

GROSS
Continued from Page 1

comfortable with the performance as it went on.

"(At first) it was fine," the freshman said. "They showed a tape of him going around with half his body cut off and he pulled a bowling ball out of a piece of paper."

The student said Gross then asked for a volunteer from the crowd. A BGR supervisor was first picked for the act.

"He brought her up and kept making her step closer to him," Byrn said. "Then when she was inches away from him he joked about getting an erection, saying, 'Let me out, let me out!' in reference to his genitals."

Multiple witness accounts state that Gross then had the supervisor go back-to-back with him and made her place her hand on his leg. Those in the room also stated he made jokes concerning Matt Lauer, a former NBC television news anchor who was fired from the network due to sexual-assault allegations.

"He then purposely failed the card trick and said, 'Well, at least I got a free feel-up out of it,'" said Jeff Terpstra, a sophomore in the Krannert School of Management and a BGR team leader, via a message exchange.

Following the failed card trick, Winkler looked up from her phone and found Gross standing in the aisle attempting to have her volunteer for the next trick.

"I just gave him a dirty look," she said.

After continually being refused by Winkler, Gross continued to try and select female volunteers from the crowd. Following Gross' attempt to select the girl in the aisle over from her, Winkler led her students out

the side aisle into the lobby.

"I walked into the girls' bathroom and I saw girls crying," she said.

Terpstra also said he became uncomfortable and left the building. When he was leaving, he encountered a group of police officers in the lobby. Terpstra then re-entered Elliot and took his new students out with him.

Some students were confused, according to Winkler, or had no idea what was going on. Others were uncomfortable but didn't leave.

All BGR participants who left the closing ceremony were not allowed to leave Elliott and instead filled the lower lobby.

Winkler wanted the show to stop, but BGR personnel told her to be respectful and that "it would be handled."

"In my opinion, it wasn't handled at all," Winkler said.

According to an email sent to team leaders by Craig Johnson, the director of orientation programs, Gross' performance was not representative of Purdue's values.

"What we are proud of is you," Johnson wrote of the team leaders in an email. "The chatter on social media and other mediums is overwhelmingly supportive of each other, standing up and speaking out for our fellow Boilermakers and keeping things in the context of Freezone."

Purdue Counseling and Psychological Services and the Purdue Center for Advocacy, Response & Education were on scene, according to Terpstra.

"The dean of students came on stage afterward to point out that (Gross') performance does not reflect any of the viewpoints of BGR or Purdue University," he said.

The official CARE at Purdue Twitter account posted a message at

1:47 a.m. to students seeking support, stating that "CARE was contacted earlier this evening regarding a performance during the BGR closing ceremony that was described as harassing and offensive. As a result, a CARE advocate responded to campus to offer support to students."

Other social media users have also expressed their outrage on Twitter, calling Gross "misogynistic" and "disgusting."

After the event, Tim Doty, the director of public information and issues management, sent out the following statement:

"On Saturday night, a comedian performed as part of our BGR student orientation closing session. Accounts differ as to what exactly happened on stage, but some portions of the performance were clearly inappropriate and contrary to the university's values of respect and support for all. We will not work with this comedian again and are proud of our students who are standing up and voicing their concerns about the performance."

Winkler says she thinks the situation could've been prevented.

"I feel like you should have a script or something from the comedian that (BGR) goes over," she said. "They should have known what he was planning on performing, and I think they should have ended the show when they noticed the supervisor was crying."

Winkler took particular issue with the continuance of the show, saying that "it was not OK" for the Student Orientation Committee to continue to let Gross choose volunteers.

"I could have been one of them as well; one of my students could've been one of them," she said. "I just don't think the people in authority handled it well."

Editorial: They will call you out

BY ATREYA VERMA
On behalf of The Exponent
Editorial Board

The Class of 2022 walked into its lectures on Monday morning to kick off four of the most memorable years of their lives. They will go on to be artists, engineers, scientists and athletes and make indelible impacts on the world, proudly representing Purdue at every turn.

Yet, somehow, 48 hours before they introduced themselves to each other in their first classes, they have already made a statement.

Many freshmen students who attended the closing ceremony of Boiler Gold Rush witnessed a routine by Andy Gross that can — at best — be described as a performance that poorly straddled the line between comedy and unnecessary crudeness. At worst, he deliberately sexually harassed multiple volunteers to use up cheap lines that wouldn't crack smiles in front of an educated audience.

But, for the moment, forget the childish immaturity Mr. Gross displayed on Saturday evening. Turn your head downstage.

As members of the Class of 2022 filed out in disgust in the middle of his performance, there was a timely response from those responsible for welcoming Mr. Gross to West Lafayette.

Many Boiler Gold Rush team leaders gathered their groups and led them away from the Elliott Hall of Music to discuss the uncomfortable nature of the evening, emphasizing that Mr. Gross did not represent the values of BGR. Purdue's mental health resource agencies made themselves available to assist those affected by the caustic vibe spread-

ing through Elliott Hall.

Early steps to correct this unforced blunder by Purdue have started to take place.

The performance was a particular slap in the face to one of the core components of BGR: Freezone, a diversity-awareness program to educate students about being respectful of their peers and their new home.

The vitriol and outrage directed at Mr. Gross will flow from all corners of the Purdue community — as it should. In the near future, there will be thorough reporting of all the facts regarding how his act was vetted and who was responsible for allowing Mr. Gross to contaminate an otherwise inclusive week of orientation.

But at the dawn of a new academic year, we choose to recognize a bold generation that has entered the hallways of Purdue — a generation that will unabashedly call out those they see fit, at the instant it becomes necessary.

Gone are the days when students would capitulate internally but stay silent in the face of blatant public disgraces. This class, it seems, wants to make sure of that.

Purdue President Mitch Daniels, in part, told the 2018 graduating class in May that he saw Purdue students as citizens with "innate decency" who have the "ability to wrestle with (the) complexity" of big problems.

After watching the Purdue community's response to Mr. Gross over the weekend, his sentiment could not be more accurate.

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These faculty and lecturers received teaching evaluation scores of 4.7 or higher in classes with enrollments of 10 and above and 50% or higher response rates. Based on student evaluations from courses taught in Engineering in spring 2018.



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