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Molly Lamendola/ The Mirror

Pictured above is the Office of Accessibility located in the DiMenna-Nyselius Library on campus. The Office of Accessibility provides resources for hundreds of students to ensure fair and equal opportunity for all, across campus, inside and outside of the classroom.

## The Office of Accessibility Works to Ensure Equal Opportunity For All

By Thomas Coppola  
Sports Editor

Fairfield University students all have the right to an equal and fair opportunity on campus. The Office of Accessibility, which operates out of the main floor of the DiMenna Nyselius Library, can be an extremely necessary tool to help Fairfield students with their Fairfield experience, given certain circumstances.

Whether it hinders their academics, or their on-campus living and dining experience, the Office of Accessibility is used to assist students

with any accessibility-related accommodations they might need.

Leading the charge for the office is Megan Buxton, the director of accessibility at Fairfield. Being one of the only offices that works with both undergraduate and graduate students alike, Buxton and her staff ensure that Fairfield's campus community is continuously being offered equal opportunities in the classroom and in residence halls.

Alongside Buxton is the Assistant Director of Accessibility, Jillian Kelly and Program Coordinator, Susie Filipowich. The staff works to

proctor exams to students who may need extra time or a separate place to take the exam; the office provides two sectioned-off testing rooms for this reason. Professors are made aware of any accommodations at the beginning of the year, and Buxton works to train professors in any areas they may not be entirely well-versed in.

Just like any office on campus, the Office of Accessibility operates from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, with the office being closed on weekends.

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## Fairfield University Set to Hold Vaccine Booster Clinic

By Madison Gallo  
Head News Editor

Fairfield University will hold a COVID-19 Vaccination Clinic in partnership with Griffin Hospital on Friday, Dec. 10 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Field House of the Leslie C. Quick, Jr. Recreation Complex. At the clinic, first and second doses as well as booster shots will be offered. All three vaccines — Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson — will be available at the clinic.

Anyone looking to receive their booster vaccine must bring their vaccination card.

This clinic comes after the two that were held during the 2020-2021 academic year, in partnership with Griffin Hospital in which the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine was offered to members of the campus community.

Currently, Fairfield's campus community has a vaccination rate of over 93 percent. According to Vice President of Marketing and Communications Jenn Anderson, 650 appointments are going to be offered for the upcoming clinic but that the registration demand will be evaluated in terms of whether more appointments and doses need to be added.

At the first two clinics, there were 1,500 doses available to "any community member — University and eligible [Fairfield] Prep students and all employees — who is not currently in isolation or quarantine" according to the email sent by Human Resources on Monday, April 21, as reported by the Mirror in the April 21, 2021 issue.

The Mirror also reported that though 1,500 doses were available, 868 community members scheduled appointments to get their vaccination

at the clinic offered by Fairfield.

When asked how the University foresees the turn-out of this vaccination clinic, Anderson responded by saying "Our first and second vaccination clinics were well-attended, with over 800 vaccines administered contributing to the very successful campus vaccination rate" and that the University "anticipates strong participation in this clinic as well."

At the upcoming clinic, participating students will be eligible to participate in raffles and also receive a drink voucher to Dunkin' Donuts for a free cup of coffee.

There will be five baskets participants can enter their raffle tickets into: a Stag Spirit Shop Basket, Wellness Basket, Getaway Basket, Active Basket and a Lunch Basket.

Some of the items community members can win are a \$250 bookstore gift card, an Airbnb gift card, a bottle of wine, a Fairfield mug and wine glasses, free lunch from Garden Catering and more.

Members of the University community, in compliance with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines, are considered to be fully vaccinated two weeks after receiving their second dose, or two weeks after receiving the single Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

Anderson emphasized that the University strongly recommends and encourages its community members to get fully vaccinated and also to receive the booster vaccine.

"Fairfield continues to evaluate all Covid related processes and

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## Surge of COVID-19 Cases On Campus Leave Questions About Finals

By Molly Lamendola  
Editor-in-Chief

COVID-19 cases appear to be increasing across campus. During the Fall 2021 Reopening Testing, 89 members of the Fairfield community tested positive out of 10,662, a rate of .835%.

In November, Vice President for Marketing and Communications Jennifer Anderson stated to The Mirror that the current case count was zero, although no collection of those results remain on the COVID-19 dashboard.

For the week ending on Dec. 3, 41 tests came back positive out of 877, a roughly 4.7% positivity rate. Students have still raised concerns about seemingly increased COVID-19 cases.

Senior Olivia Burke stated that she feels as though she's heard of more people getting contact traced or testing positive lately and states that maybe people were exposed during Thanksgiving.

Junior Caroline McConville added that, "With COVID cases

on the rise it is making me very nervous for possibly getting it during finals and how that will impact not only preparing, but taking them."

In November The Mirror attempted to ask administrators what would happen if a student tested positive during Finals Week and Vice President of Marketing & Communication, Jennifer Anderson did not answer.

But, despite a lack of University response, many professors have begun moving finals from in-person to virtual.

Junior Anna Mercurio stated that, "My teacher said that she's making her final exam online because of the risk of being all together in the exam room while some people are unvaccinated."

Mercurio added that she's happy it's online and said, "I also know that the rise in COVID cases recently made her make this decision. It's crazy the cases went up so much."

A professor in the Department of Religious Studies, Ellen Umansky, Ph.D. is one of the faculty members that's

Covid-19 Fall 2021 Testing Dashboard

Test Results Week Ending - 12/3/21						
	Faculty and Staff		Students		Total	
	Total Tests	Positive	Total Tests	Positive	Total Tests	Positive
Surveillance	84	1	637	9	721	10
Diagnostic	2	0	74	7	76	7
External	21	5	59	19	80	24
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>770</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>877</b>	<b>41</b>

Pictured above is a screenshot of the COVID-19 dashboard for the week ending on Dec. 3. Many students have raised concerns about numbers increasing just before finals week, and how COVID-19 will impact that.

decided to move one of her exams online due to recent trends.

"I decided this morning to move my previously scheduled in person exam to virtual after the registrar denied my request (and I'm sure the request of other faculty members) to move the final to a larger room," Umansky stated, continuing, "Some of the students in the course are unvaccinated and our classroom in Canisius fits my 24 students

and me but without much space between desks and chairs. Out of care and concern for the health of my students and me, I decided to give an open book, 'take home' exam which students will send back to me as a Word or PDF attachment.

She added that she's giving an in-person final in one of her classes due to a 100% vaccination rate, "I don't know whether other professors will make this change. I am trying to remain optimistic

that the administration will put a vaccine mandate in place for next semester."

Junior Kayla Brosnihan adds that, "I think the rate of covid cases shows that regardless of vaccine status there still needs to be caution and measures taken to ensure we stop the rise of cases so we don't spread it to our families come winter break."

The Mirror will continue to update the story as needed.

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# The Office of Accessibility Is “All Hands On Deck” with 1,300 Students Served

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“We have close to 1,300 students who have disclosed disabilities to our office. We are all-hands-on-deck. So what I mean by that is, I may be doing faculty training, but then I walk out and a student hands me an exam, and then I am scanning it and sending it to the professors”.

- Megan Buxton,  
Director of Accessibility

During final exams, however, the office is open 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. every single day of finals to ensure that everyone's needs are being met.

The office controls one of the largest operations at Fairfield. “We have close to 1,300 students who have disclosed disabilities to our office,” Buxton stated. “We are all-hands-on-deck. So what I mean by that is, I may be doing faculty training, but then I walk out and a student hands me an exam, and then I am scanning it and sending it to the professors.”

The “all-hands-on-deck” mentality is always present in the office, where upwards of 500 note takers are taking notes in class and

sending the documents to the office.

“It's really the simplest thing, you just diligently record and upload detailed notes for students with acknowledged disabilities to help assist them with their studies,” note-taker Carly Manzi '23 commented. “Plus it's a great way to earn a little bit of money while also helping your peers.”

These note takers are registered under payroll and with the human resources department, which shows how wide the scope of the office actually is.

“I always laugh when I say I don't think there's a department on campus that we don't talk or coordinate with,” Buxton commented.

Many requests for exam proctoring come through the office, with Filipowich coordinating all email communications with students. With the large number of students looking for their services, the turnaround time for requests to be fulfilled could take up to two weeks.

This is not a fault of the office, but merely is a reflection of the amount of requests they need to take on at once.

“We have broken multiple weeks where we've proctored over 100 [exams],” Buxton said. Buxton also highlighted the need for professors to receive education regarding accommodations, which would streamline the process of

“We have broken multiple weeks where we've proctored over 100 [exams].”

- Megan Buxton,  
Director of Accessibility

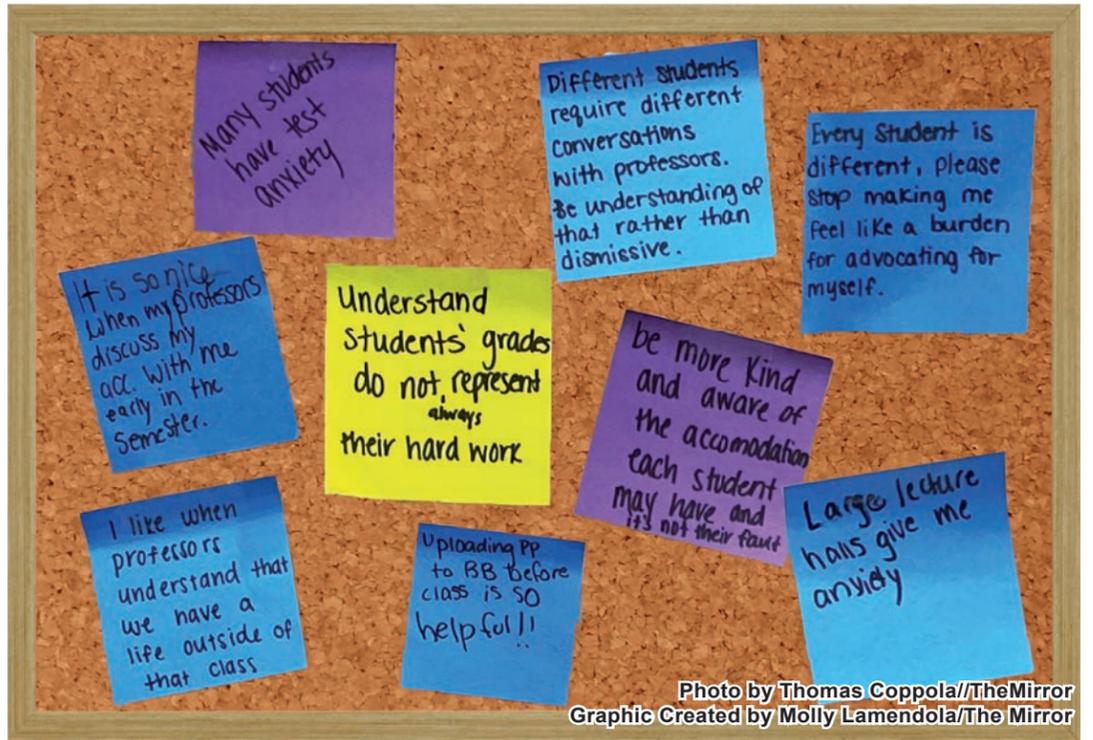


Photo by Thomas Coppola//TheMirror  
Graphic Created by Molly Lamendola//The Mirror

Pictured above are post-it notes left by students in the Office of Accessibility when asked what are “...some things your professors do well or could do better when handling your disability or accommodations?” The Office of Accessibility works with close to 1,300 students each year, proctoring up to 100 exams each week.

how the office of accessibility works.

Multiple students added their experiences with the office.

“The office of accessibility is definitely helpful. The application process is so easy and the staff is willing to help you in any way they can,” Tess Morrissey '23 stated.

Others acknowledge the turnaround time for requests, like Jake Cartisano '23, who said “The Office of Accessibility is a very nice group of individuals and the accessibility portal is easy to use, however, the entire process is slow and could be made a little quicker.”

Sometimes, with the sensitivity of applications the office receives, there may need to be a longer or more extensive process in fulfilling the student's request for accommodations. The Office of Accessibility believes that if professors were better trained in academic accommodations from the get-go, this would improve the turnaround time for certain requests.

In the lobby area of the Office of Accessibility, they have a bulletin board which includes notes from anonymous students about things that professors have done

well in terms of accommodations, or things that they wish were done differently at the academic level.

One reads, “Uploading the powerpoint to Blackboard before class is so helpful!” Another states “Understand students' grades do not always represent their hard work.” Finally, another says “I like when professors understand that we have a life outside of that class.”

All of these requests and comments are important and helpful to the Office of Accessibility, who are responsible for making sure that professors are aware of such accommodations.

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APPLICATIONS WILL BE SENT OUT ON JANUARY 17TH AND WILL BE DUE IN EARLY FEBRUARY. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, OR HAVEN'T RECEIVED STAFF DESCRIPTIONS AND WANT THEM... PLEASE EMAIL EDITOR-IN-CHIEF MOLLY LAMENDOLA AT [MOLLY.LAMENDOLA@STUDENT.FAIRFIELD.EDU](mailto:MOLLY.LAMENDOLA@STUDENT.FAIRFIELD.EDU)





Compiled by Madeline West  
Information contributed by the  
Department of Public Safety.

