



Photo Courtesy of @jogueshall on Instagram

Pictured above is the Jogues Hall RAs at the start of the Fall Semester. From left to right is Pedro Garcia '24, Jack Matorano '23, Alaina Tarallo '23, Avery Fenton '24, Aarushi Vijay '22, Amber Alsaigh '22, Sebastian Michel '23, Jay Vo '23. Since the beginning of the year, there have been two RAs in Jogues who have quit.

RA Applications Lower Than Expected Leads RAs to Ask Why

By Molly Lamedola
Editor-in-Chief

By Madeline West
Assistant News Editor

The Office of Residence Life extended the deadline for the Resident Assistant application twice this semester. The application was originally due on Jan. 28, the deadline was then extended to Feb. 1 and then extended again to Feb. 7.

For some, the extension alludes to a lower than expected group of applicants and further highlights issues within the Office of Residence Life. Sophomore and RA in Jogues Hall, Pedro Garcia stated that he heard that the number of applications had been far less than previous years.

The Mirror reached out to the Office of Residence Life to confirm the number of applicants and further questions on three occasions, however they failed to respond in time for publication.

RA in the Barnyard Manor, Nwachukwu Ibekwe '22, agreed with Garcia's statement on a low applicant turnout but didn't know why specifically numbers would be so low this year.

"I would say the RA position has lost the prestige it once had on campus," said Ibekwe. "This also goes for the treatment of RAs, as there has been growing dissatisfaction among the staff members on how they are treated by some professional staff."

RA in 42 Langguth Hall, Chizimuzo Chibuko '22 stated that, "In my experience as being an RA, the retention rate has

been pretty low as most of time about half of the RAs and AC they hire end up quitting before the end of the academic year."

Chibuko adds that as of now, she doesn't know the exact number of student applications, but "... it is obvious that the turnout hasn't been great especially with the change in the deadline three times in one semester."

Further than the low turnout, some Resident Assistants have been leaving their positions due to issues with Res Life, leaving more spots for Res Life to fill.

Senior Jakob Matala is the third President of the Resident Assistant and Commuter Peer Assistant Council and RA in 42 Langguth Hall.

Matala stated that, "There are always some RAs, CPAs and ACs who do not plan to return, which is commonplace in Residence Life" but that, "Returning applications turnout has also been exacerbated because Covid-19 and students do not want to be an RA/CPA in a pandemic."

"However, I believe that everyone who is an RA/CPA has their own unique experience in this position, and one's experience can motivate or dissuade residents from applying and current RAs/CPAs from reapplying for the position," Matala continued.

Senior Aarushi Vijay became an RA for the 2021-2022 school year in Jogues Hall, but left the position in January.

Vijay states that after she had COVID-19, the office did not lessen the workload and expected her to, "have stuff ready for the residents when I [got] out of quarantine."

"There was no understanding from their side making the work environment toxic, and unfortunately, this is not new. They claim to understand but they never do that all the RAs are students before they are anything else. My illness just put things in perspective for me and I decided to leave," said Vijay.

When asked how Res Life could be more supportive of RAs and CPAs, Vijay stated, "They can first get rid of the fluff language and actually act on the things promised."

When asked what it was that Res Life "promised" Vijay stated that, "They continuously throw around the word 'support' without providing any. They promise they'll provide that support but when time comes, we are left alone and have to advocate for ourselves with the central staff."

Vijay believes that the low turnout is connected to the fact that students have seen from current RAs the "true condition of Res Life."

Vijay finishes by stating, "The free room and board no longer entices the students because of the working conditions and how RAs are not actually paid, apart from a trivial stipend which does not justify the amount of time you put in this job, along with the mental stress that is put on the RAs."

Garcia stated that the RA position is "a very complex position," that "demands a great deal of leadership, responsibility and most important of all, energy."

Junior and RA in Jogues Hall Alaina Tarallo shares similar sentiment with Garcia stating, "I love

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Lack of Transparency from University Continues

By Molly Lamedola
Editor-in-Chief

Last week, The Mirror reported that the lack of COVID-19 data posted to the COVID-19 dashboard caused many students to call for more transparency from the administration regarding decision-making processes. Since then, the COVID-19 dashboard has been updated.

The University stated that the repopulation testing that occurred from Jan. 1 - Jan.31 resulted in a 9% positivity rate.

They do not state how many community members were tested to reach this rate, nor did they address if they were including students that tested negative multiple times.

If we use Fairfield University's Campus Community statistic from the dashboard, of 6,910, that would be roughly 622 positive cases if everyone was tested.

But, since students who had tested positive for COVID-19 within 90 days of the Jan. 1 - Jan. 31 window did not have to test, the reported population would be lower.

The University has also changed the COVID dashboard to include a "Current Testing Data" section, but they do not state how current these numbers are, nor do they indicate how often this section is updated.

They do state that they will begin a "7-Day Rolling Average" on Feb. 11. If students want more information for how the administration is deciding COVID-19 protocols or testing, then typically they could access the Academic Council or Undergraduate Curriculum Committee's meeting minutes for information updating the faculty on cases, mitigation strategies and general COVID-19 updates. But, according to the Secretary

of the General Faculty, Steven Bayne, Ph.D., in February of 2021, the Office of the Provost requested that the Academic Council pass a motion that made the meeting minutes password protected in an effort to restrict access to the Fairfield University Community exclusively.

Bayne and the previous Secretary of the General Faculty, Susan Rakowitz, Ph.D. began to work with Information Technology Services in May of 2021 to put this motion into action.

Bayne stated, "The plan was to password protect files with meeting minutes in them so that all members of the Fairfield University community (including students) could access them using their NetID."

They worked with a company called DocFinity, but after issues on DocFinity's part, the work stalled. He added that "Last week, ITS, apparently under pressure from the President and Provost, decided they could wait no longer to protect these files, and so they chose to go with a temporary solution using Dropbox on the most recent files and limiting access completely on previous years' minutes files."

Bayne later learned that the University's use of DropBox barred students from accessing the meeting minutes, and states that if students want access to the files, they have to contact him to file a request.

Provost Christine Siegal Ph.D. did not mention that the Provost's Office originally requested the motion be passed by the AC in February of 2021.

"During the spring 2021 semester, the Academic Council passed a motion stating that 'Links on the General Faculty website be password

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Kyler Erezuma/ The Mirror

Pictured above is a professor teaching in a class with a mask on. Currently, all Fairfield community members are required to wear a mask while indoors, including during classes. The Governor of Connecticut, Ned Lamont, announced that the state would not extend the mask mandate in public schools past Feb. 28. The University has not announced any plans to change the current mask policy and as a private university, the University is not directly impacted by Lamont's decision.

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Questions? Contact **Sandy Richardson** at arichardson@fairfield.edu



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

- Feb. 2
9:30 a.m.
Professor reported money taken out of her mailbox in Canisius. No suspects reported.
- Feb. 3
4:30 p.m.
A student reported damage to his vehicle that was in the Dolan Commons parking lot. No suspects reported.
- Feb. 4
1:00 a.m.
RA reported a broken window to an exterior door in Gonzaga Hall. No suspects reported.
- Feb. 5
4:30 p.m.
Student in Champion Hall reported vandalism to his white board.
- Feb. 7
3:00 p.m.
Sometime over the weekend, several exit signs were vandalized in Meditz Hall. There are no suspects at this time.



THE MIRROR

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Stags Embark on a Semester Abroad

By Anne Tomosivitch
Contributing Writer



Photo Contributed by Amy Knott

Amy Knott '23 and Nicole Manserra '23 pose for photo in Spain while studying abroad. Fairfield students have gone back abroad, but the future of some programs are still up in the air due to COVID-19.

This spring semester, many Stags have embarked on their semester abroad. With variation in scheduling between programs, some students have begun their studies abroad, while others are set to depart soon.

Fairfield students in the Madrid, Spain program are beginning to settle into their new routine, having started their studies on Jan. 24.

Junior Amy Knott is enjoying the program so far.

"I have never been so far away, essentially by myself, before, but, it's been super awesome living in a different place and experiencing a different culture and different types of people," she said.

Knott continued, "The country itself is so beautiful and Madrid is a fun city. I've loved being able to explore it." Knott recounted the change of plans her program underwent.

"The Madrid program isn't at the typical school students attend because of a problem with Covid, so we are in a small program, around 25 students total, with other college students from Gonzaga University, University of South Carolina and Southern Methodist University," Knott said.

With that said, Knott is enjoying her time abroad regardless of the circumstances.

Knott gives this advice to students considering studying abroad, "I would highly recommend for everyone to study abroad because I know I'm going to come out of this experience so grateful and fulfilled even though I was hesitant."

While some students have left for their studies abroad, many are still preparing for their departure. Junior Lily Carnicelli is going to study abroad in Florence, Italy this semester. The program is scheduled to begin on Feb. 15.

Carnicelli is eagerly awaiting the trip.

"I have always known I wanted to study abroad and Fairfield provided many great options," Carnicelli said. "I'm definitely a little nervous but excited, and the program staff have been extremely helpful in answering questions."

Broadly speaking, Carnicelli is "looking forward to immersing [herself] in a different culture, taking fun classes, exploring different cities, and meeting more students from Fairfield."

Junior Rebecca Walsh, also in the Florence program, feels similarly. She stated, "I'm really excited to explore Florence, and Italy as a whole."

While Walsh is in Italy she will have an internship.

"I will be interning at NYU Florence with their Office of Student Life planning events to help students acclimate to life in Italy," she said. "It seems similar to stuff I've done with the Office of Student Engagement here, so I think it will be a lot of fun."

As she prepares for this unique experience, Walsh claimed, "the closer it gets to our departure date the more excited I am becoming."

As many students are either currently abroad or anticipating their travels for this semester, the University has recently released decision letters for those interested

in studying abroad next academic year.

While many students have received finalized decisions about studying abroad during the fall semester of next year, some are still unsure of their plans.

Some students with plans to study abroad in the Spring 2023 Semester recently received news that their decisions would be pushed back until later in the semester, raising concerns about students' plans for the housing lottery, which takes place in March.

Sophomore Zach Vargas ran into this issue. "I hope to study abroad in the spring of 2023 in London. I received an email the evening of [Jan. 31] saying my decision was delayed and that if I wanted to pursue other opportunities I could withdraw my application," Vargas said. "There was no new date given, and I have learned other people have received their decisions."

Another sophomore, Annie Mackey, looking to study biology in Ireland was frustrated with a similar situation.

She stated, "they canceled the [spring] study abroad program for biology majors, letting us know the day the decisions were supposed to be released, and they suggest going for [the fall semester]."

She summarized that, "now there's no study abroad options for biology majors in the spring," and "they didn't give us our deposit back, or any money back."

Information about next year's programs are available through Global Fairfield.



Photo Contributed by Amy Knott

This is the skyline over Madrid, Spain, where Fairfield students are currently studying abroad. Due to the nature of some programs, certain majors have been asked to apply for different semesters.

Student Representatives State That The Student Body "Deserves" Transparency

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

protected and that access be restricted to members of the Fairfield University community," she stated, continuing that ITS has been working with the General Faculty Secretary to implement the motion.

She does not state that the switch to DropBox this week was due to the Provost and President's request as Bayne stated, but instead says that the new password protection was part of the "implementation process."

Seigel adds, "The General Faculty Secretary is continuing to work with ITS to ensure that password protected access is available to members of the University community, as per the motion."

She ends by stating, "In the meantime, there are student representatives on both the Academic Council and the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee who have access to the meeting materials."

The two student representatives in the committees are the Fairfield University Student Association President Tyler Heffern '22 and FUSA Senator Vincent Rotondo '23.

Heffern sits on the AC and was notified of the issues with student access before their meeting on Feb. 7 and brought up the concerns with the General Faculty

and the Executive Secretary of the AC.

He continued that, "A discussion ensued in the meeting about transparency and all of the speakers agreed that students should have access to minutes and agendas of the meetings though [they] could not settle on how to do that or how long it would take to fix the problem on their online platform."

Heffern added that Siegel mentioned in the meeting that while ITS works, student representatives could provide the documents to students who wanted them.

"However, even as the student representative on the Council, I did not have access to the meeting's agenda packet or their Zoom link and had to specially request them from their leadership," Heffern stated, adding, "I also found it rather shocking that the administrative voice on the AC would make it my responsibility to keep the executive arm of the faculty transparent."

