



'Polaroid Stories' debut

PAGE 8



Owls defeat rivals UNH 73-63

PAGE 9



Jill Stein calling for a recount

PAGE 4

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The making of winter commencement



PHOTO | PALMER PIANA

Winter commencement will be held on Dec. 16 in the Lyman center.

By Jeniece Roman

Patrick Dilger, chair of the University Commencement Committee, said the major difference between the May and December commencement is the location.

“There’s less planning to do for the December ones because they’re smaller and also we have a kind of template that we use every year,” said Dilger.

The undergraduate

commencement in May is held at the Webster Bank Arena in Bridgeport, which holds 8,000 people, according to Dilger. He said the December undergraduate commencement, which will take place on Friday Dec. 16 at 2 p.m., is held at the John Lyman Center for the Performing Arts.

“It’s different in scope and size,” said Dilger. “Although they do really nice events in the Lyman center. They do a

very nice job so it’s still, it’s no less of an event, it’s still your graduation. We do make every effort to make it feel that way.”

According to Dilger the planning for the May commencement usually starts in January and for December, it started in late September. He said there are more things to consider when the ceremony is on campus.

“There are more things to take into account,” said Dilger.

“There are added logistical things beyond the order of exercise but the order of exercises is the same.”

Dilger said that in last years’ attendance for December 316 students attended the ceremony, 314 the year before and 258 the first year. He said that initially the December commencement was for students that needed a few more credit in order to graduate and it was decided to

SEE WINTER COMMENCEMENT PAGE 2

Future teachers become pen pals for elementary students

By Meagan McAdams

Emily Sheehy, a junior secondary education major, had a second grader as a Pencil Pal this semester through the Future Teacher’s Organization.

“Even though I’m doing secondary education, middle school and high school, I still want to get to know the kids that are out there, maybe I want to do that instead,” said Sheehy. “I wanted to connect with that age group, I have a nephew the same age and they’re really fun to talk with.”

Beginning in late September, 62 members of Southern’s Future Teacher’s Organization were paired with three second grade classes from Spring Glen School in Hamden as Pencil Pals. The Future Teachers wrote four letters, and their pencil pals wrote three.

“I wanted to do it because I thought it would really have an impact on the kid’s life, like he would really appreciate that,” said Reed Beely, a senior interdisciplinary studies major. “I also think that there’s a difference between being a teacher and being like someone our age, kids see you differently and it’s an opportunity to have an impact on them in a different way.”

Students are able to talk about anything they want in their letters. Vice President of the Future Teacher’s Organization, Rachael Tyrrel, said most students discuss their Hallows-eens, Thanksgivings, families, what they are learning in school or hobbies they have.

“I told my pen pal I play the violin and he said something like ‘you’re the best thing ever,’ it was precious,” said Beely.

All letters are handwritten on themed stationery and are submitted for review before they are sent out to the students.

After writing letters back and forth three times pencil pals have a chance to meet in person at the end of the semester for about two hours. The

SEE PEN PALS PAGE 2

University is prepared for armed intruders

By Alex Pamieri

Evacuate, hide and take action are the three steps to take if there is a shooter on campus, Deputy Chief Phillip J. Pessina said.

“The first step is to evacuate,” said Pessina. “You want to get out of the area. You want self-preservation. That’s why we ask to evacuate first.”

With the Ohio State University shooting just a few weeks ago, it can have plenty of people thinking about safety at schools. Pessina said vigilance and awareness goes beyond the shooting at Ohio State.

He said all students and faculty should always be mindful of their surroundings in case a shooting or a serious situation occurs at Southern.

“Be familiar with your surroundings,” said Pessina. “Be aware with what you may need to be safe. I don’t want people to be fearful; I want them to think safe all the time and know their surroundings.”

Shelter-in-place is another step of action to take if people cannot evacuate. Pessina said this is when everybody takes



PHOTO | ALEX PALMIERI

Deputy Chief Phillip J. Pessina said the first step is to evacuate if there is ever an armed intruder on campus.

immediate action and all lights and cell phones get shut off. Everybody must remain quiet and stay secure for further information.

“Our main focus is to neutralize the threat,” said Pessina. “We will try our best to take the target out.”

Communication ties into all of

the steps that need to be taken, and Pessina said it is key in any drill or serious situation. With a situation as serious as a gunman on campus, Pessina said with all of the new and improved technology, it makes things a lot easier.

The communication aspect is major for everyone on campus

to understand the situation completely, especially with the Southern updates to keep everyone informed.

“Once we evaluate what happens,” said Pessina, “the university homepage will set up a notification. It’s all about communication. There will be updates on campus, emails, the

website, etc.”

When the officers get into the building, Pessina said the officers will neutralize the victim immediately. They will then call the EMT’s to get the victims to safety.

Pessina said the police always attempt to be as prepared as they can be in case something like a campus shooting happens.

“The fact of the matter is: We are prepared, but never prepared. You never know what is going to happen. This is why we do the training we do. We have done numerous, numerous trainings over the years.”

Pessina said he has been a part of the Southern Police for ten years.

He said Southern has a robust student center and it is good. Pessina added that he hopes everyone knows what to expect if something like this happens because it is also on the Southern website.

“We’re going to do our best to keep the university safe,” said Pessina. “But we need partnership. The university, faculty and staff are a part of the process of keeping the university safe. It takes a whole family to keep us all safe. We’re all a family.”



PHOTO COURTESY | GAGE SKIDMORE
President-elect Donald Trump has said he wants to create a registry of U.S. residents who are Muslim.

Muslim registry threat

By Brokk Tollefson

Haroon Chaudhry is fearful that he and his family will not be allowed back into the United States after visiting their home and family in Pakistan. The reason for his fear: President-elect Donald Trump’s proposal on the mandatory Muslim registry.

Chaudhry, a sophomore business major, is the president of the Muslim Student Association at Southern Connecticut State University. Chaudhry is not the only one with this worry, other members of the MSA find themselves discussing these matters too, Chaudhry said.

“It’s really hard for us to go back to our country just to visit,” said Chaudhry, “because there’s no guarantee that we’ll be allowed back in even though we’re citizens of the United States.”

Maysaa Akach, a senior pre-med major, said the proposed Muslim registry is comparable to the victims of the Nazis in World War II.

“I think it’s extremely wrong and I think it’s the same thing as the Holocaust when Hitler made them wear the stars,” said Akach. “It’s basically the same thing; I don’t understand why only one faith would have to have registration based on someone thinking it’s wrong.”

According to the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, this is not the first time this country has considered a nationwide Muslim registry. On Sept. 10, 2002, the Bush administration enacted the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System.

The ADC reports there were three parts to the NSEERS program--requiring non-citizens to register who entered the country, to regularly check in with immigration officials, and to check out upon leaving the country. Violators were arrested, fined, and deported. The ADC also said that from 26 countries, all “male visitors” were forced to register. Although no specific religious group was targeted, immigrants from all countries except one were Muslim majority countries.

The ADC stated due to insufficient training of NSEERS officers and personnel, “hundreds of individuals who had voluntarily appeared to register at INS offices around the country were arrested and detained without reasonable justification.”

The ADC said because of how unorganized NSEERS was and because of the many civil rights activist groups fighting against it, it was ended in December

2004; “no registrants were charged with terrorism,” and it was considered a major failure.

Steven Judd, Ph.D. Middle East Historian and a professor of the SCSU History Department, said NSEERS is different from what President-elect Trump is proposing.

Said Judd: “What was done earlier in 2002 was basically focused on immigrants and non-citizens of the country and keeping track of people from various places. This is something much bigger that’s being proposed and it certainly looks like bad things we’ve seen in the past.”

Judd said he reads and speaks Arabic and spent time in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, Morocco and Turkey doing doctoral research. He said he “spent decades studying Islam,” and this has given him insight and respect for the people and culture.

Bahar Musa, a junior psychology major and MSA member, said people should not use actions of the few to define the many.

“Already Islam is portrayed in a negative light with ISIS,” said Musa, “so for America, which vows equality, to say that we’re going to put you guys in a registry that separates you from the rest of us reinforces the whole Muslim equals terrorist idea.”

Chaudhry said those involved in the terror attacks seen in the United States and other countries do not truly know what Islam is.

“Every attack that has happened by Muslim people, they don’t know the real meaning of true Islam,” said Chaudhry. “They misinterpret Islam and commit those horrible crimes in the name of Islam but they don’t represent us.”

Judd said the people who are trying to implement the Muslim registry do not have the correct understanding of Muslims.

Said Judd: “I think those who are planning these things have a perception that Muslims are all from the Middle East and they’re all terrorists, or at least some of them are and are a great danger to us. But the majority of them are actually African Americans who have been here for many generations.”

Musa said Southern is a place where she feels safe and able to be open about being Muslim.

“We all kind of have that bond here; we’re kind of like a safe space,” said Musa. “We don’t really have people who make you feel like you’re not a part of the bubble. For that reason, Southern is awesome.”

Winter commencement

Continued from page 1

December commencements on campus in 2013 to accommodate students who were completing their degree requirements in the fall.

“The big challenges in Lyman are having enough tickets to give away for family and friends,” said Dilger. “It’s easier for the graduates because there are not that many graduate students graduating at this time.”

According to Dilger, because the December commencement is held at Lyman Center, of which the capacity is roughly fourteen hundred, there is limited space and therefore a limit of two tickets per student.

“In this day and age, people might have extended families or they might have two sets of parents, that kind of thing,” said Dilger. “So it’s tough if you can only bring two people.”

Dilger said the university does their best to accommodate the students and does give out extra tickets if they have them. He said that the commencement ceremony is the pinnacle of a student’s college career and it is something to celebrate no matter where, but that the Lyman center has its benefits.

“It’s more intimate and by being on campus, it’s got that campus feel,” said Dilger. “You can connect with your faculty, mentors, etcetera perhaps beforehand or afterwards.”

Dilger said that no matter what time of year it is, it is always a thrill for him to see students going up and getting their diploma.

“The reward is just seeing our students walking up and achieving their goal. That’s the big thing,” said Dilger “It’s a big rush.”

The effects of juvenile incarceration

By Ali Sorbara

Kelly DeFranco, a junior psychology major at Southern Connecticut, said she had a friend who went through a juvenile confinement wilderness program.

“In the beginning of 10th grade, when we were around 15, he was sanctioned to go to this out of state wilderness program for about 10 months,” said DeFranco. “He and other troubled youths were forced to learn how to fend for themselves in the wilderness with no guidance and a small set of supplies.”

According to a report conducted by the National Institute of Justice, the current youth prison model that emphasizes confinement and control often exacerbates youth trauma; in fact, it prevents positive growth, and fails to address public safety.

The Office of Policy and Management, said the most common charges for youths are 25 percent simple assault, 17 percent orderly conduct, 16 percent larceny, 7 percent drug abuse violations, 5 percent vandalism, 4 percent burglary, 2 percent aggravated assault, 2 percent robbery, 2 percent weapon charges and 2 percent motor vehicle theft.

DeFranco said when her friend came back home, he was a completely different person that noticeably held a lot of isolation, resentment, anger and hurt inside of him.

The NIJ report said the practice of incarcerating young people in institutions has been subject to failure, both for youths and the community. Also, the re-offense rates for these institutions range from 70 to 80 percent.

“He had extreme anxiety, to the point where he wouldn’t even talk to me or anybody close to him for weeks,” DeFranco said. “He told me that he would always be scarred by not only the inhumane obstacles, but the feelings of neglect, betrayal, and confusion he was exposed to.”

As a whole, the process of cutting individuals off from their families through residential treatment facilities or wilderness programs disrupts their education, exposes them to further trauma and violence, harms their development, and has lifelong negative consequences, according to the American Civil Liberties Union.

The OPM said 92 percent of arrests made in Connecticut concern individuals over the age of 18, as 8 percent are under the age of 18. Also, there was a 12 percent

decrease in juvenile arrests between 2014 and 2015.

