

THE CHARGER BULLETIN

The student news source of the University of New Haven.



LIVING AND LEARNING BLACK HISTORY



Cover courtesy of Lismarie Pabon, Hobbes Parisien, and Kayla Mutchler

*Pictured:
Shania A. Wauchope,
Forensic Science,
Class of 2021*

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THE CHARGER BULLETIN

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The Charger Bulletin



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The Charger Bulletin

Voice your opinions on diversity and inclusion with the annual Campus Climate Survey

BY KAYLA MUTCHLER
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Since 2019, the University of New Haven has annually released the Campus Climate Survey, an opportunity for students, faculty, staff and administrators to voice their opinions on diversity and inclusion on campus. The survey opened on Feb. 1 and is available until March 12.

The survey features a variety of questions in regard to diversity and inclusion, where participants can rate answers based on how they feel at the university. There were also sections where participants could type their own responses or leave further comments based on previ-

ous answers. The survey also provided a terms and conditions list, which participants could refer to throughout.

In an email to the campus community, Danielle Cooper, director of research at the Tow Youth Justice Institute and associate professor in the department of criminal justice, described the purpose of the survey. The results will be used to build “a supportive environment for student learning—both inside and outside of the classroom—through the implementation of educational programs, policies and procedures.”

Cooper said, “The University of New Haven seeks to build and promote a supportive campus community where all

individuals are treated with respect and have the opportunity to learn from others in our increasingly global society.”

In a statement to the Charger Bulletin, Cooper said that the goal is, once the survey is closed, to review the information over the summer, then changes would occur in the fall of 2021. However, with the pandemic, it is possible that the timing could change.

To create change, offices and organizations will review the results and decide what actions to take. The Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access (IDEA) Council will also provide recommendations for policies based on the responses.

People wishing to partake in

the survey must be at least 18 years of age or older. All participants are entered into a raffle for a chance to win several incentives, such as \$50 Amazon gift cards, a one-month-long reserved parking spot on campus, and early selection for housing.

Cooper also said that there were many university students and employees who worked together to review the survey for the past few months. She thanked them and vice president for diversity and inclusion and chief diversity officer Lorenzo Boyd, and dean of students Ophelie Rowe-Allen, specifically, who were “attentive and supportive to the requests of students and employees.”

Senior criminal justice major

Mikaela Spennicchia, said the survey can improve the university environment “by listening to what the students want and make change according to the populations who feel unheard and things the university needs to do better.”

However, Spennicchia also said that there are other issues outside of diversity and inclusion, such as yearly housing process issues, that she wishes would be addressed in the survey.

University community members can check their university email to participate, where they will find a personalized survey link and details about the survey.

Myatt Center & NAACP host Black History Month programs

BY TIARA STARKS
ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

February is Black History Month and the Myatt Center for Diversity and Inclusion (MCDI) has been known for hosting and promoting a variety of events to help celebrate and educate students. Carrie Robinson was recently named the director of the Myatt Center and with the new hire, there has been an even greater push to encourage students to learn about how to be more inclusive of their peers on campus.

Zanaiya Léon works at the Myatt Center as the senior coordinator for leadership and diversity and inclusion. She spoke about the pivot from in-person to virtual Black History Month programming on Zoom.

“This year was a bit of a challenge, as you can imagine, since we’re used to hosting programs

that are in-person and usually include food and none of that is safe to do anymore,” she said. “The Black History Month planning committee is made up of students, faculty, and staff so we had to get really creative with planning virtual events that were still engaging, fun, and informative.”

“By offering students more ownership with programs we hope that they can reach out to their networks and introduce their peers to the Myatt Center and all that we have to offer,” said Léon.

Leon said that it’s not just the Myatt Center that puts on events.

“You’ll note that there aren’t any events hosted by the Myatt Center alone and that’s because a lot of the work that the MCDI does is to directly benefit or impact the students, Léon said. “So, we wanted to give students an opportunity to run the show

this time around.”

Student groups such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) have hosted a wide range of events as well.

Destiny Rubins, a junior International Affairs major and the university’s chapter of the NAACP public relations (PR) chair, spoke specifically about the events the organization is holding virtually. “Over the last few weeks and continuing into the next couple of weeks, my e-board has had events celebrating Black History Month,” she said. “Our first event featured a panel discussing what’s next for our generation of people of color (POC). Then, on Feb. 16, we discussed how Black women are discriminated against in the healthcare field.”

She also spoke about the lasting impression these programs and initiatives for Black students have on campus. “Some-

thing as simple as an Instagram post explaining my experience with my natural hair, or a Zoom meeting I hosted with 80+ attendees might not seem like it has much of an impact; But what it does is remind us that this might be a long fight but we are not alone. Black History Month is a reminder that we are more than what they make us

out to be.”

If you would like to get more involved in the Myatt Center for Diversity and Inclusion, you can contact the center at CDI@newhaven.edu.

The Myatt Center
Photo courtesy of Michael Hill



SPORTS

Football program gains 12 on signing day

BY ETHAN CARDONA
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

National Signing Day was Feb. 3 as high school football players began to sign their national letters of intent (NLI) to join college football programs. The Chargers were not left out of the mix, as head coach Chris Pincince announced the signing of 12 new players, who will don Blue and Gold for the next four years.

Of those 12 new players, eight will line up on the offensive side of the ball, including a pair of local quarterbacks, Ethan Reed of Windsor, Conn., and Brady Lafferty of Southington, Conn., who will compete for

the starting position. Lafferty's ties to the athletic department run deep, as his mother was a member of the 1987 Chargers

Football

Photo courtesy of New Haven Athletics



women's basketball team that won the only team national championship in the history of New Haven athletics.

The remaining four will look to become key members of the New Haven secondary, includ-

ing cornerback Christian Ais, who joins the football program along with his twin brother, running back Christopher. These new additions will feature a greater number of athletes from the Connecticut area, with COVID-19 limiting Pincince and his staff during the recruiting process over the last year. "We've probably only left campus less than half a dozen times since the beginning of last fall," said Pincince. "We went to a couple combines and a couple high schools to watch teams play, probably a reason why we have so many local kids joining the program."