- 11/30  
12:34 p.m.  
There was an elevator rescue in Bannow. The person involved was rescued, the elevator was shut down and a repair committee was sent.
- 11/30  
1:34 p.m.  
A student was documented for trying to sneak a non-university student onto campus. They were referred to student conduct.
- 12/1  
12:40 p.m.  
Theft was reported from Dolan House. Planters were removed from the front of the building. It is currently under investigation.
- 12/1  
11:56 p.m.  
There was vandalism to the bulletin boards in Jogues Hall. Responsible parties were identified and referred to student conduct.
- 12/1  
10:59 p.m.  
There was narcotics possession in Mahan. Those responsible were referred to student conduct.
- 12/3  
1:35 a.m.  
A DUI was reported on Lynch Road. The vehicle was parked and transportation was arranged for the student who was also referred to student conduct.
- 12/4  
3:20 p.m.  
A table in Townhouse 124 was reported stolen. Students request the table to be returned.
- 12/6  
9:59 p.m.  
A fake ID was confiscated from a student. The ID was taken and the student was referred to student conduct.

# With Covid Cases Rising, New Questions Raised Regarding Fairfield's Mask Policy

By Molly Lamendola  
Editor-in-Chief

By Tobenna Ugwu  
Managing Editor

Since the start of the semester, masks have been required at all times in indoor spaces at Fairfield University after the decision was made by the town of Fairfield to temporarily re-institute the policy on Aug. 23, 2021. This decision was made after Fairfield County was moved into the "high transmission" category by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, with 82 hospitalizations within the county.

This decision came after a summer of emails from the university stating that masks wouldn't be required for vaccinated students, but would be for those unvaccinated.

On June 10, 2021, the Fairfield University Student Association sent an email to students stating that an incentive of getting the vaccine would be "... not having to wear a mask anymore..."

In July of 2021, the Dean of Students office sent an email to the student body stating that in a return on campus, masks would be optional to

vaccinated students, but unvaccinated students "must wear a mask indoors."

On Aug. 6 of 2021, this policy was reiterated in an email regarding move-in protocols. "At this time, for students and guests who are fully vaccinated, masks are not required but highly encouraged" the Office of Residence Life stated.

But, with COVID-19 cases decreasing towards the end of September, the indoor mask mandate was lifted in the Town of Fairfield on Oct. 1. The Mirror reported that despite the town's decision, the University would maintain the indoor mask mandate, but monitor the situation daily and would adjust if necessary.

Since then, there have been rumors circulating about whether or not the University would lift the mandate with positivity numbers lowering to zero. In early November, The Mirror reported the low case numbers leading into Thanksgiving Break.

Vice President of Marketing and Communications Jennifer Anderson stated at the time, "We will continue to evolve and plan as needed to adapt to the ambient environment, and are pleased to share that our current case count is at zero."

Yet, as of Dec. 5, 2021, for

the testing week ending on Dec. 3, 35 students out of 770 tested have come back positive, a 4.5 percent rate.

Since then students have been voicing their concerns about lifting the mask mandate and the low amount of mask-wearing happening on campus.

Junior Madeline Hossler stated, "I think the further we get into this year the more relaxed people have become about restrictions despite the fact that arguably circumstances are getting worse."

Hossler adds that "The pandemic is still evolving, and especially with emerging variants we don't fully understand and cases on the rise on campus now is exactly the wrong time to intentionally be making students more vulnerable."

"I think masks are important because we do not understand the effect of vaccines on the new variants, but I do not think students are following the mask policy so it will be difficult for the University to find ways to enforce the mask mandate," added Connor Padover '24.

Junior Megan Murphy stated that "Out of consideration for our professors and their families, I believe that it is important that in the classroom students and faculty continue to wear masks."

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Kyler Erezuma/TheMirror

Pictured above is Gabriel Rodrigues '22 studying in a mask in Bannow Science Center on campus. Fairfield University has had an indoor mask mandate in place since the start of the school year and since then students have stated differing opinions about the continued mandate. This has increased since COVID-19 cases have gone up on campus and since cases of the Omicron variant have been discovered in the United States.

## Stags Encouraged to Sign up to Recieve COVID-19 Booster Shot

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

policies and will communicate any changes for the spring semester at that time," Anderson said. "Fairfield highly encourages our campus community to receive the booster vaccination, however, according to the CDC, you are considered fully vaccinated with two doses."

Director of the Student Health Center Julia Duffy MS, APRN, BC echoed Anderson's statements by saying that "The Student Health Center is recommending all eligible students receive the COVID-19 booster vaccine."

She warned that, "individuals vaccinated in the spring semester may have waning immunity," adding that "Receiving a booster vaccination will help prevent 'breakthrough' infections and will help protect the individual and our campus community."

To be eligible for the booster

"Receiving a booster vaccination will help prevent 'breakthrough' infections and will help protect the individual and our campus community."

- Julia Duffy  
Director of the Student Health Center

vaccination, one must be fully vaccinated and wait the allotted time from the vaccination. If you have received the Johnson & Johnson Janssen vaccine, you are eligible to receive the booster vaccine at least two months after your shot. If you received the Pfizer-BioNTech or

Moderna vaccine, you are eligible for the booster at least six months after your first COVID-19 vaccination.

Junior Hadley Waterbury will be receiving her booster vaccine at the upcoming clinic and "is very excited" to be doing so.

"I am incredibly grateful to the school for making it so easy to receive the shot right here on campus and before we head home for Christmas break," Waterbury said. "I am already preparing by drinking lots of water this week!"

Students who participate in the booster clinic should send copies of their updated vaccine cards to covidhealth@fairfield.edu. University employees should send their updated vaccine cards to COVIDHR@fairfield.edu. Participants can share and tag @fairfieldu on Instagram after receiving their booster shot at the vaccination clinic Friday.

### THE MIRROR

Incorporated 1977

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# Mixed Opinions Rise on the Future of the Mask Mandate

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

“From my own experience,” she added, “It seems that the majority of students abide by this policy. However, in all other facilities on campus, there seems to be an even split of students who do or do not wear a mask.”

Senior Chelsea Gabriel stated that, “To a degree, I think masks are still needed on campus” to slow the spread of all diseases, but she added that, “I think it’s up to the discretion of each person.”

Gabriel adds that students have been acting as if the policy is up to the discretion of each student anyways and, “I think if you want to wear one, you should wear it. If you don’t want to wear one, then don’t, but you must practice proper hygiene etiquette, which is something most Americans don’t [do].”

Some students have stated that they wish for the mask policy to be lifted on campus.

First-Year student, Alexandra Riggi added that, “I feel as though students at Fairfield have been following the mask policy whether it be in class or inside buildings. Students have been respectful of the regulations and cases at the University have remained very low.”

She continued, “I personally think masks are not needed on campus anymore and would love to see the campus return back to normal!”

Junior Stephanie Rodgers seemed to disagree with Riggi, “Yes, masks are definitely still needed on-campus. There’s a new variant and it sucks for everybody, but they’re still a necessity.” Rodgers spoke to the low number of students seen around campus wearing masks.

“You go all over campus and [virtually] no one wears it indoors until they’re yelled at to do so,” she said.

Senior Elena Galligan agreed that there’s been a lack of students following the indoor mask mandate. “I think there’s a lot of people who are just not wearing masks and getting away with it.”



Molly Lamendola / The Mirror

Pictured above is a sign outside of the Barone Campus Center stating that masks are required indoors. This is a policy that has been in place since the beginning of the semester.

Galligan adds that it’s not just an issue in the Barone Campus Center, but also in classes and around academic buildings.

“There’s not really people enforcing [the mask mandate] but there shouldn’t have to be...people should care about wearing masks.” She said, continuing, “Especially with another new variant of Covid which can affect anyone, including vaccinated people.”

The faculty on staff seem to agree with the student sentiment.

When David Crawford Ph.D., professor in the department of anthropology and sociology and President of the Fairfield Chapter of the American Association of University Professors, was asked if the mask policy should be kept in place, he stated that as

an anthropologist, he couldn’t speak on it.

“I think we should listen to the experts, so if the CDC and our own Public Health Advisory Team say that we should be wearing masks, then we should be wearing masks.” He states, continuing, “It is horrifically arrogant of anyone without expertise to be making public health decisions that contradict the experts.”

When asked if he’s had any issues in classes with students wearing masks he says he has not and that, “I know everyone hates masks and I really appreciate students following the rules and not forcing me to play cop.”

“The rules are hard for me, too,” Crawford adds, “We all have to work together.” He continues that though some of the administrators are taking the pandemic seriously, “Some are deliberately

politicizing it for reasons I cannot understand.”

The Mirror reached out to Anderson regarding whether or not the University is planning on lifting the mandate, and if so, how this decision would impact unvaccinated students, and if professors will use the honor system regarding vaccination status since unvaccinated students’ names aren’t provided to them, if the AAUP and other staff supportive of this decision, and how the University was planning on monitoring whether or not the unvaccinated students continue to wear masks in public spaces.

Anderson stated in response to the questions, “Fairfield will continue to make policy and process changes based on CDC guidance, state and local policy, and university data, and will communicate any changes for [the] spring semester at that time.”



Kyler Erezuma/TheMirror

Pictured above are students in a classroom wearing masks. David Crawford Ph.D., professor of sociology and president of the Fairfield Chapter American Association of University Professors stated that he hasn’t had a problem with students wearing masks in class but some members of administration seem to be “deliberately politicizing” the pandemic.

CAMPUS CLOSING INFORMATION

**All university residences will officially close and be locked on Wed., Dec. 22, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. for Winter Break and will not reopen until Mon., Jan. 17, 2022 at 10 a.m.**

**If you have a final exam at 3 p.m. or later on Wed, Dec. 22nd, the Office of Residence Life asks students to contact your Area Coordinator/Graduate Resident Coordinator for specific checkout information.**

**Requests to remain on campus after Dec. 22 must be made by Dec. 17, at 4:30 p.m. You must be fully vaccinated and complete an online form to get permission for your stay. The Office of Residence Life states that permission will not be granted for students seeking outside employment and athletes and international students are still required to fill out the form.**

## STAGSHospitality

Meet Your  
Campus Dietitian  
Joanna Schipke



Joanna Schipke is a Registered Dietitian who received her Bachelor’s Degree in Nutritional Sciences and Dietetics from the University of Connecticut. She went on to complete her 1200-hour dietetic internship from Keene State College. Joanna started her nutrition career in K-12 working for several different school districts across the state and most recently was employed as the Food Service Director for Watertown Public Schools.

Joanna is available as a resource to students to provide one on one nutrition counseling, assistance with food allergies and other dietary needs, and help students find healthy options on campus. She looks forward to helping students form a positive relationship with food and teach them healthy habits they can take with them the rest of their lives.

To schedule a consultation with Joanna, email [Schipke-Joanna@aramark.com](mailto:Schipke-Joanna@aramark.com).

# Opinion

Editor Peyton Perry » [peyton.perry@student.fairfield.edu](mailto:peyton.perry@student.fairfield.edu)

## Fairfield Students Should Take Advantage of Covid-19 Booster Clinic

By Thomas Coppola  
Sports Editor



Get **THREE** chances to **WIN** prizes & a cup of coffee on us!

Fairfield University is encouraging all members of the campus community to get vaccinated or receive a booster vaccination during the Covid-19 Vaccine Clinic in partnership with Griffin Hospital, on December 10, 2021 from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. at the RecPlex Field House.

**FAIRFIELD TO HOST BOOSTER & VACCINATION CLINIC**

Get Boosted! Get Vaccinated!

Schedule #COVID19 vaccination or booster!

Photo Contributed by Fairfield University

I might be starting to sound like a broken record. I've written about why I think masks should stay on, what the deal is with COVID at Fairfield University, and even about testing procedures after Thanksgiving break.

Back in March of this year, after practicing social distancing and mask wearing for a whole year since the onset of the pandemic, I caught COVID.

Granted, that was right before the vaccine became available to all who wanted it, so there wasn't much else I could do to protect

myself.

But now, even after the vaccine is publicly available, we all have the opportunity to give ourselves an extra layer of protection from COVID-19 in the form of a booster shot that we did not have a year ago.

Fairfield University is hosting a booster and vaccine clinic on Dec. 10 in partnership with Griffin Hospital. This provides students with the perfect opportunity to get their booster.

And what better time to get the booster shot than now, with

the Omicron variant of the virus picking up serious steam around the world just this week?

I should acknowledge that I think Fairfield has done an incredible job this year of handling COVID-19, and I think that our vaccination rate on campus is actually a really good sign.

Breakthrough COVID cases, however, which are cases of COVID-19 that are contracted by fully vaccinated individuals, have been running rampant, which has been causing some people to lose faith in the vaccines that they

received.

We cannot let up now. We've made it this far as a country through this pandemic, with most people electing to do their duty in getting the vaccine. In order to really try and get through this new phase of the pandemic, we need to get the new shot.

According to an article by CNN, the definition of being "fully vaccinated" is being moved up to three doses.

The former definition of being fully vaccinated meant you had two doses of the vaccine, but as the booster shot to the Moderna and Pfizer vaccine becomes available, this definition is changing.