According to the Public News Service, or PNS, Gov. Dannel Malloy said he wants Connecticut to close its Juvenile Training Schools by 2018.

“I don’t agree with Governor Malloy wanting to close down Connecticut juvenile detention centers,” said Jim Comstock, a New Haven Police Officer. “I believe if a juvenile, no matter what the age, commits a serious crime, they should be placed in a suitable facility.”

Comstock said an effective way to help juveniles is to get to the core of the problem, and address potential complications that are coming from a juvenile’s home, as many come from broken families and lack a father figure or role models to look up to.

“I think the best way to approach this issue is to build programs that allow more role models and positive peers inside their communities, that way they have supportive relationships to look up to so it lessens the chance of them committing more crimes,” said Comstock.

According to the ACLU, the benefits for juveniles in well-run facilities include increased insight, positive change in behavior, and a developed set of goals that they can pursue when released.

Paul Burinskas, a psychology professor at SCSU, said detention centers should set standards that are equitable for everybody.

“Speaking as a psychologist, I think the appropriate age that a young person can cognize what they’ve done to be incarcerated is 22,” said Burinskas. “As a citizen, I think 17 years old is the youngest a person should be subject to incarceration.”

Burinskas said if a youth were to have ill intentions or a sociopathic mindset, he would feel it is best for them to be detained, as opposed to an individual who made an honest mistake and repented their wrongdoing.

The NIJ report said that the youth prison model should be replaced with a continuum of community-based programs and, for the youths who require secure confinement, smaller homelike facilities that prioritize age-appropriate rehabilitation.

“I definitely feel like there are more beneficial alternatives than to just lock up a youth, they at least deserve a well suited and well run facility,” said DeFranco. “I also think they have the right to be medically evaluated, which could help determine any mental illnesses or developmental problems one might have that could have contributed to the crime.”



PHOTO COURTESY | CREATIVE COMMONS
Gov. Dannel Malloy said he wants Connecticut to close its Juvenile Training Schools by 2018.

Pen pals

Continued from page 1

Future Teacher’s Organization takes a trip to Spring Glen School, where this year they will be reading a book to their pal. In past years they have done arts and crafts, had snacks, or watched a movie. At their meeting in person Southern students bring their last letter with them.

The exchange lasts for one semester every year. Tyrrel said they continue to do the pen pals every year so that the Future Teachers can gain experience and the elementary school students are practicing their reading and writing skills.

“The goal in it is to create bonds, obviously with students it’s great professional experience for potential teachers to be communicating with students, and it increases literacy,” said Tyrrel, who is a double major in Interdisciplinary studies,

and Special education with a concentration in elementary education.

Tyrrel, and President of the Future Teacher’s Organization Christina Mazzeo, are the only two who do not have pen pals. They have to organize and facilitate the meet and greet.

Tyrrel said the organization does not go to the same elementary school every year however they have worked with Spring Glen School before.

“We have a goal of reaching out to our surrounding communities,” said Tyrrel, “so we’ve really been trying to do a lot in New Haven, Hamden, Bridgeport, we have events coming up in Wallingford so we really are trying to get connected and give back to the community in a way too.”

Reporting sexual assault on campus

VPAS said they direct victims to recieve the proper care and guidance they need

By Alex Palmieri

If any student wants to report an incident regarding sexual harassment on campus, there are many steps that can be taken, Elizabeth Brady said.

“Advocates help walk students through the process,” said Brady, graduate intern of Violence Prevention, Victim Advocacy and Support Center. “If they want to press charges, switch resident halls, switch classes, or just talk to someone; it is all up to them.”

Brady said it is all up to the student to decide what they want to do if they are feeling uncomfortable regarding a specific situation. She added that studies show people are less likely to ask for help if they do not feel safe.

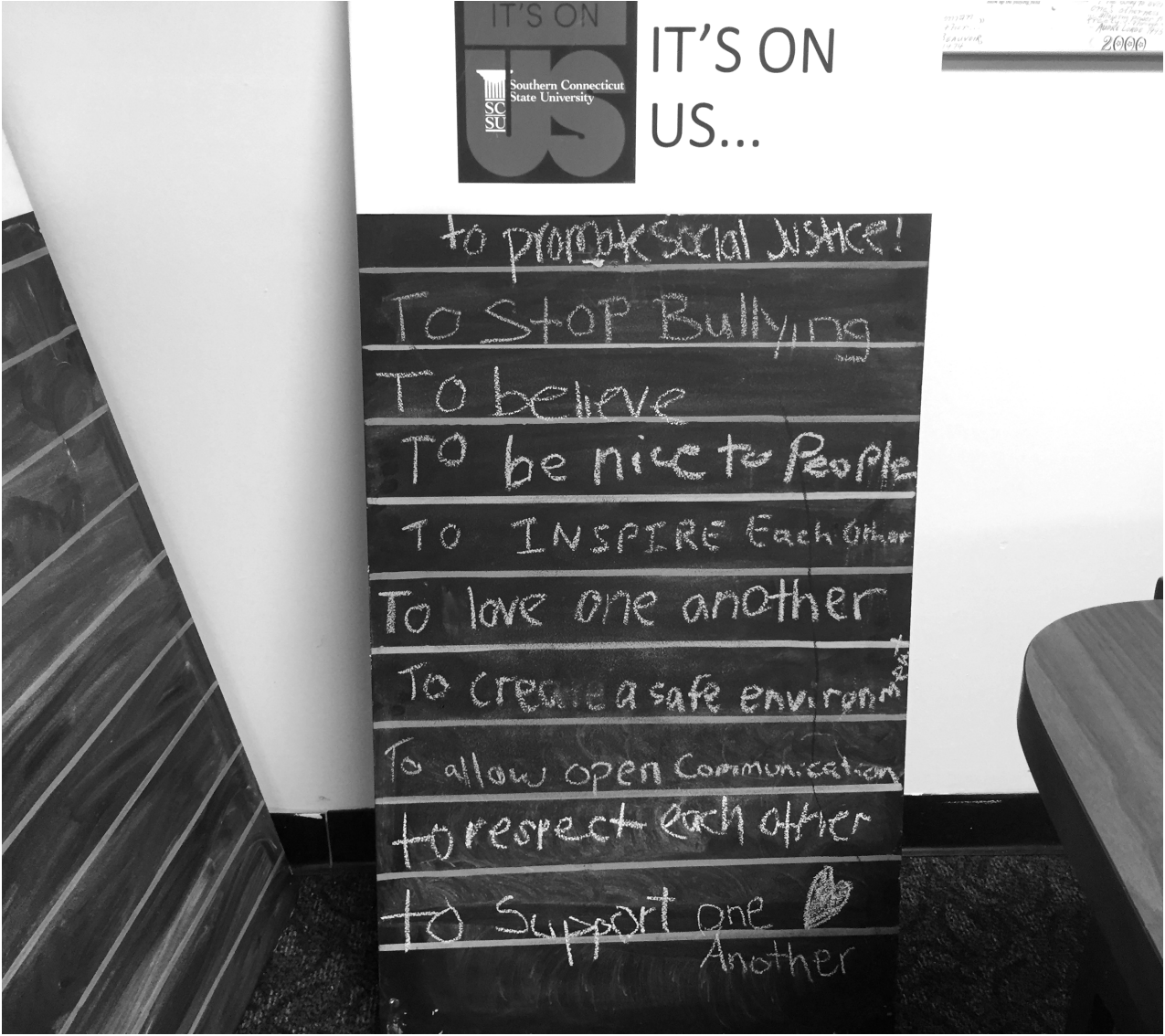
This is why VPAS is so important. They can direct students to the proper care and guidance towards helping anyone in need.

“We try to reach with as many students as possible,” said Brady. “There are always events going on.”

The events include the bystander event, “It’s on us,” Take Back the Night, etc. All these events attempt to include all Southern students to raise awareness about victim advocacy. It is very important because it is a serious topic.

“We are here as a center to support students,” said Brady. “We realize a lot of students are good. It’s on all of us to stop and prevent these acts.”

A U.S. News and World Report study found more than one in



This sign was created to invite students to write civic responsibilities they believe are important.

six freshmen are raped during their first year at college while too drunk or drugged. With a

staggering statistic that can leave many uncomfortable, Alexandra Adams, a sophomore English

major, said it is shameful and sad that it is widely accepted in the society we live in today.

“I think it’s a problem,” said Adams, “that girls are told how to prevent being raped or assaulted, but boys aren’t taught not to be rapists.”

With the events and gatherings VPAS hosts throughout the semesters, Adams said it is a good move by the university. She thinks it can start prevention and people can start to speak up about things that are wrong.

“I think it’s good to do as much outreach as possible,” said Adams. “It’s good to start from the root of the problem.”

Kyley Fiondella, a freshman nursing major, said she is surprised with the statistic and said she is upset that it is so high. In order to prevent the sexual assault and harassment, Fiondella said there has to be some resources that students can have if they are ever feeling uncomfortable.

“There needs to be a lot of outreach for women to know how to avoid certain situations,” said Fiondella. “Also to teach people who can help someone who might be in a situation like that, and to make it safe for women to reach out to the authorities to get help if it does happen to them.”

There can always be steps taken to avoid any situation that looks uncomfortable to someone. The SART team is at Southern to support those in need in case of any situation.

“If they are too shy or scared,” said Brady, “we are here as a center to support our students.”

Further reaction to election results

By Joshua LaBella

More than three weeks have passed since Donald Trump’s surprise victory on election night and the nation is still adjusting to the thought of a Trump presidency.

On the Southern Connecticut State University Campus many students are unpacking the results of the election both in the classroom and the dorm room. Discussions and debates can be heard in many classes, clubs and events.

One student, Sarah O’Connor, an exercise science major and freshmen on campus, voted for Donald Trump and said she went into election night prepared for Hillary to win.

“I didn’t think it was going to happen so it was a complete shock to me,” said O’Connor.

Juliah Green, a public health major and sophomore who voted for Hillary Clinton, said she felt the United States was

becoming a disaster. She said Trump does not know how to control what he says and thinks this will lead our country to war.

“We are going to be at war with people and people don’t realize that,” said Green.

Green said she could feel the effects of the election on campus, especially in the days immediately following the election.

Green said: “They day after I feel like everyone was just sad. The campus had this vibe that was just not great.”

She said one time she was walking across the academic quad when she passed by a couple of anti-Trump students who were shouting about how Trump wants to build a wall. When she voiced her disagreement with them they called her a “racist Trump lover.”

“This election really brought out the nasty side of people,” said O’Connor. “People are so quick to name call instead of backing up their facts.”

O’Connor does not let that get her down. She said she had grown used to being one of the only Trump supporters

in her classes and had gotten good at debating her fellow classmates.

Green said she won’t let people’s political views get in the way of her talking to them. She said she just needs to accept the fact that people do support him.

One thing that has bothered Green is how Trump supporters are reacting to the election on social media. She said that many of the Trump supporters that she is friends with online have become even bolder in their anti-Obama and anti-liberal rhetoric.

“America is diverse and there are a lot of immigrants and people from different countries,” said Green. “He has to think for everybody and not just himself and the people that he likes to be around.”

According to the Pew Research Center 55 percent of Americans say they believe the polarization of political views will continue under a Trump presidency. Both O’Connor and Green said they agreed with this view. While they hoped for unification neither thought it would be very

realistic to expect things to get better.

“At the rate this country’s going at I hope for the best but I don’t see it happening in the near future,” said O’Connor.

Green and O’Connor said that the most important thing Americans could do at this point was to learn to work together.

O’Connor hopes that Hillary voters give Trump a chance and see the positive in the situation. She said that he is going to be the president and it would be wrong for anyone to hope for him to do a bad job.

“He could do really great or really bad but we don’t know yet and everybody should stay positive and take it day-by-day,” said O’Connor.

Green said she thought that many Americans fear how divided we have become.

“Now is the time we really have to stick together or we are going to pull apart,” Green said. “I really hope that doesn’t happen.”

