



Suh-Toma '25 and Fonkeu '25 elected YCC president and vice president

BY JANALIE COBB
STAFF REPORTER

In an email to the student body on Friday evening, outgoing Yale College Council vice president Iris Li '24 announced the election of Julian Suh-Toma '25 and Maya Fonkeu '25 as YCC president and vice president.

This election boasts a higher turnout than the past two years of YCC elections, with 2,180 total students voting. It is also the most contested election in over 20 years, with six students running for president and five running for vice president.

"I feel incredibly grateful that this student body has entrusted us with the leadership of the YCC. Maya and I are going to work tirelessly to ensure that this trust doesn't feel misplaced," Suh-Toma told the News.

The election used ranked-choice voting, asking students to rank candidates in order of preference and requiring a candidate to receive over 50 percent of the vote to win. In the ranked choice voting system, if no candidate receives over 50 percent of the vote, the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated. The vote of any student who ranked the eliminated candidate first is then redistributed to the candidate they ranked second. This process is continued until one candidate receives over 50 percent of the vote.

Fonkeu won her election in the first round, with 54.9 percent of the vote, making her the YCC's first Black female vice president.

"I am honored and humbled to be the first Black female vice president of the Yale



SEE **YCC** PAGE 4 Suh-Toma and Fonkeu ran a campaign advocating for transparency from the YCC and from Yale. / Courtesy of Julian Suh-Toma and Maya Fonkeu

Students call for Yale to cancel contract with security company G4S

BY NATHANIEL ROSENBERG
STAFF REPORTER

Yalies 4 Palestine is calling on Yale to cancel its contract with a British security company that they say is committing human rights abuses around the globe.

The student advocacy group began circulating a resolution at the end of March which urges Yale to cut ties with G4S — a British private security company that provides Yale Security with the technology to track swipes into campus buildings. Y4P alleges that G4S has been involved in a litany of violations of human rights around the world, including in Israel and South Africa and at the United States–Mexico border.

The Y4P resolution has been co-signed by 19 student and New Haven organizations, and a petition calling for Yale to divest from G4S has also amassed over 100 signatures.

"With this campaign, specifically, we want to provide students with an outlet to engage in the issue that's very relevant to them," said Craig Birkhead-Morton '24, who is a co-chair of Y4P. "It's not



Yalies4Palestine is circulating a resolution to join Columbia and Cornell in divesting from G4S. / Michael Paz, Contributing Photographer

Film students express frustration over lack of CPA funding

BY SARAH COOK AND MIRANDA WOLLEN
STAFF REPORTERS

This past year, Yale College saw a rise in applications for the Creative and Performing Arts Award and decreased the maximum amount students can be awarded to \$500 for projects in most arts disciplines that are not student theses. Previously, all award maximums were set to \$1200.

SEE **FILM** PAGE 5

Negrón leaked as NHPS superintendent

BY YASH ROY AND NATI TESFAYE
STAFF REPORTERS

Madeline Negrón — a former Director of Education for New Haven Public Schools and current interim deputy superintendent at Hartford Public School — is slated to take over as NHPS superintendent in September.

On April 13, elected Board of Education member Darnell Goldson told the News and the New Haven Independent that Madeline Negrón had been chosen by the district's Superintendent Search Committee as the next superintendent for the district of roughly 19,000 students. If confirmed, Negrón would be the first Hispanic superintendent in the history of

a district that now has a plurality Hispanic population.

After the Personnel Search Committee voted to select Negrón as superintendent, they authorized NHPS' counsel to negotiate a contract. Goldson said that the contract has been negotiated and is slated to be presented at the Board of Education's special meeting on Wednesday — when the Board of Education had planned to announce Negrón's appointment.

"We have followed a long and rigorous process to come to this decision, and this is a decision I stand by," Goldson told the News.

Goldson, who is a member of the Superintendent Search Committee, decided to

release the information before it was officially made public by the committee or the Board of Education.

He told the News that he believes this move was necessary so that both Negrón and stakeholders had time to be informed before the announcement and ratification of her contract occurred on Wednesday.

"There's no reason for secrecy," Goldson told the News. "I'm a true believer of transparency. ... I can not in good conscience support keeping something secret that's been the worst kept secret in New Haven."

According to Goldson, the Board of Education and district have followed a process

that began through the employment of McPherson and Jacobson as the headhunting firm for the search. Teachers, parents, students and other community members were invited to share their thoughts on the new superintendent.

Board of Education president Yesenia Rivera did not respond to requests for comments to confirm the identity of the new Superintendent or the matter that will be voted on during the Wednesday meeting.

"By all means cite Mr. Goldson as your source," New Haven Public Schools Spokesperson Justin Harmon told the News. "A vote such as Wednesday's is

SEE **SUPERINTENDENT** PAGE 5

Yale docs call for boycott of states banning abortion

BY KAYLA YUP
STAFF REPORTER

A young female doctor told Naf-tali Kaminski that she did not want to attend her medical society's upcoming meeting in Nashville because "she felt unsafe," he recalled.

The woman did not necessarily know if she was pregnant, but worried about being in the early stages. She was scared

SEE **FAST** PAGE 5

CROSS CAMPUS

THIS DAY IN YALE HISTORY, 1987. A group of 20 teachings assistants, who speak on behalf of the Teaching Assistants Solidarity Group, air their grievances over insufficient pay, demand improved working conditions and request the expansion of pay equity across academic departments.

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PHARMA FIELD TRIP New Haven high school students tour Alexion Pharmaceuticals.
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THROUGH THE LENS



Zilin Jing '24:
“Unspoken struggles and hidden resilience in a single gaze.”



Sianna Xiao '25:
“I feel so grateful that I know another part of the world.”



Ruiyan Huang '25:
“It’s a sense of rootlessness, the feeling that I don’t belong anywhere, but that is exactly how I can belong anywhere.”



Howard Shi '25: “Optimism prevails in the end.”

Statistically insignificant



Anouk Yeh '26:
“Finding joy in places that weren’t built for you is a form of resistance!”



Kelly Yan '26:
“Sometimes those feelings are like a pebble in the shoe, annoying enough to cause discomfort but small enough to be



Elaine Cheng '25:
“Microaggressions are camouflaged everywhere: in compliments, in stares, and in silences.”

In this portrait panel project, I attempted to capture expressions that are integral yet often unrecorded. Typically participants were asked to convey something they felt that was related to their Asian identity — or something, anything.

*Linxi Cindy Zeng,
Contributing Photographer*

OPINION

Of course they won't leave it to the states

On April 7, U.S. District Judge Matthew Kacsmaryk of Texas issued a ruling striking down the FDA's authorization of mifepristone, a drug used for medication abortions.

For a more detailed analysis of Judge Kacsmaryk's ruling — it is quite bad — I recommend reading Slate's Mark Joseph Stern, but here's a quick summary. Kacsmaryk argues that the FDA has not properly reviewed the health risks of mifepristone. "Due to FDA's lax reporting requirements," he writes, the number of bad results is "likely far higher than its data indicate." He uses language that endorses the concept of "fetal personhood," and holds that the Comstock Act — an unenforced 19th-century law written to ban the mailing of "every obscene, lewd, lascivious, indecent, filthy or vile article, matter, thing, device, or substance" — bans transporting abortion medication or any of its ingredients across state lines is illegal.

Of course, Judge Kacsmaryk is simply calling balls and strikes in a neutral manner; his ruling has nothing at all to do with the fact that he worked for the First Liberty Institute, an anti-abortion advocacy group, before being appointed to the bench by President Trump in 2019.

Kacsmaryk's injunction was set to go into force on April 14. But just after he released his ruling, District Judge Thomas O. Rice in Washington state, an Obama appointee, ruled in a separate case that the FDA's current restrictions on mifepristone are too strict and ordered the agency not to restrict the drug any further. The Biden administration appealed the Texas ruling, first to the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals and then to the Supreme Court. On Friday, Justice Samuel Alito issued a temporary stay, preventing Kacsmaryk's ruling from taking effect until the Supreme Court can hear the full case; a decision is expected in the coming weeks.

Here are the facts about mifepristone. Medication abortion — usually a combination of mifepristone and misoprostol — is the most common method of abortion in the country, often preferred due to lower cost, increased restrictions on abortion clinics and greater privacy. It makes up more than half of all US abortions, typically in the first 10 to 12 weeks of pregnancy. It is safe: according to a "New York Times" review of over 100 studies, zero found medication abortion to be dangerous; the serious complication rate was 0.31 percent, compared to 0.16 percent for surgical abortions and 1.4 percent for childbirth. If mifepristone is banned, it's possible to use misoprostol alone for medication abortion, with a slightly lower efficacy than the combination. The plaintiffs in the Texas suit also sought a ban on misoprostol, but only requested a preliminary injunction against mifepristone.

Here is another fact: when the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade last summer, the justices in the majority argued that courts should never have gotten involved in making abortion policy. To quote Justice Alito in his majority opinion, Dobbs "return[ed] the issue...to the people's elected representatives." And yet, here we have a single judge in Texas making policy for the entire nation. What gives?

Well, it's simple, really. The other day I was talking to a smart guy who works at a GOP polling firm about the 2024 election. He said it would be hard for Republicans to run on leaving abortion policy to the states; I said that's because they clearly don't want to do that. Because if you take the pro-life position that abortion is murder seriously, then of course you won't be satisfied with leaving it up to the states. If you believe in the fetal personhood doctrine — a legal argument which holds that fetuses are full human beings entitled to the protections of the Constitution — then of course you'll support a national ban on abortion, no if's, and's or but's.

Of course, Republicans don't want to say that part out loud because a national abortion ban is horrifically unpopular. Per Gallup's polling, in 2021, pre-Dobbs, 33 percent of Americans were "satisfied" with US abortion policy, compared to 17 percent who were dissatisfied and wanted less strict laws and 27 percent who wanted stricter ones; in 2023 those figures were 26 percent, 46 percent and 15 percent, respectively. According to a new report by the Public Religion Research Institute, support for making abortion illegal in all cases doesn't poll above 14 percent in any state; support for overturning Roe v. Wade is under 50 percent in all 50. In Wisconsin, the Democrat-aligned candidate for state supreme court just beat the Republican-aligned candidate 56-44 by campaigning on a promise to overturn the state's 1849 abortion ban. Last year, voters in states ranging from deep blue — Vermont and California — to purple — Michigan — to red — Montana and Kentucky — all passed pro-choice ballot measures. You get the point.

But the GOP is fundamentally committed to an extreme, out of touch position on abortion — which is why Republican politicians, whether in suits or robes, keep finding it so difficult to tell people with a straight face that they'll leave the issue to the states: because they won't.

MILAN SINGH is a first-year in *Piereson College*. His fortnightly column, "All politics is national" discusses national politics: how it affects the reader's life, and why they should care about it. He can be reached at milan.singh@yale.edu.

Buddhism at Yale, Buddhism in America

The Yale Buddhist Sangha, under the auspices of the Yale Chaplain's Office, is Yale's flagship organization for Buddhist life. Its stated aim is to provide the Yale community with an opportunity to learn about and practice Buddhism. The organization also advertises itself as open to "the curious, beginners, experienced Buddhists, and those of other religions equally." However, this welcoming facade belies a far more serious problem. YBS, like many Western Buddhist organizations before it, professes a variant of Buddhism that undervalues devotionism and religiosity. They partake in the secularism and New Age idealism that have dominated Buddhism in America for the better part of the last half century.

For the vast majority of Buddhists around the world, Buddhism entails an intensely devotional religiosity. Contrary to the prevalent conception of Buddhism that associates the religion with meditation, in most Buddhist-majority countries, practicing Buddhism involves elaborate ritual worship, listening to monks deliver sermons and patronage of monastic asceticism. Many lay Buddhists also believe in Buddhist cosmology, which owes its complexity and richness to over two millennia of commentaries and scriptures. Even through a cursory observation of Buddhist art — be it Mahayana, Theravada or Vajrayana — one will encounter deities, demons, rakshasas and depictions of otherworldly realms.

My personal experiences are no different. I spent most of my formative years in Thailand and was raised a Theravada Buddhist. I grew up prostrating before Buddha images in temples and presenting offerings to Buddhist clergy to make merit. Some of my immediate family members are not ethnically Asian and were raised Protestant, but later converted and now practice similar types of Buddhist religiosity. I was even ordained as a Buddhist Monk during the summer of my freshman year. In the monastery, scriptural education, ritual worship and sweeping the temple grounds constituted the majority of my responsibilities. I barely had time to meditate.

Devotional practices such as these first came to America in the mid-1800s, when Chinese workers arrived in Hawaii and California. Asian American Buddhists born into the faith continue to comprise the majority of Buddhists in the United States, making up over two-thirds of the total population.

However, their distinct forms of devotional worship have failed to enter popular Western imaginings of Buddhism for a number of reasons. By the late nineteenth century, European and American scholars had produced a considerable amount of scholarship on Buddhism. While their work on scripture and thought has produced valuable contributions to fields such as historical linguistics and religious history, they did so through a distinctly Orientalist, modernist lens, often under the patronage of an imperial power. These Orientalist textual approaches necessarily selected for Buddhist tenets compatible with Enlightenment rationality while rejecting practices at odds with prevalent forms of Western religiosity. They prioritized the psychological aspects of Buddhism and individual meditation over devotionism, ritual and cosmology.

To be clear, meditation has a long history in Buddhism, but for many lay Buddhists, it is only one of many aspects of their everyday religious practice and for some, plays little to no role in their daily lives. Many forms of everyday devotional worship in Buddhist societies came about as Buddhist ideas mixed with pre-existing folk and animistic traditions. These "impurities" led early Orientalist scholars to emphasize what they saw as "rational" aspects of Buddhism in line with post-Enlightenment conceptions of reason.

Today, many Western Buddhist "converts" continue this Orientalist legacy, regarding meditation as the most authentic component of Buddhist practice at the expense of ritual and

devotional religiosity. More often than not, they scientize meditation as a practice, articulating the benefits of meditation in empirical language for maximum appeal to a secular audience. This prioritization of meditation above all else devalues the plurality of ritual practices that have arisen in Buddhist societies spanning South, Southeast and East Asia. Just as Western Orientalists dismissed particular forms of religiosity as superfluous and backward, so too Euro American "converts" to Buddhism neglect devotionism in their valorization of meditation and scientization of Buddhist psychology.

YBS is no different. While I certainly appreciate the regular visits by Buddhist teachers and accessibility of their shrine space — both of which attracted me to YBS as an underclassman — I found the over-emphasis on meditation peculiar. YBS's most visible public activity is meditation, with weekly sessions on Tuesdays and Thursdays open to all members of the community. Advertisements for events about meditation dominate YBS's weekly emails to the Yale Buddhist community. However, the far more problematic issue at hand is the secularization and commodification of meditative practices.

