

# THE MIRROR

Independent student newspaper

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# BLACK LIVES MATTER

Listed above are the names of every faculty member and student who has signed a letter to the editor, directly told the Mirror "Black Lives Matter" or expressed a stance in support of "Black Lives Matter" to the Fairfield University student body. After the removal of a BLM flag outside the Office of Counseling & Psychological Services and the "A Community in Action" event, students and faculty members have come out against the University and specifically the administration's stance on institutional neutrality.

Illustrated by Madison Gallo

## Nemec Sends Response Following Student Protests

By Madeline West  
Editor-in-Chief  
By Madison Gallo  
Executive Editor

On March 4, University President Mark Nemec Ph.D. sent an email out to the University community after he thought "about and [reflected] upon the campus presentation of our Diversity and Inclusive Excellence Narrative." This event took place on March 1 and was reported in the Mirror, which featured the responses of students and faculty present at the event. The event, though it was planned in the Fall 2021 semester, took place just days after the Mirror broke the news that University administration directed the removal of a Black Lives Matter flag from the front window of the office of the Counseling & Psychological Services. In his message, Nemec states "the work of making a more just, inclusive and compassionate community is difficult." He continues by mentioning that this work "compels each of us as individuals to reflect on our own experience of being included or excluded, heard or ignored, and how we impact the experiences of others." Nemec then goes on to state "I am deeply sorry people are upset and I regret that my remarks while intended to advance the conversation have caused pain." He continues that "...this moment resurfaced deep wounds in our community that call for healing. However, it is also

a moment of reflection, and a call for all of us to continue our important work." In his response, President Nemec referenced both the Ignatian tradition and Pope Francis stating, "we can engage in this work, including its painful conversations, because we are members of the Ignatian family." He further states that as inheritors of the Ignatian tradition, "we believe that each one of us has a unique, God-given personhood that is striving for realization and fulfillment." Moreover, Nemec referenced "...as Pope Francis says, racism is a sin, and will not be tolerated at Fairfield." Nemec also mentioned a new proposal that will be made by the co-chairs of the Presidential Working Group on Inclusive Excellence alongside representatives on campus, "That clearly specifies how we will move to the next phase of the initiatives outlined in the Diversity and Inclusive Excellence Narrative." Additionally, on March 7, students received an email from the Office of the Dean of Students signed by Dean of Students William Johnson, Ph.D. in which the subject line read "Reflection on the Past Two Weeks." Dean Johnson expressed that he had various conversations with faculty and acquaintances. He acknowledged that none of the conversations were easy. However "as frustrating as the circumstances may have been [...] I found myself being inspired by the commitment of so many people on our campus

— students and employees, to make Fairfield a more welcoming community for all." Johnson also directs students to read "Academic Policies and General Regulations" of the Academic Catalog, which notes "while free expression exists, it is not without limitations." Johnson continues to state that "respect is a principal element of free expression. Free expression cannot threaten the safety or security of others, and must comply with all University policies including, but not limited to, those prohibiting harassment, hate crimes, and discrimination." He also acknowledged the members of the student body who have acted to "let their voices be heard." He mentioned during his own personal reflection, "as the dean of students I must do a better job of creating spaces for this to occur." Johnson then closed his email stating, "Black Lives Matter." Both students and faculty have expressed their reactions to the two emails sent, reflecting upon the different administrators' responses. Junior Aliyah Seenauth, the Fairfield University Student Association vice president-elect and current assistant director of FUSA's Diversity and Inclusion Board stated that she at first glance saw Nemec's email and hoped to see the statement Black Lives Matter or "simply the word 'Black' in general."

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Fairfield University Student Association Vice President-elect Aliyah Seenauth '24 and President-elect Jordan Gale '23 walk through campus. They were announced winners of the FUSA election on March 1.

## Gale and Seenauth Secure Victory in FUSA's 75th Election

By Isabella McAlhaney  
Contributing Writer

The newly elected Fairfield University Student Association President Jordan Gale '23 and Vice President Aliyah Seenauth '24 first crossed paths in the Office of Student Engagement last year. Seenauth was a first-year student interviewing for a New Student Leader position and Gale was her interviewer, a developmental intern for OSE at the time. Right away Gale knew Seenauth was something special. Talking to a colleague after his interview with Seenauth, Gale remarked, "Not only is she going to be hired without a doubt, she's going to be one of the best NSLs we have." As the two had the chance to connect through NSL activities such as Fall Welcome and Orientation, they quickly grew to become good friends

rather than just a mentor and mentee. Gale began to explore the idea of running for FUSA President towards the end of the last fall semester. In order to run, however, he needed to find a running mate. Identically, Seenauth had been interested in getting involved but faced the same issue with regards to who she would run with. Reflecting back on how well the two worked together in their time as NSLs, and accounting for Seenauth's previous experience in high school student government as well as the level of involvement she demonstrated on campus, Gale knew "they'd be a great team" and reached out to her. After receiving the offer, Seenauth considered the time they had previously spent together, noting that

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# Fairfield University

## HIT THE BOOKS & THE BEACH

Choose from over 100 online and in-person graduate and undergraduate **summer** courses

**Fairfield.edu/Summer**



### "Stags Go Move" Challenge March 2022

Sponsored by Leslie C. Quick Center, Jr. Recreation Complex



- Students can register as individuals or teams on the "Stags Go Move" website.
- Students who log exercise minutes are automatically entered into a weekly raffle, with the chance to win prizes.
- Activities that can be logged are broken down into four categories: cardio, strength/resistance, yoga/pilates and sports/fitness.
- Further descriptions of each can be found on their website.
- Students can track activity as many times as applicable throughout the day and there is no cap on time logged.

Illustrated by Peyton Perry

### STAGS Hospitality

## Spring Break

### Campus Dining Hours of Operation

**Tully Dining Commons**  
Closed Friday, 3/11 @ 2pm  
Reopens Sunday, 3/20 @ 4pm

**Stag Snack Bar**  
Closed Friday, 3/11 @ 7pm  
Reopens Sunday, 3/20 @ 4pm

**The Levee**  
Closed Friday, 3/11 - Sunday, 3/13  
Open Monday, 3/14 - Friday, 3/18 @ 11am - 3pm  
Open Saturday, 3/19 @ 11am - 4pm  
Open Sunday, 3/20 @ 4pm - 11pm

**Dunkin' BCC**  
Open Friday 3/11 @ 7:30am - 3pm  
Closed Saturday, 3/12 - Sunday, 3/20

**Dunkin' DSB & Library**  
Closed Friday, 3/11 - Sunday, 3/20

**Food Trucks**  
No Food Trucks Friday, 3/11 - Sunday, 3/20

All locations resume regular hours  
Monday, March 21<sup>st</sup>



Compiled by Max Limric  
Information contributed by the  
Department of Public Safety.

- 3/3  
6:56 p.m.  
Residents of Loyola Hall reported AirPods stolen from their room. This is currently under investigation.
- 3/5  
2:16 a.m.  
Gonzaga Hall's east StagCard reader door glass was smashed. This is currently under investigation.
- 3/5  
3:17 a.m.  
A student reported being assaulted in Regis Hall. This is currently under investigation.
- 3/5  
2:06 p.m.  
A student reported their vehicle parked in Townhouse 9 Block had a smashed windshield resulting from someone throwing a bottle.
- 3/6  
12:49 a.m.  
Gonzaga Hall's north entrance door had a smashed window. This is currently under investigation.
- 3/6  
2:34 am  
Possession of drug paraphernalia in Regis Hall. Students were referred to student conduct.
- 3/7  
1:26 p.m.  
There was a minor grease fire at Barnyard Manor Townhouses. DPS was alerted and the fire was extinguished.
- 3/7  
9:42 p.m.  
There was a minor grease fire at Dolan Hall. The oven sparked while baking muffins. DPS was alerted and the fire was extinguished.



## FUSA's President and Vice President-Elect Express their Excitement for the Future

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previously spent together, noting that all their encounters incited deep and meaningful conversations. She recognized their similar values, morals and ways of processing, alongside their differences that encourage a healthy balance. Her reflection opened her eyes and there was no need to think about the offer any longer. She would do it.

"I wouldn't want to [run] with anyone else," said Seenauth.

When Gale and Seenauth found out they had won on March 1, they both were overjoyed, sharing a sense of gratitude for all the new connections made while campaigning around residence halls, The Stag, the Daniel and Grace Tully Dining Commons, and other locations around campus.

"We were grateful for those connections whether we won or lost," said Gale.

The duo was further grateful for the support and celebration shared with their friends from the NSL team and other organizations Seenauth is involved in.

"I think both of us will remember that for the rest of our lives," said Gale.

Seenauth nodded in agreement adding how emotional of a night it was for her.

"It was such an overwhelming amount of emotions, but I think that was the whole journey," she said.

There were a lot of different things to process from such a momentous win. She expands upon her emotional journey sharing, "I told myself, 'Wow, I'm very proud of us. There is so much that's gonna change.'"

She further makes the side note, "It really does change your life." For Seenauth, the position is not only life-changing but historically significant as well, according to the duo.

Gale clarified, "It really set in for me, being a good friend of Aliyah's before we even started campaigning, through the NSL program, working with her, knowing that she made history being the first woman of color."

Seenauth then shared how long it took for the achievement to actually sink in.

"Everyone keeps saying it to me and I'm like, oh it's whatever but I saw someone yesterday that said it again and I was like this is now very real for me," she said.

She was touched by the support she received from the student body ensuing the win, also noting, "Going to classes and going about my day after what happened Tuesday night, everyone is just so kind about it."

Seenauth is also the current assistant director of Diversity and Inclusion for FUSA. She addressed the current issues campus is facing in regards to diversity and inclusion, pointing out that prior to looking into things she "didn't realize the amount of initiative based work that still needed to be done."

She capitalized a bulk of what students expect to see from FUSA's programs and events. These fun things, however, cannot happen unless the foundation is reassessed and rehabilitated to a state that ensures everyone feels comfortable in participating.

She expanded on the matter stating, "Being in the position we're in now and the position I have, I've learned a lot."

She continued, "I'm still learning a lot about the University in general and I think that in the learning – that's when we bring the change. Figuring out what is causing the problem and then finding the solution for that."

"We are going to have a bit more of a relationship with the administration now and that helps in trying to fix this. It's not going to be overnight. It's not going to be solved completely

in our term, no. – But you get proactive," she said.

"Proactive changes and making the progression is the main part of it all. It's something I'm very passionate about; I love my D&I board and I can't wait to see it expand and flourish [...] that's why it feels like an honor for me to be in the position I am and knowing that I can do my best to implement that kind of change," said Seenauth.

Gale added that they are striving to continue taking steps in the right direction. Gale mentioned that he and Seenauth have spent a good portion of time in Student Diversity and Multicultural Affairs and the Commuter Lounge, in order to better talk with the underrepresented community.

A main question the two feel should be posed more often is, "How can we help you as members of the student body?"

As they have taken the initiative to explore that question, they feel it starts with making sure all students feel welcome in clubs and activities.

Aside from their goal to improve upon diversity and inclusion, the pair have quite a few other goals to share with the student body. One of the first being to create a consistent advising experience for all students.

It is something the two identified while talking amongst friends and with their connections across campus.

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"I'm still learning a lot about the University in general and I think that in the learning – that's when we bring the change. Figuring out what is causing the problem and then finding the solution for that."

- Aliyah Seenauth '24  
FUSA Vice President-Elect

## ShamJam Causes Strife Between Students and Beach Residents



Photo Contributed by  
Meredith Montella

Fairfield students gathered on Lantern Point to celebrate Sham Jam. There was significant security presence at the event.

By Madison Gallo  
Executive Editor  
"Sham Jam" – a longstanding tradition of Fairfield University students – is an annual St. Patrick's day themed party. This year, students attended and celebrated the event throughout the entire day on Saturday, March 5, gathering at the townhouses on-campus and the beach off-campus.

While this event is favorable and highly anticipated among students, non-student beach residents found the party to be disruptive. This reaction is not uncommon, considering the dynamic between students who live off-campus at the beach and the full-time non-student beach residents has been historically tense.

A November 2021 article by the Mirror states that "the Mirror's website is filled with articles like 'Beach Resident Relations Not 'On Point,' 'Tensions with Beach Residents Alter Uber Policy' and 'Town-gown relations: No day at the beach' that highlight the nearly decades of tension between the two groups."

To help quell the tensions and make the beach more suitable for its full-time

residents, the Fairfield Beach Residents Association was established in the 1950s. Today, the FBRA acts as an advocacy group that tries to "band together against beach erosion, beach beautification and just working to maintain the areas as much as they can," according to the November 2021 Mirror article.

Carolyn Kamlet, the president of FBRA, spoke with the Mirror about Sham Jam and stated that "there was a great difference between this particular event and the two previous very large events."

The first event that she described is the "white out" party, which happens traditionally on the night before the first day of fall semester classes. The white out usually falls over Labor Day Weekend and students who attend dress up in all-white outfits, gathering at the Point and beach area. The second event that Kamlet described is "SantaCon," which occurs in December during the weekend before finals. This is a heavily anticipated event by students and those who go dress in Christmas sweaters and other festive attire.