Another thing I would like to acknowledge is that the side effects of the vaccine are not fun to deal with; after my second shot, I felt pretty tired and it felt like I had a cold. Like I said, it's not fun- and I understand this.

Many people don't want to be knocked out for a day, because we all lead busy lives and have things to do on a daily basis.

But consider the long

term: is sacrificing one day more important than the health of the whole nation?

In my own opinion, I am putting the health of the general public over one day of feeling crappy every single time.

If Fairfield University students don't do their part in getting fully vaccinated, I am worried that we might be finding ourselves in a similar situation as last year, where fairly strict COVID-19 directives were put into place and some freedoms that we are seeing this year were limited.

Obviously, it is up to your own discretion if you want to get the booster shot; I cannot force anyone to go out and do that, I am merely writing this to give my opinion on how the rest of the pandemic should play out from a more local point of view.

If it is something that interests you, however, Fairfield University is hosting a booster clinic on Dec. 10, 2021, which I think is a great opportunity to give yourself an extra shield against the virus ahead of yet another COVID-filled winter.

## The Levee Should Become More Diner-Like for Students

By Peyton Perry  
Opinion Editor

If there is one big weakness I have, it's my sweet tooth.

Every single day, without failure, I crave a dessert: specifically ice cream or frozen yogurt. Sixteen Handles in town has become my kryptonite, as I frequently find myself going spontaneously on weeknights just to satisfy my sugar crave.

One night whilst on my phone and unwinding from the long day, I came across a social media post from one of my good friends who attends Sacred Heart University, which is one town over.

It was a picture of her and her friends at an old-fashioned diner, sipping from huge milkshakes that were loaded with whipped cream and cherries. My eyes immediately widened and I quickly messaged her asking where she was; being so close, I thought that maybe my friends and I could go!

To my great surprise, she responded that it was JP's Diner, which is actually located on their campus.

I did some more digging on my own and learned that JP's diner is a 50's style restaurant for Sacred Heart students, offering breakfast, lunch and dinner, serving diner classics.

From club sandwiches, burgers, milkshakes and cheesecake, they offer a wide variety of options for students with an even more fun atmosphere!

The booths are bright red, there's a bar counter for sitting if one were to just stop in for a coffee, and there's actual print

menus with waiters and waitresses to serve. It must feel as though students are travelling back in time! Even more exciting, the diner is open until 3:00 a.m. on weekends and dining dollars are accepted.

But enough about Sacred Heart University! I want to focus on Fairfield.

It would be a wonderful thing to have something similar to this on our campus!

I say this not as a complaint or dissatisfaction for what the school already offers, and I don't necessarily find it practical to create something like this anytime in the near future, but I think there's leeway to bring a similar experience to our campus.

The Stag, our diner of sorts, located in the Barone Campus Center has incredible food in my opinion, as well as booths and tables. The fried chicken sandwiches and french fries are mouthwatering and the Stag is always bustling with activity.

I don't think anything here

should change; this place serves more as an in-between classes kind of venture to catch up with friends. The Levee, however, I think may benefit from a little expansion, creating more of an actual sit-down cozy diner atmosphere for students.

The Levee is another great place to grab food and was actually just redone for this year with completely new owners taking over!

The food here is my favorite; the pizza is always delicious and the penne and meatballs are my personal go-to meal. All my friends enjoy the food too and there are great big portions to fill you up!

I have heard several students say however that they miss the booth seatings offered and the bar, which was replaced

with another good alternative of deli casings and snacks. I think there is potential here to make this even more appealing to students!

Over time, imagine bringing booths back to The Levee, maybe even putting an old-fashioned jukebox for students to choose different classics to play!

Walls could be painted fun bright colors, and printed menus could be passed out to students. Just adding one waitress or waiter, which may be a cool work-study job, would change the whole atmosphere to more of an actual sit-down restaurant.

Of course with the sweet tooth I have, I am also going to bring the idea forth of having old-fashioned milkshakes to replace the ice cream sandwiches and treats currently being offered.

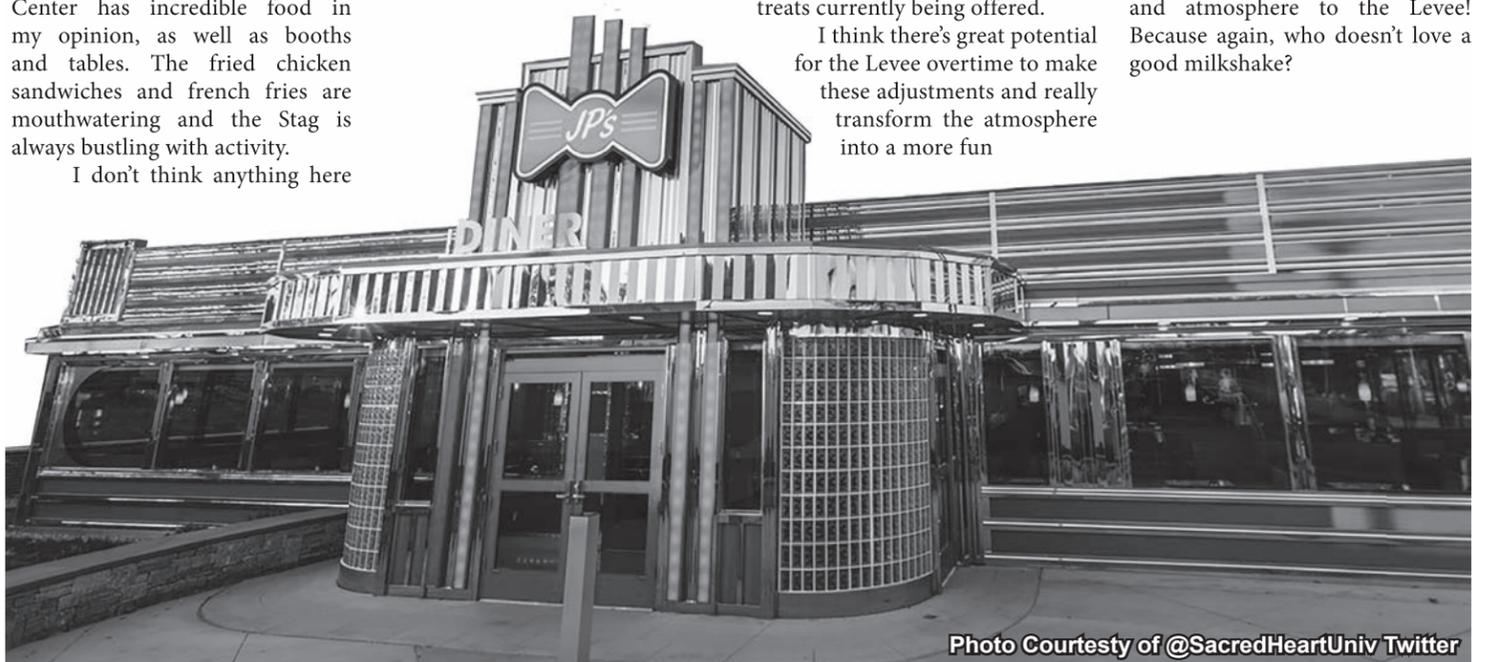
I think there's great potential for the Levee overtime to make these adjustments and really transform the atmosphere into a more fun

environment for students. I mean, who doesn't love a '50's style diner?

This would also serve as an alternative for going out to town on the weekends. If students felt as though it was a similar experience attending a sit-down restaurant in town, a lot more would prioritize going on the weekends, especially. It would be a great way of saving money and connecting with more Fairfield students!

Maybe I'm just saying all of this because I want milkshakes on campus, but I don't know - I think there's real potential here. It would take a lot of work and may not be practical for right now since the ownership just switched over, but I think it'd be a great goal to reach over time

Let's bring that fun energy and atmosphere to the Levee! Because again, who doesn't love a good milkshake?



# The Best Professors Care for Every Student

By Anne Tomosivitch  
Contributing Writer

As students and faculty alike are aware, professors undergo a tremendous amount of scrutiny. Virtually every student on campus has something to say about each of their professors, and typically negative opinions get the most air time.

We busy ourselves with these conversations, but how often do we ask ourselves, what exactly makes a “good” professor?

In my experience, there is no such thing as a universally “good” or “bad” professor. Often students’ opinion of each professor has everything to do with teaching styles, learning styles, study habits, grading preferences, types of assignments, interest in the content, etc.

Your view of a particular professor is essentially a personal algorithm dependent on the above

variables, among others.

But I would also argue that there are some universally cherished traits among our educators. I think that the best professors are distinguished not by the difficulty of their assignments, nor the nature of their teaching, per se, but rather by their genuine care for each student.

My favorite professors at Fairfield have not been those who have handed out good grades, though that has been appreciated.

More than that, they have been those who have both acknowledged and challenged me as an individual. My favorite professors have ten to know me, and beyond that, they have held me accountable.

My decision to come to Fairfield was inspired, in part, by a conversation with Fr. Tom Reagan S.J., a former professor at Fairfield. “Professors at Fairfield, or really

any Jesuit school, care about you,” he said.

From what I have experienced thus far on campus, that statement could not be more true. Fairfield is not the type of school where you can skip class and go unnoticed. And in my opinion, the best faculty members are those who make you feel noticed, sometimes even more than you’d like to be.

See, my favorite professors could call me. They check in to make sure I am paying attention in class.

My favorite professors will read and re-read my assignments before they accept them, providing feedback until I am on the brink of exhaustion, because they have high expectations of me.

My favorite professors let me sit in their offices, as they kindly go over content again and again, and then maybe another time.

My favorite professors offer me their phone numbers and have

me call them in the airport to go over a paper.

My favorite professors reach out to ask me how I am doing, and genuinely want to know the answer.

My favorite professors talk to me about my strengths and weaknesses. They know me personally. They inspire me to do great things.

My favorite professors pray for me.

My favorite professors offer me feedback, even when I don’t want it.

My favorite professors hold me accountable, even when it hurts.

But more than anything, my favorite professors let me bare my own fruit. After they’ve done their pruning, my favorite professors sit back and let me take the reins.

And my favorite professors are the best cheerleaders.

A lot of the time, you’ll

hear students assess faculty based on the grades they’ve received.

And while I would be lying if I said I didn’t care about the letter grade I get on paper, I’ve come to learn that our tangible grades are just a fraction of what we really earn in each of our courses, because the best professors do more than coach their classes to A’s on a transcript.

They facilitate real problem solving. They inspire critical thinking. They challenge students form well-developed arguments, and to effectively articulate them. They expose students to new concepts, and frame them in a creative way. And in the best way possible, they sometimes kick our butts.

In any or all of these things, a “good” professor shapes us into the people we are becoming. But the best professors give us the tools we need to “go forth and set the world on fire.”

# Why You Should Not Make New Year's Resolutions

By Madeline West  
Assistant News Editor



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At the end of each year, most people share a tradition of writing down resolutions and big goals for the

upcoming new year. While I think it is important to always have dreams and goals, the stigma around basing your

goals off a calendar is not the way to go about making lasting change and usually results in failure.

Studies show that only eight percent of Americans who make a New Year’s resolution actually keep them all year and 80 percent have failed by the start of February. One reason for this is because of the pressure to try and make huge lifestyle changes such as starting a fitness journey or working towards some sort of financial goal- when you simply are not ready.

Instead, the change should be made not relying on a certain day, but when you have the true preparation and commitment to stick to it.

Delaying a goal to when it can truly be worked towards is better than abandoning it altogether.

Another problem with aligning goals to a specific date is the fact that if you truly want to accomplish something- it can be

worked towards whenever. I am a strong believer that if you sincerely want to do something you can do it no matter what or when - you just need the right mindset.

Resolutions are crucial in growing as a person and it should be normalized to make them whenever you feel as though you are ready. Personal growth and goal setting and achieving is not linear and should not be calendarized.

More so, the pressure of having multiple resolutions is simply too overwhelming and unobtainable. For instance, having one resolution for the year leads to more success because it allows for more preparation, and the time to truly fulfill the commitment to yourself. Being more likely to achieve one resolution will create more motivation and esteem to continue on the path of bettering yourself as well. Additionally, having one goal will allow more willpower

to actually stick to it because it will be a top priority, having no other competition.

It is also crucial that resolutions are relevant and specific to you. There is a societal pressure that resolutions circulate around a very narrow popular list.

For instance, in 2021 about half of Americans wanted to start 2021 by getting in shape, and a quarter wanted to save money. But, I am here to say dreams and goals are supposed to be specially aligned to your life and should not be concerned with following the expectations of others.

So with that being said, come Jan. 1, 2022, I urge you to make the resolution to not make any resolutions. Instead, enter the year with an open mind. Take the time to think about the chance of achieving your goals when the time is right for you in the next 365 days.

## EDITORIAL BOARD

### “REMEMBRANCE OF MUSICAL THEATRE LEGEND STEPHEN SONDHEIM”

SHEILA MCCOMBS  
MANAGING EDITOR

Throughout my life, I have always loved musical theater. My parents were huge theater people and every year for Christmas I got tickets to a Broadway show. Following this, I performed in shows during middle school and high school, which are all some of my most cherished memories. All of these connections help to make sense of why I cannot stop thinking about the legacy of Stephen Sondheim, who passed away at the age of 91 on Nov. 26.

