the grant also contributes to the salaries of graduate and undergraduate students who assist alongside researchers. Though required for graduate studies, according to Coffin, Tao and Webber, their students’ presence has been proven to be invaluable both in the laboratory and the center as a whole.

“My graduate students are absolute rock stars. They have really thrown themselves into this work and are the driving force behind our projects. They are enthusiastic, eager to learn, and always willing to help one another. They have also taken on responsibility for mentoring our undergraduate students, and it has been incredibly rewarding to watch them develop not only as scientists, but also as mentors and leaders,” Webber said via email. “Our undergraduate students are already developing into great scientists themselves. They



come into the lab with positive attitudes, are eager to learn and are willing to tackle even the most tedious experiments that are part of doing research. I have seen so much growth in them ... I am incredibly proud of the team we are building. Their enthusiasm and willingness to support one another make the lab a really enjoyable place to work, and ultimately, they are the people who make this research possible.”

Creighton University’s hearing center receives \$10.9 million NIH Phase Two renewal grant.

PHOTO COURTESY OF UCOMM

# Skutt Shutdown ignites campus



JONAH LAGRANGE /THE CREIGHTONIAN

Creighton University's Skutt Student Center is transformed into a brightly-decorated bustling atmosphere, where students are invited to discover new and exciting extracurricular opportunities.

## BROOKE VANDERWAL Assistant Scene Editor

There is a giant neon green sign by the fountain. Multicolored tulle, streamers and balloons adorn every inch of the Skutt Student Center and the Kiewit Fitness Center (KFC). One can hear blasting music and see the cheerful crowd of Bluejays on the mall from a mile away.

Thursday, Aug. 27, Skutt Shutdown took over campus, and the vibe was palpable. Skutt Shutdown is one of Creighton's largest student involvement events, bringing together students from every class and every degree program. Students can learn about ways to get involved on campus while enjoying the free activities, collecting swag and hanging out with friends.

Freshman Keahi Lum Kee from the Heider College of Business said that he was excited to try out for the club quadball team. He captured the culture of Skutt Shutdown perfectly, saying, "Everyone is so inviting."

This event is a fantastic way for the freshmen new Jays to explore different clubs and organizations that they can join. From major and degree-specific programs to pre-professional organizations, clubs and intramural sports, Creighton's involvement opportunities are endless.

Evelyn Thornburg, a freshman from the College of Arts and Sciences, said that at Skutt Shutdown, "there's really anything and everything that you could possibly ever want to do."

It just brings such a great community into Creighton, especially as a freshman. I think that's just so great to have those opportunities."

She is a member of the new Premiere Club Softball team and is excited to check out Campus Ministry and the church choir.

Skutt Shutdown is not only a place for freshmen to learn about campus opportunities, but also a chance for upperclassmen to share their passions with new students.

The women's Premiere Club Softball team

is new to Creighton this year, but there are already mentors and upperclassmen lined up to welcome new recruits.

Sami Schonrock, a sophomore from the College of Arts and Sciences and a life-long softball lover, says, "I'm just excited to grow a bigger community. I was a captain on my high school basketball team, and my favorite thing was making sure everyone felt welcome and mentoring people, making them better, mentally and athletically in the sport."

One of the main goals of Skutt Shutdown is to build and strengthen Creighton students' sense of community and of belonging. This event is intent on finding every Jay places on campus that feel like home.

Harvest Pak, senior in the College of Arts and Sciences, is the president of the Hawaii student organization, Hui 'O Hawai'i, and she shares this commitment to building a positive, supportive community. She explained, "my favorite part about tabling for Hui 'O Hawai'i is definitely the energy. I feel

like my team and all the students really bring great energy and are always really excited ... I never feel tired at this event. I love my team. I love my club members. They're all just very positive."

Sophomore from the College of Arts and Sciences, Ella Junck, said, "My favorite part about being an NSO leader at Skutt Shutdown is seeing all my RSP students come in and get so excited about seeing all these new clubs and hanging out with their new friends in RSP and getting to know people and seeing what they're passionate about here and just being fearless and signing up for anything."

Whether it is seeing your RSP freshmen get amped up for their first year at Creighton, signing up for something unexpected, or tabling for your club or organization, Skutt Shutdown is always filled with lots of enthusiasm and great opportunities to start your semester off right.