These new players are the start of a long process for Pincince and his staff, as they will look

to sign more players through the spring semester, and have already added eight new players since signing day, bringing the freshman class up to 20 members in the early part of the signing season.

New Haven football has maintained a winning record in each season since the program was reinstated prior to the 2009 season, including a 7-3 record in 2019. The most recent post-season success came in 2018 when the team made the NCAA tournament, upsetting the two-seed West Chester University on the road, before losing in the second round of the tournament to Slippery Rock University. The 2020 season was canceled due to COVID-19.

Student athletes break honor roll record

BY LYNDISAY MILLER
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

While college athletes have a reputation for trading academic success for success on the field or court, student-athletes at the University of New Haven have proven versatile as a record-breaking 327 student-athletes were named to the NE-10 Honor Roll or higher after the fall semester.

Women's lacrosse

Photo courtesy of New Haven Athletics



Maintaining a GPA of 3.5 or higher, 196 of the 327 honorees were named to the Dean's List with 37 student-athletes completing the semester with a perfect 4.0 GPA.

"The key is to lead by example," said Zack Pincince, a junior on the baseball team who has continuously earned a spot on the honor roll. "It's important for me to get good grades and stay on top of school because a lot of the younger guys are still trying to figure out study habits and how to succeed in the classroom. So, being able to be

a good role model is essential."

Volleyball led the way for Chargers' athletics in academic success during the fall 2020 semester, as they posted a team average GPA of 3.73. Out of the 16 players on their roster, 13 of them earned a spot on the Dean's List.

"The key to being a successful student-athlete in college is time management." Said Mikayla Bowerfind, a senior on the women's lacrosse team. Bowerfind, who earned a 4.0 GPA last semester, says that sports have helped her find success in the classroom.

The women's lacrosse team recorded the largest number of student-athletes on the Dean's List, as 19 of them were honored. According to Laura Agbayani, a sophomore on the women's lacrosse team, being named to the honor roll last semester was "even more rewarding than usual."

"Homework and assignments are already tough and having limited resources due to COVID-19 doesn't help." Said

Agbayani. "But New Haven has worked hard to make it possible for us to succeed."

The men's soccer team also found success in the classroom during the fall semester as the team averaged a 3.24 GPA. Senior Estanislao Desseno and Junior Francisco Guedes led the way for their team. Both finished the fall semester with a 4.0 GPA.

While the average GPA for a student at the University of New Haven is a 3.44, Charger student-athletes have positioned themselves above average. Despite facing unprecedented challenges, Chargers' athletics saw over 50% of their student-athletes listed on the honor roll.

For Cypress Levitt, a two-sport athlete for the Chargers, time management is essential. "Balancing academics and athletics is never easy," said Levitt, a freshman member of the women's soccer and lacrosse teams. "It's proven even more difficult in college, but seeing my name listed makes it all worth it."

The Northeast-10 Academ-

ic Honor Roll recognizes student-athletes within the conference for their academic success. To be eligible for the NE10 Honor Roll, students must maintain a GPA of 3.0 or above and be registered as a full-time student.

"Seeing my teammates do well in the classroom always encourages me to do better," said Pincince. "It's good to have that healthy competition."

With 14 school and 6,300 student-athletes in the conference, roughly 70% have been named to the honor roll for the fall 2020 semester. Out of the 4,417 honorees conference wide, 450 athletes posted a 4.0 GPA.

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The Charger Bulletin!



SPORTS

Black History Month in professional sports: A chance for celebration and critique

BY TYLER WELLS
STAFF WRITER

February offers a chance to reflect on the importance of Black history and accomplishments. In professional sports, it allows leagues to celebrate the successes of their Black athletes while continuing to advocate for a better future.

February was officially designated Black History Month in 1976 by then-Pres. Gerald Ford. It was originally established by historian Carter G. Woodson, who helped form the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (ASNLH) in 1915. The ASNLH sponsored a week of recognition in February, coinciding with the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass.

For sports, the month is a chance to celebrate a group of athletes who persevered through discrimination to etch a legacy in their respective sports.

Many of the greatest Black athletes have played an important role in shifting the nation's social fabric. Athletes such as Jesse Owens and Jackie Robinson helped begin the breaking down of racial barriers that continued plaguing the nation following the abolition of slavery.

Major League Baseball is celebrating the month by posting a series of artwork honoring some of the sport's greatest players. The MLB's first tribute was posted on Feb. 9, recognizing the career of Satchel Paige.

This month's celebrations come following the MLB's Dec.

16 decision to elevate the Negro Leagues to "Major League" status. The move corrects a 100-year oversight of an important part of the sport's history.

"All of us who love baseball have long known that the Negro Leagues produced many of our game's best players," said MLB Commissioner Rob Manfred in December. "We are now grateful to count the players of the Negro Leagues where they belong."

This reflects an initiative to better recognize the role of Black athletes in the sport.

Many other professional leagues are following a similar strategy to celebrate the month. The NBA is featuring the sport's legends through their "Barrier Breakers" series, starting with the 11-time champion Bill Rus-

sell. The league has also recognized its current Black players by highlighting their stories and contributions off the court.

The NFL said they have decided to celebrate the month by dedicating hours of programming to honor "the iconic people, stories, and events that shaped the NFL." This started prior to Super Bowl 55 on Feb. 7 and continued through last week.

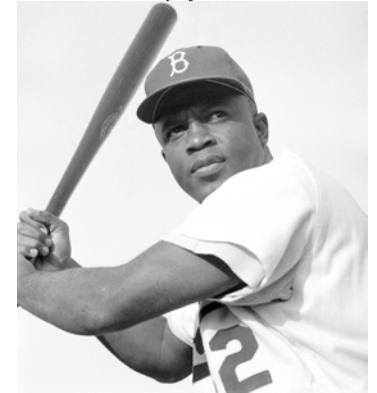
However, this month also provides an opportunity for professional sports to be critical of the difficulties Black athletes face. For example, the NFL continues to struggle with diversity in their coaching staff and front offices. In sports such as baseball, poor diversity outreach has led to a lack of representation from Black players, coaches and

owners.

