Billy Fennelly: The recruiting guru

It’s been six seasons since Billy Fennelly was promoted to assistant coach. But deep down, Billy Fennelly has bled cardinal and gold for much longer than that. In fact, Billy Fennelly arrived in Ames in 1995 with his father, Bill Fennelly.

When Bill Fennelly arrived in Ames to coach Iowa State, in a sense, so did Billy Fennelly, but not until 10 years later. In 2004, Billy Fennelly officially joined the Iowa State staff as a manager. Far from what he is now — a recruiting wizard.

Fast-forward 11 years from when he left Iowa State in 2007, the Cyclones have a lot to be thankful for after he returned for good in 2010. Today, Billy Fennelly is known as one of the main recruiters and he has turned that title into a form of art.

What almost wasn’t

With the success he has had, it’s funny to think that his father didn’t even want him to be a coach. Billy Fennelly was born with a heart condition and had to quit playing basketball at a young age, but one thing never wavered: his love for basketball.

There was one problem though. Bill Fennelly knew there were more things to celebrate than dwell on. Billy Fennelly’s dream was to be a basketball coach and no one was going to change that.

“I’ve kind of been spoiled all the way through to see the insides of it, which is the goods and the bads, but obviously a lot more positive than negative,” Billy Fennelly said. “I just kind of knew at a young age that that’s what I wanted to do and go on recruiting trips or watch video or whatever.

“I never really probably gave myself a chance to do anything else. I don’t have any regrets.”

Bill Fennelly’s eldest son jump-started his career as a student manager for the Cyclones in 2004 and ended that run in 2007. Following that, he went to Maryland to coach under Brenda Frese, a former player his father coached. A Final Four run as the recruiting coordinator highlighted his short stint with the Terrapins.

Then, there was one final stop before returning to the place he’s called home for most of his life. That last stop was at Northwestern and he was met with success once again. This time, bringing the Wildcats back to postseason play for the first time in 13 years. “[At Maryland] we were the No. 1 seed and 33-4 and that was an unbelievable year, but the fanbase even at that was nothing near [Iowa State’s],” Billy Fennelly said. “Again, [Northwestern was a] phenomenal place to live, Chicago, all that stuff — no fanbase.”

Iowa State, part two

Billy Fennelly has gone out and gotten the likes of Emily Durr, Alexa Middleton, Adriana Camber and future Cyclone Maddie Frederick. Of course, there is also Ashley Joens, who is arguably one of the best recruits to ink a commitment to the Cyclones since the Fennellys have been in Ames.

However, recruiting doesn’t come easy. It takes hours of work and sometimes those hours can turn into a player choosing a rival school. For example, Billy Fennelly recalled of a certain school east of Iowa State that snagged a recruit the Cyclones were after. And the eldest Fennelly didn’t sugar coat the hardships of recruiting.
Nicolas, a DACA recipient, tells his story to an audience of over 50 people at the DACA Dinner at St. Thomas Aquinas on Feb. 24, 2018.

We want to remind you this isn’t just political. We aren’t here as Republicans or Democrats, we’re here as Christians,” said Parishioner Karen Stein, the lead organizer of the event.

Thousands of immigrants may be at risk of deportation after March 5, the deadline set by President Trump for the Deferred Action For Childhood Arrivals, DACA, program to end. DACA is a program put in place in 2012. It allows undocumented immigrants who entered the U.S. younger than 16 to legally work and attain documents such as driver’s licenses.

About 50 students and community members gathered in the basement of Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church to hear the stories of three DACA recipients and ask them questions. “The DACA recipients are students at Iowa State, and requested their last names be omitted from this story due to the sensitive nature. “DACA changed my life,” said Nicolas, who immediately began working two jobs after qualifying for DACA. “It assured me I could be here for my family no matter what, and that allowed me to go to college.”