# Spider-Man: a brand new hero?

CHARLEY HECHTL  
Advertising Manager

Since the Marvel Cinematic Universe’s Spider-Man sub-franchise premiered in 2017, no film has taken the nation’s theaters by storm quite like this one. Released on July 31, 2026, the highly anticipated “Spider-Man: Brand New Day” has shattered numerous major box-office records, pulling in over \$360 million domestically during its opening weekend and surpassing “Avengers: Endgame’s” seven-year-old record, according to Deadline.

The film is the fourth in the series, featuring Tom Holland as Peter Parker, and the first since the 2021 release of “No Way Home,” where we last saw Parker buying a coffee from his girlfriend, Mary Jane Watson (Zendaya), who no longer remembers him after Doctor Strange’s reality-altering spell erased the world’s memory of his existence.

“Brand New Day” opens on a montage of Parker, now a full-time vigilante partnered

with NYPD Detective Jean DeWolff, fighting crime in a city that has forgotten he ever existed. Meanwhile, he quietly watches from afar as his former best friend, Ned Leeds (Jacob Batalon), attends MIT, seemingly living out the college experience the two had always imagined sharing together.

As his powers begin to evolve beyond his control, Parker joins forces with Frank Castle, the Punisher, to uncover a growing threat that the shady government agency, the Department of Damage Control, is racing to contain. He even reaches out to his old friend, Bruce Banner (Mark Ruffalo) — now a college physics professor — hoping the former Hulk can help him understand the

changes taking place in his own body.

The plot thickens when the mysterious threat is revealed to be none other than Jean Grey, the hooded, telepathic X-Men character, played by “Stranger Things” star Sadie Sink. Initially driven by fury and despair, she ultimately unveils a devastating connection to Parker himself: profound loss — she has lost her sister, just like he has lost Aunt May. Sink’s performance adds a new dimension to the exploration of finding an unforeseen connection amidst solitude.

This theme of isolation and connection was intentional, according to director Destin Daniel Cretton. In an interview on NPR’s “Fresh Air,” Cretton told co-host Tonya Mosley that the film explores the significance of family and community, specifically focusing on what happens to a person severed from their support system. Personally relating to Parker’s isolation and drawing on his own experience, he states that “staying connected to the people who really know me” is the most important aspect of his life.

This can be seen throughout the entire movie: Parker is constantly thinking about his old life, checking in on his old friends, how things used to be with the Avengers, and even how things used to be with his Aunt May. His mental battle is a driving force in his identity, mental, and even physical changes throughout the movie, and adds to the somewhat darker themes in this movie, setting this movie clearly apart from the traditional

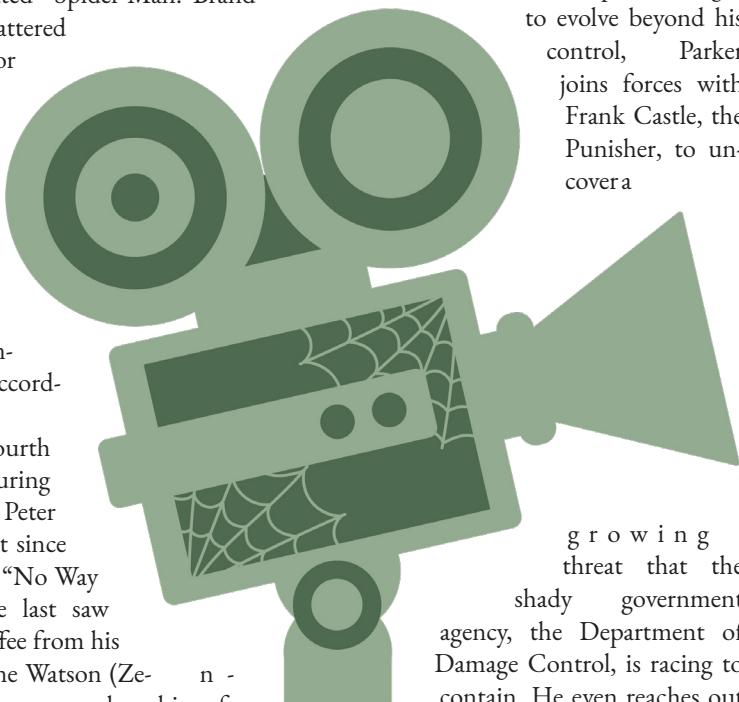
light-hearted Spider-Man that most people know and love.