Because of these issues, the month has double meaning for professional sports; it is a time for both celebration and critique. The accomplishments of Black athletes are meant to be highlighted and not forgotten as sports continue their fight for diversity and inclusion.

Jackie Robinson

Photo courtesy of Creative Commons



Charger sports spotlight: Gabriela Chavez

BY TYLER GARNET
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Charger Sports Spotlight, our new section highlighting sports teams and players at the university, begins with Gabriela Chavez, a senior health science major from Massachusetts. She is a center-midfielder for the University of New Haven Women's Soccer Team.

The goal of her last season here is, to cherish the moment. "The pandemic has put a halt on many things in the world for almost a year now. You never know when things like this are going to occur and take things away from you so quickly so you just have to roll with the punches," she said. Whether it be an actual season game or a scrimmage against another school, in Chavez trying to make the most of her last season.

Soccer, according to Chavez,

has been in her blood since she was three years old. Between her uncles, father and brother playing (and Chavez competing with her brother to see who played better) Chavez has been surrounded by soccer. Her dad is from Ecuador, with a big **Gabriela Chavez**

Photo courtesy of New Haven Athletics



soccer culture. Chavez was an active girl, who usually had her dad as the coach.

"Even though dad can be the toughest coach to approve," Chavez said she "fell in love with the sport."

One team tradition is for students to wrap their wrist

with athletic tape and write who they play for on the tape. One side would read "UNH Soccer team" while the other side reads whatever Chavez personally plays for, such as "family" or "friends" or even as simple as "So I don't have to do homework."

After not having the opportunity in the fall, Gabriela hopes that one of their potential scrimmages will be a "senior night." No athlete ever wants to stop playing but a senior night is a great way to end a career. Chavez said that she has already thought of a career after the University of New Haven and soccer and has begun to apply for nursing schools.

For now, Chavez hopes that the team can get together one more time. With COVID-19 protocols, teams are only allowed to train in small groups. One thing she tells the underclassmen is to "step up to the plate," as their turn is next once the seniors graduate.

Chavez has had many great memories from being on the soccer team like scoring her first goal at home with her family in attendance. She hopes to make more memories in soccer and her last semester.

STUDENT LIFE

Black community at University of New Haven speaks out about lack of Black faculty on campus

BY AMANDA M. CASTRO
MANAGING EDITOR

In a year where overwhelming racial unrest has taken place in the U.S. and in the University of New Haven's own backyard, increasing faculty diversity has become a priority this year for college campuses across the country. However, according to students and some professors at the university, there still is a weak presence of Black faculty on campus.

According to Inside Higher Ed, in 2017 nationally, 6% of college professors were Black. Vice president for diversity and inclusion and chief diversity officer Lorenzo Boyd said that 69% of the university's full-time faculty is white, 31% non-white, and 9% of faculty self-identified as single-race Black/African American in the fall of 2020. A website that collects data from different universities for rank, College Factual, reported that New Haven is ranked 1,813th out of 3,750 colleges and universities in ethnic diversity nationally.

Senior political science major

and university chapter NAACP president Jordan Harris said that the lack of a Black presence in the university's faculty is disappointing because diversity on campus has not "grown as much as you would want it."

"My major is political science, and we have no Black faculty," said Harris. "For other departments, it's kind of hard to find professors that will teach a course surrounding race, and if you want a Black professor, most likely, their classes fill up very quickly. Sometimes you don't even know if you do have Black professors."

Junior psychology major Kevise Canales-Jenkins said that the lack of Black faculty makes her feel tired. Though her first time being exposed to Black teachers was at the university, she said she wishes there were more Black faculty with whom she, a Black student, could identify.

"When you see someone that looks like you, you're like 'Oh my God, they could do it, so I could do it, too,'" said Canales-Jenkins. "It's just that basic concept that would just, like, spark so much passion in people

and drive.... Just like the basic thing that you see someone that looks like you."

Canales-Jenkins also said that she was the only Black person in her race, class and gender in criminal justice class and that her professor pulled her aside to warn her about the topics that would be discussed in class so that she would not feel "singled out."

"I mean, I know that a lot of universities are now like, 'we have to get more Black professors,' and so there's a large push to get them," said Harris. "At the same time, I think maybe [the university] should be more creative in [their] ideas and do more searches to hire to get more people in here."

Canales-Jenkins said although she understands that it may be difficult to find Black professors, she thinks the university should be doing more to hire them.

Boyd said that there is "absolutely" a lack of Black faculty at the university and that it's "a higher ed issue in general."

"Not all universities are like that because before I came here," said Boyd, "I was a department chair at an HBCU (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) and we did not have a dearth of Black and Brown faculty – that was the norm. Most of our faculty were Black and Brown at HBCUs...I've worked in HBCUs and I also worked in PWI's (Predominantly White Institutions), and there is, in fact, a difference."

Boyd said that the only way to hire more Black and Brown faculty is to simply do so.

"When you have no Black and Brown faculty, it's hard to attract them," he said.

"The toll that it has on Black faculty being in low numbers, we get what I like to call the

'black tax,'" said Boyd, "so if there's only three or four Black faculty, guaranteed, whenever there are students of color that need help, we have to jump in or whenever there's a diversity issue, we have to rule on it because there are not enough people to go around so the few Black people that you have that are good, tend to get overtaxed and get the worn out and that becomes problematic."

Professor in the university's English department Randall Horton said that for 11 years he has been the only full-time Black professor in his department. He also said that having few Black professors on staff makes him "frustrated," but that it is because of a lack of interest in applying for a position at the

university.

