



Father Keith Maczkiewicz, the Director of Campus Ministry for three years, unfortunately, is relocated to Holy Cross. After the end of the 2024 Spring Semester, a new Jesuit will be taking his place in the Fall.

Fairfield Bids Farewell to Fr. Mac After Three Years of Service

BY SAMANTHA RUSSELL  
Executive Editor

Father Keith Maczkiewicz (Mac), Fairfield University’s Director of Campus Ministry and University Chaplain, is dedicated to the Jesuit standard of availability. This commitment is why, when was asked by The Provincial to apply for a position at the College of the Holy Cross, he readily applied and accepted his relocation.

“We’re Jesuits, we’re meant to be available,” he said. “I’m available for whatever they need.”

Shortly following Fairfield’s commencement ceremony in May, Fr. Mac will begin a new chapter of his Jesuit career, working as the Associate Vice President for Mission and Ministry at Holy Cross. While he admits the transition will be difficult, he looks forward to the opportunity and hopes to maintain the Jesuit need for availability, which exemplifies the practice’s “one foot raised” motto: always on the move.

Fr. Mac confessed that if asked twenty years ago whether he’d be working as a Jesuit at Fairfield University, he would have said, “no.” He attended Emerson College for one year as a musical theater major, then transferred to Fairfield University to finish his four years as a Stag. Working at his alma mater, the Jesuit discussed his bittersweet feelings

regarding his upcoming move.

“Because it’s my alma mater that I will miss,” he declared. “Being here, as an alum, as a Stag, was special in a way.”

Despite calling Fairfield University a home, graduating in 2004, Fr. Mac is no stranger to Holy Cross. From the years 2013 to 2015, then again from 2018 to 2021, he worked for the college’s Campus Ministry before transferring to Fairfield in 2021.

Ever since he graduated college, Fr. Mac has worked in Campus Ministry. He became a Jesuit in 2008 after lengthy schooling, and ordained as a priest in 2008.

Although he never planned on becoming a Jesuit priest, it is

something that Fr. Mac claims God called him to do. According to him, God, along with “the people,” wanted him to be a priest. “I think this is the way I’m called to live by, by God,” he affirmed.

He continued to explain that a substantial value of Jesuit practice is the showing of love. Especially on a college campus, he notes that Jesuits are countercultural, and that “the value of Jesuit life and the value of Jesuit witness is love.” Fr. Mac is gratified by the opportunity to show love through Campus Ministry.

Arriving at Fairfield University in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, the campus met Fr. Mac with masks and remote settings. Throughout his time at the university, a goal of Fr. Mac was to bring Campus Ministry back into an in-person force, a place of influence. This work grew into many different initiatives, one being a return of Campus Ministry on the Case Management Committee, which provides holistic outreach for students struggling with issues on and off campus. To Fr. Mac, it was important for Campus Ministry to be a part of those conversations.

Fr. John Mulreany is the Superior of the Fairfield Jesuit Community. He praises Fr. Mac for all the work he has accomplished at

Theme of Hope Shines at Annual Out of the Darkness Walk

BY BRIDGET KEOHANE  
Assistant News

On Sunday April 14, Fairfield students – led by the Fairfield University Psychology Club – took part in an on-campus walk titled “Out of the Darkness” to aid in the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention’s goal of bringing hope to those affected by suicide.

Following registration at 11:00 a.m, the walk began at 12:00 p.m. and was about one mile long, starting at the Stag Statue and walking around the campus perimeter. 75 participants registered for the event and helped to raise over \$5,600 for the cause.

Psychology major Olivia Cataldo ’24 emphasized the importance of the event, stating, “Suicide prevention is a cause that the Psychology Club has been so passionate about spreading awareness for. We love any chance we can get to educate people on the subject and spread positive messages with each other! A great community came together on Sunday for the Out of the Darkness walk, and we helped each other realize that we are not alone!”

Ava Holmes ’24, Co-President of the Psychology Club, added “I had the honor to organize the AFSP Walk this weekend on campus. After months of planning and raising money for suicide prevention, the event was the most beautiful and fulfilling moment of my time at Fairfield thus far. Talking about mental health and suicide is a very difficult endeavor, as these topics are heavily stigmatized.”

Here For You, a local clothing brand in Fairfield, was also

present at the event in honor of its mission to spread mental health awareness. The store’s merchandise was available for purchase at the walk, and the business’ efforts helped raise over \$500 for the cause.

Most fundraising efforts took place on social media, where participants shared why they walk for suicide prevention and made use of the hashtags #HopeWalksHere and #OutoftheDarkness and shared a link to donate.

The walk was complemented by honor beads of different colors, each signaling different ways participants are personally connected to suicide, in an effort to help individuals identify others who might understand their experience. The theme of hope and healing was also prevalent through many shared messages of hope and remembrance.

Sophomore Ellena Whipple reflected on these moments and stated “At one point during the walk, I looked around and felt the immense amount of strength within the community. It is so important for all of us to show up for one another through all the good and bad that life brings. We are never truly alone.”

Fairfield offers several confidential and no-cost counseling and psychological services for students who may be looking for extra support, including individual counseling, groups and workshops, and crisis intervention.

Junior Clare McGuinness encourages students to “Tell your loved ones you love them, give someone a compliment, invite a classmate to dinner...small gestures can mean the most.”



Fairfield’s Psychology Club led the efforts to organize the annual Out of the Darkness campus walk on April 14 to raise awareness about suicide prevention. The walk took place around the perimeters of campus and was about one mile long.

# Five Fairfield Bellarmine Faculty Reflect on Program’s First Year

BY KATHLEEN MORRIS  
Managing Editor

Fairfield University’s Bellarmine is perched on a hill in Bridgeport, housed within a century-old church now equipped with state-of-the-art classrooms. The campus’ synergy of historic and modern elements reflects the undercurrent of the Jesuit ideals within the program. The preservation of scholarly tradition, paired thoughtfully with a flair for innovation and a commitment to social justice. Fairfield Bellarmine’s mission is “to provide a Jesuit and Catholic education that is accessible and affordable and empowers underrepresented students to realize their God-given potential and serve their communities.”

The first class is comprised of 44 students, primarily low-income and first-generation, who were uplifted by a team of dedicated educators. The following interviews provide a glimpse into the academic offerings of Fairfield Bellarmine through the lens of five faculty members.

### D’Arcee Neal, Ph. D.: Professor of the Practice, English

D’Arcee Neal, Ph.D. conducted his first Bellarmine interview in Hong Kong at 4 a.m., black coffee with a splash of skepticism coursing through his veins.



D’Arcee Neal finds joy in infusing popular culture and modern reimaginings of classic works into his English course content. His unique teaching style allows his students to relate and open up to him.

“To be perfectly honest, if I had done a little bit more due diligence and checked into it, I may not have applied,” Neal confessed.

Neal’s hesitation was rooted in the “squeamish” feeling he associates with Catholicism, the religious tradition that is the lifeblood of Fairfield University.

“As a Black person who is also queer and a wheelchair user, I have had religion thrown in my face my entire life,” Neal explained. “I’ve been told I don’t have enough faith to get up and walk, which is just nonsense.”

However, Neal relied on the endorsement of his mentor Kim Gunter. His willingness to trust Gunter, an Associate Professor of English at Fairfield, proved to be fruitful.

Neal was employed on April Fool’s Day, which seemed like “a really weird joke” that made him “really, really excited.”

Today, Neal feels privileged to have been gifted a rare opportunity to serve Bellarmine’s unique population and uses his platform to undermine false narratives about the program’s underlying purpose.

“I look at the Bellarmine program as reparations,” he proclaimed. “The education system is stacked against people of color in the United States. There are so many obstacles that people put in place, many of which people have zero control over by the time their children get ready to go to college.”

However, Neal does not classify the initiative as “segregation” or “charity.”

“It would be segregation if we put the program on campus and never spoke to them again,” he clarified. “It’s all about how you frame it and your frame of mind. We’re in the United States and we created this opportunity. It’s not charity. It is an opportunity.”

As he addressed misconceptions about Bellarmine, Neal considered his ideas about the program’s origins.

“I’ll just be honest. I feel like initially, it started as a white savior initiative,” he said. “But, it has turned into an actual thing. We don’t have white folks running stuff. We’re the ones making decisions.”

### José Luis Fernández, Ph. D.: Professor of the Practice, Philosophy

José Luis Fernández, Ph. D. is well-versed in the work of Immanuel Kant, a passion only matched by his love of opera.

Within the Department of Philosophy, Fernández can be found singing impromptu arias and drawing upon the ideologies of his favorite Enlightenment thinker. He hopes that Kantian principles will enable his students to recognize “the intrinsic worth and value of all human beings.”

“My interactions with students at Bellarmine are no different than my interactions with students here at North Benson,” he explained. “It involves the same level of admiration and respect. It involves a deep concern for the entire person, in which we value each other to the highest limits.”

Through his instruction, Fernández strives to dismantle the notion of distance often felt between students and their professors. He is committed to creating a space where his students will not only recognize the fullness of their academic potential, but the fullness of their humanity.

“If there is one big takeaway from philosophy, it is nothing other than a reflective appreciation of who we are in relation to others,” he shared. “If I can come into possession of my most fundamental qualities as a human being, I can then look at another person and see the very same thing reflected back to me.”

Fernández underscored the value of collaboration, noting the collaborative spirit he fosters within the classroom environment. A key facet of this collaboration takes place in the mini-tutorials he conducts to prepare students for essay writing. As his pupils present their papers, Fernández feels humbled by the trust instilled in him.

“I can sense their vulnerability and try to remove the feeling of being judged,” he noted. “The paper is just an



Ryan Harper embarks on daily commute from New York City. As a poet and jazz drummer, he is inspired by the vibrant arts scene of his urban backyard. This summer, he looks forward to moving to Bridgeport.

academic exercise that is meant to improve a skill and not a judgment on the human being.”

At a lecture hosted by Father O’Brien, S.J., a handful of Bellarmine students reflected on the most memorable course that had taken thus far. Fernández recalled a particularly touching moment when a former student acknowledged the lasting impact of his teaching.

“The student shared that philosophy had provided a level of questioning that was performed within a safe space,” Fernández recounted. “We can push the boundaries of the ideas that we have internalized in society. In that sense, philosophy was a very disruptive process. But, it was one that he found very rewarding.”

To Fernández, disruption is required for progress. He hopes that, as the Bellarmine program evolves, the Fairfield community will embrace the unparalleled initiative.

“There is always going to be pushback to innovation,” Fernández declared. “But, pushback and resistance will eventually give way to acceptance and praise.”

### Ryan Harper, Ph. D.: Professor of the Practice, Religious Studies

Ryan Harper, Ph. D. has a storied history. His upbringing was shaped by two opposing settings, as he grew up in rural Missouri before entering the Ivy League.

Harper earned his Ph.D. at Princeton University. But, he was raised by a father without a high school diploma and a mother who returned to college when he was in high school.