The film closes with one final message: you cannot do this alone. Parker crosses paths with Ned at a bodega, where the pair instinctively perform their iconic secret handshake (as seen in past movies) despite Ned having no conscious memory of their friendship. This small moment leaves the audience with a big question: what comes next?

The suspense around this question doesn’t end at the end of the movie either. For die-hard Marvel fans, you know better than to leave as soon as the credits roll. If you didn’t stay for the end-credits scene, it’s worth the rewatch.

Additionally, if you have a knack for movie soundtracks, this film is full of songs that perfectly go with the themes you’re watching. With songs from Chaka Khan to Tame Impala to Bad Bunny, you’re bound to be both entranced by the visuals of the film and the music that goes alongside them.

If you are looking for an action-filled film that combines heartfelt sentiment with genuine emotional depth, all while delivering just the right amount of humor, then “Spider-Man: Brand New Day” is your next watch.



# NEW CAMPUS RESOURCE HELPS YOU NAVIGATE LIFE

Maybe you're ...

- Managing financial or wellness concerns
- Adjusting to college life
- Navigating a difficult situation
- Or something else

...let's figure it out together.

SUPPORT STARTS AT CURA SERVICES

VISIT:

Kiewit Fitness Center 225

EMAIL:

CuraServices@creighton.edu

to request an appointment

CALL:

402-280-3600

SUBMIT:

A referral for yourself or another student

Creighton UNIVERSITY

Cura Services

## Be careful what you meme

AINSLEY SMITH  
Assistant Opinion Editor

Here is a collection of new suffixes I've picked up on college campuses in the past year: "-maxxing," "-pilled," the duplicitous "-oid" (usually in reference to the male or female gender) and "-slop," which seems to be used more flexibly as both a suffix and an independent noun. To most people, these terms are simply the latest products of Gen-Z slang culture, a lingering trend before the next form of "brainrot speak" overruns the linguistic zeitgeist.

However, what looks invented to older generations has almost always been lifted and repurposed from different cultural dialects. Phrases like "cap," "finna" and "woke" originated in African American Vernacular English (AAVE) and were later labeled as "internet slang" by the wider public, despite the fact that Black Americans had been using these terms long before they were appropriated by white audiences and stripped of their original meanings.

Similarly, the linguistic history of words like "looksmaxxing" and "mog" can be traced to dialects created on internet forums like 4chan, famous for its contribution to the modern cultural conception of internet memes, and more controversially, its reputation as a breeding ground for radical cultures like the manosphere. Communities founded in these back alleys of the internet are now commonly cited as the specific origin point for the incel and looksmaxxing terminology we associate with quasi-mainstream influencers like Andrew Tate, Clavicular and... the ASU Frat Leader. I'm not sure he's still relevant.

While the usage of certain slang does not necessarily entail endorsement of the culture or ideology from which it stems (see the previous paragraph about the divorcement of AAVE dialect from its history in American linguistics), I believe the popularization of these terms reflects a subliminal acceptance of a misogynist, harmful culture that continues to invade the minds of young people.

The prevalence of short-form video content algorithms through which we obtain and distribute these terms encourages us to remove the words from their context, but language always carries baggage. Clavicular, who would have been considered a fringe member of the incel movement only two years ago, is now touring colleges across America. My younger brothers, just entering high school, are familiar with and reference disparaging terms like "foid" while in conversation with their peers.

We may have a while yet before the incel community achieves genuine mainstream acceptance, but the prevalence of their lingo among youth culture has certainly accelerated their charge toward the Overton Window. While the language you use on a day-to-day basis may seem like irrelevant products of your online or in person socialization, it's important to understand that all slang, however stupid, can give a platform to causes of any kind and origin. All the words we exchange carry a legacy. We should be careful about the ones we popularize.

