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Panel held by SGA and BSU President leaving university

By Ali Fernand
Features Editor

Police brutality once again became an important topic for students to learn about on campus. Student leaders of the Student Government Association and the Black Student Union organized an opportunity for students to learn what to do when they encounter law enforcement.

"As student leaders, a lot of change comes from college campuses, it's important to know our rights and know how to speak and handle ourselves when it comes to police," psychology major Antonio Gonzales, a senior said.

This is taking place in the aftermath of the death of Tyre Nichols, a victim of police brutality. The Know Your Rights march took place to honor his life and recognize what happened to him.

"The Know Your Rights march is in collaboration with the Black Student Union to pay tribute to Tyre Nichols who was senselessly killed by six police officers on January 7," SGA President Kyle Thaxton said.

Nichols was stopped at a traffic light on his way home. Just minutes away from his home, he was brutalized by these officers. He suffered critical injuries because of the violence from the police. After this, he was taken to the hospital in critical condition, where he later died.

Since this is not an isolated incident, student leaders felt they needed to educate students on police brutality. To help students understand law enforcement, a panel took place after the march. This panel hosted a retired police officer and two lawyers. They discussed why police brutality continues to be an issue and what students should do if they encounter police.

"As a cop, was I surprised? No. As a US citizen, was I surprised? No. As a black man, was I surprised? Hell no," retired police officer from Stratford Bobby Ramos said.

Ramos worked as a police officer for 28 years. He spoke about his time as a police officer, criticizing the practices. This was just as minorities were just allowed to be on the police force. As a black man, he often called out many of the unfairness he saw in the treatment of black officers and citizens.

"I wonder if people have a fear of getting involved, if it's a cultural thing," Amer-

ican Civil Liberties Union lawyer Allan Hillman said.

The culture of the police was called into question. However, Ramos denies any type of culture. He attributed the brutality of the police to wanting to move up in their job rather than just a cultural influence.

"Once I became a cop, that blue culture doesn't exist, it's about self-preservation," Ramos said.

The panel went to discuss other cases of police brutality. Some of these cases were decades ago, some within the last few years. The panelists were questioning how this could still be not surprising to Americans.

"I was appalled in light of the past two years of Black Lives Matter that this was still happening," adjunct professor and lawyer Andrew Marchant-Shapiro said.

The murder of George Floyd sparked nationwide protests, calling for reform within law enforcement. With a repeat of similar events, many people are shocked to see their activism still has not been able to protect new victims.

"It was a repeat, it was like watching the same old, same old," Ramos said.

Ramos cites other incidents of similar situations, like George Floyd and Rodney King. However, the death of Tyre Nichols has stuck out to people because the officers who beat him were also black. For the panelist, this called into question how black officers are also complicit in the racial discrimination of black people.

"I was astounded that 5 black officers would beat a black man that way, or anyone," Hillman said.

To respond to this, Ramos described that black officers often want to fit in with their peers. To be liked in the police force, they had to be complicit in the brutality of other black people. This also would take away the guilt of white officers who participated in brutality of minorities.

"Here was the mentality, I want to be one of the boys," Ramos said.

SGA and BSU encouraged students to continue their activism, especially on the local level. They hope that the efforts on campus help change local efforts.

"It's going to happen on the state level, a lot of people want it to happen on the federal level, but we need advocates to keep pushing for change," Thaxton said.

By Sofia Rositani
Editor-in-chief
By Jaylen Carr
Sports Editor
By Sarah Shelton
Photo Editor

President Joe Bertolino is leaving the university after being here for seven years. He is going back to where he grew up and where his husband and father currently reside, New Jersey. He will be the new President for Stockton University.

Bertolino said he is looking forward to being able to spend time with his husband again and go back home.

"It's very bittersweet, it's been a wonderful experience," Bertolino said.

According to Connecticut State Universities President Terrence Chang, they are currently looking for a new president, and the university will know soon who it will be. The switch will occur July 1, according to Bertolino.

The university will know more about this shift in Bertolino's April Spring Town Hall. "Seven years ago when I first visited, I was enamored by the students, the community, the beautiful campus

and this amazing city of New Haven. I vividly remember meeting with students, faculty, staff, alums, and friends of the university. I was told then that Southern was a special place where relationships and community mattered. That is no less true today," Bertolino wrote on Instagram.