Kamlet attributes the "great difference" between Sham Jam and the other two big events to there being multiple rumors that were heard by beach residents. Such rumpus, she says, allowed beach residents to prepare for the party to happen. These preparations were not made for the white out party at the start of the fall semester, nor SantaCon at the end of last semester. Kamlet further stated that things were "more calm" this time around.

Typically, the Lantern Point Association, which overlooks the residents and houses located within Lantern Point on Fairfield Beach Road is required to hire security starting in April to manage beach gatherings, according to Kamlet. Due to the warning the LPA received about Sham Jam, however, they were able to hire both security for the event and a cleanup crew following the event.

In addition to this, there were more officers on duty, Kamlet said, as well as around 50 trash cans located on the Point for people to use to dispose of their trash.

"We were told Fairfield University would be using their vehicles to go up and down Fairfield Beach Road and Reef Road, as well as the Fairfield Police Department," Kamlet said. She added that the University communicated, they would "message their students a lot" about what is expected of them when coming to the beach area.

When describing the relations between student attendees of Sham Jam and the hired security, Kamlet said, "I know from inside Lantern Point the students were tough, but the security was also tough." President of the Lantern Point Association, Brian Russell, was on-site at the Point for the duration of the event. He told the Mirror that there were two distinct groups of attendees.

"There was a group of students who were respectful, having fun, but behaving appropriately," Russell said. "Then there was a larger than I would have hoped group of students that were highly disrespectful."

He added that, "the majority of students who were partying on the beach and in the vicinity of the Forgotten Path were disruptive to the community." Both Kamlet and Russell heard complaints from residents after the event.

Russell said the majority of the complaints he heard focused on the litter that was on the beach area nearby Lantern Point, along with a few noise complaints.

Though Kamlet heard little complaints of any activity at the Point, which she attributes to the security that was stationed there, she heard many complaints from full-time residents that live adjacent to the Point.

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### THE MIRROR

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# Students and Faculty Respond to Administration's Emails Regarding "A Community in Action" Event



Kyler Erezuma/The Mirror

President Mark R. Nemeck Ph.D. spoke at the Diversity and Inclusion Narrative Community Event on March 4. Students gathered at the event to protest the administration's decision to remove the Black Lives Matter flag from C&PS.

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When she did not see either written, however, she "knocked [herself] over for having hope in him."

Seenauth says that while Nemeck gave an apology in his email, "He did the minimum he could have possibly done," continuing that "It's as if he's afraid to say the word 'Black.'"

"I feel he's had many opportunities at this point to prove himself as someone who cares for us students of color, but at this point all of the wrong things are said," she added, continuing on to say that the apology "felt lazy."

Seenauth continued that Johnson is

“The email sent out by Mark Nemeck is nowhere near an ‘apology’ and was another attempt to silence student voices so that he could keep the culture of racism and hate on campus.”

- Eden Marchese, FUSA Director of Diversity and Inclusion

someone who has "been there for me and has been a vital part in my time at Fairfield thus far."

And that, "as a student of color, the culture shock of starting here made it hard to find people I can trust. Luckily, Dean Johnson became a person I can look up to."

She said his email filled her with joy and "it felt as if it was alongside us."

Seenauth says she doesn't want this conversation to end or be forgotten when students return from spring break, and states that "keeping the dialogue going and continuing to foster a safe environment here is necessary."

Junior Eden Marchese, FUSA director of diversity and inclusion, echoed Seenauth, stating that, "The email sent out by Mark Nemeck is nowhere near an ‘apology’ and was another attempt to silence student voices so that he could keep the culture of racism and hate on campus."

They continued that instead of Nemeck taking the time to reflect on his statements at the "Community in Action" event, "he chose to half-heartedly pretend to apologize."

"If Mark Nemeck truly cared about the harm he was bringing to the students at this University, he would understand that he needs to stop talking and listen," Marchese added, continuing that, "The kind of email that Nemeck sent is by someone who is clearly upset they got caught in their racism and whose anger comes from not being able to sweep it under the rug like he thought he could. Nemeck has only proved he is incapable of being a person for others, he is only a person for himself and the money he can make off his time in power."

Marchese praised Johnson's email, stating, "Dean Johnson's email was incredible and spoke to everything the students have been pushing for."

"Many students that I spoke with were relieved that someone finally said 'Black Lives Matter' from the administration, and I do not think Dean Johnson gets enough credit for all the work he does on campus," they added, continuing, "He is a true leader and inspiration for students in this community and his recent email only continues to show why his role in this community is so vital."

Senior and 73rd FUSA President Vincent Gadioma '22 reflected upon the Diversity and

Inclusive Excellence Narrative event stating, "President Nemeck's words at the event were uncharacteristic of the Ignatian Spirituality and Radical Hospitality that are inherent to our community."

With regards to President Nemeck's email Gadioma states that, "Until he [Nemeck] can accept that his words have directly caused pain to members of the community and apologize for the content of his speech, Fairfield will have a hard time healing and formally giving the recognition that other members of the Diversity and Inclusive Excellence Working Group deserve."

Junior Ray Hinds added that, "The past two weeks have been very uncertain in terms of what response and action we were going to see from higher administration."

"Nemeck's email was futile and ignorant to say the least," Hinds stated, continuing that, "Once again, he failed to address the actual issue at hand, and the issues that black students are facing on a day-to-day basis, and instead marketed his 'narrative' to the entire campus."

Hinds continued that they were upset at Nemeck's use of the words "university community" throughout the email.

"This was upsetting to have to see because not only do black students feel they are not welcome on campus or do not belong, but it also erases the fact that our community is very broken and has lost its path," Hinds said. "He claimed we are part of an 'Ignatian family' but the choice of being 'neutral' says otherwise. It is an utter disappointment. I would say do better, but God knows he won't."

Hinds added that Johnson's email was surprising, but not perfect, "...because it simply wasn't."

But they added that, "[Johnson] said something that people have been waiting to hear from the administration: 'Black Lives Matter.'"

"This is something Nemeck, and many other administrators, have failed to do and many of us were waiting to hear it," Hinds continuing, adding that, "Still, there is more to be done, and Dean Johnson is only the beginning of shifting the administration to being more receptive to the black community on campus. And, now that you have done better, DO IT AGAIN!"

Senior Tushi Patel, senior resident assistant, and one of the main organizers of the protest at the "A Community in Action" event stated that, "Dean Johnson signing off with Black Lives Matter truly emphasized that he was with us."

She continued that, "To Dean Johnson's point, free expression should not discriminate nor harm another individual whether through harassment or hate crimes, these which have occurred in our university's history. A neutral stance equates to the allowance of free expression of racism, does it not? The Black Lives Movement is NOT a political movement or stance. It is a social justice movement, and as a Jesuit institution rooted in social justice, what does a neutral stance convey?"

Members of Fairfield's faculty also revealed feelings towards the two emails.

Dr. Carol Ann Davis, a professor in the English Department stated that she hopes "facilitated conversations" take place regarding the last two weeks events.

She continues, "I think our community is at its best when we are accountable to one another and remain responsive to one another, and I would encourage us to move toward working together in that way."

Additionally, Emily Orlando, Ph.D., professor of English stated that "Dean Will Johnson's 3/7/22 email is, of course, pitch perfect."

Orlando

continues by mentioning the important meaning behind faculty stating Black Lives Matter.

She states that "As an English professor, words are my life". Orlando then quotes from a letter drafted by humanities faculty across the College of Arts and Sciences: "To say that 'Black Lives Matter' is to acknowledge centuries of erasure and violence toward Black communities and experiences.... Saying 'Black Lives Matter' means that we see and acknowledge the past and the present moment."

Orlando also referenced a line from Lin-Manuel Miranda, "History has its eyes on us." She then stated, "I hope we can rise to the occasion and do and say the right thing."

Orlando closes her statement with, "Black Lives Matter."

Furthermore Professor David Crawford, sociology and anthropology professor and president of the Fairfield Chapter of the American Association of University Professors stated he found the president's letter "confusing."

Crawford goes on to mention that "five days ago he [President Nemeck] said we should welcome anti-anti-racists to our conversation and today 'racism will not be tolerated at Fairfield.'"

He then questions this stating, "Are we no longer supposed to be in amicable conversation with racists? This speaks to the president's promotion of principled neutrality, the idea that as an institution we should not 'take sides.'"

Further Crawford acknowledges that President Nemeck's words "caused a lot of pain on Monday," and the new email "was meant to be anodyne, but I doubt it did much."

He believes, however, there was a positive future change relayed in the email which "was heartening to see references in the new letter to building a diverse student body. I have never heard this president commit to that in any concrete form."

Crawford concludes by mentioning that "Fairfield's faculty are pretty good at getting heard" and that the faculty are set to hold an emergency general faculty meeting next Friday in response to the events of the last two weeks.

Rachelle J. Brunn-Bevel, Ph.D., associate professor in the sociology department, faculty chair for inclusive excellence and member of the Presidential Working Group states, "I am glad President Nemeck reached out to the Fairfield University community and acknowledged his remarks caused pain."

Brunn-Bevel continues by mentioning, "I have been meeting with the faculty to discuss both short-term and long-term goals related to diversity, equity and inclusion."

Brunn-Bevel mentions these goals include advancing the Diversity and Inclusive Excellence Narrative initiatives which President Nemeck referenced in his email.

Furthermore, several hours after Johnson sent out his email, the Fairfield University Student Association sent out an email in response to President Nemeck's email and last week's events. The email was signed by the 74th FUSA President Tyler Heffern '22, the 74th FUSA Vice President Cailyn Fiori, 75th FUSA President-elect Jordan Gale '23 and 75th FUSA Vice President-elect Aliyah Seenauth '24.

The email opened by addressing Nemeck's statement at the "A Community in Action" event earlier in the week and Nemeck's statement that the flag was removed due to "...the university's — until then

“Our university cannot stand idly by as racial injustice continues to infect every aspect of our world” they add, continuing that Fairfield’s Jesuit history makes it unique and, “to ignore these [Jesuit] principles and to hold neutrality over our values is to entirely misunderstand who we are and what Fairfield is.”

- Fairfield University Student Association

— relatively unknown policy of institutional neutrality.”

They continue that, "It is his opinion that the university 'is home and sponsor to the critics' but must refrain from having any critiques of their own. He believes that we should not just accept anti-racist perspectives, but 'anti-anti-racist' ones too. We do not accept this answer, nor this policy."

"Our university cannot stand idly by as racial injustice continues to infect every aspect of our world" they add, continuing that Fairfield's Jesuit history makes it unique and, "to ignore these [Jesuit] principles and to hold neutrality over our values is to entirely misunderstand who we are and what Fairfield is."

The email continues to discuss Nemeck's response and how his statement was meant to "advance the conversation." They instead argue that the removal of the BLM flag from C&PS is "an attempt to pass off censorship as free speech. Ordering the flag's removal does not promote free expression, it hinders it."

The email continues that they believe that the Diversity & Inclusive Excellence Narrative "does not represent the full history of our university and must be revised to incorporate the shortcomings of our community's diversity and inclusion efforts."

It is important to note that FUSA President Heffern was a member of the Presidential Working Group established to create the narrative, but Fiori, Gale and Seenauth were not.

"We unequivocally believe that Black Lives Matter and call on the university, and President Nemeck, to state the same," the letter continues, finishing, "Until these points are addressed, President Nemeck's words will continue to ring empty on the ears of students, faculty, staff, and alumni alike."

FUSA invites all students "who wish to discuss the removal of the BLM flag, or the university's position on institutional neutrality, or any matter they deem important to bring forth, to join us at a Town Hall on Wednesday, March 9th at 4:30 pm in the [Lower Level of the Barone Campus Center]."

The Mirror will continue to cover both the Town Hall as well as the emergency general faculty meeting as the meeting minutes become available and the story further develops.



Kyler Erezuma/The Mirror

During the "A Community in Action: Sharing Our Work In and Commitment to Diversity and Inclusive Excellence" event, student protesters dressed in black held up large "Black Lives Matter" flags while President Nemeck spoke.

# Opinion

## Letters to the Editor

# Faculty Continue to React to President Nemec's Remarks

Dear President

Nemec,

The Black Studies program wholly supports and applauds the Fairfield University's students' Silent Blackout Protest. We are humbled by the dignity and humility they demonstrated in the face of righteous discontent and heartfelt disappointment with the administration's response to the removal of the Black Lives Matter flag from Counseling and Psychological Services on February 28.

The silent protest is part of a long tradition of student protests, especially Black student protest, at Fairfield University. On November 12, 1969, Black students gave a list of demands to the administration, one of which included the increase of Black student enrollment to 240 by September 1970. On November 21st, the Black students occupied Xavier Hall. In Spring of 1992, Black students and allies mobilized after multiple cases of racism on campus, including a Black student finding the words "F U n-word" on his dormitory door in Dolan. Two years later, a multicultural group of students organized panel discussions and wrote letters to the editor of the Fairfield Mirror, regarding racist graffiti they found in Regis Hall. One student wrote, "students, make your feelings known, because silence and indifference are affirmations of racism and bigotry." Then as now, faculty and staff backed the students and this coalition helped to set the

stage for the creation of the Black Studies program in fall 1995.