“My experience splits the difference between North Benson and Bellarmine,” Harper determined. “I know a little bit about the world of some of these Bellarmine students, but still got to grow up in a world of some white entitlement. So, I’m in the middle of the two spaces.”

At Fairfield, Harper continues to coexist amongst varied populations as he teaches religion courses at both campuses. He referred to this experience as “a great experiment between the two populations.”



José Luis Fernández, Ph. D. instructs an audience, comprised of students and community members, during the First Annual Academic Spring Festival held on April 6. The event allowed faculty members from various disciplines to showcase a sample lesson and highlight their academic accomplishments throughout the first year.



# STI Testing Hosted at the Health Center

BY ERICA SCHINDLER  
Assistant News Editor

The Fairfield University Wellness Center is offering free and confidential sexually transmitted infection (STI) testing throughout the month of April. Students can participate in the walk-in testing on weekdays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. now until April 30th.

The health center’s free testing is being offered in partnership with the Connecticut Department of Public Health Laboratory, which will manage the results of the lab tests. All asymptomatic students can be tested for both chlamydia and gonorrhea by providing a urine sample. Students who are experiencing symptoms of an STI should instead make an appointment with a nurse practitioner at the health center.

Located in Jogues Hall, the Student Health Center offers a variety of services to Fairfield students including medical appointments and a women’s clinic. Now, the center is promoting sexual health through free STI testing.

In an Instagram post from @fairfielduwelness, the health center provided more information on the importance of testing for sexually transmitted infections. In part, the post explains that STI testing is especially important for college-aged young adults.

“Chlamydia and gonorrhea are among the most common sexually transmitted infections (STIs) in the U.S,” it reads. “Infection rates are highest among young adolescents and young adults of both sexes.”

In the event that a student does test positive for an STI, the health center will provide care for the infected student. As explained in a health center flier, these infections are both treatable with antibiotics that the center can provide to students.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), STIs can be prevented in a number of ways. These include testing and treating infections in order to prevent transmission, abstinence and the use of condoms. As reported in a Mirror article from earlier this semester, university policy does not allow for the sale or distribution of contraceptives – including condoms – on campus.

Despite this policy, the Student Health Center does provide pregnancy testing in addition to testing and treatment for

sexually transmitted infections. The center’s physician can also prescribe oral contraceptives to patients “for certain gynecological conditions requiring hormonal treatment.”

In addition to the free STI testing available this month, students can visit the health center for HIV testing. The Instagram post reads: “Students interested in an HIV test will meet with the Student Health Center nurse practitioner to obtain a laboratory requisition for a blood draw and testing through Quest Diagnostics Laboratory.”

Student Health Center Director Julia Duffy was contacted and declined to comment for this story. Fairfield students interested in being tested can do so until Tuesday, April 30.



The Student Health Center is located in Jogues Hall. The Center has free and confidential STI testing for all students from April 2 to April 30 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m..

# Father Mac Gets Relocated to Holy Cross

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

work he has accomplished at Fairfield University and throughout Campus Ministry.

“As director of Campus Ministry, [Fr. Mac] has expanded our Mass and confession offerings. His love for liturgy is self-evident. He is an inspiring preacher,” Mulreany stated. He added, “He has breathed new life into the Jesuit Honor Society, Alpha Sigma Nu, and made valuable contributions to the Ignatian Residential College. Fr. Mac leaves a solid legacy at Fairfield for his successors to build upon.”

Something left undone at the time of Fr. Mac’s transition is a ministry at Fairfield’s Bellarmine campus. He disclosed that Fairfield’s Campus Ministry had been “trying some things,” and that other initiatives will have to be redone next year due to added cohorts at the Bridgeport school.

Nonetheless, he holds sure content for his time at the North Benson campus.

When asked about what he will miss most about his time as a Fairfield Jesuit, Fr. Mac was quick to highlight the work he has fulfilled with students. Through various retreats, masses and student confessions, he credits the ability to “walk with people” as extremely rewarding.

Living in a residence hall during his three years as a Stag adds to the list of things he will miss about his recent work. “That has been a joy and just a way to be with students,” the priest assured.

Fr. Mac explained that he often kept his door open for students to

walk in whenever, whether they needed support or simply a listening ear. He commented on the fact that there is no “normal” day in his occupation; he never quite knows who will walk through his door, and with what.

Despite this uncertainty, he contended that each day is filled with grace. The Jesuit has learned a lot about God through observing how He is present in the lives of others. “Walking with them” allows Fr. Mac to achieve this religious growth.

Furthermore, Fr. Mulreany shared the inspiration he holds for Fr. Mac’s “pastoral care of students and their families.” The Campus Ministry director’s dedication to students is also demonstrated in the large and small changes he has made to campus masses, as described by Fr. Gregory Konz, Assistant to the Dean of Dolan School of Business.

Fr. Konz attested that Fr. Mac made attending mass more convenient for students. He changed the time of daily mass to 12:30 p.m. and initiated nighttime masses on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Moreover, he established a discernment group for young men considering entering the Jesuits.

Fr. Mac’s work at the university would not be complete, however, without mention of his fellow Jesuits. “In this role, I’ve helped my staff do their ministry, which has been worthwhile,” he stated.

Because of his previous work at Holy Cross, Fr. Mac is not arriving there completely blindsided. He noted that the college has experienced “just

enough” changes since he was last there for the transition to feel new, yet he will still know some familiar faces.

Earlier this semester, the Provincial asked him to apply for this position. Essentially, while Jesuits are allowed input towards where they are moved, they do not have a choice over it. He will move into Holy Cross around mid-to-late June.

Fr. Mac admitted that he thought he’d be at Fairfield University for about six or seven years before leaving. While that hope is now not the case, he hopes to continue striving to be available for the Jesuits whenever they need him.

“I think the sense of availability is something I want to hold on to...I never want to get ‘stuck,’” he confessed, deterred by the vision of becoming so established in one place.

In his three short years in Stag Country, Fr. Mac made an incredible impact on those around him. Fr. Kevin O’Brien S.J., Vice Provost and Executive Director at Fairfield Bellarmine as well as a professor in the Department of Religious Studies, reminds the community of Fr. Mac’s devotion to Jesuit teaching and impact on Fairfield’s campus.

“Fr. Mac has a unique blend of being an exceptional educator, administrator, and priest,” O’Brien said. “He exemplifies the best of ‘cura personalis’: caring for each person, in their uniqueness, in mind, body and spirit. As a friend and Jesuit brother, I will miss him a great deal.”

# Fairfield Celebrates Campus Pride

BY ISABELLA DIANGELO  
Contributing Writer

Campus Pride took place on Sunday, April 14, for students and faculty of the LGBTQ+ community and their allies. Even though designated ‘Pride Month’ is still a month and a half away, Campus Pride allows students to express themselves fully while still on campus before returning home for the summer.

Junior Rishi Black spoke about their Campus Pride experience, stating “I think it’s important to have events like Campus Pride, and the upcoming Drag Bingo because it embodies the spirit of radical hospitality, showing that everyone has a home on this campus.”

Black continues, “Being queer can sometimes be a lonely and difficult journey, but events such as Campus Pride celebrate the resilience and beauty of the community all while creating a fun and engaging environment.”

Campus pride was not only there for LGBTQ+ students but was there to educate allies on what LGBTQ+ students on campus could be going through. Some of these topics included feeling discriminated against, feeling as if they have no community support, and being lonely in general. There were free books that students could take to learn about LGBTQ+ people’s journeys while navigating a society transitioning to the acceptance of the ‘Love is Love’ motto.

Junior Nicolas Garofalo, President of the Gender and Sexuality Alliance club, states, “I think it’s so important to have pride on campus, just to promote all of the queer students here at Fairfield, and really represent

how there is a community here and that we are in support – we’re here for them. We are all about inclusivity, and representation and were happy to be here today.”

Much like Black said, Garofalo speaks about how important it is to know everyone has their community here on campus, and they will welcome you with open arms. Another part of the community students have access to is the Triangle Community Center, Fairfield County’s LGBTQ+ Community center, where they offer programming, events and counseling.

Elena Sicconi, the Development and Communications Coordinator for the TCC, says that there is much more to the Center than just LGBTQ+-related activities.

“There is movie nights and community dinners, and I have said community a lot but that’s what it’s really about. It’s about having a safe space” Sicconi explained.

Triangle Community Center is holding Pride in the Park on June 8 at Veterans Park In Norwalk.

More LGBTQ+ friendly events will be happening on campus before the end of the semester. FUSA’s Fabulosity Night of Drag will be on April 26 and is a part of FUSA’s Celebration of Unity which includes other events such as the Black Stags Matter walk set to occur on April 17. Lavender Graduation, “a ceremony for LGBTQIA+ and Ally students to acknowledge their achievements, contributions, and unique experiences at Fairfield University” will happen on April 30.



Campus Pride was celebrated alongside the 16th Annual Holi, Festival of Colors Celebration that was hosted by the South Asian Student Association.

# Opinion

Editor: Roisin McCarthy  
Assistant Editor: Natalie Dripchak

## Is an On Campus Spring Concert Better For Students?

By **BROOKE LATHE**  
Executive Editor Emerita

FUSA is making history on Friday, April 19 as our annual spring concert is set to take place in Leo D. Mahoney Arena for the first time since its major renovation. 2 Chainz featuring Kaliiii will headline the night while student artists, Stingray and DJ Tristan, open.

I'm known for not loving change, so when I found out the concert would no longer be held at the Hartford Amphitheater in Bridgeport like the past two years, I was partly saddened. It was all I'd known! Now, however, I feel so lucky to be a part of the class that gets to experience a concert in the arena for the first time.

All tickets last year were sold at \$55 whereas current 2024 seat tickets in the arena are \$55 and pit tickets are \$65. Every ticket in previous years ensured both pit tickets for all students and transportation to and from the venue.

It's definitely great that this year students are given the option of what seating assignment they would prefer.

As someone who will always pick the pit, I recognize that seats would most likely bring in more students as they would feel more comfortable throughout the night so I applaud the new addition.



Photo Courtesy of Fairfield University

The newly renovated Leo D. Mahoney Arena will house over three thousand Fairfield Students for this year's concert.

While I was initially expecting a cheaper price than last year, I quickly understood that the pricing was the same or \$10 extra in the case that the student wanted to buy a pit seat, because two big-named artists and two openers are getting paid to come specifically to our campus for only Fairfield students.

Additionally, it's also super convenient to have the concert on campus as it allows students not only more time to get ready but a safer and easier experience. It was always a hassle when trying to get back to campus as the flood of students and other attendees of the concert would pack the parking lot.

Both years people left the artist's set early to ensure an earlier spot on the way home and sometimes would still be left to wait another 30 minutes to an hour. While there were a small amount of Uber vouchers available, they were hard to attain or would take the same amount of time as the buses took to return to the venue.