Calling all bystanders to speak up if they witness an abuse incident

By Alex Palmieri

Awareness of a bystander is important, Melissa Kissi, Sexual Assault and Violence Prevention Specialist, said.

“If something is wrong,” said Kissi, “we need to step in in some way. We may not be comfortable doing it in a direct way, but doing something always helps.”

Kissi said there can be valid reasons of why people do not help others in certain situations. Some people might be afraid of what can happen, the unexpected or for other reasons.

“It’s what we do,” said Kissi. “It’s the social norm. It’s normal for us to speak up and focus on positive reasons so that the day-by-day, we can make Southern the best it could be.”

A National Sexual Violence Resource Center study found found that one in six boys will be sexually abused before the age of 18.

For girls before 18, it stated one in four girls will be sexually abused. Kissi said if there were more bystanders that can help, these statistics can be prevented a lot more.

“Doing something always helps,” said Kissi. “There is no one right way. As long as we work together, we can have a better and safer community.”



Melissa Kissi said that stepping into a situation where violence is expected can help someone in danger.

Marco Velazquez, a freshman undecided major, said the event was very interesting and he was thrilled with the statistics. If a situation occurred and he was around as a bystander, he said he would take action.

“I would definitely say something,” said Velazquez.

Velazquez said the overall event was

great because he saw statistics he has never seen before. Because he learned new information.

“I thought the event was great,” said Velazquez.

Kissi said if people do happen to witness a situation unfolding as a bystander, there are the “Three D’s” to attempt to follow:

Direct, distract and delegate. Direct means talk to the person in the scenario to try to help them. Distract is to attempt get that person away from the situation. Delegate is to go contact police, the RA or someone else to assist the situation.

“I hope people gain an awareness of bystander info,” said Kissi. “We’re supporting the community; we are not only responsible for ourselves.”

The event ended with a video by Ohio State University, which featured people at a party. The girl had too much to drink and a man was attempting to take her home, and he did. The video then flashed back and pointed out all of the bystanders at the party, playing out different scenarios if the bystanders prevented the scenario.

It was a very intriguing concept to show that if people stand up for what is right, it can help someone in danger. With people speaking up, it can prevent the outcome of a situation.

“The most interesting part of this was definitely the video,” said Velazquez.

Kissi said people cannot help to fix these sorts of things overnight; it takes one step at a time. But with people saying something if they see something, it can lead to a better community.

“The goal day to day,” said Kissi, “is to make Southern the best it can be.”



PHOTO | LATASHA DUDLEY

Humans of SCSU: Latasha Dudley

By Jeniece Roman

Latasha Dudley said, for as long as she can remember, she has always been interested in the law and politics.

“I’m the kind that always watched the news all the time and always picked up current events,” said Dudley, a junior political science major.

Dudley said that she was always focused in academics and knew it was important for her to do well but she never understood why. She said she knew that she wanted to study law since the seventh grade.

“It’s kind of everything to me,” said Dudley. “I’ve been going to school my whole life and in a way working towards this goal my whole life.”

Dudley said she was always a curious child growing up and when she asked questions, her mother would reply with “It’s politics,” or “It’s the law.” She said it just made her even more curious about the law, what it is and how it works because she felt that it is everywhere and she just wanted to know.

“I’ve always just wondered why certain laws are in place and how can they get better to benefit everybody,” said Dudley. “So I’ve always just been attracted to that kind of thing.”

With a major in political science and a minor in criminal justice, Dudley said that her plan is to go to Quinnipiac or UConn law school, practice law and eventually become a judge in the state of Connecticut.

“When I actually get to this point, I will feel complete,” said Dudley. “God forbid I don’t get to this point, I will not be happy.”

Dudley said she is a member of the Pre Law Society at Southern but plans to be an active member next semester, of which the advisor is professor Jonathan O’Hara.

“So usually any questions you have about law, you go to him,” said Dudley. “He has the most education when it comes to law.”

Dudley said, that in the past, her and a friend would look up the public records of current court cases and practice law.

“I guess it’s kind of like an odd thing to do but we’re going to do one again over break,” said Dudley.

She said she would review the case and find different arguments that have not been used in the cases to present in defense and prosecution.

“We’re going to take one out and then kind of try to present it,” said Dudley, “To practice on our speech and what we know about the law and try and see where we stand.”



PHOTO COURTESY | GAGE SKIDMORE

Jill Stein calling for a recount

Caitlin Bunegru, a junior music major said while the outcome of the election was disappointing, she feels as though a recount will not make a difference in the overall results.

By Lynandro Simmons

Jill Stein’s plan to have a vote recount probably will not change anything, said Caitlin Bunegru.

“I’m disappointed in the results, but I don’t think this will change the Electoral College decision,” said Bunegru, a junior music major.

However, she said that it is unfortunate that Hillary Clinton won the popular vote and still lost the election. Not only did Clinton win the popular vote, she said, but she won it by an incredibly large margin.

Instead of a recount of votes – which probably would not sway the election – there should be a reform on the Electoral College, she said.

“It’s unfair that the majority of people clearly didn’t want this man in office,” said Bunegru.

Going forth with the decision to recount the votes could be a double-edged sword, she said. It could turn out positive or

add more controversy to an election that does not need more.

Also, the recount is only taking place in three states – Pennsylvania, Wisconsin and Michigan. Bunegru said she did not believe there is a guarantee Trump would lose the electoral votes in these states.

Bunegru also added a lot of people did not take the election seriously. She used an example of people writing in Harambe on their ballots.

“It’s ridiculous that people joked around with an election,” she said.

Though she doesn’t see anything changing, Bunegru said Jill Stein should continue with her push for a revote.

“Considering the fact she’s a woman and she’s gone so far, she might as well continue,” said Bunegru.

Taylor Wiggins, a sophomore political science major, said one way discrepancies could be reduced in voting is by changing the process. She

used her own personal experience as an example.

“When I went to vote I had an issue with my I.D. because I had just moved here,” she said.

Little issues like this can deter people from voting, according to Wiggins.

There were also many people who did not take the election seriously, which contributed to Trump’s win.

Instead of focusing on a recount of votes, a focus should be made on the large amount of people who were not pleased with either candidate, she said.

Having a recount of votes probably will not change anything, but it could reaffirm the decision already made, said Wiggins.

“He could win again,” she said. “Then we really have to deal with his arrogance.”

Christine Njoroge, a senior accounting major, said she was unhappy with the results, but a recount was unnecessary.

“What if it does bring about a new outcome,” she

said. “It could create chaos.”

Njoroge said the group of people who supported Trump probably would not just take their candidate losing in a recount so easily. Instead of a recount, Njoroge said that there should be a focus on the voter suppression that occurred in certain states this year. Unfortunately voter suppression harmed minority communities the most, she said.

“Voting should be as simple as possible,” she said. “As long as you’re a citizen your voice should be heard.”

Njoroge also said Stein could be playing into the anger of people much like how Trump ran his campaign. This would be taking advantage of a situation because of how many people did not like the outcome, she said.

However, Stein might not be aware she is even doing this, she said.

“I believe she’s raising the money for the right reasons,” Njoroge said. “But it’s pointless.”

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Advisors: Cindy Simoneau
Frank Harris III

Contact information:
Email: scsu.southern.news@gmail.com
Newsroom Phone: 203-392-6928
Fax: 203-392-6927

Mailing Address:
Southern Connecticut State University
501 Crescent Street
Student Center Room 225
New Haven, CT 06515

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To submit a piece, email it to scsu.southern.news@gmail.com, or stop by the Southern News office on the second floor of the Student Center, room 225. Electronic submissions are preferred.

Opinion Columns are 500 to 800 words and Letters to the Editor are a maximum of 400 words. They must include the writer’s name and phone number for verification. We reserve the right to edit for grammar, spelling, content and length.

Students prepare for a cold Connecticut winter



PHOTO COURTESY | TONY WEBSTER

By Adrianna Rochester

As the winter season approaches, some students like Leticla Araujo, are finding ways to deal with the cold weather and all that comes with it.

“I’m Brazilian so I like the heat,” said Araujo. “I’m not crazy on dressing up. I just like to be comfortable, especially when it comes to school because, since I’d rather be comfortable than worry about outfits.”

Araujo, a junior communications disorder major, said sometimes if it is really cold, she carries hand warmers and wears leggings under sweatpants. “I just put a lot of layers but I still put on, just like a t-shirt under so I can feel comfortable if I’m inside,” said Araujo.

Araujo said she prefers the warmer weather and that because she commutes to campus from Danbury, it makes it harder for her to dress for the weather.

“Some days it’s really cold and you walk into a building on campus and it’s like really hot,” said Araujo.

Hajar Jazay, a junior business major, said she checks the weather everyday but she mainly sticks to her go to jacket. Jazay said that she actually prefers the colder weather.

“I mean I don’t do shorts in the winter or anything like that but I just like the cold.”

Shelby Church, a senior Spanish major, said that for her, winter comes with problems other than the cold. She said because she commutes from Shelton, she has to leave earlier than residents because she needs to find parking.

“When the weather changes and it starts to rain,” said Church, “Now I have to go to my car to get an umbrella, if not I’m getting wet.”

Church said she thinks it is more of a pain to find parking during the colder months or during inclement weather. She said she has to carry her jacket around inside because it is so much warmer in the buildings than it is outside.

“I would rather be able to add on a bunch of clothing and take it off to get cooler rather than,” said Church, “you can only go so far in public.”

Unsung Hero: Sue Clerc

By Adrianna Rochester

As a librarian of the Hilton C. Buley Library, each member of the department works with other academic departments on campus to provide the best materials for student’s research, according to librarian Sue Clerc.

Clerc said she is in charge of the communications, communications disorder, journalism and media studies databases for the Buley website.

Clerc said she reads various books reviews to determine what material could be useful for student’s research topics.

“I spend time sorting out the old books, add new ones to the collections and talk to classes about how to access the information needed to assist them with their schoolwork,” Clerc said.

Clerc expressed the importance of hands on time outside of the classroom because even though she gives as much information to students during her in class discussions, she said she can always go more in depth with students if they come for a visit outside of their class times.

“We have classrooms set up in the Library Department that can be utilized to further assist students,” she said “All they have to do is make an appointment and I’m here to help.”

Besides staying up to date with the online databases for each of the departments she is in charge of, Clerc also said she fixes any issues students may encounter while trying to do their research—such as making inaccessible links accessible, provides guides for MLA and AP citations and more.

“One thing that can get tricky is when the website’s interface changes,” she said “when that happens the librarians have to learn how to use the new system so that we can then teach other students how to use it as well.”

However, Clerc said she has witnessed that the profession has changed tremendously over the years because everything is digitalized now.

“When I was getting my master’s degree everything was on CDs and card catalogs,” she said. “Now I find myself teaching students how to use periodicals through online databases.

By having so much information online, Clerc

said it does lead to some problems. For example, she said if someone was doing research on how violence on television affects children the researcher would have to look for information on each topic separately before connecting the topics together.

Nowadays, Clerc said if you type the words into a search engine it gives you a lot of information and makes those connections for you, but the person has to then determine what information is useful and most of the times they end up having to dig deeper.

When Clerc is not in the library helping students, she said she is a fan of traveling and likes to take photographs of Muffler Men.

“Muffler Men are usually seen on the road side as you’re driving by, but I found that there is one female Muffler statue.”

Clerc said after discovering the female Muffler statue she decided to use her image to represent Clerc publicly instead of using pictures of herself. An effort that was done as a way to pay homage to the only Muffler Woman.

SPLC reports that hate crimes have risen since the election

By Adrianna Rochester

According to the recent Southern Poverty Law Center reports, over 400 harassment and hate crime incidents were reported—from Nov. 9 to Nov. 16—since the presidential election. Around 65 percent of the incidents collected occurred within the first three days following the 2016 election.

The SPLC stated while the total number of incidents have risen, the “trend line points to a steady drop-off,” which means since the SPLC began collecting these reports the number of reported incidents have declined.