# Stop trying to be cool

**We spend so much time worrying about how others perceive us that we forget some of life's best moments come from letting our guard down.**

CECE SLADOVNIK  
Opinion Editor

Over the summer, I got pretty into karaoke. I would go with my brother and our friends, choosing songs with the same focus and strategy I imagine is present in a naval war room, hyping each other up as we belted and moved. I am by no means a good singer, and I often forgot the words, but those nights were by far some of the highlights of my summer. As I started this semester, I wanted to figure out a way to bring the same electricity that was present on those karaoke nights to my

final year here at Creighton. As I reflected, I realized that these moments, and many more of my favorite college memories, came from deliberately choosing to do something a little embarrassing.

With the constant prospect of being recorded and having our behavior saved, sent or posted, our generation is more averse than ever to doing anything potentially embarrassing, unfortunately including the things that make college, and our lives, the most fulfilling. We won't dance, we won't sing, we won't be the first to reach out; even walking down the mall with an umbrella is embarrassing in our eyes. By avoiding any chance of social shame, we are denying ourselves opportunities for growth, connection and fun.

The coolest, most confident person you know was not born that way. People gain their swag by facing embarrassment and doing something anyways. Your favorite artist at one point had to say "screw it" and sing their songs in front of people. Your favorite actor had to embarrass themselves in auditions until they were good enough to make it to the screen. That professor you look up to once had to defend the thesis they worked on for years in order earn their Ph.D. You won't gain anything from standing in

the corner and doing nothing. You're going to have to risk making a fool of yourself sometimes.

Studies show that the physical signs of shame, such as blushing or stammering, make people like and trust someone more. Being able to let your guard down and be more human in front of someone will bond you more than staying cool would. I can't tell you how many friends I've made on campus just because I did something silly or stupid in front of them. Would you rather have friends who are focused on their image and avoiding discomfort, or do you want to be around people who live their lives unrestricted, taking every chance to have fun?

So, as we start the year, I encourage you to embrace the embarrassment. Sing that song you know by heart in front of everyone. Talk to your class crush. Wear that funky outfit with pride. As Austin Butler said, "Embarrassment is an under-explored emotion. Go make a fool of yourself. Just go for it. Feel the cringe, feel the fear ... because everything you want is on the other side of that."

# Your microwave misses you

CLARA JOHNSON  
Opinion Writer

As we restart the school year and no longer have the easy option of homecooked meals made by mom and dad, it's time to reevaluate everything we know about feeding ourselves.

Is it worth it to wake up and make yourself eggs before class? How many days and nights in a row are you willing to eat ground beef and rice? Should you skip the stress and order food instead?

For the students that aren't on a meal plan this year, and even for a few that are, these questions probably sound familiar.

Part of college is learning how to live independently, and that comes with the task of navigating a kitchen, buying groceries and reading recipes. As someone who grew up learning how to cook and is very comfortable in a kitchen, I've spent the past few weeks helping my friends navigate the inevitable "what's for dinner?" question.

While most of us are capable of boiling water for noodles, making toast without burning it and heating up takeout, sometimes variety is needed.

And here's the truth: it's way easier to cook than you'd think.

TikTok, Instagram and good old-fashioned Google search can actually help inspire shopping lists and meal-prep ideas. It's not hard to search for a grocery list. You can even specify "no reheating needed" and have lunch anywhere on campus. Trader Joe's is an excellent example of a store that provides easy short-cuts to meals that don't require as much prep work, just a little bit of creativity.

There's an old saying, "if you can read, you can cook." A recipe is just a set of instructions. But these days it's even easier than reading.

Creators on social media have seen the need for instructional cooking content and responded with fun recipe videos, easy one-pan dinners and ways to reuse your leftovers

that save you from food boredom. It's as easy as picking up a new sauce at the store or adding a different spice than usual; and honestly, it'll be a more satisfying meal if you are proud of making it.

Of course, it's important to make sure your chicken is cooked all the way through, and that you know how to turn the oven off before you start making cookies, but part of learning is trial and error. After enough practice, you might even make something good enough to share.

As the school year progresses, start buying groceries with a plan in mind and avoid takeout and easy DoorDash alternatives. You'll find that it's rather fun to cook with your roommates and there's a definite sense of satisfaction when you nail that cool recipe. Anyone can cook, it's just a matter of taking the initiative and doing it.

# What's wrong with being loud?

MIA CASTRO  
Opinion Writer

Lately, I've been getting comments that I'm not used to receiving. Since I've come to college, I've been hearing more and more that I'm a "loud person."