Sondheim is without a doubt one of the most popular and prolific writers in musical theater history and he changed the way that people think of the American musical forever. It is such a hard thing to try and quantify the effects of his career when he wrote so much over so many years. However, I can speak with authority on the effects that his works have had on my life in particular.

Whenever you look at a musical by Sondheim, from “Sweeney Todd” to “Into The Woods,” or “Sunday in the Park with George,” one of the major themes is how he changed what he believed a musical could do as a work of art. Before the rise of Sondheim’s first musical in 1957 with the release of “West Side Story,” the musical was mostly a

vehicle for fairytale endings and peppy numbers that didn’t leave the audience with any unanswered questions. Sondheim wanted more. He focused on social and political issues, and the stories of characters who were at times unlikeable, or never got what they wanted.

In “West Side Story” there are no happy endings; it is a real representation of racially focused violence paired with the story of senseless violence in “Romeo and Juliet.” Within his musical “Company,” the characters take a hard look at what it means to be married, in a more emotional way than any other musical at the time. That idea was revolutionary in the field of musical theater and you can see his influence in so many other shows from other writers even today.

Creators like Lin Manuel Miranda, who is again changing what a musical can look like, credit Sondheim with inspiring him to think outside the box and take those risks. This idea has also had attention brought to it in the new movie, “Tick Tick Boom,” directed by Miranda, which focuses on the work of Jonathan Larson, the creator of the musical “Rent.”

Sondheim and his influence on Larson’s work plays a major role

in the film, without giving too many spoilers, and it gives a good sense of how other writers look to the work of Sondheim for inspiration. I recently watched the movie and I loved the way that this relationship was shown.

To me, just hearing one of his songs can bring me back to a memory of when I heard it for the first time. When I heard “The Last Midnight” and “On The Steps of The Palace” from “Into The Woods,” I can still remember how I was immediately transported to another world when listening to these sweeping melodies and huge orchestral pieces with so many different elements. Music by Sondheim has a way of making the world around you look different after you listen to something that he has written.

My favorite and one of the most underrated pieces by Sondheim is “Sunday in the Park with George,” which is based on a fictional backstory to the painting, “A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte” by Georges Seurat. This play looks at what it means to be an artist and how being the focus of artworks allows a person to become frozen in time. It also shows how isolating it can be to become an artist, and a lot of the musical feels biographical to

Sondheim’s own life, which he spent most of alone. He had only one long-term romantic partner, who he met well into his seventies. Sondheim was committed to making art, and a lot of his work holds the reflection of the negative effects of this commitment.

The song “Sunday” from “Sunday in the Park with George” was performed in Times Square in New York City by actors from every show currently on Broadway in tribute to Sondheim and his work. I think the quote from the play that Lin Manuel Miranda spoke at the tribute helps to sum up the legacy of Sondheim. “A blank page or canvas. His favorite. So many possibilities.”

For all of these reasons, the passing of Stephen Sondheim has had a huge impact on the theater industry as well as me personally. From his lyrics to his melodies, and stories, there is no parallel to him in the world of theater. These plays and songs have such a special timeless quality to them. Even now, his musical “Company” is back on Broadway and already getting rave reviews.

There is something so special about a Sondheim musical that never gets old to me and never ceases to make me feel like a little kid at my first show again.

Brooke Lathe, Vine Editor

A Festive Edition of...

# The Vine



# FAIRFIELD LIGHTS THE TREE AND IT FINALLY FEELS FESTIVE

By Peyton Perry  
Opinion Editor

COVID-19 prevented my friends and I from experiencing a lot of Fairfield traditions last winter as first-year students, one of which being the magnificent annual tree lighting ceremony!

I received a notification email for the event a little over a week ago and immediately marked Monday, Dec. 6 off on my calendar, full of excitement. To some, it may seem silly to hold so much eagerness and anticipation for merely seeing lights flash on a Christmas tree for the first time, but it was more than that.

The Christmas spirit brings everyone together and all that can be felt is pure joy. Sure, a small part of this joy may have had to do with my friends and I still swooning over any opportunity to spend time with others outside our small group, since last year there were none, but nevertheless it was a great experience!

The tree itself is huge, seeming more wide than tall, and sits right in front of the Egan Chapel of Saint Ignatius of Loyola. Strings of colorful lights wrap the entire tree, with

a glistening star on the very top.

Students, faculty, administrators and guests started gathering as early as quarter of 6 p.m. to watch the first lighting of the tree, which was scheduled to happen at 6:15 p.m. As more and more people gathered, smiles began to spread and happiness gleamed in everybody's eyes.

Those who attended were treated to delicious sugar and gingerbread cookies, with hot chocolate to wash it all down. I chose a sugar cookie that was shaped like a Christmas tree, since I felt it fit the event, and it was delicious! There were also snowflakes and bell decorated ones.

After grabbing some delicious holiday treats, one could make the night all the more better by grabbing a Stags Santa hat, which was being handed out to everyone at zero cost. This was a big surprise to my friends and I and we were all excited to throw on our hats!

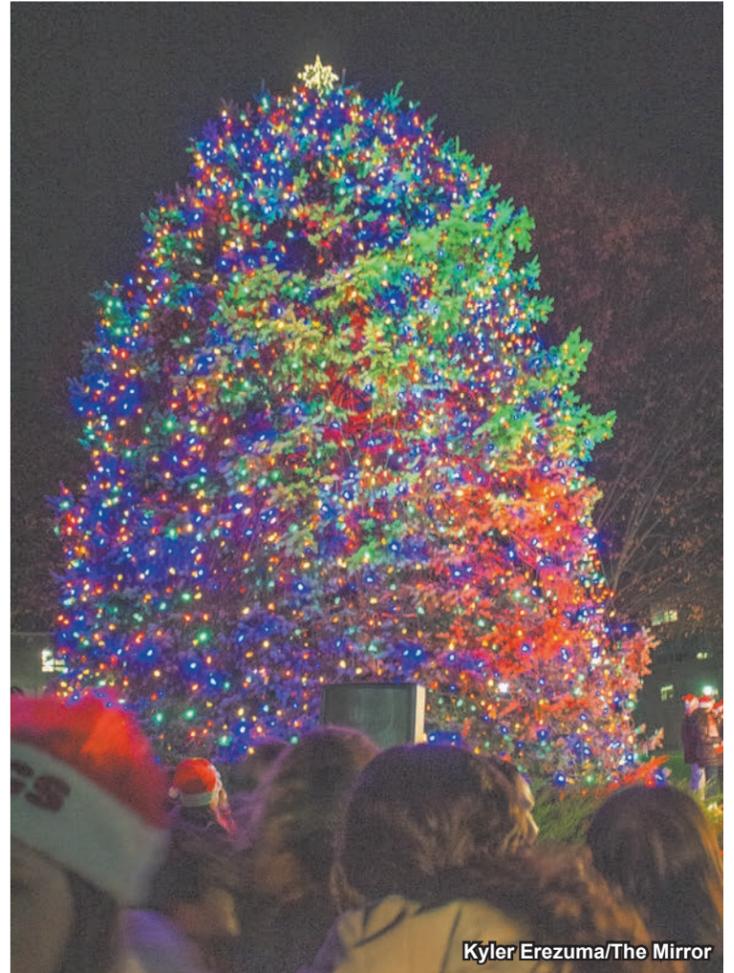
This was also one of my personal favorite aspects of the night because seeing everybody in the same Santa hats heightened the sense of community that was cultivating. I love Fairfield University but we don't have big football

games and tailgates like most state schools do, to foster a strong sense of community. I think that makes it all the more special when Fairfield hosts events that bring a lot of us together, even if it's as simple as lighting our Christmas tree up with matching Santa hats!

Santa and Lucas the Stag were there to take pictures with and say hello to everyone, as well. At roughly 6:30 p.m. President Mark R. Nemeč along with his wife and daughter began the countdown. Everybody joined in and pulled out their cameras, and as we all reached the final number and chanted "One!" the candy cane lever was pulled, lighting up the entire tree.

There was a loud cheer from everyone and carols were sung immediately after by the Fairfield University acapella groups, The Bensonians and Sweet Harmony. Christmas songs filled the air, glistening colorful lights shone upon all who gathered around the base of the tree, and hearts filled with joy.

My friends and I had a wonderful time and I am so happy to have been able to finally take part in this Fairfield tradition. It finally feels like Christmas, which I'm so thankful for!



Kyler Erezuma/The Mirror

Fairfield University hosted the annual tree lighting ceremony outside of the Egan Chapel of Saint Ignatius of Loyola on Monday, Dec. 6.

# PROJECT "X" IS A MUST SEE FOR ALL

By Molly Lamendola  
Editor-In-Chief

I walked into the Wien Blackbox Theatre in The Quick Center for the Arts to see Theatre Fairfield's performance of "Project X" by Judy Tate, with very limited knowledge about what I was about to experience. However, I left with the urgent need to encourage every member of the Fairfield community to see it. It told stories of the Fairfield community that we don't typically hear, including stories of microaggressions, racism, classicism and simply what it means to be a student here.

It also unearthed much of which the university seems to repeatedly sweep under the rug. The team that had created and brought "Project X" to life, sought to overturn that rug completely and tackle the problem with shovels in hand.

Before attending, all I had heard about it was that it was a play written for Fairfield, and that was about it. So, when I walked in and saw two colored cards on my seat, a pen and a message projected on a screen behind the stage with the instructions to write, "What do you expect from this performance?"

I didn't know what to write.

Then, all of a sudden, the lights cut.

"Breathe," an unknown voice said over the audience, "The cast of 'Project X' is inviting you to breathe."

The voice continued to instruct the audience to breathe in and out. And then, "Strange Fruit" by Billie Holiday then started to play.

The audience was silent as one by one the actors stepped out from behind the stage and looked out to the audience, just staring at us, as the music continued to play.

The music ended and the actors started speaking over each other, their lines overlapping and blurring into one congealed mess of confusion. I could only make out one man's voice dressed as a Jesuit (Rob Esposito '94) repeat over and over again that

the Jesuits participated in the ownership of enslaved people. But, the other voices of the other actors, Jill Bodach, lecturer in the Fairfield University English Department, Krystal Flores '25, Kai Halm '25, Lissbeth Larrea Ortiz '24, Alyssa Suarez '25 and Amal White '11, were lost in the fray before it all stopped at once.

Pure silence echoed across the room before the actors began to explain the show. "Project X" was a show written for Fairfield, by Fairfield. It was created by hundreds of hours of interviews with members of the Fairfield community. The actors would be read-



Photo Contributed by Lynn Porter

Project X cast members from left to right: Kai Halm, Alyssa Suarez, Jill Bodach, Rob Esposito, Amal White, Lissbeth Larrea Ortiz, Krystal Flores, Godfrey L. Simmons.

ing the lines of what actual students, faculty and staff had said in interviews during and after the summer of 2020—particularly, after President Mark Nemeč Ph.D. released a statement following the murder of George Floyd and Ahmaud Arbery and the Black Lives Matter protests that broke out across the nation.

They stated that Fairfield University ran away from the problem, as many members of the Fairfield Community voiced frustrations with the President's statement and his refusal to say "Black Lives Matter."

They continued with the letter later on, but now looked to the audience, asking us what we were expecting from them. They asked, and then walked around to collect our little pieces of paper, reading some of the words or phrases written on the papers.

"Inspiration" one said, "I want to learn," said another, with the last stating, "To support my fellow people of color."

The lights cut again and each actor went back and forth to introduce themselves and the roles they'd be reading.

Without picking any specific story out, what stood out most was the overlapping identities. One line stated they were a Christian "first and foremost," while another stated they identified with both the

LGBT+ and Black communities. Another said they identified with the theatre community most of all.

But, what resonated the most, was finally hearing all of my feelings on stage in front of me. "Fairfield is its own little bubble" one student stated, with another adding, "It was hard to find my community at Fairfield."

These are all feelings that I've felt, feelings that I know my friends and roommates and classmates have felt. But, for once, I didn't have to try and find the words to say what I was feeling, here they were being spoken aloud in front of me.

The lack of anonymity in this aspect made the influence of these stories more impactful. The unnamed comment could be from a classmate, a professor of yours or even someone you pass by every day.

The stories continued on until the Jesuit spoke up and told his story. What stood out to me was his statement that there is no service of faith that doesn't require the promotion of justice. I wrote it down quickly, circling it and circling it.

The lights cut again and the actors jumped into a fake admissions tour, with the same script the tour guides repeat again to hundreds of tours each year. The "Modern Jesuit Catholic University" with these amenities, ranked here on nine different lists and with these sorts of students.

The tour stopped, the actors returned to their places and lines were read about what students felt about campus and the campus community.

Students stated that Fairfield is like "90210," where students just pretend to be wealthy or express entitlement in other ways. Students have expensive cars, expensive bags and mention their boats offhandedly in class-reflections.

To read more continue at  
[fairfieldmirror.com](http://fairfieldmirror.com)



By Abigail White  
Contributing Writer

Christmas is in full swing here at Fairfield University. You will find a Christmas tree in just about every building on campus. You will hear Christmas music playing in the Tully. You will see lights and garland strung up in the BCC.