Another great thing about having it at the arena is there will be alcohol and drinks served. I was nervous before tickets went on sale that drinks would not be offered like at the Joe Gatto comedy show on Dec. 2, 2023, since I believe that would've encouraged binge drinking. However, I'm glad they have officially announced that the rule has changed.

Having alcohol sold on campus allows for dual identification (with student Stag Card and state ID) as well which means the university doesn't have to worry about accidentally selling alcohol to minors like the Amphitheater did two years prior.

The only thing that partly upset me was that we won't have a complementary food truck like in the previous years when FUSA provided a Super Duper Weenie truck.

Yet, I understand that it is the end of the year and their funds are probably running low after booking our artists. Perhaps only the club could've pitched in to ensure we're fed—especially with some students drinking or dancing in a heated pit where people are known to pass out.

I don't know either of these artists quite well but I think part of the beauty of going to a concert where someone else chooses the performers allows you to experience music you wouldn't necessarily choose yourself.

And, while I was worried about going to the arena not knowing what songs to prepare, FUSA also provided a pre-concert playlist so that we can learn the songs beforehand—what an amazing idea!

With 3,500 seats (including open floor access) and no possibility where no guest tickets will be sold, I have no doubt that all students who want to go will be able to.

There is no fear that tickets will quickly sell out as there is more than enough room.

I do hope that everyone takes up the opportunity to come hang out and listen to music together—it would definitely be a magical experience to fill out the arena entirely with only fellow Stag members. After much thought, I've decided this has the potential to be one of the best spring concerts during my undergraduate experience and I'm looking forward to the show more and more each day!



Photo Courtesy of FUSA Instagram

The performers for this year's Spring Concert are 2 Chainz and Kaliiii. This will be the first time the concert will be on campus in the new arena.

## Women's Sports Are Stronger Than Ever

By **DANNY McELROY**  
Assistant Sports Editor

For basically as long as sports have existed, they have been dominated by men. In America specifically, we are still not all that far away from the days when women completely lacked their own collegiate athletic programs and professional leagues.

But now, times are changing, at least a little bit. If last weekend's Women's College Basketball National Championship was the first of its kind you've ever tuned into, you are not alone. The rematch between superstar guard Caitlin Clark's Iowa Hawkeyes and the undefeated South Carolina Gamecocks drew an estimated 19 million viewers on television, more than any single game of the 2023 NBA Finals or World Series. So, why the change?

To me, the biggest factor impacting the popularity of sports is the presence (or lack thereof) of star players and figures. There is no bigger draw to an event than the chance to witness the individual excellence of a renowned athlete. The likes of Magic Johnson, Larry Bird, and eventually Michael Jordan in the NBA are a perfect example. Their play completely elevated the league into the national limelight after it struggled for years post-inception to find its footing.

Applying that same thought process to women's sports now, and especially women's basketball, there are stars abound, beginning with Clark herself. Few athletes, man or woman, have captivated the sports

world in the way Division I's new all-time scoring leader has. Everything about

Clark's game and mannerisms on the court, from her logo threes to her well-justified trash talk, is ideal for generating fans and social media buzz. And maybe even more importantly, she plays at such a high level that the normally dismissive pickup game heroes at your local park actually have to stop and consider that no, they wouldn't be able to beat her one-on-one.

To think Clark is solely responsible for this newfound appreciation would be shortsighted though. A prevailing argument in the media and online has been that women's college basketball this year simply had more star power across the board than their male counterparts, and I'm inclined to agree.

There's LSU forward Angel Reese, who catapulted herself into stardom last year when her team took down Clark and Iowa in the national title game, throwing some of Clark's banter back at her. There's USC guard JuJu Watkins, who took over games on the offensive end time and time again, even scoring 51 points in a win over Stanford this year. Oh, and she did it all as a freshman.

There's Connecticut guard Paige Bueckers, the once prodigal child of the sport who overcame almost a year and a half of missed time due to injury to put together an All-American season this time around.

That's only scratching the surface, but

it's telling that many otherwise uninterested sports fans have come to know the above names over recent months. More than just stars themselves, though, I think the heightened support for women's sports also stems from the storylines that surround or have surrounded some of its biggest faces.

In the realm of gymnastics for instance, Simone Biles has been dominating for almost a decade now. But at the Tokyo Olympics in 2021, it was her withdrawal from competition that set the stage for teammate Suni Lee, who won over the hearts of the country as she stepped up at the last moment and won gold in the all-around competition.

Another example is Serena Williams, who along with her sister Venus has ruled women's tennis for longer than I've been alive. But in some respects, it wasn't until her return from pregnancy and subsequent farewell tour at the 2022 US Open that the sports world at large stopped to truly give her career the appreciation it deserves.

Here at Fairfield, stars and storylines have helped bring greater attention to the success of many of our women's sports programs. In the fall, volleyball claimed a conference title behind the exceptional performance of numerous players, including libero Kyla Berg '24 who put her name in the rafters of Mahoney Arena as she surpassed 1000 career digs.

This winter, women's basketball put together the best season in program history, winning 31 games alongside a perfect 23-0 year in conference play. They were

bolstered by guard Janelle Brown '24, who won conference player of the year honors, and forward Meghan Andersen '27, who took home conference rookie of the year.

Now in the spring, multiple women's programs are in the midst of more terrific seasons. Lacrosse has reached a national ranking of 23rd as they extended their win streak to 13 games this week, bolstered by several conference player of the week earners like Kelly Haggerty '27 and graduate student Libby Rowe. Tennis has also gotten in on the fun, just this week clinching the conference regular season title.

Simply put, both at Fairfield and on the national level, we are living through a period of massive growth for women's sports. And if you aren't paying attention, then you're missing out.



Photo Courtesy of The Wall Street Journal

Caitlin Clark who played for the University of Iowa has just recently been drafted as the first round first overall pick for the WBNA.

# The Rise of Influencers: Helpful or Harmful?

By JENNA CODEY  
Contributing Writer

For so many individuals in 2024, Tik Tok is synonymous with a daily routine. From the mindless scroll upon waking up in the morning, to quick peeks in between classes, or the notification of a video specially sent by a friend, Tik Tok has taken over. Along with this increase in app use is a skyrocket of influencers - those with large followings, who can easily become opinion leaders, even without any credentials.

Influencer culture allows for regular people to wield influence on culture and trends. The format of Tik Tok takes away some of the regulations and gate-keeping for regular media. With the press of a button, anyone can share their opinions. These opinions can be simple, such as clothes they are wearing or products loved. They can also become bigger, when politics or culture are brought up. It is almost inspiring that any thought can be released to the public so quickly.

On the other end of this freedom to blow up, though, is the question of legitimacy. If anyone can overnight have influence over others, it begs the question: Should they? Influencers with large followings are often looked up to. Whatever they say is taken as truth. This can become problematic, though, when influencers then share thoughts with little or no education behind it, and soon their opinion is taken as truth.

I remember first seeing this consequence during the COVID-19 pandemic. Large influencers would go from encouraging quarantining or masks in a video, but then were spotted out at large parties in the peak of the pandemic. Especially in a time where everyone was online, these posts left many infuriated over the message that was spread to their young and impressionable followers.

There is a danger in the power that these people can hold, especially when they blow up

for their opinions on something like dancing or comedy, and then are expected to lead when it comes to political matters.

Another problem with the rise of influencers is the illusion of authenticity. Since the nature of influencers now is so casual, it is easy for followers to feel as though they know everything about the people behind their phone screen. They start to feel a connection to people they have never even met. They feel obliged to know the ins and outs of their life, and can even feel personally slighted when said influencer does something outside of what they think is in line for them.

Furthermore, feeling like one knows more about an influencer than they really do can cause trouble when it comes to comparison. In fifteen second snippets, anyone can seem as though their life is perfect. Both physically and mentally, people can display the best version of themselves. So, when someone is scrolling and sees person after person with the perfect outfit, or the newest things, or on an exotic vacation, it is easy to feel down about yourself, like you're somehow less than.

I do think there has been a shift recently, with influencers becoming increasingly relaxed and casual. More and more influencers have been embracing an openness, which is where I hope the future of influencers lies. Since hypothetically anyone can become an influencer, I think those with that power should work to be as open and honest as possible with their platform.

Influencers are not going away anytime soon. In fact, the number will only increase as time goes on. I think what is most important is that viewers continue to recognize who influencers really are, typically regular people without much legitimate knowledge behind them. Influencers can provide a sense of connection, offer advice, or simply be a breath of fresh air away from the reality of life. Influencers should be enjoyed for what they are, not taken far beyond the Tik Tok screen.

# Guest Speakers Need To Be Promoted

By NATALIE DRIPCHAK  
Assistant Opinion Editor

Occasionally, I will walk the halls of buildings on campus and see flyers for various guest speakers. These flyers intrigue me especially if the guest speaker is in a career field that I want to enter.

These guest speakers can be very helpful and even entertaining, but I feel that Fairfield doesn't advertise them enough.

To be completely honest, most of the guest speaker events I attended were for an extra credit assignment for my class. Though, that doesn't mean I didn't enjoy myself.

Guest speakers are very underrated for their advice and wisdom but also for the connections they can give students.

Students can go up to a guest speaker after their lecture and personally ask them questions or for advice that could really help them with their future career goals.

When looking on the Fairfield University website for lectures and events, all of the events are geared toward the Dolan School of Business. However, I know of many events and lecturers being hosted by other departments on campus. Where is their recognition?

I personally am an English major in the College of Arts and Sciences and we rarely get notified of any events or lectures happening within our school.

Of course, this could be for numerous reasons but the information should be more circulated because I know people would love to attend.

Personally, with the few guest speaker lectures I have attended, I have had a great time. I love to hear people with vast experience talk about their work and their passions!

Not only are guest speakers a way for people who already know what they want to do in life but for people who are exploring what they want to study.

Guest speakers can offer a variety of resources and connections to Fairfield students past and present.

As someone who is in the College of Arts and Sciences, I would love for the school and the faculty to have a more active role in promoting these guest speakers, if we have them. A lot of the time these events may not be packed because of the lack of word around campus.

There are also many guest speakers who can relate and connect to many different students across the many different schools at Fairfield.

This would allow for more students from different disciplines to come together and bond over someone or something they are really interested in.

I understand that this can be hard, especially with funding and even finding people willing to come, but this is what schools are for. Schools are for giving resources, guides, experiences and connections to their students.

This is something that I am very passionate about because personally, I love to have inside input from someone who has worked a career path for a while. Especially if it is something I am interested in.

Even Professors from Fairfield who have lots of background in their specific discipline would be an interesting lecture and would be beneficial to so many students!

Guest speakers are a way for students to get involved with their interests and futures and that is something a University should strive to do and advertise more of.



# Is There a Rivalry Between the Schools at Fairfield University?

By TJ CRIARES  
Contributing Writer

Fairfield University prides itself on offering a quality curriculum across multiple fields of study.