I never know how to respond to this, because I've rarely ever been described that way. I wouldn't argue that I'm a quiet individual by any means, but enough to be loud? I project my voice, and laughing is one of my favorite things to do, but I don't think that makes me loud. Even if this were the case, I find it hard to wrap my head around why it's such a negative thing.

What's wrong with people speaking passionately or just at a higher volume?

What's so wrong with expressing emotion visibly enough for people to feel it too? For someone to share with you the intense emotions they're experiencing?

If you ask me, one of the most gratifying feelings in the world is sensing another person warm up to you enough to speak comfortably in their own nature and inflection. For another individual to be able to cry, yell, and belly laugh without fearing being judged or misunderstood.

I'm not proposing we all accept someone screaming in your face or being a public distraction, but I think the fact that someone feels comfortable enough to show extreme excitement, happiness, gratitude or whatever emotion they are expressing is something to be valued and celebrated, rather than subtly

shamed. For example, asking someone to "calm down" when they're happy has to be one of the worst things you can do as a friend or decent human. In my personal experience, when someone tells me a joke is "not that funny" or that I "need to relax," it doesn't do anything other than make me want to stop interacting with them as my genuine, true self.

We all share a collective responsibility to look after one another. Being more mindful of the way you react to others' vulnerability is a significant first step to doing that.

# Hot start sends Jays to No. 23

**ALLY SEEVERS**  
Editor in Chief

For the first time in more than three years, Creighton men's soccer is back in the national rankings.

The Bluejays checked in at No. 23 in Tuesday's United Soccer Coaches poll, marking the program's first national ranking since Aug. 8, 2023. The recognition comes after a 3-0-1 start to the 2026 season, including a nine-goal weekend with wins over San Francisco and Tulsa.

Creighton's latest two victories came in very different ways, however. Against San Francisco on Aug. 27, the Bluejays had to fight for its 4-2 victory. Four days later at Tulsa, Creighton controlled the match from start to finish in a 5-0 shutout.

"We knew we were going to get a fiery bunch, a very good soccer playing team, very physical, defending on the front foot, committed to trying to win the ball back in a hurry to get forward," head coach Johnny Torres said following the match against San Francisco. "I'm proud of our guys for being calm under pressure, for continuing to be brave under adversity."

The Bluejays wasted little time getting on the board against San Francisco, as senior midfielder Matthew Reed found the back of the net for the first time this season a minute and 48 seconds into the match. The goal came after junior defender Brian Edelman won the ball and carried it forward before sending a cross toward the back post.

"I feel like it was pretty hectic the first minute," Reed said, "and then Brian stepped and won the ball, kept his run going, crossed it, and luckily got through for a tap."

San Francisco answered in the 26th minute, taking control of possession for much of the remaining time before the match appeared to swing back Creighton's way just before halftime when sophomore midfielder Aaron Deppe lofted a ball past the San Francisco goalkeeper. The goal was ruled however to cross the line after time expired. There was no review.

Despite the confusion heading into the locker room, Creighton did not let it affect them, retaking the lead just 30 seconds into the second half. Freshman forward Jordan Igwenma found sophomore forward Ayden Kokoszka inside the box, who finished to put the Bluejays ahead 2-1.

San Francisco tied the match again in the 57th minute, but the turning point came

three minutes later when San Francisco's David Raphael received his second yellow card of the match, leaving the Dons with 10 players for the remainder of the contest.

Creighton took advantage of the situation, applying continuous pressure on San Francisco's defense and creating chances before finally breaking through in the 80th minute. Junior midfielder Brady Bragg and freshman midfielder Carter Derksen combined to find Igwenma, who put the Bluejays back in front. Junior Angel Lopez added an insurance goal in the 85th minute to seal the 4-2 victory and cap an undefeated three-game start at Morrison Stadium.

"It's in our DNA to make sure that we answer the call," Torres said. "I wouldn't say it was defeating that they were able to turn around and make it two in quick succession. That is the beauty of our sport, right? You get to decide if you're going to answer that call or not, and we did that two times, so really proud of the guys being able to protect their home."

Four days later, Creighton traveled to Tulsa for its first true road test of the season. If Thursday's win showed the Bluejays' ability to withstand adversity, Monday's performance showed what the team can look like when everything clicks.