But there is one special, fan-favorite event that comes with the Christmas season at Fairfield: 'Stuff a Stag'!

Hosted by Fairfield@Night, 'Stuff a Stag' is an annual, late-night event where you can create your very own plush friend. With so many adorable plushie options, holiday music, hot chocolate and cookie decorating, this is the perfect event to celebrate the holiday season!

In speaking with students and event coordinators, this is one of the most anticipated late night events of the year. In fact, there was so much interest shown by students for the event this year, that there was even a need for a waitlist.

I know that for many students, including myself, this was a highly anticipated event as it could not take place in person last Christmas season due to COVID-19 restrictions. Last year, around this time, all Fairfield students

were at home, completing their semesters online.

However, this did stop Fairfield@Night as they found a creative way to make this event possible by sending the plushies and supplies to the houses of students who ordered them online. Although this was a great way to celebrate the holidays, even as we were apart, I knew that I could not pass up the opportunity to attend 'Stuff a Stag' in person this year with my friends and classmates.

When I entered the event, I was greeted with friendly Fairfield@Night staff members,

balancing Christmas music and the delicious smell of hot chocolate. The Fairfield@Night staff did an incredible job of making this event so much fun for everyone and helping students, including myself, with every step in stuffing our stags.

There were just a few fun steps to follow in order to create my own festive friend:

The first step was to select my animal. There were so many cute options to choose from: a polar bear, a penguin, a reindeer, a husky and, of course, a stag! It was incredibly difficult to choose just one plushie, but I finally settled for the adorable husky.

The next step was to collect the supplies to stuff my stag. The stuffing was a must in order to stuff my plushie. Then I selected a stuffed heart in order to fill my new festive friend with love. Finally, I picked up an adorable birth certificate for my husky so I could give him a name (I decided to name him Snowshoe to stick with the winter theme!) and hold on to the fun memory of creating him.

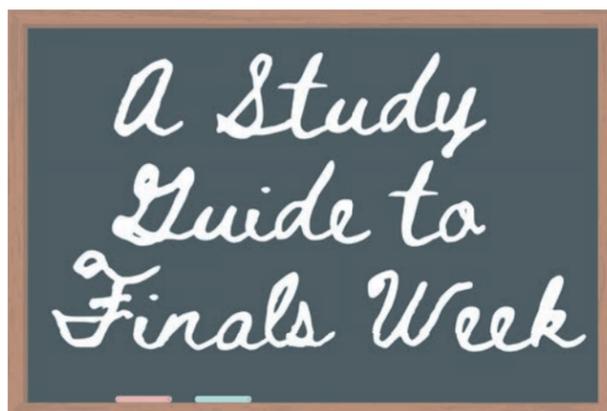
Once I picked out my animal and collected my supplies, I was ready to stuff my stag!

I grabbed some hot chocolate and other holiday sweets and sat down with some friends to create my festive friend. We had such a fun time creating our plushies, naming them, singing along to holiday music and enjoying some holiday treats. I could tell from the atmosphere in the room, from the laughing and singing and crafting, that everyone who attended had just as much fun as I did.

This event certainly did not disappoint, having been my first time attending in person. Fairfield@Night did an amazing job putting on this event and making it fun for everyone who attended. I already cannot wait to attend 'Stuff a Stag' next year!



Photo Contributed by Ryan Levine



By Liana Giacobbe  
Contributing Writer

With the holiday season in full swing and chillier weather creeping upon us comes the most dreaded season of all for college students: finals. Although we have all experienced a slow return to exams, this process has shifted quite a bit with the introduction of online exams and many "open-note" opportunities.

But no matter what differences have arisen in the test-taking process for this generation, studying and proper preparation are still intrinsic to a successful collegiate academic experience.

Thus, I am here to remind you just what you need to do in order to ace your exams, no matter what the course is or what platform they may be offered on!

One of the best methods that I have found for studying, especially for subjects that entail lots of process memorization, is to create a reference sheet. I have taken many exams in which these types of resources are permitted, but often find myself without time to truly find the necessary information within them when I am pressed for time.

However, the actual process of creating these papers proves to be just as useful as the reference sheet itself! By reviewing your notes and organizing them in an aesthetically pleasing and neat fashion, you are allowing your brain to relearn the information, all while creating a useful space to refer back to. I usually type these sheets, and through the use of various fonts and different colors of highlighting,

I am able to mentally refer back to these documents, remembering where I stored each category of information. Even still, handwritten notes are just as helpful if you can bear the quick appearing cramps. Though it may seem like a waste of time, creating reference sheets is one of the best ways that I have found to organize my thoughts and continuously prepare for exams!

Another simple yet effective method of studying is to use

flashcards! These work incredibly well for any test in which you have to memorize terms and short concepts, as they are a fast-paced way to check your knowledge again and again.

I am a fan of using Quizlet, as I find myself more willing to use flashcards when I can access them from my phone or computer. Old fashioned index cards get the job done just as well, and might even be more beneficial because you are writing it down! This form of studying allows for a more collaborative way of learning, as multiple people can be reviewing the flashcards simultaneously, and even simply hearing the facts being learned makes studying feel more approachable.

Though some may be quick to dismiss the use of flashcards because of their redundant nature, they truly are useful and can make studying feel like a fun memorization game as opposed to a tedious task!

Although this may not be a true method of studying, attending your professor's office hours is a great way to begin honing in on the information that you simply must review for an upcoming exam.

Not only are you able to work with your professor in a more directly interactive setting, but you are also able to establish a solid

connection with them, which may prove useful in the future for flexibility on other assignments and due dates.

Professors obviously serve as the most abundant fountains of wisdom, as they both teach the content of the class and create the exams, meaning they are the ideal sources of support when beginning the journey of preparing for an exam. Do not be afraid to ask questions and convey your desire to fully understand the subject, as this will encourage them to dedicate more time to help you study. Most professors, especially here at Fairfield, simply want to see their students excel: set a foundation for a good relationship with them, and you will feel much more confident in your abilities!

Though finals are certainly far from easy to prepare for without feelings of stress and anxiety arising, it is important to remember that these assessments ultimately do not define the rest of your life, or even your college career.

When studying, be sure to take time for yourself, practice self-care and spend time with friends to alleviate general feelings of worry. I have full faith that my Stag peers will perform amazingly during their exams, no matter the subject or form of assessment.



Fairfield University/Flickr

# A Collection Of the Perfect Christmas Cookies

By Brooke Lathe  
Vine Editor

The holiday season is filled with so many wonderful traditions like setting up a Christmas tree, putting up lights on the outside of your house, celebrating a multitude of holidays and most importantly, making cookies that will last you until the end of the year! Though it's become customary to set out treats for Santa Claus as a token of appreciation for giving us gifts, there is no harm in making some for ourselves as well.

And because there are so many recipes to choose from and not enough time to eat them before they go stale, here are my top picks for which cookies you should make in the following weeks!

## SEVEN LAYER BAR

A nice, big chunk of a seven-layer bar is my all-time favorite cookie, not only in the holiday season but all year round. These tasty snacks consist of butter, graham cracker crumbs, chocolate chips, butterscotch chips, chopped walnuts, sweetened condensed milk and shredded coconut. With the overwhelming amount of ingredients stacked upon one another, it's super filling and oh so good!

## SNICKERDOODLE

Snickerdoodles have to be the

most perfect cookie to snuggle up within the colder months of the year. The hints of cinnamon and vanilla, on top of the soft, gooey dough have proved time and time again to be such a comforting treat when laying by the fire.

## PEANUT BUTTER BLOSSOM

Okay, peanut butter blossom cookies are just an absolute staple dessert during the holiday season! They are so simple, fun to make and they taste amazing. I've also seen this same style done in different flavor forms like chocolate dough with peppermint Hershey's Kisses on top, so you can make them in any way you please; especially for those who are allergic to peanut butter.

## SNICKER PEANUT BUTTER

I'm not too sure if snicker peanut butter cookies are a common holiday treat for everyone else, but my family always has them on Christmas; and good thing for that, because they are delicious! The thick patties are also so pretty on a presentation dish due to the chocolate glaze on top.

## ALMOND SNOWBALLS

As a child, I was never really a fan of almond snowballs because I thought they were dry and just totally not on the same level as the other options I was given (probably because they didn't have chocolate). But as I've grown

older, I have developed an appreciation for their buttery feeling that seems to melt in your mouth. Snowballs also remind me of my grandmother since it was her favorite holiday cookie, so maybe that also has something to do with my newfound interest as well.

## SUGAR COOKIE

Sugar cookies are the perfect holiday dessert because you can bake them into any silly seasonal shapes your heart desires! But, with all of the endless options out there, my personal favorites will always be snowflakes and snowmen. Even further, once these goodies are fully cooled, you get to unleash your creative side and decorate them with all different types of frosting and sprinkles. How fun and cute!

## CHOCOLATE CHIP

You can never go wrong with a classic chocolate chip cookie as its simplistic yet sweet flavors can please any guest that you invite over to your house these holidays. To make the treat more festive and keep the taste the same, you can even add some red and green M&M's! I also always love adding a hint of kosher salt on top of the cookies once they finish baking and they are still warm. It makes the chocolate really pop.

## CHOCOLATE CRINKLE

I don't think I've ever attempted to make chocolate crinkle cookies, but

thankfully someone always ends up making them for events or bringing them to parties so I am able to enjoy the chewy goodness this treat offers. Honestly, a cookie covered in confectioners' sugar sounds kind of weird, but it's a perfect holiday recipe!

## GINGERBREAD

Ginger is the ultimate taste of Christmas, so it's a given that you have to bake a huge batch of these bad boys. And even more so, it matches the holiday spirit by embodying a true gingerbread man. It's fun to make and to eat!

## SPRITZ

When I was little, my grandmother had given me a spritz cookie press set with a bunch of shape cutouts that I still use today. The buttery dough and small size pairs perfectly with a full dip in dark chocolate and a topping of some sprinkles (red and green or any other seasonal colors, of course.)

## CRANBERRY WHITE CHOCOLATE

Like cranberry bread, cranberry white chocolate chip cookies are the ideal dessert to pair with the upcoming winter holidays since the bright red reflects the season's coloring. But with the addition of chocolate? Say no more!

## VANOCNI CUKROVI

Honestly, this may be a harder treat to recreate in your own kitchen and might just be safer purchasing at a bakery. But who knows, maybe it'll



Pixaby



By Molly Lamendola  
Editor-In-Cheif

I turn into a different person during any sort of holiday season. I just love the festivities, the activities and the things that you're able to go out and do just once or twice a year. So, in the middle of having to write four different final papers, I thought it was the perfect time to spend my entire weekend doing fun festive things by discovering all the campus and surrounding areas had to offer this season.

I first started with the Fairfield University's Glee club concert Friday night, who put on a very festive winter concert called "See Amid The Winter's Cold". I was lucky enough to snag tickets for their Friday night show on Dec. 3.

It was an incredibly fun time. I grabbed some friends and we were able to sit and listen to some holiday music. I'm going to be honest, we had the most fun during the songs we all knew by heart. When the choir sang "Night of Silence/Silent Night," the conductor even turned around to include the audience in the song.

The Bensonians, the all-male a cappella group, also had a stand out perfor-

mance with their remixed version of "12 Days of Christmas". It was fun, festive and had me and my friends crying with laughter in the back row.

All in all, the show was phenomenal and if you missed it this year, then make sure to grab tickets for their performance next year!

After the show, I was sure my festive weekend was going to come to an end. But, shortly after, I received a text from an amazing fellow festive festival lover, Fairfield University librarian Lisa Thornell, who notified me that the annual Scandinavian Christmas Market was set to take place on Dec. 4.

I rallied the troops, or just one troop (my sister), and we set off the next morning.

Saturday started with some breakfast and lattes at Candlewood Market. But, it was during our travels towards breakfast when I saw a sign on the side of the road highlighting another Christmas festival: the Celtic Christmas Festival held by the Gaelic-American Club in downtown Fairfield.

So, after our lattes and egg sandwiches, we headed off to the Celtic Festival first.

Maybe it's just because my grand-

mother is Irish and all the wall decor reminded me of my childhood, but it was just so warm with all the Christmas lights, decorated trees and a realistic Santa's "ho, ho, hos" echoing around. They had about a dozen vendors selling a variety of crafts, many of which were connected to Ireland in some way.

My sister bought me a ring made in Ireland with a "This is your Christmas gift kid, enjoy it." We also bought some raffle tickets to support The Lenihan Dancers' Fund, which even if we're still waiting patiently by the telephone line to get notified of our win, it was a nice cause to support.

We "wrapped" up our Celtic time and headed over to the Scandinavian Christmas Market hosted by the Scandinavian Club.

As I was driving down South Pine Creek Road and towards where the GPS was directing me, we couldn't believe the traffic. "Is this all for the market?" My sister asked, and I told her there was absolutely no way... but I immediately was proven wrong as all of the traffic and blocks of parallel parked cars was indeed for the Scandinavian Christmas Market.

