

Ryan Zielie

www.zielie.com
ryanzielie@gmail.com
630-200-2832
Yorkville, Illinois

Design Portfolio

2026

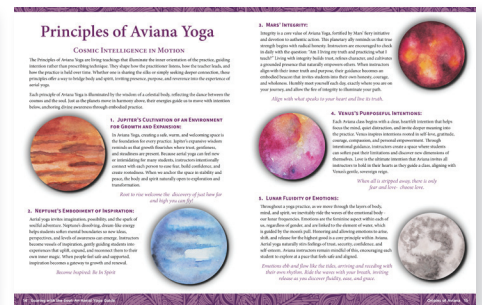
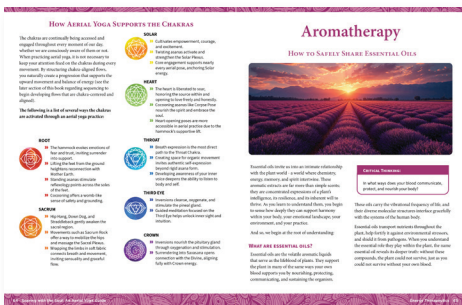
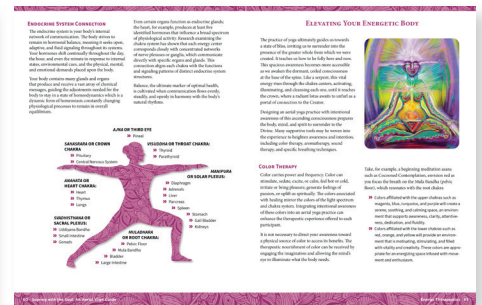
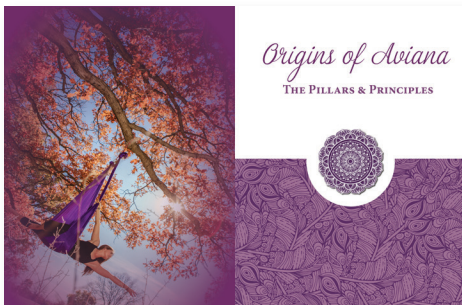
Graphic designer graduating from Aurora University in May 2026, working across publication design, corporate branding, and experimental typography. Translates complex ideas into clear visual systems through academic projects and professional internships.

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Aviana Yoga
Graphic Designer
August 2025 - May 2026

Soaring with the Soul: An Aviana
Aerial Yoga Guide; 2nd Edition

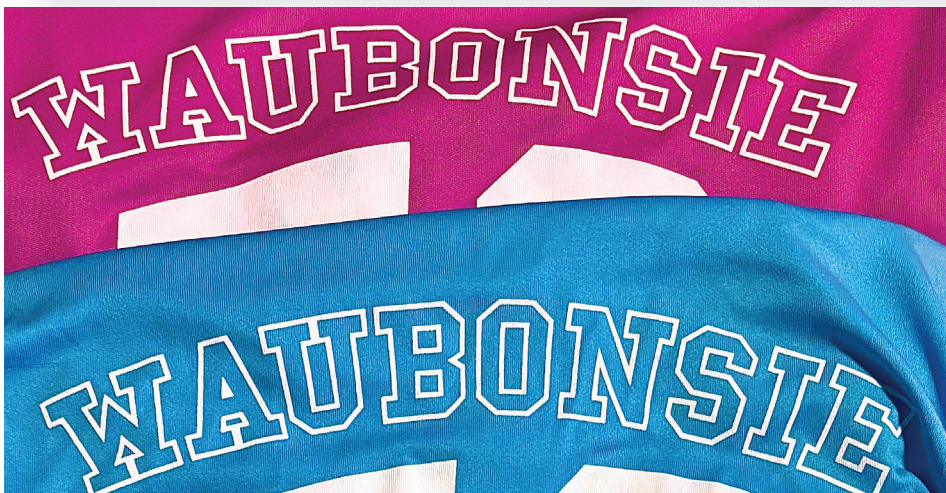
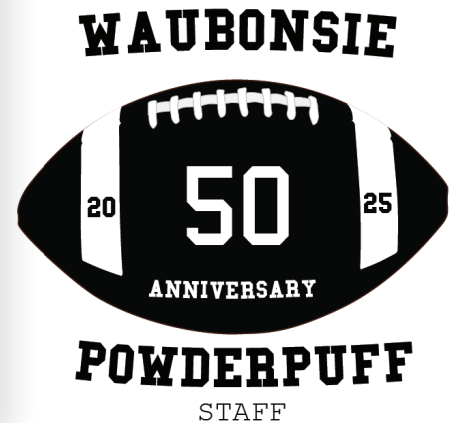