On December 5, 2014, a group of students in Professor Kris Sealey's course organized a demonstration at the Stag Statue. Like the Silent Blackout Protest on the 28th, this demonstration responded to the developing Black Lives Matter movement. In fact, only weeks before, the grand jury decided not to indict Darren Wilson, the police officer that fatally shot Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri. Over the next year and a half, student activism with the support of faculty and staff led to the formation of Racial Justice is Social Justice. This advocacy group for social change assisted in the creation of the Black Lives Matter course, offered for the first time in Spring 2016.

Thus, the [Black Studies] program is deeply invested in and responsible for social and racial justice on this campus. The combined activism of students, faculty, and staff is responsible for the creation of our program and our only required course, Black Lives Matter 1101. Significantly, Fairfield University has been grappling with the idea of "Black Lives Matter" since 2014.

This history clearly demonstrates that it is not Fairfield University's tradition to define itself as "neutral." In 2022, on the last day of Black History Month, the administration departed from precedent.

The BLST program is dismayed by the administration's response to the removal of the Black Lives Matter flag.

We believe this was a missed opportunity to support a movement for social and racial justice. In 2020, thousands of people across the racial, ethnic, and religious spectrum in the United States and abroad mobilized in protest not only against the police murder of George Floyd but also similar occurrences across the Americas and Europe. The administration, in contrast, described the murder of Floyd and others as "unfortunate deaths." In the context of the removal of the Black Lives Matter flag, the administration could have revisited its muted description of the aforementioned, in view of the conviction of Derek Chauvin and others, and connected this new information to the BLM flag.

Instead, the administration has effectively blamed the low number of Black student enrollment on the pool of Black men applying to college. According to the administration, as the Mirror reports, Fairfield University's numbers are low because "students of color, specifically Black males, dropped by 15% in terms of those who are applying to college in 2021." While we do not question the statistics, we do question the use of them to explain Black enrollment at Fairfield University. Other colleges and universities across the country and nearby have managed to enroll a greater percentage of Black students than Fairfield University, despite the statistics the administration cites above:

According to College Factual's 2021 diversity report, at Fairfield University of 4,160 undergraduates there are 78

(1.87 %) categorized as "Black or African American." At Fordham University, a nearby Jesuit institution, that number is 3.8% and at Boston College, 4%; and its peer institutions, such as Providence College, 3.9% and Manhattanville College, 8.3%. In Connecticut, at Trinity College, 6.5% are Black students; Quinnipiac University, 3.5%; and nearby Sacred Heart University, 3.6%.

Along with providing suspicious reasons for low Black enrollment, the administration has transformed a social justice issue into a discussion of free speech and intellectual debate that might be held in a classroom, a conference, or a public forum. Students go to Counseling and Psychological Services to find support and to feel safe; the removal of the BLM flag sends the opposite message.

As reported in the Fairfield Mirror, the administration's lackluster response to confederate flags found across campus has not helped. As we all know, the confederate flag signals not only anti-Black attitudes but also anti-Semitic and anti-Catholic sentiments. The university's acceptance of what it calls an "anti-anti-racist" perspective is deeply troubling.

In that vein, we are disturbed by the administration's effort to frame this dialogue/response as singularly an exchange about a slogan. We know that these flags represent not only perspectives but sometimes actions. In our recent past, these actions came in the form of Dylan Roof killing 9 Black

members of the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church during bible study in Charleston, South Carolina in 2015; James Fields, Jr, a white nationalist, intentionally driving his car into a crowd that protested white nationalism, killing Heather Heyer in Charlottesville in 2017; and the violent storming of the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021. Considering the small number of Black students on campus, a number that reflects the university's lack of institutional commitment to make transformative change around equity and inclusion, we would expect the administration to be as concerned about their comfort and the safety that they might seek at C&PS.

We are deeply encouraged by the support for Black students from across the campus. Our letter echoes the students' silent protest, as well as the multiple letters from faculty and staff. We hope that the administration will not only listen to members of our community who are disappointed with the administration's silence regarding the safety of Black students on campus, but also learn from and follow this groundswell as we move in the direction of transformative social change and racial justice. The spirit of inclusive excellence and radical hospitality requires no less.

Respectfully,  
The Black Studies Steering Committee

Dear Fairfield Community,

We, the undersigned faculty in the departments of English, History, Modern Languages and Literatures, Philosophy, Religious Studies, and Visual and Performing Arts write regarding the recent removal of the Black Lives Matter flag from the office of Counseling and Psychological Services. We are deeply troubled by details described in the February 23, 2022, article "Black Lives Matter Flag Removed by Administration" in the Fairfield Mirror. We are equally disturbed by President Nemec's subsequent comments, particularly those made at the February 28 Diversity and Inclusive Excellence Narrative "unveiling." We stand with our students, staff, and colleagues across campus and censure these recent administrative actions and communications.

As scholars with a broad range of expertise, we acknowledge systemic institutions of racism and stand in solidarity with the sentiments and commitments inherent in the claim that Black Lives Matter. Forced removal of the Black Lives Matter flag has inflicted pain on our campus community, especially on our Black students, staff, and faculty. Perhaps even more damaging has been the failure of President Nemec to listen to this pain with humility and self-reflection.

We value the meaning of words. We mourn the fact that the phrase "Black Lives Matter" is seen as controversial. We mourn the fact that Fairfield's senior leadership is unwilling to see that

standing behind these words is a particularly urgent responsibility for Fairfield University, given the enduring whiteness of all facets of our institution. Asserting that a life "matters" should be the lowest bar. Our students, colleagues, and co-workers matter. To say that "Black Lives Matter" is to acknowledge centuries of erasure and violence toward Black communities and experiences, an acknowledgement that is especially important given our own institution's complicity in such erasure. Saying Black Lives Matter means that we see and acknowledge the past and the present moment. It is a first step towards more substantive and hard-won equality. If we cannot see or acknowledge our community members, if we cannot say that they matter specifically and individually, how can we call ourselves a community, and how can we teach and learn effectively?

We reject the claim that Fairfield University can reach objectivity through neutrality. "Neutrality" as a stance reinforces and supports existing systems of power. It actively supports and duplicates existing power structures and therefore existing, real oppressions verifiable by every field of study on this campus. Furthermore, "neutrality" only appears as an option available from positions already shaped by power and systemic privilege. Taking a "neutral" position on injustice will never be objective; Nor, of course, can any space claimed and marked by a specific religion be neutral.

Claims to universality only perpetuate biases and tacit hierarchies of being. Any deliberate program of inclusion and equal-

ity necessarily begins by recognizing that conscious action and reflexive analysis are required to produce that equality—i.e., that it cannot happen on its own. This is among the most basic tenets held by Dr. King. We are therefore particularly troubled to learn that the administration welcomes "anti-anti-racist" views on this campus. We find it impossible to deny that racism exceeds individual biases and is embedded in our institutions and systems—the basic point of "anti-racist" stances—and see it as crucial to admit this fact with regard to our institution, just as we admit it in our own disciplines and adopt anti-racist pedagogies. The simple truth motivating anti-racist education is the same truth motivating the statement Black Lives Matter: to practice inclusivity, we must actively reach out to and recognize the systemically excluded while also scrutinizing the dynamics of exclusion. From a rhetorical standpoint, the claim that we invite "anti-anti-racist" positions also means, especially to those who hope it to be the case, that we openly welcome racist views at Fairfield University.

The administration's position on the removal of a Black Lives Matter flag on campus stands in direct opposition to Jesuit values of social justice and equity. We hear time and again that we must be "the modern, Jesuit, Catholic university." Yet we cannot be "modern" when we refuse to decry racism. Indeed, Pope Francis has declared racism a sin. Pope Paul VI stated nearly 50 years ago the Catholic Church "is called" to support Black people's liberation from marginalization and to do otherwise is to allow "a social

structural sin." President Nemec's insistence on permitting open and equal space for opponents of anti-racism, just as these educational approaches are gathering incipient momentum against overwhelming tides of systemic racial bias, is nothing short of the institutional racism Pope Paul rejected. Because the space for racism is already here in all facets of life in the United States—in our "educational, legal, financial, health, and political" institutions, as Pope Paul has stated. By invoking naive notions of free expression, President Nemec has asked us to inhabit an imaginary world where privilege and marginalization do not exist. If we are concerned about our branding and our image and most particularly our mission, we should attend most carefully to the damaging image of Fairfield University currently being shared internally and externally, one that refuses to acknowledge a message and vision that has galvanized the globe.

We support the demands made by the Fairfield Alumni Response Team; by our colleagues in the School of Education and Human Development; by the Faculty of Color; by our colleague Dr. Paul Lakeland, Aloysius P. Kelley, S.J. Professor of Catholic Studies; and others calling for specific administrative and community responses to these incidents.

We state affirmatively and without qualification that Black Lives Matter, we support BIPOC students, faculty, and staff at Fairfield University, and we will work in solidarity to dismantle white supremacy in our country and on our campus.

Sincerely,

Nels Pearson, Chair, Dept. of English and Director, The Humanities Institute;  
Martin Nguyen, Chair, Dept. of Religious Studies; Michelle Farrell, Chair, Dept. of Modern Languages and Literatures; Kris Sealey, Chair, Dept. of Philosophy; Marice Rose, Chair, Dept. of Visual and Performing Arts; Patricia Behre, Chair, Dept. of History

Dept. of English Faculty Signatures: Betsy A. Bowen; Lindy E. Brigitte; Matt Tullia; Lisa Pierce Flores; Emily Orlando; Rachel Heffner-Burns; Sonya Huber; Elizabeth Petrino; Elizabeth Boquet; Curtis Ferree; Tommy Xie; Colin Hosten; Mary Laughlin; Tiffany Wilgar; Jill Bodach; Tania Etcoff; Kim Gunter; Carol Ann Davis; Magda Desgranges; Johanna X. K. Garvey; Nadia F. Zamin; Shannon Kelley

Dept. of Philosophy Faculty Signatures: Maggie Labinski; Sara Brill; Dennis Keenan; Ryan Drake; Jason Smith; Steven Bayne; Jose Luis Fernandez

Dept. of Religious Studies Faculty Signatures: Martin Nguyen; Lydia Will-sky-Ciollo; John Thiel; Xavier M. Montecel; Nancy Dallavalle; Paul Lakeland; Clarence Hardy

Dept. of History Faculty Signatures: Patricia Behre; Jennifer Adair; Shannon King; Gabriel Rosenfeld; Danke Li; Silvia Marsans-Sakly; Cecelia Bucki; Anna Lawrence; Elizabeth Hohl; Nick Rutter

Dept. of Modern Languages and Literatures Faculty Signatures: Sergio Adrada Rafael; Carolina Anón Suárez; Covadonga Arango Martin; Sara Diaz; Laura Gasca Jiménez; Lauren Shigeo Gaskill; Jereilyn Johnson; Viviana Rigo de Alonso; Luis Alberto Rodríguez Cortés; Mary Ann Carolan; Juwei Xiao; Joel Goldfield

Dept. of Visual and Performing Arts Faculty Signatures:

Patrick Brooks; Claudia Cathoun; Suzanne Chamlin; Michael Ciavaglia; Ivo Covaci; Michelle DiMarzo; Cheryl Yun Edwards; Philip Eliasoph; Julie Learson; Marti LoMonaco; Meryl O'Connor; Lynne Porter; Katherine Schwab; Brian Torff; Jo Yarrington

# What Kind of a School is Fairfield University?

By Paul Lakeland, Ph.D.

Aloysius P. Kelley, S.J. Professor of Catholic Studies and the Director of Fairfield's Center for Catholic Studies

Because I am going to disagree almost completely with President Nemeć, I need to establish my credentials. This will sound like boasting, but it's not.

This is my 41st year of teaching at Fairfield and my 65th year of uninterrupted connection with the Jesuits in one way or another. I have written ten books on one aspect or another of the Catholic tradition, four of them award-winning, and I was the 2020 recipient from the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities of the Monika Hellwig Award for contributions to the Catholic Intellectual Tradition. I am a past president of the Catholic Theological Society of America, the largest association of theologians in the world. So I know whereof I speak.

The president of any university is in a sense the symbol of the unity of the enterprise. But that does not mean he or she is always right, or indeed that he is sufficiently well-informed to speak on a particular topic.

President Nemeć invokes the notion of institutional neutrality to justify removing the Black Lives Matter poster from the Counseling Center Window. But institutional neutrality has absolutely no place in a Jesuit and Catholic University.