The increasing popularity of "mindfulness" is a paradigmatic example of this. Today, "mindfulness" has become so ubiquitous to the point where it is almost impossible to keep track of all the different ideas and practices to which the term refers. It appears everywhere, from self-help books to corporate retreats. Mobile meditation apps like "Headspace" are emblematic of what happens when this commodification encounters technological modernity. In light of this, anyone who has partaken in the so-called "Mindfulness Movement" will have likely reckoned with the relationship between modern mindfulness practices and its Buddhist origins. Buddhism, of course, entails much more than mindfulness — right mindfulness is only one of the Eightfold Path's components, for example. Calling mindfulness meditation "Buddhist" is about as ludicrous as equating blowing birthday candles with Christian prayer.

Advocates contend that turning mindfulness into a secular, self-help tool can psychologically benefit anyone regardless of background. To be clear, Buddhists should absolutely welcome interest by non-Buddhists in any aspect of the religion. I also understand that introducing an unfamiliar faith to a target population often involves simplification or distillation of key ideas.

However, it is precisely this watering down of mindfulness, and by extension, meditation, that renders the practice ethically and sacrally vacuous. YBS is more than guilty of this. In addition to labeling secular mindfulness practices "Buddhist," they promote these practices using the language of wellness, self-care and mental health. For instance, the YBS website openly advertises Being Well at Yale — the university's campaign to promote physical and mental wellbeing — as a resource for beginners looking for an introduction to Buddhism. The first page of YBS's "Meditation Handbook" — published last September — begins by declaring how "solid scientific research" confirms the "benefits of meditation." It subsequently lists a range of mental illnesses before proclaiming that meditation "increases" qualities such as "compassion," "inner peace" and "intimacy." This utilitarian secularization of meditation and mindfulness extends to YBS events, which run the gamut from "Mindful Kimbap Making" to "Bringing Mindfulness to Anti-Racism and Climate Activism." These guidebooks and events belong in the Good Life Center, not a religious organization under the Yale Chaplain's Office.

In addition to selective portrayals of mindfulness and meditation, YBS further denigrates the religious integrity of the Buddhist faith, alleging its universal compatibility with other major religions. Some of YBS's student

board members publicly adhere to other major faiths while simultaneously professing commitment to Buddhist principles. It is easy to see why this is the case — if you cherry pick specific practices, secularize them and divorce them totally from their original religious contexts, why wouldn't seemingly benign mental health practices be compatible with other belief systems?

A basic understanding of Buddhism's core tenets reveals how farcical this is. Even the Dalai Lama concluded that it is impossible to be a Buddhist and Christian at the same time. How can someone who believes in a timeless cycle of reincarnation believe in a Creation that had a beginning? How can they believe that meritorious deeds will result in a better rebirth while holding that Jesus is the only path to salvation and good deeds alone will not get one into heaven? How can they reject divine intervention in karma while believing in the grace of God? The contradictions are striking and obvious. Buddhism is a religious knowledge system, not simply an identity marker that one can collect and carelessly tack on.

The unfortunate result of all this is the alienation of people, like myself, whose relationship with the Buddhist faith hinged largely upon devotional religiosity and worship. Reducing Buddhism to a series of feel-good self-help rituals purportedly backed by scientific evidence is a surefire way to deprive the faith of its sanctity. It reaffirms the cliché that Buddhism is an areligious "philosophy, not a religion" that can be liberally construed to justify anything from treatments for depression to the counter-cultural, drug-fueled lifestyles of the Beat Generation.

The absence of a community in which I felt that I could worship authentically bred a great sense of disillusionment. I no longer practice Buddhism in any meaningful way as I found its upkeep simply impossible without a space to engage in familiar forms of devotionism. Because there are no temples in the vicinity of campus, my sole source of continued engagement with Buddhism became through an academic lens. For the past four semesters, I have been taking Sanskrit and Pali classes, scrutinizing epic poems and philosophical discourses in their original languages. It has been an intellectually rigorous, but different, experience. This entire ordeal has compelled me to reconsider some of my deepest religious convictions about theism and soteriology, many of which I have held since childhood.

I realize that there are factors limiting YBS's ability to successfully appeal to Buddhists from all walks of life, backgrounds and denominations. All organizations at Yale are subject to bureaucratic and financial constraints, and the population of self-identifying Buddhist undergraduates is relatively small, often under two percent of each incoming Yale College class. However, as long as YBS continues its current practices, it cannot claim to be a home for all Buddhists at Yale. YBS must better accommodate all forms of religiosity lest even more formerly avowed Buddhists become disillusioned and lose faith.

At stake is not simply the ability of Buddhists at Yale to worship authentically. Events at YBS are symptomatic of the state of Buddhism in our country more generally, where distorted and commodified secular practices masquerade as "Buddhist" in the mainstream, alienating and excluding those born and raised in the faith. Buddhists should not have to sanitize their practices in response to the pressures of modern liberalism. Compromising one's religiosity should not be a precondition for meaningfully participating in the pluralistic religious patchwork of America.

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FROM THE FRONT

“Music was my refuge. I could crawl into the space between the notes and curl my back to loneliness.”
MAYA ANGELOU AMERICAN AUTHOR

Yalies 4 Palestine puts pressure on the Uni. to end its contract with G4S

PALESTINE. FROM PAGE 1

just about Palestine, in this case, because G4S, broadly, is a part of the system of mass incarceration that's existed in this country since the 90s.”

When asked to discuss Yale's contract with G4S, Tracey Houston, the director of strategic communications for Yale Security, provided an “independent review” report by two British academics who concluded that G4S's activities in Israel were not in violation of international law.

“Yale University takes social responsibility and association with vendors seriously,” Houston told the News. “AMAG Technology has assured the University that it is committed to providing worldwide apolitical, ethical, and socially responsible services. They also affirm a commitment to treating matters of human rights seriously and ensuring that the company conducts its business in a way that meets internationally recognized human rights laws and standards.”

According to G4S, the service it provides to Yale is the Symmetry SR Retrofit System, which is administered by AMAG Technology, a company owned by G4S. The system — which went into effect after Yale installed 5,200 access card readers and 947 door controllers purchased from G4S beginning in 2014 — is used to control access to buildings and monitor who swipes into buildings across all of campus.

G4S did not respond to a request to comment for the article.

G4S's Human Rights Abuses

In their resolution, Y4P details a series of G4S clients and services that they allege are in violation of international human rights standards.

Within the United States, the resolution criticizes G4S for helping Immigrations and Customs Enforcement and Border Patrol in “imprisoning and deporting refugees.”

G4S was sued by the American Civil Liberties Union in 2018 for keeping four women shackled for hours in suffocating heat. The company was serving as a contractor for ICE and kept the women in a windowless, airless van for a 282-mile trip between migrant detention facilities that took 19 hours longer than it should have, according to the lawsuit.

“G4S is a huge company that has a lot of different arms, where they generally profit off of the securitization and the military industrial complex,” said Rebecca Wessel '24, a member of Y4P. “Namely in Israel, but also in other places, they help with a lot of work that ICE does at the border to detain migrants, and have also been involved in human rights abuses in prisons all over the world.”

Y4P also highlights an April 2019 report by the Council on Ethics for the Norwegian Government Pension Global Fund which determined that G4S committed systematic human rights violations against migrant workers it employed to work in Qatar and the United Arab Emirates. The Council found repeated instances of G4S misleading migrant workers about their wages and working conditions. Workers also universally reported having their passports illegally confiscated by G4S, and several told stories of being forced to work while sick.

In the conclusion of their report, the Council recommended that the Norwegian pension fund divest from G4S “due to an unacceptable risk that the company is contributing to systematic human rights violations.” And in November of 2019, the pension fund followed the recommendation, adding G4S to its list of excluded companies.

In South Africa, Y4P organizers took issue with G4S operating Mangaung Prison, the second-largest private prison in the world. At Mangaung, G4S has been accused of torturing a prisoner to death, as well as forcibly administering electric shocks and anti-psychotic drugs to inmates to keep them subdued.

Birckhead-Morton emphasized that the violence G4S committed in South Africa was part of a legacy of European colonialism, with a wealthy British corporation imposing its will on a country that was largely Black and still impoverished.

“It's gotten so bad, both in Britain and in South Africa, where some of these prisons, which were privatized and contracted out to G4S have been revoked,” Birckhead-Morton said. “I think once people hear that, there's no doubt that they'll want the university to cancel the contract.”

In Israel, Y4P organizers point to G4S's 25 percent ownership stake in the Israeli security company G1 Secure Solutions, which until 2016 was completely owned by G4S. According to NGO WhoProfits, G1 Secure Solutions provides security services to Israeli settlements in areas of the occupied West Bank, settlements which are in violation of international law.

Houston did not respond directly to the allegations against G4S in the resolution.

History of divestment

A number of prominent organizations have divested from G4S for their involvement in human rights abuses.

On top of the Norwegian pension fund blacklisting G4S, the United Methodist Church did the same in 2014, explicitly citing the company's then-involvement in Israeli prisons. The Danish pension fund MP Pension also divested from G4S in 2020, referencing the company's “risk of repeated human rights violations.”

At Columbia University, students were successful in pressuring the university to divest from G4S in 2015. The University of California system also divested from G4S following student pressure the same year, and Cornell followed suit the next spring.

“Because of all the complicity, we are hoping that Yale can end its contract,” Wessel said. “We've seen other universities make similar choices, so we feel like it's a realistic ask.”

Theia Chatelle '25, the political action coordinator for the Yale Women's Center, explained the center's decision to sign on as part of their broader mission of fighting for justice around the world, whether that involves supporting student activism in New Haven or Palestinian organizers abroad.

“It's Yale involving itself with evil corporations doing evil work around the world,” Chatelle said. “And I think drawing a line in the sand that says, ‘no, we as students are not okay with this’ is really important.”

G4S made approximately \$425 million in profit in 2020.

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Negrón leaked as NHPS superintendent

SUPERINTENDENT FROM PAGE 1

not pro forma, and the board as a whole has chosen to respect the process it put in place.”

Board of Education Vice President Matt Wilcox neither confirmed nor denied Goldson's announcement, telling the News that as a member of the personnel search committee he had agreed to a process that prevents him from commenting on the superintendent that has been selected.

The members of the Search Committee are not listed on the New Haven Public Schools website, nor are the names of members or stakeholders involved in the decision making process listed on the website designed to provide members of the public information on the superintendent search process.

New Haven Mayor Justin Elicker stressed his faith in the selection and his excitement for the district's new leadership.

“The search process for a new superintendent has been a thoughtful and deliberative one that has spanned several months, considered many well-qualified candidates, and included input from students, parents, teachers, administrators, support staff, and other community members,” Elicker told the News.

Dave Cruz-Bustamante, a Board of Education representative and senior at Wilbur Cross High School, expressed less optimism in the selection of a new superintendent. Regardless of who holds the position, he said he hopes they consult parents and New Haveners more to better the city's education system.

“To me, revitalizing this school district is much bigger than appointing a new big-wig at the top,” he said. “I hope that the new superintendent is willing to listen and act as a co-conspirator in the demands and frustrations of students, teachers, and community.”

Cruz-Bustamante added that he has faith in the board's selection and trusts this decision was made with “honesty” and “integrity.”

The current superintendent, Iline Tracey, informed the community of her decision to retire at the end of the 2022-2023 school year after almost 40 years of service in New Haven Public Schools.

Tracey announced her retirement around a cloud of controversy with the district releasing test scores that showed a precipitous decline during the pandemic and a debate over phonics-based education.

Tracey was originally tapped in 2019 to serve as an interim superintendent after her predecessor, Carol Birk's, contract was bought out by the Board of Education. Tracey was confirmed as non-interim superintendent for the 2020-2021 school year.

Carol Birks resigned mid-year following controversy related to her management style, which relied heavily on consultants and data analysts. Birk's stint was also tainted by claims that she tried to hide payments to strategic planners through the use of purchase orders.

Throughout the current process to choose Tracey's successor, community members have raised concerns, including at the Board of Alders' Education committee, about the process not sufficiently including the voices of the community.

“There were people in the community that felt that the process was not inclusive of I was more than willing to fight for their cause,” Goldson told the News. “I was never approached by any groups. I didn't see any groups arise to oppose the process.”

With looming teacher shortages, absenteeism, rising student homelessness and low test scores, Madeline Negrón faces an uphill battle.

The superintendent's office is located at 60 Putnam Avenue.

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Suh-Toma and Fonkeu win YCC President and VP in contested election

YCC FROM PAGE 1

College Council,” Fonkeu said. “This is also daunting; I do not hold this title lightly whatsoever. I am representing a community larger than just my individual self and the work I do in this position paves the way for students like me to follow, just as I follow those who came before me.”

Fonkeu's election is the latest in a series of firsts for the YCC — Leleda Beraki '24 became the first Black female president last year, while 2021 saw YCC's first Muslim president and 2019 saw YCC's first Black president.

Although the vice presidential election was decided without any elimination rounds, the presidential election was more complicated. In the first round of votes, Suh-Toma received 812 votes, or 37.5 percent. After multiple rounds of elimination, Suh-Toma emerged victorious with 1288 votes, or 59.6 percent of the vote.

Last year, Beraki and Li ran uncontested, and Beraki won the presidency with 615 votes. In 2021, Bayan Galal '23 became president after getting 1131 votes in an election with a turnout of 2007 students. Turnout for the YCC election of 2020 currently tops that of any elections following, with Aliesa Bahri '22 winning with 64.17 percent of the 2640 votes.

Previously, Suh-Toma served as YCC Senator for Benjamin Franklin College and Fonkeu served as the YCC Career Resources Policy Director, in addition to both being Commu-

nication and Consent Educators for their respective colleges.

The pair emphasized transparency from Yale and the YCC in their platform, and advocated for demonstrable change in areas such as mental health treatment on campus, policies surrounding the add/drop period and credit/D/fail, and support for First Generation Low Income students.

“In the Presidential debate, I acknowledged that YCC candidates often overpromise and underdeliver,” Suh-Toma told the News. “From [the moment] our administration comes into effect, we're going to deliver on our promises, and show exactly what we meant by a ‘More Transparent Yale.’”

Li told the News that she believed that Suh-Toma and Fonkeu to be qualified for the roles of president and vice president. She added that she was excited to see how they continue the legacy of the YCC president and vice president by representing and advocating for the student body.

“These roles require people who have been consistent in their efforts to make this university a more equitable place,” Li wrote in an email to the News. “I believe they will continue working and building on decades of student group and YCC advocacy while simultaneously pursuing new solutions to novel problems.”

In addition to Suh-Toma and Fonkeu, Brian Zhang '25 will be the new Junior Class Council president after receiving 46.3 percent of the votes prior to any rounds of elimination and 55.6 percent, or 509 votes, after one elimination round. Zhang is also a staff reporter for the News. The Sophomore Class Council president will be Mimi Papatathanasopoulos '26, who ran uncontested.

Olivia Lombardo '25 was elected as the new YCC Events Director in an uncontested race. Lombardo has two major goals she hopes to accomplish first in this position, one of which is internally-focused and the other of which is directed externally.

“My first internal goal will be to take inventory, meet with the former YCC Events Director, and review and revamp all event planning guides,” Lombardo told the News. “Externally, I am looking forward to beginning those initial conversations regarding organizational partnerships to set a positive tone for the upcoming year.”