"A lot of times, people aren't even applying for these positions, so that's a problem," said Horton. "But I think we can be more targeted."

Canales-Jenkins and Harris said that though they have not had many Black professors, the few that they had have made impacts on their student life.

"Our Black and Brown students need role models," said Boyd. "They need to be able to see that that's who they can be if the only role model they have is a white person that doesn't have the same living experiences that you have... They could still mentor you, but there's a piece missing."

The Myatt Center

Photo courtesy of Lismarie Pabon



Graphic courtesy of Elisa D'Egidio

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CHARGERBULLETIN.COM

STUDENT LIFE

NAACP continues to educate on campus

BY BETH BEAUDRY
STUDENT LIFE EDITOR

Since its establishment 121 years ago, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) remains America's largest civil rights activist organization, expanding by over 2,200 branches, including a chapter at the University of New Haven.

The university's chapter continuously participates in community service and holds weekly events that tackle crucial topics, such as poverty in New Haven, Black justice, Black history and more.

Senior political science major and the university's NAACP president Jordan Harris has been involved with NAACP since his freshman year. Harris has witnessed and contributed to the growth of the organization. He said that the club has become more diverse, creative and that other organizations on campus, such as the Undergraduate Student Government Association (USGA), have become more involved. Harris feels that now more than ever, NAACP is being recognized and respected on campus.

Not only does the NAACP spark important conversation and action, but to some, it also acts as a haven and a voice for its members.

"What made me involved was the fact that it was a Black community. That it was a safe Black community for me to speak my mind and also, learn more about who I am and where I come, and where my community comes from," said treasurer Kaela Bazemore, senior criminal justice major. "It's more like a very comfortable safe haven."

"I have gotten better in being more confident in myself and speaking my mind on racial issues, not just with Black people, but all people of color," said freshman industrial and sys-

tems engineering major Aaron Brooks, NAACP's executive assistant.

Multiple members of the 2020-2021 NAACP executive board (e-board) said that their initial reaction to the chapter was that it fostered an inclusive, encouraging atmosphere. This prompted them to continue attending meetings and to eventually run for spots on the e-board.

Senior forensics biology major and vice president of the university's NAACP chapter Jennifer Edwards said that even before she chose which college to attend, she knew she wanted to join an NAACP chapter. Although she said that she was intimidated at first, members of the organization were always welcoming and finding different ways to engage with incoming students. Edwards said that this is what led her to become vice president.

"[NAACP] has made me



more self-aware and conscious of what type of person I am. What I do and say has an impact on others," said Edwards. "No matter if you are Black or if you are of any identity, it really

made me be more motivated to get involved."

"I ended up joining the e-board and meeting wonderful Black excellence people, who prove that it is reachable for you to obtain," said Bazemore. "It has affected me as a person because I see the world differently now. It's almost as if I step out of myself and see the Black community as a whole."

Public relations chair and junior international affairs major Destiny-Jenkins Rubins said that she ran for e-board because she wanted to become better at speaking up for herself and others. Rubins said that being active in NAACP has helped to raise her confidence, and has provided her with an opportunity to better connect with her Black peers.

"Being able to speak to people of color and get their experiences and my experiences and be able to relate them," said Rubins, "it made me happier because I knew I wasn't going through it alone."

Rubins and the other e-board members are not the only students on campus who find solace in NAACP. According to Edwards, even in the pandemic, when student organizations are having difficulty getting

Graphic courtesy of Christopher Colquhoun

attendance for virtual events, the numbers are only rising for NAACP. So far this year, attendance at their events this year typically ranges from 30-80 members.

On Feb. 9, over 70 participants attended one of their recent Black History Month events: "White Washing of Black History," featuring alumni and former NAACP president Es-pranza Humphrey as a guest speaker. The Zoom presentation centered around whitewashing of Black culture and people, especially Black women, and the impact it has had throughout history and still today. Their most recent event, "Disparities in the Healthcare Field for Black Women" was held on Feb. 16, and brought in over 40 participants.

"We didn't even need a budget, and we'd still have an impact on campus so great that it spoke for itself," said Edwards.

Students can follow NAACP on Instagram @uhnnaacp and visit Charger Connection to find out more about what events are happening on campus.

NAACP e-board
Photo courtesy of NAACP



ENTERTAINMENT

Seven films to watch during Black History Month

BY JADA CLARKE
MULTIMEDIA EDITOR

Black History Month is a time to reflect on significant events in African American history and to celebrate the accomplishments made by the Black community. Here are seven movies you should check out.

“The Wiz” (1978)

This adaptation of the children’s novel, “The Wonderful Wizard of Oz,” is an urban retelling of the classic story. The film featured an all-Black cast and included iconic stars such as Nipsey Russell, Diana Ross, and Michael Jackson.

“The Wiz” is available on Hulu with a premium subscription.

“Coming to America” (1988)

A papered prince renounces his arranged marriage and travels halfway across the world to find his true love. This hit romantic comedy was created by lead actor, Eddie Murphy. The film received positive reviews during its release and became the highest-grossing film of 1988 for Paramount Pictures.

The sequel, “Coming 2 America,” is scheduled to release on Amazon Prime Video next month.

“The Women of Brewster Place” (1989)

The miniseries, based on the 1982 novel, premiered on ABC and was produced by Oprah Winfrey’s production company, Harpo Productions. It tells the story of several women living in a run-down apartment building while struggling with prejudice, poverty, and living in a man’s world. The series was highly acclaimed and won an NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Drama Series, Mini-Series, or Television Movie.

Watch “The Women of Brewster Place” on Sling TV with a premium subscription or on

BET and TV One.

“Lean on Me” (1989)

“Lean on Me” is based on the true story of an inner-city high school in New Jersey. The film follows Joe Clark, the tyrannical principal of Eastside High School, and his journey to improve the school’s deteriorating standards by any means necessary.

This inspirational story is available to stream on HBO Max.