Heffern added that he doesn't believe a request for documents "...should ever be necessary" and "As members of the Fairfield community, students should have unrestricted access to documents by those who govern our institution just as administrators and faculty have access to student government documents." Rotondo added that, "At this time, I don't

believe there are set plans to make the UCC Minutes more accessible to students; however, I do believe that there is certainly a necessity for them to be."

Rotondo continued, "The student body deserves to hear about what is going on academically at our institution."

The Mirror will update on this story as more information becomes available.

“As members of the Fairfield community, students should have unrestricted access to documents by those who govern our institution just as administrators and faculty have access to student government documents.”

- Tyler Heffern '22,
FUSA President

Fairfield Honors Community Members that Exemplify Spirit of Martin Luther King Jr.

By Julia Lanzillotta
Executive Editor

Fairfield University kicked off their annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration on Monday, Jan. 31 to welcome a docket full of events highlighting the importance of racial justice.

Throughout the week, activists within the Fairfield community were honored, and a particular emphasis was placed on Dr. King's legacy through celebratory and educational opportunities. The theme of this year's celebration was "2022: Fighting for Justice and Liberation at Home and Abroad."

The 2022 Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration Steering Committee was co-chaired by Associate Professor of History Sunil Purushotham, Ph.D., and Director of Student Diversity and Multicultural Affairs Pejay Lucky.

Other committee members included Fairfield University faculty and staff members Jocelyn Boryczka, Ph.D., Rachelle Brunn-Bevel, Ph.D., Rony Delva, Elizabeth Hohl, Ph.D., Kris Sealey, Ph.D., Deborah Chappell, Ph.D., Felicia Jeter, Sharon Daly, Luisa Vargas and Lori N. Jones.

The Martin Luther King Jr. Reception on Wednesday, Feb. 2 preceded the Martin Luther King Jr. Convocation and honored both the Fairfield University/Connecticut Post Essay Contest Winners and the Community Leader Vision Award recipients.

Delivering the opening remarks was Purushotham, who stated the committee's

aim was to "Situating Dr. King's commitment of racial justice to our Jesuit mission of the University." Welcoming words were given by President Mark R. Nemeec, Ph. D. which echoed that sentiment.

Nemeec spent much of his time behind the podium discussing how King's values fit seamlessly into the context of this academic institution and Fairfield's dedication to inquiry.

"At Fairfield University, our faith is intertwined with our pursuit of truth," he said. "Our hope stems from truth, and our pursuit of truth through inquiry."

After that, the Fairfield University/Connecticut Post Essay Contest winners were announced. For over 15 years, the two have worked in tandem to facilitate this contest open to middle school students from Bridgeport, Conn. The first, second and third prize winners as well as an honorable mention were presented a certificate by President Nemeec to commemorate the accomplishment.

Participants were asked to describe in detail their personal experiences of discrimination, bigotry or prejudice, or their personal observation of discrimination, bigotry or prejudice. In addition, they were tasked with coming up with two or more strategies that they would use to overcome these challenges.

In first place was Jaedyn Pinkney, a seventh grade student from John Winthrop School. What made his submission stand out to judges was his emphasis on peaceful strategies to combat

bigotry, like communicating with those who have different attitudes on racism, and attempting to understand one's prejudices and where they stem from.

Earning second place honors was Thea Jade Barbieto, and in third place was Nathalia Marques. The eighth graders attend the Multicultural Magnet School and John Winthrop School respectively. Honorable mention went to Wayne Lewis Jr., another eighth grade student from John Winthrop School.

"I believe we can engage one another respectfully," said Lewis in an excerpt from his essay, "It is possible to achieve equality and equity."

According to the University's official website, the MLK Celebration Committee aimed to, "recognize individuals (faculty, staff, undergraduate and graduate students) whose record of personal and institutional achievement in areas of leadership and service reflect a strong commitment to advancing the ideals and values of Martin Luther King through courage, truth, justice, compassion, dignity, humility, and service."

Senior student Mahfouz Soumare was honored with the undergraduate award. Soumare came to the United States from the Ivory Coast to flee the civil war at the age of 15, and has used his story as fuel to make change.

He is a Magis Scholar at Fairfield University, double majoring in International Studies and Economics. In addition, he is a member of Model UN, a Division I athlete on the men's soccer team and an entrepreneur.

"When I moved to [the] U.S I was introduced to people who made history and are part of the United state history like Dr. King. I became inspired by what they stood up for," Soumare stated.

Nat Bush is currently a graduate student in the 2022 cohort, working to receive his Master of Social Work, with the plan of becoming a licensed clinical social worker.

Bush was nominated and won the Vision Award for his extensive efforts in working to achieve gender equity.

Most notably, Bush worked to create Rainbow Road, which is a day treatment program for LGBTQ+ clients with eating disorders at Walden Behavioral Care, an eating disorder treatment center in Guilford, Conn. It provides LGBTQ+ members with the opportunity to be treated by

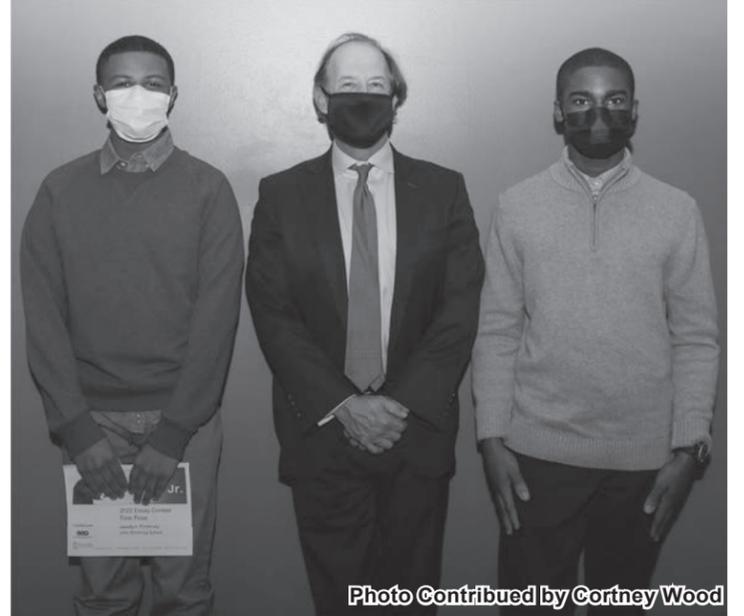


Photo Contributed by Cortney Wood

Pictured above from left to right is seventh grade student Jaedyn Pinkney, the Fairfield University/Connecticut Post Essay Contest winner, Fairfield University President Mark Nemeec, and eighth grade student Wayne Lewis Jr, the Honorable Mention in the Essay Contest.

LGBTQ+ clinicians. He exemplifies Dr. King's ideals of serving one's community.

Professor of English Sonya Huber, Ph.D. was awarded the Vision Award for her relentless strides towards making a difference at Fairfield University and beyond. Throughout her career, she has worked to address issues such as ableism, redlining and healthcare disparities. Her most current work, entitled "What Divides Us?" highlights inequities in Fairfield County, specifically, and outlines the need for change.

Nakia Letang is the associate director for Multicultural Admission, and another Vision awardee. As the first point of contact for students considering Fairfield, Letang is known for her welcoming disposition, and dedication to making Fairfield University a safe and welcoming place for all.

"Those who work with Nakia are inspired by her patience, endurance, collaborative nature and clarity of purpose," said Director of the Center of Social Impact, Melissa Quan, Ed. D. in a video by the University made to announce Letang as a 2022 award recipient.

"I recognize that I am fortunate to work in a lot of spaces and with a lot of great people that support me in this

work, and allow me to pursue this work," said Letang. "I don't take any credit on my own for the things I'm being honored for. It really is to the credit of a lot of amazing people that I've had the chance to work with for so many years."

Finally, mailroom associate Kenneth Smith received the MLK Lifetime Service Award, in recognition of his service at Fairfield University and beyond.

"Ken is the ultimate example and model of Dr. King's legacy," said fellow awardee Nakia Letang. She continued, praising Smith for his tireless work as a force of unity and community through his love for Fairfield and racial and social justice.

"I'm glad that in the role that I play, that I've been able to be an assistance and a help and be part of this special arrangement," said Smith. "I'm humbled that they thought of me but I'm also glad that I was able to be involved and be such an assistance to all here at the University."

The Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration events offered a space where Fairfield University faculty, staff, students and friends can be recognized and revered for their hard work and devotion towards equality, living as Dr. King did, as people for and with others.



Photo Contributed by Cortney Wood

Senior Mahfouz Soumare stands with President Mark R. Nemeec, Ph. D. after being awarded with the undergraduate award. Soumare moved to America from the Ivory Coast when he was 15, and he is now a Magis Scholar, member of Model UN and a Division I athlete.

RAs Urge for More Internal Support from Central Staff at Res Life

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being an RA but it is not for everyone! The job requires a lot of patience, compassion and time. You really have to enjoy working with the residents and find a true purpose in that."

"There are a lot of sacrifices involved," Garcia continues, "But with these sacrifices come a lot of opportunities to grow as both a person and a leader. It will definitely vary from person to person based on their scheduled time commitments, ambitions, and financial situations, but for the right people — it certainly has a lot of merits. I would definitely recommend

discussing it personally with a current RA before making a final decision."

When asked if he knows of anything that would cause the low-turnout, Garcia states that, "While there is no way of knowing for sure, I feel like it is true to say that more people would apply for the RA position if there were more incentives as well as generally just a better word of mouth with the job."

According to the Residence Assistant Job Description, RAs receive room and board plus a stipend that's paid out at the end of each semester.

New RAs receive \$150, Advancing

RAs receive \$200 and Senior Resident Assistants receive \$350.

Chibuko added that, "Overall, I wouldn't say that the benefits of being an RA outweigh the cons."

She states that though it's great to have the free room and board, "...for such a long time this was used to excuse neglect of RA complaints and non concern for the mental health of RAs."

"There has been some progress made since last semester after our major reflection about it but there is still a long way to go," Chibuko adds, stating that, "There is still fear among RAs that presenting their complaints would lead to them being fired."

Former RA Romel Maldonado '21 stated that having a low number of applicants was an issue when he was an RA as well, but the Res Life Office was still selective in who they choose.

"When I applied I remember it being very selective to get a position as an RA. But as the years went on and Res Life changed and became more chaotic they let more and more people through the application process," Maldonado states, continuing,

"I remember hearing nightmare stories of some staffs [residence halls] that just had incompetent RAs. I think they had a low number of applicants and that's why they lowered the bar of who they let into being an RA."

Maldonado continues that the low turnout might be due to the culture of the RA program in that it's become "...a culture of always complaining about their job and how there wasn't enough communication between the RAs and the Res Life central staff."

Maldonado adds that, "I think RAs didn't feel like their concerns were heard and decisions were made in vacuums" and morale was brought down after "some RAs were let go over minor things."

"I think that combination made the RA role seem like it wasn't fun or worth doing and that would eventually get out to the students who were thinking of applying and affect their decision to apply," Maldonado added.

Chibuko seemed to agree with this sentiment and stated, "RAs are asked daily to sacrifice their academic life and mental well being for the sake of other students yet there is no obvious appreciation

given to them. Everything seems to be too hard, including the possibility of increasing pay or hosting a formal RA awards dinner."

Chibuko continued saying, "It has been this neglect of RAs that has led to severe dissatisfaction which has obviously bled out into the student population. RAs sacrifice so much for the job yet the administration does not recognize the actual worth of each one of us. RAs carry on work that, in my opinion, DPS and the other members of pro-staff are late to respond to."

She does add that Res Life seems to be improving.

"There have been some new initiatives suggested by RAAC which Central staff has funded. We even had an RA Gala for the first time. However, there still needs to be more internal support in the community," continued Chibuko. "There needs to be a revision of RA responsibilities so as to reduce the burden they carry in their daily lives. The RA job should aim to improve individual growth."

If Res Life does respond after publication, it will be included in the online version of this article on fairfieldmirror.com.

“ They continuously throw around the world ‘support’ without providing any. ”

- Aarushi Vijay '22

Opinion

Editor Peyton Perry » peyton.perry@student.fairfield.edu

Telehealth Counseling Option Still Remains Beneficial to Students

By Rebecca Quigley
Contributing Writer

Addressing mental health is a need that has only grown in the midst of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Questions of how to provide supportive counseling in a constantly changing environment are routinely raised, particularly focusing on the effectiveness of Telehealth Services.