Nicolas came to the United States when he was 3 years old. If the March 5 deadline passes, it would mean he would have to leave the country. “I’ve met children in kindergarten who will lead the floor debate. This bill is expected to move out of committee and onto the house floor before the March legislative deadline and Rep. Steven Holt, R-Denison, said they suspect them of being an illegal immigrant.

One bill, SF 481, would bring the state more in line with national code by making it so local ordinances and constitutional challenges,” Wessel-Kroeschell said. “Not a single law enforcement group is in favor of it. Sen. Julian Garrett, R-Indiana, who was the floor manager of the bill, said, “the bill serves to detain people for lengthy periods of time if they suspect them of being an illegal immigrant.”

Another concern Wessel-Kroeschell and other Democrats bring up is that the bill asks officers to detain people for lengthy periods of time if they suspect them of being an illegal immigrant. “This will most certainly lead to court battles and constitutional challenges,” Wessel-Kroeschell said.

Supporters, like Sen. Garrett, said these claims are “bogus as many officers already do this exact practice.” Garrett also stated that the concerns around the bill have no truth behind them as the bill has protections for those who report a crime or are a witness to a crime. “Studies show that in areas with these laws, everyone has the same propensity to report a crime whether they are an immigrant or not.”

This bill may have implications for Iowa State’s campus as well. Last year, the Iowa State Student Government overwhelmingly voted to make the campus a sanctuary campus. While this was only a symbolic vote and any legal protections for immigrant students would have to go through other governing bodies, this bill could make Iowa State seem less welcoming.

The DACA dinner was organized by three churches: Saint Cecilia’s, Saint Peter and Paul and Saint Thomas Aquinas. All of them pooled their resources for the event, and DACA recipients weren’t the only people invited. Parishioners from the affiliated churches invited local and state representatives, and even Attorney General Tom Miller.

“Due to conflicts nobody could make it,” Stein said.

Stein immigrated to the U.S from Nicaragua when she was 10 years old and is now a U.S. citizen. She works with Saint Cecilia’s Hispanic Ministry in Ames.

“I’ve met children in kindergarten who are eligible for consideration by the House next session if representatives wanted to pursue the bill in 2018, but it could not go any further that year.

Now that it is 2018, the bill is pending a committee meeting in the House where it is expected to face an equally tense debate. Rep. Beth Wessel-Kroeschell, D-Ames, said that her concerns with the bill stem from the “broad reaction” of the law enforcement community. “Not a single law enforcement group is in favor of the bill because they believe it would break down trust in immigrant communities. These law enforcement officials don’t want to do what ICE does because they know that immigrants will be afraid to report crimes when the immigrants think doing so will get them deported,” Wessel-Kroeschell said.

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“If the bill passes it would make any previous immigrant protections moot, and that really could make Iowa State seem unwelcoming to new and diverse students,” Wessel-Kroeschell said.

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The Age of Consequences
Documentary Film

Monday February 26, 2018
7pm - Great Hall, Memorial Union

The Age of Consequences investigates the impacts of climate change on resources, security, migration, and conflict through the lens of U.S. national security and global stability.

Part of the Symposium on Sustainability Series
Sponsored by: Green Umbrella, Office of Sustainability, Committee on Lectures (funded by Student Government)

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Iowa State Daily
NEWS 03

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The balloons are Des Moines artist Jami Milne’s piece “The answer comes when we consider what pressure is,” which is part of the ReACT Gallery’s newest pop-up exhibition “Thoughts and Prayers: Mass Shootings in the U.S.”

“Thoughts and Prayers” opened today, exactly one week after the Parkland, Florida shooting. The nation is still grappling with the deaths of the students and teachers, and as people search for answers, University Museums has created a space where students can transform their feelings into actions. The exhibit will remain open until March 9.

“It’s not necessarily different, but it’s quite odd for us to put on an exhibit that we planned and executed in less than a week,” said Savanna Falter, an intern at University Museums.

Falter assisted museum employees in selecting the artists, reaching out to professors for comments to go with the artwork, and creating the interactive portions of the exhibit.