In some schools with no religious tradition it may be that the term is somewhat appropriate, because it is indicating the institution's commitment to freedom of speech, to the right and responsibility of the university to encourage debate. Of course, Fairfield University honors that same commitment, but the mistake is to think that the only way to do this is to practice institutional neutrality. It is perfectly possible, in fact re-

quired, that a Jesuit and Catholic school proclaims a set of values that grow out of the intellectual and religious tradition, that in no way impede freedom of expression. And this means that the institution qua institution, not just individual voices within it, sometimes has the responsibility of taking stands on ethical and even political issues. Claiming neutrality is always in effect siding with the status quo, and the status quo of America is racist. Fairfield

has to commit to becoming an anti-racist community and, by the way, anti-anti-racism is nothing other than plain racism, and it has no place here. It is of its nature, hate speech, and that is something no academic institution should tolerate.

The Catholic tradition begins with an understanding of the human

person as always already in a set of relationships, as part of a community and a world with shared responsibilities for the common good. When President Nemeć proclaimed himself a classical liberal, he identified with a philosophical tradition that stresses the priority of the individual over the community, which is itself merely a social construction to protect individual freedoms.

Where this tradition understands the common good as the utilitarian "greatest good of the greatest number," adding up all the individual goods, the Catholic tradition offers a very different view.

In Catholic thinking the common good is the good of the whole, measured by the way in which the community pays special attention to the needs of its most vulnerable members. In our country

today, white privilege can never be an expression of the common good, while recognizing that Black lives matter is essential to caring for the common good.

At Fairfield University we all have the right to express our opinions freely, short of crossing the line into hate speech. That means that we have to tolerate views with which we may be in profound disagreement. The university has to protect that freedom of expression. But it does so as a place built on a religious tradition that makes clear that all people have equal dignity, that individual freedoms only work in the context of community responsibility, and that the world's poor and the fate of the earth are our moral priorities. If someone disagrees with this, short of hate speech, they have the right to express themselves. But they do not have the right to claim they are in sync with the mission and identity of the University.

Why, then, would President Nemeć want to invoke institutional neutrality? What would be the value that would outweigh the honest recognition that a Catholic and Jesuit school should be working to change the world for the better, not just reflecting the values of an increasingly dysfunctional world? Recent events here at Fairfield seem to suggest that institutional neutrality is a cover for avoiding offending "certain people." But if you stand for anything, you will offend some people. Maybe even potential donors or powerful alums. But you will offend a whole lot more if you kowtow to the fear of offending the powerful few. That seems to be what has happened here in this past couple of weeks. In a Jesuit and Catholic school, even a "modern" one, institutional neutrality is distasteful and antithetical to the mission and identity of our academic home. It's time that senior leadership got in line.



The Fairfield University Egan Chapel is a symbol of faith on campus. This represents the university's devotion to a continuance of the Jesuit mission.

## Prioritizing Neutrality Over Justice Is A Failure to Uphold Jesuit Values

By Madeline Hossler  
Opinion Editor

A huge part of what makes Fairfield University so great, and what made many of us choose to come here, is its foundations in the Jesuit tradition.

The University Mission Statement boasts, "Fairfield University is Catholic in both tradition and spirit and celebrates the God-given dignity of every human person."

As a Catholic institution, we welcome individuals of all beliefs and traditions who share our passion for scholarship, justice, truth and freedom, and we value the diversity their membership brings to our community." A beautiful sentiment, and the message that drew so many of us to become Jesuit scholars. But what does it mean to live by it?

Last week, during the unveiling of this university's new Diversity Equity and Inclusion Narrative our President, Dr. Marc Nemeć Ph.D., said "as a Jesuit Catholic University our discussion welcomes socialist, capitalist, distributive, libertarian, anti-racist and anti-anti racist perspectives."

Anti-anti-racist.

If President Nemeć wants to preach "intellectual honesty" in the same breath, he has to own up to the fact that anti-anti-racist

means racist. He openly claimed a willingness to accept the perspectives of racists into our community. In his statement to the University community regarding the issue President Nemeć evokes Pope Francis and his sentiment that racism is a sin.

So what then, of anti-anti-racism? What penalty might one incur on their soul for the acceptance of such a position?

Scholarship, justice, truth and freedom. That's what the Jesuit mission, and the Fairfield mission, is supposed to mean to us. Scholarship demands we acknowledge that history does not look kindly on those who fail to stand up to bigotry, in whatever form it may take. Justice demands that we work as a community to identify and combat the legacy of systemic racism and injustice wherever it may surface in our lives and communities.

Truth demands that we hold our President accountable for his words and the impact they have on our community, and not allow him to hide behind a double negative. Freedom demands that we work to build a university community in which diverse students feel safe, supported and free to be themselves, and that we reject those who seek to put others down. Scholarship, justice, truth and freedom. That's what it means

to be a Jesuit student.

President Nemeć frequently reiterates the sentiment that the Jesuit mission requires the university to be neutral and impartial in order to foster debate.

But such a pursuit has its consequences. Impartiality turns quickly from a virtue to a vice when it requires us to turn a blind eye to the social issues we are called to solve, and the injustices faced by so many in our society.

The middle position between anti-racism and racism is showing indifference towards racism. This is not the lack of choosing a side. Desmond Tutu once said "if you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor". Neutrality means promotion of the status quo. It means support for existing structures of power and the legacies of discrimination that have granted them that power. Most importantly, it means refusing to defend those who need it most, those who we are most called upon to serve.

No truly devoted Jesuit could accept that choice.

As for fostering academic debate, there is no space for healthy and productive scholarship and discussion when one side does not respect the other.

Racism is fundamentally a position of disrespect. Racism as-

sumes that that some people are less than others, and that they deserve the position of inequality that centuries of oppression have relegated them to. This is not an assumption that would be welcomed in any classroom I have ever been in. Good debate is a means for us to learn and grow, to strengthen our convictions or change our minds. There is no debate over whether or not racism needs to be eliminated, the only debate is over how we do it.

Fairfield University has always had a strong grounding in

the Jesuit tradition. Our mission statement calls on us to work everyday to be better scholars and better individuals. We are called to serve others, to pursue truth and to ensure justice. We need to be putting this theory into action and taking stronger positions when it comes to questions of justice in our communities.

Our mission is a noble one, and we should never shy away from holding our leadership, and ourselves, responsible for its pursuit.



Photo Contributed By Ruby Francis

A sign utilized by students who protested at the Feb. 28 unveiling of the Diversity & Inclusive Excellence Narrative. During this unveiling, University President Nemeć emphasized Fairfield University's stance on institutional neutrality.

# The Vine



Arts, Features,  
Entertainment  
Editor: Brooke Lathe

# Beloved Breakfast Businesses

By Madison Gallo  
Executive Editor

Some of the favorite memories I have from college have come from getting breakfast on Saturday and Sunday mornings. It's sitting around a table with my friends in one of our townhouses or out at breakfast somewhere that, looking back, I sometimes feel my absolute happiest. However, one thing is certain: the food we enjoyed during any of these memories is incredibly important and I have some opinions on the matter.

Fairfield has no shortage of delicious eateries ranging from upscale restaurants to great, lowkey lunch spots. But right now, we're going to focus on some of the best breakfast spots in town.

A breakfast sandwich is a staple of the early weekend mornings. I'm a Jersey girl at heart, so when I'm back home, I usually get a taylor ham, egg and cheese sandwich with a hashbrown on a round roll from my favorite deli in my town. The places here had a lot to live up to. But, after tasting my way through all the breakfast spots in town, I think I now have a good read on which spot is the best in show.

## Hole in the Wall - 2/10

Hole in the Wall located on Post Road just be-

tween SunnyDaes and Stop and Shop is definitely a cult favorite and a classic. My take might be a hot one, but I'm not really the biggest fan of Hole in the Wall. Going there, you know you are going to wait a long time, run into every single person who attends Fairfield University and you're going to have a sometimes mediocre sandwich. And — about running into people from school — who actually wants to see the girl you kind of know because you have had four classes together throughout your time at Fairfield while you have both rolled out of bed to pick up breakfast? Nobody! There are better places to go in Fairfield.

## Chef's Table - 9/10

Chef's Table, also located on Post Road, has tons of different breakfast options. However, my go-to order is this: an egg and cheese sandwich with hashbrown and avocado. You need to add the hashbrown and avocado, it's a huge gamechanger. It takes what might be just a greasy sandwich and provides not only new textures from the crispiness of the hashbrown and the softness of the avocado, but the avocado also provides a unique, refreshing flavor that balances really well with its cooked-component counterparts. In addition to the food, the atmosphere of Chef's Table is great. I love the inside because there are booths to eat at, and, when

it's warm out, you can eat at the outside tables. The only reason I am taking one point off of Chef's Table is because this is also a place you will run into absolutely everyone from school at and because it is pretty pricey for a breakfast sandwich.

## Donut Inn - 8/10

Donut Inn is one of my safe spaces. Great sandwiches, great donuts, amazing coffee — what more could a girl ask for? But the best part is that you can get it all from the comfort of your car because they have a drive-thru. This characteristic gives Donut Inn major bonus points in my book, as the drive-thru is surprisingly quick. However, you still have the option to park and order inside if

that's your prerogative as well.

I always get a bacon, egg and cheese sandwich on a toasted everything bagel. The one thing I would say is that the portion is much smaller (or perhaps just normally sized??) compared to its competitors in this list. Also, whenever I taste the bacon, I am always slightly alarmed that it might not be cooked all the way through which is a fear I really only have at Donut Inn. Although, this fear has never once stopped me from ordering it, so maybe that detail is not that important after all. Overall though, they have really good sandwiches. I also love that you can get donuts because I have the biggest sweet tooth and I 100% suggest hazelnut coffee. Additionally, they get even more bonus points for the fact that I went out to pick up breakfast for a friend and myself once that consisted of two breakfast sandwiches, two donuts and two large iced coffees, and only came to be around 12 or 13 dollars.

## Reef Shack - 5/10 (with potential to move up in rank)

Reef Shack is conveniently located on Reef Road for anyone who lives at the beach or who doesn't mind driving a little bit further through town to get there, is the newest addition to the breakfast location rotation for my friends and I. Here, I always order their "Jersey Shore" which consists of taylor, ham, scrambled egg and cheese. I jazz it up by adding a hash brown. One of the downsides, like Chef's Table and Hole in the Wall, you definitely will run into someone you know here. Other than that though, Reef Shack has been a surprisingly reliable favorite and good enough that my friends and I will drive to the Starbucks on Blackrock and then go all the way to Reef Shack — which is the total opposite direction and involves us driving past Fairfield to get there — just because Reef Shack is that good. I am not giving Reef Shack a crazy high score because it's still on the newer side to me and I need to try it out a few more times

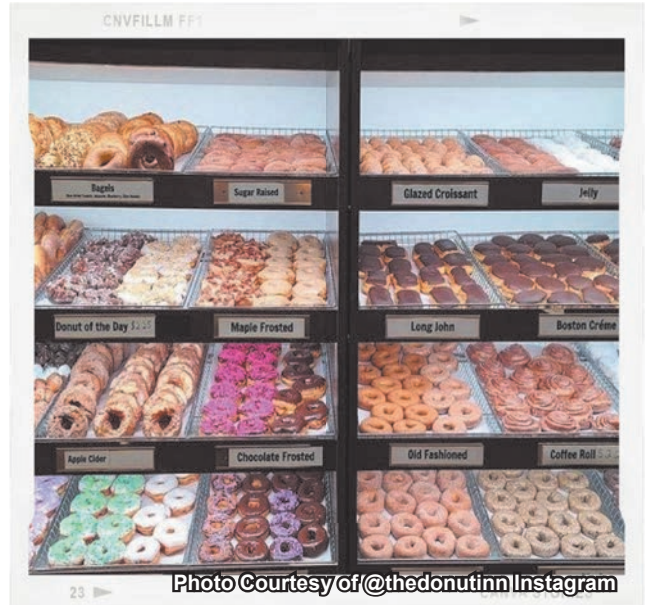


Photo Courtesy of @thedonutinn Instagram  
Donut Inn has a large range of donut flavors daily.

before I can rank it as highly as some of the other contenders on the list.

## Honorable Mention: Chip's Family Restaurant

Anyone who knows me, knows I love pancakes. There was even a period of time this school year where my roommate and I made pancakes at least once a week. Like consistently. Because of this, I felt it was necessary to include a friend-group-favorite: Chip's Family Restaurant. Located on Tunxis Hill Cut Off, which is right near Blackrock Turnpike, you will find Chip's. An unassuming-from-the-outside eatery that is ready to provide you with a phenomenal experience the second you sit down. I recommend getting the banana, strawberry and Nutella cakes which combine all of my favorite aspects and components of a breakfast into one. Other great options include the Cinnabun pancakes and the chocolate chip banana pancakes. Chip's is a sit-down experience and you will not ever be let down here. I highly recommend you go if you have not yet already and if you are not in the mood that day for a breakfast sandwich.

It is so great that there is no shortage of breakfast options surrounding campus. I can't wait to explore more breakfast spots around town and the general Fairfield area.



Photo Courtesy of @chefstable Instagram

A bacon, egg and cheese sandwich is the way to go!