Fairfield University's Counseling and Psychological Services posted an announcement on Life@Fairfield in regards to their services for the Spring Semester. The announcement makes note of the challenges in conducting in-person counseling due to the presence of the Omicron Variant and the desire to prevent the spread on campus. In regards to this, Counseling and Psychological Services plans on offering mental health services over Zoom meetings, but also have recently made in-person appointments available.

Two years ago, during the fall semester I decided to set up a meet-

ing with the counseling services on Zoom, to address the growing stress I was experiencing during the pandemic and adapting to a "new normal" college environment. As someone who struggles with being open about my feelings and insecurities, I was nervous heading into my first session but my nerves were put at ease once I met with my counselor and felt comfortable in expressing the feelings I've been bottling up. The counselor I met with was engaging, and actively listened as I shared my stress, and followed up our meetings with links to resources and exercises to provide further support in navigating my situation.

While an online session can take getting used to, there are ways

to adjust your experience and make sure that it is meeting your comfort level to gain the most out of your time. For myself when zooming in my dorm room, it was hard not to get distracted by my surroundings or by the technology around me. There is also the risk of technology issues that can interfere with the session such as connection problems or

level of privacy and flexibility such as having the opportunity to turn off your camera during the session if you prefer, or if someone is more comfortable writing about their feelings rather than vocalizing them, there is the option of using the chat function.

While on Zoom, I found it helpful to use headphones as it provided more confidentiality when interacting with the counselor, and allowed me to tune in more to what the counselor was saying.

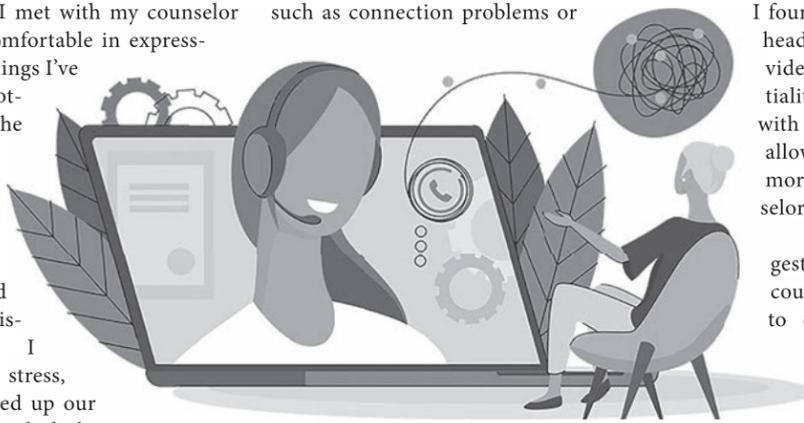
A further suggestion for an online counseling session is to create a comfortable environment for yourself in whatever space you are

in. This could be getting into something more comfortable or using blankets while heating up some tea. Feeling physically comfortable helps put the mind at ease

and can alleviate anxiety and stress when confiding in a counselor.

Online counseling can also be easily adaptable to one's comfort level; voicing your preferences to your counselor can make it a more engaging experience. You can suggest taking a break and rejoining the session to gather your thoughts, or you can decide what you would like to discuss for this session and plan what to discuss for a session at a later date. You can also discuss how long you would like the session to last or provide feedback on what's working or what to incorporate into the next session.

While a therapy session can seem daunting, especially for someone who's never done it before, it truly can help make a difference in learning how to address and take care of your mental health. Talking about mental health can be uncomfortable but it is not a conversation to shy away from, being open about one's struggles can not only help you but help someone else who can be going through something similar.



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What Makes for a Fulfilling and Successful Career?

By Peyton Perry
Opinion Editor

I remember being asked frequently when I was a little girl, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" I didn't ponder it all back then as much as I do now. As a five year old, your imagination runs free to all the possibilities and the sky's the limit. You aren't expected to rationalize your yearning to be a rockstar, a firefighter or an astronaut. You simply get to just blurt it out to everyone with a huge smile on your face and that's that.

It becomes much different as you grow older, however. You start to realize that a lot more has to go into choosing a profession than just shouting out what amazes us at first glance. Of course, that's how we'd still like it to be, but there's more to it than just saying the word. There are finances to think about, figuring out what aligns with your current lifestyle and habits and looking ahead to how you will support yourself and those who may rely on you one day.

The truth is, our society very much depends on this whole concept of having a career, and consequently, there is a lot of pressure placed on us adolescents to pursue the right professional path. Our expectation of having a job

one day is placed on us as young as five years old, without us even being aware of all the intricacies that are woven within such a decision.

There are a lot of individuals who try to discredit the social construct of a 9 to 5 job altogether. Many argue that there's not as much value in signing yourself up for a cycle of work everyday, rather than traveling the world and truly experiencing life and all it has to offer outside of office walls.

Regardless of your own beliefs, each and every one of us has pondered over a potential career path and been faced with the question as to what we want to pursue. Our society demands this of us.

If for many of us our career is going to take up a good chunk of our time and lives, I think it's worth pondering over what makes for a fulfilling and successful career?

A fulfilling career fills one with purpose and meaning; whatever the individual is doing, self value is felt and boosts one's self esteem. I believe this is the most important piece to think about when pursuing a career path. It doesn't matter what others think or will tell you along the way, you need to feel as though what you are doing is worth it and making a difference in the world.

Finding a career that fulfills you then leads also to a successful career. You are successful not only in your hard work and happiness, but also most likely financially. You will often be more devoted to something that fulfills you and brings comfort, leading to more financial rewards and luxuries.

Another important thing to remember is that you don't need to know the final destination in order to start taking the steps of getting there. Step one can be signing up now for more classes you find interesting and love, step two can be applying to internships that pop up in your email feed from Fairfield's Career Center, step three can be building your network in the areas of study you are interested in, and so on.

If you follow your heart and these steps while working hard, no matter what job you land from it, it will most likely be fulfilling because that's where your energy has been focused.

When thinking now about answering that same question that was asked to me at five years old, "what do you want to be when you grow up?" I no longer think of being a ballerina.

Instead, I think that I want to be happy – happy through feeling fulfilled, in whatever that may be, and successful over time through my own hard work.



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Stephanie Gallo is Exceptional in CAS Career Planning

By Christian Mannino
Contributing Writer

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, everyone, in one way or another, has had to face their own personal challenges.

In my case—as I'm sure is the case for many other upperclassmen—these challenges pertained to securing internships and, of course, the dreaded job search.

The task at hand became more daunting than ever—favorite employers were pulling offers to minimize COVID-19 exposure, and any available opportunities were slowly shifting to remote operations. It was time for some creative thinking.

Well my version of 'creative thinking', in this case, was to put my stubbornness to the side for once and ask for a helping hand.

I remembered hearing about some incredibly helpful individuals in the Career Center, so I decided to finally reach out.

The only regret I had from this point moving forward was not reaching out to the Career Center earlier.

After one Zoom meeting with Stephanie Gallo, a career counselor at the center, it became clear that I had been ignoring an incredible resource. After polishing up my resume, Gallo immediately began to help me strategize.

She showed me the best way to approach applications, how to begin building a professional network, and she even set me up with a handy spreadsheet to keep track of it all.

Aside from her clear expertise in career development, Gallo's positive attitude alone was enough to make me feel as if the job application process doesn't have to be as daunting as many of us (namely myself) make it out to be.

Though the job hunt continues, I still use the tips and tricks I learned from Gallo to guide myself through the process.

Every once in a while I'll even get sent a job lead, which, aside from being an incredible

privilege to have a second set of eyes looking out for career opportunities, continually shows me that I have someone in my corner—that I really don't have to do it alone.

Especially in the wake of COVID-19, I'm incredibly grateful for the assistance provided by Gallo and the Career Center.

If this story does have a moral, it would be to utilize the resources provided to you by the University—many people here want to see you succeed as much as you do. If you find yourself on the fence about asking for help like I was, please just do yourself a favor and reach out. You never know what opportunities you may be missing.



The Mirror/ Kyler Erezuma

Pictured above is Director of Career Planning for the College of Arts and Sciences Stephanie Gallo.

Hot Take: The Levee's Pizza is the Best Around!

By Tommy Coppola
Sports Editor



Kyler Erezuma/The Mirror

Pictured above are freshly baked pizzas served at The Levee on Fairfield University's campus.

If you're reading this on the day of publication, happy National Pizza Day! I know that I will personally be rushing to the Levee to grab a few slices myself to celebrate the wonderful occasion.

While there are obviously other options around the town of Fairfield for pizza, there is no better option for a Fairfield University student than making a quick trip to the Levee to get some. With

a whole bunch of factors like its convenient location and amazing taste, The Levee shines as the best pizza for Fairfield students.

The Levee makes a pie that could be mostly associated with the common definition of a New York slice; the difference from other types of pizza comes mainly in the crust. Chicago style pizza has a deeper and doughier texture, whereas New Haven focuses on the charred edges of the crust for an amazing smoky taste. Regardless of your preference, The Levee brings in the best of every style.

My favorite part of The Levee's pizza is, as you could probably predict, their crust. It's doughy and super fluffy, but still has a ton of flavor; this is exactly what I am looking for in a good slice of pizza. It makes it easy to eat the whole slice of pizza instead of leaving the over-crunchy crust to the side.

The cheese and sauce, however, are also stars, which are both the perfect amount of melty but

also hold together well. Whenever I'm getting their pizza, I always ask for a side of ranch to dip my pizza in. But I digress; my pizza-eating habits are a hot take for another time.

The toppings and variety are extremely unique, as well; just this year, they included a specialty item called "Taco Pizza".

Other offerings include chicken and broccoli pizza and even barbeque chicken pizza, alongside the usual bacon, sausage and meatball toppings you can find elsewhere.

Another amazing point to raise about their pizza is the convenience of your entire trip - it is probably the least hassle I have ever had to go through to get pizza. If you're using a meal swipe, you can get yourself two slices of any topping pizza and a side salad with a drink.

This, to me, is an insanely good deal, and for the quality of the pizza you're truly getting the

bang for your buck that you might be looking for.

The Levee sits atop a small hill in between some trees, with its entrance right off of Lynch Road.

Its location right around the center of campus makes it extremely accessible to Fairfield students who are looking for a comforting bite to eat outside of the Tully Dining Commons.

Whether you're a first-year student living in the Quad, a sophomore living in the Village or especially a junior living up at the townhouses, The Levee's amazing pizza is probably less than a ten minute walk away.

Don't get me wrong- I'm not using this article to attack other pizza places around the town of Fairfield- in fact I don't think there's a bad one.

However, The Levee's pie has quickly risen to my favorite in the area, and if you haven't tried it, I urge you to because I think it'll become your favorite as well.

Covid-Positive Students Should be Zoomed into Class

By Carina Kortick
Contributing Writer

It is apparent that throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Zoom has been both a blessing and a curse. Allowing classes to be held virtually while the world was deemed unsafe, Zoom helped schools, businesses and other organizations to have some sort of normalcy during those difficult times. Classes and meetings were able to continue with only minimal disturbances while individuals could meet virtually from any location.

With the world beginning to return to normal, Zoom has become a lesser part of our lives. At Fairfield University, classes are almost held entirely in-person, with a few exceptions, of course. Zoom continues to have useful advantages within the education system which can be seen through professors' use of the platform to hold office hours or other meetings. However, the school is seemingly attempting to make all classes in-person from this point forward. Although I do believe that this shows positive progress towards re-

turning to the state we were in before COVID-19, it is not accommodating to those students who have unfortunately tested positive.

I believe that professors should be allowed to, if not obligated to, hold hybrid classes in the sense that quarantined students who have COVID-19 can easily Zoom into class. It seems as though Fairfield is not accommodating students who have to go home or miss class because they either have COVID-19 or worrisome symptoms.

Professors are telling these students to talk to a classmate or go to their office hours in order to catch up on the material they missed.

Perhaps before the pandemic this option was the best a professor could offer, however, in the state of the pandemic that we are living through right now, it seems as though people are not making use of the technologies, such as Zoom, that would allow an alternative possibility for students.

Before COVID-19, if a student felt sick and they would not be able to go to class, they usually would

not miss that much. Now, with a minimum five-day isolation period, students are missing out on multiple classes and are unable to do much about it.