He continued, "I will always have a deep affection for all that is Southern: its historic mission of access and affordability, its unique ability to transform lives through the power of education and the caring compassion of its community - never more clearly evidenced than during the challenges of the pandemic. I am particularly proud of the productive relationships that we have built with our neighbors in New Haven and beyond, the growing recognition of our distinctive excellence in a range of academic disciplines, and how we have extended a commitment to social justice and anti-racism throughout our institution, providing an example for our students to make positive change when they enter society."

Many students had

different reactions to the news. Some knew about his interview for Stockton University, while others had no idea.

"It's sad to hear," Psychology major Jacob Adorno, a senior, said. "Even though I wasn't close to him or got the chance to interact with him much, it was always fun when I did and he clearly loves the Southern community. It's an honor that I'm part of his last graduating class and I'll be one of the last handful people he hands a diploma to. Regardless of why he's stepping down, I wish him the best of luck in all of his future endeavors."

Psychology professor Cheryl Durwin said: "My initial reaction was sadness, as I think most faculty, staff, and students feel. President Joe has meant so much to the campus community, especially the students, and he has led the university not only through significant growth but also through an unprecedented pandemic."

Durwin said the university needs to be delighted for President Bertolino and his family for this decision. "But also, not lose sight of the hard work that

lies ahead to ensure that Southern offers the very best for its students."

"When I found out that President Joe was leaving, I was shocked and saddened," History and political science major Kyle Thaxton, a junior and Student Government Association President, said. "He has been a strong champion for social justice, and we must ensure that, when he officially leaves, our institution's commitment to social justice does not waiver."

Thaxton said Bertolino laid the groundwork for the university to continue to fight for social justice. "But it will be up to us, the students, to ensure that our university's social justice mission continues to flourish and expand in a post-Bertolino presidency."

Thaxton said he learned a lot from President Bertolino, such as how he didn't allow his sexual orientation to define him and how he led the university.

"I have always respected his grit and determination to unapologetically be himself, and someday, I hope that I can build enough confidence and courage to be like him one day," Thaxton said.



Leassya Lindsey, a student, holding a sign at the "Know Your Rights" march on February 27, 2023 on campus.

PHOTO | LUKE MOLWITZ

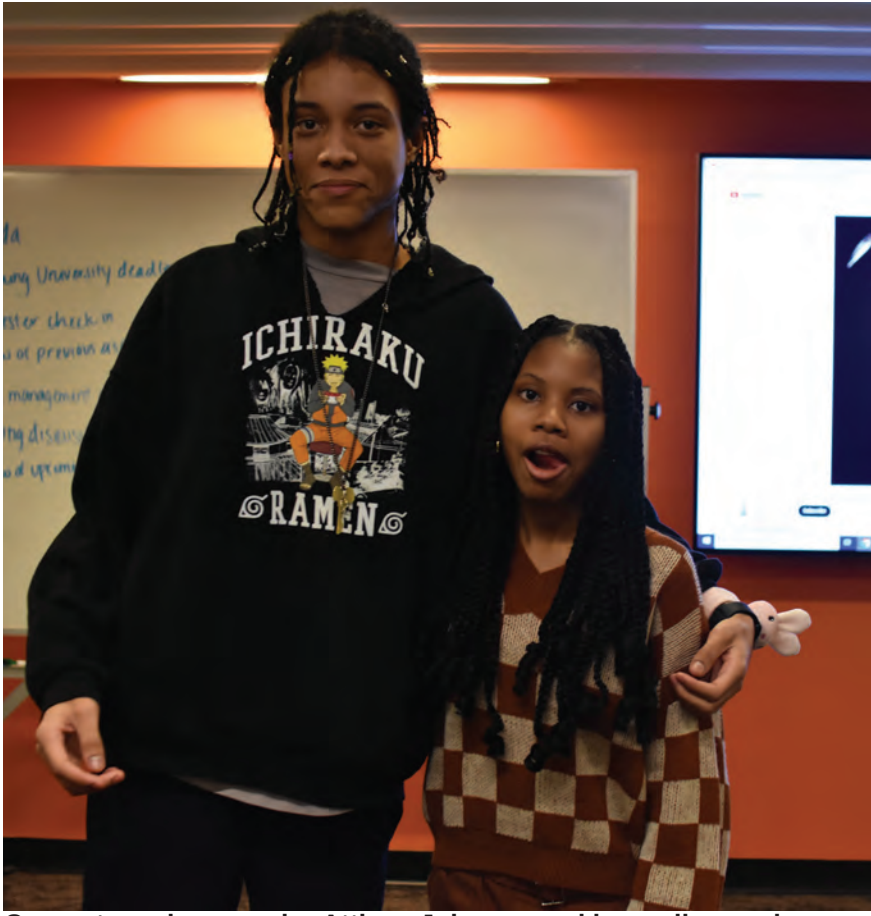
'Know your Rights' preparation and march

Photos By Luke Molwitz
Photographer

For coverage on this,
turn to page 1 and page 3.



poster for the march.