Fonkeu described the election process as being tiring but rewarding. Although campaigning took a lot of work, Fonkeu is grateful for the experience and the reception that she received from the Yale community during her campaign.

“Putting yourself out there in front of the student body can be such a scary thing, but I was met with nothing but warmth, encouragement, and support,” Fonkeu told the News. “I'm happy I was able to do it with Julian and grateful to everyone that helped us along the way.”

According to Suh-Toma, the pair's platform was intentionally built on input from as many people as possible. To them, the platform was “a living and breathing document” that changed as they listened to stories from more of their peers.

“From the start, we recognized that there is no one better to help shape our platform on a specific issue than those who are most affected by it, and that was the guiding principle in developing our platform,” Suh-Toma told the News.

Viktor Kagan '24, who served as Suh-Toma and Fonkeu's campaign manager during the election, told the News that he was excited to see them work toward the changes outlined in their platform.

He noted that he joined their campaign because he believes in their ability to effectively advocate for the issues that they are passionate about.

“Their work this year spoke to the leadership and advocacy I want at the helm of YCC and [I] wanted to do all I could to ensure they win, for the best of the Yale student body,” Kagan told the News.

Jeremy Williams '25, who served as their elections coordinator for their campaign, chose to work on their campaign for a similar reason—he has trust in Suh-Toma and Fonkeu to do their best for the student body.

Even if Suh-Toma and Fonkeu are not able to accomplish everything they set out to in their platform, Williams hopes that they will begin addressing every issue noted in the platform over the course of their term.

Reflecting on her term as vice president, Li shared that she is grateful for the opportunity to serve the student body for the final time by overseeing the election. Apr. 14 marked the end of seven years of student government for Li, and she said she was appreciative of the opportunity to ensure that students' were able to choose their campus leadership.

“I think one of the most rewarding parts of being in this role was internally transforming the organization while serving the student body externally,” Li said. “It has been a joy every week to hear from eager Senators, Executive Board members, and delegates about their work to improve this institution.”

In light of the election results, both Suh-Toma and Fonkeu voiced their support for the other candidates. Suh-Toma and Fonkeu told the News that every candidate added important perspectives to the conversation, and that they are grateful for everyone who ran.

“Despite all the vulnerability, time, and effort that such a public race demands, everyone elevated the conversation to talk about vital aspects of student life,” Suh-Toma said. “The election dialogue, Maya and I's campaign and Yale were better for it.”

Suh-Toma and Fonkeu began their terms as YCC president and vice president at 12 a.m. on Apr. 15.

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FROM THE FRONT

“*Music doesn’t lie.*”
JIMI HENDRIX AMERICAN MUSICIAN

Film students express frustration over decrease in CPA funding

FILM FROM PAGE 1

Film students expressed concern that the money they get from CPAs – often lower than the limit – remains insufficient for the costs of their projects. These students said the guidelines for what CPAs cover are often restrictive for film projects, as CPAs cannot cover purchase of equipment, actors, travel or transportation costs, food – unless it serves as a prop – or wages.

“It’s a really hard space to navigate and almost feels like we’re pulling at strings, pulling at each other and pulling from the little resources that we can to make anything work,” said Fernando Cuello Garcia ’24, a film and media studies major. “As a whole and for the CPA as well, it really shows that Yale doesn’t care about film.”

CPAs are administered by the Council of Heads of College with the goal of supporting on-campus dramatic, musical, dance, video or film projects. They are financed by the Sudler Fund, Welch Fund and the Bates Fund. Projects must take place on campus, and applying students must consult with their Head of College prior to submission of their application.

While there is a centralized website for applications, Cuello Garcia said that changes to recent rules – including that students must speak to their Head of College – goes against “institutional knowledge” passed down from upperclass-

men, creating confusion around how to apply for CPAs.

Given these challenges, Marc-Alain Bertoni ’24, a film and media studies major, said film at Yale is an “afterthought,” with the lack of funding through CPAs as clear evidence of this. “Time and time again, film at Yale has been undermined by unclear regulation and broad rules applied to the artistic community that simply don’t consider how film and filmmaking would factor into the equation,” Bertoni wrote.

Students may apply for CPAs twice a year and can only serve as the primary proposer for one project produced per term.

The maximum grant for plays and musicals, as well as thesis films, is \$1,200. For all other projects, price maximums range from \$500 to \$1,000, with additional funding granted for obtention of legal rights. Cuello Garcia said the decreased limit compounds with other discrepancies including a lack of resources for film students at Yale, which are mostly provided through the Center for Collaborative Arts and Media.

“Film, on its own, I think tends to be a lot more expensive to produce than some of the other arts but that’s compounded with the fact that a lot of resources at Yale are kind of lacking for production,” Cuello Garcia said.

Cuello Garcia, the student coordinator at the CCAM, said that the CCAM lacks resources from Yale to support the space, especially if compared to the

resources for graduate students at the School of Art.

Bertoni wrote that he applied for a CPA for a film project last fall and received the maximum amount of \$500, but said he thinks that there are a lot of hidden costs which make the maximum insufficient, along with the high costs of what the CPA does cover.

“Essentially, if you’re at Yale, and you want to make a film, you have to be prepared to pay out of pocket to do so, and considering the amount of money this institution has, I think it’s a shame that is the case,” Bertoni wrote to the News. Head of Timothy Dwight College Mary Lui, the chair of the CPA committee on the Council of the Heads of College, wrote that there are categories of funding within the CPA system that each have preset limits, and the aim is to fund projects “as best as possible according to our best understanding of average costs per category.”

“There are many reasons why a project won’t get full funding, and it is case by case rather than a specific category getting less,” Lui told the News.

According to Lui, CPAs come out of gifts to Yale College and are broadly defined – early conversations back in the 1980s emphasized performing arts but the fund “quickly broadened” to a greater variety of arts today.

But Lui said this year has faced an increase in applications across many categories. Residential colleges have stretched their arts budgets “to the limit,” with some exceeding their own budgets.

Lui added that there are varying costs between theater and film projects, and theater projects may be especially costly due to the buying of rights for productions.

“The difficulties of funding such a high volume of CPA applications across the board, including film, has led to discussions with film faculty on how best to support filmmakers whether through the CCAM or additional streams of funding devoted to curricular film making,” Lui told the News. “So I am hopeful that we’ll be able to do more for filmmakers in the future.”

Kate Krier, Dean of Yale College Arts, explained that total CPA funding per college has remained flat since 2014. In the 2014-15 year, 72 students applied. In the 2022-23 year, 421 have.

As such, colleges have had to be more selective regarding funding decisions, and a lower percentage of applicants.

Krier noted that the Center for Collaborative Arts and Media will, in the coming fall, offer \$28,000 worth of film equipment to students, informed by “wish list” feedback from student filmmakers.

This year’s applicants, however, have weathered numerous monetary difficulties in carrying out graded film projects and, in some cases, their senior theses.

Jonas Kilga ’23, whose senior thesis film required external funding, felt hindered in his ability to complete his graduation requirement by financial restraints.

“If you, like me, needed this grant to graduate from

Yale, then it is a case of the school actively prohibiting you from completing a graduation requirement,” Kilga explained to the News. “The need to crowd-fund...creates significant equity issues, because those students with wealthier friends and family will have more funding for their films than students from low-income backgrounds.”

Kilga explained that difficulties surrounding CPA funding only cropped up starting this year, when a drastic increase in applications had severely reduced the percentage of applicants who received grants.

The explanation students received, Kilga noted, was that the money “just wasn’t there.”

Non-senior film students have also run into difficulties funding class-mandated film projects, having to crowdfund or spend thousands of dollars on projects. Cuello Garcia said many students fund projects using their own money – spending up to \$10,000 for film theses.

“It doesn’t have the sufficient equipment that we need,” Cuello Garcia said. “So it’s a matter of pulling money out of your own pocket or, or asking friends to give you equipment. There’s mostly no other mainstream ways of funding.”

Funds given from the CPA awarded in February must be submitted for reimbursement by May 5.

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Yale physicians call for boycott of states banning abortion

FAST FROM PAGE 1

that if something went wrong with a potential pregnancy while in Nashville, she would not be able to get the reproductive care she needed.

The woman and Kaminski were both part of the American College of Chest Physicians, but Kaminski – the Boehringer-Ingelheim Endowed Professor of Internal Medicine and chief of pulmonary, critical care and sleep medicine at the Yale School of Medicine – was a more senior doctor. Last October, he wrote an open letter to the ACCP calling on the society to only hold meetings in places that protected access to health-care. Not places, like Nashville, that had “draconian abortion bans,” he maintained.

Kaminski worried about young female members of the society who had to choose their safety over the advantages these meetings offered to their careers. He said “almost every step” of his career happened at a conference.

“These societies are like their bread and butter,” Kaminski said. “You give talks, you get elected to roles that help you in your academic career. The people who review your papers go to these conferences. This puts an undue pressure on younger people, mostly women.”

Kaminski reflected on a patient he saw in medical school. A young woman came in with an ectopic pregnancy – a life-threatening condition where a fertilized egg grows outside the uterus – and had to be rushed to the operating room. If the doctors had waited for a judge to make a ruling on whether surgery could be performed in that case, the woman would have died, he explained.

“Going to a place where injustice is happening and pretending that everything’s okay is unacceptable,” Kaminski added.

On June 24, 2022, the Supreme Court ruled that there was no constitutional right to abortion. The case, *Dobbs v Jackson Women’s Health Organization*, overturned 50 years of precedent established by *Roe v. Wade*, giving states the authority to decide abortion rights.

As of April 19, 13 states have banned abortions while several others have introduced strict gestational limits.

In response, the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, which represents

60,000 obstetrician-gynecologists, changed their 2023 annual meeting location from Louisiana to Maryland due to the former’s strict anti-abortion laws.

“My concern is that other societies are not following ACOG because they don’t see as much of a direct relevance to them,” said Cary Gross, professor of general medicine and epidemiology at the Yale School of Medicine. “I think that’s a colossal mistake because [of] the physician-patient relationship, access to appropriate health care and frankly, concerns around state legislators dictating what type of care people can and can’t receive – all these things should worry members of any and every [medical] professional society.”

Kaminski partnered with Kathleen Akgün, associate professor of pulmonary medicine at the Yale School of Medicine, to write an article in the journal of the American Thoracic Society. Akgün clarified that the views she expresses are hers, not of the ATS Ethics and Conflict of Interest Committee, which she currently chairs. The two Yale physicians called on medical professional societies to not sponsor large meetings in states that strongly restrict access to abortions.

Kaminski emphasized that Equity Florida, the largest LGBTQ+ organization in the state, recently issued a travel advisory suggesting that Florida is unsafe for people who can become pregnant, communities of color and LGBTQ+ people. He called on medical societies to take a similar stance.

Drawing on her background in clinical ethics, Akgün emphasized the field’s four main principles: beneficence, nonmaleficence, autonomy and justice. She felt that the *Dobbs* decision violated the principle of autonomy by eliminating a person’s ability to control what happens to their body. Akgün said it was “inexcusable” that a patient would be forced to carry on with an unwanted pregnancy, and argued that restricting healthcare for half the population would set the country back by decades.

“When patients are put in positions beyond their control due to state control, that’s certainly a bridge too far,” Akgün said. “I felt as though human rights were under attack.”

In deciding to not host events in states that ban abortion, Akgün hopes that medical soci-



Tim Tai, Photography Editor

Medical societies attract thousands of medical professionals to their days-long annual meetings. Money does not just go to the convention center they reserve – by patronizing local businesses, society members offer a substantial financial incentive for states.

eties can put pressure on states in an organized fashion and counter anti-abortion groups. Akgün acknowledged that some societies may not be able to change contracts already made with convention centers without paying a penalty, but emphasized the importance of advocating through boycotts.

Medical societies attract thousands of medical professionals to their days-long annual meetings. Money does not just go to the convention center they reserve – by patronizing local businesses, society members offer a substantial financial incentive for states. According to Akgün, one argument against their boycott has been the potential losses faced by community members in anti-abortion states, but she emphasized that in general, it is not guaranteed that every state will get to host a meeting. As Gross put it, if you put your medical conference in one state, you are already not putting it in 49 other states.

“As far as the idea of ethical consumerism, why would you bring these tremendous resources to states that are enacting these [anti-abortion] laws?” Gross said.

Gross is a primary care doctor who has been on the Yale School of Medicine faculty for 20 years. In an editorial written with Yale Law School professor Katherine Raschel, he laid out the clinical and ethical considerations for holding society meetings in states that protect abortion rights.

Gross acknowledged that not every member of a professional society will agree about access to abortion. However, medical professional organizations should have a mechanism for reaching a consensus. Though unanimity is unlikely in any case, he argued that organizations need to take a stance, and said that “frankly, to not act, is acting.”

Some people have expressed to Gross that taking a stance on abortion could lead to a “slippery slope,” in terms of then having to address the “myriad” of other political issues. However, he argued that this argument is used as a “wedge” to avoid making tough decisions and having contentious conversations.

“It sounds very reasonable on the surface, but also it can be used by people in positions of power to never make a stand on anything,” Gross said. “[Against] any potential egregious law or human rights violation because ‘that might be a slippery slope.’”

Gross argued that societies need to reflect on what professional norms and values they hope to espouse. If those norms include a desire to preserve the doctor-patient relationship, then it matters that patients have a right to choose, and that there is not disproportionate harm posed to women of color and people with fewer resources, he said.

Gross urged societies to “vote with their feet” and hold meetings in locations consistent with those values.

“I do not have the expectation that every single physician is out there marching in the streets, getting really active politically,” Gross said. “However, it is naive to think that medicine is not a political undertaking. It is detrimental to the profession if physicians recede into the woodwork when there are critical public health and societal issues that affect the wellbeing of people and patients in our society.”

In 2021, the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, alongside 24 other medical organizations, submitted an amicus brief in the *Dobbs* case that opposed abortion restrictions and emphasized the potential harm to patient wellbeing and the patient-clinician relationship.

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“It is good to remember that the planet is carrying you.”
VANDANA SHIVA ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVIST

YSMHA hosts annual Mind Over Matter Fair

BY SARAH COOK
STAFF REPORTER

Yale Student Mental Health Association hosted their annual Mind Over Matter Fair on Cross Campus on April 15.

During the fair, students explored various booths helmed by mental health advocacy groups while also sitting and enjoying performances from acapella and dance groups. The performers included the a cappella groups Cadence of Yale, Mixed Company and Doox of Yale, as well as the dance group Yale Movement. Yale College Community Care, the SHARE Center, the Asian American Cultural Center, Alliance for Prevention and Wellness and Elis for Rachael all had booths at the event.

YSMHA co-president Peyton Meyer '24 told the News that he was excited to see so many people on Cross Campus for the event.

“Any time we’re able to facilitate even just one new conversation about mental health, it’s a win,” Meyer wrote in an email to the News.

Meyer added that after the event, students seemed to enjoy being able to browse booths and grab a bite to eat while enjoying the performances.

Ben Swinchoski '24, one of the YSMHA members who helped organize the event, also said he hoped that the fair would expose students to different groups, spread awareness about mental health and promote ways to prioritize mental health through the performances.