Without a better option, students who are not wanting to miss class material may feel obligated to go to class even though they may feel sick or have symptoms.

This only increases the chances of COVID-19 being spread and I believe this can be avoided through the solution of having professors teach on Zoom if a student requires it.

Sophomore student Catherine Zarrella states, "I am worried that I will miss critical information for these courses by not having the opportunity to Zoom into class if I test positive."

Zarrella's concern is shared by many other students who cannot afford to miss class due to either the intense level of classes they are taking or simply their major.

I am not unaware of the fact that some students may take this feature for granted and decide to skip

class and only attend on Zoom. This number, however, seems low to me since I know many students who prefer in-person learning due to the fact that they gain a much better un-

derstanding of the class. seems as though the school should accommodate those students who have COVID-19. Especially with the Omicron variant being the most transmissible variant of COVID-19,



Creative Commons/PxHere

derstanding of the class.

I am also not saying that classes should be put on Zoom again, similar to last year's type of learning.

I am simply stating that it

according to the CDC, it is inevitable that many students will now become sick. I believe that the University should be more accommodating to those who are infected.

Stigmas Surrounding the Unvaccinated are Harmful

By Brittany Misiore
Contributing Writer



The Mirror/Kyler Erezuma

Pictured above is weekly Covid-19 testing in the RecPlex at Fairfield University for unvaccinated and unboosted students.

Since the very beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in March of 2020, the entire world has been living in fear. Thinking back to almost two years ago, uncertainty was surely at an all-time high, with mental health ultimately being neglected and many not knowing how to respond or who to trust.

To add to the uneasiness, the virus began rapidly spreading during the midst of the 2020 presidential election. Every day, millions of Americans would sit in front of their televisions and watch the daily COVID-19 task force press conferences. Viewed on the television were former President Donald Trump,

Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Anthony Fauci, MD and White House Coronavirus Response Coordinator Deborah Birx, speaking out in unison on the case numbers and new information, which had been discovered regarding COVID-19.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, Americans have acted with diligence and determination by following strict safety regulations. Some of these include lockdowns, the closings of restaurants, retail and entertainment businesses, as well as limited travel. Under the lead of Trump's administration, the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines were approved after nine long months, becoming readily available for any eligible American who wanted one.

Despite the gravity of such a great medical achievement, since the very beginning vaccines have been polarized, acting as a political tool being used by both Democrats and Republicans.

Someone's "vaccine status" is often an uncomfortable question to be asked now, as it can lead to negative and political assumptions being made about a particular student. If one admits to

being unvaccinated, many students will then follow up with more questions such as, "Why are you not vaccinated?," "Are you anti-vaccine?," "Do you not believe in science?" and "Who did you vote for?"

These are expected questions due to the extreme political polarization surrounding COVID-19 vaccines, but that still does not make them okay to ask. The problem with such questions is that they further enable current negative stigmas surrounding those who decide not to get vaccinated. These negative stigmas feed into blame of those who are unvaccinated for the continuing of the pandemic.

President Joe Biden himself is seen fanning the flames of such negative stigmas when he says, "For the unvaccinated, we are looking at a winter of severe illness and death." Additionally, in a White House speech, he declared, "This is a pandemic of the unvaccinated." These kinds of blanket assumptions are accusatory, vague and flat-out not true. The President of the United States targeting those who are unvaccinated is unhelpful and extremely polarizing. If those types of thoughts are coming from the President then Americans are sure to follow.

While the President of the Unit-

ed States continues to underhandedly blame the unvaccinated through statements such as the ones above, this sense of fault fosters widespread negative feelings of anger, judgment and frustration towards unvaccinated individuals. Unvaccinated Americans are constantly being blamed for the rise in positive cases.

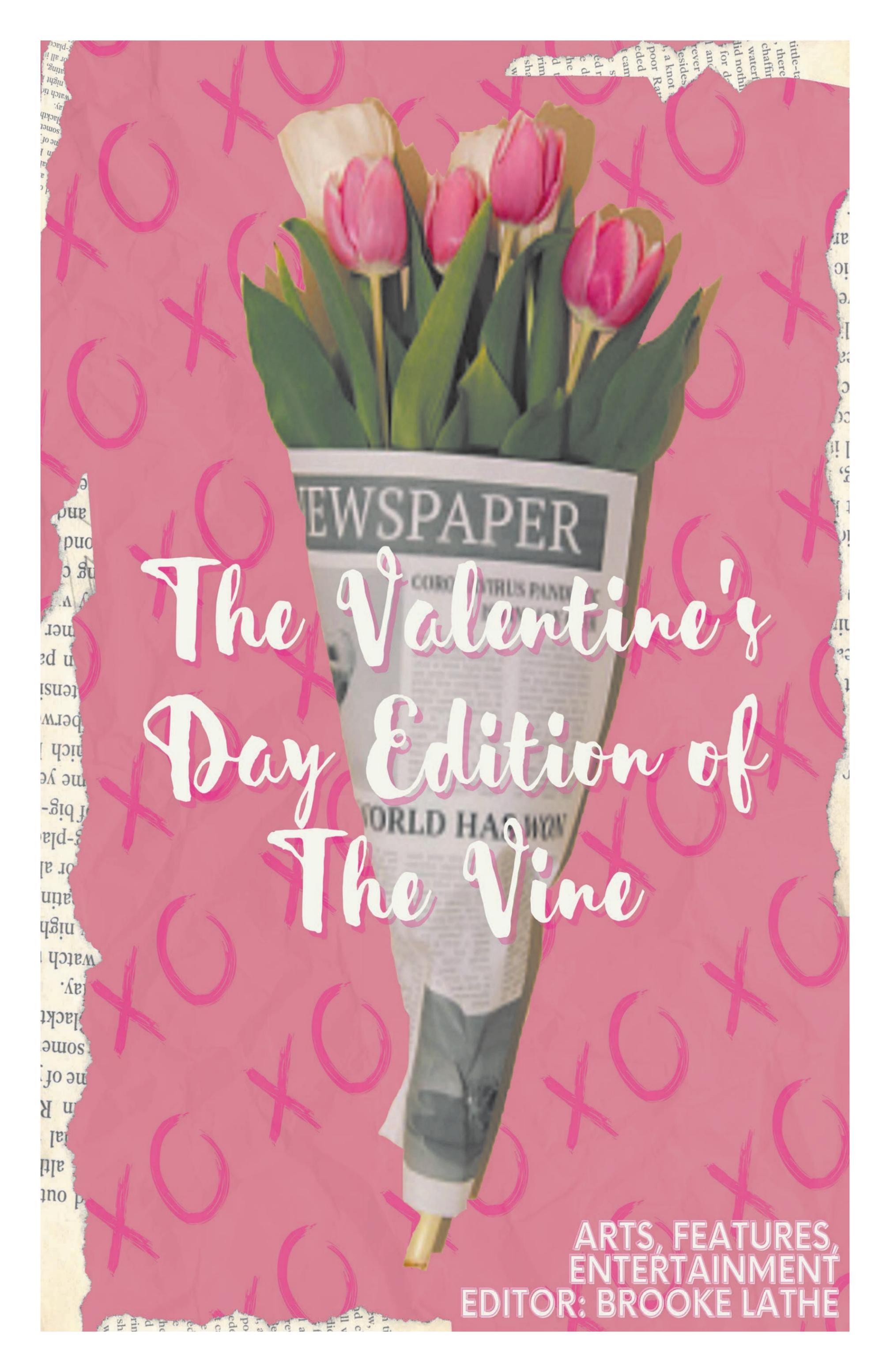
With the spread of the Omicron variant, it is evident that both those who are vaccinated and unvaccinated are testing positive for COVID-19. Therefore, it seems as though one's vaccine status is not as important to know as some used to believe.

As part of the move-in process for the Spring 2022 semester, Fairfield University sent out multiple emails promoting booster clinics, sharing mandatory vaccine surveys, and initiating double mask mandates.

This begs the question, why do students need to report to the school their private medical choices?

If many of those who are getting diagnosed with COVID-19 currently are double vaccinated and boosted, why is the school still continuing to promote booster shots?

(To read full article visit www.fairfieldmirror.com)



NEWSPAPER

The Valentine's Day Edition of The Vine

ARTS, FEATURES,
ENTERTAINMENT
EDITOR: BROOKE LATHE

The Complicated History Of Valentine's Day



By Liana Giacobbe
Contributing Writer

Valentine's Day: a day dedicated to love, friendship and the joys of life. Though everyone enjoys this special day, even those without a significant other to spend it with, the holiday has a bit of a darker history behind it.

There is no one consistent story to describe the history of Valentine's Day, as the origin of the holiday is something that historians still find themselves disagreeing on.

However, there are certainly some general truths to the story behind this day of love.

So before you finish your shopping for candy and flowers, continue reading to gain more knowledge on how these traditions began!

Valentine's Day, though it may have a confusing origin story, was primarily implemented to honor two men that were executed by Emperor Claudius II.

Why were these men honored and associated with love?

It is believed that one of the martyrs, Saint Valentine of Terni, had been officiating weddings in secret and against the wishes of the emperor.

These acts not only elected him into sainthood, but is the basis of a holiday primarily concerned with undying love and commitment.

The idea of writing and receiving valentines themselves aligns with this story, as it is thought that St. Valentine had written a note before his passing to a girl that he fell in love with.

There are additional stories surrounding the birth of Valentine's Day, but these tend to be followed and believed less closely.

A portion of this story that seemingly lines up with its popularity in ancient Roman times is Shakespeare's work towards making the holiday more widely recognized.

This makes a great deal of sense, considering so many of his famed works surround the ideas of love and communion, though they often have a more tragic twist.

Love letters became a popular form of romantic communication, which eventually led to the commercialization of Valen-

mary stimulant for the economy. Though there is certainly lots of

forms of love, such as with family and friends.



confusion surrounding the origins of the holiday, it is certainly true that it has become intrinsic to the month of February for many.

For those without significant others, it is a day of celebrating other

So no matter what form of the holiday you partake in, remind yourself of these interesting and twisted origins: right before purchasing all the flowers and candy you could possibly need!



How To Send Cards With Love

By Molly Lamendola
Editor-In-Chief

I'm a bit of a greeting card connoisseur. I get it completely from my mom, who still hand-writes out Christmas cards every year. But it's a passed-down hobby I can't be mad about. There's something sweet and special about handwriting a card and giving it to someone else. We're in a society that's so overwhelmingly digital that something handwritten is magical.

The perfect holiday to test out this magic is Valentine's Day. But, if you've never written a Valentine's Day card, it can be a daunting task. So, I created this guide to get you started, and hopefully, by the end of it, you'll be ready to tell all of your loved ones exactly how you feel through a card.

Get the Right Card:

I'm a big fan of Marshall's Valentine's Day card selection. But, it is incredibly hit or miss, as sometimes they have absolutely nothing. Furthermore, there's a chance that the cards you find at Marshall's are cute, if not a bit basic. If you want something more personalized or funny, I'd look at Etsy.

Etsy, without any of the rules following that the big box stores do, can be incredibly funny, if not a bit inappropriate. If you have someone in your life that might enjoy something a bit more raunchy, then I'd definitely start here. But... the tricky thing about Etsy is that the cards are on the more expensive side and sometimes the cost of the cards in addition to shipping fees can make ordering from Etsy a bit pricey.

With this in mind, I urge you to possibly make your own valentines. I'm a second semester senior at Fairfield with way too much time on my hands. I'm looking forward to delving back into the world of hand-making valentines,

as I was never allowed store-bought ones growing up.

My mom believed that anything could be done with a glue stick and some patience. We made little mice with lollipops for tails, we made cameras

The Writing:

More important than the aesthetic of the card, the sentimentality needs to be there. I try my best to pour everything into the card, sometimes by including warm anecdotes of moments that were absolutely nothing to them, but meant a lot to me.

Examples could include the time you were overwhelmed with some-

were kind to you on a random day, you make that person feel like they matter. Which, in my book, is way better than throwing out a random, empty, "I love you and Happy Valentine's Day!"

But... if sentimentality like that isn't for you, I'd recommend attempting humor. Look up a good pun or Valentine's related joke to write into the card. Making someone laugh on Valentine's Day is just as important as making them feel loved.