However, the SPLC reported other patterns pointed out showed that anti-immigrant incidents remain the top type of harassment reported with nearly 40 percent of all incidents occurring in educational – K-12 schools and university/college – settings.

These incidents were ranked by the SPLC based on the number of reports. For example, about 206 anti-immigrant incidents were reported, followed by anti-black incidents with about 151 reports, anti-LGBT with about 80 reports, anti-woman with about 36 reports and anti-Trump incidents also rose from 20 to 27 reports.

McKenzie Katz, a senior sociology major, said now people think they can do what they want and say what they want without any repercussions.

“There used to be a boundary of political correctness that isn’t there anymore mainly because of Trump’s

campaign,” she said.

Katz said while she has heard other individuals argue that the rise in hate and harassment crimes, it will not affect many people’s day-to-day lives. However, she said she highly disagrees.

“When you’re a person who potentially can be targeted it becomes a reoccurring thought on that individual’s mind,” she said.

Being a woman and a member of the LGBT community incidents such as these matter to Katz, she said.

“I think this is a reflection of our times,” said Jeremy Grier, a videography major at Southern, “because hate crimes have been occurring in this country before Trump ran for office, but I think he did add fuel to the fire.”

“You can’t un-teach prejudice, but you can un-teach ignorance,” Grier said.

After reviewing the SPLC’s reports himself, he said he felt more shocked than afraid because as person of color he knows that if any changes were to occur it would have to start locally with the youth.

“I think when people project their prejudice onto others it’s done partially out of fear because they’re afraid of those who are different from them,” he said.

“Instead of being open-minded, some are closed-minded and allow that closed-mindedness to be their tool to gain power over others.”

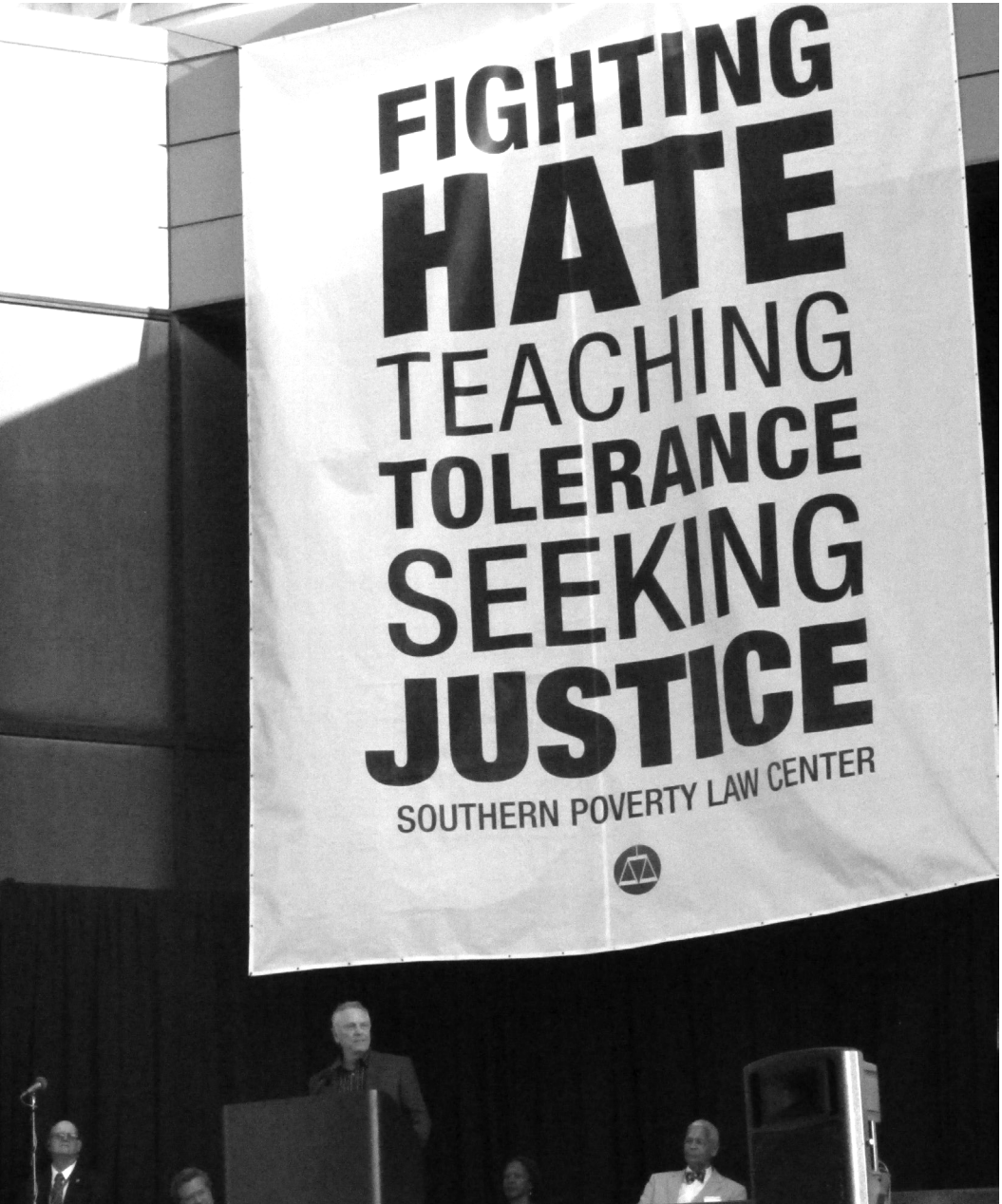


PHOTO COURTESY | STRETCHYBILL

Symphonic Pulse Dance Company holds their first showcase

By Adrianna Rochester

The Symphonic Pulse Dance Company kicked off this month with their first dance showcase of the academic school year. Organizations, such as OLAS, SPDC Dance Team, Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity Incorporated, the African Student Association and more were amongst some of the few acts of the night. The showcase was a donation based event, free of admissions and opened to anyone who was interested in attending. Staff member of the Lyman Center, Shimera Estes, handed out programs and collected donations in lobby. According to Estes, SPDC collected about \$150 in almost the first hour of the show and though they don't have a target goal, Estes said "every penny counts."

Once the show started, SPDC choreographer, Tiana Jarrett opened with a group dance number, followed by OLAS, SPDC and Phi Beta Sigma Incorporated. During a brief intermission, David Starkey, associate director of the Lyman Center said SPDC are returning clients. "SPDC has been hosting shows here for a while now," he said "usually they have a dance show twice a year—in the fall and spring—and they have them at Lyman."

Starkey said, anytime organizations inquire about using the center to host their events he does what he can to help make their vision come to life. He said one thing the center does is provides hands on staff both backstage and front stage. Laura Folker, who is also a part of the Lyman staff, said she was very impressed with the student's performances. "I really liked the OLAS number," Folker said "That was a nice one."

In regards to the donations received at the event, she said it was one of the best turn outs she has seen in a while for a student ran event. "We had to empty the donation container once and people are still giving, which is amazing, she said. Folker said she has been working at the Lyman Center for a few years now. During her time there, she said has witnessed student involvement evolve over the years. Folker said, she hopes more people will hear about this event through word of mouth and come out for SPDC's next dance showcase in the spring since this one went so well.

Review: Sadie Dupuis releases her first solo project 'Slugger'



Sadie Dupuis performing at The Space in New Haven on Nov. 17, 2016. PHOTO | ABIGAIL O'KEEFE

By Abigail O'Keefe

Sadie Dupuis, best-known for being the mastermind behind the band Speedy Ortiz, released her first solo project on Nov. 11, 2016. Performing as Sad13, "Slugger" is a departure from Dupuis' typical indie punk sound. The synth-heavy LP is rife with feminist imagery and catchy hooks. The 11 track album takes listeners on a trip through what sounds like pages from Dupuis' diary. The whole album feels thematically cohesive because it was written and recorded in a mere two weeks. The intricate post-production helps the album come to fruition. In the wake of powerful pop albums like Beyonce's "Lemonade," "Slugger" feels right on beat with the pulse of 2016. Songs like "Line Up" and "Hype" address the inequality that often comes with musical notoriety. "Line Up" chastises festivals for seeking out token female acts for their bills. The track features some of the guitar work that Speedy Ortiz fans are used to hearing from Dupuis, with an upbeat chorus that feels like a perfect merger of indie pop and punk rock. "Hype" takes on the redundant questions Dupuis often gets asked about her peers in the music industry. "I just want to hype my best friends, man. Just want to hype my girls," she sings of praising her fellow female musicians. "Coming Into Powers" features a verse from female rapper Sammus, who recently performed at Café 9. The album also tackles heavier themes like consent and abusive relationships. On "Get a Yes," Dupuis highlights the importance and sexiness of affirmative verbal consent with lyrics like "I say yes to the dress when I put it on, I'll say yes if I want you to take it off." "Devil in U" addresses how Dupuis edited herself to keep a controlling ex-partner's temper at bay. "That's what an angel would do, stuck with the devil in you," laments Dupuis on the song's chorus. The track's instrumentation evokes the dark subject matter of the lyrics. Sad13 is currently on tour to support "Slugger." Dupuis and her all-female backing band stopped by The Space in Hamden on Nov. 17. With support from Sam Evian and Vagabon, Sad13 headlined the basement venue on a chilly Thursday night. Dressed to the nines in her high school prom dress, Dupuis played Slugger in its entirety. Though she played the synth for most of the show, Dupuis did don her turquoise guitar for several songs. The show was sparsely attended, but the vibe was positive and excited. Dupuis' mother was even in attendance. Interludes between songs were accompanied by a remix of the "Sabrina the Teenage Witch" theme song and lots of light-hearted stage banter. Fans were able to chat with the band at the merchandise table while picking up a record, tee-shirt, or lapel pin after the show. The album and its live rendition are well-worth checking out. Dupuis has crafted one of the most insightful indie pop albums of the year, without sacrificing an easy-listening factor. Slugger lives up to its name: it hits a homerun for DIY and feminism.

Review: 'Bad Santa 2' falls short of expectations and laughs

By Adrianna Rochester

If you are a politically correct person, then the film "Bad Santa 2," will offend you on various levels because of the content of the dialogue. However, the film is not meant to be politically correct. It is meant to do the opposite by using crude, sexual and inappropriate jokes. The movie tries to echo its predecessor—and though I did laugh—it seemed to fall short. It is not a bad movie, but it is not better than the first. It definitely had its moments, but they were short lived in the movie. I am not sure if it is because the laughs came easier and more frequent in the first movie than it did in the sequel, but much of the plot did not call for comedy. Despite the glimpse of hope at the end of "Bad Santa," things have not been going so good for Willie in the following years. The movie starts off with the main character's subconscious talking while he is experiencing his lowest point in life. Billy Bob Thornton's character, Willie Stock, is as broken and drunk as before. The girlfriend he had in the first movie did not stick around and his only friend, played by Brett Kelly, is a 21-year-old who has the mind of an 8-year-old. His inability to keep a job has left him to drown in his own sorrows. He attempts to commit suicide, but while his last attempt was failing an old friend reached out with an offer to pull off a scam that will make them both rich. The plot twists when Willie learns that the whole idea for the scam came from his mother, whom he hates. The target is a charity who accepts volunteers every year to dress up as Santa during the holidayws. Forced to put the Santa suit back on, Willie agrees to go along with the plans. Unfortunately, because the plot is so straight forward there was no room for character development and there was no surprise factor. Parts of the movie, particularly the ending was predictable and the jokes were just as bleak as they were in the first movie. Thornton's character seems to continue to serve as a reminder of what could possibly be going on with those Santas we see at the malls and street stores every holiday season. A sequel was definitely not needed. It did not push the storyline any farther than it did before, but it is still a movie some would enjoy watching.