“I hope students are exposed to different ways that different groups intersect with mental health awareness and take a look at the ways we’re promoting ways they can prioritize their

mental health the rest of the semester,” Swinchoski said.

The booth for mental health advocacy group Elis for Rachael featured a wheel attendees could spin to learn about different options to support mental health on campus. They also included a prompt board where people could submit suggestions about what could be improved about Yale’s mental health services.

Elis for Rachael’s booth also included a TV, which played closed-captioned testimonies from alumni about their experiences with mental healthcare at Yale. Their booth also had newspaper clippings from articles regarding the recent changes to medical leave and cards that featured stories of specific alumni experiences.

The group also included links to a new survey about mental health experiences at Yale, along with an interest form for the new mental health peer liaison program.

In organizing the event, Meyer said that connecting with community partners took many emails, but they were excited to get both booths and performers for the fair. He said that the performances were a great way to build excitement and show attendees mental health is “not something that should be stigmatized or hidden,” drawing in students who may not otherwise be engaged in conversations about mental health.

Another booth included representatives from Alliance for Prevention and Wellness, a program of BH care, a community behavioral health clinic that focuses on mental health awareness and suicide prevention. The group also provides mental health first aid training, as well as an emer-



SARAH COOK / CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER

Yale Student Mental Health hosted their annual mental health fair Mind Over Matter.

gency mental health training known as QPR training.

“I am really glad that we’re here serving the Yale community,” said Taylor Gainey, the regional suicide advisory board coordinator for Alliance for Prevention and Wellness. “We want to let students know that in addition to mental health services on campus, we’re here as well.”

Additionally, the Asian American Cultural Center hosted a booth with space for painting posters and

the opportunity to post sticky notes answering the question: “How have you felt cared for recently?”

Sunehra Subah '24, a member of the wellness and mental health team at the AACC, said her team hopes to emphasize that students should take time they need to rest. She added that they are also often focused on the intersection of mental health and Asian identity.

“When we talk about identity, especially as racialized bodies, we

talk a lot about dealing with trauma or harm or pain, and I think that’s a very good conversation, but there’s also so much joy in being Asian,” Subah told the News. “Asinanness is not only dealing with harm.”

Yale Mental Health and Counseling’s central office is located on the third floor of the Yale Health building at 55 Lock St.

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Students advocate for official disability studies program

BY MIRANDA WOLLEN AND MADDY CORSON
STAFF REPORTERS

Undergraduate, graduate and professional students are advocating for the institution of an official disability studies department at Yale.

The Yale Disability Studies Network, a multidisciplinary student-led coalition that unites students, faculty and alumni through disability scholarship, has petitioned for the formalization of an interdepartmental center for the study and research of disability at Yale.

Throughout the months of April and May, four disability advocates — including an author and autism activist, a political anthropologist, a CNN journalist and a professor of architecture — will visit Yale’s campus to speak on issues relating to disability. The Yale Disability Studies Network hopes that this speaker series will call attention to the interdisciplinary character of disability scholarship, and also serve as a platform through which those interested in disability studies can engage more deeply with the field.

“I found it to be an unacceptable oversight, particularly for an institution like Yale, not to have a dedicated space that caters to the intellectual needs of scholars and practitioners working to benefit disabled individuals,” Yushi Zhang SPH '23, co-leader of the Yale Disability Studies Network, told the News.

Zhang said that support for the proposed disability studies center became clear in conversations she had with community members involved with the Poorvu Center, DiversAbility at Yale, Student Accessibility Services and the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Office, as well as the Office of the Provost and its faculty and student affiliates.

However, she noted, the program will need the support of leading University faculty and administrators in order to move past planning stages.

Presently, the Yale Disability Studies Network’s leadership team consists of students from all across the University. According to Zhang, the graduate and undergraduate working groups will be led by history Ph.D. candidate Rebecca Boorstein GRD '26 and disability peer liaison Alexis Sye '25, respectively.

To gain further legitimacy, Zhang explained that the program

will require official registration and internal funding. The next step in their advocacy efforts will be to collect signatures on a petition letter from supporters of an interdepartmental Center for Disability Studies.

Martine Cruz '23 defined disability studies as the academic exploration of the experience of disabled persons. Historically, she said, scholarship has often medicalized certain aspects of the disabled experience instead of taking a holistic approach. Cruz affirmed the importance of the creation of a disability studies department as a way to begin facilitating a more tangible connection between the University and its disabled community.

Cruz previously served as a member of Disability Empowerment for Yale — an undergraduate advocacy group for disabled, chronically ill and neurodivergent students — for one year, before becoming the group’s communications director.

According to Cruz, she and Zhang connected through their shared interest in public health, and have worked together to coordinate action around Zhang’s Yale Disability Studies Network initiative.

As a student-led initiative, the Yale Disability Studies Network has introduced a number of efforts to gain attention and support from University administrators.

“Presently, Yale really does what is demanded by the Americans with Disabilities Act and that’s about it,” Cruz said. “It’s never been the initiative of the university to provide any support to students that would otherwise not be required by the law.”

Zhang’s first concept of the Yale Disability Studies Network was as an intra-university “cross-school student group,” she told the News. This vision was complicated when Zhang discovered that multi-school organizations were not eligible to receive activities funding from any single school.

Relying on individual faculty members, too, proved onerous.

Zhang explained that though a number of faculty members are individually invested in disability studies, “many of them did not have the bandwidth to establish a university-wide collaboration” without institutional support.



TIM TAI / PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR

Students and staff are pushing for the creation of an official department dedicated to the discipline of disability studies.

“I can’t do this alone,” she continued. “If we want this thing to exist, I will need a lot more people joining me and joining the many [disabilities studies] scholars and students at Yale.”

Anthropology professor Elizabeth Berk has thrown her support behind expanding disability studies at Yale, and Katie Wang, assistant professor in the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences at the School of Public Health, expressed hope that the current movement would increase visibility and resources for disability studies scholarship.

Wang said that she thought the program could “encourage the conceptualization of the disabled lived experience as a form of human diversity, and raise awareness of disability inclusion as a social justice issue, both within the Yale community and beyond.”

Through her own experience as an educator, Berk said she has observed students’ experiences with disability, chronic illness and mental health challenges. To Berk, a dedicated disability studies center would not only expand academic and extracurricular opportunities relevant to

the field, but also provide a space through which students can explore their own experiences.

Some students and faculty believe that University support for a disabilities studies program is, at best, overdue.

Cruz said that institutional recognition would be “the first step of Yale formally acknowledging that disabled students exist and that disabled people exist.”

Both Zhang and Berk affirmed that disability studies have recently gained an increasing amount of academic attention. Wesleyan’s “cluster” program cropped up in 2010 thanks to student advocacy, and Georgetown has offered minors and Masters and Ph.D programs. Certificates in the study for three decades.

However, Berk also highlighted the intrinsic value of disability studies beyond its “trendy” status as a field of study.

“One thing I think is incredibly important about disability studies overall is not just treating it as another axis, [like,] ‘okay, we’ve talked about gender, we’ve talked about race; now let’s add disability,’” stated Berk. “I think disability studies come out of the ways in which all

of those are constructed together, and the different ways that disability has been constructed over time.”

However, Ivy League schools have lagged behind in offering organized disability studies programming: Princeton and Yale only have working groups, the University of Pennsylvania allows womens, gender and sexuality studies majors to “concentrate” in Health and Disability and Columbia University’s disability studies program is tucked away in its Department of English and Comparative Literature.

Members of Yale Disability Studies Network said they see the gap as an opportunity to be trailblazers of disability studies and to encourage wider recognition of the practice in academia.

The Yale Disability Studies Network’s next speaker event will take place on Tuesday, April 18, where Eric Reinhart — a Harvard-trained medical anthropologist and physician — will discuss abolitionist care.

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“Together, we can preserve the forest, securing this immense treasure for the future of all these children.”
CHICO MENDES BRAZILIAN ENVIRONMENTALIST

New Haven high school students tour Alexion Pharmaceuticals

BY BROOKLYN BRAUNER
CONTRIBUTING REPORTER

A group of tenth and eleventh graders from Hill Regional Career High School brought their biology and chemistry knowledge from the classroom to the laboratory on a field trip this week.

Huân M. Ngô, who conducted his post-doctoral training in cellular and molecular parasitology at the Yale School of Medicine, helped lead the field trip as part of a new “classroom to the workforce” curriculum model for science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and medicine, or STEMM courses at Career High School. After observing both the professional and educational sides of developmental science, Ngô wants to help New Haven youth launch into local careers in bioscience.

According to Ngô, most nationally-accepted science curriculums in public high schools operate on a curiosity-based approach where instructors engage their students through enthusiasm and wonder. But Ngô explained to the News that this approach becomes a prevalent structural setback. Rather than attempting to excite students about topics they have no inherent interest in, Ngô believes that staff and administrators must transition to a more practical approach that explains the relevance of scientific information.

“STEMM studies are beneficial when attempting to establish a career, and genuine connection the material is often not encountered with ‘Bill Nye science education,’ or classes designed to stimulate mere excitement,” Ngô told the News. “Instead, we should shift to STEMM workforce development and modernize bioscience education so our kids are a little closer to the growing workforce of their city.”

These sentiments originated from Ngô’s previous teaching experience as a middle school

science teacher at New Haven’s Sheridan Middle School. At Sheridan, he noticed his “middle school academic stars” losing interest in their passions for science by the time they reached graduation. Ngô came to grapple with a single question: why?

After much contemplation, he concluded that pursuing a career in STEMM requires learning a “whole new world,” which is seldom required in other professions. Any job within the bioscience industry necessitates a different way of thinking and a new vocabulary. These barriers, he said, made many students apprehensive about pursuing science.

“Their passions and curiosities alone were not enough to motivate these students into a STEMM-oriented path,” said Ngô. “I now have to explain to them the opportunities that fundamental biology could bring to them, and give them a reason to go through all of that trouble.”

With approximately six percent of New Haven’s workforce employed in the bioscience industry, Ngô noted that graduating students could fulfill a larger percentage of these positions in the city. He wants to encourage New Haven residents to fill these positions as opposed to pharmaceutical companies and hospitals outsourcing their jobs to non-residents.

If students are able to form a comprehensive STEMM foundation in high school, they will be better able to access the opportunities that surround them in New Haven, Ngô said. He hopes that contextualizing the necessity and applicability of science education will boost the numbers of employment opportunities for his students.

“Science is on the rise, so we need to get our students involved early to set a precedent,” he told the News. “We are engaging in targeted growth; I don’t want my students to be left behind again.”

Modernizing science education, Ngô said, could help close the gap between high school stu-

dents and the bioscience workforce in New Haven, which is currently ranked 20th in the nation in terms of life sciences labor markets.

Ngô reported that implementing the “classroom to workplace” model has already produced positive results, with students becoming more inquisitive and taking the initiative to further explore career options.

“The initiative not only enhances a students’ awareness of various career pathways available to pursue after high school (especially uncommon or unknown options), but also shows the relevance of applying the various 21st century skills in a real setting while building confidence in networking with others outside of a school building,” Sarah Kane, who teaches courses on business at Hill Regional Career High School, wrote to the News.

This development involves visiting and interacting with bioscience institutions in New Haven, allowing students to see how they might attain a career in STEMM. The tenth and eleventh grade biology, chemistry, and STEM careers classes toured Alexion Pharmaceuticals, a local corporation that lies approximately a half a mile down the street from their school, on April 17. Alexion works to cure and eliminate rare diseases through the interdisciplinary studies of neurology, hematology, nephrology and metabolics.

Several students told the News that they were excited to see how accessible the bioscience industry can be, with the laboratory located within walking distance of the school. They also mentioned feeling closer to the industry after speaking with Alexion employees about personal stories of success.

“Touring the facility helped me realize that we are not just learning these details to get a grade,” Awurabena Ofori-Amo, a tenth-grade biology student, told the News. “We are actually doing it to one day find cures and



COURTESY OF SARAH KANE

To shift the standard attitude towards science education, tenth-grade teacher Huân M. Ngô introduced his students to the bioscience industries of New Haven.

help injured individuals. It’s easier to remember this when we see the reality of what we learn.”

Five students who the News interviewed mentioned feeling more a personal investment in STEMM material after the field trip. Each student interviewed agreed that they now find more value in the “behind the scenes” work they perform in class.

Eleventh-graders Elijah Cohen and Chance Moore both commented on receiving an increased amount of high-level, hands-on academic support at school across subjects, which they report to have created a sense of community which had previously been lacking.

Fellow eleventh-grade student Shanagay Phillips also spoke highly of their science education thus far, stating that “approachable and thorough” teaching has allowed them to enjoy their courses.

Additionally, tenth-grader Candyce Cox discussed institutional differences between Hill Regional Career High School and her former high school, saying that she enjoys the more in-depth explanations her current teachers provide.

“I had never been prompted to think about science so deeply before,” Cox told the News. “The classes are definitely challenging sometimes, but they explain the material better than a textbook or a video.”

While only at the beginning of the STEMM curriculum transition, both faculty and students alike remain optimistic about future endeavors, ranging from further curricular adjustments to forthcoming career prospects.

In total, 21 students attended the Alexion field trip with Dr. Ngô and Kane.

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New Haven celebrates 50th anniversary of Wooster Square Cherry Blossom Festival



HANNAH KOTLER / CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER

According to the Historic Wooster Square Association, 72 Yoshino cherry trees were planted in Wooster Square in 1973. Delauro’s parents participated in organizing the first Cherry Blossom Festival.

BY HANNAH KOTLER
STAFF REPORTER

Thousands gathered on Sunday afternoon to celebrate the 50th anniversary of New Haven’s Cherry Blossom Festival. Yoshino cherry trees in full bloom lined the perimeter of Wooster Square Park and crowds gathered on Academy Street in queues for over a dozen food trucks including Ben & Jerry’s, Bear’s Smokehouse and the Kettle King.

On a stage in the corner of the park, three bands — St. Luke’s Square Band, Airborne Trio and

Carlos y su Momento — performed before the crowd.

“My favorite thing about coming here is seeing people have a good time,” Dante Hall, vocalist for the Airborne Trio, said. “No one’s fighting. The cherry blossoms — it’s about nature, it’s about love, that’s what it’s about. Hopefully it will transcend throughout New Haven, that’s what we need.”

Airborne Trio is a New Haven-based contemporary jazz band. Hall told the News that the band did not expect so many people to turn out with the overcast weather.

During an intermission, Bill Iovanne, co-chair of the Wooster Square Monument Committee, introduced various city officials and community leaders on stage. New Haven Mayor Justin Elicker, whose daughter accompanied him on stage, welcomed residents to the festival. Sen. Martin Looney, who represents New Haven, followed Elicker to speak about the festival, also highlighting the sense of community the festival demonstrated.

“This festival is of course the official opening of spring,” said Looney. “Even though it’s a little

overcast today, [this is the] first large springtime gathering we have in the city. It brings together people who reside here now and former residents.”