This broad range of disciplines begs the question of what sets each school apart. What could provide better insights than the aspects of the curriculum as well as the students themselves?

For the Egan School of Nursing, the numbers and rankings speak for themselves as one of the best programs in the state with a variety of hands-on experiences in the field.

The same goes for the School of Education as it has dozens of programs and certificates, opening the door for a lot of opportunities for prospective teachers. Skylar Seifart '24, who has taken several education courses here, believes the curriculum has given her the ability to "narrow down her goals within the field." She also acknowledged the beneficial




Photo Courtesy of Fairfield University

The Dolan School of Business is one of the most popular schools at Fairfield. Do all of the University's resources get poured into the Business School? Or are all the schools at Fairfield treated with the same amount of resources?

opportunities within Student Engaged Learning Hours which involves the chance to observe a wide variety of classroom experiences. Seifart specifically mentioned how a class she took known as: 'Special Learners in the Mainstream' led her "to view (her) future profession in a different light." The university makes it a priority to not just teach students the necessary skills in a specific profession, like teaching, but also show how it is put into practice.

The College of Arts and Sciences is also one of the top-ranked schools for 'Communication & Media Studies in Connecticut' according to College Factual. They are also acknowledged as one of the top 15 schools in the U.S. for Communication/Journalism Majors by the Payscale College Salary Report.

Dylan Ruddy '24, a Communication major with a Film, TV, & Media Arts minor here at Fairfield, acknowledges how the school "lays the foundation for networking with potential companies" and grants "opportunities to connect with a vast array of alumni with years of practical experience." The most notable aspect of the school, according to Ruddy, is the staff's emphasis on personal development. "Their eagerness to further develop my career during college and after graduation is a testament to their focus on caring for their student's academic and personal lives."

The School of Engineering & Computing stands out with its 100% placement rate six months after graduation, but also through its hands-on experience in the field. "In freshman year, every student must contract a flotation device that can be used to support one student in the local pool in the RecPlex which is then raced against other students in the department", Kameron Reynolds '24, a student in the school mentioned. "At the beginning of senior year, you are presented with a multitude of potential projects to work on. These projects may be contracted from outside corporations that have partnerships

with the University, and others can be produced by the University itself."

One of the most hands-on courses that Reynolds highlighted was 'Robots' which involves "coding and building electrical circuits that will be tested at the end of the course. The course also includes the opportunity to go to a nearby school to teach the students how to build circuits and test them."

The School of Engineering and Computing not only tries to present students with a wide range of topics and courses for full immersion in the field but also prioritizes hands-on experience. This emphasis not only furthers understanding of the material but also contributes to the school's exceptional placement rate for students after they graduate.

Dean Tobin '24, when talking about the Dolan School of Business, reiterates that they "have some of the best alumni who go on to achieve incredible successes" and how "it has offered (him) some of the greatest extracurricular activities along with the most challenging and rewarding classes." Tobin also mentions how the school ties in the social justice and Jesuit learning components.

A consistent theme across each of the curriculums is the emphasis on practical experience and relevant skills for life after graduation.

What stands out after learning more about Fairfield education is the Engineering School and its extensive programs and course selection. In such a broad field, it really allows students to narrow down their particular interests and career pursuits, while simultaneously being able to explore all of the options at their disposal with a hands-on approach.

Simply memorizing material isn't enough; it's crucial to apply it in real-world scenarios for years to come and the common sentiment is that each of the schools at Fairfield successfully achieves this objective.

# THE VINE

Happy Earth Day

Drugstore Makeup  
Book Club  
Spring Decor  
Percy Jackson

Editor: Caitlin Shea

# Going Green: Celebrating Earth Day

BY FIONA WAGNER  
Head Vine Editor

As spring blossoms to its fullest potential, nature lovers worldwide prepare to celebrate the annual Earth Day festivities on April 22 with enthusiasm and a dash of eco-friendly charm. It's that magical time of year when we ditch the doom and gloom and celebrate our incredible planet for all its glory. A lot of people probably don't recognize or think twice about Earth Day, but I am here to convince you that it is so much more than you think! It's important to give our planet some love every once in a while; Earth Day is the perfect excuse to do so!

Before we get into ways to celebrate Earth Day, I thought I would provide a little bit of history revolving around the day. Earth Day was created in 1970, when Senator Gaylord Nelson, the junior senator from Wisconsin, recognized all the issues and destruction happening to our planet. He recruited Denis Hayes, an activist, to teach college students about the Earth. They settled on April 22nd to hold events all around the country promoting environmental movements. From there on, Earth Day grew bigger and bigger and became what it is today.

There are many ways to celebrate our wonderful Earth. For example, participating in a beach cleanup is a great way to protect our environment and have fun. It just so hap-

pens that we live right next to the beach, so when you have some free time or the weather is nice, try participating in a beach cleanup. It does not have to be an organized event, but if you want to participate with a group,

sitting in The Quad. There is something so nice about sitting outside, soaking in nature. If you are interested in Earth Day, there are so many organizations to donate to. Realistically, I know donating money as a broke col-

summer, check out your local zoo/aquarium. If you are ever near the Baltimore area, The National Aquarium is one of the best in the country. Both The Philadelphia Zoo and Smithsonian National Zoo (in Washington D.C) are great options as well.

If you are too busy or don't want to celebrate Earth Day outside, I suggest watching nature documentaries. I know they sound boring, but trust me they are so relaxing and educational. I recently got into watching nature documentaries on both Netflix and Disney+. If you really don't care about nature or animals, maybe this isn't for you, but I find them very entertaining and therapeutic. On Netflix, there is a series called "Our Planet," which is an educational nature docuseries capturing the beauty of animals in nature. On Disney+ I recommend watching "Magic of Disney's Animal Kingdom" or "Growing Up Wild."

As Earth Day approaches, try to take some time out of your day to appreciate nature. Whether it's cleaning up the beach, going to the zoo or simply appreciating the beauty of nature, celebrate Earth Day by embracing the power we all hold to make a positive impact on our Earth. We can continue to cherish and protect our precious planet, ensuring a brighter and greener future for generations to come!



Life@Fairfield  
will have scheduled  
beach cleanups posted.

Besides cleaning up the beach, you can do almost anything outside. Talking about a walk when the weather is nice is so therapeutic. If you have homework that you are procrastinating, try doing it while

hard, but if you are looking for some suggestions here are three: One Tree Planted, Earth Justice and Daughters For Earth. I would also recommend going to a local zoo or aquarium. It might be difficult to get to one of those during the school year, but if you are looking for something unique to do this

# Beauty on a Budget: Drugstore Makeup 101

BY ABIGAIL ROBERGE  
Contributing Writer

Anyone who wears makeup knows how expensive the popular "must-have" products advertised on TikTok or Instagram tend to be. However, quality products that make you look and feel good don't have to be expensive, as shown through the wide variety of underrated drugstore makeup brands

with amazing products that you can purchase at stores located everywhere like CVS, Walmart or Target.

Starting with a base, E.L.F. Cosmetics' Flawless Satin Foundation is an amazing choice for anyone who likes a thicker and heavier foundation. For people who may want something more natural and less thick, L'oreal Paris' Magic BB Cream works to take away redness and blemishes without looking like you're wearing a lot of makeup. If you prefer powder products over liquid ones, Maybelline's Super Stay Foundation Powder is a good option that is thick enough to cover imperfections. To add a flirty flush to your face, the various shades provided by E.L.F. Cosmetics' Putty Blush or Milani's Baked Blush are popular options that are easily accessible at any drugstore. If you want to add a sun-kissed look too, you can use E.L.F Cosmetics' Contour Palette or their Contour Beauty Wand, or if you don't like putty or liquid products you can use Physicians Formula's Butter Bronzer

Contour. There are also a variety of contour sticks from brands like NYX and Wet N Wild, which are quick and easy to use.

Lips are also important, and there's more variety when it comes to what you want to put on them. For those who like lipstick, Maybelline's Super Stay Vinyl Ink Liquid Lipstick comes in a range of shades, and so does Wet N Wild's Silk Finish Lipstick. For those who might prefer lip gloss, Covergirl's Clean Fresh Yummy Lip Gloss is a perfectly shiny and non-sticky choice.

My personal favorite products, however, fall heavily into the eye makeup category. Maybelline's Sky High Mascara provides length and volume to your lashes, and Essence's Lash Princess Eyeliner Pen is a lifesaver when it comes to having a stable hand for eyeliner since the pen itself is thick and easy to hold. If you like traditional liquid eyeliner, though, NYX's Epic Wear Long Lasting Liquid Eyeliner is probably the best option for you. If you want to go for a full natural glam look, Maybelline's The Nudes Eyeshadow Palette allows you to create a gorgeous eyeliner look with a variety of nude shades that blend easily. For a more funky, colorful look, NYX's Ultimate Shadow Pal-

ette "I Know That's Bright" provides bright pigmented color for fun eyeshadow looks. If you're feeling like you need a little sparkle, E.L.F. provides their Liquid Glitter Eyeshadow in various shades, both natural and colorful, that you can either just swipe on your eyelid for a pigmented, blinding glitter look, or tap on your eyelid with your finger for a toned-down sparkle.

Some people might be picky and think it's lower than them to buy drugstore makeup products, but through my experience, drugstore makeup has worked for me, even more often than expensive products - and I never regret purchasing any products even if they don't work for me since they're all affordable and not a big investment! Not everything you use needs to be trendy and expensive like some influencers may lead you to believe, it just needs to make you feel good and comfortable in your own skin. by showing she can still be awesome while also switching up the genre of music she is producing. She is such a decorated and poised artist who deserves respect and recognition. I'm keeping my fingers crossed that she can pull an Album of the Year win at the next Grammys!





BY SOPHIA COSSITT-LEVY  
Staff Writer

If you keep up with music and pop culture at all, you’re probably aware that Taylor Swift is releasing her eleventh studio album, “The Tortured Poets Department”, on April 19th, 2024. As one of the biggest Taylor Swift fans, here are my predictions for the album as a whole and each song.

Though the album has been categorized as pop on Apple Music, I’m not sure if I totally see it fitting. Initially, I thought it would be a lot like “folklore” and “evermore”. Maybe the sound will be more like “1989” or “reputation” with lyrics similar to “folklore” and “evermore”. Either way, I’m excited. Given the title, I have a feeling the lyrics will be based in literature, specifically poetry, with lots of allusions. As an English major, I’m beyond hyped for that possibility, and I’ve already decided which poets could influence this album. My top picks were Emily Dickinson and Sylvia Plath.

**“FORTNIGHT”**  
I won’t lie, I was a bit thrown by the idea of Post Malone being on this song, simply because he’s a rapper. I think this song will be a little bit like “End Game” in terms of sound, but I have a feeling it’ll become as iconic as Kendrick Lamar’s feature in “Bad Blood.”

**“THE TORTURED POETS DEPARTMENT”**  
Title tracks are always so fun. This will definitely encapsulate the themes of the album, and I think it’ll sound similar to “folklore”.