Most University Museums exhibits take months to plan and execute, but museum staff created this pop-up exhibit to help students process and react to last Wednesday’s events. The topic had been conceptualized around the time of the Las Vegas shooting last October, but the museums’ employees wanted more time and resources to dedicate to the exhibit.

Another piece represents death in a different way. “It’s a Long Way Down: For Ana” by Jane Gilmor, consists of multiple metal bars penetrating a metal structure and was created after Gilmor’s friend was murdered. Falter said the piece expresses the more personal nature of losing someone to murder, and “really hones in on the individual.”

On another wall of the gallery is the “In Memoriam” section, which displays photos of various memorials created after college mass shootings, including the shooting that occurred at the University of Iowa in 1991. Next to “In Memoriam” is a reaction wall where students can anonymously post what they are feeling.

“One it’s on the wall, it’s nice to see, ‘Oh, other people are feeling what I’m feeling,’” Falter said. “We can all agree that something needs to change, but we’re not in agreement on what that change needs to be.”

The key part of the ReACT Gallery is to inspire people to take action, and the exhibit contains multiple resources for students to take with them. These resources include contact forms for representatives and senators, resources for counseling and self-care, and information surrounding upcoming protests and marches.

On Friday, March 24, a “March for our Lives” will be taking place in Washington, D.C., with a more localized version occurring at the Iowa State Capitol in Des Moines. On April 20, students across the country will be participating in a school walk-out in an effort to demand action from legislators across the country. Many of these protests are much more student-focused than past protests related to gun violence.

“I think it’s because the students are very, very vocal,” Falter said. “They’re supposed to rely on the adults, but the adults aren’t doing enough.”

Artwork portrays powerful message

BY MELANIE VANHORN
@iowastatedaily.com

Melanie Van Horn/ Iowa State Daily

Savanna Falter, an intern with University Museums, explains this piece is part of “Thoughts and Prayers: Mass Shootings in the U.S.” in the ReACT Gallery.

In the center of the basement gallery of the Christian Petersen Art Museum, 17 helium-filled birthday balloons hang aloft in the air. The balloons don’t look much like art. But each of those balloons represents a birthday that the victims of last week’s shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School will never experience. As time goes by, the balloons will lose their helium and drift to the ground, symbolizing the great loss of life that accompanies the tragic events of a mass shooting.

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POLICE BLOTTER
2.22.18
An officer initiated a drug related investigation (reported at 9:47 a.m.)

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Jackson Clearing Service
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Corrections
On page four of Friday’s paper, the caption for the photo of the art gallery was mistakenly put in as a caption for the basketball game on Wednesday. The caption should have been about the gallery. The Daily regrets the error.

The Iowa State Daily welcomes comments and suggestions or complaints about errors that warrant correction. To submit a correction, please contact our editor at 515-294-5688 or via email at editor@iowastatedaily.com.

Feature Photo

SARAH HENRY/IOWA STATE DAILY

Senior Night
Seniors Claire Ricketts and Emily Durr show their excitement during the Senior Night celebrations on Feb. 24 at the Hilton Coliseum.

Crossword

Across
1. Lake in Rome
2. Play on a sport's field
5. Work out
10. Workout song
14. Takes a Siesta
15. BMW competitor
16. Wine
17. Meet
20. Plante River
21. Spat, with "on"
22. "Caging & Emmy winner"
23. Knees
25. I’m just a boy, though my family wouldn’t tell you"
27. "The Boy"
31. "50s/70s Primetime"
44. "Fourteen" NFL team
45. Not in the 90s
50. "Beautiful"
53. "Over 80"
54. "Peach" potato
55. 100-Down holder
58. "Fish"
60. 1-Down holder
68. "Famous"
69. "Edward"
70. "Futura"
71. "Toothpaste"
72. "Normal"
73. "House"
74. "Sofa"

