As the coronavirus hurts the economy, SU seniors fear for post-grad job prospects

By Chris Hippensteel
ASS. NEWS EDITOR

In the midst of a historic public health crisis, Khenyan Wilcox, a senior public health major at Syracuse University, is struggling to find a job.

Wilcox planned to enter public health administration after graduating from SU in May. Since the coronavirus outbreak struck the United States, the health industry has directed its hiring efforts toward specialists equipped to address the virus, he said, leaving him hard-pressed to find employment.

“During a public health crisis, there’s a huge emphasis on addressing whatever the crisis is,” Wilcox said. “So, most health institutions, health clinics or health departments, anything like that — they’re hiring for the crisis at hand and not for other systems or other jobs.”

Wilcox is one of thousands of SU seniors entering a job market that the coronavirus pandemic has thrown into chaos. As businesses across the county implement hiring freezes, cut down expenses and reduce staff, soon-to-be college graduates find their careers, and their futures, increasingly in doubt.

States across the county have implemented strict social distancing measures and ordered the closure of nonessential businesses to curb the spread of the coronavirus. Funerals in Syracuse have taken on a distant form.

Community members involved in The Syracuse Mask Project sew and deliver cloth masks to local hospitals and health centers that need them.
Hastings, Golden prioritize SA accountability

Justine Hastings and Ryan Gold- den’s first priority as president and vice president of Syracuse University’s Student Association is to work on accountability and communica- tion within the organization.

The pair was elected shortly after midnight on April 17 and will be sworn into their respective posi- tions on Monday. They ran against two other pairs of candidates: Morgan Eaton and David Williams on one ballot and Sadia Ahmed and Yanan Wang on another.

“Communication, outreach, that’s on us,” Hastings said. “So that’s one of the biggest things that could be done.”

Hastings and Golden’s cam- paign centered on five platforms: support for marginalized communi- ties, campus accessibili- ty, financial accessibility, SA accountability and student voice.

They plan to immediately start working with SU administration and members of SA to reach these goals, they said.

The pair campaigned for includ- ing students’ preferred names on university identification cards. Their goal is to ensure SU makes this change before the start of the fall semester, Golden said.

Sharing the minutes from all SA meetings with students via email is another priority of their administration calls from work.”

While some essential employees fear what the future holds for them and their coworkers, they also hope the challenges that the outbreak has exposed — difficulty accessing child care, maintaining benefits and stay- ing healthy — will lead to greater support for workers.

With kids home from school and new schedules at work, daily life has changed for Charles Garland, a funeral director and the CEO of Gang Funeral Home.

“Usually when people come in we shake their hands, we offer a shoulder to cry on,” Forbes said. “But we can’t do that anymore.”

Cities like Syracuse have come to a near standstill as people stay home to curb the virus’ spread, but work hasn’t stopped for essential workers in the funeral industry.

Funeral directors in Syracuse have continued to offer their ser- vices and provide comfort to fami- lies of the deceased, regardless of whether their deaths were related to COVID-19.

“Death is happening all the time,” said Eric Gang, a funeral director and the CEO of Gang Memorial Chapel. “It’s just that this aspect is more of a focal point this time.”

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced an executive order March 20 that halted all funeral operations. The state relaxed its restrictions one day later to allow immediate family to attend services.

Charles Garland, a funeral director and manager of Garland Brothers Funeral Home, would also like to make members of SU more involved in their university’s response to the pandemic.

“CU has been creative in creat- ing limited schedules and providing training opportunities from home — but it’s still a lot of work, and keeping their benefits intact,” said Doug McClure, a representa- tive for the Employees’ International Union Local 200 United.

More essential workers are adjusting to new hours, roles and respon- sibilities during the pandemic. Some are working from home, while others are adjusting to new schedules at work.

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The duo will also begin working to implement Callisto, a third- party sexual assault reporting system, Golden said.

“Our first steps will be starting conversations surrounding issues,” Golden said. “We want to make sure we start the ball rolling early.”

Over the summer, Hastings and Golden plan to help address the con- cerns of students that the coronavi- rus pandemic has affected, they said.