**“MY BOY ONLY BREAKS HIS FAVORITE TOYS”**  
Imagine “You’re Not Sorry” and “Better Than Revenge” together and as adults. That’s this song.

**“DOWN BAD”**  
I think this song will be about falling for Travis Kelce. It’ll probably sound more like songs from “Midnights”, maybe “Karma.”

**“SO LONG, LONDON”**  
This is the song I’m claiming. I feel like the emotions and sound will be most like “All Too Well (10 Minute Version)” and “My Tears Ricochet” (and maybe, hopefully, there is a 10 minute version of it somewhere). Also, I’m fairly certain that the subject of “So Long, London” will be Joe Alwyn, and I’m excited for the tea.

**“BUT DADDY I LOVE HIM”**  
This song and “I Can Fix Him (No Really I Can)” are probably similar in terms of subject, but I think this one will be a little slower, more like “exile.”

**“FRESH OUT THE SLAMMER”**  
I think this one has the potential to be most like “reputation”. I don’t see it being a slow song, but rather more like “Ready for It?” or “I Did Something Bad” in terms of sound. I also think this song will be about leaving her relationship with Joe Alwyn and having more freedom now that they’ve separated.

**“FLORIDA!!!!”**  
I have the strongest feeling that Jack

Antonoff produced this song. But, I think it’ll be more indie because of Florence + the Machine, and production will be similar to songs from Jack Antonoff’s band, Bleachers.

**“GUILTY AS SIN?”**  
This one feels like it could be about trying to place blame and find a reason for a failing relationship. I think it’ll sound like “this is me trying” or “Maroon,” if the album is pop-heavy.

**“WHO’S AFRAID OF LITTLE OLD ME?”**  
This has the energy of the cackle from “This is Why We Can’t Have Nice Things.” I think it’ll be very confident and loud and I can’t wait.

**“I CAN FIX HIM (NO REALLY I CAN)”**  
The titles on this album are “excellent”, and this one is my favorite. I think the subject is fairly obvious from the title, and I have a feeling it’ll be a more upbeat song, like “Mr. Perfectly Fine.”

**“LOML”**  
This is definitely a slow song, and I can’t decide if it’s going to be about her new relationship with Travis Kelce, or a song trying to convince herself that Joe Alwyn is the love of her life.

**“I CAN DO IT WITH A BROKEN HEART”**  
This’ll be like “The Man” and “This Is Why We Can’t Have Nice Things” both in theme and sound.

**“THE SMALLEST MAN WHO EVER LIVED”**  
Imagine “tolerate it”, but instead of tak-

ing responsibility and trying to fix it, you realize the other person is at fault.

**“THE ALCHEMY”**  
This will definitely be a slow song, maybe like “New Year’s Day”, with fantastical ideas – something different from what we might expect.

**“CLARA BOW”**  
I sense that Aaron Dessner produced this. This seems to be the most folklore-esque song, based on the title alone. Clara Bow was an incredibly famous actress, nicknamed “The It Girl,” and I think Taylor is going to compare Clara Bow’s life and her own. Now that you’ve read my endless opinions on Taylor’s next album, you’re ready for the release date! Happy listening!



Photo Courtesy of Genius  
Taylor Swift's newly anticipated album The Tortured Poets Department releases everywhere on April 19.



# CELEBRITY BOOK CLUB



BY ABBY WHITE  
Contributing Writer

If there’s one thing celebrities love, it’s a book club. From some of the more popular celebrity book clubs run by Reese Witherspoon or Oprah Winfrey to other smaller celebrity book clubs run by Dua Lipa, Emma Roberts, Dakota Johnson and more, it seems that every celebrity runs a book club these days.

Here are my top three favorite celebrity book clubs to check out if you are looking for some new book recommendations:

**Reese’s Book Club:**  
I am starting off with popular actress and film producer Reese Witherspoon’s book club, as some of my all-time favorite reads have come as a result. When I see the stamp on the front of a book cover that reads, “Reese’s Book Club,” I almost always know it will be good.  
Each month, Reese Witherspoon, the founder of Reese’s Book Club, picks a book that showcases a woman at the forefront of the plot. What I love about Reese’s Book Club is its diversity in genre. From mystery-thrillers to romances, to beach reads, to historical fiction, there is a book for everyone on the list of Link to Reese’s Book Club picks.  
Some of my personal favorite books on



the list include “Daisy Jones and the Six” by Taylor Jenkins Reid (one of my all-time favorite reads!), “Little Fires Everywhere” “The Nightingale” by Kristin Hannah and “The Paper Palace.” Again, all of these picks feature women at the center of their stories and have proved to be incredible reads. I look forward to checking out more books from the list of Reese’s Book Club’s picks!

**Oprah’s Book Club:**  
This book club run by popular television host and producer, Oprah Winfrey, is another well-known celebrity book club. Founded in 1996, Oprah’s Book Club is committed to selecting books that spark conver-

sation and enlightenment as well as connect readers with authors both new and old.

With a total of 104 books picked for Oprah’s Book Club, this list boasts an impressive variety of titles. There are classics like “A Tale of Two Cities” and “Great Expectations” by Charles Dickens, “Anna Karenina” by Leo Tolstoy, and a variety of works by William Faulkner. There are also incredible memoirs included in this list like Viola Davis’ “Finding Me” and Michelle Obama’s “Becoming.” Some of my personal favorite reads from this list include “American Dirt” by Jeanine Cummins and “The Bluest Eye” by Toni Morrison. Like Reese’s Book Club, there is such a variety of genres on this list that there is a book for almost everyone in Oprah’s Book Club.

**Service95:**  
One celebrity book club that has taken me pleasantly by surprise is popular singer-songwriter Dua Lipa’s book club called Service95. Though not as well-known as Reese Witherspoon or Oprah Winfrey’s celebrity book clubs, the more I looked into Service95’s book recommendations, the more

intrigued I became.  
I immediately recognized a lot of the titles as some of my all-time favorite literary classics like “The Great Gatsby” by F. Scott Fitzgerald, and “One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest” by Ken Kesey. And with authors like Simone de Beauvoir and Joan Didion, both of whom I admire greatly as writers, Service95 boasts just as impressive of a list of book recommendations as Reese’s Book Club and Oprah’s Book Club. Though I have not read as many titles on Service95’s list, I am excited to check them out!  
These three celebrity book clubs have such a great variety of books, that they will probably leave you set for a long time if you are searching for your next read. However, there are a few others, like Emma Watson’s Our Shared Shelf, Dakota Johnson’s Teatime Book Club, and Emma Roberts and Karah Preiss’s Belletrist that also have a great variety of book recommendations.  
What is great about all of these celebrity book clubs is their interactive, community-driven nature as well. There is nothing like a book club to bring a community of readers together to share and discuss their favorite books. So if you are stumped as to what you should read next, give one of these celebrity book clubs a try!



# “The Lightning Thief”

## Electrifying Review

BY FIONA WAGNER  
Assistant Vine Editor

Nestled in the heart of Fairfield, Theatre Fairfield presents a captivating journey into the world of Greek mythology with “The Lightning Thief: Percy Jackson Musical.”

As the curtains rise, audiences are transported into a realm where gods and mortals collide, following the epic adventures of Percy Jackson and his friends.

With its dynamic blend of electrifying music, intriguing storytelling and charismatic performances, this production promises to ignite the imagination and leave audiences spellbound.

This musical follows the extraordinary journey of Percy Jackson, a young boy who discovers he is a demigod, the son of Poseidon, the god of the sea.

As Percy navigates the challenges of being a half-blood and embarks on a quest to prevent a war among the gods, he learns the true meaning of friendship, bravery and heroism.

As a huge Percy Jackson fan, I was so excited to see this musical adaptation.

As soon as it started I was swept away into the magical world of Camp Half-Blood, where demigods and mythical creatures

come to life on stage.

The vibrant set design, electrifying music and dynamic choreography immediately captured my attention, drawing me deeper into Percy Jackson’s epic journey.

It’s very clear that everyone put their heart and soul into this musical and it paid off.

One thing that needs to be recognized is the amazing leads of the musical.

Everyone did an outstanding job in their roles but Zachary Cirillo ‘27 who played Percy Jackson was a standout.

Not only did he embody the witty, impulsive nature of Percy, but his singing blew me away.

The song “Good Kid”, which he sang at the end of the first act gave me chills.

Katharine Gutkoski ‘26, who played Annabeth Chase embodied the fierce and wise demi-god perfectly.

I thought she captured Annabeth’s snarky attitude, determination and resourceful nature with remarkable authenticity.

The chemistry between Percy and Annabeth was spot on and I think it will resonate with audiences.

Anthony Lupercio ‘26, who played the fun-loving Grover, did an amazing job of portraying his endearing charm, loyalty and humorous attitude.

Not to spoil, but this scene with Grover and the squirrel was comedic gold.

“The Tree on the Hill” in the second act was absolutely a standout performance for Lupercio.

Dominic Chila ‘27, who played Luke, Ares and Gabe Ugliano was incredible.

Though his characters were different, he played all of them with such ease, showcasing his versatility and talent.

His vocals throughout the entire musical were powerful and commanding, electrifying the stage.

Along with amazing acting, the costume and set design were truly exceptional, seamlessly transporting me into the enchanting world of Camp Half-Blood.

I loved all of the special effects throughout the musical, it felt very engaging.

I thought the costumes were very authentic and realistic for the world of Percy Jackson. Angelo Corsini’s ‘25 Chiron costume and Emily Sheridan’s ‘24 Oracle costume were both amazing and added so

much to the enjoyment of the musical.

Overall, Theatre Fairfield’s production of “The Lightning Thief” musical delivered an unforgettable experience that exceeded all my expectations.

From its captivating performances to its ingenious set design and electrifying musical numbers, every aspect of the production worked perfectly.

If you want to be transformed into the world of Percy Jackson, I highly recommend seeing the musical for yourself!

It is running from April 17 to 21 in The Quick Center!





Spectacular Spring Decor:  
Spice up Your Room



BY CAITLIN SHEA  
Head Vine Editor

As winter melts away and the world begins to bloom, it's the perfect time for a room refresh!

With spring cleaning comes the urge to spice up your living space with vibrant and uplifting spring decor to not only brighten up your room but to incorporate some much-needed springtime charm.

I know that the warmer weather always has me wanting to redecorate, so here is a list of the best ways to spring your space into a colorful comfort!

**Embrace Soft Pastels:**

Swap out dark, heavy tones for light and airy pastel colors like blush pink, soft mint, or light lavender.

Introduce these hues through throw pillows, blankets, or even small decor pieces as an accent.

**Bring in Fresh Flowers:**

Nothing says spring like a bouquet of fresh flowers.

Display a vase of tulips, daffodils, or hyacinths on your nightstand or dresser. For a low-maintenance option, opt for faux flowers that still bring a touch of nature indoors.

For a fun DIY - make your own pot and flowers!