Rep. Rosa DeLauro spoke about the history of the Wooster Square neighborhood, reminiscing about growing up just steps away from the park.

The city purchased the land where Wooster Square Park stands now in the 1820s. Italian American families immigrated to the area in the late 19th century. In the 1950s, the Urban Renewal Act threatened to demolish the neighborhood as the city planned to build Interstate 91 through the park.

“My dad and my mom stood in front of the bulldozers and said you’re no way gonna come and bifurcate this neighborhood, and for this we are all very grateful,” DeLauro said, followed by loud applause.

According to the Historic Wooster Square Association, 72 Yoshino cherry trees were

planted in Wooster Square in 1973. Delauro’s parents participated in organizing the first Cherry Blossom Festival. Ted DeLauro, Rosa DeLauro’s father, was a community organizer who advocated for Wooster Square to become New Haven’s first designated “historic district.”

At the festival, DeLauro presented the Urban Resources Initiative with The Friends of Wooster Square Award. The Urban Resources Initiative is a nonprofit organization dedicated to urban forestry.

“To see all of you here today,” continued DeLauro, “The families who are thriving and flourishing like the cherry trees we cherish, generations of New Haven families have grown, they have flourished in the special place we called home.”

Wooster Square Park was designated as a local historic landmark in 1970.

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HANNAH KOTLER / CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER

Wooster Square Cherry Blossom Committee hosted musicians, food trucks and vendors for their annual festival this Sunday.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Inside Governor Lamont’s bill to expand maternal healthcare

BY SAMANTHA LIU
STAFF REPORTER

In New Haven, Black people are seven times more likely than white people to die from pregnancy-related complications.

The statistic is part of a maternity mortality crisis unfolding statewide. Even though 80 percent of these deaths are preventable, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, people of color continue to bear the brunt of Connecticut’s dwindling maternity services.

In response to these disparities, S.B. 986 An Act Protecting Maternal Health, introduced by Gov. Ned Lamont in February, seeks to reshape and expand the scope of maternal health care in Connecticut. The bill proposes to license free-standing birth centers for low-risk pregnancies, in addition to implementing nurse home visits for newborn infants and certifying services by doulas — trained professionals who provide emotional and physical support to their clients during childbirth.

The bill was passed out of the Public Health Committee on April 4 and now awaits Senate approval. If signed into law, S.B. 986 could fill in some gaps left by statewide maternity ward closures — which occur overwhelmingly in rural, low-access areas — and offer a more human, intimate birthing experience for expecting mothers.

“This [bill] is just an opportunity to address that issue,” Lucinda Canty, associate professor and director of Health Equity in the Nursing Program at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, said to the News. “We’re a small state, but we still have pockets where people don’t have the resources they need when it comes to healthcare.”

Maternity care in crisis

Maternal morbidity and mortality serve as a bellwether of the general population’s health, said Katherine Campbell, associate professor of obstetrics and medical director of labor and birth at Yale New Haven Hospital.

Yet Campbell has witnessed increasing hemorrhage and hypertension in her obstetrical care patients, much of which occurs in the postpartum period — six to eight weeks after birth. She noted that these complications are compounded by diabetes and obesity, which are also on the rise.

In Connecticut, the issue is worsened by the shuttering of hospital maternity wards over the past three years. Citing low delivery volumes and high costs, medical center operators have been closing their labor and delivery units in northern Connecticut, including Windham Hospital and Johnson Memorial Hospital in Stafford.

The closures are part of a larger landscape of consolidation of smaller, often rural hospitals by health system giants such as Yale New-Haven Health System and Hartford Healthcare.

“[For health systems], maternal health is one of those easier things to cut, because they’re like, ‘Well, it’s just pregnancy. [Patients] can make it to Hartford Hospital, or they can make it to St. Francis.’” Canty said. “They’re not looking at those other pieces that influence and impact women’s lives.”

Canty — who also serves as a certified nurse-midwife and provides reproductive care at Planned Parenthood of Southern New England — emphasized that “anything can happen” to people in labor during the hour-long drive elsewhere. Aside from the “anxiety and stress” the experience induces, the distance may deter people from seeking prenatal care beforehand.

Nor can people in labor always make it to the nearest hospital in time. When Hartford Healthcare’s Windham Hospital closed its labor and delivery unit in June 2020, rural mother Shantell Jones had to give birth to her son in an ambulance on the side of the road.

The Windham population is 41 percent Latine, with a 25 percent poverty rate compared to the statewide 10 percent poverty rate.

Campbell explained that the state has adopted some positive measures toward increasing maternity care access. While people enrolled in Medicaid formerly were only covered for six weeks after giving birth, now they are assured health insurance for a full year postpartum.

This expansion impacts about 40 percent of the maternity population in greater New Haven, according to



JESSAI FLORES/ILLUSTRATIONS EDITOR

If passed, the bill could radically change the landscape of Connecticut maternal care — and the lives of underserved people.

Campbell. Still, she noted a problem in actually connecting patients to these programs. In underserved areas, individuals may lack awareness about statewide resources which could benefit them.

“So what is in that area? What’s going to be left for those people who are there, in our rural areas of Connecticut?” Canty asked. “Where are those resources that are going to be right in their community if these things close?”

The historical case for birth centers

Under the first section of the maternal health bill, a licensing category would be created for free-standing birth centers. These facilities would focus on low-risk pregnancies and serve as an alternative to hospital labor and delivery units. Not only would they fill the void left behind by hospital closures, but they would also give pregnant people a choice in the birthing care they receive.

The bill takes precedent from the Connecticut Childbirth and Women’s Center in Danbury, currently the only standalone birthing center in the state. The center focuses on natural childbirths and is staffed by certified nurse-midwives.

Canty explained a recent history of midwifery in marginalized communities, in the 1940s, when segregated hospitals turned away pregnant Black people, these people developed their own communal systems of care.

“Births were done in a home, where people weren’t trained in our formal institutions, but they were trained through apprenticeships,” Canty said. “It was an environment where women felt safe, and there was a sense of community.”

Canty went on to explain that even while access to hospitals and public health knowledge has grown, the disparity has not budged. Nationwide, Black people are three times more likely to die than white people of pregnancy-related causes — the same differential as in the 1940s.

Naomi Rogers, professor in the history of medicine and of history, also pointed to how people of color have historically received second-rate reproductive care. Even in the 1960s and 1970s in urban hospitals which were free and available for inner city populations, medical students could practice on patients “in the worst possible way,” Rogers said. Unknowing patients were even used for clinical research because, according to Rogers, “it was seen that you didn’t really need to ask anybody’s consent.”

While sweeping reforms have since changed the “horrific nature” of these hospitals, Rogers said, public health persists beyond the hospital building.

“Why do people develop certain kinds of health issues? Because of the houses they live in, the places they live in, the lead in the paint?” Rogers asked.

For both Canty and Rogers, these sustained inequities point toward a need for alternative health centers.

“I don’t think it’s just the hospital’s fault, but maybe it’s the current structure of care ... with medical professionals and the way they treat women,” Rogers said. “Maybe rather than trying to deal with that, you just set up a differ-

ent environment. You just build a new house.”

At home in the “new house”

At the Labor and Birth Unit of Yale New Haven Hospital, expectant parents are welcomed by walnut-colored wood paneling, plush carpets and soft dim lighting. But Rogers recalled how the cabinets slid back, and out came “the equipment, all the equipment... just you name it.”

“I’ve never forgotten the sort of total transformation of the birthing space,” Rogers said.

These hyper-medicalized spaces and apparatuses are a growing reason for fear among people, explained Rogers. Birthing centers — without all the “bells and whistles,” as Canty described it — would instead focus on patient-centered care. People would not be attended by doctors and white coat-clad surgeons, but rather certified nurse midwives and doulas, with whom they develop intimate relationships.

Canty also explained that while birthing center staff are trained to screen and respond to medical complications, they aim to make birth feel like a natural process. In that vein, Canty described heightened focus toward helping a patient feel listened to.

“The way that we approach and develop relationships with those we care for helps create an environment where people feel like they’re a part of the team,” Canty said.

Feeling listened to is not just a matter of emotional satisfaction, emphasized Rogers. When Black people’s symptoms are overlooked and dismissed, the consequences can be life-threatening.

Rogers alluded to the “Serena Williams problem,” in which the then-pregnant famous tennis player had to fight her nurses and doctors to pay attention to her shortness of breath. While her physicians originally ignored her requests, a CT scan eventually revealed deadly blood clots in her lungs.

Even though Williams’ life was likely saved by this intervention, Rogers stressed that “even wealthy women of color find that hospital staff, nurses and doctors don’t really pay attention to them, when they mention health problems during childbirth.” For other people of color, that power to self-advocate is less present, explained Canty.

“Women have told me, [‘my doctors] make me feel like I’m exaggerating, or they don’t listen, or they make me feel like I’m wasting someone’s time,’” recalled Canty.

Thus, Canty pointed to the “holistic environment” of birthing centers. Not only would the physical space be more inviting, but people would have check-ins and regular meetings with their nurse midwives well before the pregnancy, to “feel good and feel welcomed” with their providers.

She also emphasized having a “no-rush” birthing process — rather than hospitals, which may be swamped with patient volumes, birthing centers can afford to wait and take their time with each patient. Canty described her own experience of evaluating the patient, sending them home if necessary, checking in and waiting for the childbirth to occur at a “natural pace.”

“That’s what I would love to see right away — that some-

one leaves and says, ‘they listened to me, and I felt my body was respected in this process,’” Canty said. “I want [...] people just to be able to have trust in our healthcare system again.”

Ensuring patient safety

Without the “bells and whistles,” however, some raise concerns about maternal safety as compared to hospitals.

In its testimony to the Public Health Committee, the Connecticut Hospital Association pushed back on the lack of regulation established around the new centers.

“Before any birthing center is approved, clinical thresholds and protocols, mandatory clinical guidelines, stakeholder review, public oversight and transparency must be in place — and accomplished in a way that would meet typical standards of administrative procedure,” Connecticut Hospital Association wrote in its testimony.

Connecticut Hospital Association also included a list of questions about what guidelines birthing centers would be subject to, citing safety standards, HIPAA guidelines, statewide Certificates of Need and data collection by the Department of Public Health.

Canty views extensive oversight as something that would detract from these centers’ mission. She acknowledged that guidelines were necessary to protect people’s safety. Still, she emphasized her hope that state and hospital intervention will help people feel “safe” and supported, rather than scrutinized by rules and regulations.

“Talk to women, and look at their experiences of care,” Canty said. “There are women who are terrified. We have to make sure [the state] is not putting that medical model that we’re trying to run from because it’s causing harm.”

Rogers bolstered Canty’s perspective, emphasizing that a patient’s emotional wellness is often mirrored by their physical health.

A patient feeling that “they’re in a safe place, that people are listening to them,” as Rogers puts it, can already lower their risk of complications. Hypertension, for example, commonly poses risk during pregnancy and is caused by high stress. For an individual about to give birth, in an unfamiliar environment, that may be enough to drive up their blood pressure.

“The health of the patient is profoundly caught up with their mental state,” Rogers reiterated. “One of the reasons that alternative health center birthing centers are seen as likely to work is that they will create an environment that will help a woman feel cared for.”

Even so, Campbell cautioned that there are a multitude of pregnancy-related complications that can arise suddenly, some of which can be fatal if not properly attended to. Hypertension is sometimes unavoidable, as is postpartum hemorrhage, which arises in 7 to 9 percent of the patients she attends. Campbell also pointed toward necessary interventions for shoulder dystocia, in which the baby’s shoulder becomes stuck during childbirth, and Cesarean sections.

“There does have to be some regulated system to make sure that

all the unpredictable nature of obstetrics is there, ready and able to support that patient if they were to need it,” Campbell said. “For a freestanding birth center, that’s going to be a hospital that’s prepared to receive a complex obstetrical patient who no longer can safely remain at the freestanding birth center.”

Campbell also spoke to the cruciality of care in the postpartum period, during which pregnancy-related complications often strike.

According to Campbell, existing Yale New Haven Health programs already draw upon the hospital’s extensive resources to support patients after childbirth, such as a blood pressuring monitoring program and Family Centered Neonatal Opioid Withdrawal Syndrome Program, which assists opioid-dependent pregnancy patients. Programs also offer personalized consultants and lactation classes.

“A lot of effort has been put into these infrastructures at hospitals across the state,” Campbell explained, in reference to YNH’s resources. “My recommendation would be to listen to patients’ needs, and let’s see how we can use our existing resources and infrastructure to meet those needs. Could we lean on our existing infrastructure and expand?”

Ultimately, Campbell expressed overwhelming support for the birth centers for low-risk pregnancies, but explained that existing hospital systems can — and should — help patients when unforeseen health issues occur.

“How can we collaborate and work together?” Campbell asked.

Toward community health

S.B. 986 is scheduled to go before the Senate. In the meantime, Campbell, Canty and Rogers hope that, if signed into law, the bill will establish birth centers as long-standing fixtures in communities statewide.

Canty reiterated that she hopes centers would not just exist when “a woman pops in to give birth,” but rather as integrated forms of community healthcare. They could provide routine people’s health checks as well as postpartum care.

They could also serve as easier points of access — a woman seeking care would only have to check-in at the center in her town, rather than setting up an appointment at a distant hospital location.

“That’s a wonderful vision of better healthcare,” Rogers explained. “Because if they are seen by the community and used by the community, as a welcoming place, women would be more likely to go to be checked out to have critical prenatal visits.”

From their experience with patient care, Campbell and Canty spoke to the importance of medicine which broaches the “human side of care,” particularly in reproductive health.

“Every woman deserves a beautiful birth,” Canty said. “I think any birthing person that delivers should have access to quality care should feel safe, from beginning to end.”

The United States is 55th in the world for the World Health Organization’s maternal mortality rate rankings.

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“If the environment is happy, people will laugh and your grief will go away.”
SRINIVAS MISHRA ENTREPRENEUR

State of Connecticut suspends commutation, YLS community responds

BY INES CHOMNALEZ
STAFF REPORTER

Undergraduate, graduate and professional students are advocating for the institution of an official disability studies department at Yale.

The Yale Disability Studies Network, a multidisciplinary student-led coalition that unites students, faculty and alumni through disability scholarship, has petitioned for the formalization of an interdepartmental center for the study and research of disability at Yale.

Throughout the months of April and May, four disability advocates — including an author and autism activist, a political anthropologist, a CNN journalist and a professor of architecture — will visit Yale’s campus to speak on issues relating to disability. The Yale Disability Studies Network hopes that this speaker series will call attention to the interdisciplinary character of disability scholarship, and also serve as a platform through which those interested in disability studies can engage more deeply with the field.

“I found it to be an unacceptable oversight, particularly for an institution like Yale, not to have a dedicated space that caters to the intellectual needs of scholars and practitioners working to benefit disabled individuals,” Yushi Zhang SPH ’23, co-leader of the Yale Disability Studies Network, told the News.

Zhang said that support for the proposed disability studies center became clear in conversations she had with community members involved with the Poorvu Center, DiversAbility at Yale, Student Accessibility Services and the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Office, as well as the Office of the Provost and its faculty and student affiliates.