“Cinderella” (1997)

This version of “Rodgers and Hammerstein’s Cinderella” is widely praised for its intense diversity and use of a strong lead. According to IMDb, “Brandy became the first African American actress to play Cinderella” on-screen, opening the door for movies like “The Princess and the Frog” (2009). This film became an outlet for young people of color to see themselves represented in the media.

“Cinderella” was released on Disney+ on February 12.

“Get Out” (2017)

Jordan Peele’s directing debut starts with this horror film. A young Black man plans to meet his white girlfriend’s family for the weekend. What starts

as an awkward encounter turns into a terrifying experience.

The film shows that the white savior complex is an intense threat to the Black community. Peele’s work earned him the honor of becoming the first African-American to win Best Original Screenplay.

“Get Out” is available on Hulu with a premium subscription.

“Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse” (2018)

This animated feature won Best Animated Feature Film at the Golden Globes, the Academy Awards, and the Critics’ Choice Awards. The film tells the story of Miles Morales, an Afro-Latino teen who has to balance transferring to a new school and learning to deal with his new superpowers. The unique animation style and strong Black lead combine to create another outlet of representation.

Although the film recently left Netflix, audiences can anticipate the release of “Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse 2” in October 2022.

Into the Spider-Verse

Photo courtesy of Creative Commons



Underrated Black artists

BY CAM GARDEN
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Follow the Charger Bulletin on Spotify!



Happy Black History Month! Although Black history should be learned and celebrated every month, February is a great time to learn more about Black history. Here’s a list of some underrated Black artists to add to your playlists.

“And I Am Telling You I’m Not Going” – Jennifer Hudson

Jennifer Hudson isn’t an unknown artist, but her vocals are definitely underrated. This song from her debut role in “Dreamgirls” is a perfect example of her strong vocals and ability to belt out any note.

“(No One Knows Me) Like the Piano” – Sampha

Sampha is one of my favorite artists. He sings incredibly powerful ballads, and this one in particular is about his relationship with his mother as he grew up an artist.

“Unmoved (A Black Woman Truth)” – Ayoni

Hands down, one of my absolute favorite artists, Ayoni is an incredible vocalist and even though she’s still fairly new to the music scene, her song “Unmoved” was featured on Spotify’s “Most Beautiful Songs in the World” playlist.

“Cranes in the Sky” – Solange Knowles

The lesser known and underrated sister of Beyoncé, Solange, is another incredible vocalist. She spent eight years working on her critically acclaimed album “A Seat at the Table.” This song earned her a Grammy for Best R&B performance.

“Why I Love the Moon” – Phony Ppl.

This five member neo-soul/funk group is based in Brooklyn, NY. They have been featured on a song with Megan Thee Stallion. This particular song sports a jazzy and upbeat melody.

“Girl Like Me” – Jazmine Sullivan ft. H.E.R.

Both of these artists are incredible vocalists. She can belt a note, hold a strong melody, and hit some life-changing harmonies. H.E.R., on the other hand, has a more subtle voice but all of her music is incredibly calming and peaceful, balancing the song.

“Georgia to Texas” – Leon Bridges

As he moves away from his debut album that was heavily stylized similarly to music from the ‘60s, Bridges enters more into R&B for his second album. This album as a whole is beautiful, thought-provoking, and moving.

“Toast” – Koffee

“Toast” is the second track on Koffee’s debut EP “Rapture.” This EP not only secured her a Grammy, but she became the youngest and only female artist to win a Grammy for Best Reggae Album. She has released 13 singles and is definitely an artist to watch going forward.

Powerful performances shine through in “Malcolm and Marie”

BY ELDRICK GREENWAY
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

A dialogue-heavy film about relationship issues might be the broad definition for the emotional, recently-released Netflix film, “Malcolm and Marie.” Giving us their best performance, the film stars Zendaya, playing Marie, and John David Washington, playing Malcolm. Marie is an actor who believes she deserves more credit for a film that was mostly about her life, which was directed by her self-centered and insecure boyfriend, Malcolm.

From a personal standpoint, this film was well done. Creator of HBO show “Euphoria,” director Sam Levinson wanted this film to expose the problems that are faced within the film industry and he did just that. This should be one of the reasons

why you should avoid the strong negative criticism against this movie and give it a chance.

Most critics tend to believe that this film isn’t art or that it’s a meltdown because of how repetitive the arguments get, which is understandable. However, it goes without saying that this film had a strong opening, great monologues and something that many filmmakers don’t adjust to nowadays; the pacing of the film.

Raise your hand if you watch modern films on streaming services. Now, raise your hand if you watch a wide variety of modern films that cuts to a different shot every three to five seconds. Don’t lie. The pacing of this film lets the audience be the moment with not only Malcolm and Marie, but with Zendaya and Washington. We get to gaze and feel their performances as they constantly argue

and make up again. If this is incorrect, you have every right to correct it, but we haven’t seen shots that linger on the actors like that in a long time. Long takes are used for a wide variety of reasons from establishing a mood or setting to creating suspense.

A film relying only on dialogue can get boring, but this is not the case; in fact, it’s the complete opposite. This film is a mixture of a strong story, characters, cinematography and much more. Don’t go into this film expecting everything to be a 10 out of 10; movies aren’t perfect. Instead, watch this film with an open and positive mind giving the new, emotional Washington performance a chance. Because what both Malcolm and Marie go through feels, and is, real and powerful, just like their performance.

People don’t like Sia’s new movie, and here’s why

BY SHAYLEN STANCIL
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Award-winning singer and songwriter Sia is trying to make a name for herself in the film industry. Sia’s first film, “Music,” which she wrote and directed, was released on Feb. 10, and the response to it so far has not been positive. As of Feb. 18 it had a 11% rating on RottenTomatoes and 3.1/10 on IMDb.

The story follows a girl with autism named Music (Maddie Ziegler) and her older sister Zu (Kate Hudson) who has recently become her legal guardian.