The Sending of the Card:

There are two ways this can work, and one, in my belief, is supremely better than the other. See, I love the post office. I have loved it since I was little. Something about just standing there in line, looking at the Great Depression Era Works Progress Administration's piece on the wall while thinking about life, puts me at peace. Therefore I love sending anything I can through the post office.

This is especially cool as it allows for additional envelope decoration. There's nothing more fun than absolutely littering stickers all over a pink envelope. Match that with a little heart stamp and you're completely golden.

You could always also deliver them in person. This provides the opportunity to give the person a quick hug, say in person "Happy Valentine's Day!" and wait for their "Awe! Thanks!"

But, there's a good possibility that this might be an awkward experience if they don't have anything for you. So just to avoid all chances of that, I either mail the card or just leave it somewhere I'll know they'll see it and write their name on it!

Have Fun With it!:

At the end of the day, anything you do will make a person's day! If you have fun, be creative and personal with it- you just can't go wrong.

out of cardstock with a York Peppermint Patty as the lens and we used button candy to make little remote controls. I was always the star of the show for Valentine's Day, and I want to bring that energy back into 2022.

thing and they helped you out, or they got you a random iced coffee on a bad day they didn't know you were having. I think sometimes we feel as if our lives aren't having an impact in the day-to-day. By reminding someone that your life was made better just because they



What Does Valentine's Day Mean To You?

By Bridget Mayer
Contributing Writer

Is there such a thing as a 'perfect' Valentine's Day?

With Valentine's Day drawing around the corner, those that are in relationships find themselves scrambling to pick out the perfect gifts for their loved ones, especially something that symbolizes, "I love you, so I'm buying you this as a token of my appreciation for you."

In addition to the expectation of reciprocal gift-giving, there stands a common insinuation for a date night, this usually involves a preplanned dinner reservation and some recreational activity thereafter.

On the other end of the spectrum, those that are not in a relationship may find themselves facing the guilt, or conversely, the empowerment of being alone on V-Day.

In order to get a better understanding of the differing ideals between these groups, I texted with members belonging to both affiliations and asked, "What is your opinion on Valentine's day and what do you like to do on the day?"

To begin, I spoke with Olivia Burke '22, who has been in a relationship since her freshman year. I began by asking Olivia the preformatted question, to which she responded, "I think Valentine's Day is a fun way to show your love for your significant other or other special people in your life, like your friends."

She noted that "When I'm spending Valentine's Day with my boyfriend, I like to have a romantic date night.

We used to go out to a restaurant or see

a movie, but with the pandemic going on we prefer to have a night in and order food and watch something on Hulu or Netflix and exchange Valentine's gifts."

Afterward, I spoke with Olivia's boyfriend, Luka Zedginidze '22, who stated, "It's pretty nice that there is an 'official' date to celebrate your significant partner.

Valentine's Day becomes less important the more that you and a partner love and care for each other, it's a little ironic.

You grow to a point where you realize

hypocrite."

In terms of similar self-proclaimed hypocrisy, when asking single graduate student John Meagle the same question, he stated, "I hate it [Valentine's Day] because it manipulates people to feel like they need to be extravagant and takes away from what relationships are really about; much to the detriment of people actually looking for real meaning or to people without the means to compete financially."

Meagle stated in a consecutive text, "I still like Valentine's Day though, I enjoyed just spending it with my ex-girlfriends."

It seems that from this small sampling, the positive influence of Valentine's Day is still very much prevalent in both optimists and pessimists alike.

But, the lesson that can be gathered from these personal accounts is that Valentine's Day's meaning differs immensely depending on not only the person but the stage of life that they are in.

Most readers may agree that as a child, the perfect Valentine's Day was getting a letterbox full of candy in their elementary school classrooms. As a college student, the perfect Valentine's Day may be a gesture from a friend, a CVS post-Valentine's sale on candy, a date with a love interest, a 'galentine's' day or generally just having a good day.

The notion of a perfect Valentine's Day aligns with that of any other day, one should do what makes them happy, and in doing so be sure to love themselves and love others in the process.



It kinda provides an excuse to dedicate the whole day to each other, which is nice. I think every couple will have its own perfect Valentine's date. It should be something meaningful."

Class of Fairfield alumna, and my sister, Carolyn Mayer '18 stated, "I feel like Valen-

you don't need a day to celebrate your love, you should be doing that every day.

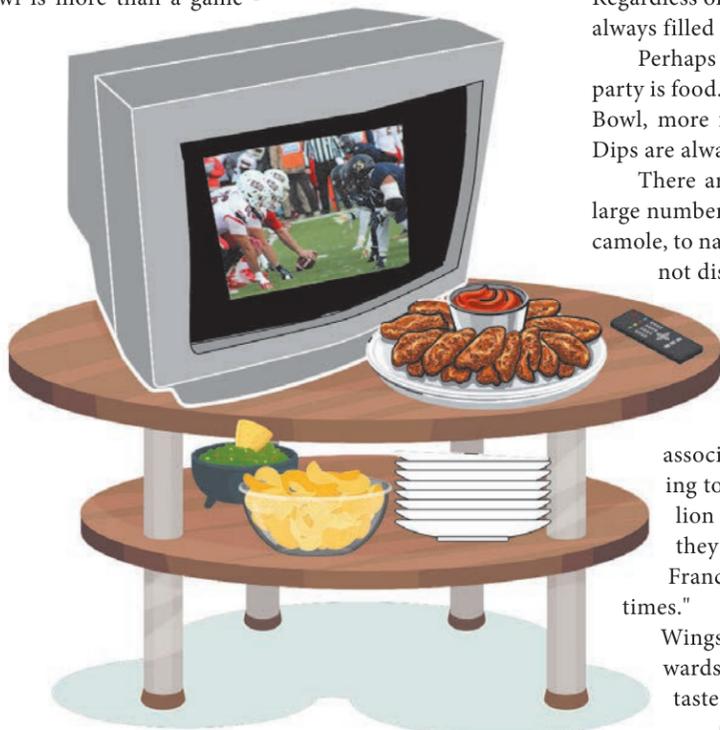
It's a day of capitalist expectations, peacocking around.

But my boyfriend still takes me out and I like it, so maybe I'm a

TASKS, TREATS & TOUCHDOWNS

By Madeline West
Assistant News Editor

Super Bowl Sunday is arguably one of the best days of the year, regardless of whether you are a sports fan or not. Whether or not the team you root for is playing, the Super Bowl is more than a game -



it's a phenomenon that brings people together. It doesn't matter if you're an avid sports watcher, love the commercials, are here for the food or a little bit of all three, I am here to help you plan the best Super Bowl party.

My family hosts a Super Bowl party every year. It's basically a holiday for us and it's something we look forward to. Regardless of if the team we root for is playing, our house is always filled with food and friends.

Perhaps the most important necessity for a Super Bowl party is food. Besides Thanksgiving, on the day of the Super Bowl, more food is eaten than any other day of the year. Dips are always a good idea.

There are so many options and they are perfect for a large number of people. Buffalo chicken dip, salsa and guacamole, to name a few are some household favorites and will not disappoint.

Not to mention, they are so easy to make and are perfect for serving lots of people.

Wings are another popular favorite for the Super Bowl.

They are by far a crowd favorite and are associated heavily with Super Bowl Sunday. According to the Wing Report, Americans will eat 1.23 billion wings next weekend. If laid out end to end, they would "stretch from Candlestick Park in San Francisco to M&T Bank Stadium in Baltimore 27 times."

Wings are so popular because they are catered towards all palates, from an almost sweet barbecue taste to a spicy buffalo flavor.

Cheese boards are another essential aspect of

any party, but especially Super Bowl parties. The great thing about cheese boards is that you can personalize them and add whatever is catered to your and your guests' liking.

Now, you're going to want to set up some televisions and ensure there are places for all different types of watchers. You will have the die-hards that want no distractions and are totally honed in on the game.

Another TV will probably be needed for the commercial watchers who could honestly care less about the game itself. Finally, you will want a big central watching location for the halftime show; arguably the best part of the game.

With regards to what to wear to a Super Bowl party, I recommend taking the comfortable route. Sweatpants are the way to go with all the food and lounging that will be going on.

If your team is playing, showing your support for them through what you have on is also a good option, or even color-scheming your outfit to match the team colors is a good choice as well.

However, if the team you support is not playing, you can choose a neutral route or even just pick whatever color you like best out of the two teams playing.

So, if you are planning on hosting a Super Bowl party, ensuring you have good food and good people will result in success.

The Super Bowl is such a great event because it not only brings together those who watch sports, but it also unites so many other viewers across the country.

Even if your favorite team is not playing or you simply don't like sports, Super Bowl Sunday is the perfect excuse to kick back, relax, eat and spend time with friends.

PERFECT PIES FOR PIZZA DAY

By Sophia Spinelli
Contributing Writer

Like all students at Fairfield University, my week is occupied with the typical rigorous academic responsibilities. Monday through Friday (or more realistically, Thursday), I'm all business.

It's not until the weekend rolls around that I shut my laptop and focus on the best part of my week: eating good food.

On Saturdays and Sundays, there's absolutely zero room for a drab salad or the bland chicken I keep in my fridge.

Instead, I choose to carbo-load my body and my soul.

In true Italian fashion, the only way I can make this happen is by ordering a large, well-done meatball and ricotta pizza from the renowned Frank Pepe's.

To get down to business, I am writing this article to offer you all some "knead"-to-know information.

Wednesday, Feb. 9, is National Pizza Day.

While it may be self-

explanatory, the only adequate way to celebrate this national holiday and honor our pizza-making ancestors is by ordering a pie (or many) from a local pizzeria.

Luckily, as an unofficial, official, pizza connoisseur, I have some recommendations. It's the "yeast" I can do.

To begin, my friends and I have found that the perfect cure to the "Sunday scaries" is found tucked inside Frank Pepe's establishment.

We've discovered that

weekly Sunday night dinner dates are the best way to unpack the weekend, unwind before the week ahead, and scarf down some of the most unreal pizza pies.

My must-try recommendation, as previously stated, is the meatball and ricotta pizza.

It quite literally melts in your mouth.

Some of my other favorites in-

clude: "The Veggie Special" pie and the seasonal "Fresh Tomato Pie" which can only be eaten between the months of July and September.

If you're looking for a dressier atmosphere, our very own Pizzeria Molto in town offers some of the best, exceptionally crisped, flatbread pizza.

The margherita pie has the perfect blend of crushed tomatoes and gooey mozzarella cheese. The dough is handled with extreme care, fantastically crusted around each edge.

Lastly, not only is Molto perfect for a gourmet-level pizza on National Pizza Day, but it's also a perfect spot for a Valentine's Day date, or better, a "galentine" gathering.

Finally, if you're on that broke college student budget but still want a "slice" of the action, I have a few suggestions for creating your own pizza masterpiece.

First, you will want to purchase your own dough.

Trader Joe's has plenty to choose from, especially if you are looking for something gluten-free. A hack for obtaining the perfect crisp is to put your dough in the oven for a few minutes before you put your toppings on.

Next, buy your favorite toppings and share them with your friends (or keep it all for yourself).

Now that you are fully equipped with the insider information, I wish you the best on your national holiday extravaganza.

Don't forget to order your pies well-done!



Four Fairfield Clubs You Might Have Missed

By Erica Salisbury
Contributing Writer

Here at Fairfield University, there are many wonderful ways to meet new people as well as get involved in the campus community.

With over 200 clubs and organizations, there is a lot to choose from. With the wide selection, clubs are bound to appeal to all different types of interests.

New clubs pop up all of the time, and it's a great way for students to bring to campus what they actually are interested in. Below are four of some newer clubs that showcase different types of interests for the Fairfield U student.

Play Like A Girl

Play Like A Girl, or PLAG, for short, is a nation-wide organization that has chapters across the country for college aged women.

It encompasses health and wellness, networking and financial and

charity work in the local community to better everyone. They host fitness events on and off campus at different places like Pure Barre and Soul Cycle, as well as resume building activities on campus.

"It has allowed me to join a community of like-minded girls," said club co-president Alyssa Thomas '22, "I am so grateful to have been able to be a part of an organization that empowers girls on campus to become leaders."

Book Club

The Book Club here at Fairfield University is a great way to continue reading while balancing the busy college schedule. They meet biweekly to discuss the readings that the group decides to pick out each time.

"We want to appeal to anyone who has a passion for learning and would like to share that passion with others".