The decision to resume on- campus classes in the fall will be based on guidance from local, state and federal health officials, Chancellor Kent Syverud said in a press release April 16.

“Now that we are in the middle of the coronavirus pandemic, what’s going to have to take pri- ority (is) what students need,” Hastings said.

Hastings and Golden plan to have their cabinet filled by the first Assembly meeting of the fall semes- ter. They will look for passion, expe- rience and diversity in each of their cabinet members, they said.

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“Because a lot of our platforms are going to be ambitious and take a lot of time to implement, passion is a big deal for me,” Hastings said.

Hastings, a member of SEIU AgainSU, said she and Golden would also like to make members of the movement aware of SUs influ- ence and encourage them to take part in the organization.

SEIU AgainSU, a movement led by Black students, has protested SU’s response to a series of over 32 racist, anti-Semitic and homopho- bic incidents that have occurred on or near campus since November.

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Funeral homes adjust arrangements

As finals week begins, few students can be seen on and near Syracuse University’s campus. The university on March 16 announced it would suspend on-campus classes and transition to online learning for the remainder of the semester due to the coronavirus pandemic. University officials asked students to leave Syracuse by March 22, if possible.

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the PARCC Program for the Advancement of Research on Conflict and Collaboration

The Summer Institute is a series of workshop-style 3-credit courses designed to enable participants to manage disputes and differences collaboratively in both professional and personal settings.

Note: Courses will be held online for the summer session.

For more information, please visit the PARCC website. Current SU students can register through MySlice. Non-matriculated students should register through University College.

PARCC SUMMER INSTITUTE
Many incoming freshmen said they’re uncertain of whether they’ll begin their first year of college online. SU intends to resume on-campus classes in the fall, but the decision will be based on guidance from state officials. Chancellor Kent Syverud said April 16, Administrators, faculty and staff are developing multiple scenarios for beginning the fall semester, he said.

Ryan Hodges, an incoming mechanical engineering major from Spencer, New York, is nervous about how well his courses would translate to online learning.

“Even the simplest things such as orientation or a club fair — I’ve heard from so many people, and I really do believe it — that you make your closest friends during your first two weeks freshmen year,” Shinder said. “Facebook’s great, but there’s nothing like meeting up with people.”

SU’s fall classes are set to begin Aug. 31.

Despite uncertainty about their first year of college, many incoming freshmen said the online admissions programs had been helpful. They are still excited to begin their four years at SU, they said.

“Even though it is a very stressful time, once all of this is over, we will have a fresh start, something new,” Perez said. “I’m excited for college so I want to have that view.”

William Barlow

FROM PAGE 1

FRESHMEN

Sanatos, who is from Syracuse and plans to major in music industry, decided to attend SU instead of going to school in her parents’ home state of Massachusetts because her parents lost their jobs due to the virus. Although her parents were able to pay the down payment, they fell behind on the worst part of the enrollment process.

“I’m glad we did come up with money in the end,” Sanatos said. “None of my members wanted to do that. My parents were nervous and were worried about the virus. It was tough,” said DeTolla. “You get a whole different feeling if you’re actually there versus just: ‘I wish you would.’”

DeTolla ultimately decided to attend SU after researching the university on websites like College Confidential and watching online videos from current students. She also attended the university’s virtual tours.

She has attended online classes in Syracuse in the fall if the COVID-19 pandemic is ongoing is a concern for Mariana Perez, an incoming nutrition studies major from Los Angeles, California, who plans to enroll undecided in the College of Arts and Sciences. She was unable to visit any of the schools for which she applied.

“It’s really nerve-wracking because one of the things my counselor told me is you are really having to go online and home with him, you have to be really good at it,” DeTolla said. “You get a whole different feeling if you’re actually there versus: ‘I wish you would.’”

The anxiety surrounding COVID-19 mirrors the public’s reactions when the HIV/AIDS epidemic took place in the 1980s, when relatively little was known about the virus at first, Garland and Mathewson recalled.

Despite the surrounding fear, many funeral homes, including Garland Brothers Funeral Home, cautiously continued their work during those times, Garland said. The present situation calls for the same action, he said.

“Right now, the more we out about this, the more we can accept this normal,” he said. “And even after it will end.”