Film critics and fans of Sia have found this movie to be insensitive and tone deaf toward the autism community. The main issue people have is that the

actress who plays Music, former “Dance Moms” star, Ziegler, is neurotypical. Audiences have said that a movie that raises awareness about autism should feature an actor who is on the autism spectrum. Critics have said that Maddie’s portrayal of a person with autism was dramatic and over-exaggerated to the point that her portrayal comes across as mocking. Sia claims that she did originally cast a non-verbal autistic actor, but the actor found the experience to be “unpleasant and stressful.”

Another issue for critics is a scene in the movie where Music is having a meltdown and her sister uses a restraint method called the prone restraint to calm her. This method is extremely dangerous and has been

a cause of death for people with autism. According to an article by Vice, at least 20 children have died as a result of restraints since 2001.

Sia addressed this on Twitter prior to deleting her account by saying, “I plan to remove the restraint scenes from all future printings,” she wrote. “I listened to the wrong people and that is my responsibility, my research was clearly not thorough enough, not wide enough.”

Despite everything wrong with this movie, in late January, “Music” received two Golden Globe nominations, for Best Motion Picture, Musical or Comedy, while Kate Hudson’s performance was nominated for Best Performance by an Actress in a Motion Picture, Musical or Comedy.

An inside look into a pop icon’s life

BY MARIAH TOWLES
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Why is everyone talking about the one and only Britney Spears? And if I let you know, would you hold it against me? According to The New York Times Presents’ “Framing Britney Spears,” the “Hit Me Baby One More Time” singer has always been a kind, strong-minded woman. The documentary begins by recalling Spears’ sudden and heavily scrutinized rise to fame.

Parents often had complaints about Spears’ clothing -- or lack thereof -- along with her dance moves and song lyrics. The “risqué” image of Britney Spears hit its peak after dating Justin Timberlake. Timberlake claimed Spears cheated on him and the media shamed her for this without missing a beat. The misogyny expressed by the media was accepted as the truth. From the scandal with Justin, being followed by paparazzi, and losing custody of her children somewhere along the way Spears’ mental health deteriorated. That is where the conservatorship comes in.

For those who do not know, a conservatorship is when a judge appoints someone to manage the

finances and daily life of another due to age or mental limitations. Spears’ conservatorship puts her father, Jamie Spears, in control of her daily life and finances. Her father was not often around during Britney’s rise to fame. Whether conservatorship was needed in the first place is heavily debated, but it is now clear to many that Spears has the mental capacity to make some decisions and she wants out of this arrangement with her father. Let’s be clear, it seems she is not fighting the conservatorship itself, but the fact that her father is conservator to her estate. He previously was the conservator to both estate and daily activities. In a document, Britney basically thanks her fans for staying informed and speaking out.

The documentary closes with Spears attempting to remove her father as conservator, but failing. Now, a trusted lawyer will co-conservator the estate with him. It is believed Spears’ father believes he would be hurting his daughter by stepping down.

“Framing Britney Spears” is available for streaming on Hulu and FX.

Britney Spears

Photo courtesy of Creative Commons



POLITICS

Kamala Harris: A future of firsts and progress

BY ISABELLE HAJEK
STAFF WRITER

On Jan. 19, Sen. Kamala Devi Harris was sworn into office as Vice President of the U.S., and now, as the highest-ranking woman in the country's history, she is expected to continue to lead through a series of firsts and progress.

When Pres. Joseph R. Biden announced his running mate to be Kamala Harris, conversations surrounding the importance of representation and the impact of Harris holding office began to take hold. Not only is Harris the first woman to be vice president, but she is also the first Asian American and Black American vice president as her parents are from Jamaica and India. Harris, 55, is also one of the youngest leaders in current American politics.

Her list of firsts does not stop

there.

Together, Harris and Biden make up the first presidential administration since 1980 that does not hail from Ivy League Universities. Harris is the first vice president from a Historically Black College or University (HBCU), Howard University and the first to be a member of a black sorority.

The label of "first," forever attached to Harris' name, does more than declare her notoriety and place in history. Increased representation in politics impacts society by demonstrating progress in reducing systemic barriers, providing a true demographic representation of the voter base constituency and bringing a diversity of thought and experience to political conversations.

Harris has demonstrated how important representation in politics is as she has shown over

and over her ability to institute progressive policies meant to improve opportunities for all. As the elected District Attorney of San Francisco, she implemented a program to help first-time drug offenders earn their high school diploma. As the elected California Attorney General, Harris created the state's first Bureau of Children's Justice as a point of reform in the state's Juvenile Justice reform. In her capac-

ity as a lawyer, she has also supported exploited California homeowners, students, and veterans and defended the Affordable Care Act, environmental law, and marriage equality.

In her political career, as a Senator, she has protected DEAMers and fought for better conditions in immigrant deten-

tion facilities in the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee. She has also tackled issues surrounding securing American elections, international security, bail reform, hunger relief, rent regulations, maternal health care, and climate change among many others.

Harris most likely will continue her legacy of activism and progressive initiatives in her as vice president as she works to embody the words she spoke the first time she stood in a courtroom, "Kamala Harris, For the People,"

These words rang true when Harris gave her inaugural address. Speaking words of hope Harris called for unity in the nation, calling on all citizens to be innovators and pioneers as they have, "The courage to see beyond crisis, to do what
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Kamala Harris

Photo courtesy of Creative Commons



Marjorie Taylor Greene: A threat to politics

BY TYLER WELLS
STAFF WRITER

Following the end of the Trump Administration, the Republican Party appeared at a crossroads: build off his fervent fanbase or distance themselves from it. There has been a gulf between far-right politicians and more moderate members of the party.

Enter Marjorie Taylor Greene, who has disrupted the foundations of traditional politics and presented herself as the Trumpian torch bearer after just a month of being in office.

The House voted to remove Greene from her committee assignments on Feb. 4, citing her history of violent sentiments, such as liking a Facebook comment that said "a bullet to the head would be quicker" in removing Speaker of the House

Nancy Pelosi and claiming that the 2018 California wildfires were caused by a "Jewish space laser."