# IRHA PRESENTS A MONTH OF FUN

By Abby White  
Assistant Vine Editor

The month of March is here, which means that Fairfield University's Inter-Residential Housing Association is getting ready to celebrate Community Pride Month! Students will get the chance to represent their residence hall in various events and competitions. I was recently able to speak with IRHA Vice President, Annie Mackey '24, to learn what Community Pride Month is all about and what fun activities are in store for Fairfield University students.

Mackey explains that for each residence hall, "Community Pride Month is a good time to showcase what you have done." Each residence hall will post on social media, participate in games and compete against other residence halls. Mackey also claims that for students, Community Pride Month provides "access to meeting new members of your community." All of the activities planned will serve as great opportunities to meet new people and make new friends within your own residence hall or in others!

I spoke with Mackey about the many fun activities that will take place this month. The month of March can be a long one, and with midterms thrown in the mix, these events can serve as a perfect way to destress, take a break and meet some new friends.

The first activity, which takes place this week, March 7-10, is called "Duck My Life". Mackey explains that throughout the week, ducks will be hidden all over campus for students to find. If you find a duck, you can turn it in for some amazing prizes, including candy, a Yeti water bottle, a Bluetooth speaker and even an UberEats gift card. As you walk around campus this week, make sure to keep an eye out for bright yellow ducks as you could be the winner of one of these awesome prizes!

Another activity that takes place the week of March 21, is a social media challenge. Each day of the week, a prompt will be posted and each Residence Hall Association will be challenged to post in accordance with that prompt. This is another great way for RHA to build pride in their community and compete

against other residence halls! Make sure you are following your residence hall's Instagram, as well as IRHA's account: @fairfieldirha.

The next activity, set to take place on March 22, is "Fairfield's Got Talent". Mackey explains that each residence hall will hold its own talent show and the top two acts will make it to the final Fairfield's Got Talent. This university-wide talent show will showcase some of each residence hall's best talent, with prizes and points awarded to the winners. To determine these winners, IRHA will be joined by some of Fairfield's favorite faculty and staff members who will serve as guest judges.

When I asked Mackey which event she was most looking forward to for Community Pride Month, she said "I'm most excited for Fairfield's Got Talent." With the challenges the pandemic has brought upon the last two

years, students have not had many opportunities to gather and showcase their talents. Fairfield's Got Talent will be a great way for residence halls to come together and for students to share what they do best!

The final activity planned for Community Pride Month is Trivia Night on March 29 at 7 p.m. in the lower level of the Barone Campus Center. Students are encouraged to attend with a group of friends to enjoy some snacks and play some trivia games. Of course, big prizes and points for residence halls will be awarded to winning players!

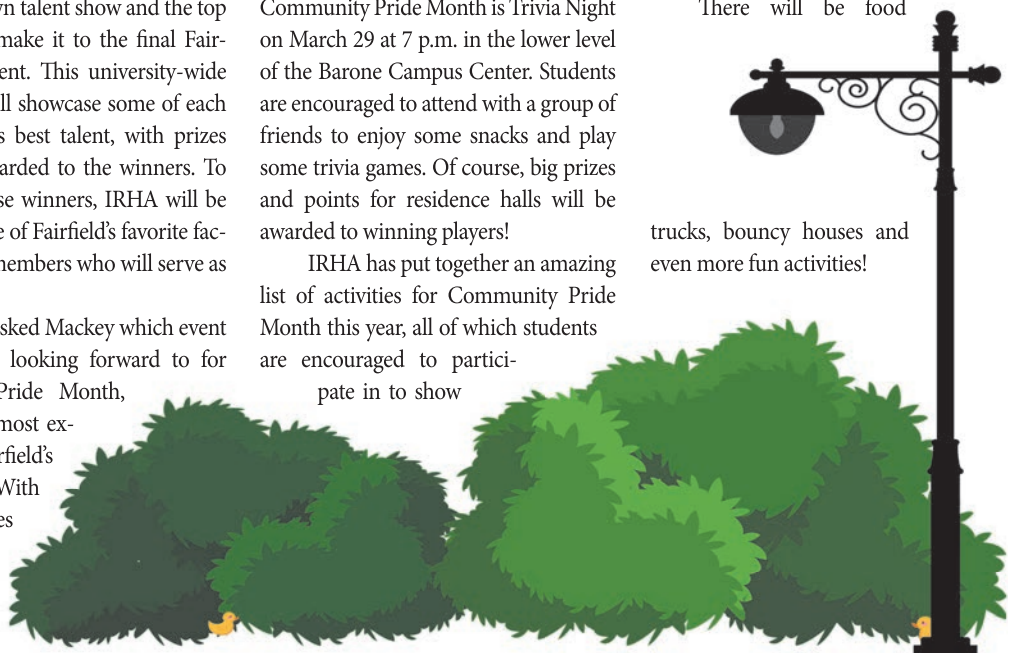
IRHA has put together an amazing list of activities for Community Pride Month this year, all of which students are encouraged to participate in to show

pride in their residence halls. The more students participate, the more chances they will have to win prizes or earn points for their residence halls.

Mackey also asks that students keep an eye out for IRHA's Spring Fest coming up this April.

There will be food

trucks, bouncy houses and even more fun activities!







Dear Brooke,

Since I don't have money to spend on a trip for spring break, what can I do with my time off?"



By Brooke Lathe  
Head Vine Editor

Spring break has somehow grown to be a tradition when students spend thousands of dollars on extravagant trips, instead of taking the time off as a reset following the mid-semester exam influx.

Personally, I will not be traveling during my week off because I'd rather save my money for my summer. Additionally, I feel that planning a vacation with a group of friends while trying to figure out the flights, hotels and finances would just cause me more stress during a time intended for the opposite.

Instead, I look forward to spending my week back at my house surrounded by my family, dog and hometown friends.

Although my list of activities might not sound the most "thrilling" compared to the Snapchat videos that show other students partying away in another state, I find this time in isolation

incredibly peaceful and will seek to take advantage of it – and so should you!

Try some of these activities I have on my to-do list, as they might act as a nice refresher before coming back for our final month of the semester.

**Examine your bookshelf**

One thing I never get to do during the regular school week is read a book since I am so busy. I have always loved indulging myself in a good, intense fictional narrative, so I will definitely sit on my back porch (if it's warm enough) or in my cozy bed to engross myself in an interesting story.

I've had "The Night Circus" by Erin Morgenstern and "The Book Thief" by Markus Zusak on my bookshelf for quite a while, so I hope to finish at least those novels. Try to search your room for books you haven't gotten to read yet!

If you don't have any new ones, then buy some at Barnes and Noble or check out one at your local library. Some of my favorites include "Sharp Objects" by Gillian Flynn and "Then She Was

Gone" by Lisa Jewell.

**Order a paint by number**

Painting is another one of my favorite hobbies, though I'm not that good. So, I've found that ordering a paint by number is satisfying enough where I have to do the work to create a beautiful finished product, but I don't necessarily need to have the talent to do it.

It takes pretty long so it's definitely something to pass the time, and I enjoy brushing the canvas while listening to music, a podcast or Kitchen Nightmares in the background. It's peaceful and productive! Search through the catalog for any designs that catch your eye and make a painting for yourself.

**Make time to visit your hometown friends**

I never get to see my hometown friends. Even with facetime, it's hard to find a time when our schedules have an opening at the same time. Luckily, my friends have the same week off for break, and we have already planned to meet up for dinner if we can't make the time or

have the money to go on a fun spontaneous day trip to New York City.

If your schedules align definitely try to take advantage of this opportunity, otherwise it'll probably be until summer that you see them next.

The same tip goes for seeing your family. Make time to have a nice meal together or watch a movie in the living room.

**Get a head start on work**

This might not be for everyone or sound fun at all, but once we get back to school, it's a mad dash to the finish line. We will all get submerged with work and finals so much so that it will feel like we're getting buried.

So, try looking ahead on your syllabus to help your future self out.

I personally will be outlining any final essays or projects coming up or finishing small assignments to clear up space when I get back to campus. Only give yourself one to two days on this though, you still want to enjoy your time off of your regular workload.

**Sleep In**

I can not stress enough how vital it is to take advantage of sleeping in. School seems to strip us of our beauty sleep, so make sure to close those curtains, turn off your alarms and just sleep.

**Do anything**

Think of all of the things you don't normally have time for when you're at school. Maybe you haven't gotten to binge a good Netflix show in a while or miss driving around aimlessly listening to music. Whatever it is, use this time to relax and breathe! It's the perfect opportunity for a reset.

These plans may not be the most exciting, but the point of spring break is to have a period where you have no obligations to do anything.

So, do exactly that. You don't need to have money or go on a trip to enjoy your time off. Have fun and soak it in!

Are you seeking any advice? Email Brooke at brooke.lathe@student.fairfield.edu or direct message our Instagram @fairfieldmirror to be featured!



# A LOCAL TASTE OF VIETNAM AT PHỞ NHA TRANG



By Christian Mannino  
Contributing Writer

By this point, most students (especially our seniors) are well acquainted with the cozy town of Fairfield and all of the wonderful dining options it has to offer. If you're looking to try something new, though, I suggest taking a quick trip to Phở Nha Trang.

Located on 80 Post Road, it's only a couple of minutes outside of town. The extra few minutes are well worth it though, as it's the only place in Fairfield to get authentic Vietnamese food.

Walking in, you'll be greeted by a pleasant atmosphere with plenty of charming decorations. After finding a table of your preference, a friendly staff member will hand you a threefold menu that has something for everyone.

If it's your first time visiting Phở Nha Trang, you absolutely have to order a bowl of Phở. If you're unfamiliar, phở is a Vietnamese soup that consists of broth, rice noodles, herbs and different meats, depending on your order.

Their house special is my go-to order because of the wide variety of flavors offered in a single bowl, but they have plenty of other tasty options including spicy beef and pork, shrimp noodle soup, wonton soup, veggie soup and even a more classic chicken noodle. No matter what you order, though, don't forget to liven up your broth with some hoisin sauce and even chili oil if you want a little zing to your bite.

Though their soups alone are worth the trip, Phở Nha Trang has plenty of other things to offer. For appetizers, I always recommend the veggie fried spring rolls, but the chicken fried and shrimp summer rolls are great options as well. If you're in the mood, their appetizer selections also include Bánh Xèo, a Vietnamese pancake/crepe made of rice batter.

My favorite part about Phở Nha Trang though, aside from their neatly curated options of hot and

cold dishes, are the prices. Their highest priced options are their fried dishes, coming in at a whopping \$11.99. At that price (and largely lower than that), I think Phở Nha Trang's meals are the best bang for your buck around Fairfield. And, depending on your appetite, you might even have leftovers to bring home too.

Before asking for the check though, make sure to order some bubble tea for the ride home. My go-to pick is honeydew, but they also offer taro, watermelon, mango, strawberry, coconut and Thai tea. At \$3.00 for a reasonably sized cup, it follows suit from

MENU:	
<b>PHO/NOODLE SOUP</b>	<b>\$7.99 /</b>
includes beef, chicken, shrimp, pork, veggie or wonton	<b>\$9.99 /</b>
	<b>\$10.99</b>
<b>FRIED/STEAMED RICE</b>	<b>\$9.99 -</b>
includes beef, chicken, shrimp, pork, or veggie with fried eggs	<b>\$12.99</b>
<b>BUBBLE TEA</b>	<b>\$3.00</b>
includes taro, honeydew, watermelon, mango, strawberry, thai tea, coffee, coconut, green tea, or milk tea	

the rest of the menu in terms of value. If you're a coffee person, though, you might want to opt for their Cà Phê Sữa Đá, a Vietnamese coffee with condensed milk, which can either be served iced or hot.

Phở Nha Trang offers delivery and takeout in addition to dining in. If you choose to sit inside to have a meal (which I highly recommend), they conveniently accept nearly all forms of payment, including credit card, Apple Pay and Android Pay.

If you're looking to try something new that's not too far away from campus, I highly recommend visiting Phở Nha Trang. It's become my go-to place

for a quick bite to eat, maybe it'll be yours as well!

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# PRESS PLAY TO THESE PODCASTS



By Madison Gallo  
Executive Editor

All my friends think I'm a bit weird because I'm the type of person who needs background noise for everything that I do: homework, laundry, cleaning, sleeping — you name it. I don't always pick music as my background noise of choice, however. Sometimes I put the news on, or whatever show I'm currently streaming. But more recently, I've

been turning to podcasts!

If you are looking for a series to kickstart your podcast listening journey, or you are an avid podcast fan looking for a new show, I have a few recommendations for you.

## “Anything Goes” with Emma Chamberlain

In “Anything Goes,” influencer Emma Chamberlain gives listeners an unfiltered glimpse into her life. She records the podcast from the “comfort of her bed” which gives

the show an intimate and vulnerable feel as it creates the impression that listeners are getting access to one of their favorite celebrity's minds they otherwise would not have.

This podcast's description states that on this show “anything really does go.” Listeners can hear “philosophy,” a “random story from 10 years ago,” “advice” and “sometimes nothing at all,” according to the show's description.

What sets this podcast apart for me, is how open Chamberlain is when it comes to talking about the anxiety she feels and struggles she faces.