**Lighten Up with Sheer Curtains:**

Replace heavy drapes with breezy, sheer curtains that allow natural light to filter

through.

This will instantly brighten and freshen

chair, a soft throw blanket, and a stack of your favorite books.



up your room, making it feel more open and inviting.

**Add Botanical Prints:**

Incorporate botanical-themed art prints or wallpaper to infuse your space with the essence of spring.

Leafy patterns or floral designs on cushions, rugs, or wall hangings can enliven your room's atmosphere.

**Create a Cozy Reading Nook:**

Design a cozy corner with a comfy arm-

as citrus, lavender, or clean linen.

These fragrances will evoke the feeling of a spring breeze indoors.

**Decorate with Seasonal Accents:**

Switch out your decorative accents for items that reflect the season.

Look for ceramic birds, bunny figurines, or decorative eggs to celebrate springtime whimsy.

**Refresh Your Bedding**

Update your bedding with lightweight linens or a floral duvet cover to create a serene and inviting atmosphere.

Choose fabrics in soft colors and breathable materials for comfort.

**Add Greenery:**

Bring in potted plants or a small indoor herb garden to introduce life and freshness into your room.

Succulents, ferns, or peace lilies are great choices that require minimal care.

By Incorporating these spring decor ideas, you can transform your room into a cheerful and rejuvenating sanctuary.

Let the colors, scents, and textures of spring inspire you to create a space that feels like a breath of fresh air every time you step inside.

Enjoy the season's beauty right in the comfort of your own room!

Happy decorating!



Best Spring & Summer Scents



BY NOELLE GORI  
Contributing Writer



There are many Spring and Summer scents that smell amazing and are affordable.

Spring and Summer are two of my favorite seasons and I also love scents for these seasons as well.

I rely heavily on Bath and Body Works perfumes and scents and over the years I have spent a lot of time and money there.

Starting off with some of my personal all-time favorite spring and summer scents from Bath and Body Works, there are a variety of wonderful scents but these are the ones that stood out most to me!

In the Spring, these scents are some of my personal favorites.

You're The One with white birch, velvety rose, and a drop of strawberry nectar.

This scent smells just like quality time with the one you love or a fresh start of spring and warmth that can feel like winter too.

I have a hand sanitizer of this scent that I put in my backpack and put on all the time and I absolutely love it.

Pure Wonder with iced rose, star jasmine, and warm white amber smells like a joyful bright day in spring when you are going on a nice picnic sipping some sparkling rose.

One of my top three summer scents is Midsummer Dream with fresh nectarine, salted pear, and seaside lily.

This scent smells like a nice summer day when you're laying on the beach and soaking up the sun.

At the Beach with Frangipani blossoms, toasted coconut, and bergamot waters.

This scent makes me feel like I am on my favorite vacation and smells like coconut sunscreen where the beach is a happy memory.

Watermelon lemonade with watermelon ice, sparkling water, and Meyer lemon.

This scents like a nostalgic summer sip of fresh watermelon juice squeezed lemonade, and just a hint of soda with a sprinkle of sugar and lemon.

My favorite Spring and Summer scents aren't just limited to all Bath and Body Works products, there are many more scents from other popular brands as well.

One of my favorite spring and summer scents that I use all the time is Burberry Her.

I have had this scent since I was in high school and I would always go through it so quickly.

This scent smells like a carefree woman with a mix of both fruity and floral scents.

The scent opens with juicy green pear, strawberry and blackcurrant, and a hint of spicy pink peppercorn.

In the heart of it are peonies, honeysuckle, lily of valley and rose.

Then the scent closes with musk and cedarwood.

Another Spring scent that I just adore is Marc Jacobs Daisy Eau So Intense because it smells like the richness of spring in full bloom.

It begins with sparkling pear, strawberry, and bergamot.

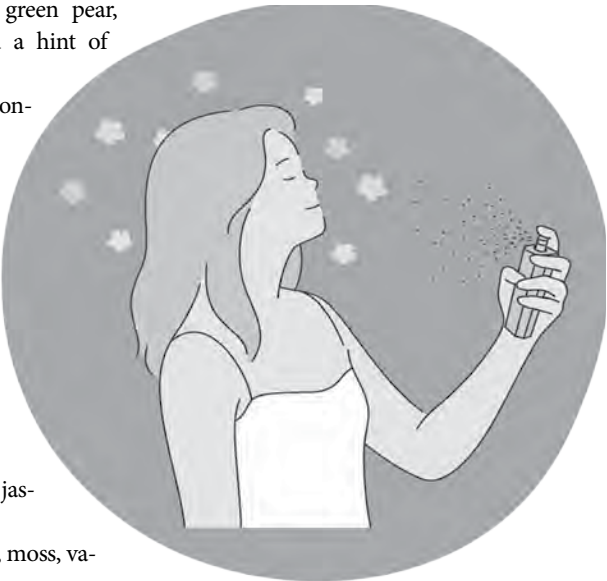
The heart of it is rosebuds and jasmine with honey.

Lastly, the base of it is benzoin, moss, vanilla, and musk.

This scent smells like a beautiful golden hour with the sunset and a nice spring day under the warm sun that gives off a vibrant and sweet scent.

I hope this list gives you some ideas for perfect perfume.

These scent suggestions are sure to help you craft your personal scent for this spring and summer season!





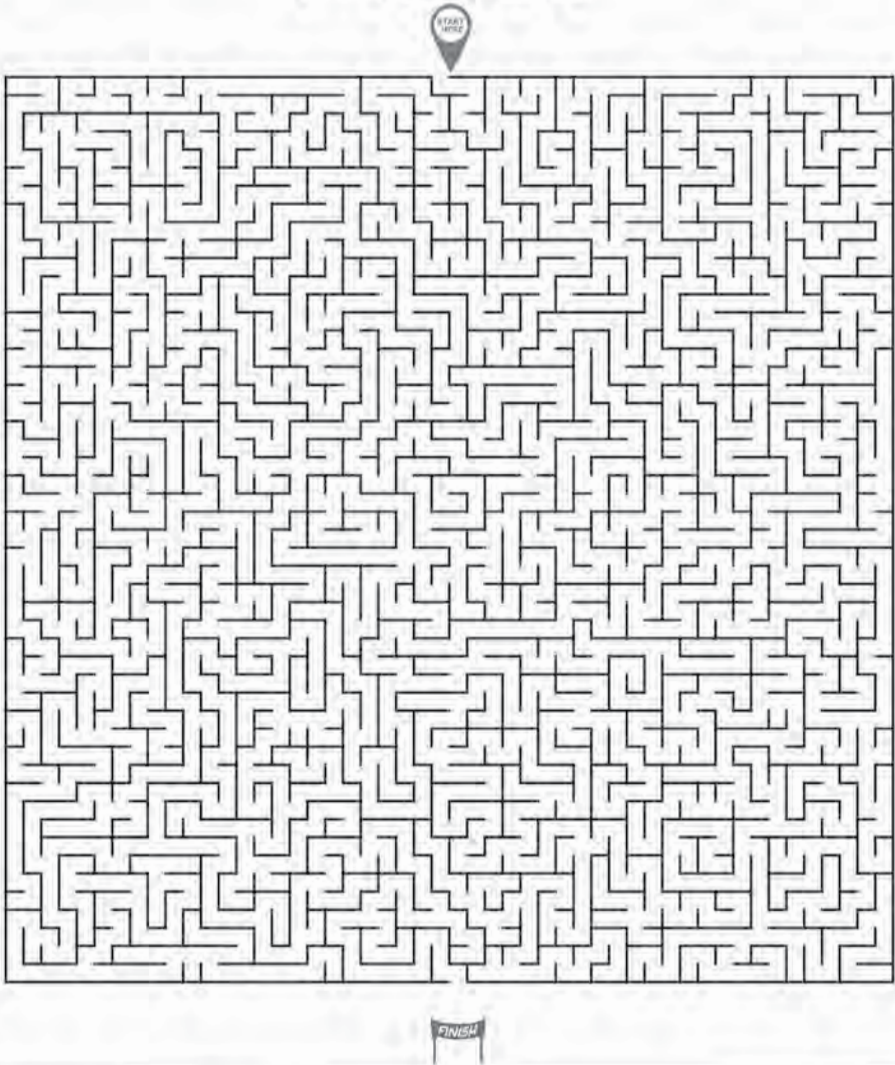
# COFFEE BREAK



GAMES, PUZZLES AND MORE  
Editor: Matthew Robles



## MIRROR MAZE




## MIRROR WORD SEARCH

HVDTARPLXBFAXHIMUBXKKPJAKKUDFX  
SHNQJXKSOIZSADRGWQXLKWGBKXSHMF  
HCZHMAOVQCJJHUFMIAKLULOJLOPMFH  
MLYOLEBLVEXWISJFOFEIELRIKIXALL  
JJWNNVHDHHPBKQOZZLEAYCDSAWKPVSF  
HEJABYJQMIAGPWNNBHRPMAQKMSVFQE  
XNLAHKEYEKTGIXFCOBMMMWOKIFFD  
KICTRGJBFIFTVRAGHORYAKBPSUKNHQ  
OOCPEDEVINNLBWJUEJUEXANIDIJUPOD  
IEZDJNNJWGFASOJKMQLSRAEGLNQNMA  
RFKYLYPPFETEQPMVXHDVUQJBRFOGOHD  
ZAUGZPQLKHOJHIFIHIZFCRXAGGPZST  
KNGJOZJUUVBGVKZLUCARZTCBMOYHLOG  
TEFRAHNVJRSLKGPJPHRLHUMINBFCKC  
BUWLALVSMOSEMJRIJRQUZGYGPPUXGCQ  
IGRPJBQORUKULUDXRKQJGHVWVTYWVN  
QIGLSPDOEODYAGEMAKDBCVAZAUANBY  
ODRZPTUGJYFCRSENNXMEJBLLYSFQM  
PHKASBZHAVHWJWKZXSXLWRWEZWJERP  
KSWZBESSJJIRZIUUGSOELHGGJQYLNOMH  
INOZAFISHINGVMKVLAUIBPXLWTZUYZ  
DSLJTOGEPNYSRMIBINATMEKKILKIZX  
PAROJDPPBJUACIGKLRRYTZNBLWLTZOL  
VNVVYZLEDWDMTNJJOFSGKRDYVNLKT  
RIAQXFACGHVTWGRJTKYKPHEUVTUIF  
NJHSPFRASFTQIJHWRWDBHHVURCCGPB  
PKWXBUDOSBMSZGEAMLCEAWAEGLOATN  
ZGSLSIGHTSEEINGBIEUJGLFPNYKDOA  
IUXGVZUICWEFOXTXGRQIBXIQUHRVOF  
NULNDJLTTHWPCTRAVELINGTZAKRFQY

- Sightseeing  
Fishing
- Traveling  
camping
- Swimming  
Hiking

## Sudoku

			3			9	1	
		9	5	7			2	
				1		5		3
				8		3		2
5			6	3	4	7	9	8
							4	1
7			4	9		2		5
4	6						8	
9							3	7

April 17	April 18	April 19	April 20	April 21	April 22	April 23
Baseball at Yale University Fairfield, Conn. 3 p.m.	No games scheduled	Men's Golf MAAC Championship Lake Buena Vista, Fla. All Day	Men's Golf MAAC Championship Lake Buena Vista, Fla. All Day	Men's Golf MAAC Championship Lake Buena Vista, Fla. All Day	No games scheduled	Softball vs Quinnipiac University Fairfield, Conn. 2 p.m.
Softball vs Yale University Fairfield, Conn. 3:30 p.m.		Women's Golf 2024 MAAC Championship Lake Buena Vista, Fla. All Day	Women's Golf 2024 MAAC Championship Lake Buena Vista, Fla. All Day	Women's Golf 2024 MAAC Championship Lake Buena Vista, Fla. All Day		Basebal vs Sacred Heart University Fairfield, Conn.
Women's Lacrosse at Rider University Lawrenceville, N.J. 4 p.m.		Baseball at Mount St. Mary's University Emmitsburg, Md. 3 p.m.	Men's Rowing Kerr Cup Philadelphia, Pa. All Day	Men's Tennis 2024 MAAC Championship	 <div>Photo Contributed by the Sports Information Desk</div>	
			Women's Rowing Kerr Cup Philadelphia, Pa. All Day	Women's Tennis MAAC Championship West Windsor, N.J. 10 a.m.		
				Softball at Rider University Lawrnceville, N.J. 12 p.m.		