Actor, Billy Bob Thornton back in 2012. PHOTO COURTESY | ANGELA GEORGE



PHOTO COURTESY | PUBLIC DOMAIN

Piano duo performed by music professors in Earl Hall

By Lynandro Simmons

Dr. Mark Kuss and Professor Irene Senedak performed a beautiful piano duet Wednesday, Nov. 30 at Southern Connecticut State University. The duo shared one piano and played side-by-side in a performance that left no room for errors. “If we’re an inch off it could mess us up,” said Kuss. The first piece was described by Kuss as a groundbreaking piece. The piece was even written so that different parts can be heard as it is played, he said. “When I first heard this music I was 18,” said Kuss. “I was riding on my bike and I never heard anything like it.” At the time this music was released it was even considered radical, he said. Due to it being the first of its kind people were not used to the erratic sound. “Now we look at it and see how profoundly original it is,” said Kuss. The next piece – which was described as the weirdest in the program – was more grandiose. Around

this time artists were not able to fully grasp the concept this piece was reaching for, he said. The ideas were described by Kuss as to be larger than the capacity of space they were written on. “Later on Beethoven figured out how to make something that’s larger than human,” said Kuss. In order to capture this piece, Kuss and Senedak had to work tightly together using what Senedak described as cinematic techniques. Senedak said that their familiarity with each other helped to ease the pressure of performing. “We’ve been working on and off forever,” she said. “But this was like a live reunion concert.” Senedak said over the summer her and Kuss started getting together and tossing ideas around. Though the duo had worked together for more than 10 years, an intricate art form like this still required practice, she said. The hours of work proved fruitful with the flawless execution of the performance. Senedak said that live performances such as this are important as other mediums for art.

“Seeing performances live can really be a different thing,” she said. Often seeing a live musical performance can even lead to inspiration, said Senedak. This was the beauty of art, and more specifically music. Music can connect people despite the spectrum of differences in society. “Music is a universal language,” she said. “Even if someone doesn’t know the subtext of it.” Mariah Bazile, a senior nursing major at Southern, said the performance was magnificent. “This is my first time seeing a duet concert,” she said. “They’re just great musicians.” Bazile, a music minor, said she attended the concert because both professors invited their class to watch the performance. She had seen both of them play individually so she knew she would be in for a treat seeing them play together, she said. However, two people working together on one piano was something she had never seen. The partnership on the piano despite different playing styles was also brilliant, she said.

“Dr. Kuss is dynamic and commands your attention,” she said. “At the same time he allowed professor Senedak to breathe.” Similarly, Bazile said Senedak’s docile but poignant style of playing the piano was still able to stand out in its own right. Both of the professors’ playing styles were almost like a representation of their personalities, she said. Even though she admitted she didn’t know much about the selections, she said she still appreciated the performance due to the level of execution. “Music is complicated, but it’s beautiful,” said Brazile. “It just takes people who know what they’re doing to translate the music effectively.”

Students give their take on their art classes and experiences

By Mary Rudzis

Edwin Vargas did not always want to be an art major, but he said he is now is glad to be studying painting and going into a career as an artist. He said he has enjoyed his time in the department and being able to hone his skills within a supportive community. “I came here and chose art because I wanted to pursue what my dream was when I was younger,” said Vargas, a senior studio art major with a concentration in painting. Before coming to Southern, Vargas was an intercultural studies major. As a whole, Vargas said he has had a positive experience in the department with both his professors and peers. “The professors are all amazing,” said Vargas. “They have their different ways of showing you how to learn. Some will push you really hard and some will give you the freedom to explore and I like both aspects.” Vargas also said he has enjoyed the classes he’s taken outside of painting. “I’ve learned a lot in terms of expanding my scope,” said Vargas. “There’s a strong emphasis on exploring other areas of art so that is the strongest part of the major.” Vargas said that he also appreciates how easily accessible the professors are and that they lend their knowledge and experience to students. “You can always go to them,” said Vargas. Jeremy Chandler has taught

photography at Southern for five years, and he said his favorite thing is working with students. “That’s definitely the highlight,” said Chandler. “Definitely the diversity of students here is as great if not a little bit greater than places I’ve worked before. I like that diversity, I like being able to work with students in different majors and teaching them the skills to be successful.” He also said teaching at Southern is different than other places he’s worked; however, he has embraced it. “The thing about Southern is that it’s so teaching-driven,” said Chandler. “At other places I’ve taught, faculty are very much into their own work and they see teaching as a way to fulfill their obligation to the university where at Southern it’s the other way around. Teaching definitely comes first and I feel like everybody is very invested in working with students and making sure they succeed.” The studio art major requires students to choose a concentration, which are ceramics, graphic design, jewelry/metals, painting, photography, printmaking and sculpture, according to the art department’s page on Southern’s website. “I’ve always liked art but I didn’t discover until later that I knew that’s what I wanted to do,” said Kristina Borelli, a junior studio art major with a concentration in graphic design. Borelli said she did not enjoy her first graphic design class but she took a year off school and came back to a new professor, and she enjoyed it a lot more. She’s taken more

classes in the graphic design department, like typography, and chosen to stay with her concentration. “I think my typography class has been the most helpful because I’ve learned so much in it that I’m looking at graphic design in a different way,” said Borelli. “That class has taught me a lot and I feel a lot more confident in my career as a graphic designer because I wasn’t sure if I was going to continue to do that.” She also said her advisor, Alex Girard, a graphic design professor, has helped her a lot. “I’m pretty sure I could get a job in graphic design,” said Borelli. “I already have some portfolio pieces and I can tell Alex is going to be able to help me get an internship.” The university employs students as assistants to the concentration departments within the major. Steven Jean Simon is the university assistant for the photography department, but he didn’t always want to do art. “I came to Southern for computer science,” said Jean Simon. “They didn’t have what I was looking for. Then I took the intro to photography class, which I really loved.” Jean Simon does both digital and film photography, and wants to see where his career takes him when he graduates from Southern. He said he may plan to go to graduate school to study cinematography. “So far I’ve had fun in the art department,” said Jean Simon. “It’s been a great time. It’s definitely challenging but this is school so I don’t expect any less.”

He said he likes the breadth of classes available as well as the sense of community in the department. “I’ve always enjoyed photography and I did a little bit of that in high school so I switched my major to that because I had more fun with it than computer science,” said Jean Simon. He also said that he likes all the professors he had. “The art department does really well in reviewing who works for them,” said Jean Simon. They have a solid community that’s there to support you and teach you.” Chandler said he hopes students both in and outside of the art major are able to take away something useful from the art classes they take, and feels a sense of community within the department. “To be self-motivated and how to think creatively about problem solving and how to get to where they want to be with the skills that they have– that’s one thing that art is especially good at,” said Chandler. “Everybody refines their own skill set.”



PHOTO COURTESY | SCSU CRESCENT PLAYERS

On stage picture of the Crescent Players during “Polaroid Stories.”

The Crescent Players tackle dark truths in ‘Polaroid Stories’

By Gregory Gagliardi

“Polaroid Stories,” is the most recent play performed by Sothern’s ensemble theater group, The Crescent Players. “Polaroid Stories,” is originally by Naomi Iizuka, adapted from Ovid’s Metamorphoses, and directed at Southern by Raphael Massie. The play is quite complex. According to director Massie, original playwright Naomi Iizuka takes stories from Greek Mythology, and re-imagines them through the eyes of homeless teens in a modern adaption. Her tale works on three levels: the world of Greek mythology, the fictional setting of the play, and actual stories from the real-life prostitutes and street kids. The play does not hold back on any fronts. Prostitutes and drug use are shown in a realistic and grime content. Greek mythology is used to explore these topics and show them in non-generalized sense. The idea of putting 90s back alley debauchery combined with Greek Mythology is not easy, and too many it can seem far off. But director Massie emphasized that the adaption style would draw students in. He mentioned that playwright Iizuka did actual interviews with homeless teens and prostitutes. The realistic element translated well for the audience. Junior, Katelin Adintori, said “The play wasn’t light, but it was honest. It was

refreshing to see students tackle a play that exposes dark truths.” Associate Sound Designer James T. McLoughlin said, “You will see crack use, and pimps, but none of this is done to mock anybody. This play takes place in the 90s when this was almost the norm to some people. We wanted to emphasize that in the time before many southern students were acclimated to the world, dark things were happening. It’s important to bridge the gap for students. In today’s social world, with a polarizing election having just taken place. I think it’s important for students, and actors to have reflection.” The leads included senior theater major, Briana Bauch; transfer student, Betzabeth Castro; senior communication major, Cantrell Cheeks; sophomore theater major, Carter Cooke; graduating senior, Ben Cooperman; junior business management major, Eric Clinton; a theater alumni from Housatonic Community College, James Hall; freshman, Erin MacLeod; and senior, Kiernan Norman. Each aforementioned actor played a Grecian God. Each god depicts a homeless person, prostitute, or drug addict. Some represent all three. A common thread amongst the male roles was the reference to “being a god”. As the play progressed the theme became more apparent. Each time a male character was struggling with self-identity after being asked by their



PHOTO COURTESY | SCSU CRESCENT PLAYERS

The Crescent Players in a group photo for “Polaroid Stories.”

female counterpart “Who are you, for real?” The answer was always “A god.” Obviously none of these people were “gods”, but that is the point. Each character wanted to be a god, they wanted power. They, in essence wanted what they didn’t have. Each time “a god” was said, it was never spoken, but rather yelled. Cantrell Cheeks’ character is the first to do so. He bellows for the entire audience to hear “I am god”

when he is questioned by Ben Cooperman’s character, Skinhead a.k.a Oklahoma Boy. For these homeless teens, it was not about having your friend hear you, but rather the world. But the world did not listen. Aside from riveting acting and precise directing, the best thing about “Polaroid Stories” is that it shows us how cold the world can be, even to a bunch of teenagers.

Sports management major hopes to inspire others with art

By Lynandro Simmons

Osaro Eromosele said that art has always been a form of escape and a way for people to express themselves. “I particularly love sculpting,” said Eromosele, a sophomore sports management major at Southern. Though Eromosele majors in sports management, he chose to minor in art because of the influence it had on him growing up. “Going on field trips and seeing work in museums really inspired me,” he said. “I knew I just wanted to do that type of stuff one day.” The passion did not turn into actual work for Eromosele until he was a freshman in high school. Six years later he is still chasing his passion in college, he said. While sculpting, Eromosele loves to listen to music. This music provides the motivational soundtrack for him to complete his sculptures, he said. “When I want to sculpt I usually listen to classical music,” said Eromosele. “I like Beethoven and Bach.” Classical music provides inspiration for Eromosele, but he said when he starts a new sculpture he tries to keep an open mind. Sometimes looking at his previous sculptures also helps to provide inspiration,

he said. Though Eromosele loves all his work, he also makes sure to look at older sculptures with a critical eye. “I do this to see what I can improve on with my new sculptures,” said Eromosele. However, there are times when Eromosele lacks motivation and inspiration. While working in class, he said, the strict guidelines can hamper his creative drive. Some art professors shoot down ideas before they even get off the ground, he said. “In Southern I’m limited to the work I really want to do,” said Eromosele. In spite of this, Eromosele said the numerous art history classes he took has provided him with a plethora of talented artists from the past. Learning about these artists – such as Vincent Van Gogh and Michelangelo – has helped him to learn about his craft more. Though he does not like the lack of freedom in deciding what images to sculpt, he still finds ways to keep his creative drive working. “Free time always gives me inspiration,” said Eromosele. During this time he chooses to freely sculpt anything he can put his imagination to, he said. Doing this rejuvenates him whenever he has a creative block. At one time Eromosele chose to keep his sculptures and artwork to himself, but he has recently become more open to sharing it. On social media platforms – like Insta-



PHOTO | LYNANDRO SIMMONS

Osaro Eromosele, a sophomore sports management major stands with his art.

gram, Facebook, and Snapchat – he likes to show what he has recently worked on. This new-found confidence in his work came from another artist – his sister Sara. Eromosele said his sister inspired him to be more forthcoming with his work. Now he wants his sculptures to provide the same type of inspiration for someone else, he said. By looking at his art, whether it is

his sculptures or paintings, he wants future artists to be inspired to be as true to themselves as possible. Eromosele said that he hopes his work will live on beyond his time and not only inspire his peers, but even his future family to be true to themselves. “I want my future kids to remember me as a great artist,” he said. “Maybe I can even inspire them to be artists too.