It can be difficult to fit reading an unassigned book into your college schedule, especially if you enjoy it, so the

Book Club might be a great option for you.

Cryptocurrency Club

The Cryptocurrency Club is another great club to gain an understanding of a very confusing topic, especially if you are into currencies and financial trading.

Their purpose here at Fairfield is to educate fellow students on cryptocurrency terms and how the stock market and other external factors can impact crypto.

They also offer a series of guest speakers, informative presentations and open discussion to allow its members to talk freely and learn more about the subject.

For anyone interested in these topics or going into the business world, this is another excellent way to learn more about a hot topic in the world.

Girl Up Fairfield

Girl Up Fairfield is a very new club that was just recently introduced. There are organizations nationwide and Fairfield University just added a

chapter here as well.

It is a service oriented club that dedicates itself to raising awareness of the obstacles that girls face within the Global South when it comes to accessing primary and secondary education, which is a very big issue.

The club also hosts events that serve as community builders and fundraisers to help with the larger Girl Up organization, which is what makes everything happen.

If you are interested in service work and want to make a difference in the world, then this new club is an excellent choice to try out.

There are so many different clubs and activities to be a part of, it can be extremely overwhelming to choose what you want to dedicate your time to.

These four organizations are all excellent to be a part of, and you can go find out more about all of the other clubs and opportunities at the Club and Activities Fair on Feb. 11 in the Oak Room.



"Untidy Soul" Is A Masterpiece

By Brooke Lathe
Vine Editor

If you know me, you know that I love Samm Henshaw. It's a fact as simple and true as my name; so much so that I will forever brag about how I was fortunate enough to secure tickets to his first concert in New York City at Sound of Brazil (which was undoubtedly one of the best nights of my life).

At the venue, he performed songs from both of his first two albums, "The Sound Experiment" and "The Sound Experiment 2," and some of his most popular singles "Broke," "Church" and "Doubt." Additionally, he shared a handful of tracks that were scheduled to come out on his newly released album, "Untidy Soul," to excite fans for his upcoming work. Which, of course, easily worked on me.

So, when my countdown app finally dwindled to "zero days" on Jan. 28, and his entire record was released for listening, I have not stopped playing it since then. Here is why.

"Still No Album (Intro)"

"Still No Album (Intro)" is a silly, short, self-deprecating conversation acknowledging that it's taken him "ages" to release another album for his fans.

"Thoughts and Prayers"

This is definitely my favorite track on "Untidy Soul." It is so unbelievably beautiful, soulful and thought-provoking that I can't help but belt beside Samm as he sings "If everyone were like me, could that be the change I'd like to see." Even further, the small hints of saxophone and layered harmonies are just the poppy undertone needed to balance out the powerful lyrics. If not a must listen, it's surely a must-read as it truly allows you to reflect on the actions of yourself and others.

"Grow"

"Grow" is one of three songs that Samm released as a sneak peek for his upcoming record, and with good reason. It sets what seems like a perfect tone for "Untidy Soul" as it talks about growing as a romantic couple, while also incorporating a higher-pitched voice that makes an appearance in a few other songs on the album.

"Chicken Wings"

This song just makes me so happy. I vividly remember when Samm released "Chicken Wings" in October of 2021 and I actually skipped around campus with a huge grin on my face. His silly lines that combine love in a relationship and food will always make me giggle no matter how many times I listen to it. And more importantly, when the trumpets start blaring at 2:18, I can't help but throw my head around without a care in the world.

"Mr Introvert"

Mr Introvert is such a nighttime, summer night drive song. In just one short minute, he creates a quick R&B jam about it being better when it's "just the two of us".

"8.16"

I absolutely love the feel and vibe this song gives off. The background vocals echoing "run to me" and piano trills work in such a beautiful balance with the steady drumbeat.

"Mr Introvert (Reprise)"

"Mr Introvert (Reprise)" is 50 seconds of what I imagine someone ascending to heaven would sound like, as the saxophone, chimes and guitar play in perfect harmony.

"Loved By You"

If someone ever wrote something like this about me, I think I would cry until the end of time. He begins the song in conversation, "sh'd say do you love me? How much?" and goes on to explain just how much he does in a slow, melodic rhythm.

"Take Time"

"Take Time" is one of the most popular songs on "Untidy Soul," and probably due to the foot-tapping, R&B feel. It discusses a relationship moving too fast, and how they should just "take a minute" and "just let it be".

"Waterbreak"

"Waterbreak" is another short addition to the album, coming in at just 39 seconds. A smooth jazzy feel plays up until you hear Samm's voice ask, "what you didn't bring no cookies?" which never fails to bring a smile to my face.

"It Won't Change"

This tune takes you through a multitude of rhythms and vibes throughout its length, which I love. To me, I enjoy listening to the range on top of listening to the beautiful reassurance Samm sings about.

"East Detroit"

I feel a special connection to this song - as I'm sure most people will have if they've ever experienced a breakup. Samm's raw cries "time heals everything but this wound" continue to tug at my heart every time I play this track.

"Enough"

This song! I swear he is just a lyric genius. Not only do I absolutely drool over the layered female voices alongside Samm's, but the chorus speaks to me on another level as it explains how pushing yourself to the furthest

limits is sometimes not the best thing that you can do for yourself.

"Keyon (Interlude)"

"Keyon" is a short piece of just pure instrumental while a woman simultaneously lectures the musician for playing at four in the morning. It definitely brings out a good chuckle.

"Still Broke (feat. Keyon Harrold)"

I have such nostalgia listening to this song as I immediately picture the stage where Samm Henshaw sang this right in front of my face. The instrumentals, choir and lyrics are what make this piece a true masterpiece.

"Joy"

Instead of singing along to all of his songs like I usually do, I just like to sit back and listen to this track as he closes his third album explaining how he now just seeks pure joy.

I urge you not only to take time to listen to "Untidy Soul," but to all of what Samm Henshaw has to offer. Even if you only have time for a few songs, at least check out my notable favorites: "Autonomy," "Redemption," "Better," "Night Calls" and "Broke". And Samm, if you're reading this, thank you for creating such breathtaking work.

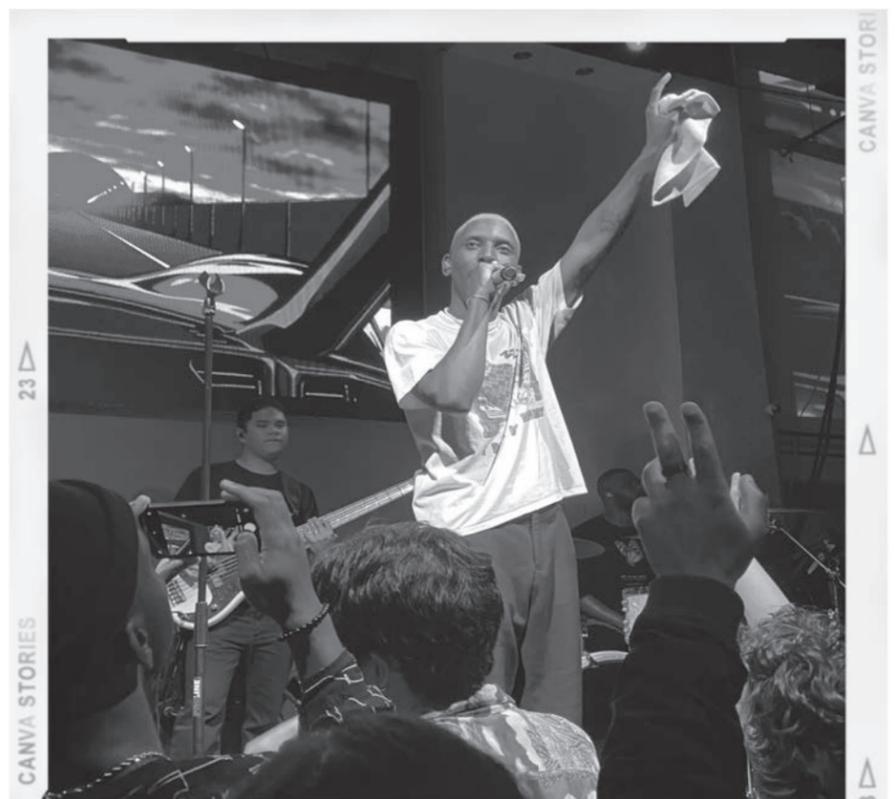


Photo Contributed by Brooke Lathe

Samm Henshaw performs at Sound of Brazil in New York City.



THE HIGHS AND LOWS OF SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL

By John Bizub
Contributing Writer

While we eagerly await some of the more mainstream tentpole blockbusters to release such as Matt Reeves' "The Batman," Sam Raimi's "Dr. Strange and the Multiverse of Madness" and "Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse (Part One)," film fans are excited to see the new hit films from breakout directors and auteurs. And thankfully, I was able to attend Sundance virtually for the second time as a member of the press.

Before discussing some of the movies I saw, the experience was very strange compared to last year. While the online streaming site was perfectly executed, many screenings remained up in the air after Sundance decided a week before the festival to establish it as "online only" due to the increase of COVID-19 cases.

However, despite the shortcomings, the festival was still a magical experience and one I highly recommend people try.

Now, onto the movies!

"When You Finish Saving The World" dir: Jesse Eisenberg

The most common approach nowadays is seeing actors step behind the camera and direct a film. Sometimes it is a hit, (ex. Greta Gerwig's "Lady Bird"), and at times, they should just stick to acting. "When You Finish Saving The World," tells the story of a young teen named Ziggy (Finn Wolfhard), a social media influencer who sings sappy love songs, and the disconnect between his dreams and what his mother Evelyn (Julianne Moore) wants from him.

While it does contain a promising story, its execution feels familiar and falls flat, at times playing itself like Greta Gerwig's indie smash.

While Moore carries the movie, Wolfhard is written to be so unsympathetic that I had a hard time empathizing with him due to how he treats his family and his potential love interest.

Sure, it's shot well, but it's score by the usually great Emile Mosseri feels unspecial and forgettable.

"When You Finish Saving The World" could work well on paper, however its annoying character writing, mixed performances, shallow story and unsatisfying conclusion keep this from becoming another darling in the coming of age genre.

Eisenberg tries to play himself like his contemporary Noah Baumbach but has a hard time trying not to replicate his style.

Grade: D-

"The Worst Person in the World" dir: Joachim Trier

NOTE: SOME MOVIES CAME OUT LAST YEAR AND PREMIERED AT OTHER FESTIVALS AND WERE PICKED UP DUE TO THE CRITICAL RECEPTION

What are the types of movies you do not see nowadays? Romantic comedies or existential dark comedies! And Denmark filmmaker, Joachim Trier, concludes his "Oslo Trilogy" with his latest. The film follows Julie (Renate Reinsve) a young 20-something year old who feels indecisive when it comes to finding a career and the love of her life.

I am having a hard time deciding if I should include this in my best of 2021 or 2022 because if it was to count for this year, it would be hard to top this one.

"The Worst Person in the World" is a home run from Joachim Trier and truly creates a romantic comedy unlike any other. Renate Reinsve brings one of the most relatable characters as Julie, a woman who is trying to figure her life out and feels pressured to take big steps even though she wants to feel young again.

The film captures both the feeling of finding your true soulmate and the uneasy melancholy of being alone/independent post-college-graduation. There is no denying the excellence of the screenplay by Trier.

At times you feel unsure when to laugh due to the cringe-worthy situations done, or the witty humor at play. This feels like one of the rare films that feels tailor-made for our generation.

It does not feel unobtrusive but also pokes fun at our ability to change and our roads that lead us there

Grade: A+



COFFEE BREAK



SATIRE, GAMES, PUZZLES AND MORE

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

The Mirror's Takes

We are back this semester with another segment of the Mirror's Takes! To start the semester off, we gathered some input regarding everyone's favorite new song or album from 2022 so far! Here are some of the top answers!

Drip Season 4 Ever - Gunna

Dawn FM - The Weeknd

Light Switch - Charlie Puth

SICK! - Earl Sweatshirt

From a Bird's Eye View - Cordae



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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!

F.U.S.A. E.L.E.C.T.I.O.N.S.

Nick Silvia, Contributing Writer

On today's episode of "Acronyms That I Didn't Understand" we'll be looking at FUSA, or the Fairfield University Student Association. At first, not knowing what "FUSA" stood for seemed completely reasonable, and then I realized that I've been at this school for almost three years and probably shouldn't have gotten this far. What's next? Am I going to find out that RHA and DPS are acronyms, too?