The congresswoman, who represents Georgia's 14th district, has become the political representative of right-wing conspiracy theorists. She has embraced QAnon, a group that promotes an internet-based conspiracy that Trump will take down a child sex-trafficking ring made up of the world's elite. QAnon has since evolved into the base of many far-right extremist conspiracy theories and ideologies.

These claims have been disproven and discredited. However, they have continually sparked violent far-right supporters, many of whom led the Jan. 6 Capitol insurrection.

The vote to remove Greene from her committees passed 230-199, with every Democrat voting yes, and just 11 of the

210 House Republicans crossing the party line. This came as House GOP leader Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.) tried to distance his caucus from Greene's sentiments while still voting in support of her.

"Past comments from and endorsed by Marjorie Taylor Greene on school shootings, political violence, and anti-Semitic conspiracy theories do not represent the values or beliefs of the House Republican Conference," McCarthy said. "This House condemned QAnon last Congress and continues to do so today."

Even though McCarthy said this, congressional Republicans continue to show where their loyalties lie.

It is even more telling following the House GOP's privately voting whether to remove Rep. Liz Cheney (R-Wyo.) from her post after her vote to impeach

former President Trump. Sixty-one Republicans anonymously voted against their fellow party member, because of her stance against Trump. Cheney retained her party leadership.

Acceptance of Greene's ideology is another example of some Republicans welcoming baseless conspiracies into the political world. It is the same security Trump gave his supporters while in office, leading to five people being killed during the Jan. 6 insurrection. Though Greene has been removed from her committees, the Georgian congresswoman may be more influential than ever. Now, she has much of the Republican Party indirectly supporting her extremist rhetoric.

"Going forward, I've been freed," she said following the House hearings. "I have a lot of free time on my hands, which means I can talk to a whole

lot more people all over this country and ... make connections and build a huge amount of support that I've already got started with."

Greene, along with Reps. Matt Gaetz (R-Fla.) and Madison Cawthorn (R-N.C.), have become primary figures of the Trumpism movement. They have shown a disregard of facts in favor of pushing a political agenda.

This is a dangerous precedent for contemporary politics during an age where technology makes conspiracies more transmissible. It has also begun spreading globally, with thousands of QAnon accounts starting in European countries. It falls on the U.S. to now rebuild confidence and trust in the government, keeping conspiracists like Greene from growing their influence and changing politics forever.

OPINIONS

Harris

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is hard, to do what is good, to unite, to believe in ourselves, believe in our country, believe in what we can do together.”

As a pioneer, Harris embodies the words of her mother, “Kamala, you may be the first to do many things, but make sure you are not the last.”

After making history herself, Harris swore in three history-making Senators into office: Alex Padilla, California’s first Latina Senator, Rev. Raphael Warnock, Georgia’s first Black Senator, and Jon Ossoff, the youngest Senator elected to office since Biden in 1972. With the swearing in of these Senators, the Democratic party officially took control of the Senate with Harris being the majority tie-breaking vote.

Presently, in the U.S government, Democrats control the House of Representatives, the Senate, and the presidency. Majority control combined with Biden’s diverse cabinet and Harris’ history of progressive policies have reduced the barriers to progressive policies and reform.

How the pandemic has impacted procrastination

BY LYNDSEY MILLER
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Procrastination may be the hidden disease eating away at the productivity of college students. We’ve all done it at some point -- stared blankly at a homework assignment, daydreamed of a million other things we’d rather be doing, and it may be taking a larger toll on some students than anticipated.

However, students may not always be at fault for their poor habits. According to Piers Steel, the author of “The Procrastination Equation,” students are not only socially, but biologically predisposed to procrastination. While you may put off assignments with the deadline only an hour away, you might not be able to help it.

For Julia Agram, a sophomore at the University of New Haven, she’s never procrastinated so much in her life.

“You’d think that because activities have been limited and we’re stuck at home so often,

we’d be bored and do our homework,” said Agram. “But that’s not the case.”

Despite being stuck in what seems to be an endless cycle of boredom, this has not changed the initial pressures, such as an extracurricular activity or job, that can often make it difficult for some students to prioritize school work.

“Ever since we’ve gone to online classes and remote learning, I hardly feel like a student,” said Daniel Brauer, a senior at the University of New Haven. “I don’t even feel like I’m getting an education.”

Brauer works a part-time job and has picked up more hours at work, despite missing class and not having enough time to finish assignments.

According to Agram and other students, a substantial factor in their increase of procrastination has been fueled by technological distractions.

“We spend so much class time on our computers and the Internet, how could I not be

distracted?” said Agram.

A study from the American Psychological Association says that up to 95% of college students admit to procrastinating and even suggests that the closer you are to temptations, the more difficult it is to remain focused; especially in college, where most students live in a close radius to their friends.

“It’s even more difficult to remain focused when you live in a house with four of your best friends,” said Brauer. Even when friends are busy, Brauer said he’d “rather watch Netflix or literally do anything else.”

Students at the University of New Haven are not the only ones struggling with procrastination. “Classes started this week for us,” said Dylan Klock, a senior at St. Thomas Aquina’s College. “I already haven’t completed the first assignment. We’ll see how my grades turn out this semester.”

However, not all students claim that procrastination has negative effects on them.

Graduate student, Raven Linton, said she always waits until the last minute to do assignments as she, “does her best work under pressure.”

“I grew up playing sports my whole life,” said Linton. “So, when the pressure is on and my adrenaline is high, I feel like I’m able to complete work at my full potential. That’s just me, though.”

A study from the Warwick Business School said that when students receive larger assignments, they are more inclined to wait until the last minute to complete the assignment and saw their grades drop 5%. This can have a snowball effect, as low grades can make a student less confident.

According to CollegeXpress, students can avoid procrastination by getting organized, setting simple and achievable goals, creating a schedule, using incentives to complete assignments and most importantly, taking breaks.

COVID life: Continue or vanish?