Computer science major Atticus Johnson and journalism major Sole Scott, freshmen at the march prep.



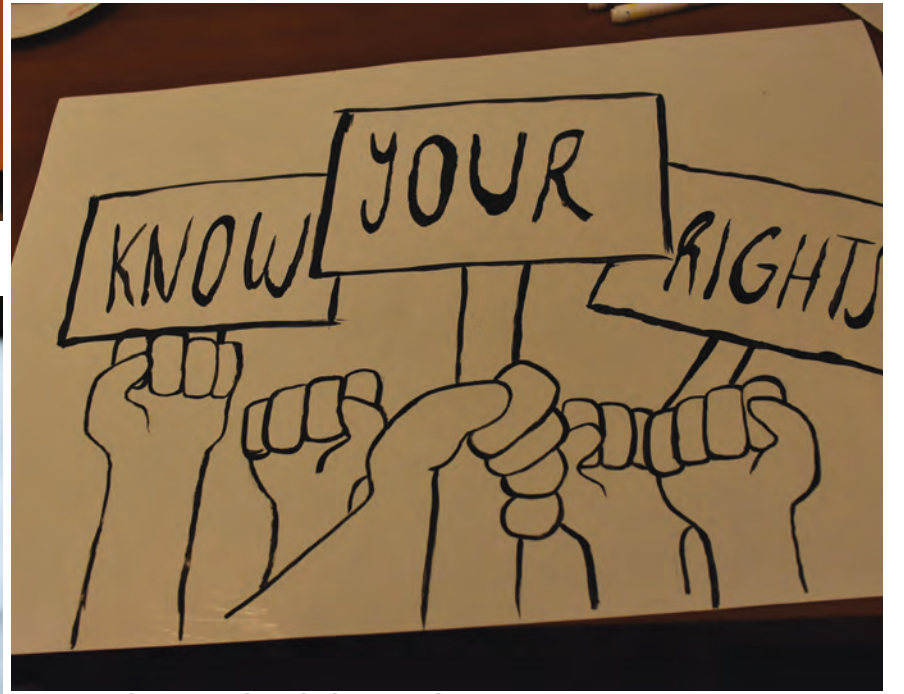
Buttons that were handed out at the prep event.



Social work major Leesy Lindsey, a junior, working on a poster.



Music major Imani Tyson, a sophomore, speaking through a megaphone.



Buttons that were handed out at the prep.



Marchers walking through the residence quad.



Computer science major Atticus Johnson walking with a poster that reads, "There comes a Time when Silence Becomes BETRAYAL."



Marchers walking through the residence quad with poster, "My skin Color is Not A Crime."



Students holding handmade posters wearing BSUXSGA hoodies.



Marchers walking on the bridge in front of the student center.

Students prep to march for victim Tyre Nichols

By Abiba Biao
Copy Editor

Students took action for social justice Friday evening at the Know Your Rights March prep session night in Farnham Hall, making posters and buttons against police brutality. The event brought around 30 people who enjoyed pizza, wings, and refreshments while using their artistry for racial justice.

The Know Your Rights March was hosted in collaboration with Sothern's Black Student Union (BSU), and Student Government Association (SGA). The demonstration was held to bring awareness to Tyre Nicholas, a 29-year-old

Black man, who was beaten to death by five officers from the Memphis Police Department during a traffic stop.

Journalism major, Solé Scott, a freshman, said that she came to the event because she wanted to amplify SGA and BSU's cause. She hopes that people learn to take social justice seriously and admired the on-campus effort to spread this message and remove barriers to entry for activism.

"I hope everyone goes to the march," Scott said. "If you don't stay from one to three, at least like come support for 10-15 minutes if you can spare."