Men's golf will travel to Lake Buena Vista, Fla. to take on the MAAC championships.

# Women's Tennis Wins MAAC Regular Season Title

By **BILLY MCGUIRE**  
Contributing Writer

The Fairfield University women's tennis team closed out their regular season schedule on Saturday, April 13, taking on Quinnipiac University at the Walsh Athletic Center Tennis Courts.

The Stags came into the contest red hot, winning their previous six prior to their date with the Bobcats. On the other hand, Quinnipiac had a lengthy winning streak of their own, snagging sixteen consecutive Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference victories dating back to the spring of 2022, when the Stags ironically also prevailed over the Bobcats.

The Stags made their presence felt early on, taking the doubles point in a back-and-forth first set. After a Quinnipiac triumph in the second set, the Stags refueled with much-needed resilience thanks to the help of their number three flight duo of graduate student Laina Campos and Nicolette Loeffler '27. Both the veteran and first-year were joined by the number one team of Sarah Liu

'26 and Maeve Cassidy '27, roaring back from a 0-5 disadvantage to emerge victorious, 7-6.

The Stags continued to be a thorn in the Bobcats' side as they moved into singles, Loeffler excelled in the number three spot, 6-1 and 6-4. Katrina Plumtree '24 prevailed at the number two spot, 6-1 and 7-5, and Cassidy snapped the Bobcats' near two-year winnings streak at sixteen by winning 6-4 and 6-1 at the number one spot.

As a result of Cassidy's victory, the Stags made program history by clinching their fifth MAAC regular season championship. This was the first regular season title under head coach Jeff Bricker, who is in his maiden voyage as the head of the women's program.

Bricker was very pleased with his players' performance.

"What a great fight from everyone today. The doubles point was huge as always and to come back from the 5-0 deficit was impressive," Bricker says, according to the match's official press release. "In singles, we came out with



Photo Contributed by the Sports Information Desk

Women's tennis will compete in the MAAC championships this weekend in New Jersey.

energy and battled on all six courts. I'm super happy for the team. They've worked hard all year. The job is not done though and they know we have to keep working hard. Winning the regular season title is a great accomplishment, and I'm very proud of them."

The Stags are not quite finished yet. They will take on the fourth-ranked Siena College Saints as the conference's number one seed at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, April 20 in the semifinals at the 2024 MAAC Women's Championship in West Windsor, N.J., at the Mercer County Park Tennis Center. For more information on the Fairfield Stags' tennis program, please visit [www.fairfieldstags.com](http://www.fairfieldstags.com).

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- Stags Sweep St. Peter's in Dominant Fashion (Page 15)
- Sports Staff NFL Draft 3x4 (Page 15)
- One on One with Head Coach Chris Casey (Page 16)

# Women's Lacrosse Adds to Streak with Senior Day Win

By **DANNY McELROY**  
Assistant Sports Editor

Fairfield women's lacrosse extended their win streak to 13 consecutive games as they claimed victory in dominant fashion over a pair of conference foes last week.

The Stags, who have remained as the number 23 team in the country for several weeks, have just two regular season contests left on the schedule before the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference Championship begins on April 28.

### Game One

The Stags kicked their week off last Wednesday with a 17-5 win over in-state rival Quinnipiac. Fairfield got off to a great start in

the opening quarter, outscoring the Bobcats 5-2, and never really looked back. The team maintained control of possession throughout the contest, boasting a staggering shot margin of 43-14 and going plus 12 on draw controls.

Still, despite the dominant performance, head coach Laura Field noted the continual need for improvement as the season comes to a close.

"It was a good home win," she said in a postgame press release. "But I do think we want a little bit more. This is the part of the season that we need to start playing our best, and I would have liked to see us play a cleaner game."

Offensively the Stags were paced by graduate attackman Elizabeth Talluto, who scored four goals while adding one assist. Talluto's fellow graduate attackman Libby Rowe found the back of the net three times, plus an assist

of her own. The four total points helped Rowe become the third Stag ever to surpass 200 career points, behind Talluto and former player Kristen Coleman.

Even with the individual and group success, Talluto largely echoed her coach's sentiment as the team hits the final stretch of the year, highlighting the need for maintained intensity.

"Going forward, we need to play each game like it's our last," she said. "No matter the competition or pressure of the game, sticking to our game plan and playing together is what gives us momentum and success."

### Game Two

That led to the second contest of the week for the Stags, a Saturday afternoon matchup with Manhattan on Senior Day. It was a similar

story for the reigning MAAC champs, who began the game on a 9-0 run across the opening two quarters, helping them easily withstand a return 6-0 run from the Jaspers.

A decisive 7-2 second half margin sealed the deal, with a final score of 16-8. Rowe, attackman Kelly Haggerty '27 and midfielder Rylee Harrell '24 scored two goals each in the half, with Rowe and Harrell both completing hat tricks after finding the net once in the first 30 minutes.

Talluto had yet another great game, finishing three consecutive first half goals for a hat trick of her own and adding three assists.

In all, 13 of the 16 total goals by the Stags were scored by seniors or graduate students, a fitting performance for the Senior Day festivities.

"Getting a win on Senior Day is always huge, because our seniors have done so much for our program and team within the past few years," said Talluto, who celebrated her original Senior Day last season. "Our team would not be as strong, dynamic, and relentless as we are if we did not have our senior class, so seeing all their hard work pay off in a win was super rewarding."

The victory brings the Stags to 13-1 on the year, with a perfect 7-0 mark in MAAC play. Since the season opening loss to Holy Cross, the Stags have outscored opponents by an average of 6.8 goals per game. The sustained success has helped the team maintain their spot in the rankings, which they've held since breaking through at number 25 back on March 11.

"After our first game, we knew we were better than what we showed on the field and wanted to prove that to ourselves, our coaches, and our competition," Talluto said. "To be nationally ranked has been our program's goal. Finally seeing all of our hard work and dedication pay off has been such a rewarding feeling."

The Stags will now try to continue their stay as a ranked team on Wednesday, April 17, as they visit Rider. Opening faceoff is at 4 P.M.



Photo Contributed by The Sports Information Desk

This past weekend the Fairfield women's lacrosse team celebrated their senior class with a 16-8 win against Manhattan on senior day.

## The Weekly 5x4

Five People. Four Questions. Because we have witty things to say.

	Max Limric Editor-in-Chief	Samantha Russell Executive Editor	Kathleen Morris Managing Editor	Claire DeMarco Copy Editor	Erica Schindler Assistant News Editor
Did Shohei know?	I know I've read this name in print before, but I know nothing of the topic.	Who's Shohei?	I'm forfeiting my answer to Ryan and Crystal...R: He knew. C: He was robbed.	Sure doesn't!	I'd like to think he had no idea.
What's your favorite SNL skit?	The "Close Encounter" skits. I'm not really into SNL, but Kate McKinnon aced it.	Let me watch a few episodes and I'll get back to you.	Tina Fey as Sarah Palin and Amy Poehler as Hillary Clinton was a pivotal moment in the	The Melissa McCarthy as Sean Spicer skits will never not be funny.	It's so hard to choose, but I love Debbie Downer and More Cowbell. Classics.
What's your main Fortnite skin?	Widdawally, the Wenagade Waider.	I agree with Erica.	It doesn't matter, as you won't be able to see it when I'm hiding in the bushes.	I don't know what that really means, but I remember Ariana Grande having one. I'll go with that.	I think I might be too old to understand this question.
Are you going to see 2 Chainz Friday?	Yes, but I'm moreso looking forward to Geronimos beforehand.	Sadly I'm not, but catch me at Clam Jam next week!	If you mean the DJ Tristan and Stingray concert, then yes.	I'm not, but I'm wishing everyone a great time. Kaliiii will be amazing, too!	No, but I hope it's good! Movie night instead, Claire?

# Stags Sweep St. Peter's in Dominant Fashion

By **CRYSTAL ARBELO**  
Assistant Sports Editor

The Fairfield University baseball team pulled off an impressive sweep of Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference Foes, the St. Peter's Peacocks. Including some previous mid-week action against Central Connecticut and UMass, the Stags moved their overall record to 16-17 and their conference record to 8-1.

Following a stretch of dominance leading up to this weekend's matchup, starting right-handed pitcher Colin McVeigh '24 was named MAAC Pitcher of the Week after his tremendous start against Canisius through eight innings that saw only one hit and 14 strikeouts.

Other players making a mark included Matt Bergevin '24 and graduate student catcher Ethan Hibbard who started off the series tied with a MAAC-leading 12 home runs.

**Game One**

Left-handed starting pitcher Blake Helmstetter '24 was off to an unfortunate start for Friday's game, giving up a solo and 2 run home run in the first inning to make it 0-3. Helmstetter did not crumble with the added runs, though, and fought back to strike out the last two of the side.

Teasing their comeback, graduate student second baseman Zach Selinger hit a single to center field and advanced on a balk, putting him in scoring position for Hibbard who then hit an RBI single.

Helmstetter kept his ground up until the 3rd inning, to which the Peacocks picked up another run off an RBI single.

By the bottom of the 4th, the Stag's bats were hot and ready to go. Bergevin singled to left field and advanced on a wild pitch, and Hibbard smashed one to center field to clear the bases and set it to 3-4. Wanting in on the action, right fielder Matt Bucciero '26 hit his own homer past the right-center fence, tying it at four runs apiece. Right after, shortstop Luke Nomura '26 gave the Stags the lead with yet another home run, making it 5-4.