However, she noted, the program will need the support of leading University faculty and administrators in order to move past planning stages.

Presently, the Yale Disability Studies Network’s leadership team

consists of students from all across the University. According to Zhang, the graduate and undergraduate working groups will be led by history Ph.D. candidate Rebecca Boorstein GRD ’26 and disability peer liaison Alexis Sye ’25, respectively.

To gain further legitimacy, Zhang explained that the program will require official registration and internal funding. The next step in their advocacy efforts will be to collect signatures on a petition letter from supporters of an interdepartmental Center for Disability Studies.

Martine Cruz ’23 defined disability studies as the academic exploration of the experience of disabled persons. Historically, she said, scholarship has often medicalized certain aspects of the disabled experience instead of taking a holistic approach. Cruz affirmed the importance of the creation of a disability studies department as a way to begin facilitating a more tangible connection between the University and its disabled community.

Cruz previously served as a member of Disability Empowerment for Yale — an undergraduate advocacy group for disabled, chronically ill and neurodivergent students — for one year, before becoming the group’s communications director.

According to Cruz, she and Zhang connected through their shared interest in public health, and have worked together to coordinate action around Zhang’s Yale Disability Studies Network initiative.

As a student-led initiative, the Yale Disability Studies Network has introduced a number of efforts to gain attention and support from University administrators.

“Presently, Yale really does what is demanded by the Americans with Disabilities Act and that’s about it,” Cruz said. “It’s never been the initiative of the university to provide any support to students that would otherwise not be required by the law.”

Zhang’s first concept of the Yale Disability Studies Network was as

an intra-university “cross-school student group,” she told the News. This vision was complicated when Zhang discovered that multi-school organizations were not eligible to receive activities funding from any single school.

Relying on individual faculty members, too, proved onerous.

Zhang explained that though a number of faculty members are individually invested in disability studies, “many of them did not have the bandwidth to establish a university-wide collaboration” without institutional support.

“I can’t do this alone,” she continued. “If we want this thing to exist, I will need a lot more people joining me and joining the many [disabilities studies] scholars and students at Yale.”

Anthropology professor Elizabeth Berk has thrown her support behind expanding disability studies at Yale, and Katie Wang, assistant professor in the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences at the School of Public Health, expressed hope that the current movement would increase visibility and resources for disability studies scholarship.

Wang said that she thought the program could “encourage the conceptualization of the disabled lived experience as a form of human diversity, and raise awareness of disability inclusion as a social justice issue, both within the Yale community and beyond.”

Through her own experience as an educator, Berk said she has observed students’ experiences with disability, chronic illness and mental health challenges. To Berk, a dedicated disability studies center would not only expand academic and extracurricular opportunities relevant to the field, but also provide a space through which students can explore their own experiences.

Some students and faculty believe that University support for a disabilities studies program is, at best, overdue.



YASMINE HALMANE / PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR

Commutation was indefinitely suspended by the Connecticut Board of Pardons and Paroles.

Cruz said that institutional recognition would be “the first step of Yale formally acknowledging that disabled students exist and that disabled people exist.”

Both Zhang and Berk affirmed that disability studies have recently gained an increasing amount of academic attention. Wesleyan’s “cluster” program cropped up in 2010 thanks to student advocacy, and Georgetown has offered minors and Masters and Ph.D programs. Certificates in the study for three decades.

However, Berk also highlighted the intrinsic value of disability studies beyond its “trendy” status as a field of study.

“One thing I think is incredibly important about disability studies overall is not just treating it as another axis, [like,] ‘okay, we’ve talked about gender, we’ve talked about race; now let’s add disability,’” stated Berk. “I think disability studies come out of the ways in which all of those are constructed together, and the differ-

ent ways that disability has been constructed over time.”

However, Ivy League schools have lagged behind in offering organized disability studies programming: Princeton and Yale only have working groups, the University of Pennsylvania allows womens, gender and sexuality studies majors to “concentrate” in Health and Disability and Columbia University’s disability studies program is tucked away in its Department of English and Comparative Literature.

Members of Yale Disability Studies Network said they see the gap as an opportunity to be trailblazers of disability studies and to encourage wider recognition of the practice in academia.

The Yale Disability Studies Network’s next speaker event will take place on Tuesday, April 18, where Eric Reinhart — a Harvard-trained medical anthropologist and physician — will discuss abolitionist care.

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US, ukrainian gov officials discuss post-war reconstruction on campus

BY ESMA OKUTAN
STAFF REPORTERS

Vladyslav Rashkovan, former governor of the Central Bank in Ukraine, explained that Ukraine’s reconstruction has already started despite the ongoing war.

Rashkovan, who is also an executive board member of the International Monetary Fund, was joined by former U.S. ambassador to Ukraine John Herbst for an April 17 conversation on reconstruction in Ukraine. The panel was sponsored by the Jackson School of Global Affairs, the European Studies Council at the MacMillan Center and the program on Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies at Yale. It was moderated by Marnix Amand, senior lecturer in economics at the Jackson School, who teaches about the economics of the European Union.

“The overwhelming priority is to make sure that Ukraine wins this war,” Herbst said at the Monday event. “What that means is that Ukraine controls its territory and that it has the ability to be prosperous economically, provided that reforms necessary for that prosperity are implemented.”

Rashkovan added that while victory is the priority of the Ukrainian government, this does not mean they have postponed reconstruction. In fact, efforts to rebuild the country are already underway, he said.

From an economic perspective, Amand listed five essential components of reconstruction: capital, labor, technology, institutions and markets. He emphasized that capital surplus has to come from both public and private sources to counteract much of the war damages.

“The World Bank recently made a property damage assessment... that Russia already brought 135 billion dollars in damages to Ukraine,” Rashkovan said. “To compare, Ukraine’s GDP before the war was about 200 billion dollars.”

Rashkovan explained that reconstruction must consider Ukraine’s own vision for its new infrastructure.



ESMA OKUTAN / CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER

The conversation, held at the Jackson School of Global Affairs, centered around reconstruction in Ukraine amid the country’s war with Russia.

For example, he explained that the cost of a destroyed airport in Ukraine is often added to the calculation of the expected cost of reconstruction, even though many airports in Ukraine reflect a Soviet legacy — the necessity of long-distance travel — rather than the needs of current Ukrainians. He explained that instead of just rebuilding infrastructure, Ukraine now has the chance to implement its own vision for its future. For example, they can develop rapid trains between various cities instead of rebuilding all of the destroyed airports.

“One way that the World Bank and the European Central Bank give money is by limiting spend-

ing to, say, the building of one airport, to limit corruption and spending,” Amand said. “If they give a big level of money to spend on Ukraine’s own vision it will, in theory, be a much better outcome but there are institutions in Europe that will be suspicious.”

Herbst explained that Ukraine can solve this issue by maintaining substantial control over systems within the country during its reconstruction period, exemplified by its ongoing efforts to restore energy infrastructure and maintain a constant flow of resources.

Rashkovan also noted that a majority of the capital needed for

reconstruction will likely come from the private sector and that private capital is already being invested in the country due to a feeling of “national connection.”

He highlighted the vital importance of this shared dedication of Ukrainians to invest in their country for victory and the reconstruction of the state.

“I’ve always been struck by the love of Ukrainians for their country,” Herbst said. “And what we’ve seen since the big invasion is how the best and the brightest in Ukraine have not fled to Europe. They’ve gone to the front. Which by the way, is one

of the reasons why Ukraine has used American weapons brilliantly ... So all of this makes me optimistic about what will follow once victory ensues.”

Amand and Rashkovan both highlighted the significant opportunity for Ukraine to implement this human capital to modernize and develop its technology as part of reconstruction efforts.

The World Bank estimates the recovery and reconstruction financial needs in Ukraine to be around \$411 billion as of March 2023.

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SPORTS

“We play our style and good things usually happen. We’re a resilient group.”
ANTTI RAANTA, CAROLINA HURRICANES GOALTENDER

Elis sweep Dartmouth in Ivy series

BASEBALL FROM PAGE 14

double header on Saturday. In their first game on Saturday, the Bulldogs won in a run-packed game, beating the Big Green 16–3. In their second game, the Blue and White rallied to win 7–2.

“We need to continue the approach and systems that helped us be successful in the Dartmouth Series,” coach Brian Hamm wrote to the News. “Our approach has helped us succeed in a number of ways to put us in the mix to make the Ivy Tournament and now we are performing more consistently. We were so close to getting results out of the Columbia series and we made adjustments and stuck with our approach and were rewarded with three wins against Dartmouth.”

In the morning on Saturday, Reid Easterly ’24 started on the mound for the Bulldogs. In the top of the second, the Blue and White started the scoring for the game with a run from Pierantoni and Williams off a single from Milner. In the top of the fourth, Martin brought a run in for the Blue and White off a triple to right center from Metzner.

The Big Green scored their first run of the game in the bottom of the fifth from a homer to left field. In the top of the sixth, the Blue and White brought in two runs to make the score 5–1 off of a double from Pierantoni, which brought Hanson home,

and a homer from Martin to right field.

In the bottom of the eighth, Capell relieved Easterly on the mound. The Bulldogs did not score any more runs until the top of the ninth when the Blue and White brought in 11 runs, bringing the final score of the game to 16–3. Atkinson, Milner, Chatfield, Hanson, Williams, Pierantoni, Martin and Metzner all brought in runs for the Bulldogs.

In their second game on Saturday, the Bulldogs beat the Big Green 7–2. Scoring did not get started for either team until the bottom of the sixth when Dartmouth brought one run home. In the bottom of the seventh, the Big Green brought in their second and final run of the game off a dropped fly by the second baseman which brought Zackarie Casebonne home.

The Bulldogs scored their first run in the top of the eighth after Williams singled to center field, which brought Sobbeck home. In the top of the ninth, the Bulldogs tied it up after Metzner scored on a throwing error by the third baseman. The game stayed tied into the bottom of the ninth and continued into extra innings.

In the top of the tenth, the Blue and White brought five runs in, winning the game with a final score of 7–2.

In their final game of the weekend on Sunday, the Blue and White rallied to win a low

scoring 1–0 game. The first and only run of the game came after Hanson walked, Williams advanced to second and Chatfield advanced to third, which brought Atkinson home.

“I think my personal highlight of the weekend was our pitching staff’s performance in Sunday’s game, throwing a shutout,” Capell told the News. “It showed how far we have come from where we began this year and it is something that is amazing to be a part of. Couple that with having a beautiful 75 degree and sunny atmosphere, and getting the weekend sweep, the feeling was unmatched. As a whole, it puts us in a position to control our own destiny for the Ivy League playoff which is one step closer to our team goal.”

Daniel Cohen ’26, Bryant Reese ’24, Richardson, and Capell were on the mound on Sunday for the Blue and White. All four of them helped prevent any tying runs for the Big Green with their solid defense.

Looking ahead, the Bulldogs will compete against Quinnipiac University (13–19, 7–5 MAAC) on Wednesday in Hamden, Connecticut and continue Ivy play in a three game series against the University of Pennsylvania (20–11, 9–3 Ivy) in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania over the weekend.

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MUSCO SPORTS PHOTOS

The Bulldogs will continue Ivy play in a three game series against the University of Pennsylvania over the weekend.

Bulldogs earn multiple personal records

TRACK AND FIELD FROM PAGE 14

son, adding nearly three and a half meters on his shot put so far.

“It’s a great feeling to have finally won a meet,” Ward told the News. “It’s been a long time coming and I’m excited to see my work paying off. Sometimes I get frustrated that I haven’t hit the bigger throw that I know is there, but it’s definitely important to realize how far I’ve come since last year. Overall, I’m happy with how things are going and I’m excited to keep improving.”

Personal records also abounded for the women’s team. On Friday, Kiera Suh ’26 set a PR in the long jump with a 5.42m leap. Samantha Friborg ’23 ran

a 2:05.92 in the 800m, her fastest time since February. On Saturday, Larissa Giles ’25 set a PR in the 100m dash with a time of 12.76, and Bella Bergloff ’24 PR’ed in the shot put with a throw of 12.85m.

Other notable performers were Karen Kirunda ’23 in the triple jump with a mark of 11.00m and Kyra Pretre ’24 in the 1500m with a time of 4:29.42, a second off her personal best.

Bergloff, who was one of many Bulldog throwers to have a strong weekend, noted the friendly support among Yale’s prominent group of throwers this year.

“I think sometimes people think that when you are competing against your friends it

can be a little uncomfortable and too competitive,” Bergloff wrote to the News. “But our throws squad this year has been nothing but supportive, and our joint success has motivated us each to do better at every meet, and keep these personal bests coming. It’s exciting to be a part of this group.”

Next weekend, Yale’s teams will split up, with middle distance and distance runners heading to the University of Virginia. Sprinters, jumpers and throwers will travel to Georgia Tech. The rest of the athletes will stay home in New Haven to host the Mark Young Invitational.

Contact **PETER WILLIAMS** at peter.williams@yale.edu.



YALE ATHLETICS

Next weekend, Yale’s teams will split up, with middle distance and distance runners heading to the University of Virginia.

Crimson squeak past Bulldogs

W. LACROSSE FROM PAGE 14

As Hopkins said after falling to University of Pennsylvania the weekend before, the key will be learning from the mistakes that saw Yale drop back-to-back games for the first time this season.

Most important will be end-of-game situations, as the Bulldogs had an opportunity to tie the game after winning a draw with 2:49 left in the game. After winning the draw, the Elis seemed in control and ready to set up their offense, but they then turned the ball over and were never able to get it back before the final horn blew.

“We never want to be the same team as we were yesterday,” Maryegan Wright ’25 said. “In other words, we’re always striving to get better.”

The Bulldogs now have two games to get back in the win col-

umn while they fight to stay in the top four in the Ivy League standings in order to qualify for the league playoffs.

Much of the pressure will come in the first game against Cornell University, who currently sit at 2–3 in the Ivy League — only one game back of the Elis.

“Going into our next Ivy games we are trying to focus on regaining the confidence we had going into the season,” Sophie Straka ’25 said. “And this just comes with a lot of prep. So we’re doing a lot of game-like prep during practice to get us ready for that because Cornell is a must-win.”

The Bulldogs will square off with the Big Red at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday at Reese Stadium.

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MUSCO SPORTS PHOTOS

The Yale women’s lacrosse team fell 10–9 in a tight, back-and-forth game against their rivals from Cambridge.

Bulldogs looking strong

SAILING FROM PAGE 14

skippers Teddy Nicolosi ’24, Jack Egan ’25 and Stephan Baker ’26.

“Conditions were very light and tricky which made it difficult to race and led to the regatta being shortened,” Baker said. “Despite having less races, we were still able to close out the victory with a race to spare. While this victory helped us clinch a spot in the National Championship in King’s Point Academy, NY and the one seed, we are going to continue working extremely hard to defend the national championship title this May.”

The focus then swung to the women’s team as they competed the next weekend in the New England Women’s Team Race Championship.

The women turned in an equally impressive performance, as they went 15–2 with their only losses coming from Dartmouth. The strong performances earned the Bulldogs another first-place finish and auto-qualification for Nationals.