Accompanying her

was computer science major Atticus Johnson, a freshman. Johnson remarked on people's reluctance to join social justice efforts because of the feeling of insignificance from repeated atrocities happening. Despite the difficulties in creating change, he believes that opening the floor to dialogue is a crucial step toward achieving justice.

"I feel like it's important because we have to show that it actually matters and that we care about it," Johnson said. "If you don't talk about it, even if like you can't do something yourself, just putting it out there really makes a change and that's what everybody here is trying to do."

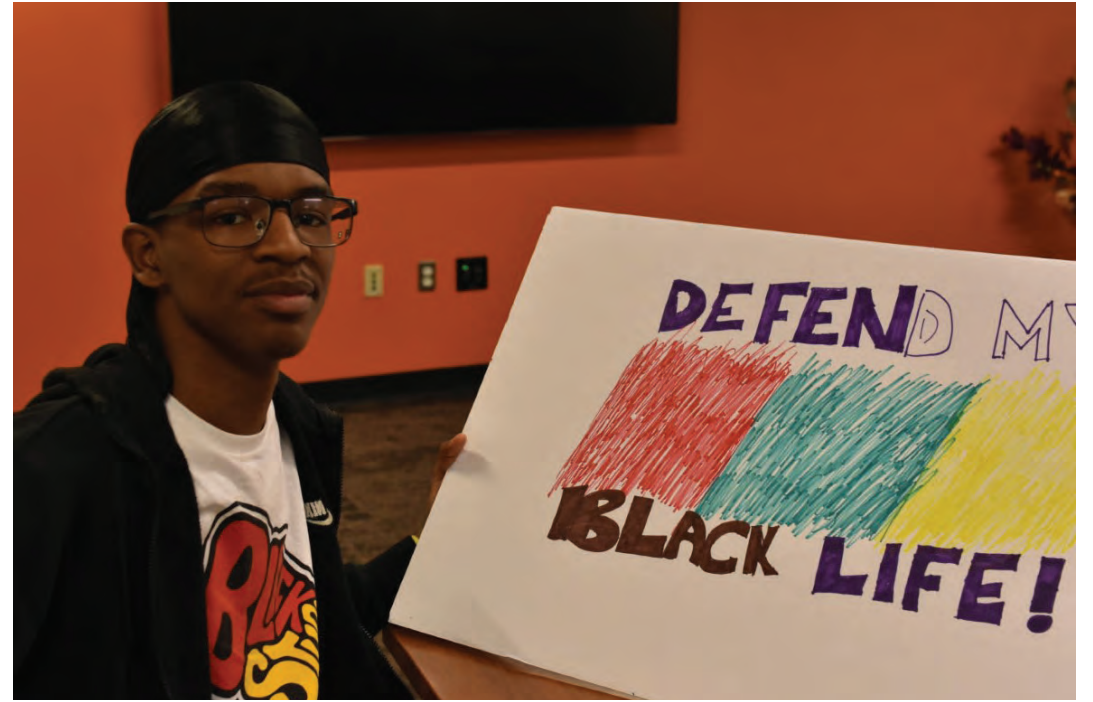


PHOTO | LUKE MOLWITZ

BSU co-President C. Letel Rutherford with his sign in Farnham Programming Space on Feb 24.

Review- boygenius album Opinon- School burnout

By Ali Fernand
Features Editor

Supergroup boygenius has just released an EP teasing some of the songs that will appear on their first album coming out later this month. This group is comprised of singer-songwriters Phoebe Bridgers, Julien Baker, and Lucy Dacus. They released their first EP together in 2018, which featured passionate and sad songs. This immediately became a staple in sad queer girl music. I personally always find myself coming back to "Salt in the Wound." This is a powerful emotional song that captures the painful parts of love. It contains a satisfying growth into powerful guitars and vocals.

Since that release, Bridgers has become a highly praised singer-songwriter act. The release of Punisher in 2020 made her an artist to watch. She was nominated for Grammys and gained tons of new fans. Baker has also released an album within the time between boygenius releases. One of my favorite singles from that release is "Hardline," another sad love song. Baker has gained a more niche following, compared to Bridgers. Lucy Dacus has also grown quite a lot since the first boygenius release. She has over 1 million monthly listeners on Spotify with a lot of indie hits.

These friends have regrouped after 5 years. New fans quickly discovered this side project, pressuring the three artists to band back together.