The Peacocks managed to

scrape together another two runs on a home run in the 7th, taking back the lead, but the Stags immediately scored another thanks to Hibbard's second home run of the day.

Working their way through the one-run deficit, Nomura hit a game-tying home run in the bottom of the 8th, making it 7-7. A wild pitch was responsible for the lead, as outfielder Paul Catalano '24 made his way past home plate due to the miss. The score remained 8-7, and the Stags pulled off a twice-comeback win to open the series.

**Game Two**

The Saturday continuation of the series started off quietly. Left-handed starting pitcher Bowen Baker '24 kept the Peacock's bats silent, keeping the scorecard empty for the Stags to write all over it in the bottom of the 3rd.

With two strikes, Bergevin hit an RBI single to left field following third baseman Dean Ferrara '25 reaching on an error at third base, putting him in scoring position for Hibbard's subsequent single. Buccirio cleared the bases, bringing Hibbard home to make it 4-0 Stags.

An RBI single was responsible for Saint Peter's first run of the game, and the score was scratched to 4-1.

Action resumed for the Stags in the 5th inning, starting off hot with a home run from Ferrara. Nomura singled and remained on first when the Stags got their first out, managing to steal second. Hibbard worked his way past a full count and walked, then Bucciero fought his way from two strikes to single and brought Nomura home, a subsequent wild pitch advanced the runners and Hibbard scored. Pinch hitter Tyler Kipp '25 kept the momentum going with an RBI single to center field. The Stags got their second out before TJ Schmalzle '26 stepped up to the plate and walked, loading the bases. Wrapping up the seven-run inning, Ferrara doubled to right center and reached third on an error. The score was 11-1 by the end of the 5th.

Saint Peter's scored on a fielder's choice in the top of the 6th, but that concluded scoring for them. Pitching dealt well, Baker went seven innings with just 2 ER and 11



Photo Contributed by The Sports Information Desk

Graduate student infielder Zach Selinger is batting .347 on the year with two home runs and 11 runs batted in.

strikeouts. RHP relievers Peter Phillips '26 and Ryan Maiorano '27 each went through one inning to conclude the game.

The Stags managed to score one more run in the bottom of the 8th, a fly-out to bring Bergevin home after he doubled and advanced on a wild pitch. The final score was 12-2.

**Game Three**

Sunday afternoon's conclusion saw the Stags eager to pull off the sweep, and it showed. At least one run was scored by nine different Stags; Ferrara led the pack with four hits and two home runs.

McVeigh took the mound for game three and struck out two in the first after an initial lineout. Matching the energy from the defense, the Stags offense flexed their own strength and Ferrara hit a lead-off home run to right center, prompting the Peacocks to undergo a pitching change. Nomura and Bergevin both walked, giving Hibbard the perfect opportunity with no outs. Hibbard delivered on this chance and doubled to center field to bring both teammates who walked home. Capping the scoring for the inning, Selinger singled to left field and Hibbard scored. It was 4-0 in the first.

he pitching problem for

Saint Peter's continued. Schmalzle was hit by a pitch and advanced on a passed ball. Nomura then walked, and Bergevin topped it off with an RBI double. A pitch also hit Hibbard, and Bucciero doubled for 2 RBIs. It was 7-0 going into the third.

McVeigh kept the Peacocks at bay, collecting four strikeouts between the second and third innings. The Stags' offense kept going, and Ferrara hit an RBI single that brought Schmalzle, with some impressive baserunning, home. A failed pickoff attempt with two outs brought Ferrara home, making it 9-0.

Saint Peter's finally broke through and scored a run on a home run, but the Stags immediately responded and scored four more of their own at the bottom of the inning.

Selinger hit an RBI double, Catalano an RBI single and Ferrara placed the cherry on top with another home run, making it 13-1.

Trying to chip away at the deficit, another home run brought the score to 13-2 for Saint Peter's. Selinger made up for the narrowing run difference and hit an RBI single to set it back to 12 runs.

It seemed like for every run




scored, the Stags added several more in response, and the 6th inning was no different. Bucciero hit a 2 RBI double, bringing Ferrara and designated hitter Eric Ludwick '25 home. Pinch hitter Aidan Baglino '27 was responsible for the next run thanks to an RBI single. Bases were loaded for Schmalzle, and a walk sent another runner home. Another pitch hit Ferrara and another scored. It was 19-2 by the top of the 7th, and the Peacocks could not score another, ending the game.

Through his six-inning start, McVeigh had a final line of 6 IP, 5 H, 2 ER, 1 BB and 9K. Right-handed reliever Bo Buckley '25 induced a lineout, pop-up and foul out to end the game after 10 pitches.

According to the game's official press release, Head Coach Bill Currier commended McVeigh's performance, "It was a good day of McVeigh getting ahead in counts." The hitting also got a shout-out, "It was a good power day too with a lot of different guys in the lineup and it was good to see a good combination of that today."

MAAC action continues for the Stags this weekend against Mount St. Marys, in an away series starting this Friday at 3 p.m.

## NFL Draft 3x4

		Who is your favorite player in the draft?	Who is your favorite team picking in the first round?	Who is your favorite sleeper pick?	Which of the top QBs will be the biggest bust
	Ryan Marquardt Head Sports Editor	I absolutely love the way Malik Nabers looks on a football field. He can make grown men look silly on the field.	Trade up for Drake Maye, trade back and take Quinyon Mitchell or Terrion Arnold, stick and pick Malik Nabers.	He's not really a sleeper anymore but Max Melton from Rutgers. He is an absolute dawg on the outside.	If Drake Maye goes to Washington or New England then him, if not then it'll be Jayden Daniels.
	Danny McElroy Assistant Sports Editor	Rome Odunze is a magical viewing experience, haven't been so in love with a receiver since DeVonta Smith.	As much as I want Odunze, I think the Giants prefer Nabers, assuming all the QBs are off the board.	Give me Christian Haynes out of UConn. Straight bulldozer at guard and dominated at the Senior Bowl.	Maybe I'm just a hater, but Drake Maye's college career hasn't convinced me at all about his chances in the NF.
	Crystal Arbelo Assistant Sports Editor	My sweet prince JJ McCarthy,	The streets say we're getting Troy Fautanu.	I wanna see DeWayne Carter do good, you got this pookie!!!	My sweet prince JJ McCarthy. The lights will be too bright I fear :(

## One on One with Head Coach Chris Casey

By RYAN MARQUARDT  
Head Sports Editor

Fairfield men's basketball Head Coach Chris Casey was appointed as the interim head coach just weeks before the start of the 2023-2024 season. He said his initial thoughts were that it was "unexpected, I wasn't aware anything was going to happen. When I was asked to make a role change and take the job I love the guys on the team and I love coaching so I was gonna take the job but the other part of it is there are long term friendships there, with guys who are not gonna be there coaching with you. There was a positive part of it and a negative part...What I talked about with the guys was that the season was gonna happen with or without us so it made sense to put our heads down and make the most of it,"

He then continued by discussing how his experience prepared him for the opportunity, saying, "I've been a head coach now four times on three different levels and in a few different places and, you know, I think it helps because to get good at something you have to go through it a little bit and experience it...But in the end it was just a great group of guys to work with."

Coach Casey started his career coaching basketball with Central Connecticut State and bounced around the northeast for a few years before getting the job as head coach of Niagara in 2013. He coached there until 2019. His head coaching career started at Division III Rutgers-Newark from 1998-2001.

He also commented on the experience of the team by saying, "experience could be a good thing or it could be a bad thing...What really helped was the approach of these guys and

their attitude and their positive outlook on everything. They bought into everything we were trying to do right away and I think that helped us play well. They bought into it even when we struggled early on they're not a group that points fingers and blames, they just kept working at it and completely bought in." He continued by saying that "A big part was experience but it's more so your makeup, what kind of person you are. How do you react to difficult situations and I think our guys did a really good job of that."

When commenting on what was different this year compared to the past couple, coach stated that, "Our guys played with a lot of confidence this year and that was something we tried to foster. To be a productive athlete and an achieving athlete I think you have to play with confidence and know the people behind you have confidence in you so like I kind of tried to take that approach."

One of the standout Stags on the team, graduate student Caleb Fields who led the Stags with an average of 16.9 points per game and was a leader on the team. Coach Casey noted that, "the keyword is leadership. He obviously had an outstanding season and I think he was a first team all league guy, it's certainly an honor to be second team all league but I think he was a first team guy along with Jalen. He played really, really well for us and had an outstanding year but more importantly the leadership was day in and day out. It was consistent and it really helped our team." He continued by saying, "He was really an extension of the coaching staff. I always feel like a player coached team is going to be better than a coach coached team and he ran with that. He bought



Photo Courtesy of @fairfieldmbb Instagram

Coach Chris Casey and his team celebrate an 85-81 road win over Quinnipiac in the locker room.

into everything we were doing and he was an extension of us and he played that way and he led that way on the court."

For all athletes at Fairfield The Red Sea Rising Name Image and Likeness collective was recently started by a group of alums. It will work with the industry leading Student-Athlete Name, Image and Likeness (SANIL) which will help the power of the alumni and fans. It will allow for businesses and donors to support Stags student-athletes.

When asked about the NIL program Coach Casey said that it will "help tremendously... Vice President Schlickmann and all of the other people did a really good job getting that off the ground. We are now in the process of hoping we can get a good number of people to contribute to that collective and support the NIL efforts. Mr. Schlickmann and the university

have done a great job at supporting (NIL efforts) and they're making a lot of effort trying to get this off the ground."

Coach also praised the fans and atmosphere of the Leo D. Mahoney Arena throughout the season by saying, "I was really appreciative of the tremendous support we got from the university and tremendous support we got from the fan base, students, community members, campus members. That Mahoney arena was electric for most of our home games and had a great energy level to it. People may not realize it but that helps us tremendously and our guys really appreciated it."

When discussing the future of the team with so many players graduating, Coach Casey stated that, "I don't know the makeup of our roster yet. We are certainly going to recruit to play the same style and we're certainly going to recruit to have the same type of character

guys in the program. So I'm going to be very optimistic about what we can accomplish next year.

Lastly, when asked how it felt to be officially announced as the head coach of Fairfield men's basketball and to have the interim title removed coach said that, "It was great, it really was. You're only human so you're going to think about it during the season, I'm not going to say it was never thought about but I tried to keep that thought out of my head as much as possible and really just tried to concentrate on our team and how to make our team better that day." He continued to say, "I'm a lifetime coach, this will be my 39th year coming up coaching college basketball and I could do it for another 20 if they'll let me. I love doing it and it's my life passion and to have that opportunity at a university of this statcher... is an honor."



Photo Contributed by The Sports Information Desk

Coach Chris Casey was promoted from interim to full-time head coach after leading the Stags to a 24-13 record and a second place MAAC finish.