PHOTO | PALMER PIANA

Jerry Luckett Jr. (#34) drives to the basket and shoots a layup in Southern’s 73-63 win over the University of New Haven. Luckett recorded his second double-double of the season with 13 points and 13 rebounds.

New Haven clash

SCSU’s Austin Carter had a game-high 19 points and helped hold cross-city rivals UNH to 63 points, the Owls’ lowest points allowed all season

By Edgar Ayala

The basketball clash for the best in New Haven went in favor to Southern Connecticut, as the Owls edged past the University of New Haven 73-63 last Wednesday night.

“Whenever two New Haven city schools meet, you know it’s going to be a tough battle no matter what the records are,” said Scott Burrell, Southern’s head basketball coach. “We played a great defensive first half. We just got a little soft and lazy in the second half – and it hurt us a little bit.”

Senior Austin Carter was red hot in the first half, as the forward had

a season-high and game-high 19 points – scoring 17 of his 19 points in the first half.

Carter did not miss a single shot in the first period, as the reigning defensive player of the year went 7-for-7 from the field and 3-of-3 from three-point range.

“I can’t stand New Haven, that’s just how it is between us.”

— Austin Carter, senior forward

“I can’t stand New Haven, that’s just how it is between us,” said Carter. “I knew I had to perform big

tonight. I wanted to make sure being a captain and leader, to come off starting on the right foot.”

The Owls were up 14 points at halftime shooting 51 percent from the field, and the Chargers did not have a response as UNH shot 11-of-30 (36 percent) from the field in the first frame.

However, the Chargers erased the Owls’ 42-28 lead and opened the second half on a 16-2 run to tie the game at 44. The Chargers and Owls would continue to battle as they tied things up at 55 with 9:16 on the clock.

“We didn’t come out with the same mental toughness in the second half,” said Burrell. “That’s what happened. They made some shots and got confident. Their energy level built up, and it was tough.”

Sophomore Isaiah McLeod echoed Coach Burrell’s words on the Owls’ second half performance.

“We talked about that coming out of the locker room,” said McLeod on continuing to play hard after a 14-point lead at halftime. “We need to close this game and go up 30 and put it away, but we came out a little bit slow.”

But it was guys like McLeod who came off the bench and contributed with 11 points, three rebounds and one assist, block and steal in 27 minutes of action. This was

SEE MENS BASKETBALL PAGE 11

Find out what the next move is for star reciever Devante Jenkins



PHOTO | EDGAR AYALA

Devante Jenkins is fourth all-time in touchdown receptions (24) in two years for the Owls.

By Phil Zoppi

Now that star wide receiver Devante Jenkins has finished his Southern career, he is now setting his sights to play at the professional level.

“I think I can play at the next level because I have an incredible work ethic, and I’m willing to do whatever it takes to get where I have to go,” said Jenkins.

Jenkins would not be the first player to reach the NFL from Southern Connecticut, as players like Jerome Cunningham (Tennessee Titans) and Joe Andruzzi (retired, three-time Super Bowl champion) made it to the league out of Southern.

Jenkins definitely has an NFL-type resume. Not only was Jenkins a First-Team All-Northeast-10 Conference selection last year, but he was also named an All-American by USA College Football.

Robert Nittolo, the quarterback that Jenkins caught so many of his passes from at Southern, believes in the wide receivers ability to compete at the highest level.

“He is one of the best wide receivers I have played with,” said Nittolo. “He has real natural ability and a nose for the ball. I do believe he has the talent to make it pro. With hard work I believe he can do it.”

Nittolo helped Jenkins burst onto the scene at Southern as the duo hooked up for three touchdowns in Jenkins first game as an Owl in 2015. Ever since that game

SEE JENKINS PAGE 10



PHOTO | SOUTHERNCTOWLS.COM

McLaughlin is averaging 21.8 points and 10.4 rebounds per game. She had a near triple-double (32 points, 12 rebounds and seven steals) against UNH.

McLaughlin nets career-high in UNH win

By Phil Zoppi

Senior Taylor McLaughlin was the dominant force that edged Southern over the University of New Haven in the Owls’ 79-54 win last Wednesday night.

McLaughlin finished with 32 points and 12 rebounds; UNH did not have an answer for the star forward all game long.

“I just really owe it all to my teammates,” said McLaughlin. “They set me up all night.”

McLaughlin can praise her teammates all she wants, but what she is doing this year is remarkable. Just last

week McLaughlin notched her 1,000th career point for Southern, and is currently averaging a double-double on the season (21.1 ppg and 10.9 rpg).

Head coach Kate Lynch was more than impressed with her senior captain after arguably her best performance of the season.

“It’s really fun watching her play,” said Lynch on McLaughlin. “She is really blossoming and you can see her confidence on the floor. Something that we’re really proud of is her defensive effort today. She was really great defensively in the post today. She’s been great for

us this year, we can’t ask for anything more from her.”

“It’s really fun watching her play. She is really blossoming and you can see her confidence on the floor.”

— Kate Lynch, women’s basketball coach

The Chargers jumped out to a 2-0 lead, but that was the only time they were up the entire game. The Owls came out firing as they spread

SEE WOMENS BASKETBALL PAGE 11

This is not the last of Edgar

By Edgar Ayala

The doors into the journalism field opened for me once I joined the Southern News. Since then, it has been a life changing two years.

Southern News exposed me to meet and talk to many diverse individuals. It has led me to find job opportunities through my current internship. It has turned me into an improved writer and gain the necessary experience I need in journalism. And most importantly, it has let me pursue my dream job of working in sports media.

I am going to take you back to Oct. 27, 2014. I think. That is the date I made the decision to switch my major from business to journalism. Coming out of high school I knew I was good at math and wanted to pursue a business degree. That did not go well.

After switching majors I remember walking into the journalism department where I saw professor Jodie Gil. As I gazed around the department I said, “is this where you change your major?”

Since hopping on the journalism train, I joined the Southern News staff the

semester that followed. And boy was that fast.

I started off as a general assignment reporter, but only for a week – Phil Zoppi can tell you how that went – and landed the sports writer position for the rest of that semester.

Being able to write about sports is a big passion of mine. But the story continued when I earned the sports editor position.

Yet, if it were not for switching majors or joining Southern News I probably would not have gotten my internship at Frontier Communications’ Vantage Sports

Network. Who knows where I would be had I still continued a business degree? Definitely not writing this.

Never in a million years would I have believed that I’d be a sports journalist. It just never crossed my mind. Yet, here I am now – and I love it.

This is not the last of me, as I still have one more semester here – thank God. But this is my last column for SNews. I just want to thank the journalism department and the Southern News for making me the man I am today. You guys are the real MVP’s.



Southern athletes weigh in on their pre-game approach



PHOTO | EDGAR AYALA

Football linebacker Vasilios Grigorakos and women’s basketball guard Maria Weselyj are two student-athletes that weigh in on their pre-game techniques and routines.

By Michael Apotria

Physically preparing for a game is only half of the battle, the other half is confidence and mindset. Athletes dedicate their time in practice to display the best results during a game, according to senior guard Maria Weselyj.

“Preparation is extremely important,” said Weselyj, the basketball player. “I’d say more important than actually going through the physical motions in practice. A lot of the game is mental. Your mind is powerful and you have to be in the right spot mentally in order to perform.”

Weselyj said she believes visualization is a key component of mental preparation. A tip she learned from some of the top professional athletes.

“You always hear of some of the top athletes utilizing it – Michael Phelps, Serena Williams, Stephen Curry – they’re at the top of their sports,” Weselyj said. “For me, being able to visualize my opponent’s movements or where to be on certain spots of the court is a big advantage.”

Assistant coach for Southern’s men’s basketball team, Mike Papale, said confidence is the key to success. He added that an athlete has to feel good about where they are mentally and emotionally before a game.

“For every athlete it’s different,” said Papale. “What one athlete might love to do before a game, might drive another crazy. Whatever it may be they need to figure it out on their own.”

Southern’s junior linebacker, Vasilios Grigorakos, said it is all about music and eating his

favorite snack.

“I always eat a peanut butter and jelly sandwich and listen to some of my favorite artists on repeat to get me pumped up before every game,” said Grigorakos. “It’s usually a combination of 50 Cent, Eminem, Jay Z and Kanye West.”

Additionally, Weselyj said while she similarly has a go-to snack before a game, she does not enjoy listening to music before a game because it distracts her.

“Music before a game can give me anxiety,” said Weselyj. “Instead I like to eat something like a Snickers bar – for the energy, while reading over some old texts my dad sent me. He’s my biggest supporter and it motivates me.”

Head coach of Southern’s women’s basketball, Kate Lynch, said she understands the feeling

of having pregame nerves, and sometimes having a superstition can ease the mind before taking the court.

“When I played it was pancakes,” said Lynch, “just regular pancakes, not any other kind. Before every game, it was my way of feeling right. In my mind it worked.”

As the head coach, Lynch said it is her responsibility to make sure her players are not only in the right mindset before a game, but also prepared with scouting reports and game film.

“I always want to make sure my players are prepared,” said Lynch. “They get a really heavy scouting report. We really try to know what our opponents are going to do offensively.”

According to Grigorakos, a lot of knowing how to prepare for games comes with time and experience. He knows the feeling

of being nervous, and he tries to be someone the team and underclassmen can look up to.

“Looking back on my freshman year I was definitely nervous before games,” said Grigorakos. “I was nervous to ask questions and play. Now when I am out there I tell the younger guys to make sure they speak up and ask any questions if they have them, we all have to be on the same page.”

Coach Papale added that regardless if it is keeping up with an athlete’s superstition that helps them win games, the most important factor is that the athlete enters the game in the right mindset, and exits the game feeling confident.

“As a coach or a player,” Papale said, “you have to take advantage of affecting the outcome in anyway you can.”

Jenkins

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

Jenkins has been a well-known commodity on Southern’s football team.

“It was a special game because it was my first, and I felt I had a lot to prove,” said Jenkins. “Even though we lost that’s something positive that I can take from the game.”

That is the kind of player that Jenkins is. Even if he catches three touchdowns it is not a successful day for him unless his team comes out on top. A mindset like that is one that can make it to the NFL. Nittolo will always remember Jenkins for his fierce and competitive nature.

“He was a good teammate that was for the team and wanted to win,” said Nittolo.

Southern finished with a winning record of 6-5 for the first time since 2011 – a large part due to Jenkins. There was no question who the best player was on the field when the Owls took the field every week. Jenkins hauled in nine touchdown passes, which was fourth best in the entire Northeast-10 Conference. Additionally, he led the conference in touchdowns last year with 15.

He racked up 24 touchdowns in his two-year career at Southern Connecticut.

To go along with the nine touchdowns this year, Jenkins was able to catch 49 passes for 850 yards. The statistics and



PHOTO | SOUTHERNCTOWLS.COM

Devante Jenkins’ final year at Southern saw him record 49 catches, 850 receiving yards and nine touchdowns in 11 games. Jenkins played a pivotal role in the program finishing with a winning record (6-5) for the first time since 2011.

personal success is not what Jenkins is going to remember most about his time at Southern though.

“I’m going to remember and miss all the good times I had with my team and family,” said Jenkins.

With the NFL offseason looming Jenkins has started to look into what it is going to take for him to find his way onto an NFL roster one day.

“My next goal is to try and compete for the NFL,” said Jenkins. “Maybe go to the NFL

combine and have an NFL pro day.”

Many college football players share Jenkins’ goals. There are limited spots for all of those players to achieve their goals as only 1,696 players are employed in the

NFL at any given point.

This time next year Jenkins is determined to be one of those lucky 1,696 contestants.

He certainly is not the first to make it to the big league out of Southern Connecticut.