Down
1. 1-Down holder
2. "Monopoly"
3. "Pepsi"
4. "Fireball"
5. "A" in "Alfred"
6. "Somebody"
7. "Electric"
8. "Anchorman"
9. "Waltz"
10. "Bump"
11. "Man"
12. "Fearless"
13. "Lag" in "Lagrange"
14. "Rick"
15. "Hit"
16. "Sobbing"
17. "Flash in the Pan""s"
18. "Middle"
19. "Small"
20. "Full"
21. "Sail"
22. "Small"
23. "Guitar"
24. "Mount"
25. "Peach"
26. "Fruit"
27. "Family"
28. "Progress"
29. "Small"
30. "Sidewalk"
31. "Peach"
32. "Jelly"
33. "Butter"
34. "Cons" in "Consuela"
35. "Draft"
36. "Save"
37. "Take"
38. "Room"
39. "Take"
40. "Pasty"
41. "Fire" in "Firehouse"
42. "Cage" in "Caption"
43. "Handle"
44. "Legumes"
45. "Scene"
46. "Park"
47. "Check"
48. "Utah" in "Utah’s"
49. "Flammable"
50. "Person"
51. "Take"
52. "Chinese"
53. "Randy"
54. "South"
55. "Goof"
56. "Randy"
57. "Park"
58. "Ash"
59. "Center"
60. "Bourbon"
61. "Moot"
62. "Tulip"
63. "Car"
64. "Prada"
65. "Amato"
66. "Finn"
67. "Amato"
68. "Clarinet"
69. "Pause"
70. "Piano"

Sudoku
BY THE MEMPHER GROUP

Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 box (in bold borders) contains every digit, 1 to 9. For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, visit www.sudokus.org.uk

Front Page Weather courtesy of American Meteorology Society
We need to discuss gun violence

BY DAVIS.PATTON
@iowastatedaily.com

Editor’s note: This is a satirical opinion piece. The names of people mentioned and their quotes are completely fictional. The circumstances of this piece and their quotes are completely fictional. The names of people mentioned are fictional. Editor’s note: This is a satirical opinion piece. The names of people mentioned and their quotes are completely fictional. The circumstances of this piece and their quotes are completely fictional.

The United States has more guns per capita than any other country and more mass murders, like the one two weeks ago in Parkland, Florida.

But NOW, according to the National Rifle Association is NOT the time to talk about that obvious and tragic relationship. But the NRA never says when would be appropriate. The NRA doesn’t understand that when disasters occur, people talk about them. Humans talk about and react to tragedies when tragedies occur. That is a normal response. We immediately try to comfort those most affected. We think about ways to try to prevent more occurrences of such tragedies. We try to repair damage, emotional and physical.

Now is the very best time to talk about mass murders. Now is when people care most fervently and when politicians are most likely to be held responsible for their inaction on the issue. Now is when the NRA’s role in promoting extreme and irresponsible gun “rights” that result in weekly school murders becomes shamefully evident. If not now, when?

The NRA also accuses those who are talking about guns now of exploiting the tragedy for “political” means.

Somehow a group that raises over $300 million per year and reports affiliations only with Republican organizations, publicly grades politicians for their votes limiting gun safety and donates millions based on those grades to almost exclusively Republican candidates, objects to making a discussion about guns “political.”

While the NRA never explains what they mean by “political,” they use it frequently as an accusation against any group, person, or proposal they oppose. That’s an abuse of logic and of language.

Does “political” mean people disagree? Isn’t that our right in a democracy? Does “political” mean our positions tend to correlate with political party affiliation? Isn’t that part of the reason we have parties – because they represent and support differing beliefs? Is it political to suggest major social problems require politicians to respond?

Even the suggestions the NRA has proposed involve politicians and officials initiating programs and spending public funds. That means the NRA is being just as political as the people it berates.

The U.S. has more mass murders than any other country because of the excessive availability of guns and assault weapons. And yes, reducing gun deaths will require political action. If talking about solutions such as banning assault weapons is political, let’s keep talking and let’s keep it political.