Either way, my groundbreaking discovery couldn't have come at a better time, because not only is half the campus finally going to realize who's been sending them weekly unsolicited emails about what's happening on campus, but also because FUSA is holding elections this month.

The competition is starting to heat up, too. While one student tried to persuade voters by offering an extra 20 minutes of recess after lunch, he's trailing behind his competition, who has promised to abolish homework on Fridays and get Halloween officially declared a university holiday.

"I'm not sure who I'll vote for yet. They both have such great plans for the school," said a student we found on the Prep School's secret hidden playground. "Honestly, I think the difference maker will be whoever can get chocolate milk in the cafeteria, but I just hope all the candidates have fun."

Make sure you cast your votes this upcoming week, Stags, and for my sake, vote for whoever says that if they win, they'll abolish acronyms forever.

SPORTS

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



Feb. 9	Feb. 10	Feb. 11	Feb. 12	Feb. 13	Feb. 14	Feb. 15
Men's and women's swimming and diving 2022 MAAC Championship Day 1 Buffalo, N.Y. All Day	Men's and women's swimming and diving 2022 MAAC Championship Day 2 Buffalo, N.Y. All Day	Men's and women's swimming and diving 2022 MAAC Championship Day 3 Buffalo, N.Y. All Day	Men's lacrosse at Stony Brook University Stony Brook, N.Y. 12:00 p.m.	FAIRFIELD	Men's basketball vs. Canisius College Bridgeport, Conn. 7:00 p.m.	FAIRFIELD
Women's tennis at UConn Manchester, Conn. Magic Lincer Tennis Club 4:00 p.m.	Women's basketball at Iona College New Rochelle, N.Y. 7:00 p.m.		Men's and women's tennis at Lafayette College Easton, P.A. 1:00 p.m.			
Men's basketball vs. Quinnipiac University Bridgeport, Conn. 7:00 p.m.			Men's basketball vs. Niagara University Bridgeport, Conn. 1:00 p.m.			
			Women's lacrosse at The College of the Holy Cross Worcester, M.A. 1:00 p.m.			
			Women's Basketball vs. Siena College Bridgeport, Conn. 3:30 p.m.			

Fairfield's Rugby Teams Rise Up To New Heights



Photo Contributed by Kate Welzel



Photo Contributed by Kate Welzel

Pictured to the left (L-R): women's rugby head coach Jane Kim, Erin Bailey '23, Cait Wood '22, Director of Rugby Austin Ryan

Pictured to the right (L-R): Chris Schiavello '22, Stephen Ryan '23, Connor Rinklin '23, Rob Betsais '25, Director of Rugby Austin Ryan

By Tommy Coppola
 Sports Editor

Both the men's and women's rugby teams have been creating waves on Fairfield University's campus; many athletes are being recognized for their great attitudes on and off the field as well as their on-field abilities.

In recent news, Austin Ryan took over as the new Director of Rugby at Fairfield University. Ryan will now be spearheading operations for all things rugby at Fairfield University.

More specifically, in the men's program, the Liberty Rugby Conference announced that four ruggers from Fairfield's team would be recognized as All-Conference players. Juniors Connor

Rinklin and Stephen Ryan took spots on the first team, Rob Betsais '25 placed onto the second team, and Chris Schiavello '22 was an honorable mention.

The women's team dished out team-specific awards at their end of year banquet, which saw Erin Bailey '23 earn the Lt. Hans Grauert Service Award for her "unselfish service to the team on and off the field", according to Graduate Assistant of the Office of Competitive Sports Kate Welzel. Senior Cait Wood, on the other hand, earned herself the title of the team's most valuable player, winning the Pegeen Quinn '95 MVP Award. The namesake of this award honors the founder of the team.

The rugby team will begin to play in their "sevens" league running from March to May, which is just normal rugby played with fewer players on the pitch.

In this week's issue...

- Hot Take: The NHL Requires A Division Realignment (Page 14)
- Yale Blanks Fairfield Men's Tennis In Season Opener (Page 15)
- Men's Basketball Hindered By Hawks, Saints (Page 15)
- Women's Basketball Collects Three Wins In Home Conquest (Page 16)

Hot Take: The NHL Requires A Division Realignment

By Tommy Coppola
Sports Editor

If you took a glance at the National Hockey League divisional standings this season, you'd know that there is a massive power balance between the Metropolitan Division and every other one.

This is not necessarily a huge problem, but it makes me cringe a little bit every time I see its effects. As of this writing, the big bad Metro (as it is shortened to) holds three of the top six spots in the league overall.

I should preface that I am a New York Rangers fan, and they are one of the most well-known teams in this division; if anything, I think the Rangers, who play out of New York City, are the face of the idea of the Metropolitan Division, which is to encapsulate the biggest northeastern cities around the NYC area. Let's keep that in mind.

However, in the Eastern Conference, there is also the Atlantic Division, which gives me more of an impression on coastal cities and southern teams. Currently, I believe that some teams are out of place in their current divisions.

For one, why aren't the Boston Bruins a Met-

ropolitan Division team? They are located in a huge city in the Northeastern part of the United States and have a huge hockey

Hurricanes and the Columbus Blue Jackets are both in the Metropolitan Division. This doesn't really make much sense to me, if I'm being completely honest; Carolina could be dropped

in the Western conference. It might seem like kind of a small and nit-picky argument until it's your team that is being negatively affected by the

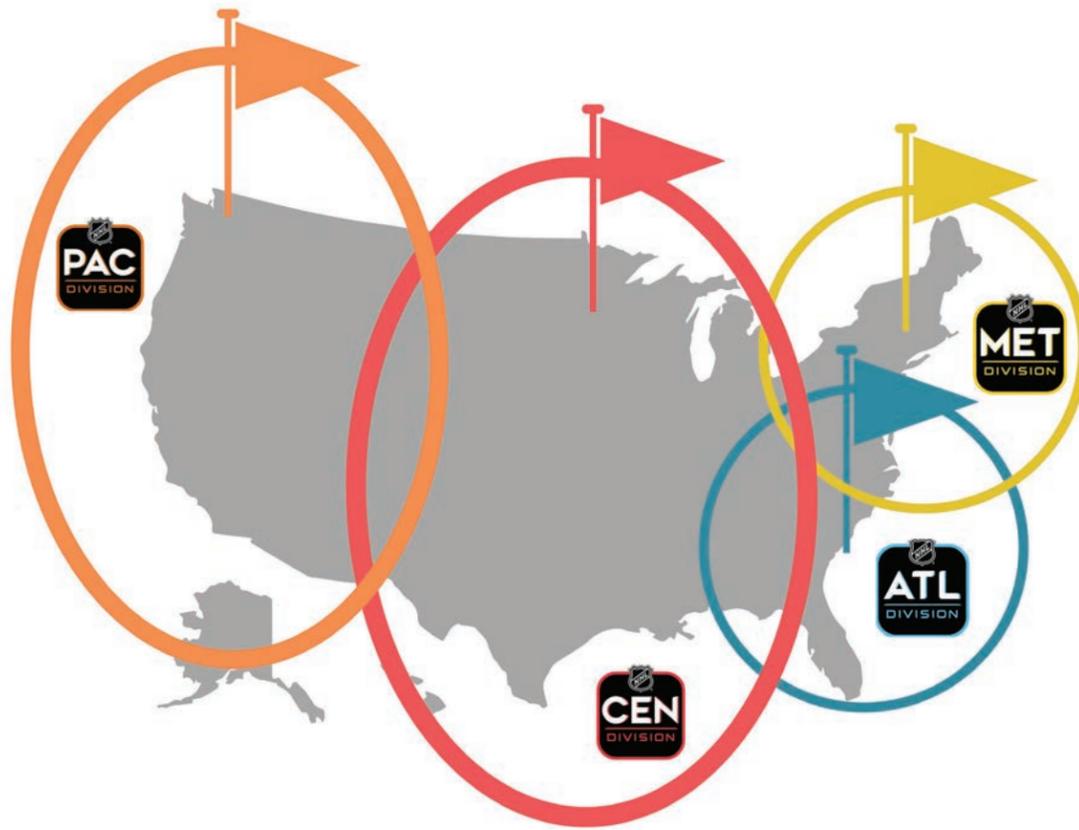
the third, fifth and sixth spots in the league overall. They're now in a horse race to determine who will take the top spot in their division, with the Washington Capitals not too far

three. I feel as though this might cheat some actual real contenders in the East out of a spot that they worked hard to get, because the divisions are, well, a geographic mess.

I wouldn't have as much of a problem with this if that weren't the case. It's just tough luck if my team isn't doing well, and I won't complain about that; my problem comes in when they are doing well and still have to fight hard for a playoff spot, when realistically they should be in a comfortable place statistically.

The Hurricanes, in my opinion, should not be located in this division, since they aren't really part of the "metropolitan" area anyways. This would offer teams like the Rangers and Penguins a better opportunity to be appropriately seeded when playoffs come around.

I'm not really that mad about this, I just think a review of the divisions could be helpful and fairer to teams around the league who genuinely have a fighting chance at a run for the Stanley Cup. It is not an issue now, only halfway through the season, but I have a feeling it may become more of an issue when playoff seeding starts to take shape



The National Hockey League is comprised of four regional divisions: Metropolitan, Atlantic, Central and Pacific.

market. So why are they in the Atlantic?

Another misplacement I can point out is the fact that both the Carolina

into the Atlantic Division and fit right in with its Floridian companions, and Columbus could even pass as a Central Division team

insane weight carried by the Metropolitan. Overall, the Hurricanes, Rangers and Penguins (all in the Metro Division) hold

behind. Come playoff time, a lot of Eastern Conference teams will be crushed under the might of the big

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 ...

Bengals or Rams—who do you have winning?

How will you be spending Valentine's Day?

Do you agree with the "Levee Pizza" hot take in the opinion section?

Which Olympic sport will you be watching the most?



Tommy Coppola
Sports Editor

Bengals of course. Who dey?

Taking a finance exam.

I said what I said.

Hockey for sure, but I always get super into snowboarding and skiing.



Molly Lamendola
Editor-in-Chief

Pumped for the halftime show.

Drag show!

I don't agree with Thomas's self promotion of his own article here.

Same sex ice dancing and dressage.



Julia Lanzillotta
Executive Editor

Bengals because they've never won a superbowl and I'm a sucker for an underdog story.

At a turbo from 6:30-9:00 is not so romantic.

I don't necessarily feel the same, but I appreciate the passion.

Hockeyyyyyy for sure.



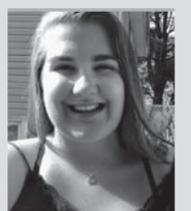
Tobenna Ugwu
Managing Editor

Bengals! Simply because I've had a Bengals sweatshirt since freshman year so it'll be a good time as any to use it.

I do not subscribe to capitalist holidays!

"The Levee Pizza is good" - said nobody ever.

Nigeria is competing in the Cross Country Skiing race.



Sheila McCombs
Managing Editor

Rams!! (See article from last week for details)

Celebrating Galentine's with all of my soulmates!

I couldn't agree less, but Tommy, I respect your bravery.

Figure skating, easily, and maybe snowboarding to watch Shaun White in his last Olympics!

Yale Blanks Fairfield Men's Tennis In Season Opener

By Emily Miller
Contributing Writer

The Fairfield University men's tennis team opened their spring season with a 0-7 loss to the Yale University Bulldogs in New Haven, Conn. on Sunday, Jan. 30. The Stags fought hard against the Bulldogs and were led by the opening day starting tandem of Kean Shah '24 and Jonathan Olive-Blanco '23. They went head to head against Yale's top pair, Cody Lin and Michael Sun, before falling 7-5. The same score was achieved at number three doubles with Stags Sam Hodges '25 and Griffin Schlesinger '23. The men stayed competitive and kept positive attitudes throughout gameplay.

Jeff Bricker is in his eighth season as head coach of the Fairfield men's and women's tennis teams. A native of Branford, Conn., Bricker was voted the 2019 MAAC Women's Tennis Coach of the Year after taking Fairfield to the Metro

Atlantic Athletic Conference Championship and a National Collegiate Athletic Association postseason appearance.