In a world where we are surrounded by picture-perfect lives on social media, it's comforting to know that one of the most famous 20-year-olds in the world feels the same confusion, anxiety, fear and stress that I do.

Her podcast topics range from body-image issues that stem from social media to favorite products that have changed her life and her experiences with stepping out of her comfort zone — there truly is an episode for everyone.

Episodes are released every Thursday and can be listened to wherever podcasts are found.

## “We Can Do Hard Things” with Glennon Doyle

Glennon Doyle, the author of “Untamed,” hosts her podcast “We Can Do Hard Things” with her sister Amanda Doyle and her wife, former United States Women's National Soccer Team player, Abby Wambach. In “We Can Do Hard Things,” the trio, along with other special guests, explore topics that surround the idea of how challenging life can be but that we must always remember “we can do hard things.”

This podcast was born out of the difficult times the ongoing pandemic brought to life and from “Untamed,” released at the start of the pandemic, that became a huge support for many. She said that the mantra “we can do hard things” saved her life twenty years ago and it became a “worldwide rally cry.”

I read “Untamed” at the start of the pandemic, and when I saw that there was a podcast from the same author, I knew I had to listen. At the end of every episode, I always feel better, as if it's a therapy session each time. All kinds of topics like divorce, marriage, setting boundaries, equality, freedom, battling addiction and loss are discussed on the podcast.

You can find “We Can Do Hard Things” wherever you find podcasts.

## “Modern Love by the New York Times” with Anna Martin

I love everything about love. I love loving people and feeling loved by people, and for a long time, the Modern Love column from the New York Times has been one of my favorite columns to read.

Anna Martin explores people's real love lives based off of the New York Times column essays published weekly. On top of being a column and a podcast, there are also three books and a television show based off of the stories shared in the column.

I love reading the essays, but even more than that, I love hearing them be read. It adds a whole other dimension and layer to the essays because you can hear the voice and emotion as they are read the way they were intended to sound.

Episodes come out every single Wednesday and the podcast can be listened to on all podcast platforms.

If you are looking for some intellectual white noise to play in the background of your everyday life, give these three podcasts a try!



# GIRL SCOUT COOKIES: RANKED

By Tommy Coppola  
Managing Editor,  
Head Sports Editor

It's the most wonderful time of the year! At least, to me. It's officially Girl Scout cookies season. To get in the spirit for the momentous occasion, I am going to be ranking my favorite cookies from the lineup.

Before I rank my most and least favorites, I have to go through the rich history of how Girl Scout Cookies came to be. According to the official Girl Scout's website, the tradition began in the 1910s after a troop from Oklahoma began selling baked goods to raise money for activities.

A decade later, the troops began going door to door selling their cookies to any customer who was willing to indulge.

After 70 years, the Girl Scouts began to include different divisions into the sale of their cookies; younger troop members were able to gain experience in selling through their girl scout

cookie campaign.

With new forms of technology arising in the new century, the Girl Scouts began selling their cookies online, while continuing their traditional door-to-door campaigns.

Most recently, they have increased their efforts for inclusion and diversity with their kosher and halal certification, as well as options for vegan and gluten-free customers.

Girl Scout cookies have a very long and valuable history that is still being written today with each new cookie or flavor they add. Now, onto the rankings!

## BEST... SAMOAS

Samoas are everything I would hope for and look for in a cookie. With an intricate, donut-esque design, Samoa's taste lives up to its looks. Toasted coconut lines the top, with chocolate drizzle over it and a chocolate layer on the bottom.

The bite is softer than you'd expect, and the caramel inside melts in your mouth. There is something incredible about Samoas that I just can't get enough of.

## THIN MINTS

Thin Mints are just great. They are such a consistent cookie — the mint and chocolate mix is one of the greatest flavor profiles you can find.

These have really never changed, unlike others, and I truly hope they never do.

I must say, these pair the best with milk.

## LEMONADES

Now, I can't add these on the list without including the fact that I have a Savannah Smiles-shaped hole in my heart. I'm not sure why they switched them and included two different lemon-flavored items on the list, but they did.

These vastly outshine the Lemon-Ups, which are just basic cookies — at least the Lemon Ups include icing and an actual shortbread cookie.

These remind me more of the lemon-dusted Savannah Smiles that would've nestled into number one on this list if they were still around.

My honorable mention includes Tag-alongs.

## WORST... TOFFEE TASTIC

I tried toffee-tastic cookies for the first time last year and I was disappointed. I normally like the flavor of toffee, but I just couldn't get into these for some reason.

There really isn't a bad cookie in general, but I think if I was in the market for Girl Scout Cookies, these would fall towards the bottom of my list.

## LEMON UPS

I mentioned these earlier, which I just don't think are absolutely necessary to the lineup. They are heavily overshadowed by the Lemonades and just don't scratch the itch that former Savannah Smile

fans like me are looking for.

The inspiring messages printed on the cookies are a very nice touch, however.

## S'MORES

Maybe I lied earlier, there exists one bad girl scout cookie. S'mores are just not at all what you would expect or even hope for.

If you love actual s'mores like me, you're going to be disappointed.

These relatively new additions to the menu are boring, tasteless, and not a fun experience for your teeth considering these are incredibly dense to bite into.

Although there are highs and lows to Girl Scout cookies, there's no doubt that all of these are classics.

If you're looking out for these delicacies this season like me, I hope you enjoy them just as much as I do.



# A Handful Of Helpful Hairstyles

By MK Kalenak  
Contributing Writer

So you're having trouble styling your hair? Trust me, I too have spent so much time contemplating what to do with my own hair, all for it to end up in a ponytail or laying blandly. This is a dilemma I often encounter which leaves me feeling hopeless.

Let me guess, you want to change it up, but you don't know how or you don't have the time to scroll through Tik Tok or Pinterest ... I get you. So, that's what I did so that you don't have to! I think I finally cracked the code for the best hair ever.

## "Up and Away"

Whether you have curly, straight, wavy, thin or thick hair, it can be a challenge. You may want to tie it up in a ponytail and call it a day, but if you're like me, you may find yourself wanting a change (with minimal effort). Two words: Claw Clips.

Trust me, these babies are your new best friends. The variations of colors are unbeatable, plus they're everywhere! Some of my favorite places to get them include Amazon and Free People!

If you're really invested, Kov Essentials is also an online boutique that offers "indestructible" clips that are perfect for any hair type/texture. Claw Clips add flair to an updo that a ponytail is incapable of! You can also do a half up half down, or grab your hair and twist it up and away into the clip!

I would seriously recommend getting a few, they make life so much easier. Plus, they add an extra look of effort to your hair, so you can look your best after a short amount of time!

## Quick Style & Leave it Down

I don't know about you, but I wish I could get my hair done every day. Sadly, I can't. But, there are so many tools that can give you salon hair in less than 15 minutes. My personal favorite is the Dyson Airwrap, which can do literally anything to make your hair go from drab to fab in minutes. Don't panic, this is not the only way to get the "blowout" look.



The Revlon One-Step Brush is equally a lifesaver. A hair dryer and round brush is a game-changer as well. If you have a little extra time one day, play around with your hair rather than brushing it out and walking out the door. You can add some volume, curl it, straighten it and totally bring it to life. If you don't like heat, add some mini clips, or even a small braid.

## Get it Out of Your Face

Okay, I hear you, claw clips, and styling aren't your thing. You have five minutes and have no idea what to do with your hair; been there, solved that. A good style is great for the right occasion, but sometimes, getting your hair out of your face is the goal. Here are some of my solutions...

A good bun (messy is the easiest) can be accomplished by just grabbing your hair, and twisting! A slicked-back bun is also a great alternative. Grab some gel or hairspray, tame the flyaways and mod your hair into a low or high bun, for a fresh clean look.

They got you through middle school lacrosse games, and sleep away camp, you know 'em, you love 'em ... classic, reliable and sturdy: braids! Braided pigtailed, side braid, french braid, dutch braid, etc. All styles are quick and easy fixes to tame your hair, and show off your skills!

I love a good ponytail as much as the next person, but if you're trying to change it up ... drumroll please ... the "not so classic" ponytail. Okay, so you put your hair in a ponytail, now what? Braid it, singularly or add multiple! Don't like braids? Bubble it, this is when you take sections of the whole ponytail and add elastic bands to create a bubble effect. Not into that? Tease it, crimp it, curl or straighten it!

I bet trying any of these styles should ultimately help you fall in love doing your hair, or at least hate it less. Go and try them out for yourself!

# The Backseat Lovers Shine At Webster Hall

By Julie White  
Contributing Writer

On Feb. 24, my friend Lauren and I ventured into New York City as part of a sold out crowd eager to see The Backseat Lovers play at Webster Hall.

The Backseat Lovers are what I would categorize as an alternative/indie-pop-rock band from Utah consisting of Joshua Harmon on lead vocals and guitar, Janas Swanson on lead guitar and vocals, KJ Ward on bass guitar and Juice Welch on background vocals.

I first discovered their song "Kilby Girl" in late 2020, and my Spotify recommended other songs introduced me to other songs in their discography throughout 2021.

So, when I heard that they put on a great show, I simply had to go. I made sure to walk in with little to no expectations - I didn't look up the setlist, I didn't see any videos of them performing, I was just happy to see a band I like and enjoy a night of live music.

I was lucky enough to find a spot in Webster Hall where Lauren and I were only one row behind the barricade, so I didn't mind being off to the right of center stage a little bit.

Over Under, a small band from Salt Lake City, Utah, opened

for The Backseat Lovers. I checked them out once I purchased my tickets back in November, and they only had two songs released on Spotify. I was very interested to see them open: how could they play for forty-five minutes with only two songs?

I was pleasantly surprised by not only the amount of unreleased songs they have, but how good of performers they are.

They seem like the most down-to-Earth people ever, and it is so obvious they love being able to share and play their music. They actually have a new song out, "Time to Waste," that was released at midnight the day of the concert, so it was super exciting to hear it live.

Around 9:15 p.m., The Backseat Lovers finally took the stage. They opened with a climactic instrumental number before playing their 2019 single "Just a Boy" and "Pool House," a song off their debut album.

I was a little surprised by their choice of opening songs, as I was expecting them to play two of their upbeat hits.

But the crowd made up for the lack of vitality of their opening set.

The audience knew and sang along to every word the entire show. When they played crowd-

favorites such as "Kilby Girl," "Maple Syrup" and "Sinking Ship," the floor bounced to the beat of the drums and the audiences' jumping - which was slightly scary considering the stage is the second floor of the venue.

The Backseat Lovers played a significant amount of their discography, ranging from songs off their 2018 EP "Elevator Days" and their 2019 debut album "When We

Were Friends." They also played an unreleased song, which I liked a lot, so I'm definitely excited to hear their future music.

Perhaps my favorite part of the show was when Joshua Harmon flung himself into the crowd with his shiny red guitar and continued to aggressively strum the guitar break of "Still a Friend."

He was filled with so much energy the whole night and just

seemed so appreciative that the crowd was loving his band's music.

I've been to twenty concerts now, and I can honestly say that The Backseat Lovers has been one of the best I've been too.

I would definitely recommend their music and going to one of their concerts if and when they tour again, if you like their songs!



The Backseat Lovers perform a lively show in Webster Hall.

Photo Contributed by Julie White



# COFFEE BREAK



SATIRE, GAMES, PUZZLES AND MORE

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

## St. Patrick's Day Word Search

K K S H A M R O C K N W S Z Y J D N M O H E E T Z  
 C C T E H S F Z E X T J U Z S E I N Z V N S N L C  
 D I I C V N E H Y E V P H V H Z A B B U L Q I A Z  
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- Clover
- Holiday
- Leprechaun
- March
- Seventeenth
- Gold
- Ireland
- Limerick



- Shamrock
- Green
- Irish
- Luck
- Rainbow
- St. Patrick
- Parade



## SUDOKU!

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# SPORTS



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March 9	March 10	March 11	March 12	March 13	March 14	March 15
<p>Women's basketball vs. Iona College/Rider University Atlantic City, N.J. 1:00 p.m.</p> <p>Women's lacrosse at Lafayette College Easton, P.A.. 7:00 p.m.</p>	<p>Women's swimming &amp; diving CSCAA National Invitational Elkhart, Ind. All Day</p> <p>Men's swimming &amp; diving CSCAA National Invitational Elkhart, Ind. All Day</p>	<p>Baseball at Florida Gulf Coast University Fort Meyers, F.L. 6:00 p.m.</p> <p>Men's Golf SHU Spring Break Invitational Daytona Beach, F.L. All Day</p> <p>Women's Golf SHU Spring Break Invitational Daytona Beach, F.L. All Day</p> <p>Softball vs. Western Carolina University Huntington, W. VA. 9:30 a.m.</p>	<p>Men's Lacrosse at Binghamton Vestal, N.Y. 1:00 p.m.</p> <p>Softball vs. Western Carolina University Huntington, W. VA. 9:30 a.m.</p> <p>Softball at Marshall University Huntington, W. VA. 11:00 a.m.</p> <p>Baseball at Florida Gulf Coast University Fort Meyers, F.L. 2:00 p.m.</p>	<p>Women's tennis at College of Charleston Charleston, S.C. 2:00 p.m.</p> <p>Softball at Marshall University Huntington, W. VA. 11:30 a.m.</p> <p>Baseball at Florida Gulf Coast University Fort Meyers, F.L. 1:00 p.m.</p>	<p>Men's tennis at College of Charleston, S.C. 3:00 p.m.</p>	<p>Baseball vs. Bradley University Auburndale, F.L. 1:00 p.m.</p> <p>Women's lacrosse at University of Denver Denver, Colo. 3:00 p.m. (EST)</p>

## Arena 100: March Progress Report



Pictured left is a photo from the top of the Kelley Center parking garage, where one can see the front of the new arena. On the right is a view from the back of the arena near the Bannow Science Center.