Unlike the Celtic festival, the Scandinavian festival had both an indoor and

an outdoor aspect. We started with the indoor section and heard a lovely live band playing Christmas music on stage as we walked around looking at all of the beautiful handmade crafts. We then headed outside and peeked at all of the craft tables with amazing hand-blown Christmas ornaments and jewelry. There was nothing in particular that caught my attention enough for a purchase, but we did a loop around to the food tent to purchase some cardamom and almond buns, with some little gingerbread men, so I'd say it was a beyond successful stop.

Apparently, the Braided Cardamom Bread is the most popular purchase at the festival and it goes so fast that they ask people to pre-order and just pick it up at the festival. Who knew?

With two stops out of three completed, we headed over to the Pop Shop Market. It's an incredibly large craft fair that was held inside and around the Fairfield Theatre Company in downtown Fairfield. I was warned that it was going to be a bit pricier than our other stops of the day, but a fun place to stop and look.

Like the Scandinavian Christmas Market, we had a nightmare parking for this one. But, after we were all secured, I was in awe of all of the lovely booths. We stopped and saw a man who was a concert photographer and would make candles with QR codes connected to albums. You'd scan the code, burn the candle with the specific scent and be drawn into an entire experience.

We then headed inside and saw that they were serving mimosas and bloody mary's at the bar. Which is an incredibly genius idea. Those are two things that mix best: craft fairs and alcohol. So, even though I didn't partake, as I was the designated driver, it was a great

addition to the atmosphere of the room.

My sister and I walked around a bit, looking at all of the beautiful clothing from all of the boutiques in the area, all of the small jewelry shops and random assortment goods until a polite, a "Have you had your fill, Molly?" from my sister pushed me to wrap up the trip.

I dropped her back off at home and then scooped up my roommates and friend for the afternoon section of my festive day.

We headed to the Fairfield Museum for a festive card printing activity. Tickets were just \$8 per person and included access to the museum itself. Which, around Christmas time with their festive train exhibit, was an absolute steal.

We met Heather Maxson, the deputy director of programs for the Fairfield Historical Society, who showed us some vintage Christmas card examples to get started on our prints. She then gave us some paper, a piece of styrofoam and sent us on our merry way to make cards.

The tricky thing about making cards from a styrofoam printing block is that you've got to keep the design very simple and any writing has to be written backward. This was something I only figured out after my first attempt, but the second time around I was able to create something quite cute.

When the styrofoam printing block was done, we went over to the ink station, coated the little block and could create as many cards, in as many different colors, as we wanted from that print cards.

To read more continue at  
[fairfieldmirror.com](http://fairfieldmirror.com)

# THE BEST HOLIDAY MOVIES TO WATCH THIS SEASON

By Brooke Lathe  
Vine Editor

It's finally the time of the year where it's socially acceptable to start watching holiday movies - Woohoo!

I absolutely love cuddling up on the couch, submerged in fuzzy blankets, with a hot cocoa in one hand and a warm cookie in the other. But while the snacks and location remain the same, how do we choose which seasonal movie to watch since there are thousands to choose from?

Well, here are my favorite traditional holiday films I watch with my friends and family each December!

## "Elf"

Possibly my favorite Christmas movie of all time is "Elf," much like every other person with good film taste. Will Ferrell just does a phenomenal job at embodying a silly, whimsical character, forcing me to laugh at a majority of his lines no matter how many times I watch it: which is, disclaimer, a lot. Zoey Deschanel playing the love interest, Jovie, continually adds to the humor and fun of the plot since I absolutely love her. Because my fondness for the movie is so strong, I have both an ornament hung on my Christmas tree and a bright pink shirt that quotes Buddy's line, "We elves try to stick to the four main food groups: candy, candy canes, candy corn and syrup!"

## "The Grinch"

This may be an unpopular opinion,

but the Jim Carrey version of "The Grinch" will forever be unmatched to the cartoon version. How can anyone dismiss his brilliant and hilarious acting which he does all while wearing such a heavy suit? I remember reading somewhere that Carrey had to train under CIA operates on how to endure torture because the Grinch suit was so hard to breathe in. The visuals are so colorful and the costumes, sets and music always make the film an easy and entertaining watch.

## "The Polar Express"

I have had many arguments over my love for "The Polar Express," and I'm not sure why. While my appreciation for the film has definitely stemmed from watching it during the school day before winter break every year in high school, there is no denying how beautiful the movie is! The meaning, animation and soundtrack are all gorgeous. And of course, the "Hot Chocolate" musical number during the train ride is so iconic.

## The "Home Alone" Series

Both "Home Alone" movies are a staple duo to watch every holiday season. Though the sequel, "Home Alone 2: Lost in New York" is the best in my opinion. I can't help but laugh so hard that I actually cry when Marv (Daniel Stern) is electrocuted in the basement and is struck in the face by multiple bricks. His scream and Harry's (Joe Pesci) frustrated mumbles never fail to put a smile on my face! The soundtrack truly invokes the holiday spirit as well. Once you hit

the "start" button and the movie opens with the "Home Alone" theme song, you know Christmas has really begun.

## "The Santa Clause" Series

Every single "The Santa Clause" movie is a masterpiece, but my personal rankings have remained the same since middle school: "The Santa Clause 3: The Escape Clause," "The Santa Clause" then "The Santa Clause 2". But no matter which film is the better one, Tim Allen will prevail as the best actor to embody Santa. The filmmakers do a wonderful job making each movie so different from the previous one, carefully eliminating anything repetitive that we've already seen before, which I love. Each plot is so unique even though it has the same characters, sets and theme in all three.

## "Christmas Vacation"

This is without a doubt, the funniest Christmas movie you can watch. Every year, my family and I will always push out soundless laughs, the good ones where it's so deep nothing comes out, even though we know all of the lines by heart. The dried Christmas turkey that disintegrates, the electrocuted cat and Clark Griswold's dirty humor are all just a few scenarios that make this film so hilarious. What's even sillier is that my parents have matching holiday sweaters that say "Todd, why is the carpet wet" and "I don't know, Margo!"

## "Christmas Story"

Not only have I watched "Christmas Story" every single December of my life since TBS seems to have some weird obsession with it (and I guess so do I since I decide to watch it each year), but I've also had the privilege of seeing it live at the Bushnell Performing Arts Center in Hartford, Conn. I'll never forget how they had trained dogs to play the Bumpuses hounds and how they had a huge slide on stage for when Ralphie gets kicked in the face by a mall Santa. It was such a magical experience!

## "It's A Wonderful Life"

I never watched "It's A Wonderful Life" until my senior year of high school because our drama club was planning on presenting it during the winter of 2019. And because I was actually cast to play Mary Hatch (which I was super excited about), it wasn't until after I performed it did I realize how beautiful the story is. And I think I honestly think I wouldn't have understood or appreciated the meaning behind the film if I had watched it at an earlier age. With my new and overwhelming connection to the plot, I will forever shed a tear at the line, "Every time a bell rings, an angel gets his wings".

These are just a few of the many holiday films out there you can watch all season long. But you'll just have to promise me that whatever you watch, please do not turn on any Hallmark movies. There are much better alternatives out there!

# STAND OUT ALBUMS OF 2021!

By Tatiana Ryan  
Contributing Writer

2021 has brought a lot of good and bad to everybody's lives. But when it comes to music, 2021 has introduced just about every different kind of album into our world. Whether you want a coming-of-age masterpiece, hometown nostalgia or 80s funk influence, 2021 has provided it all. Here is a list of the best albums to come out of 2021!

## "Home Video" by Lucy Dacus

"Home Video" is the most necessary listen of 2021. Lucy Dacus's album "Home Video" depicts childhood whims, desperate nostalgia and young love at its best and most destructive.

The album features catchy and melodic tracks such as "Hot & Heavy," "Brando" and "First Time," which all showcase her ability to write hard-hitting lyrics about growing up and growing apart. The album's gut-wrenchers "Thumbs" and "Please Stay" showcase Dacus at her best; painful songs about absent fathers and the options to change a life you don't like, respectively. With "Home Video," Lucy Dacus has set her status alongside fellow collaborator, Phoebe Bridgers, as one of the best current soft-spoken voices and heart-wrenching lyricists writing about life, loss and love.

Best track: "Please Stay" for the lyric: "Go back to school, go back to sleep/Tell the secrets you can't keep/Begin, be done/Break a vow, make a new one/Call me if you need a friend or never talk to me again/But please stay".

## "An Evening with Silk Sonic" by Silk Sonic

The debut album from superduo Bruno Mars and Anderson .Paak "An Evening with Silk Sonic" features the 70s groove sounds missing from current music. "Evening" elevates the best parts of Bruno Mars from the "24K Magic" era and turns it into something else entirely. Mars and Paak together created an album that sounds like something only the two of them could have created together. With hits like "Leave The Door Open" and "Smokin Out The Window," "Evening" fills

itself with new-age beats, exquisite trumpets and undeniable vocals and melodies coming from two of the best and innovative artists around today.

Best track: "Smokin Out The Window" for the lyric: "I thought that girl belonged to only me/But I was wrong/Cause she belongs to everybody".

## "You Signed Up For This" by Maisie Peters

Maisie Peters' debut album, "You Signed Up For This" is the necessary dialogue album for coming of age. Peters--who grew up in London--is only 21 now, and this album contains her at her best. After releasing individual singles over the years and one EP, "You Signed Up For This" combines heartbreak anthems ("Love Him I Don't" and "Volcano"), soft acoustic tracks ("Talking to Strangers" and "Tough Act") and pop-perfect songs ("I'm Trying (Not Friends)" and "Boy"). This album is a patchwork-quilt-kaleidoscope of the ages 18 to 21 and hits the nail on the head of every intention.

Best track: "Villain" for the lyric: "If she's the girl of your dreams, the best thing you've ever seen/Well, what does that make me, then?/I'm your villain".

## "Jubilee" by Japanese Breakfast

Japanese Breakfast is an indie-rock band headed by Korean-American powerhouse, Michelle Zauner. Their third album, "Jubilee," has something for everyone on it, as it is filled with 80s pop synths, delicate harmonies and eloquent prose. Zauner's ability to write fascinating stories paired with melodic wonders is her superpower and evident best on track nine, "Savage Good Boy," which details billionaire greed and manipulation written to a perfect pop background. For new-age writing, graceful vocals and undeniable good vibes, "Jubilee" is a must-add to your car rides.

Best track: "Kokomo, IN" for the lyric: "Wherever you find your way to/And though it may not last/Just know that I'll be here longing/If you ever come back".

## "In Defense of My Own Happiness (Complete)" by Joy Oladokun

Joy Oladokun's third studio album "In Defense of My

Own Happiness" is the compilation of released songs over the years ("Breathe Again" and "Sunday"), beautiful collaborations ("Bigger Man" feat. Maren Morris) and aching new songs ("Sorry Isn't Good Enough"). "In Defense" solidifies Oladokun as one of the most unique, eloquent artists around in the present day. Her smooth voice and storytelling can't help but make you think of Tracy Chapman. However, Oladokun makes it clear in "In Defense" that she is building a league of her own.

Best track: "Jordan" for the lyric, "Now we're building our own promised land/On this new ground we stand/God bless the work of our hands/And make good on our plans".

## "30" by Adele

"30" is not for the faint of heart. Adele's first three albums were heavy emotions mixed with longing and growing up, but "30" takes those themes to all new meanings. Adele's fourth album is written as a letter to her son for when he gets older and is able to understand her reasons behind deciding to divorce her husband--and his father--in pursuit of her own happiness.

"30" does have moments of joy and elation on songs like "Oh My God" and "Can I Get It," but Adele's best moments are inevitably her soaring vocal ballads. Before on "19" and "21," Adele experimented with some jazz sounds, but on "30" she dives right into the different style and makes it the background sound to nearly every song. "I Drink Wine," "All Night Parking" and "Love Is A Game" feature Adele's mesmerizing songwriting written to jazzy backtracks. This easily makes "30" somehow sound exactly like the best of Adele while also sounding completely new and unheard of.

Best track: "To Be Loved" for the lyric: "To be loved and love at the highest count/Means to lose all the things I can't live without".

I hope there is some music on this list that will make you feel better wherever it finds you; studying for finals, walking to your last class of the semester or on your drive back home for winter break. Have a wonderful end of your semester and a very restful winter break. Happy listening!