From the opening whistle, Creighton was in control. Reed scored in the eighth minute for the second consecutive match before senior forward Edward Morales doubled the lead just five minutes later. It was a goal nearly two years in the making for Morales, and fittingly, it came against the same opponent he last scored against.

Fifth-year transfer Allan Juarez added a third goal in the 43rd minute, giving the Bluejays a 3-0 lead heading into halftime.

Creighton continued its control in the second half, with Reed converting a penalty kick in the 76th minute for his second goal of the night. Freshman forward Carter Tavares capped the scoring in the 86th minute, recording his third goal in his first four collegiate matches while adding two assists.

For Reed, the road victory was another important step for a team that struggled to find wins away from Morrison Stadium a season ago.

"We talked about before the game that last year it took us until the end of September to get our first road win," Reed said. "Starting in late August with our first, it adds a little confidence to the group."

That confidence has now carried Creigh-



ALLY SEEVERS/THE CREIGHTONIAN

**Creighton has found the back of the net 16 times through their first four matches, which is tied for first in the nation with Michigan State. The Jays sit at 3-0-1 going into Socctoberfest.**

ton back into the national conversation. The Bluejays have scored 16 goals through their first four matches, tied for the most in the nation with Michigan State, with six different players recording multiple goals. Creighton's 3-0-1 record includes a 6-2 win over Florida International, a 1-1 draw against Drake and the two victories over San Francisco and Tulsa.

After opening the season unranked, the Bluejays now sit at No. 23 nationally, tied with Princeton.

With a young roster already making an impact, Reed said the depth of the group has helped the team find its rhythm early.

"It lifts a lot of weight off our shoulders," Reed said. "When we have a group of young guys that can come in and still impact, as well as the starting group, it makes our job so much easier."

Now, the Bluejays return home looking to keep the momentum going. Creighton hosts Gonzaga at 7:45 p.m. tonight at Morrison Stadium as part of the 14th annual Socctoberfest celebration. The match also marks the opening of the Jesuit Cup Invitational, with Creighton, Gonzaga, Loyola and Santa Clara competing throughout the weekend and Monday. The Bluejays will face Santa Clara at 5:30 p.m. Monday to close the invitational.

## History at Morrison for Creighton

**LAUREN GAEDING**  
Sports Reporter

Creighton women's soccer found its footing at Morrison Stadium this weekend, posting consecutive 1-0 victories over Kansas City and Missouri. The back-to-back wins gave the Jays their 200th all-time home victory, extended their shutout streak to three games and handed Creighton its first win over an SEC opponent since 1997.

The weekend began Thursday, Aug. 27, when the Jays welcomed Kansas City to Morrison Stadium for their first home match of the season.

Ending the match with 13 shots, five corner kicks, and one save, the Jays took the win with a 1-0 score. Highlighting the match was junior midfielder Olivia Duray. Her unassisted goal was the only one of the day, awarded within the first 30 minutes of the game.

"This game was probably for the attackers today ... We haven't had a lot of production up front so we're trying to establish a better forefront," Duray said.

The Jays also showed increased connec-

tivity following their two previous losses to Colorado College and Air Force and their tie with Iowa State. Head coach Jimmy Walker said the "compactness" of their lines has slowly closed in from these first few games, therefore involving all the midfielders, forwards and defense in the shutout win.

Starting the game with four sophomores and a pair of freshmen, Duray also explained the growth in communication and comfortability throughout the field.

"I think a lot of the younger [players] are starting to understand that they have to step up," she said. "The communication across all lines has been a lot better ... we're working on bonding, we're working on going out of your comfort zone to reach out to people that you don't normally, so that on the field it comes together."

Duray went on to explain the difficulty of "stepping into that role at such a young age," but emphasized that it all starts with building confidence.

Despite the clean sheet, Walker explained that it still was not necessarily his idea of their best performance. He wanted to see some

more fire out of the offense.

"We know the best version of our forwards, that would have been three-nothing tonight, but it wasn't a perfect day for us," Walker said. "We regroup... and we will get it right. We're going to catch a day where everything goes in."

The Jays got another opportunity to do just that Sunday, defeating Missouri 1-0 and earning their third-consecutive shutout and first win over an SEC opponent since 1997.