In January, they released a few teaser songs and announced their full-length album. This was huge news for fans who love the artists and the small collection of songs they collaborated on.

The EP they released is called 'the record' teasing the soon to be released full-length project. The album art is a picture of three hands in the sky, presumed to be each of the members' hands. This release does a great job at showing each artist have their moment to shine. I was afraid that a new boygenius release would be Bridgers heavy because she

has become such a popular artist. Though this is not the case. The artists once again found a way to beautifully blend in with each other and make each other shine.

The first song is called "Not Strong Enough" and features Bridgers and Baker as the main vocalists. This song is incredibly beautiful. I would describe it as the type of song you would listen to in the summer with the car windows rolled down. There is an acoustic guitar keeping the main heartbeat of the song with a humming electric guitar soloing over the rest of the instruments. By the last chorus, all three artists harmonize. Their voices really do blend well with each other.

The next song is called '\$20' and features Baker as

The last song is called 'True Blue' and is led by Dacus. Her style of vocals is really unique, and I love how it shines in boygenius projects. This one is also a bit slow, but not as emotional as the song before. The chorus feels satisfying, as if all the emotion of heartbreak and self-doubt is being released. Bridgers and Baker layer in harmonies for the chorus, but I love that Dacus gets her time to shine.

This small release of songs is amazing. They found a way to make each other shine and you can tell that these three really are good friends. Their dynamic is wonderful, and they blend in as a group so well. I am beyond excited to hear the full release of this project later this month.



PHOTO | ALI FERNAND

Julien Baker, Lucy Dacus and Phoebe Bridgers for Rolling Stone taken on an iPhone 11 on March 6.

the main vocalist. This is the most rock of all songs on this release. This one is my least favorite because I like this group best when they slow it down and get emotional. It still contains a lot of emotion, but not devastation. Baker takes the reigns on this one. It does sound like a song she would release on her own solo project.

The third song is called 'Emily I'm Sorry' and is led by Bridgers. This song is about apologizing for being lost in yourself. The main line that sticks out to me is "I'm 27 and I don't know what I want." It feels like I am witnessing an identity crisis. This is the slowest out of all the songs on this release, but it is a song I am saving for when I need a good cry.

By Sofia Rositani
Editor-in-chief

As a student who pays money to be going to this university, it is unfair that we can fail a class for missing more than 3 days, some professors making it two days.

I have a lot of issues that make me miss some of my classes. Some professors are very rude and do not understand that a lot of us are either working or have health issues. Another huge issue amongst students is burn out and we are slowly getting to that as the semester progresses.

"Their findings aligned with the American Psychological Association's Stress in America study: Gen Z adults ages 18 to 23 reported significantly higher stress levels than other generations. Of the Gen Z adults who said they are in college, 87% said their education was a significant source of stress, and stress is often linked to burnout. The association describes burnout as "physical, emotional, or mental exhaustion accompanied by decreased motivation, lowered performance, and negative attitudes toward oneself and others." Hirabayashi said it's often used as a catchall term, but ultimately it means, "the opposite of thriving," according to

hechingerreport.

Within my group of friends, I have noticed all of us having a higher level of stress due to missing class just because if we do, we could potentially fail.

It is unfair that this is an issue for many professors because like them we are humans too.

Commuters have it hard too because some of us live far and if the weather is bad, we cannot get to campus and some professors do not accommodate when that happens. It is very rough because a lot of us work extremely hard, and because we miss some days of class, we may fail; it makes no sense at all.

A lot of us already have a lot going on at home so when coming to school we should not feel like the weight of the world is on our shoulders over a class that we will probably forget about in the next few years.

More classes should be offered online synchronous or asynchronous because a lot of us have a hard time coming to class in person, especially late classes.

I am currently in a long class with zero breaks and it is extremely difficult to get to and from campus because I cannot drive that late so sometimes I have to ask my dad to drop me off, I also have a job that night too so it is a constant

struggle of picking between going to work and going to class.

Students should not feel scared about being late or missing class because we are already stressed out as it is so we should not feel worse about it or ashamed that we missed a class because we have other issues going on in our lives.

The fear of failing due to missing a few classes should not be something students in higher education should feel. My sister got her appendix removed the day after Valentine's Day causing her to miss a week of classes and the entire time, she was worried about failing because some of her professors gave her a tough time missing classes because she had surgery. Even with a doctor's note saying she needs to rest she still worried.