Dak Prescott leads NFL MVP race

By Phil Zoppi

The debate for who should win the most valuable player award in the NFL is starting to heat up, but there is no doubt in my mind who should win it this year.

Dak Prescott has been far and away the most valuable player to his respective team. Not only has Prescott handled the pressure of replacing a franchise legend in Tony Romo, but he has also led the Dallas Cowboys to a 10-1 record.

It is not just the Cowboys and their success that should give Prescott the award. Prescott has thrown for 18 touchdowns and just two interceptions. That is really hard to do – especially as a rookie. The MVP award is not who the best player in the NFL is, it is about who brings the most value to thier team.

If you remove Prescott from the Cowboys what would their record be? It would not be good. I would go as far to say that the Cowboys would not have more than two wins.

That is value. There are a few players that I think could take the award away from Prescott with a good final month though.

The most notable of those players being Oakland Raiders quarterback Derek Carr. He has had a heroic performance against the Carolina Panthers where he dislocated his right pinky, but was able to finish the game and give the Raiders a much-needed victory.

Carr also has the statistics to match Prescott as he has thrown for 22 touchdowns

and only five interceptions. On top of that, Carr does not have the type of running game that Prescott gets to benefit from.

The only reason Carr will win the MVP over Prescott is if he is able to win the AFC West. Carr plays in what a lot of people call the best division in football, and for him to give the Raiders their first division title since 2002 would go a long way in naming him MVP of the NFL.



Men’s basketball

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

his sixth out of seven games that McLeod scored over 10 points.

“Guys came off the bench and gave us a spark of energy,” said Carter. “I know the five people who started were tired. We needed as much energy as we could, in whatever way we could get it.”

And the Owls were able to find that energy in Southern’s all-time scorer Michael Mallory, when he had a fast break dunk with 8:48 left on the clock. After Mallory’s dunk, Southern led for the remainder of the game.

After coming back home to Moore Field House, Mallory was honored prior to the game for breaking the program’s all-time scoring record. However, the best scorer in Southern Connecticut history was held to 14 points on 6-of-18 shooting, after averaging 28.8 points coming into the game.

“He’s been taking great shots

and playing great,” said Burrell on Mallory. “Guys had to step up today because he didn’t have a big scoring night. I think the other guys showed they can play too.”

With the win against UNH, Southern edges closer to surpassing their cross-city rivals, as UNH leads the all-time series 43-40.

The Owls played on Sunday against the undefeated (9-0) No. 1 team in the Southwest Division of the Northeast-10 Conference – College of Saint Rose.

That undefeated streak was broken by Southern in a 68-66 win on Jerry Luckett Jr’s game-winning basket. That win improved the Owls to 6-2 overall and 4-0 in the conference.

Southern’s men’s basketball team sees action next against Pace University in a road game on Dec. 7.



PHOTO | SOUTHERNCTOWLS.COM

Austin Carter had a game-high 19 points against UNH. He is two blocks shy (187 blocks) of being second all-time in program history.

Women’s basketball

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9



PHOTO | SOUTHERNCTOWLS.COM

The women’s basketball holds a 3-5 record. They see action next against Pace on Dec. 7.

the floor and knocked down threes at an unbelievable rate.

Southern finished shooting 52 percent from beyond the arc. Lynch thought her team played to their strengths for the majority of the game.

“That’s kind of how we play and it was nice to finally see that,” said Lynch when referring to her team’s three point success. “We’re not gun shy. We’re shooters and even if we are not having a good night we’re going to keep shooting.”

McLaughlin did most of her work in the paint, but she also contributed to the three-point effort as she shot 3-for-4 from three-point range. One of McLaughlin’s good friends on the team, Murphy Murad, set her up for some of those three point shots.

Murad finished with a team-high 10 assists while playing what Lynch said was some of her best defensive games of the year.

“Honestly my teammates just gave me a lot of confidence,” said Murad. “One of the things that I’m best at is pushing the ball in transition so kudos to my teammates for running up the floor the whole game.”

Murad and McLaughlin expressed that this was a team win that they really wanted to get. The Owls’ sat at 2-4 heading into the game against their archrivals. The win has now brought them within one game of a .500 record (3-4 on the season).

Lynch preached to her team that they have to control what they can control, and that is defense. The Owls played exceptional defense on Wednesday night as they held UNH to 35 percent shooting. UNH’s 54 points was the least amount of points that Southern has allowed this season.

According to Lynch, one of the players that was key to the Owls’ success on defense was Murad.

“Defensively, she does not get tired,” said Lynch. “When she’s out there she is our floor general. When things aren’t going great she is able to pull us back and run things that we need to run. She’s been invaluable to us.”

McLaughlin and Murad will look to keep things rolling for the Owls as they head to New York to face Pace University on Dec. 7.

Sports Feature

Lilly Martin and the women’s swimming team are chasing the conference title



PHOTO | SOUTHERNCTOWLS.COM

At the ECAC Champoinships, Martin was part of the 400-yard medley relay team that finished with a time 4:08.92 on Dec. 4. The Owls placed eighth with 516 points.



PHOTO | SOUTHERNCTOWLS.COM

Lilly Martin.

By Matt Gad

Swimmer Lilly Martin has constantly proven her worth. The junior marketing major has followed up her junior campaign with an accolade that earned her Southern’s Athlete of the Week on Nov. 14.

In the Owls’ 153-147 win over Pace on Nov. 12, Martin placed first in three events – 200-yard Butterfly (2:19.16), 200-yard breaststroke (2:34.77) and the 400-yard individual medley (4:50.20). Making her case for SCSU’s Athlete of the Week.

“So far so good,” said Martin on how the women’s swimming and diving season is going. “As a team we have been winning meets and performing to the best of our abilities. That’s all you can really ask for.”

Last year, Martin contributed to the winning relay team at the Metropolitan Collegiate Championships. This is just one of dozens of milestones Martin put herself through last season.

Martin earned top finishes in last February’s Metro Championships in the 200-yard freestyle, 400-yard medley, 200-yard breaststroke and 200-yard medley relay. She also placed eighth for the 100-yard breast-stroke at 1:10.29, and 11th in the 100-yard butterfly with a time of 1:00.87.

“Lilly’s one of the best teammates you could ask for,” said Aubrey Bailey, a junior teammate and exercise science and nutrition major. “She always keeps you going at meets and practices, and just always has a positive attitude around the team.”

Martin added that she hopes this year’s team can break their conference championship drought. In their quest to doing so, the season commenced on Sept. 30 and the Owls have a 3-1 record in individual matchups thus far.

“Usually we are pretty close, but this year we seem even closer,” said Martin on winning the conference title

this season, as suppose to previous seasons. “We are all on the same mission to win NE10’s.”

In their season-opening two-day home meet with Westchester and Shippensburg, the Owls placed third out of the three schools.

In their individual one-on-one meets against Iona College on Oct. 8, they fell short 152-126. The women’s swimming and diving team earned their first win on Oct. 22 against TCNJ 147-137. Then continued their momentum and won meets against Worcester Polytechnic Institute and Pace, 150-16 and 153-141 respectively.

At the ECAC Championships on Dec. 4, Martin and three other swimmers finished with a time 4:08.92 in the 400-yard medley relay. The Owls placed eighth overall in the competition with 516 points.

Continuing a Connecticut theme, on Jan. 20 the team travels to Storrs to face off against the UConn Huskies, and the following meet on Jan. 27 they return home to face the University of Bridgeport.

“It is nice that we get to start off with local meets,” Bailey said. “There’s some good competition around the state and it is good to get to see that.”

The Northeast-10 Championships begin Feb. 16. and continue through Feb. 19. The NCAA Division II Championships, for the individual athletes that qualify, is set to run from March 8 through the 11th in Birmingham, Ala.

No matter what happens, Martin is just glad she is improving.

“My freshman year was a rough start and last year I started to get back on track,” said Martin. “This year the team chemistry is up, my teammates are looking good and my performances are also getting me excited.”

Martin and the rest of the Owls will see action next on Dec. 8 in a home meet against Yale University at 3 p.m.

SCSU men’s basketball vs. UNH photos



PHOTO | PALMER PIANA

Senior Michael Mallory (#3 with ball) dribbles past a UNH player last Wednesday in Moore Field House.



PHOTO | PALMER PIANA

Austin Carter (#11), Jerry Luckett Jr. (#34) and Isiah McLeod (#1) attempts to steal the ball away from UNH’s Najee Larcher.



PHOTO | PALMER PIANA

Freshman Taurus Adama II (with ball) posts up against a UNH defender on his way to the basket in the Owls’ 73-63 win.



PHOTO | PALMER PIANA

Sophomore Joey Wallace (#22) looks to inbound the ball. He recorded eight points, five rebounds and three assists.

Northeast–10 Standings

MEN’S BASKETBALL

	CONFERENCE			OVERALL		
	GP	RECORD	WIN %	GP	RECORD	WIN %
NORTHEAST DIVISION						
SO. NEW HAMPSHIRE	4	4-0	1.000	6	6-0	1.000
MERRIMACK	4	3-1	0.750	8	6-2	0.750
SAINT ANSELM	5	3-2	0.600	5	3-2	0.600
FRANKLIN PIERCE	5	3-2	0.600	8	4-4	0.500
BENTLEY	5	2-3	0.400	8	4-4	0.500
STONEHILL	5	2-3	0.400	8	4-4	0.500
ASSUMPTION	5	2-3	0.400	7	2-5	0.286
SAINT MICHAEL’S	5	0-5	0.000	7	0-7	0.000
SOUTHWEST DIVISION						
SO. CONNECTIUT	4	4-0	1.000	8	6-2	0.750
SAINT ROSE	5	4-1	0.800	10	9-1	0.900
ADELPHI	4	2-2	0.500	9	6-3	0.667
LE MOYNE	4	2-2	0.500	8	5-3	0.625
NEW HAVEN	5	2-3	0.400	8	4-4	0.500
PACE	4	1-3	0.250	8	4-4	0.500
AMERICAN INT’L	4	0-4	0.000	9	3-6	0.333

WOMEN’S BASKETBALL

	CONFERENCE			OVERALL		
	GP	RECORD	WIN %	GP	RECORD	WIN %
NORTHEAST DIVISION						
BENTLEY	5	5-0	1.000	9	7-2	0.778
STONEHILL	5	4-1	0.800	8	5-3	0.625
SAINT MICHAEL’S	5	3-2	0.600	7	3-4	0.429
MERRIMACK	4	2-2	0.500	8	3-5	0.375
ASSUMPTION	5	2-3	0.400	7	4-3	0.571
SAINT ANSELM	5	2-3	0.400	7	4-3	0.571
SO. NEW HAMPSHIRE	4	1-3	0.250	8	3-5	0.375
FRANKLIN PIERCE	5	0-5	0.000	8	2-6	0.250
SOUTHWEST DIVISION						
ADELPHI	4	4-0	1.000	8	6-2	0.750
LE MOYNE	4	3-1	0.750	8	6-2	0.750
AMERICAN INT’L	4	3-1	0.750	8	5-3	0.625
SAINT ROSE	5	2-3	0.400	7	3-4	0.429
PACE	4	1-3	0.250	9	5-4	0.556
SO. CONNECTICUT	4	1-3	0.250	8	3-5	0.375
NEW HAVEN	5	1-4	0.200	7	1-6	0.143

Natalie Barletta: a look back and looking ahead

By Natalie Barletta

Graduation is in nine days, a day I have anticipated for the past year or so, but now that it is almost here, I feel like am a deer in a headlights, wondering what exactly will my next chapter is going to contain.

My journey at Southern Connecticut State University began five years ago, when I toured the campus with my mother on Visitor's Day. It was then I knew this was going to be my home for my undergraduate education, even though I had not gotten accepted yet.

Over the course of the last four and a half years, I have had countless opportunities, academically and socially, whether it may be being involved in Sigma Tau Delta (the English Honor Society), the Society of Professional Journalists and my jobs at both Buley Library and the Accounts Payable office on campus. These opportunities have helped prompted a transformation from the person I was entering the university in 2012, to the person I am today.