Jen Reid, who works for the Onondaga County Health Department’s Special Children’s Services, worries if employers will keep up with social distancing guidelines and other health protocols once the pandemic is over.

“We’re already operating pretty close to the bone, and I think down the road from this, I can see them laying off people,” Reid said. “I can see pensions and wages being affected.”

The best way to address concerns about the pandemic is to speak openly about the challenges it presents workers, Spadafore said. Sharing stories brings about change, he said.

“A lot of times we do focus on the struggles in the labor movement,” Spadafore said. “And I think that we have to understand what brings us together and the good things that can come out of this. Our strength is when we come together, and we need to do it with joy.”

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ILLUSTRATION BY JACLY COLLA CONTRIBUTING ILLUSTRATOR
Behind the mask

The Syracuse Mask Project provides cloth masks for health workers

By Sydney Bergan

When Nancy Gaus started researching which kind of masks that Syracuse area hospitals needed to battle the COVID-19 outbreak, she couldn’t find anything. Gaus – who recently retired from a 12-year career as a seamstress – knew that she could put her skills to use.

“I thought, you know, I have a lot of friends that want to sew – that would like to see masks, that would like to contribute to this effort,” she said.

This led her to establish The Syracuse Mask Project, a website that connects people sewing masks in Syracuse to local health institutions.

Hospitals and other institutions can request masks through the site, stating how many they need and which design they are accepting. It then shows these requests to locals who sew so they know where to drop the masks off.

Gaus spent about five days creating the website before launching it in late March. She is constantly updating the website with the most accurate information on making hospital-approved masks, sewing tips and local organizations that are forming sewing initiatives.

Since the website’s release, requests have poured in from places like Upstate University Hospital and Crouse Health. Gaus said she doesn’t personally fulfill orders to individual clients and only donates them where they are needed the most.

“Anybody who sews in Syracuse can sew by themselves and donate by themselves in a bubble in their protected house,” Gaus said. “Or, they can reach out to a sewing group that already exists if they want to be part of more of a team.”

During her initial research, Gaus found some clarity once she discovered Syracuse local Beth Eischen’s Facebook video, which shows these requests to locals who sew so they know where to drop the masks off.

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NANCY GAUS created The Syracuse Mask Project to help first responders in the community during the pandemic. COURTESY OF MAGGIE GAUS

Old, new traditions mark 150 years of SU history

By Morgan Tucker and Sydney Bergan

Annual Syracuse University traditions have evolved over its 150 years of existence, an anniversary the university celebrated on March 24. While some have faded away, all are part of its history.

[Traditions] reinforce our values such as community spirit and solidarity and sharing and hard work and diversity,” said Meg Mason, university archivist and curator of the 150 Years of Tradition at Syracuse University.

“There’s so many different people on the campus. We come from all different places and backgrounds, and having these traditions unite us.”

Mackenzie Sammeth, a member of the U’90, said these traditions change as the campus expands. The addition of the Carrier Dome in 1979 has created many traditions, like the Dome Stomp, she said.

“Regardless as to if it’s a positive memory or something that’s been a little more traumatic in our history, I think being able to have things that are uniquely Syracuse has ultimately made us more protective and more invested in these traditions and continuing them in the future,” Sammeth said.

Here are some of the traditions that have remained, evolved or disappeared over SU’s 150 years, found in SU’s university archives.

Water Fight

In the mid-1960s, beginning signs of spring meant one thing: water fight. At night, hundreds of students would swarm part of campus with tubs, balloons and other contain- ers full of water to the streets for a water battle against other students.

“No one knew what the students were doing, so when students arrived at Hill, everybody just kind of sat there for an hour,” Gaus said. “And then when we found out, everybody just kind of sat there for a second and hysterically laughed. And then, of course, there was a lot of tears,” Molinari said.

In addition to Syracuse University’s Senior Fashion Show, other showcases and exhibits such as the Newhouse Photography Annual and the Communications Design Senior Portfolio Show have been canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Many students whose work was supposed to be displayed in these exhibits have adapted to virtual ways of showcasing their work.