We should not feel this way if we are sick, we should be able to make up the work and not feel like missing class will be the end of the world for us. It is so tiring because we work so hard to get our degrees only to be told due to missing a class we may fail our class. How is that fair to the paying students in this university who basically sign away our lives to get a piece of paper saying we have a degree that may not even get us a job.

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Column: On the NBA

By Jaylen Carr
Sports Editor



In the last few weeks the National Basketball Association, (NBA) has been a hot button debate about load management.

Load management involves players taking games off when they are "injured." I use the word injured loosely because some players use load management to take a game off, or if their team has back-to-back games on their schedule, they will take the second game off to get rest.

Players sitting out during the regular season hurts the NBA because fans who spend their money to see the star players like Los Angeles Lakers forward LeBron James or Los Angeles Clippers Kawhi Leonard deserve to see them play, not sit out.

Leonard has not played an entire 82-game season in his 11-year career, which is insane to think when the players of a decade or two ago could play at least 75 games in the regular season.

During the 80s, 90s and even 2000s, we saw star players take pride in playing most of the regular season because they knew the fans wanted to see them.

For example, former Los Angeles Lakers center and the second leading scorer of all time, Kareem Abdul Jabbar, played at least 75 games in 18 out of his 20 seasons.

When we look back at the career of NBA Hall of Famer Kevin McHale, who not only won three championships with the Boston Celtics in the 1980s but risked his ability to walk to keep playing, according to a Los Angeles Times article by Gordan Edes.

In the 1987 NBA Finals, McHale's Celtics would face arch nemesis Los Angeles Lakers McHale would play despite a fractured bone in his foot. His injured foot would affect McHale for his life, not allowing him to walk the same.

I do not think players should be playing injured like McHale, but some star players today lack toughness, unlike their predecessors.

According to CBS Sports Bill Reiter, "must-watch games only work if the best players play in said games. Fair or not, this falls on the stars in a sport that also serves as an entertainment business for it to properly and optimally function."

For more of this column, visit our website at thesouthernnews.org

Softball team previews next season

By Ben Martin
Contributor

For Coach Jillian Rispoli, what makes the Southern Connecticut State University 2023 softball team capable of going far is their "great defense".

Coach Rispoli has drilled into the importance of making good defensive plays. She hopes it will get the team many wins this season.

Ally Petrella, a fifth year outfielder, and Emily Lange, a junior outfielder agree. Both athletes also recognize the importance of being bonded as a team.

Their mid-March trip to Florida will serve not only as an opportunity to play many teams from across the country in a "spring training" atmosphere but, also to help the athletes grow closer together.

In Florida, the Owls will face IUP, Shepherd, Wayne State, Alliance, Molloy, University of

Mary, Indianapolis and Slippery Rock. All of these games will count as part of the regular season and will take place over eight days.

Lange and Petrella say that living together as a team during this time is an unconventional way to bond and learn more about each other.

"We are definitely looking forward to our Florida trip, it is a great way to start the season and it is great bonding time for us. Basically we are together for eight days straight," Lange said,

"The Florida trip is a highlight every year, to get to play in really nice weather, the best we play in all year," said Petrella.

"One thing we promote with our coaches is hammering in our team work ethic. Whether that is at the plate, on the bases, or in the field we are always cheering for each other" says Lange.

Petrella adds that if Lanage were to replace her in a game, she would "become her biggest fan from the bench".

Last year was full of ups and downs for the Owls. The team recorded 18 wins, 21 losses, and one tie.

They made it to the Northeast 10 (NE10) Conference Championship. There, they beat Pace University, but fell to Southern New Hampshire University.

There are 21 athletes on the team this year, all dedicated to getting Southern as far as possible in the conference championship.

The Owls were picked to finish seventh in the 2022 Northeast 10 Conference Preseason Coaches Poll, announced by the NE10 on Jan. 17.

As for expectations this season, Petrella says for her it is "definitely making it into another NE10 tournament in May and hopefully get further this time".

Besides looking forward to a great defense, Coach Rispoli is expecting to see "a great infield."

"They are going to be 'lights out', just really great. They will be the anchors of this team. We also

have some really solid players in the outfield," Rispoli said.

"There is so many things to be proud of with this team. Another goal is to have some great pitching to look at," Rispoli said.