“The team will now be shifting more towards fleet racing, although team racing will still feature prominently, especially for our women’s team, as they have Women’s Team Race Nationals in two weeks,” Egan said.

The Bulldogs finished out their in-season team races with the Oberg Trophy, a three-division race in a festive Cambridge, Massachusetts, during the weekend before Marathon Monday.

The Bulldogs turned out strong performances yet again, but came up just four points short of another first-place finish. The team was led by Mateo Farina ’25 and Jessi Avila-Shah ’25, who won the B Division.

All ICSA National Championships will be held in Kings Point, New York, in late May.

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YALE ATHLETICS

All ICSA National Championships will be held in Kings Point, New York, in late May.

Salovey responds to criticisms over involvement in Yale U.S.-China Colloquium

WILL POURAYOUW
STAFF REPORTER

University President Peter Salovey has responded to student concerns over his involvement at the Yale U.S.-China Colloquium alongside Ping Huang, who serves as the consul general of the People’s Republic of China in New York.

In a letter published by the News, students from China and Hong Kong criticized Salovey’s participation in an event with Huang, who denied the Uyghur genocide at a World Affairs Council meeting in Philadelphia last year. In August 2022, a United Nations human rights report found that China was responsible for “serious human rights violations” of the Uyghur people in the Xinjiang province.

“Your silence on the Chinese government’s human rights abuses and the impact they have on the Yale community, coupled with your presence alongside a Chinese government official who has publicly defended the abuses against the Uyghurs, could be perceived as an endorsement of the Chinese government’s oppressive policies and a cover-up of the human rights violations under the guise of ‘peaceful coexistence,’” the students’ letter read.

Salovey told the News that he was unable to attend the Colloquium in person due to his observation of Passover. However, a Yale student had asked him to record a video for the event, which he submitted.

“This does not constitute approval of all Chinese policies,” Salovey wrote in a letter privately addressed to the concerned students. “But keeping open the links between U.S. and Chinese universities is key to making progress, even when there are complex political challenges at the government level.”

In the letter, which was obtained by the News, Salovey wrote that Yale works on certain world challenges, such as public health and climate change, which can “only be addressed on a global level.” He added that Yale faculty work closely with their Chinese counterparts, and that his involvement in the event was not political in purpose, but rather to support academic institutional partnerships in China.

However, the University has not always been indifferent to human rights concerns in China. Last year, the News found that the University’s Advisory Committee on Investor Responsibility had begun to investigate potential investments in Chinese companies due to concerns about human rights violations, although the office has remained silent on the issue ever since.

Salovey ended the letter to the students by stating that Yale has a “steadfast commitment” to its international students and scholars, referring them to the University’s free expression policies. The president also said that he would ask Pilar Montalvo, the assistant vice president for university life, to reach out to the students to discuss the University’s diversity, equity and inclusion policy.

“We spoke about the impact of challenging classroom conversations and dynamics and how that may impact a student’s mental health and/or academic success,” Montalvo told the News.

However, in their open letter published in the News, the anonymous students questioned where the University should draw the line when it comes to free speech.

“As Yale students, we value academic exchanges that foster intellectual diversity and collaboration across different nationalities,” the letter said. “How-



TIM TAI/PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR

Salovey told the News that Yale must prioritize relationships between academic institutions in the United States and China in spite of political tensions between the two countries.

ever, we caution against the potential misuse of Yale’s academic credentials to condone human rights abuses.”

The students who wrote the letter encouraged Salovey to “address and inquire” about the Chinese government’s participation in human rights abuses, and pushed for Yale to “take a firm stance” against those violations.

When it comes to raising criticisms against the Chinese government, some Chinese faculty and students at Yale shared

that they are hesitant to publicly express their own beliefs.

“Under the current geopolitical tension between [the] two countries, and it’s very difficult in a University context, it’d be very unlikely for someone to stand out [with their opinion],” said one Chinese professor, who has been granted anonymity due to concerns about retaliation from the Chinese government.

However, the professor said they believed that advocating for the event to be blocked was

counterproductive to the mission of free speech. Open discussion and dialogue is an opportunity to resolve conflict, the professor told the News.

The Association of Chinese Students and Scholars at Yale, who organized the colloquium, did not respond to a request for comment.

The first collaboration between Yale and China took place in 1835.

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Working group reports on FAS’s treatment of instructional faculty

BY MIRANDA WOLLEN
STAFF REPORTER

The Faculty of Arts and Sciences released a report focused on improving working conditions for instructional faculty members on April 18.

Instructional faculty — or faculty members who have been hired to teach without the option for tenure — have long faced challenges in gaining the benefits and treatment which tenure-track faculty enjoy on university campuses. At Yale, adjunct instructors compose around 40 percent of the faculty.

“Most adjunct faculty in the United States suffer from deleterious working conditions,” wrote FAS Dean Kathryn Lofton in an announcement regarding the report’s release.

Indeed, per the report, around 60 percent of contingent faculty in higher education earn less than \$50,000 a year. Moreover, most states do not grant adjunct faculty the right to unemployment insurance.

The name “instructional faculty” is itself new — in 2017, an FAS senate report urged the renaming of professors who were then known as “non-ladder” faculty, claiming that the term was “inimical to inclusion and sends the wrong signals,” describing faculty in negative terms or ones that implied “provisional status.”

Lofton continued that she hoped the report would encourage faculty members to consider the ways Yale might improve the working environment of its instructional faculty.

“The policy changes that the Instructional Faculty Working Group instigated recognize [instructional] faculty for their indispensable contributions to Yale,” Lofton told the News. “I am proud of what the Working Group has achieved, and I am thrilled that Yale is taking a leadership role on the issue of equity for instructional faculty.”

The working group was formed in 2020 for faculty in the Humanities division, but has since expanded to demand FAS- and University-wide policy changes. It aims to ensure respect, security and important benefits for



TIM TAI/PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR

The Hahn Scholarship supports a small cohort of Yale students with research funding.

instructional faculty at Yale through a number of avenues.

The report noted that the IFWG had already made strides in implementing phased retirement, emeritus status eligibility, access to short-term medical disability benefits and a number of other improvements.

“It is meaningful that the FAS leadership understands and recognizes the distinct challenges faced by instructional faculty and is committed to improving their conditions,” Shiri Goren, working group member and director

of the Modern Hebrew Program, told the News. “With worrying processes of adjunctification in higher education around the nation, this is an opportunity for Yale to be a national leader, and model, as the report suggests, ‘respect and inclusion for all ranks.’”

The report identified a number of “future issues” which ought to be addressed in years to come: foremost among them was tenure eligibility, on which front Yale lags behind its peer institutions and as such places itself “at a competitive disadvantage in its

recruiting of distinguished practitioners.”

Also of concern were questions regarding instructional faculty obtention of research grants and inclusion of instructional faculty members in faculty committees and decision-making bodies.

The report commended Yale for its willingness to engage in instructional faculty reforms but urged continued attention and action. Indeed, the report ended by noting the massive import of the instructional community to institutional

advancement and the university’s “moral mandate.”

“Advancing knowledge requires intellectual freedom, financial security, informational access, and institutional commitment,” the report concluded. “Yale should remain an institution that supports its entire faculty, whose teaching forms its academic mission.”

The Faculty of Arts and Science Dean’s Office is located within Warner House at 1 Hillhouse Ave.

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““Look deep into nature, and then you will understand everything better.”
ALBERT EINSTEIN GERMAN THEORETICAL PHYSICIST

City employee arrested for alleged \$11,400 grift

BY YASH ROY
STAFF REPORTER

A 12-year veteran city employee was arrested on April 14 for falsifying timesheets and stealing \$11,400 in her capacity as Building Department executive administrative assistant.

Mayor Justin Elicker, New Haven Police Chief Karl Jacobson and Chief Administrative Officer Regina Rush-Kittle announced the police arrest warrant one week after it was issued. The warrant was issued on April 6 against the employee for a one felony count of first-degree larceny.

“Unfortunately, like in every workplace, there are some individuals who fail to meet their professional responsibilities and expectations that we have for them,” Elicker said at the press conference announcing the arrest warrant. “That is true in city government as well.”

When the press conference occurred on Friday, the employee, 57-year-old New Havener Den-nice Pair, had not been located. The press conference was called to encourage the employee to turn herself into the NHPD.

At 4:39 p.m. that same day, NHPD Spokesperson Rose Dell sent out a press release stating that the employee had turned herself into the NHPD. The release stated that a court bond was set for \$5000.

“On December 5, 2022, NHPD was informed that an employee had allegedly improperly and fraudu-lently entered unauthorized over-time for herself into the City payroll system,” Dell wrote to the News.

A criminal investigation con-ducted by NHPD revealed that Pair collected over \$11,485.39 in overtime pay in the first four months of the fiscal year — July through October 2022.

The city’s accountants took note, identifying a disproportion-ate amount of overtime being paid to Pair. According to Elicker, Pair was then placed on administrative leave in November, leading to a police investigation and the issu-ing of an arrest warrant.

Elicker explained that the grift was possible due to a previous timesheet system where each city employee would fill their own timesheet before October. A department supervisor would sign off on those timesheets



DANIEL ZHAO/SENIOR PHOTOGRAPHER

The employee, who turned herself in to NHPD last Friday, now has a \$5,000 court bond. This arrest has sparked conversation about the current City Hall administration.

and pass them to a point person in the department, who would then input the information into a municipal employee accounting system.

In this case, the Building Depart-ment’s point person, Pair, was responsible for the alleged grift. After the supervisor would sign off on the timesheets, the employee would allegedly increase their own overtime before entering the information into the system.

Last October, Elicker told the News, the city’s Budget Office placed strict parameters on over-time oversight which included breaking down overtime amounts for review by both departments and individual employees.

After this new process was instituted, the budget office

identified the grift. City admin-istrators will now also be required to oversee overtime filings and confirm records after they have been entered into the payroll sys-tem, according to Elicker.

Prior to moving to the Build-ing Department in 2013, Pair worked for the Transportation Department. Over their 12 years of employment with the city, she made \$145,000 in overtime, which Elicker believes may have also been fraudulently earned.

Elicker’s opponents in the upcoming mayoral race this Novem-ber have used the arrest to criticize the current administration.

“This is just the latest inci-dent that calls into question the administration’s manage-

rial competence,” candidate Liam Brennan told the News.

“From schools to parks, the police department to the Civilian Review Board, the city is in need of new leadership.”

Candidate Tom Goldenberg told the News that this instance was another example of “Mayor Elicker failing to live up to his promise of a well-run city hall.”

Goldenberg added that the city has not had a confirmed city con-troller since March of 2020. The city controller in the Department of Finance is responsible for oversee-ing the City’s funds and account, reporting directly to the Mayor.

“When this same incident hap-pened in Mayor Harp’s adminis-tration, Justin Elicker told the city

to vote her out of office,” Golden-berg told the News.

Former city police sergeant and Beaver Hills alder Shafiq Abdussabur told the News that the alleged theft represents “yet another testament to a poorly run, top-down government at City Hall.”

Responding to jabs from his opponents, Elicker told the News that his administration is “work-ing to hold people accountable with new financial controls.”

“It’s easy to talk and throw rocks from the outside,” Elicker said. “It’s another thing to take action.”

NHPD is located at 1 Union Ave.

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East Rock Breads bakery rolls into New Haven

BY SARAH BENTKHAYET
STAFF REPORTER

When Bill Frisch first moved to the New Haven area about six months ago, he had difficulty finding a job at a bakery.

Having specialized in the field for the last 10 years, he couldn’t imagine himself doing anything else. So he decided to start his own bakery: East Rock Breads.

Located at the site of an old laundromat, the future space of East Rock Breads is currently under renovation. Frisch said he expects the shop to be ready for business within the next few months, and he is aiming for an official opening in May.

“I do a lot of sourdough bak-ing,” Frisch told the News. “I like to make baguettes, country sour-dough breads, the kind of rustic, French style. I think there’s a lack of that in New Haven.”

Frisch previously lived in Chi-cago, where he worked in several different bakeries, including West Town Bakery. His most recent posi-tion was at a French bakery called Verzenay — Frisch ran their bread programs for a year and a half.

In opening East Rock Breads, Frisch said that he is “taking a lot of what [he] learned from all these other places,” apply-ing “good recipes and formulas” from his past experience while still tweaking them to make them his own.

Having previously worked in bak-eries that were aiming to expand to wholesale and grocery stores, Frisch emphasizes his focus on making smaller, high-quality batches. Frisch said he also favors a model that involves a more direct link to his consumers.

“It fosters community; I get to know my customers person-ally,” said Frisch. “That’s kind of what the bakery is going to be like too, it’s going to be a very open space. ... Everybody is going to be able to see what’s going on and where their food is coming from.”

Although he might consider serv-ing some pastries and sweets like croissants or cookies, Frisch wants to focus on making bread. Unlike a “sugary treat,” he said, bread is a “nourishing” staple that customers can incorporate into their daily lives.

Frisch’s particular love for sour-dough bread comes from his fond-ness for the bread’s slow rising process, which includes leaving the dough to ferment for several days.

That being said, Frisch’s ultimate favorite bread to make remains the classic French baguette.

“It’s deceptively simple,” he explained. “I feel like I’ve been doing it for so long, and I still haven’t made the perfect one. ... I’m always striv-ing to get the scores [lines on the baguette] to open up perfectly, to get a nice center.”

For Frisch, one of the keys to a good piece of bread are the ingredi-ents. He uses freshly milled grains

to retain the special and subtle notes they carry when they are fresh. The grains then bring a fermented taste that is enhanced without turning into an overpowering, yeasty flavor, he said.

Presentation is also key to good bread.

“With the visual, you want a nice, glossy, thin, crispy crust, it’s like a nice dark color from the oven at high heat and it opens up really nice,” said Frisch. “It’s a lot [to per-fect] but that’s what makes me able to come back to [making bread] day after day.”

While Frisch’s love for baking can be traced back to him mak-ing pretzels for his friends in high school, he never expected it to turn into his career.

After college, Frisch went to school for music perfor-mance but had trouble finding a job right away — with this, he

decided to fall back on his bak-ing hobby.

Frisch’s wife, Ida Cuttler DRA ’25, said she has seen how Frisch has grown through his baking journey.

“When I met Bill seven years ago, he talked about one day opening a small bakery,” said Cuttler. “It’s so exciting to finally see him make his dreams come true.”

With renovations of East Rock Breads’ future home underway, Frisch envisions a minimalist decor style for the bakery. As a new business owner working on a budget, he wants to keep things simple. With this design, Frisch said he wants to draw attention to how the bread is made by hand.

Nevertheless, Frisch has faced some administrative challenges when trying to secure his permits in

order to get the space renovated. He has had to coordinate with the fire marshal, the city’s health depart-ment and a number of other bodies, making the process “tricky.” But Frisch credits other small business owners in the area with helping him navigate the logistics or introduc-ing him to people who have assisted him in the process.