The Senior Fashion Show, originally scheduled for April 3, was going to feature the collections of senior fashion design majors. The 12 senior students in the fashion design program are in a class taught by Todd Conover, an assistant professor in the fashion design program.

Molinari said that senior collections have a close relationship. In their Zoom classes with Conover, the students have vented their feelings and discussed progress on their websites.

When they found out about the show’s cancellation, Molinari said that students had hope for a make-shift fashion show at a later date. But now, the students have shifted their focus to showcasing their collections through their websites and portfolios.

Dana Crouter, another fashion design senior, said that she still wants to showcase the looks in her portfolio and hopes to eventually have a photoshoot. She added that though the cancellation of the show is sad, the work the students put into the collections was still worth it.

“Show or no show, we still created all these amazing things. And ashow is not the main reason why we do everything,” Crouter said.

Hamnah Frankel said she was excited to have a photo displayed at Light Work for the first time through the Newhouse Photography Annual. The 2020 Newhouse Photography Annual was set to run at Light Work Gallery in Syracuse from March 23 until July 23 before Light Work closed its doors to the public March 12 due to COVID-19 concerns.

The exhibit included over 30 photographs from students in the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications, and images will now be featured on Light Work’s website.

For the photo Frankel took for a story about Loop Grill, the second...
The Nancy Cantor Warehouse. The students' portfolios show viewers how to make the rectangular mask lined with surgical sheeting. “This is the field that I teach in, and it was just very clear to me that this shortage in masks was going to be very dire,” Eischen said. “It was going to be very dire for health personnel, essential personnel, people on the frontlines and any essential workers, so I really felt driven to get these masks done and get them in the hands of those who didn’t have them.”

Eischen said she was featured on News Channel 9 for her work making masks on March 25. After her segment on the news, she said her business Facebook page “blew up” with requests for masks from health center supervisors. She stopped counting how many masks she had made at 500, but said she thinks she has made well over 1,000.

Others in the Syracuse area, such as Nancy Volk, are focused on making masks to meet the needs of the Salvation Army of Syracuse. With help from members of the community, Volk has provided about 150 masks to the local organization, where she is a volunteer. Volk is trying to provide masks to those working at shelters, food distribution and day-care centers run by the Salvation Army. She is also making masks for the children who frequent the Salvation Army operations with their families by adjusting the mask size so they stay secure on smaller faces.

“She may have been a shift in the way that the portfolios will be shown. There will now be a drop date for the students’ websites and a possible virtual event. The senior said she felt that she was in a privileged situation because she had access to the resources needed to complete her portfolio from home, such as access to a printer and photographer at her home. She also said her experiences may not reflect the students personified “Calculus” and gave the May Queen a farewell dirge and program. The services varied, including burials, cremations, letting a coffin go into the sky or preparing a little coffin to put in a local lake. This tradition began in 1873 and ended before the 20th century.

May Queen, Women’s Day
To celebrate women students and alumni, the Senior Women’s Honorary Society, Eta Pi Upsilon, founded the May Queen crowning in 1944 as part of Women’s Day. “She was basically voted as probably the best of the senior class,” Mason said. Women’s Day evolved into May Day and over time, May Day turned into Spring Weekend. A May Queen was always crowned, and other activities included the strawberry breakfast, maypole dancing, parades and a lantern ceremony. Spring Weekend traditions ended in the 1960s.

Split Day
One day each semester, a bar called 44’s Tavern would hand out small drinks called “splits” to people early in the morning, according to the University Archives. Documents in the archives said that the tradition began as a competition between 44’s Tavern and a bar at Penn State University to see who could drink more splits. 44’s Tavern closed in spring 2000 and became Konrad’s Sports Bar, The Daily Orange reported.

Santa Claus came to town as well, according to the archives. In the 1950s, a Mr. and Mrs. Santa, along with children, would hand out gifts to children in the area.

Nicole Stallings-Blanche, a senior in the College of Visual and Performing Arts, began making masks after she received an honor from the University. “This is the field that I teach in, and it was just very clear to me that this shortage in masks was going to be very dire,” Eischen said. “It was going to be very dire for health personnel, essential personnel, people on the frontlines and any essential workers, so I really felt driven to get these masks done and get them in the hands of those who didn’t have them.”