This is part one in a series of three editorials about gun violence from the ISD Editorial Board this week.

Sixty-second condolence, then nap

After sending his tweet roughly a minute and a half after first opening Twitter, Howe began another nap at 4:41 p.m. He shared that the rest of his night consisted of eating macaroni and cheese, playing Fortnite and “going out to dinner with the boys.”

Howe said he received positive feedback from the tweet. One friend of his tweeted back, thanking him for “taking action” by sharing his thoughts in response to the shooting.

When asked if he had any plans to speak to his representatives, donate to any causes or actually do any work to prevent future shootings, Howe said he hadn’t thought of it.

Howe added, “Something like that could make for a good Instagram story though.”
“His next move might be assistant coach somewhere, but right now he’s identified his own path,” Bill Fennelly said. “He could go to a lot of places at a very high level, but he’s identified his own path,” Bill Fennelly said. “He’s very comfortable where he is.”

“This is home for him.”

Yes, home it is. Billy Fennelly kept his response simple, but the message was deep.

“I don’t see any changes in the near future,” Billy Fennelly said.

He’s not going to go out and promise his recruits a national championship their first year on campus. It’s going to be straightforward and what’s best for the player to hear.

“We are who we are, we’re not going to run fines that and we’re not going to hide from that,” Billy Fennelly said. “We’re in Ames, Iowa, which is a great place, it’s not for everybody, but it’s for the people that it’s for.”

That motto has stuck with the players he and the Cyclones are after. It’s what makes Iowa State stick out from other programs chasing some of the top girls in the country.

“A lot of schools always say stuff, I can’t say they don’t live up to it, but you never know,” said Iowa City High senior Ashley Joens. “With Billy, he was straightforward and he’d just tell you what he thought and it was just something that was a big selling point.”

There’s also the fact that the Iowa State women’s basketball team is built on a family attitude. For example, Billy Fennelly was recruiting during the Cyclones’ bye week this season and it just so happened that 2018 commit Maddie Frederick had her senior night game.

So, Billy Fennelly being Billy Fennelly, instantly decided he wanted to stop in and watch the Tippecanoe High School star play her final game in her home gym. That’s just the family instinct kicking in.

“That means a ton [for him to come out],” Frederick said. “It made my day just seeing him in the stands and the support they show all the time is amazing.”

Then, there are the stories of his tenacious recruiting style. His father even went so far as saying he’s relentless. For example, the ways in which he got Durr and Middleton to Iowa State are examples of what relentless recruiting can bring.

Durr was first noticed at a tournament in Franklin, Tennessee, when the Fennellys were in a bind.

It was 3 p.m. and it was too late for lunch, but too early for dinner. So, what any basketball guru would do, they went to watch a game between a Texas team and the Albany City Rocks to see what the Texas schools in the Big 12 were going after.

It just so happened that Durr was on the Albany team and caught fire in front of Billy Fennelly and Bill Fennelly.

“I’m sitting there like man, man, man, I’m like where’s this team from, we weren’t even paying attention,” Billy Fennelly said. “[My dad] goes I can tell this is your first summer out recruiting because you’re going to call a New York kid. Obviously the rest is history.”

Without that tenacity, who knows where Durr would be playing her college hoops. There is also Middleton and her transfer story. Billy Fennelly knew Middleton was good. Heck, she started her career at Tennessee, a perennial powerhouse once led by the legendary Pat Summitt.

Billy Fennelly knew if he missed the window of contacting Middleton it might be too late. The only problem was he was in the Phoenix airport when the news dropped, but that didn’t stop him from calling a recruit.

“When you get an Alexa Middleton, you fall into your lap, you better have a spot open for that because our fans will see next year that if we wouldn’t have gotten her that would be a problem,” Billy Fennelly said.

But again, it was that personable character he walks around with that ultimately sealed the deal for Middleton.

“He knows how to adapt to each person to talk to you to make you feel important, but also be important,” Middleton said. “He was very personable and I felt like I could trust him.”