BY TIANA FRIAS
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

During this ongoing pandemic, society has picked up new, technology-based practices. Things such as virtual snow days, Zoom office hours, and virtual dates have become a normal thing for everyone in the past year. But just because we’ve picked these up to continue life, does that mean it’ll continue post-COVID?

One thing that has become prevalent since COVID-19, became known as a serious threat is Zoom calls and the need to conduct online schooling. In the colder months, schools found

themselves faced with the issue of snow days. However, online learning allows schools to easily continue teaching on the coldest days of the year -- is it fair for the students?

For years, children from colder areas have always looked forward to snow days. Being able to bundle up and run outside after waking up to play in the snow, then running inside hours later to a warm cup of hot chocolate is a tradition many are accustomed to. Is taking that joy away from kids worth it for another day of school? For kids who are completely remote, it could be a chance to step away from screens for the

day and have some fun. A snow day could be the perfect cure for the stress everyone has been through the past year.

As a freshman in college, I’ve had my fair share of virtual office hours and other important Zoom calls, especially in the last few weeks. Virtual calls are just another element that has become part of everyone’s daily lives. Personally, I find virtual calls to be convenient for short calls or something quick that you may not want to go in person for, but too long to email about. Others may disagree and feel like virtual calls take away the personal feeling of a meeting, but I believe both ways

work best. Virtual calls also bring the opportunity to meet with a professor in between classes, especially if you have a busy schedule. I think that both in person and virtual meetings should be offered post-COVID-19.

Virtual dates have become something that couples have taken part of since the first quarantine began. Staying safe and being able to spend time with your partner are both something that is especially important for someone in a relationship, especially in the early days of the pandemic. Many took to Zoom and other platforms such as Netflix Party to stay connected

while being apart.

Of course there are those who have been in long distance relationships long before the pandemic started, and had to make virtual dates work, but, now, everyone got creative during the pandemic as well. In general, virtual dates can be fun and help to stay connected, but I don’t think it’s the same as being with the person you love in a face-to-face situation. COVID-19 has definitely given us a lot of new things, but a few should stay in the past. Let’s let kids have their snow days and hold hands in the streets after this is all over.

OPINIONS

Passing laws on hair discrimination only does so much

BY KRISTEN MARCUS
OPINION EDITOR

Women and girls are taught that their hair is one of the most prized possessions they can have. Hair can represent beauty standards or religious beliefs that people stand by. However, society standards have changed how we look at hair in terms of professionalism.

I have natural hair that is very thick and curly. For picture day at school when I was younger, I would get my hair straightened to look prettier and, overtime, I kept wanting to straighten it. This led me to conform to what society sees as standards of beauty and “whiteness.”

Since it is Black History Month, it is essential to begin a discussion surrounding how many of these professional-

ism-based beauty standards affect Black indigenous people of color (BIPOC) women every day in the workforce. This is probably why Connecticut lawmakers are trying to pass the Crown Act that would prevent discrimination against Black

Tyanna Talavera

Photo courtesy of Lismarie Pabon



women in the workplace and schools.

We often see news stories on Black students getting in trouble for how they style their hair. Specifically, when a Black teen had to cut his dreadlocks to participate in a wrestling match, as well as young Black girls that are constantly getting

reprimanded or prevented from participating in school because of their hairstyles; here is a list.

For job interviews, I never wore my hair in its natural state. Having your natural hair out, if you're Black has never been deemed as professional. Although social media has created a shift in how natural hair is seen in the media and society, I don't see how this helps those in the workplace.

Everyone has their biases, and if your boss asks you to look a certain way for your job, would you not adhere to what they're saying? I understand how people could have been fired over their hairstyles, and they were probably told this by their boss; but, I feel as though this act would just prevent employers from saying “your hairstyle is not how we want our company

to be represented.”

If someone has the skill set for a job, why should their hairstyle matter? This is an issue because if more BIPOC were in higher-up positions, they would understand cultural hairstyles and what they mean to their history, educating those around them to understand it, too.

I stand by this Act being passed for students, specifically. Mainly because these kids and teens are still trying to find themselves and should not have to conform to white standards or hair when they are still so young. No school, specifically public schools, should have the power to decide how a student's hair should look.

This act would be great if it were to be passed. However, it takes more than a law to be passed for it to be enforced.

Graphic courtesy of Elisa D'Egidio

Black history is more than just a month

BY KIANA WHITE
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The month of February marks Black History Month, where African Americans and Black people around the United States take time to celebrate and acknowledge the unrecognized achievements of both the past and present.

But this doesn't square the centuries of inequities African Americans still face. Thus, Black History month is more than a month. It is an everyday reality for many African Americans.

As an African American young woman, I must admit I haven't done my best to celebrate my heritage. However, there's more to me than just the color of my skin. Yes, my skin complexion represents the roots

of my heritage, but it doesn't solely define who I am.

It's imperative that as African Americans we are aware and knowledgeable about our history. We are more than the color of our skin. We are more than a race. We are more than societal stereotypes. As African Americans, we must do more to promote and spread awareness of our race's achievements.

Martin Luther King Jr. led the Civil Rights Movement, Barack Obama became the first Black president of the United States, but there is more to Black history than these two men.

Black history doesn't originate from the 1960s, but four hundred years ago, when the first recorded African slaves arrived in Virginia. Don't get me wrong, Black history isn't just about slavery and its detrimental effects. Rather, Black

history month is an opportunity for African Americans to learn from our past history and to move forward with new stories, creations, and experiences.

Celebrating our Black heritage shouldn't just be reserved for a month. In actuality, we should be celebrating Black stories in both the past and present every day of the year.

To be “Black” isn't a trend. It's our truth. Creating and recognizing Black stories, businesses, and culture are just a few of the many ways to celebrate Black history. Thus, I encourage you to change your perspective on Black history month. Black history should be celebrated, praised, and acknowledged every day of the year. Black History is more than a month but it's an ever changing reality, constant experience, and daily commitment.

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