# COFFEE BREAK



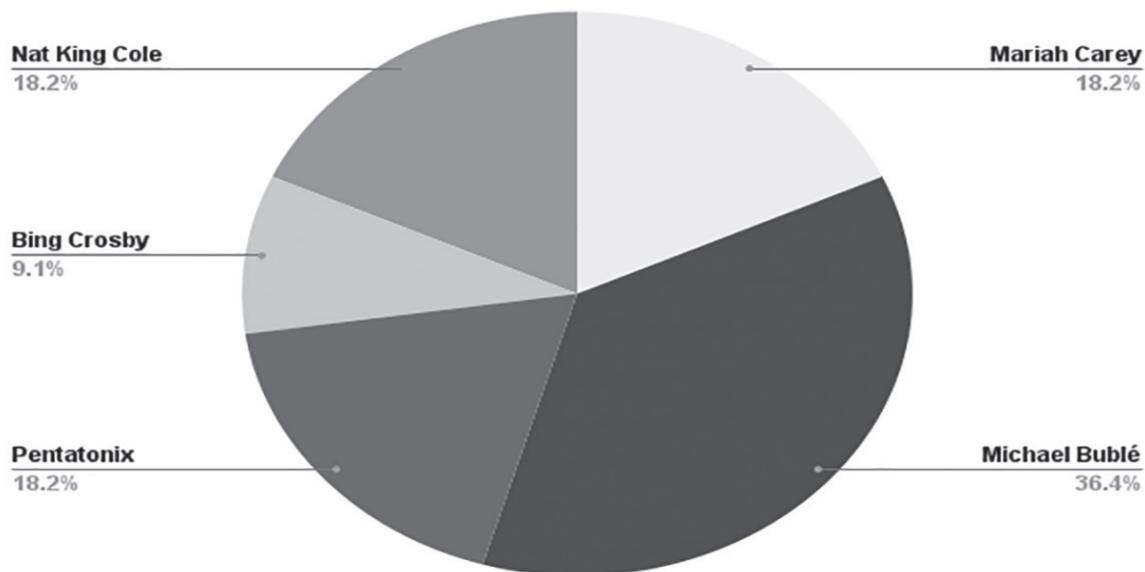
SATIRE, GAMES, PUZZLES AND MORE

Editor: Tristan Cruz  
tristan.cruz@student.fairfield.edu

## The Mirror's Takes

Coffee Break has been running a section this semester called "The Mirror's Takes"! Every week, we put out The Mirror teams' opinions on a new topic and we encourage you to carry these debates on with your friends, roommates and classmates!

This week's poll was: **BEST HOLIDAY MUSICAL ARTIST?**



Do you agree or disagree? Let us know what you think, because this infamous topic can be debated on for hours!

If you have any interesting things you would like to hear The Mirror's take on, DM us on Twitter @FairfieldMirror to let us know, and look for your poll in the Coffee Break section!

## Fa la la la- FINALS!

Nick Silvia, Contributing Writer

The end of Thanksgiving marks the official start of the Christmas season, and to counteract the joy in the hearts of the millions of children singing carols across the globe. It also marks the beginning of the end: finals week. And thus, balance is restored, and all is well in the universe.

I'm sure many students camped outside a Walmart on Black Friday to get \$7 off of an air fryer, but if you thought the season for pitching tents was over, think again, because spending a night in a sleeping bag is the only chance you have of getting a study room on finals week.

"I haven't left this room in 72 hours," said a feral student we approached in the library. "At first I was surviving on Pedialyte and Nature Valley bars, but I think I studied so much biology that I learned how to sustain myself through photosynthesis."

For anyone looking to destress as the weather gets colder, you'll be able to sled down Bellarmine soon enough, which is always fun until that one kid inevitably takes it too far and needs medical assistance because they tried to snowboard down the hill on their mattress.

Here at Coffee Break, we like to have a good time, but the truth is that finals week and the holidays in general can be a very stressful time for some people. It's okay to feel like you need a break - everyone is human (except Lucas, but he's an anthropomorphic deer, so I still think it counts) and if you need to take a step back in this time, there's no shame in that at all. The Office of Counseling & Psychological Services is always willing to help, but more importantly, check in on your friends. This is the time of year to feel grateful and let people know how much you care about them, and everyone could use a friendly face on their side. Be kind, be safe, and have a great holiday season. Good luck with finals, Stags, and thanks for a great semester.

# SPORTS

Sports Editor: Tommy Coppola  
>>thomas.coppola@student.fairfield.edu



## WE ARE STAGS



Dec. 8	Dec. 9	Dec. 10	Dec. 11	Dec. 12	Dec. 13	Dec. 14
Men's Basketball vs. The College of the Holy Cross Bridgeport, Conn. 7:00 p.m. 	Women's Basketball at #10 Indiana University Bloomington, I.N. 7:00 p.m. 		<b>FAIRFIELD</b>	Men's Basketball at The College of William and Mary Williamsburg, V.A. 1:00 p.m. 	Women's basketball vs. Sacred Heart University Bridgeport, Conn. 7:00 p.m.	<b>FAIRFIELD</b>

## Official Club Sports Instagram Account Launches

By Thomas Coppola  
Sports Editor

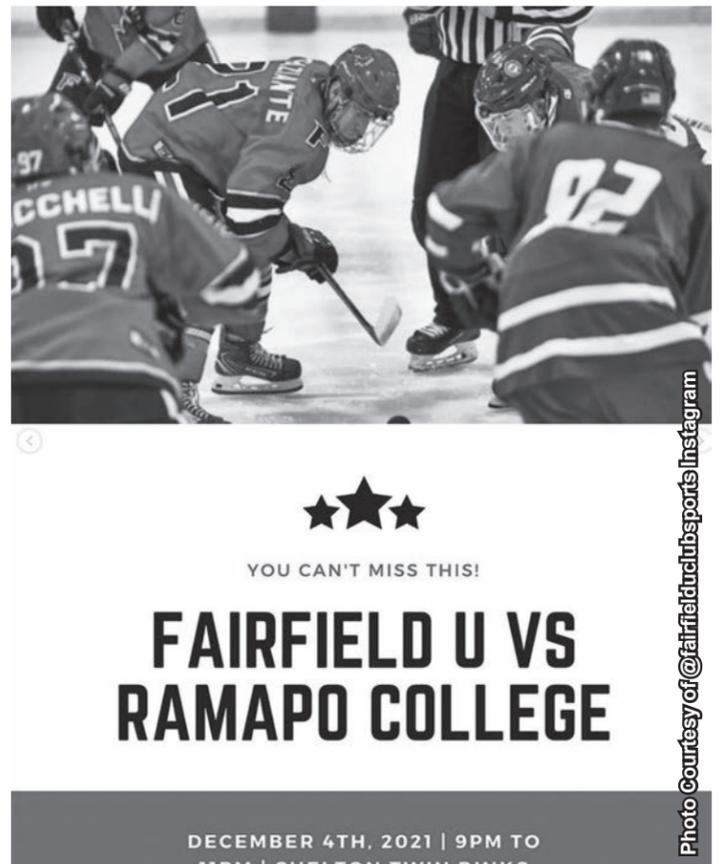
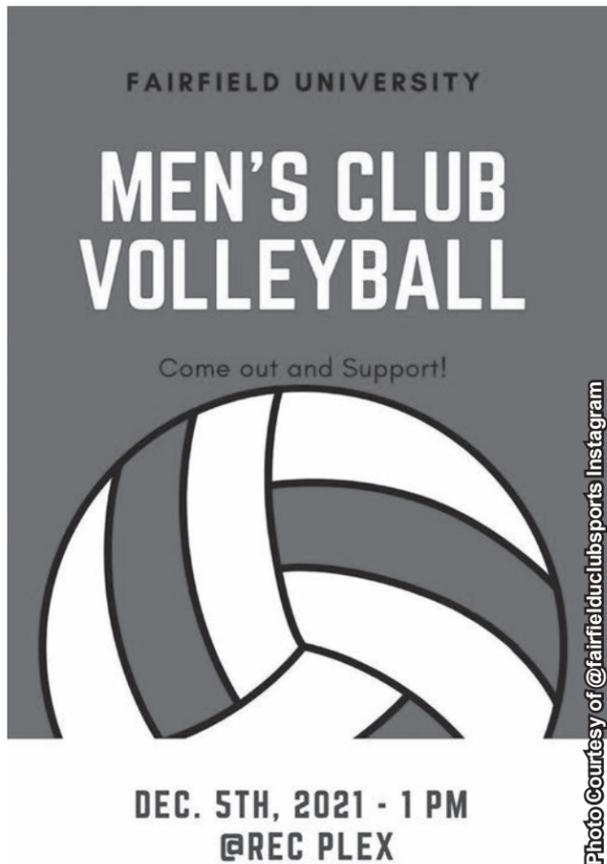
A new Instagram page has been launched for all club sports, sporting the handle @fairfieldclubsports.

As the official account of Fairfield University Club Sports, they will be updating fans of club sports about team information and schedules, and anything else that might pertain to club sports at Fairfield.

The account is run by the Assistant Director of Competitive Sports Chelsey Wright, Graduate Assistant of Competitive Sports Kate Welzel and Nick Pisano '22.

Not only will the account feature schedules, but they will also update students on "How-to" information for interested students for how to sign up for different teams", according to the creators of the page.

The club sports presence on campus has been growing over the past year, and this is a major step in the ways that students will be able to get involved and interact with each and every club sports team at Fairfield University.



Above are two examples of Instagram posts made by the brand new Fairfield University Club Sports account, which advertise a men's club volleyball game (left) and a club hockey game (right).

### In this week's issue...

- Men's Basketball Posts Perfect Road Trip Record (Page 14)
- Opinion: MLB Free Agency's Hottest Highlights (Page 15)
- Arena 100 Progress Report: A Semester in Review (Page 16)
- Stags & Pioneers Postpone Cross-Town Contest (Page 16)

# Men's Basketball Posts Perfect Road Trip Record

By Thomas Coppola  
Sports Editor

The Fairfield University men's basketball team had themselves a strong weekend, with a 74-68 victory over Canisius College on the road on Friday, Dec. 3.

Graduate Students Caleb Green and Jesus Cruz both had stellar nights, with 14 and 16 points respectively, according to FairfieldStags.com.

In conference play, the Stags now improve to a 1-0 record. Their next game, which will also be taking place in the state of New York on Sunday, Dec. 5, will be hosted by Niagara University. In this second Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference matchup, the Stags will look to improve to 2-0 in-conference under the leadership of Cruz, Green and other upperclassmen on the squad.

After the first half of the game, the Stags did not relent on their pressure against the Griffins. According to the official box score, the Stags were able to hold a 37-36 lead going into the second half of the game, and were able to score another 37 after

halftime compared to Canisius's 32.

Green and Cruz had a very productive night behind the three-point line, where they both attempted three shots and made two. Among the scoring mix as well was Chris Maidoh '23, who made four buckets out of five total attempts. Graduate student Taj Benning and Supreme Cook '24 hauled in most of the rebounds for the team, with ten and eight, respectively.

Head coach Jay Young acknowledged the success of his team this past weekend, especially in an away-game environment. "Any road win is a good win in college basketball, and a conference road win is even better and even tougher to come by," Young stated in an official press release from FairfieldStags.com.

The Stags and Griffins have faced off 91 times total, with the Stags taking the win in 51 of those matches. In back-to-back home games at Alumni Hall on Feb. 19 and 20 of 2021, Fairfield and Canisius split the decision, each taking one win apiece. Fairfield has now won two straight against the Griffins. The two will face off again at Webster Bank Arena in Bridgeport, Conn. on Monday, Feb. 14, 2022 at 7 p.m., which falls in the middle of a



Photo Contributed by the Sports Information Desk

First-year TJ Long has received MAAC Rookie of the Week recognition twice so far this season.

long list of in-conference home games in Bridgeport.

On Sunday, Dec. 5, the Stags traveled to Niagara University to face off against the Purple Eagles in an in-conference matchup. The Stags prevailed yet again, completing a weekend sweep against their New York competitors.

Just like the game against Canisius College, Fairfield went into the second half of the game holding a lead, this one by a score of 35-33, according to the official recap. With a final score of 81-71, Fairfield kept the pressure up the entire time and did not let go of their lead.

As the floodgates have begun to open for MAAC games, the standings have begun to fill in. With their two wins in the conference, Fairfield is currently tied for first in the division with Iona College and Monmouth University.

Caleb Green posted another incredible 16-point performance on Sunday, with teammate Zach Crisler '23 netting 14 of his own.

On Wednesday, Dec. 8, the Stags will host the College of the Holy Cross at home in Webster Bank Arena at 7 p.m. The last time the two played each other, Fairfield was able to sneak away with a 68-63 victory, so this matchup is sure to be an exciting one.



Photo Contributed by the Sports Information Desk

Junior Zach Crisler scored 14 points in just 17 minutes of play against Niagara University, going 4-for-5 on three point shots.

## Weekly 5x4

Your 2021-2022 5x4 Columnists:  
Tommy Coppola, Molly Lamendola, Julia Lanzillotta, Tobenna Ugwu and Sheila McCombs

Because we have witty things to say ...



Tommy Coppola  
Sports Editor

What's one thing on your Christmas list this year?

I am looking to add a pair of Nike Blazers to my shoe collection.

What do you think of the salad robot in The Stag?

I'm a massive fan. I always have to wait a while but it's so worth it in the end.

What's your new year's resolution?

To honestly just relax more. I know that's a lot to ask for these days.

Out of the ten issues of The Mirror this semester, which one is your favorite?

I'm personally partial to issue #6 with my News debut.



Molly Lamendola  
Editor-in-Chief

For Jesus to come again and a Fairfield Club Martial Arts sweatshirt.

They will eventually take over.

Learn to skip backwards.

They all blur together, maybe the one with the turkey on the front.



Julia Lanzillotta  
Executive Editor

I would really love a nice bathrobe. As I get older, the list gets more practical.

I don't know how to feel. I prefer the fried options.

I want to start running more like I used to!

I liked last week's. The front cover and back cover were both so clean and I loved them.