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“Sometimes people see, I think, the health care workers’ needs pretty easily, and I think we can forget that there are other people out there that also have needs, too,” Volk said. “And I’ve sort of thought if we can keep our frontline workers in protective gear of some type, then our masks like the N95 can be saved for health care workers.”

Susan Coats, director of the Family Planning Service of Onondaga County, also requested masks through the Syracuse Mask Project and social media, and has had 200 donations from members of the community. The health care organization, which provides reproductive and sexual health services to low-income individuals—has stayed open during the pandemic. It has changed the way it operates, though, screening patients over the phone for COVID-19 symptoms and when they arrive at the facility for an appointment.

FPF has enough surgical masks for its medical staff and is taking mask donations to give to the patients that come into the office. Coats said that the mask donations have come from both her social media post and the listing she made on the Syracuse Mask Project.

Gaus wants to make sure people are using caution “when interacting with other members of this fabulous sewing community,” she wrote on her website. She encourages people to follow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines for social distancing and hygiene protocol.

Gaus said that after Gov. Andrew Cuomo requested that everyone should wear masks in public, she received an influx of inquiries from government agencies for masks for their essential workers.

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The Ark, a popular underground performance venue, is shutting down after two years in operation. Local artists, such as NONEWFRIENDS and The Brazen Youth, have performed at the house.

The Ark, so many connections with artists, colleagues who struggle to throw concerts weekend after weekend, he added.

“They have their shine and then they fall apart,” McKeown said.

The Ark was on the path to closure when it first shut down last August, Steinberg said. That is, until the Syracuse music community responded. “We quickly discovered that The Ark wasn’t our operation, but it was the community that developed from our events,” Steinberg said. “When the Ark dissolved, the community reacted pretty strongly and came to our support. And so, from there, we really couldn’t deprive people of the experience that they had developed and earned, so we reopened The Ark.”

But after a resurgent year for The Ark — one defined by large audience turnout, more press, more art and a dedication to improving concert production — the COVID-19 pandemic forced an end to its existence. The founding members announced April 10 that they would halt operations on May 10. During its two years of operation, The Ark hosted 45 events at its 917 Lancaster Ave. house, according to a press release. On average, shows and events would garner crowds of 150 to 200 patrons, depending on the night, Steinberg said.

Former strategic coordinator Benji Wittman, a music industry master’s student, was one of more than a dozen individuals who were central to the operations of The Ark. Above all, professionalism was a priority, McKeown said. That meant detailed written plans in case of an emergency, professional recordings of each show and a professional artist booking system.

Rory Stanley, a rising senior and booking agent for the venue, never anticipated the Syracuse music scene to have such a wide variety. Stanley was tasked with finding talent among local and touring bands including Nette for Sadler, NONEWFRIENDS, Joe Morgan and The Brazen Youth.

“All of our music was very diverse,” Stanley said. “We didn’t just stick to one genre all the time, and I think that’s what kind of made The Ark.”

The Ark was in the process of hosting more university-sponsored shows, which included a performance from Stanley’s band The Weather Channel, Wittman said.

Stanley is determined to preserve underground music in the community. During the spring semester, she helped launch The Deli, a free website, which will feature track recordings of concerts, photographs and profiles on influential artists, is the brainchild of founding member and senior Noah Steinberg.

“The Ark has become the perfect opportunity to develop a multimedia storytelling platform,” Steinberg said. “One that draws influence from the vast number of archived underground media that exists, but adapting it to a modern platform, something that’s more interactive and more accessible to people.”

Steinberg became obsessed with archived underground media and received a source grant from the university to study it all over the world. For him, this is a way to give back to the community that defined his own college experience.

“It’s a community that we’ve unintentionally become a part of that has really become the cornerstone of our lives,” Steinberg said. “There are so many relationships that people have made through The Ark, so many connections with artists, collaborators, friends, loved ones.”

The Ark Collections will also serve as a tool for new music venues to see the inner workings of The Ark, said founding member and senior Ryan McKeown. He hopes the concerts become intertwined with student organizations to expand “this little micro scene at Syracuse.”