By Tommy Coppola  
Managing Editor, Head Sports Editor

Since February, the construction crew working on the brand new arena and convocation center has made incredibly steady progress over a month.

For starters, the entire roof has been placed onto the arena's frame. Walls have been

continuing to come up with rooms and divisions taking shape. Lights have now been placed inside of the building, as well, which can be seen lit up at night.

In the front on the right side, the architectural design seen in the computer-generated mockups hanging on the fence look to be completed to perfection. Now that most of the walls have been put up and the entire site now looks like a nearly-finished building, it seems like the crew is making great pace to open for the "late fall" of 2022.

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

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# Women's Basketball Finalizes Season With Two MAAC Triumphs

By Zachary Stevens  
Contributing Writer

The Fairfield University women's basketball team hosted the Rider University Broncs for senior night in the final home game for the Stags during the regular season on March 3.

Seven seniors were celebrated in the ceremony: Lou Lopez-Senechal, Rachel Hakes, Andrea Hernangomez, Callie Cavanaugh, Jazmine Carter and graduate students Sam Lewis and Sydney Lowry.

With a record of 10-1 at Webster Bank Arena, the Stags only failed to beat Yale University in November and were looking to continue their winning ways in front of the home crowd.

Although Rider has been struggling on the year and is in the bottom half of the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference, they still are a team that poses many threats and that was apparent on Thursday night.

The Stags started the game very strong, edging a three point lead heading into the second quarter. Neither team was shooting particularly well, but the Stags did have four different scorers in the opening quarter.

They continued to add pressure on the Broncs in the second, expanding their lead to the biggest of the game thus far at five points with a score of 12-17. While the Stags were making their shots, so was Rider, who simply wasn't going away.

The game was staying consistent around the four point margin, with each team trading baskets and remaining stubborn, until the Broncs went on a 9-2 run to end the half and took a two point lead with a score of 30-28.

Fairfield was getting heavy pro-

duction out of their seniors, who were doing most of the scoring in the first half, with Lopez-Senechal, Cavanaugh and Hernangomez all sinking multiple baskets.

If the Stags wanted to take back the lead, they were going to have to keep relying on their experienced leaders to win this game, and that's exactly what they did.

Fairfield would start the scoring in the third thanks to a Syndey Lowry three, taking the lead back and swinging the momentum in favor of the home team. The Stags would score another quick basket, bringing the lead back to the largest of the game, 35-30 Fairfield.

As mentioned earlier, the Broncs

may be a team that are not in any conversations for winning the MAAC, but they are certainly a team that will put up a fight for the full forty minutes and that's what they did against the Stags.

Rider would go on yet another run to end the quarter and scrape a narrow one point lead going into the fourth and final quarter.

With the fear of losing on senior night, star forward Lopez-Senechal went on a scoring rampage, netting 16 points in the final 10 minutes of the game. The France native would end the game with 30, a perfect way to cement her legacy at Webster and at Fairfield.

This was her second straight game with 30 or more, but what was even more impressive was that these 30 points brought to her 1500 total points of her career, becoming the 11th Stag to

achieve this honor and third fastest in school history.

"It was great to win the last home game and finish the regular season like we envisioned it," said Lopez-Senechal. "We talked a month ago about having the best record we could have and we achieved that goal. Now the next goal is to finish on an even higher note by winning the MAAC tournament!"

The combination of Lopez, strong defense and the home crowd was too much for the Broncs, as the Stags ended the game on a big run that made them victorious by a score of 65-61.

This brought their overall record to 21-6 overall and an incredible 18-1 in the MAAC. Crowned regular season champs and the number seed in the tournament, the Stags are extremely focused on winning their conference

trophy, then moving on to the National Collegiate Athletic Association March Madness tournament.

"Our mindset is to take things day by day and win game after game," said Lopez-Senechal. "We want to get to the NCAA tournament but for that, we know that we will have to keep playing the same basketball we've been playing all year and most importantly be us and enjoy the moment."

The Stags then closed out the regular season when they traveled to Saint Peter's University for a Saturday night game at 7 p.m. on March 5.

Fairfield was able to topple Saint Peter's by a final score of 56-43 according to the official women's basketball schedule. This final win brings their overall record to 22-6, with a 19-1 in-conference record, closing the book on another stellar season.



Photo Contributed by the Sports Information Desk

Senior Andrea Hernangomez lays up a shot around the Rider University defense; the Stags rolled past Rider by a score of 65-61 for another home win.

## Weekly 4x5

Your 2022-23 4x5 Columnists: Tommy Coppola, Maddy West, Madison Gallo, and Brooke Lathe

Because we have witty things to say ...

What is your main goal for this new Mirror Staff?

If you had to eat one thing every day for a year what would it be?

Who is the messiest person in the Mirror office?

What are your spring break plans?

What is your dream job?



**Tommy Coppola**  
Managing Editor,  
Head Sports Editor

Keeping the momentum from the last staff as best we can.

Considering I already do this anyway, probably pizza.

I'm by no means the cleanest, but at least I am not the one with the Crockpot sitting in the corner.

I'm just going to try and relax at home for a week. Key word, "try."

Although it's a bit lofty, I would love to report for ESPN.



**Maddy West**,  
Editor-In-Chief

I really want us to continue to be a voice for the students on campus, but also work to build a true bond in the office.

Immediately pasta.

I like to spread my stuff out in the office. You never know what you're gonna need throughout the day so I like to have it all in there.

The beach!

I think the dream at this point is to just get a job.



**Madison Gallo**,  
Executive Editor

Building off of the strong foundation established by our last staff and keeping up the great work being done by everyone.

Chicken parm with a side of penne please!

Maddy. Pretty sure she might still have \$20 laying around somewhere there.

Going to Florida for the first time with my best friends!

I see myself working in a city, but a specific job title? I'm not 100% sure yet.



**Brooke Lathe**,  
Head Vine Editor

Continuing to report on important topics that regard campus happenings.

I will happily eat chicken pad thai for the rest of my life.

I'm not too sure who's the messiest, but I sure am the cleanest.

Getting a head start on upcoming assignments, but also relaxing with my family.

My absolute dream is to be a screenwriter. However, working in magazines is something on my mind as well.

# Stags Rally Past Pioneers In Fourth Quarter Push

By Tommy Coppola  
Managing Editor, Head Sports Editor

In a cross-town showdown pitting the men's lacrosse team against the Pioneers of Sacred Heart University on Tuesday, March 1, the two teams duked it out in a fiery contest that saw 35 total goals scored on both ends of the field.

Only four games into the new lacrosse season, the Stags are already proving that this town is only big enough for one of us.

Fairfield was able to head home with their heads high, securing a come-from-behind 19-16 victory at Sacred Heart.

The game, statistically speaking, was toe-to-toe for virtually the whole game. After the first quarter, the Stags were leading the Pioneers by a score of 5-4, which would later flip to a Pioneers lead of 10-8 at the half. They would hold onto this lead going into the fourth frame with a 14-12 lead over the visitors.

With seven goals in the last quarter of the game, however, the Stags were able to rally and find success.

"We faced a lot of adversity tonight," head coach Andrew Baxter stated in the game's official recap. "We talked in just about every huddle about trying to be present and understanding that the most important thing is always the next play."

Graduate student Taylor Strough took up most of the scoring for the Stags, finding the back of the net a team-high five times in the win. Senior Kyle Borda and first-year Jack McKenna were not far behind with four goals and three goals respectively.

Borda is in his fourth season with the Stags. McKenna, a Fairfield, Conn. native, is a newcomer on the team.

Even with the contributions of these players, the Stags' seven goal rally was no easy feat. With the mindfulness of the team, however, this was possible.

"We talked about being present in the moment," Strough stated. "And our coaches alluded to that in the game as well. So I think that was a big key for us, being present in that moment and at the right time."

Some other main contributors to the success of the team were some of the younger players who finally have a chance to shine. "We're a big team-oriented group but specifically I think last night Kyle Borda really stepped up in the midfield," captain and redshirt sophomore Bryce Ford stated. "You got a walk-on in Luke Okupski who put two big ones in the net."

"I think guys like that are just really important," Ford continued. "They came on the field and took the opportunity."

Ford scored one goal in the effort to take down the Pioneers. However, he was selfless out on the field, dishing out four assists according to the same recap.

From a leadership standpoint this season, Ford is co-captaining the team with his brother Dean Ford '23 as well as fellow midfielder Trent Moran '23.

After a 16-9 loss to Villanova University, the Stags looked to bounce back; this is exactly what they pulled off. Ford pointed to the positives of the Villanova contest which in turn assisted in the win

against SHU.

"I thought that we showed signs of really great lacrosse and we had flashes of it, and I think after that game, as much as we want to win, it was a positive to be able to take some of those away going into [Sacred Heart]," Ford stated.

After taking on Sacred Heart University, the men's lacrosse team hosted Harvard University at Conway Field at Rafferty Stadium on March 5, 2022. Harvard has one win and one loss on their season thus far according to their

official schedule on [gocrimson.com](http://gocrimson.com). In their history against each other, Fairfield has been able to take six wins, with Harvard boasting only five.

"I think the biggest thing

we talked about already is, you know, just being us and representing Fairfield lacrosse the way we know how to do it," Strough said.

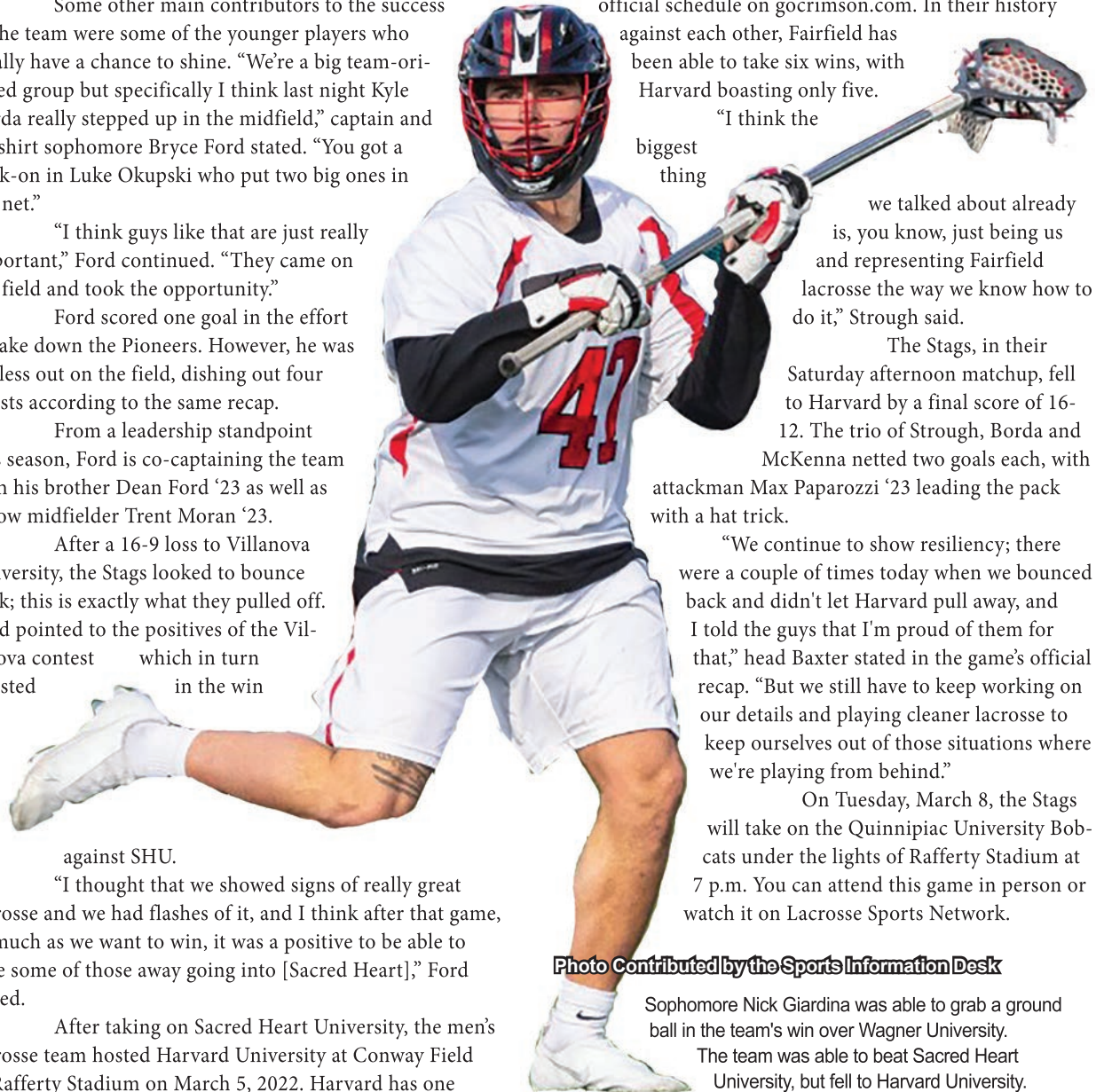
The Stags, in their Saturday afternoon matchup, fell to Harvard by a final score of 16-12. The trio of Strough, Borda and McKenna netted two goals each, with attackman Max Pappozzi '23 leading the pack with a hat trick.