That trust has allowed Billy Fennelly to churn out three recruiting classes ranked in the top 25, according to All Star Girls Report. In 2018, the Cyclones are set to have the 25th-best class and have the No. 5 class in the Big 12. Joining Middleton, Joens and Frederick in that class is Morgan Kane.

And while their future is bright, so is Billy Fennelly’s.

The future

The success Billy Fennelly has had hasn’t gone unnoticed in the coaching world. As a top recruiter, any school would be crazy not to snap him. However, in Ames it’s a family business.

He grew up bleeding cardinal and gold. He went to school bleeding cardinal and gold. He now coaches bleeding cardinal and gold. That’s one of the advantages he has in the recruiting field, according to his father.

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Assistant Coach Billy Fennelly watches his team play during their game against the Texas Longhorns on Feb. 24.

“I've heard from a lot of people that Billy could go to a lot of places at a very high level and recruit at a high level, but he’s identified his own path,” Bill Fennelly said. “His next move might be head coach somewhere, but right now I think he’s comfortable where he is.”

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“I don’t see any changes in the near future,” Billy Fennelly said.

The fact that it’s personal is what kept him in Ames and what might keep him in Ames for sometime. At least that’s what his dad, and boss, wants.

“I’ve heard from a lot of people that Billy could go to a lot of places at a very high level and recruit at a high level, but he’s identified his own path,” Bill Fennelly said. “His next move might be head coach somewhere, but right now I think he’s comfortable where he is.”

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Philanthropic community
Sororites and fraternities host charitable events

BY JOSEPH FEATHERLING
ccontributor to the Daily

COURTESY OF JOSEPH FEATHERLING

Every year, the Iowa State Sorority and Fraternity Community hosts philanthropic events that benefit a wide variety of charitable organizations.

Editor’s note: this article is part of a series of contributed pieces from Joe Fetherling, member of Delta Upsilon fraternity and vice president of philanthropy for the Interfraternity Council. This series will highlight different philanthropies taking place in Iowa State’s sorority and fraternity community, as well as what philanthropy means to members of the community.

Each year, the Iowa State Sorority & Fraternity Community hosts philanthropic events that benefit a wide variety of charitable organizations. These events have a significant impact on our society as a whole and are very prevalent within the Iowa State community. Here are some events that have happened in the past!

“This information was gathered from members of the Iowa State Sorority & Fraternity Community.

Lambda Theta Alpha Latin Sorority, Incorporated | Acts for St. Jude

Lambda Theta Alpha Latin Sorority, Incorporated held their organization’s annual Acts for St. Jude philanthropy event on Feb. 2, 2017. The event allowed anyone to share their talent while the audience raised money through cash votes to determine the top three performances. In addition to this, various raffles were going on throughout the night to further encourage donations to St. Jude. As the first Latina sorority to partner up with St. Jude Children Research Hospital, the organization enjoys fundraising for the hospital. The event raised $1,031 for St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital.

Alpha Tau Omega & Alpha Chi Omega | Desserts After Dark

Desserts after Dark was a collaborative philanthropy event between Alpha Tau Omega and Alpha Chi Omega that took place on Oct. 16, 2017. The two organizations put on the event to raise money as well as awareness for ACCESS of Ames. The philanthropy event consisted of various booths that held different desserts as well as speakers that educated guests about the different aspects of domestic and sexual assault awareness. While guests had the opportunity to learn more about domestic and sexual assault, they were simultaneously raising money for ACCESS. ACCESS stands for Assault Care Center Extending Shelter & Support. The mission statement for ACCESS is “To address the roots and impact of domestic and sexual violence through services that enhance safety, empower survivors, and promote understanding and social justice within our community.” Desserts after dark raised about $2,000 for the ACCESS organization of Ames.