Although Coach Bricker and his team fell short over the weekend, he took pride in his team's spirit and toughness throughout gameplay. "I thought our energy was through the roof on Sunday. I thought from the first ball to the last ball all nine guys were in it. They were in it for each other, they were loud and that makes a difference whether you're on the court or not."

Coach Bricker added, "You've got guys cheering, yelling for you at every point, you're gonna push harder. That was about as good as I've seen it in my time here with the men. They were pretty dialed in as a team."

Tougher matches are to come, and Bricker hopes to increase the team's

overall physical fitness. "Things that we're looking to improve on, you know, honestly we need to get our fitness level a little higher,

pretty normal for this time of year, as we come back from break," he said. That is something that we're working on in the weight room

and on the courts and on the treadmill. We'll be ready as we go forward but for right now that's certainly something that needs to improve."

Coach Bricker puts emphasis on preparation through experience. "We need to get matches. The more matches we play, the more confidence we get with our games so over the coming weeks we have lined up we should start to see all of those things start to improve," he explained.

Fairfield University's men's tennis team is locked in and ready to take the title that they narrowly escaped last year. The Stags lost 4-2 against the No. 1 seed Monmouth University last April.

Bricker explained, "The MAAC Championship is always the number one goal, we came about as close as you can come last year against Monmouth in the finals without winning. We obviously want to improve upon that."

"Beyond that, we have a really difficult, good schedule this year so getting all of that experience against top teams is going to be important."

Bricker is thrilled at the chance to face some tough opponents and sees every match as a chance for growth. "We'll go down and play UNC Wilmington in Carolina, they were top 40 or 50 last year [...] they're a very good team, so it's good to see that type of level and continue to improve and stay positive together as a team," Bricker commented.

Coach Bricker summed up the year in a few words, saying "I think the sky's the limit."

The men's tennis team will head to West Point, New York, for a double-header at Army West Point on Sunday, Feb. 6. The Stags will face the Bryant University Bulldogs at 10:00 a.m. followed by Army West Point at 4:00 p.m. Both matches will be streamed on ESPN+.



Photo Contributed by the Sports Information Desk

Senior Kaya Gore has been a key figure on the men's tennis team.

Men's Basketball Hindered By Hawks & Saints

By Tommy Coppola
Sports Editor

On Friday, Feb. 4, the Fairfield University men's basketball team fell by only three points to the Monmouth University Hawks, who were able to secure a buzzer-beater with .6 seconds left to complete the game in regulation.

According to the game's official recap page from Fairfield-

Stags.com, the Stags were shaky when attempting to hold onto a lead against their Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference competitor. At the end of the first half, they trailed 21-26, even though they were able to outscore the Hawks 35-33 in the second frame. Unfortunately, their impressive second half was not enough to complete the win.

With their win, Monmouth University currently stands in

fourth place in the MAAC men's basketball standings, whereas Fairfield fell to the eighth slot.

On a much more positive note, many of Fairfield's players proved themselves on the court under the Friday night lights. First-year TJ Long, Graduate Student Jesus Cruz and Supreme Cook '24 took up most of the point-scoring responsibilities, with 18, 12 and 11 points respectively, according to the game's box score.

According to the same recap, Long's night continued in an impressive fashion; he was able to score four three-point shots on seven total attempts and had one block, one assist and seven rebounds. Long proved himself to be one of the best all-around players on the court for the night.

Cruz and Cook both had themselves quite the game as well. Each player posted three rebounds on the night. Cruz additionally tallied two assists.

An important statistic to look at from this game is the total number of points produced by players who came off the bench. The Stags were able to come up with 32 points from players who came off the bench, whereas the Hawks were only able to secure three of their own. This is a very good sign for Fairfield since it proves the worth of the roster's depth.

More recently, on Feb. 6, the Stags took on the visiting Siena College Saints at Webster Bank Arena. The Stags unfortunately came up short by a score of 62-56.

Besides a nine-point per-

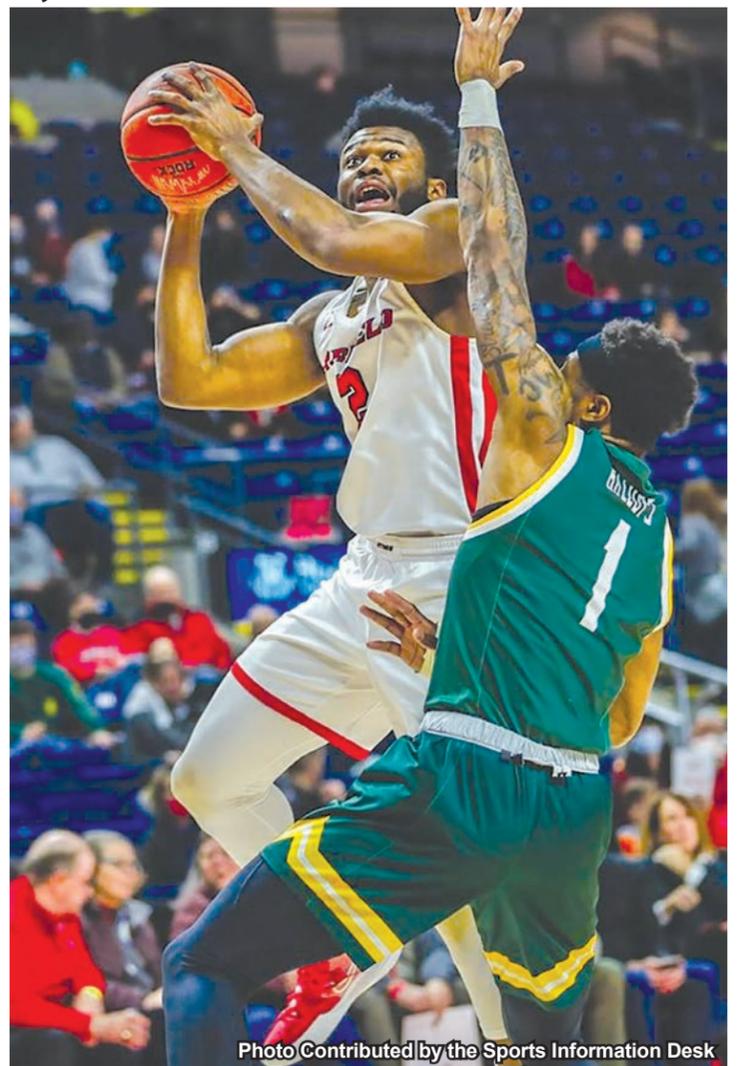


Photo Contributed by the Sports Information Desk

Graduate Student Taj Benning makes a layup attempt against Siena College. performance by Cook, some other players had their turn to shine for the Stags. Graduate Student Taj Benning posted a team-high ten points on Sunday afternoon; other impressive performances included an eight-point afternoon for Chris Maidoh '23 and a seven-point showing for Jake Wojcik '22.

In their last eight contests versus each other, the Stags have not been able to stifle the Saints,

who have won all of their contests since Feb. 4, 2019. Fairfield will look to next season to finally snap the streak.

After a three-day break, the Stags will face off at home yet again, this time versus the Quinnipiac University Bobcats on Feb. 9, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. The game can be streamed live on ESPN+.



Photo Contributed by the Sports Information Desk

Sophomore Supreme Cook lays down a dunk over the Siena College defense.

Women's Basketball Collects Three Wins in Home Conquest

By Zachary Stevens
Contributing Writer

The Fairfield University women's basketball team hosted two home games this past week against Saint Peter's University and Niagara University, where they secured close wins in both contests.

The games took place on Feb. 1 and 3 respectively, leaving little time to rest for Coach Joe Frager and his team. Although neither of the teams that the Stags faced were at the top of the conference, each game going forward is critical leading into March Madness.

"The second half of the schedules are always tougher than the first because everyone's got more film on each other," said Frager. "The thing that I'm really proud of is the fact that we really had to grind out these last two wins. We just need to keep reminding ourselves of the way the league is set up; anybody can beat anybody. You better be ready for everyone's game, so that's what we're trying to do."

Both games were close and tight until the end as Frager mentioned above, winning 63-56 to Saint Peter's and 75-72 to Niagara. Each matchup had numerous lead changes and runs, yet the Stags never looked rattled or panicked.

This was especially true in the fourth quarter of each game, where the Stags were facing defeat in their faces and prevailed to collect important victories.

Against Saint Peter's, the Stags were losing a close battle when Lou Lopez-Senechal '22 would take over the game for two straight minutes in the fourth quarter, as she netted nine straight points for the Stags to take the lead.

Fairfield took their largest lead of the game as another Lopez-Senechal jumper made the score 55-45 with 6:47 left in the game.

Saint Peter's had one last gasp as they cut the lead to just three with 23 seconds remaining, but graduate student Sam Lewis and Rachel Hakes '22 calmly hit both of

their free throws to clinch the seven-point win.

Hakes is a player who also deserves recognition this week, as she played tremendously in both games. Not only did she score in double figures for each contest but she filled in about every stat on the score sheet, showing her skill to Coach Frager and her team.

"Rachel is the type of player that does whatever is required for us to win. If in a game, she senses that we need a little more scoring, she's going to get more aggressive," said Frager. "She's got a really deep gas tank so she can play big minutes. And she's not afraid of contact and she just loves to win. I think that that helps to elevate everybody else's game as well."

Hakes, who might not be on the headlines every week like Lopez-Senechal or Andrea Hernangomez '22, is a key part of this Fairfield team and a true leader. She only has one goal on her mind for the rest of the season and she is extremely determined.

"My only focus is winning the MAAC regular season championship and then the MAAC tournament championship," said Hakes "We have a special group of girls, an incredibly senior-led team who has been playing together for four years. We are all focused on the collective goals and any individual accolades that follow will just be the cherry on top."

This type of leadership is invaluable for Coach Frager and his system. Hakes is a big reason for the huge success of the Stags season with them standing top of the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference.

After the big win against Saint Peter's, Niagara challenged the Stags to

another nail biter that came down to the wire and was decided by a single possession.

The MAAC's leading scorer Lopez-Senechal left the game in the third quarter with an injury. The senior was extremely hot from the floor before the injury, as she had nine of her 15 points in the period, helping the Stags to gain a nine-point lead at 56-47.

Niagara would fire up a comeback starting in the fourth quarter, scoring eight straight points to cut the lead to single digits. Fairfield would go back to extend the lead to 70-65 in the last minute of the game, where then Niagara would miraculously score fifteen points in that final minute.

The Purple Eagles were able to fight their way to a two-point deficit with nine seconds remaining. Lewis and Janelle Brown '24 would combine to go six-for-six from the free throw in the final 18 seconds of the game to secure a narrow three point thrilling victory for the Stags.

Two days directly after these back to back games, Fairfield had to host yet another team at home, the bottom of the table Canisius Golden Griffins.

While the Griffins were 1-10 in conference play, they are known for playing teams tough and

Coach Frager knew that coming into the ball game.

The Stags came out flat and tired, falling quickly to Canisius and losing the opening quarter, 16-9. Fairfield did fight back in the second, closing the lead within two by halftime, yet was still struggling shooting and getting consistent stops.

Fairfield started a 9-0 run to begin the third quarter, swinging the momentum back in favor of the Stags. Fairfield would continue to build on this lead in the beginning of the fourth quarter, creating the biggest gap of the quarter at eight points.

Canisius would simply not let up, tying the game around the two minute mark. Erika Joseph of Canisius would hit a crucial layup to put the score at 52-51 with just 44 seconds left.

With plenty of time to get a two-for-one for the Stags, Fairfield will have two opportunities to take the lead, failing to convert on two shots. Fortunately for the Stags, redshirt senior Callie Kavanaugh was able to haul in an offensive rebound where she would get fouled to send her to the line.

The graduate student was able to tie the game by hitting one of her free throws and sending the contest to overtime.

Canisius netted the first basket of the overtime period, but after that the Stags would hold the Griffins without a point the rest of the way to secure a huge 63-54 win.

These three wins brought Fairfield's win streak up to five, where they now have a 15-6 overall and 12-1 record in the MAAC.

Leading the conference comfortably, the Stags are looking to solidify their regular season championship within the next few weeks.

Check out their next game on ESPN against the Iona Gaels, on Thursday, Feb. 10 where Fairfield will look to continue their win streak. Be sure to show your support!



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Graduate Student Sydney Lowery (pictured above) goes head-to-head against an Indiana University defender, where the Stags ended up falling by a final score of 58-91 in December.