"We continue to show resiliency; there were a couple of times today when we bounced back and didn't let Harvard pull away, and I told the guys that I'm proud of them for that," head Baxter stated in the game's official recap. "But we still have to keep working on our details and playing cleaner lacrosse to keep ourselves out of those situations where we're playing from behind."

On Tuesday, March 8, the Stags will take on the Quinnipiac University Bobcats under the lights of Rafferty Stadium at 7 p.m. You can attend this game in person or watch it on Lacrosse Sports Network.

Photo Contributed by the Sports Information Desk

Sophomore Nick Giardina was able to grab a ground ball in the team's win over Wagner University. The team was able to beat Sacred Heart University, but fell to Harvard University.



# Stags Go South For The Spring

By Billy McGuire  
Assistant Sports Editor

The Fairfield University baseball team had arguably one of its best seasons in recent memory last season. The Stags went 39-5, carried on a winning streak which began the previous season that ended up being twenty-eight games, and went on a national tournament run before falling to the #2 ranked University of Texas at Austin Longhorns in the regional final.

Despite their success, the Stags only faced conference opponents in the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) last season. The only opportunities they had when facing non-conference opponents was in their tournament run.

With COVID-19 restrictions beginning to slowly fade away, the Stags now have more opportunities to face non-conference teams as they travel down to Florida to face Florida Gulf Coast University in a three-game series before taking on Dartmouth College and Bradley

University in the 2022 Russmatt Central Florida Invitational and North Dakota State in the Snowbird Baseball Classic.

Senior Mike Sansone is fired up about the chance to play with his team in a vastly different setting than in the Northeast.

"It's nice to be in baseball weather in early March and I always look forward to those trips," Sansone states. "Having that Florida trip is always one of my favorite trips. I got to do it once during my sophomore year, and so obviously with everything that has happened over the past two years it is nice to experience playing in a different setting."

Teammate and sophomore Matt Bergevin agrees.

"I think in terms of the environment, we're gonna be happy to be somewhere that is not 35 degrees, and on that note we're really looking forward to doing that," Bergevin says.

In addition, both players are looking forward to not only playing in a different environment, but also playing against unfamiliar teams with higher name recognition.

"It's always fun to go down south and play some of those bigger name schools," Sansone says. "I think with these other schools they have grown accustomed to seeing themselves play on TV in which we do not see ourselves doing very often. It's a lot of fun and different going down there and playing those teams, but at the same time you have got to keep the same kind of mindset to want to go down and win games."

"We're very excited to face programs that have a higher name recognition than we do," Bergevin points out. "You know, Florida Gulf Coast is obviously a very good program with really good players that have been out of there in recent years and Bradley has always done a great job with recruiting talent in the Midwest," referring to Bradley's location in Peoria, Ill.

"Obviously with Dartmouth being an Ivy-League school, they are always going to be competitive and a tough matchup to face," Bergevin further explains. "Also North Dakota State won 40 games last year, won their conference and had at least a couple of guys drafted, so facing these programs is going to be challenging but a lot of fun for our team."

Before traveling down to Florida and taking on these opponents, the Stags have one more three-game series to play against the Hawks of Saint Joseph's University in Philadelphia, Pa.

Both players acknowledge that the series against the Hawks is the team's primary focus right now.

"Right now, we have our focus on St. Joe's," says Sansone. "They are a very good ball club and are a team that we share a lot of similarities with. In order to win we need to do a good job playing a well-balanced ball game, with solid effort both offensively and defensively."

"We're really taking it one step at a time, and it's really been all about St. Joe's right now," Bergevin explains. "I think we feel like we can really build off of the kind of groundwork we've laid, especially offensively. I think we've done a good job preparing ourselves to play the St. Joe's of the world who are a good program and who can kind of be a preview of who we're going to face when we come back from Florida."

Both players seem excited for the journey that lies ahead for the team, taking on opponents in settings that they are not accustomed to. These experiences that the baseball team will partake in will prepare them for the adversity and challenges that they will face when they return home for regular season play and in the postseason in which they hope to make the Fairfield community proud of their Stags once again.

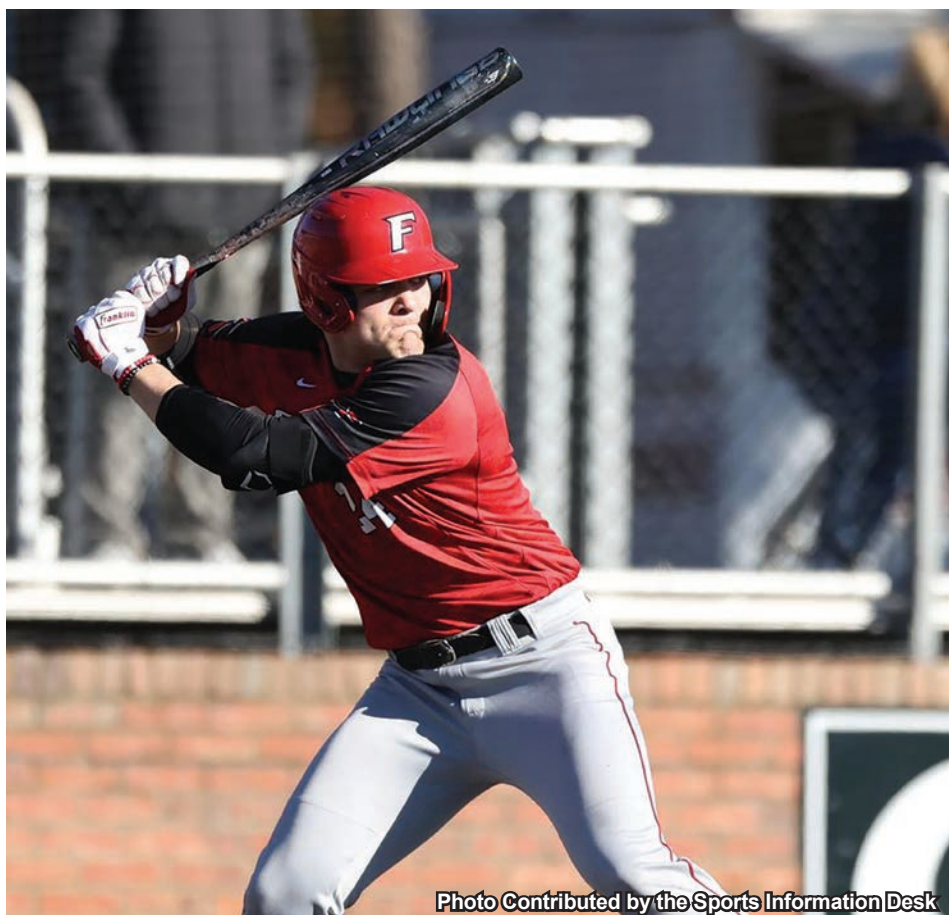


Photo Contributed by the Sports Information Desk

Sophomore Matt Bergevin swings at a pitch; he had two hits against Saint Joseph's University.

## Opinion: March Madness Mania Moves Closer

By Ryan Marquardt  
Assistant Sports Editor

Now that we have entered March, what some would call the best tournament in sports is right around the corner. What I am referring to, of course, is March Madness. Through the years March Madness has given us some of the most memorable moments in sports history, from UMBC upsetting the number one seed Virginia in 2018 to Notre Dame winning the women's bracket off of a buzzer beater the same year. With the tournament beginning in just a few short weeks here are some predictions of how it will all go down.

For the men's bracket just about everybody with a set of eyes can see that Gonzaga is the team to beat as they are ranked #1 in the most recent men's AP Poll. The surefire number one seed and favorite of many to win it all has had an amazing season with just a few blemishes. They will look to get back to the national championship game this year, but yield a different result from last year when they fell to Baylor University in the title game. They are led by #2 Drew Timmie 23' and #34 Chet Holmgren 25' who average 18.1 and 14.7 points per game respectively. Along with this they have an average scoring differential of +24.6 points per game, meaning on average they outscore their opponents by 24 to 25 points in every game. They also out-rebound, have more assists, and have less turnovers than their opponents on average. This means that they win not only on the scoreboard but in every major statistical category as well. This powerhouse of a team who is playing confidently now looks to meet expectations and win it all.

Another major story in the tournament is that of Duke University's head coach Mike Krzyzewski, is entering his 36th March Madness tournament;

He announced earlier in the year that this season would be his last; this of course puts Duke as one of the favorites as his final season will likely motivate his players to send him out on a high note. Many would love to see the well respected coach ride off into the sunset with another national title, however many will also want to see him go out on a loss. This would not be any Cinderella Story either, as Duke is

a chance to win it all, especially given the stellar play of #5 Paolo Banchero 25' and #0 Wendell Moore Jr. 23'. Duke has had a +15 point differential so far this season and could very easily make a run with Coach K's experience and some great players leading the way.

In addition to some favorites, there are also some teams that I believe do not deserve all of the hype. For starters, Auburn University

could lead to their downfall in the neutral atmosphere of March Madness without their rousing fanbase. If Auburn ends up going into the tournament cold as they seemingly could, there is a decent chance they may fall short. Another team that could disappoint is Providence College, a relatively high ranked team currently projected to be a number four seed. They have won eleven close games (games by five or fewer points or in overtime)

South Carolina team probably has the best chance of winning it all, as they have been dominant all year and have shown that they can beat anyone. If they can maintain their great play as a team and capitalize on their current momentum they could run through the competition and win it all.

One number two seed that I really like this year is Baylor. While their record is less than stellar with five losses this



has a chance to be the first of the potential number one or two seeds eliminated in this tournament.

They have relied on winning close games

which is way too many for a team ranked as highly as they are. They have also played seventeen of their twenty-eight games at home as well as two at a neutral site, meaning they have only played nine away games. Similarly to Auburn, they have let bad teams hang around with

them and rely on their home crowd which, in the tournament, could be lethal for any team. Once again, any hot-handed team has a shot if Providence, like Auburn, allows them to keep it

close late. The women's bracket does not have as much of a clear cut number one. University of South Carolina, Stanford University, and North Carolina State University all have potential

to be the top overall seed in the tournament. South Carolina is the number one seed, with just one loss coming against the University of Missouri. They are led by #4 Aliyah Boston 23', who leads the team in points per game, rebounds, and blocks. Her stellar stat lines throughout the season have helped the Gamecocks both offensively and defensively. This

season, four of their five losses have been to top twenty-five teams in the nation. They also repeated this year as Big Twelve champions and are currently on a nine-game winning streak. #22 NyLyssa Smith 22' has been dominating on the floor for them by racking up points and boards. She leads the team in both categories in addition to a 55.8% field goal percentage. She has been a stud with a recent 28 point and 20 rebound game that aided the Bears in clinching the Big 12. With her ability to take over any game that she plays in, Smith could very well lead the projected number two seeded Baylor Bears to victory.

A dark horse team not many are talking about currently is a projected number four seeded University of Iowa. Led by the current leading points per game scorer Caitlin Clark 24', she leads women's college basketball in not only points per game with 27.5 but also in assists with 7.9. Along with that, she averages about 8 rebounds per game which makes her one of, if not the top player in the tournament this year. With her ability to score and facilitate her teammates, Iowa has a chance to make a run. Three of their last four opponents were top ten teams in the nation, defeating all of them. They are on a hot streak and nobody wants to play a hot team in a win or go home game, especially one with their best player out there. Overall Iowa has a great chance to make their run and compete for the title.

Overall, this March Madness could be one of the best ever, especially with the fan attendance being tempered last year due to COVID. I'm sure all of us cannot wait to see what team ends up cutting down the net on April 3rd for the women's bracket and the 4th for the men's. The upsets and underdogs will hopefully lead to a ton of excitement and thrill this year. And remember as we are reminded every year, anything can happen in March.

season, four of their five losses have been to top twenty-

Photo Courtesy of @Stanfordwbb Instagram

Photo Courtesy of @dikemb Instagram

currently projected to get a two seed and is one of the top teams in the nation. Krzyzewski's experience leads many to believe this Duke team has

the Stanford University women's basketball team will look to defend their title.