Redesigned a 300-page aerial yoga textbook, collaborating with the author through multiple revisions to develop a consistent visual system that improved legibility and reinforced branding across complex layouts.

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WVHS Powder Puff Football
Graphic Designer
June 2025



Designed commemorative branding and jerseys for Waubonsie Valley High School's 50th Anniversary Powder Puff Football themed jersey.

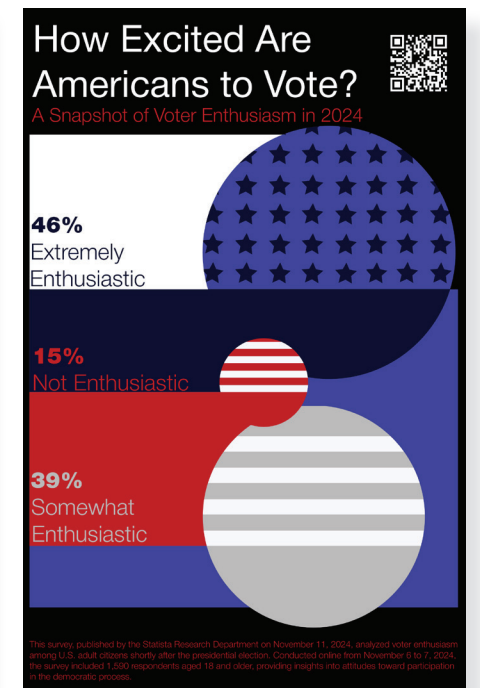
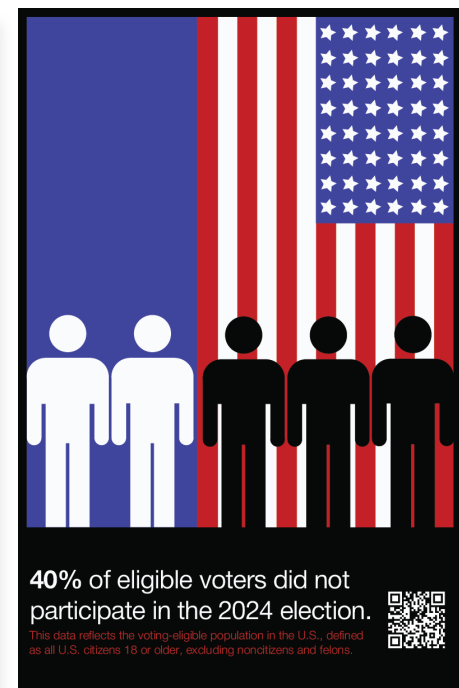
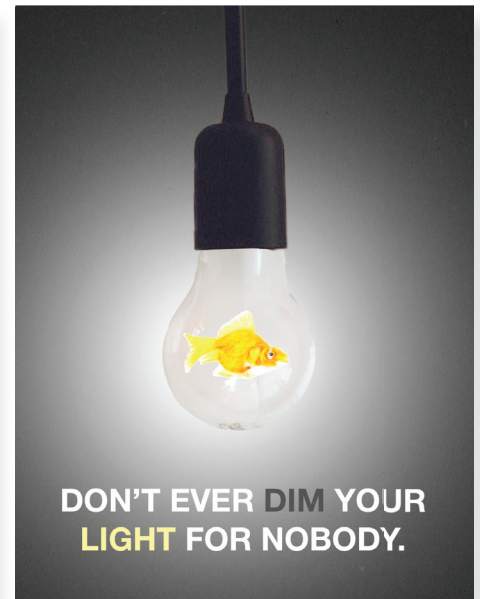
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Posters

Graphic Designer

April 2024 - May 2026



Created a series of conceptual posters exploring personal growth, civic engagement, and typography.