Above all, the opportunity that I am most grateful for is the opportunity to be involved in Southern News. My journey at the newspaper began three and a half years ago, when I began as a student wanting to write, progressed to opinions editor my junior year and became a copy editor in my final semester.

Being a part of the newspaper helped me figure out that I wanted to pursue journalism as a career. I had learned so much during my time at Southern News, from how to use InDesign and Photoshop, to writing reviews, news stories and op eds. Over the years, my involvement at the

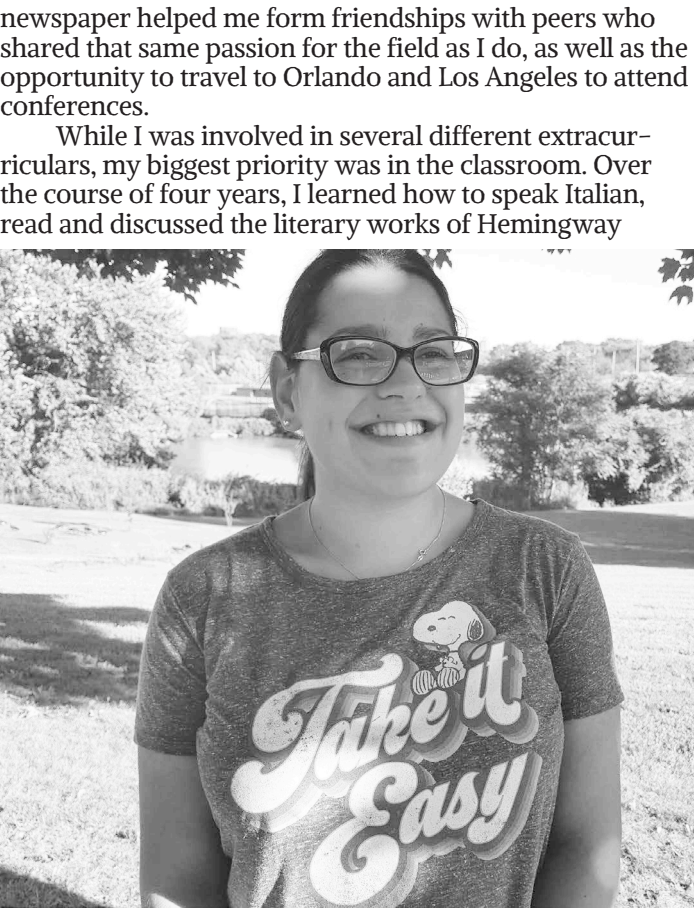


PHOTO | MELISSA NUNEZ

newspaper helped me form friendships with peers who shared that same passion for the field as I do, as well as the opportunity to travel to Orlando and Los Angeles to attend conferences.

While I was involved in several different extracurriculars, my biggest priority was in the classroom. Over the course of four years, I learned how to speak Italian, read and discussed the literary works of Hemingway

in Professor Ellis' English 463 class, learned how to be a better poet in Professor Shipley's English 303 class, learned several multimedia aspects of journalism in Professor Gil's Journalism 225 class and honed in my writing skills in Professor Simoneau's Journalism 201 and 300 classes.

While that is only a small percentage of the classes I have taken throughout my time at Southern, I am grateful for every professor I have encountered in both the journalism and English departments.

Without them, I am certain I would not have the appreciation for literature as I do now, nor could I be the writer I am today. I especially would like to thank my advisor, Cindy Simoneau, for her advice and feedback on all matters, from academic to professional.

While I am grateful for my professors that have helped me get to this point, I would also like to thank my mother, my grandparents and friends not only for their moral support when I needed it most, but for reading every article I have written.

As I am sad to leave behind the community that I built over the last four and a half years, I am optimistic of the uncertain future that lies ahead. My classes and opportunities at Southern have given me the skills I need for that next step, whatever that may be.

On Dec. 16, I will put on my cap and gown, and walk the campus one last time as a student as I walk the stage at Lyman Hall, and officially become an alumna of this University. It is hard to believe how fast the time has flown, I am still amazed by it, but am ready to see what is next.

Goodbye from the news editor

By Vivian Englund

When I started working for the Southern News two and a half years ago, I was a biology major transitioning into the English department. I started off as a copy editor and knew right away I wanted to be an editor one day. I knew it was going to take a lot of work and improvements to get there though, and boy, was I right.

I am sure my past self would be overjoyed to know I actually accomplished something that I never thought was possible. Whether it was alum Aaron Johnson patiently teaching me the ins and outs of InDesign, or former editors giving me the chance to write for their sections, I really do owe so much of my experience and growth as a writer to the Southern News.

As for my start at Southern News, I have to thank Kelsey Mix for encouraging me to take the step and apply.

To everyone else on the Southern News staff, our trip to Los Angeles--delivering In-N-Out Burger to everyone when it was raining out and the nights at Saddle Ranch are unforgettable.

As for the friends I have made throughout my time at Southern, I will carry them with my for a lifetime.

I still am not sure why it took me so long to change into a journalism major, but I am glad I did. Through all of the challenges and triumphs, I learned

so much. Thank you to the entire journalism department for giving me a chance to learn and grow.

Like everybody else, learning how to balance it all was a challenge. Whether it was frantic campus reporting in JRN 201, or running from Southern to my town hall in JRN 300, I know that all of the hard work was worth it.

What is to happen next? Even I still do not know, but at least I can say that I am walking away with the tools to make it out there. I am forever thankful for the Southern News and the journalism department for an opportunity.



PHOTO | MELISSA NUNEZ

Homosexuality and West Indian culture

By Adrianna Rochester

The general consensus is the majority of individuals within the Western Indian culture does not approve of homosexuality. This belief does stem from the culture's religious practices and their belief that homosexuality goes against the Bible's teachings. However, there is more to it than just religion, there is a historical factor as well. One that is often omitted from modern day history.

According to Tariq Nasheed, producer of the four-part documentary, "Hidden Colors," homosexuality was something was forced on the West Indians during slavery. The documentary takes its viewers on an exploration of the "negro slave buck mentality."

While Africans were chained in captivity they were at the mercy of sailors and other crew members of these ships. Women, children and men were raped during their journey from Africa to the West Indies.

Unfortunately, such abuse only continued once the slaves reached land.

Nasheed discussed that across the West Indies, particularly in Jamaica, Africans were brought to "seasoning plantation" before arriving to regular plantation.

These seasoning plantations were worse than regular plantations because the overseer or white supremacist would pick out the toughest and strongest male out of the slave population and rape them in front

of the entire plantation. The process was called, "buck-breaking," or "butt-breaking."

It was used as a way for the oppressors to not only control the slave population, but it was designed for other things as well. For example, by making the males submit to the white supremacist sexually, it showed validation over the slaves. It reminded the population the "white man" was their leader. "Buck-breaking" broke the men mentally, caused other slaves to no longer respect that man and ultimately de-masculinize and bind them to the oppressors will.

Such a practice exuded dominance, power and control over the slaves and lessened the chances of slaves rebelling against their masters. Due to the "buck-breaking" slaves endured, it gave birth to the people's negative mentality towards homosexual.

A mentality that has proven to be unchangeable throughout the years and is the main reason why homosexuality is deeply frowned upon in the Jamaican culture today.

Even though a belief such as this can't be erased from West Indian culture, I do think mutual respect from both sides of the spectrum can help strike some form of balance that will allow people to continue to coexist. Not everyone is going to stand for the same beliefs or agree with the way others decide to live their lives. With that being said, agreeing to disagree without ignorance or malice is the best solution.

Downloading tunes versus experiencing vinyl

By Karlie Borges

It is clear the way we listen to music has changed drastically over the years. People are buying their music digitally or using streaming services such as Spotify or Apple Music rather than going to a record store. With the music so readily available on phones and computers, it may seem hard to imagine people wanting physical copies of their favorite music. However, even in this digital age many music lovers still enjoy buying vinyl records.

Vinyl has been making a comeback in recent years and the data shows no sign of it stopping. According to the Record Industry Association of America, revenue from vinyl records rose 32 percent in 2015. This is the highest revenue from vinyl records since 1988. It is hard to pinpoint a particular cause for this phenomenon as there are many possible reasons to buy vinyl even in this mostly digital world.

Owning a vinyl record allows you own a piece of music history. I began by taking records from my mom's collection, which have been stored in our basement for 20 years. These were records originally printed in the 1970s and 1980s and include iconic albums such as Prince's "Purple Rain", Bruce Springsteen's "Born to Run" and several albums from

Madonna, Led Zeppelin and the Rolling Stones.

From there, I began purchasing records and building my own collection. I now enjoy listening to vinyl and often times I prefer to have a record play from my turntable rather than my phone

Vinyl provides a special listening experience that cannot be had with a digital format. One of the best things about vinyl records is listening to the hum of the needle along the record grooves and the poetic crackling sound occasionally coming through the speakers. This adds texture to the sound in a way that a digital format does not. LPs sound warmer, and you are more likely to notice subtle sounds and instruments. People may see the fragility of vinyl as a downside, but the imperfections found in vinyl records end up being part of their charm.

There is also something wonderfully interactive about putting on a record, listening to a side, and then flipping it over to hear the other side. This may not be necessary in order to appreciate good music, but vinyl enhances the listening experience by making it so that the person listening is constantly involved emotionally and physically.

With digital, the listener loses out on any sort of physical interaction with the music they are listening to while vinyl offered a more intimate experience. Having a physical

object to hold is an extremely satisfying feeling and the large format of a record feels more substantial than a simple file on your phone or computer.

It also allows you to appreciate the album cover and the inserts which can sometimes be compelling artworks all on their own. The satisfying experience of opening the wrapper, smelling the sleeve and actually touching the record is an experience that many people who collect vinyl records find worthy of their hard earned money.

For some, the process of collecting records alone is enough. An ICM poll for the BBC published in April showed that of people who bought a record in the past month, 48 percent have yet to play it and 7 percent of those people don't even own a turntable. Fifty percent of vinyl consumers identified themselves as "collectors" while others said they buy records to support their favorite artists.

Helena, an 18-year-old from Kingston in England, was quoted in the report saying "It's really nice to have an object that you can hold and physically play. I also think it's important to support artists financially if you can."

The rising popularity of music streaming has lead to less people actually purchasing albums and many artists have spoken out about this issue. A well-known example of this is Taylor Swift's letter to Apple Music in 2014.



PHOTO COURTESY | CASEY MARSHALL

Buying a vinyl record, or any physical copy of an album, rather than streaming it allows you to support your favorite musicians while enjoying their work.

It is good to see even in this digital era, many people are supporting artists and keeping vinyl records alive. Digital music is now the norm and we no longer have to rely on physical formats to listen to the music that we want to hear. But streaming music or downloading music from the Internet doesn't feel the same as physically owning a piece of music and the listening experience is not the same. Vinyl is more than just music, it is an entire experience, and it is one worth paying for.

Campus Prayer for Peace



Students and faculty gathering outside Buley Library to join in prayer to promote peace and end violence.

By Palmer Piana

About 15 students of various faiths gathered outside Buley Library Monday, Dec. 7, to join and pray.

The prayers aimed to end violence and promote peace in both our community and around the world.

The prayer was led by a SCSU senior public health major, Destiny Okeke, a member of Campus Crusade for Christ.

This was the third prayer held this semester. Previous prayers were led by other campus faith groups including the Muslim Student Association and the Newman Society.

The event was sponsored by the interfaith department alongside the multicultural center.

In an interview, Deacon Terry Moran stated, “The idea is this is a student led prayer service.”

The event is planned to occur the first Monday of each month and have a new student from a different faith group write and lead the prayer each time.

The Deacon encourages participants, no matter who is leading the prayer, to pray in any way they wish to.



The peace prayer was held for the third time in the Fall semester.



Deacon Terry Moran participating in prayer alongside students and faculty.



Destiny Okeke, a senior public health major, reading the prayer she prepared for the gathering.