An online platform will feature audio and video from past concerts at The Ark throughout the recent history of SU’s underground music scene, most music venues have not lasted longer than two years, McKeown said. In-fighting and external stressors ultimately break down the bonds of friendship between roommates who struggle to throw concerts weekend after weekend, he added.

“The underground music venue, run by Syracuse University students, is shutting its doors due to the COVID-19 pandemic. When SU announced it would move classes online for the rest of the semester, organizers planned to meet with houses on Lancaster Avenue to organize a multi-house festival with bands performing all day long.

That meeting couldn’t happen. But to preserve the memories of good times at The Ark, the student staff has focused their efforts on developing an online archival platform: The Ark Collections. The free website, which will feature track recordings of concerts, photographs and profiles on influential artists, is the brainchild of founding member and senior Noah Steinberg.

“McKeown said that this is the first of many projects both he and McKeown as they “dissolve The Ark back into the community in which it arose from.”

“We’re far from done in this work,” Steinberg said. “With The Ark gone, and especially with all the stuff going on with the COVID-19 pandemic, the DIY scene is completely dead at the moment,” Stanley said. “There are no house shows going on at all.”

Meanwhile, McKeown remains confident that the underground music scene will continue to expand. He trusts the cyclical process of music venues making their mark and then dissolving.

“All of our music was very diverse,” Stanley said. “We didn’t just stick to one genre all the time, and I think that’s what kind of made The Ark.”

The Ark was in the process of hosting more university-sponsored shows, which included a performance from Stanley’s band The Weather Channel, Wittman said.

Stanley is determined to preserve underground music in the community. During the spring semester, she helped launch The Deli, a free website, which will feature track recordings of concerts, photographs and profiles on influential artists, is the brainchild of founding member and senior Noah Steinberg.

“The Ark has become the perfect opportunity to develop a multimedia storytelling platform,” Steinberg said. “One that draws influence from the vast number of archived underground media that exists, but adapting it to a modern platform, something that’s more interactive and more accessible to people.”

Steinberg became obsessed with archived underground media and received a source grant from the university to study it all over the world. For him, this is a way to give back to the community that defined his own college experience.

“It’s a community that we’ve unintentionally become a part of that has really become the cornerstone of our lives,” Steinberg said. “There are so many relationships that people have made through The Ark, so many connections with artists, collaborators, friends, loved ones.”

The Ark Collections will also serve as a tool for new music venues to see the inner workings of The Ark, said founding member and senior Ryan McKeown. He hopes the concerts become intertwined with student organizations to expand “this little micro scene at Syracuse.”

An online platform will feature audio and video from past concerts at The Ark throughout the recent history of SU’s underground music scene, most music venues have not lasted longer than two years, McKeown said. In-fighting and external stressors ultimately break down the bonds of friendship between roommates who struggle to throw concerts weekend after weekend, he added.

“They have their shine and then they fall apart,” McKeown said.

The Ark was on the path to closure when it first shut down last August, Steinberg said. That is, until the Syracuse music community responded. “We quickly discovered that The Ark wasn’t our operation, but it was the community that developed from our events,” Steinberg said. “When the Ark dissolved, the community reacted pretty strongly and came to our support. And so, from there, we really couldn’t deprive people of the experience that they had developed and earned, so we reopened The Ark.”

But after a resurgent year for The Ark — one defined by large audience turnout, more press, more art and a dedication to improving concert production — the COVID-19 pandemic forced an end to its existence. The founding members announced April 10 that they would halt operations on May 10.

During its two years of operation, The Ark hosted 45 events at its 917 Lancaster Ave. house, according to a press release. On average, shows and events would garner crowds of 150 to 200 patrons, depending on the night, Steinberg said.

Former strategic coordinator Benji Wittman, a music industry master’s student, was one of more than a dozen individuals who were central to the operations of The Ark. Above all, professionalism was a priority, McKeown said. That meant detailed written plans in case of an emergency, professional recordings of each show and a professional artist booking system.

Rory Stanley, a rising senior and booking agent for the venue, never anticipated the Syracuse music scene to have such a wide variety. Stanley was tasked with finding talent among local and touring bands including Nette for Sadler, NONEWFRIENDS, Joe Morgan and The Brazen Youth.

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