



# THE OUTLOOK

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## Town Hall Meeting Addresses Heroin Crisis in New Jersey



PHOTO COURTESY of Kimberly Kravitz

A Town Hall meeting was held in Pollak Theatre to address the growing heroin crisis in the state of New Jersey. The event was hosted by Bob McAllan, a life trustee of the University.

JAMILAH MCMILLAN  
MANAGING/NEWS EDITOR

Over 700 attendees gathered for the Jersey Matters Town Hall: The Heroin Crisis to address the states heroin epidemic in Pollak Theatre on Mar. 16.

There are roughly 128,000 heroin users in NJ, and the epidemic claimed 918 lives in 2015, which is the highest annual death toll from heroin ever seen in NJ according to an article by the Observer published on Jan 8.

Drug overdoses in NJ jumped

overall by 21 percent between 2014 and 2015 according to the article, and health experts in the state expect the data from 2016 and 2017 to be far worse than the current numbers.

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## Israeli Journalist Visits University

ALBERT SHALOM  
STAFF WRITER

Students, faculty, and community members had the opportunity to attend a presentation held in Pozycki Hall on the future of Israel-U.S. relations by a famous Israeli journalist and political analyst, Michael Tuchfeld on Mar. 22.

The first part of his presentation focused on the major points and issues between Israel and the United States of America, including the Iran Nuclear deal, the possibility of Israel's nuclear capability, settlements, and financial deals between the governments of the U.S. and Israel. He highlighted former U.S. President Barack Obama and his administration's poor or unfair treatment of the State of Israel from an Israeli point of view. He then discussed the differences and the treatment that can be seen so far between Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu

and newly elected U.S. President Donald Trump.

Tuchfeld also highlighted some key points regarding the Israeli-Palestinian issue. Mainly on how Obama centralized the issue and the so-called "two state solution" around the settlements. He pointed out agreements between then U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and the Israeli government in which Israel stopped settlement building for nine months and released prisoners, but negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian leaders in charge didn't resume.

He concluded the presentation calling for more cooperation between the two governments and working together in areas where both sides will benefit as well as mentioning that "presidents don't lie, but sometimes they forget."

"It [the presentation] was informative, gave an interesting perspective, was more realistic and pragmatic", said sophomore political science student Michael

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## University Dean Receives Notable Award for Writing Distinguished Book on Houston's Astrodome

JOHN SORCE  
CO-SENIOR/SPORTS EDITOR

Kenneth Womack, Ph.D., Dean of the Wayne D. McMurray School of Humanities and Social Sciences, was honored with the Dr. Harold and Dorothy Seymour Medal from the Society of American Baseball Research (SABR) for his book "The Eighth Wonder of the World: The Life of Houston's Iconic Astrodome," on Mar. 4.

Womack co-authored the book with Robert C. Trumpbour, Ph.D., an associate professor of communications at Pennsylvania State University at Altoona.

SABR awards the medal to "the best book of baseball history or biography published during the previous calendar year" and must be, "the product of original research or analysis," according to the SABR website. The website also states that the winning book must "significantly advance our knowledge of baseball and

shall be characterized by understanding, factual accuracy, profound insight and distinguished writing."

Womack was born and raised in Houston, TX and mentioned that he "basically grew up" in the Astrodome. His grandfather, Kenneth Zimmerman, was the structural engineer of the building and he invented the knuckle column and the star column. These are the two innovations, Womack said, that are holding up the building today.

"The knuckle column is a four-foot piece of steel and it was designed to come out at the top every five degrees and the roof would essentially rest on it," Womack said as he demonstrated with a replica of the stadium. "[My grandfather] called it the knuckle column because vertically, the knuckle is stiff, but horizontally it can move. There's a lot of pressure on the dome and it is always moving very slightly. If there was a big wind storm you could see it, but for the most part nobody ever knows."

"On the side, he had what he

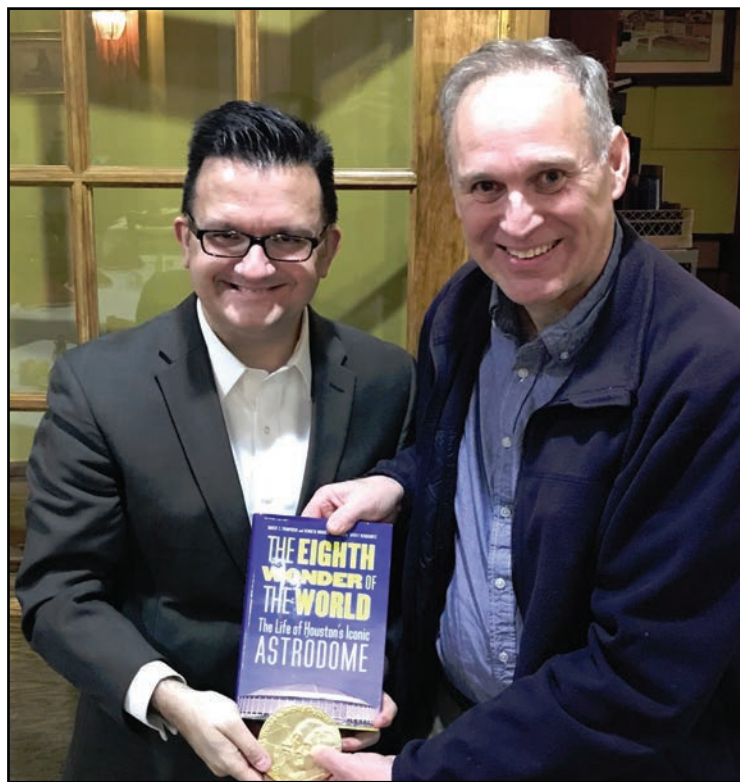


PHOTO COURTESY of Kenneth Womack

University Dean Kenneth Womack (left) teamed up to pen a unique book on the creation of the iconic Astrodome.

called the star column," Womack added as he continued to demonstrate with the replica. "This connected to the knuckle column to give it a vertical hold on that horizontal force. Buried 40 feet or so underground is a tie that is in the bedrock. So you have the knuckle connected through steel and rods connecting down to the star column, which is connected to the underground piece, and that's how it's all held in place."

Womack first met Trumpbour in 2002, when he hired him to work at Penn State. He mentioned they had talked about writing a book for a while and when Trumpbour suggested that they write about his grandfather, it took off from there.

"We decided that we wanted the story to be a page turner because it's too interesting not to," Womack said. "I did bring in a lot of storytelling. Even though Bob wrote his good 50 percent of it, I went and smoothed it into one readable story. I wrote the chap-

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