Sophomore Sarah Hyde scored the lone goal of the match in the 32nd minute, marking the first goal of her career. Hyde intercepted a pass along Missouri's back line before racing upfield and beating the Tigers' goalkeeper in a one-on-one opportunity.

"We talked to the team about making something happen," Walker said. "The last couple of games, we've had a lot of chances and not scored. We had a couple of really good opportunities today and Sarah made something happen for us top. That's what we've talked about. Make a play. Get on the end of it. Make the run behind. Be dangerous. Be a forward no one wants to go up against,

and we did it today. [I am] just so proud of the group, so proud of the effort. Unbelievable result."

While Missouri controlled possession and outshot the Jays 21-7, Creighton's defense held firm through the final whistle. Goalkeepers Morgan Paley and Kailey Hall combined for seven saves, with Paley recording three in the first half and Hall adding four in the second. The shutout also extended the Jays' scoreless streak to more than 317 minutes.

"It was just a great effort all around on the field," Hyde said. "We all worked as hard as we could for one another. We knew we just had to go and our backline killed it today, just getting the ball up to the forwards... it was just overall team effort, and we all worked our butts off."

The win brings Creighton to 2-2-1 on the season after opening the year with losses to Colorado College and Air Force, a scoreless draw against Iowa State and consecutive 1-0 victories at Morrison Stadium.

The Jays return to Morrison Stadium this evening at 5 p.m. to host Northern Colorado in the 14th annual Socctoberfest match.



ALLY SEEVERS/THE CREIGHTONIAN

**Seniors Eloise Brandewie and Jaya Johnson celebrate a block kill in the fifth set against No. 9 Purdue. The Bluejays went on to beat the Boilermakers 15-11 in this set to win the match.**

DAVID LUJAN  
Sports Reporter

Creighton volleyball commenced its season in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, with a demanding three-match slate against ranked Big Ten opponents Purdue, Minnesota and USC.

The invitational kicked off against No. 9 Purdue with a highly competitive five-set thriller, resulting in a Bluejay victory, 19-25, 25-22, 25-23, 11-25, 15-11.

The opening set began with Creighton controlling the court, maintaining a lead through the first 29 points before the Boilermakers went on an 8-1 run to take a 21-16 advantage and eventually seal the set.

From there, the Bluejays responded in a neck-and-neck second set that included four lead changes and was fueled by junior Wisconsin transfer and outside hitter Trinity Shadd-Ceres’ dominant serving. Down 16-14, Shadd-Ceres delivered two aces in her Creighton debut as part of a 7-1 run that gave the Jays a significant advantage. Purdue cut the lead to one at 23-22, but Creighton fended off the late push with consecutive kills from sophomore outsider hitter Abbey

Hayes and senior opposite Jaya Johnson to conclude the set.

The third set opened with a statement from the Boilermakers. Up 11-6, Purdue attempted to fend off a Creighton comeback, but the Bluejays gradually closed the gap, tying the set at 17-17, 20-20 and 21-21 before taking a late 22-21 lead.

“We never gave up. We never stopped fighting,” senior defensive specialist Saige Dammrow said.

That tenacity showed as the Bluejays concluded the set on a 5-2 run, giving Creighton the match advantage.

In the fourth set, Purdue used an early 9-0 run to build a 13-3 lead. Unlike the previous set, the Jays were unable to orchestrate a comeback as errors built up, allowing the Boilermakers to claim the fourth set, 25-11.

However, despite the challenging fourth set, second-year head coach Brian Rosen reminded his team that “no matter how ugly [the set] is, we’re tied again at zero.”

Creighton responded immediately, led by junior middle blocker Nora Wurtz, whose serving guided the team to an 8-2 opening run. Despite Purdue’s best attempt to mount a comeback, the Bluejays finished off the

# Jays make noise in Sioux Falls

Boilermakers and secured a top-10 victory to open the season.

Following the victory, the Bluejays were swept by No. 14 Minnesota, 18-25, 23-25, 12-25. After the loss, Rosen emphasized the need for Creighton to “get cleaner offensively” after the team was outscored by 15 points.