When asked what fans can expect to see at games, Coach Rispoli said, "You are going to see a lot of strength, a lot of fly ball and ground ball outs. That is really this team's MO. You will also see some really great pitching".

Petrella says she is looking forward to her last season.

"I am just excited to get out there and play with the team" she said.

Another important player this year is Jaqueline Dumont. The catcher is returning from the 2022 season with All-America honors from the National Fastpitch Coaches Association.

For more of this story, visit our website at thesouthernnews.org

Gymnastics reflects on season so far

By Avery Martin
Contributor

The Southern Connecticut State Women's gymnastics team have had a rollercoaster of a season so far, recording seven wins and 16 losses against opponents.

However, do not let this

deter you from seeing the large amount of talent on the team.

The diverse squad's 33 gymnasts hail from 10 states, as well as Canada. At SCSU, they have all come together for a common goal of performing the best gymnastics they can.

They frequently compete against opponents in NCAA division one schools.

Biology major Ava Kelly, a freshman was clear about her goals.

"My goals for this season are to get my highest scores on floor and vault and to make nationals as a team. I also want to make nationals for my events," said Kelly.

Senior Ava Boyd, an exercise science major, agreed. "I want us to get our season highs on all events and make it to nationals as a team," said Boyd.

"They do have some team goals, like a team high score. The goal for everyone is to qualify for nationals as a team. We also want to be ranked in the top four for our conference" said head coach Byron Knox.

Looking back at the 2022-23 season so far, Kelly has many highlights.

"I made the vault and floor lineups as a freshman. It can be kind of hard to compete while being a freshman so it is definitely a highlight," Kelly said.

The team's most recent competition took place at Brown University. While the Owls ended second with an overall 192.500

to 194.775 loss, there were many high points.

Senior Angel Lee scored a 9.850 on the Beam, which is the best score for any Southern gymnast in any event this season. Lee also won the Beam event over Brown.

Other recent highlights came from the quad meet at Rutgers in New Jersey where the Southern Owls were the only NCAA division two team in attendance.

That did not stop them, from taking a win over Fisk University and having close scores against Rutgers and the University of Michigan. The team recorded a season-high record score of 190.700 points.

"Every competition we have gotten a little bit better. The expectation is always to compete to win" said Knox, who also noted "our strongest event this year is floor, which was our weakest last year".

For more of this story, visit our website at thesouthernnews.org



PHOTO | SCSUOWL.COM

Gymnastics team takes a team photo after coming in third

Women's lacrosse starts the season 2-1

By Ben Martin
Contributor

After two games, the university's women's lacrosse team is undefeated with a record of 2-0. The Owls won two games with strikingly different scores, defeating Chestnut Hill College 17-1 and Molloy University 12-11.

Winning these first two games has shown Head Coach Kevin Siedlecki a lot about his team.

"We got a lot of young girls in, and we performed great. We have a lot of depth," Siedlecki said in response to the Chestnut Hill game on Feb. 18th.

The Owls got to highlight that depth when graduate student Kelly Jagodzinski, midfielder, went down with an injury. Coach Siedlecki decided to split her time between two freshman who he thought performed well. "They really did fine,"

Siedlecki said. "Kelly being a grad student probably is a little bit more comfortable and would have made a couple more plays than the freshman in their first college game but, they certainly did not hurt us."

Along with the depth, two of Siedlecki's captains Bayleigh Takacs and Liney White added that the growth of the Women's Lacrosse program at the university was something seen in their first few games.

"This is my fifth season with my team, so just thinking back in my freshman year not even in just numbers of the team but in depth of the skill level," Takacs said. "We are about double from what my freshman year was."

In Takacs' first season back in 2019, the team featured 19 athletes on their roster, but for their current squad 34 athletes are rostered according to the



PHOTO | SCSUOWL.COM

Defender and midfielder Sarah Robbins a junior, goes after the ball.

university's athletic department website. In addition to the depth and growth of the tournament, Coach Siedlecki saw another piece he liked in the following game against Molloy.

"The Molloy game really showed us that we have the heart," Siedlecki said.

Siedlecki saw that heart from the Owls fighting to win a game in tough conditions. The Molloy game was played in 20 degrees and snow which is not the greatest weather for any outdoor sport.

Siedlecki added that the game was very sloppy on the part of both teams.

In the game, Molloy had 20 turnovers to the Owls 16.

Siedlecki added that the team has a lot of things to work on such as turnovers.

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