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Times New Wormin'
Graphic Designer/Photographer
April 2024



Designed a custom typeface using live earthworms as letterforms. Positioned worms to form each character, then allowed them to roam and settle naturally, emphasizing their organic movement and texture. The process balanced control with chance, letting the worms' inherent qualities shape the final typography.

(No worms were harmed in the making of this typeface)

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Cane Toad Symbol Project
Graphic Designer
April 2024

Trouble Down Under



HOW CANE TOADS HAVE DECIMATED AUSTRALIAN ECOSYSTEMS

ORIGINS

Cane toads, originally from South and Central America, were introduced to Australia in 1935 to control beetle populations in Queensland's sugarcane crops. However, they became pests, poisoning native predators that attempt to eat them. While spreading across northern Australia at an estimated rate of 40 to 60 km per year.

These resilient creatures forage at night, mainly consuming insects, and require moisture to survive, absorbing water through their skin. Females can lay 8,000-30,000 eggs, allowing rapid population growth. The cane toads' poisonous glands deter most predators, though some native species have adapted to avoid them. Their presence has been linked to a decline in certain native species, like the northern quoll

and goannas, and they compete with other animals for shelter, impacting species like the rainbow bee-eater. Control efforts are limited to small-scale methods, like removing eggs and fencing ponds, as broadscale solutions remain unavailable.

The Australian government has recognized cane toads as a significant threat under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act. To address this, they are developing a threat abatement plan focused on research, management, and targeted actions. This plan aims to reduce the ecological impact of cane toads to protect native species and habitats, ensuring their long-term survival against this invasive pest.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.environment.gov.au/invasive-species/publications/factsheet-cane-toad-bufo-marinus>

BUFOTOXIN

Bufotoxin is a toxic substance found in the skin and glands of various toad species, particularly those in the Bufo genus. It's a natural defense mechanism, deterring predators by causing harmful effects if ingested. The toxic effects can range from mild irritation to severe reactions, depending on the dose and the animal or person affected.

Bufotoxin is made up of several compounds, including bufotenine and bufagin. Bufotenine is a psychoactive substance that can cause hallucinations, while bufagin affects the heart similarly to cardiac glycosides, slowing it down or even causing arrhythmias.

In some cultures, bufotoxins have been used in traditional practices and rituals for their psychoactive properties, although this is highly dangerous.



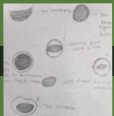
A NEW SYMBOL FOR AN OLD SYSTEM



Full Body Hand-sketch

1 THE FOCUS

Make a symbol of an animal from Central America, that fits within the system, designed by Lance Wyman, for the National Zoological Park in Washington, DC.



Eye Ball Hand-sketch

2 THE PROCESS

The creation of the symbol began with researching the various identifiable attributes of the critter. For the Cane Toad, its spotted back and large eyes were the most important qualities to capture. These ideas are then brought to the sketchbook, where it is important to make multiple sketches to flesh out all aspects of the animal. These sketches are then brought into Illustrator and digitized. It's important to consider that your symbol does not stand out in the system, but rather blends in with its counterparts. My initial illustrator sketch broke the system by including an iris in the eye, and the beginning of a leg.



First Illustrator Sketch

3

These inconsistencies must be corrected or your symbol will not be consistent with the system.

Final Zoo Symbol



Designed an educational infographic and symbol system for invasive cane toads, developed to integrate with existing Zoo visual systems.