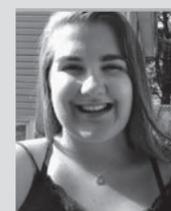
Tobenna Ugwu  
Managing Editor

An apple watch, a pair of Chelsea boots and an envelope filled with Ben Franks; nothing too big.

I generally do not eat grass, so I could not tell you.

I have not thought that far ahead given that I haven't even survived finals yet.

The first one, it was a good baseline for us to grow as a publication.



Sheila McCombs  
Managing Editor

All I really need is a new hydro-flask but all I want is some new books!

Not going to lie, it kind of freaks me out.

I always say that my resolution is to be kinder to myself and others!

The second issue of the semester! It had both my favorite front cover and my favorite vine cover!

# Opinion: MLB Free Agency's Hottest Highlights

By Billy McGuire  
Contributing Writer

Well, that was fun while it lasted.

Major League Baseball went into the ninth work stoppage in its history at midnight on Dec. 2, 2021, locking out its players after failing to come to terms with a new collective bargaining agreement. This has been a long time coming, as players and owners have not been on the same page on a variety of issues for a period of time.

However, before the lockout went into effect, many exciting trades and free agent signings occurred. Traditionally, December is the month in which many of the top transactions take place. But with the lockout being more inevitable by the day, teams hurried up and spent a total of \$1.7 billion on free agent contracts in November alone. Here we are going to take a look at some of the big moves made in free agency ahead of the lockout and how the moves will ultimately pan out for each team.

## Max Scherzer to the New York Mets

In one of the biggest moves of the offseason, the New York Mets signed starting pitcher Max Scherzer to a three-year, \$130 million contract, with an opt-out clause after the second year. As a long-suffering Mets fan, this is the most excited I have ever been about a free agent signing. Not only am I ecstatic about Scherzer teaming up with fellow All-star Jacob deGrom to form a dominating one-two punch at the top of the starting rotation, but it's about what he brings to the table.

A 2019 World Series Champion, eight-time all-star, and three-time Cy Young Award winner, Scherzer is about as accomplished as you can expect. And not to mention that he threw two-hitters in one season, in which one was against the Mets as a member of the rival Washington Nationals. Mets fans couldn't stand going against this guy, and now realizing the fact that he will now be a Met after being known as a so-called "Me-killer" after all those years in Washington, I am fired up that he is on my team.

Yes, he is 37, but he still posted a 2.46 ERA through 30 starts, including a 1.98 ERA through his final 11 starts with the Dodgers. The Mets also didn't give him a long-term contract, they gave him a very reasonable three-year contract while giving him \$43 million is something that I am happy about. Steve Cohen, the Mets owner who bought the team last year, is sending a signal that the Mets are going to do things differently than they had done in the past. They will find ways to improve the team to accomplish one goal, and that is to bring the Commissioner's trophy back to Flushing, N.Y. If deGrom-Scherzer can continue to pitch at their levels, the Mets should be in a prime to succeed next October.

## Corey Seager and Marcus Semien to the Texas Rangers

Additionally, the Texas Rangers signed infielders Corey Seager and Marcus Semien to ten-year and seven-year contracts respectively. Seager signed for \$325 million, and Semien for \$175 million, both of which will solidify the Rangers' middle infield for years to come. As much as this news may be exciting to some Rangers fans, I do not believe the Rangers are in as good of a position to contend in comparison to their AL West division foes.

Even though the Houston Astros seem poised to lose Carlos Correa

Max Scherzer, Corey Seager, Marcus Semien and Javier Baez have been some of the biggest names signing with new teams during this MLB free agency period, which recently ended.

to free agency, they still have a talented core and will be competitive. The Seattle Mariners are on the rise, the Los Angeles Angels could make a lot of noise next season if they continue to improve their starting pitching around superstars Shohei Ohtani and Mike Trout, and the Oakland Athletics always seem to find ways to be competitive with their limited budget. Seager and Semien have proven themselves to be fantastic players, with both having made the all-star game and having won Silver Slugger awards at some

point in their careers, but the

Rangers had one of the worst records in

the league last season, finishing 60-102. Yes, they have a lot of special flexibility to spend this offseason, but they are in a strange place. The Rangers have not been to the playoffs since 2016, and I feel like every season they position themselves to be in a win-now spot, hoping that they can replicate the magic in the early 2010s, in which they had won back-to-back AL pennants.

Now, their solutions are Seager, Semien and Jon Gray, a former Colorado Rockies pitcher for whom they signed for \$56 million for four years. If the Rangers have a solid plan in place to build the team around these players with young and fresh talent, then I do not have a problem with that. If the Rangers are making these moves to win now as they did before, I think they will be stuck in mediocrity for the foreseeable future.

## Javier Baez to the Detroit Tigers

Another big move saw the Detroit Tigers signing Ja-

vier Baez to a six-year, \$140 million contract with an opt-out clause. This loss won't help the Mets, whom they acquired at the trade deadline last year, but this is a huge move for the Tigers. I was a little surprised that they did not sign Carlos Correa, who once played and won a World Series with manager AJ Hinch during their time in Houston. However, this move is fantastic for the Tigers for many reasons.

First, they are coming out of a painful, full-scale rebuild, with many of their top prospects graduating to the major leagues or will do so in the short-time future. Baez also brings much-needed new leadership to the club.

He is a proven player, making the all-star game twice, winning at least one gold glove and silver slugger award, and winning the 2016 World Series as a member of the Chicago Cubs. Another reason for the validity of this pickup is because the Tigers' longest-tenured player, Miguel Cabrera, is at the twilight of his career with his contract expiring after the 2023 season. With a young team on the rise, Baez brings experience that can help younger players such as Spencer Torkleson and Jeimer Candelario develop. Shortstop was Detroit's biggest need, both in the short-term and the long-term, and they got their man in

Baez. Also, the contract is reasonable, paying him around \$23 million per year, which is more adequate than other contracts signed in baseball in recent years.

## Other Big Moves

The Seattle Mariners, Toronto Blue Jays and Chicago Cubs improved their starting rotations before the beginning of the lockout as well, signing Robbie Ray, Kevin Gausman and Marcus Stroman respectively. Ray signed for five years \$115 million, Gausman signed for five years and \$110 million and Stroman signed for three years and \$71 million. All of the contracts are signed in the \$22-23 million range, with the only difference in the contracts being Stroman's by two years.

Ray heads to Seattle to improve a Mariners rotation that could definitely use some more experience, with their top two pitchers who led the team in starts last season were Chris Flexen and Yusei Kikuchi, who remains a free agent.

They also have a young wave of pitchers including Justus Sheffield and Justin Dunn who will be counted on as future members of the rotation.

Gausman replaces Ray in Toronto as a member of the Blue Jays, and he is coming off of a career season with the Giants, making the all-star team for the second time and finishing with a 14-6 record and a 2.81 ERA in 192 innings pitched. He joins Hyun Jin Ryu and young pitchers such as Alek Manoah and Nate Pearson in helping a promising Blue Jays team return to the playoffs after falling just short last season.

Stroman joins the Cubs on a short-term contract, but this move, in my opinion, seems puzzling. The Cubs dismantled their core from the 2016 World Series last summer, trading stars such as Kris Bryant, Javier Baez, and Anthony Rizzo away to signal the start of a rebuild. Yes, Stroman is good, finishing with a 3.02 ERA in 179 last season, and he is a great addition to any rotation.

But the problem is that the Cubs like I was saying about the Rangers earlier, do not appear to be committed to a plan moving forward.

I expect this move to be the start of the Cubs being aggressive in free agency, adding some more free agents in hopes of being competitive next season, or a move that will see Stroman being traded in one or two years to help the Cubs receive some top prospects in return. If this move is all the Cubs do all off-season, then it will put the team in an uncomfortable position.



# Arena 100 Progress Report: A Semester In Review

## September      October      November      December



By Thomas Coppola  
Sports Editor

With the fall semester of 2021 nearly coming to a close, students have noticed the increasing progress of construction on the brand new arena being built on campus in place of the former Alumni Hall. Since Alumni Hall was torn down in the spring of 2021, progress has been moving swiftly throughout this current academic year, with plans to finish the project for "Late Fall 2022" as stated by signs posted around the construction site.

Currently, the "Late Fall 2022" timetable is still on pace. "We have, 'we' meaning athletics, are in constant communication with Vice President for Facilities David Frassinelli as to that daily and weekly progress, and I think we are, as of today, really on target," director of athletics Paul Schlickmann stated.

In September, the main framework was put up around the area that was previously cleared of debris in the summer months. A massive cement wall was put up as well, which separates the main area where the arena will be built and the top section adjacent to Loyola Drive where cars have parked. A fence was set up around the construction site, which allowed for a path in between the Barone Campus Center and the construction site itself. However, recently this fenced-off area was extended outward to allow for more vehicles to come in and out of the site. A large crane has remained in the middle of the project since September.

With this large-scale project, there have obviously been some difficulties, or "ebbs and flows" and Schlickmann put it. Citing supply chain issues for the construction team as one of

the more frustrating parts of the process, he remained confident that November of 2022 will close out the construction of the arena, just in time for the new basketball season.

In October, more parts of the project could be seen coming together, with a new metallic structure being placed on top of the framework. Additionally, flooring was put in for both the second and third levels off of the ground.

However, November is when the project really began to take shape, with the entire set of steel beams being finished and connected on the other side. More cranes were added to the site. "I think you can even see some stairs being formulated now, so you can really see it taking shape and visualize all the nice pictures we've been staring at for a couple years," Schlickmann commented.

As an update for December, the project has been quickly accelerating. As of Dec. 3, 2021, the northern truss of the roof was installed. With this large update to the construction of the arena, it looks as though the roof will be finished in no time.

With Alumni Hall gone and the new arena currently under construction, both the men's and women's basketball teams, as well as the volleyball team, have found new homes for the year. A new teraflex court was installed in the RecPlex Field House at the beginning of the year, where the volleyball team has played its home games. The basketball teams, however, are being hosted by Webster Bank Arena in Bridgeport, Conn. for this season, with shuttle buses being run to-and-from games.

Assuredly, however, this wait will be worth it in the long

run for Fairfield's athletes. Not only are the former amenities of Alumni Hall getting an upgrade, but some entirely new features will come out of the new convocation center as well. Equipment rooms, athletic training rooms and operations offices will all find homes in the new arena. The next steps of the project after the main outline are going to come together soon. "I think you'll probably start to see the individual spaces or aspects of the building floor by floor begin to take shape," Schlickmann said. "There's a lot of things that are greatly enhanced, or just weren't in Alumni Hall at all"

As a volleyball player who will be playing in the new arena once it is finished next year, Morgan Doll '23 knows that the energy in the building will be far different from that of the RecPlex. "It'd be kind of nice to just have our own space and

where we can focus on our stuff and not have all these distractions going on around us," Doll stated.

Doll also noted how important the new offices and facilities will be in the future, since it will bring a new level of quality to how athletes train and play. "Another big plus for us especially will be that I think a lot of our team will be more inclined to go to the training room and get more help before games for our bodies," Doll said. With new equipment and training rooms, athletes will be able to get the best care available right in the stadium, instead of walking back and forth from the Walsh Athletic Center.

While the stadium is set to be completed in the late fall of 2022, all we can do now is sit back and watch the progress unfold before us as the project continues to take shape.

# Stags & Pioneers Postpone Cross-Town Contest

By Thomas Coppola  
Sports Editor

The Fairfield University women's basketball team were set to take on the Sacred Heart University Pioneers on

Monday, Dec. 6, at 7 p.m. under the lights of Webster Bank Arena. However, due to a positive COVID-19 case on Sacred Heart University's team, the game was unable to go on.

The Stags and Pioneers have had a very back and forth nine years of play against each other, which has

seen the two match up against each other for five games in their history. It is unclear as of Dec. 6 if the upcoming game will be rescheduled for the future, but regardless, a future game between the two is poised to be a battle.

The Stags have taken three of these games, and have lost twice. In this sixth matchup in each other's history, the Pioneers will look to tie their historical record against the Stags at 3-3. The last time the two faced each other was on Nov. 11, 2016, which saw the Pioneers taking a 56-44 victory. However, a year earlier on Nov. 21, 2015, the Stags were able to secure the win by a final score of 61-50, which was played at Webster Bank Arena.

This matchup comes at the heels of the men's basketball game on Nov. 20 which featured both the Stags and Pioneers facing off against each other. The only difference was that this game was played on Sacred Heart's campus, where the Stags were able to take a 71-61 win.

Instead of playing on Monday night, the Stags will make a trip to Indiana University Bloomington on Thursday, Dec. 9 at 7 p.m. to face off against the Hoosiers.



Senior Lou Lopez-Senechal scored eight points against UMass.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Opponent</b>	<b>Location</b>
<b>12/9</b>	INDIANA UNIVERSITY 	BLOOMINGTON, IND.
<b>12/18</b>	MARIST COLLEGE 	BRIDGEPORT, CONN.
<b>12/20</b>	QUINNIPIAC UNIVERSITY 	HAMDEN, CONN.
<b>12/30</b>	IONA COLLEGE 	BRIDGEPORT, CONN.

Photo Contributed by the Sports Information Desk