Alpha Delta Pi | Chili Cook-Off in the Courtyard

On Oct. 8, 2017, Alpha Delta Pi hosted their annual Chili Cook-Off in the Courtyard Fall philanthropy. The Chili Cook-Off was provided by various chefs from different organizations in the sorority and fraternity community. Guests to the event enjoyed warm chili and delicious cornbread while fundraising for the Ronald McDonald House Charities. The money raised was sent specifically to the Omaha RMHC where funds are used to help lower the cost of living at the house for families. In addition, the funds raised also help to support the Alpha Delta Pi Foundation where the money is used to supply scholarships to Alpha Delta Pi members across the US and Canada. Alpha Delta Pi raised $6,271 at last year’s event.

Phi Kappa Psi | Phi Psi Tie Dye

Phi Kappa Psi hosted their Phi Psi Tie Dye, on Oct. 10, 2017. The philanthropy event raised $2,278 and donated 150 shirts that were tie dyed for guests for the Snoey County Chapter of the Boys and Girls Club of America. Attendees could either bring their own shirt and receive a discounted ticket price or pay a higher ticket price and have one provided for them for the tie dying. The event raised awareness and funds for the cause as well as donated physical goods for the organization.

Upcoming Sorority & Fraternity Philanthropy Events:

Gamma Phi Beta | Moonball Event | March 4 at 4 p.m. | Lied Recreation Center | Girls on The Run

Alpha Sigma Kappa | Acts for St. Jude | March 5 at 9 a.m. | Carver, Hoover, Parks Library | Animal Rescue League of America

Sigma Kappa | Let’s Taco Bout Alzheimer’s | March 20 at 5 p.m. | 233 Gray Ave | Alzheimer’s Association

Alpha Omicron Pi | Smoke out Arthritis | March 21 at 5 pm | 2007 Greeley St. | The Arthritis Foundation

Phi Beta Chi | Beta Brunch | March 23 at 5 p.m. | Memorial Lutheran Church | Bethesda Lutheran Communities

Upcoming Sorority & Fraternity Philanthropy Events:

Sigma Kappa | Acts for St. Jude | March 3 at 6 p.m. | Memorial Union | St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital
Many DACA recipients pay taxes just like any American citizens, they do not qualify for Social Security aid.

“I vividly remember being pushed under the seat of a car and then being driven through customs,” said Alan, another DACA recipient studying at Iowa State. “Without DACA, I couldn’t work. I couldn’t apply for an unpaid internship, and when it’s gone all I’ll be able to do is write to people in Congress and hope they make some change.”

Many DACA recipients spent a vast majority of their lives in the U.S. and think of this country as their home. In fact, some were actually surprised to learn they aren’t legal citizens, and didn’t find out until they were teenagers.

“I remember my father always slid away from the topic when I asked him if I could get a job,” Alan said. “It was the same thing when it came to driving. I don’t think he wanted me to know.”

Andrea, the third DACA student who spoke at the dinner, remembered a similar experience.

“I was in high school and everyone was starting to get their driver permits,” Andrea said. “I just wouldn’t talk about it, because if people started asking too many questions who knows what would happen.”

The DACA program came along soon after Andrea began seeking her driver’s permit, and she immediately found a job and started working to get her license.

“DACA does more than help just me,” Andrea explained. “I help support my family, I pay taxes. Without DACA I can’t work to pay my rent, and I can’t go to school.”

Once the March 5 deadline falls, no DACA recipient will be able to renew their DACA status.

If they’re lucky, they might have another two years before it expires. After that, they’re eligible for deportation.

“A lot of people won’t even be sent back to their home country,” Andrea said. “They’ll just be sent to Mexico, and it will be Mexico’s job to deport them again to El Salvador or Honduras, or wherever they happened to be born.”

Many people in the audience were shocked or saddened by this grim news.

“I come from a privileged home, so it’s powerful to see that people can just be torn from their families,” said Kelley Vassar, senior animal science.

Katie Hamilton, senior in biology, agreed.

“It’s easy to forget that this issue is so widespread,” Hamilton said. “Look around, it’s here. It’s at ISU!”