Despite a strong 4-0 start in the first set, the Gophers quickly erased the deficit, tying the set at 7-7 and consistently challenging the Jays through seven ties and three lead changes. Deadlocked at 13-13, Minnesota broke the set open. Aided by nine Creighton errors, the Gophers closed on a 12-5 run to secure the opening set, 25-18.

Building on its momentum from the first set, Minnesota captured the lead early and gradually began to expand it. Nevertheless, the Jays continued to battle, resulting in eight ties, the latest coming after a 5-0 run that brought Creighton back from 21-16 to tie the set at 21-21. The Gophers, however, proved too much for the Jays and closed the set, 25-23.

The Bluejays opened the third set with a 4-2 lead, but the Gophers’ offense quickly erased Creighton’s advantage, as Minnesota outscored the Jays 23-8 while capitalizing on 14 total Creighton errors to hand the Bluejays their first loss of the season.

After falling to Minnesota, Rosen encouraged his team ahead of its matchup with No. 20 USC by reminding the Bluejays, “yesterday was over,” emphasizing the clean slate they had against the Trojans.

The Bluejays capitalized on the new opportunity, navigating past the Women of Troy in a four-set odyssey to secure a 23-25, 25-22, 25-21, 25-19 victory.

Despite early first-set obstacles, Rosen recognized that Creighton remained within striking distance throughout the opening set, saying he “never felt the need to call a timeout because we were playing really great volleyball.”

Although the Bluejays could never completely erase the first-set deficit, Rosen’s poise instilled confidence in the Jays. As the match went on, the Bluejay block improved and consistently returned balls to the Trojan side, an area that had troubled Creighton against Minnesota the day before.

In the following three sets, led by senior middle blocker Eloise Brandewie’s 10 kills, the Bluejays produced 42 team kills, seven aces and six team blocks to break through the Trojans and take the win.

“It’s a really good feeling,” Brandewie said on earning a pair of ranked wins to open the season. “I think our preseason schedule is so hard and after yesterday, it could have been really easy to feel defeated, and I think our response was great. I think we just started feeling like us a little bit. It’s a great feeling and it’s going to really help us in the long run

when it comes to tournament time.”

For Creighton, the weekend was also about finding a rhythm.

With a roster featuring several new pieces, including transfers and a freshman setter, the Bluejays entered the season needing to build chemistry in real time. Against three ranked opponents, matchups changed quickly, forcing Creighton to adjust while simultaneously learning how its new personnel fit together.

“It takes time for setters and hitters to figure out what their relationship and balance is: the height, the tempo, when and where we can set certain things,” Rosen said.

One newcomer who quickly established herself as a central piece was junior middle blocker Ayden Ames.

The Texas transfer was named both the BIG EAST Offensive Player of the Week and Defensive Player of the Week after helping Creighton earn two top-25 victories. Ames became the first player in Big East and Creighton volleyball history to receive both honors in the same week.

Ames hit .305 over the weekend while averaging 1.92 kills and 1.17 blocks per set. She made an immediate impact against Purdue with seven kills and a Creighton-record seven blocks in her Bluejay debut. Against Minnesota, Ames led Creighton with eight kills, three blocks and a .333 hitting percentage before closing the weekend against USC with eight kills, four blocks and a .400 hitting percentage.

“She’s a really good volleyball player,” Rosen said. “She’s an incredibly physical blocker, but I think more important than that is the calmness she brings to the court. She’s really good at letting a mistake be a mistake, setting a great example of how to overcome.”

Although the competition was big this weekend, Creighton was even bigger.

The Bluejays left Sioux Falls with two ranked wins, a renewed sense of confidence and momentum heading back to Omaha to host the Bluejay Invitational. Creighton opens play this evening against Arizona and former Bluejay Destiny Ndam-Simpson at 6 p.m. The Bluejays will then face Pepperdine at 3 p.m. Saturday before closing the tournament against Tulsa at 3 p.m. Sunday.

Lots of fans traveled two hours north to Sioux Falls to support the Bluejays. But Friday’s home opener will offer a different kind of atmosphere.

“There’s just something different about playing in Sokol,” Rosen said. “To get a Big 12 team on Friday and two undefeated mid-majors on Saturday and Sunday ... we’ll have to be clean. It’s exciting.”

After proving they can compete, and win, against some of the nation’s best on the road, the Bluejays now have the chance to build on that momentum in front of their home crowd.