As he plans for the opening, Frisch expects the bakery to be open three to four days a week to start, most likely two weekdays and both Saturday and Sunday from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

In the meantime, Frisch has been taking pre-orders for bagels that he makes from home. Cus-tomers can message him on Ins-tagram Monday through Thurs-day to place their order. Then, on Saturdays, Frisch organizes a large pick-up day where custom-ers can come collect their orders.

Through these bagel distribu-tions, Frisch has amassed a loyal clientele, mostly composed of New Haveners and Yale graduate stu-dents. New Havener Caroline Tan-bee Smith ’14 said she sees Frisch’s project as a great addition to the East Rock area.

“Bill hasn’t even opened the doors on the actual space, and yet East Rock Breads already is build-ing a growing community around delicious bread and neighborhood friendships,” Smith said.

Yale drama student Danielle Stagger DRA ’24 also is an avid fan of East Rock Breads.

“Not until I ordered from East Rock Breads did I realize how satis-fying it is to eat bread from a baker who really loves to bake,” Staggs said. “I’ve genuinely looked for-ward to the times I’ve gotten to pick up bagels and hear Bill so kindly and excitedly describe the differences between his weekly flavors, new recipes, and adjusted techniques.”

East Rock Breads is located on 942 State Street.

Contact **SARAH BENTKHAYET** at
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COURTESY OF BILL FRISCH

Hand-made rye and French baguettes are coming to State Street as Bill Frisch plans to officially launch his new bakery in May.

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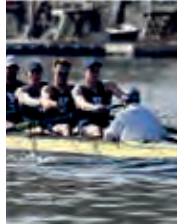


YALE DAILY NEWS · FRIDAY, APRIL 21, 2023 · yaledailynews.com

SOFTBALL
YALE SPLITS SERIES VS. SACRED HEART
After dropping game one of their two-game series against Sacred Heart 3–1, the Bulldogs rallied to take game two behind Lauren Perren '25's go-ahead home-run in the sixth inning.



MEN'S LACROSSE
BULLDOGS BEST BROWN
A 7–2 second half powered the Yale men's lacrosse team to a 16–10 victory against Brown, the team's third consecutive win after an uneven start to the year.



"Overall, the racing was solid... We stayed with it all the way down the course with a lift near the end, happy with the effort."
STEVE GLADSTONE
M. HEAVYWEIGHT HEAD COACH

Bulldogs beat Hartford, sweep Dartmouth

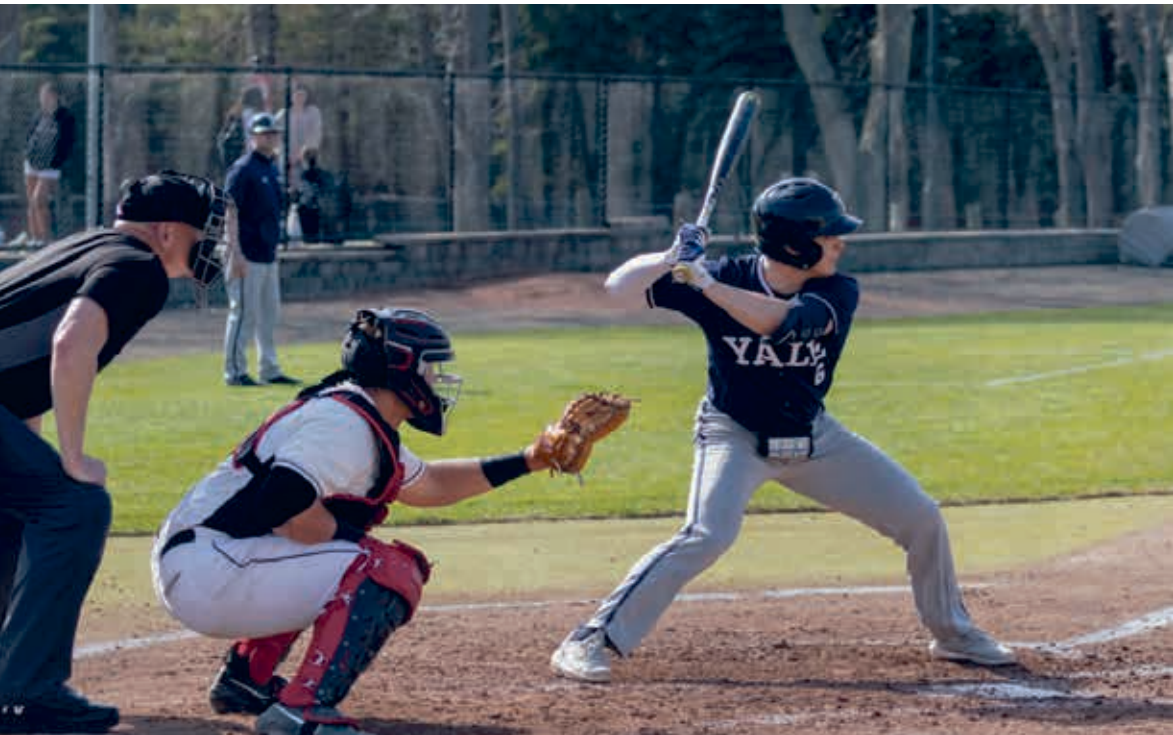
BY BETSY GOOD
STAFF REPORTER

Last Wednesday evening, the Bulldogs competed in a game at Dunkin' Park in Hartford and beat the Hawks in a back-and-forth game.
The Yale men's baseball team (13–16, 7–5 Ivy) competed in a mid-week game against the University of Hartford (2–24, 0–0 CCC). The Bulldogs beat the Hawks in an 8–4 win. The Bulldogs then got back on track in Ivy play against Dartmouth College (1–27, 0–12 Ivy) with a three game sweep against the Big Green.
"Getting the sweep this weekend was exactly what we needed," player Tommy Martin '25 wrote to the News. "Hopefully we can

use that momentum for our mid-week at [Quinnipiac] and for the Penn series this weekend."
On Wednesday, in the bottom of the first, the Hawks scored the first run of the game with a homer to right field. In the top of the third, the Bulldogs tied it up with a run from Ben Metzner '23 off a single to center field from Davis Hanson '26. In the bottom of the third, the Hawks brought another run in, but in the top of the fourth, the Blue and White brought in three runs off Metzner, Max Imhoff '25 and Martin to bring the Bulldogs to a 4–2 lead.
In the top of the fifth, Carson Swank '23 singled to left field which brought Jeff Pierantoni '24 home. In the top of the

sixth, Martin brought in his second run of the game off a single from Jake Williams '24 to left field. In the bottom of the seventh, the Hawks brought in two runs, but the Bulldogs were still ahead 6–4. The Bulldogs scored the last two runs of the game in the top of the eighth off a homer from Hanson which brought Hayden Sobecki '25 home.
Mick Kelley '25, Josh Richardson '24, Ethan Lewis '26, Mark Capell '25 and Jimmy Chatfield '24 pitched for the Bulldogs on Wednesday.
Over the weekend, the Bulldogs kicked off their three game series against Dartmouth in Hanover, New Hampshire with a

SEE **BASEBALL** PAGE 10



MUSCO SPORTS PHOTOS

On Wednesday, and again over the weekend, the Yale baseball team defeated Hartford and Dartmouth.

Bulldog throwers shine at UCONN



YALE ATHLETICS

This weekend, while many of Yale's track and field athletes rested, other athletes headed to the UConn Northeast challenge.

BY PETER WILLIAMS
CONTRIBUTING REPORTER

Many of Yale's track and field athletes competed in the UConn Northeast Challenge on Friday and Saturday during the Bulldogs' second visit to the University of Connecticut in three weeks.
After three weekends of competition, most of Yale's track and field team took a break from competition, while a small group of athletes headed up to Storrs. The Bulldogs had several PRs and podium finishes over the course of the weekend. Although the women did not notch any points

at the meet, the men's team racked up 43, putting them at eighth place out of 21 teams.
"Small group of athletes this week," Coach Shoehalter wrote to the News. "Much of the team had competed three weekends in a row. We had always planned for this weekend to be a lower key week where those who needed a competition would have that opportunity."
On the men's side of events, the throwers led the Bulldogs' charge, with Matt Appel '24 placing second in the discus with a 54.61m throw and Chris Ward '24 placing first in the shot put with a 17.49m hurl. Other notable Bulldogs

included Austin Montini '25, winning his 1500m heat with a 3:53.17 PR, and the duo of Drake Prince '24 and Thomas Cirrito '24, who took home second and third place in the 800m dash with times of 1:49.66 and 1:49.90, respectively.
Also notching PRs were Justin Yazdi '23 in the 100m with a time of 10.99, Simon Jupp '25 in the 200m with a 22.52 finish and Colin Quinn '25 in the 400m with a time of 50.16.
Ward, who captured his first collegiate victory in the meet, has been steadily improving all sea-

SEE **TRACK AND FIELD** PAGE 10

Bulldogs fall in heartbreaker against Harvard



YALE ATHLETICS

The Yale women's lacrosse team fell 10–9 in a tight, back-and-forth game against their rivals from Cambridge.

BY SPENCER KING
STAFF REPORTER

On a sunny Saturday in Cambridge, Massachusetts, the Yale-Harvard rivalry in women's lacrosse lived up to the hype and delivered an instant classic, with the Crimson barely edging the Bulldogs 10–9.
The game was tight until the very end, as the first quarter ended 2–2, the second 5–5 and the third 8–8 before the Crimson

finally took the advantage and outscored the Bulldogs in the final quarter 2–1.
"It is definitely disappointing that we fell to Harvard," Alex Hopkins '25 said. "We put up a good fight, but we are ultimately not happy with our end product. Games like this will happen, and all we need to do is accept and learn from our team's mistakes."
SEE **W. LACROSSE** PAGE 10

Bulldogs dominate final in-season team races of season

BY SPENCER KING AND PALOMA VIGIL
STAFF REPORTERS

Over the past two weekends, the dominance of the Yale sailing teams has been on full display. Both the co-ed and women's teams turned in strong performances in their final in-season team races of the season.
The Bulldogs began the stretch with a strong first-place finish at the New England Team Race Championship on April 8 and 9, going 4–1 in their races.
"Winning the New England Team Race Championship was

great as it auto-qualified us for the ICSC Team Race National Championships in Kings Point at the end of May," Nathan Sih '25 told the News.
The auto-qualification is an important one for the co-ed team, as the Inter-collegiate Sailing Association National Championships are the biggest of the season.
The Bulldogs also took some satisfaction in defeating Ivy League rivals Harvard University and Dartmouth College behind strong performances in light wind conditions from

SEE **SAILING** PAGE 10



YALE ATHLETICS

The Yale co-ed and women's sailing teams put in strong performances in their final fleet races of the season.

STAT OF THE WEEK

55.59M

MATT APPEL '24 TOOK GOLD IN DISCUS WITH A THROW OF 55.59M

WEEKEND

LIGHTS,
CAMERA,
ACTION!



// BY JANE PARK

“It was mad easy bro. It was easy as fuck. I’m being dead serious.”

This is how Sean Miyashiro described securing his first financial backer, Allen DeBevoise of Third Wave Partners, for his media company 88rising in a 2018 New Yorker interview. As for DeBevoise, he was easily swayed by Miyashiro. “I was sold, probably, in twenty minutes.”

I couldn’t help but feel slightly vexed by Miyashiro’s attitude. The arrogance, the laziness, the air of “whatever.” I read Miyashiro’s interview over and over again, my eyes tracing the number of times he uses “bro” in a sentence and my head cocking at the article’s description of Miyashiro: “flopped down on the couch.”

I just didn’t expect CEOs of multi-millionaire dollar entertainment companies to talk or act like this.

But I didn’t hate it. Something about his persona was appealing to me. I was hooked. There was something entrancing about Miyashiro’s vulgarity, nonchalance, swagger: his bad bitch Asian energy.

Miyashiro is the 41-year-old CEO and founder of pan-Asian culture/media company, 88rising. Attending a competitive high school in California, Miyashiro stated that he wasn’t a diligent student. Unlike the rest of his peers, he enrolled in non-degree education at San Jose State University in the late 90s, stopped going to classes, promoted social events on campus, and then worked in marketing jobs for Bay Area media agencies. Eventually, he persuaded VICE to let him launch Thump in 2013, a site dedicated to electronic dance music.

In 2015, Miyashiro would gear up to found 88rising: a music collective that first signed a 17-year-old, social media influencer known as Rich Brian, who would go on to be an established rapper with over 8 million Spotify monthly listeners. In less than 10 years, 88rising would come to house 18 pan-Asian artists, host the annual “Head in the Clouds Festival” (dubbed by Rolling Stone as “Asian Coachella”), and record the soundtrack for the Marvel Superhero movie “Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings.”

From releasing a Billboard Hot 100 top-ten single to filming videos about philosopher-body builders, 88rising is doing it all. And the driver of this Asian-fueled musical and artistic momentum is Miyashiro himself.

Yet, my parents, and other Asian Americans, probably don’t share this thought. If my

parents were to see Miyashiro on the street, they would probably shake their heads at the floppy red beanie, shaggy hair and designer tracksuits. If they then happened to stumble upon 88rising’s content, among them ATARASHII GAKKO!’s Pineapple Kryptonite and Hennessy x 88rising’s “Year of the Tiger” ASMR-cocktail making videos, they would probably show disdain at 88rising’s hybrid, idiosyncratic citations of Asian culture.

All of these predictions happen under the assumption that my parents will even know what 88rising is, an extremely slim possibility. In fact, even as I rave about Miyashiro and 88rising, it’s highly likely that most of you have never heard of them.

So why am I spending so much time describing one eccentric Asian man and his eccentric creations? How could this person, little-known and rather niche, be of importance?

Well, hear me out. My point lies in the very fact that people haven’t heard about Miyashiro. Why don’t we know about Miyashiro? Why is his name unfamiliar to us? And not just Miyashiro, but other Asian American creatives and visionaries who are moving through the world with flying colors, bulldozing restrictions and creating new boundaries.

Enter “the model minority myth,” a phrase that has been increasingly alluded to in the past three years but not quite fully examined. In his 1966 New York Times article, sociologist William Peterson first designated Japanese Americans as a so-called “model minority” in direct comparison to Black Americans. Peterson compared Black Americans’ “self-defeating apathy” towards racial inequities to the seemingly self-sufficient and pull-yourself-up-by-your-bootstraps approach of their Japanese counterparts. It was Asian Americans’ “work ethic” that helped them overcome American racial discrimination.

However, the sentiment that Asian Americans were defined by their “extraordinary” servitude existed well before the term came to be. In one instance, Chicago employers in the late 1940s commended Japanese Americans for their willingness to work longer and harder hours, lack of assertive qualities and tendencies to “mind their own businesses.”

While this model minority status seemed positive, the notion that Asian Americans were excellent laborers also became a way to check and dismiss Asian Americans. Attributing their docility, submissiveness and “head-down” work culture, Asian Americans were deemed inferior enough not to pose a threat to white Americans.

Asian Americans’ extreme diligence in the workplace then came to define Asian American success in the broader context. Tropes of cruel “Tiger Mom-parenting” and filial piety defined Asian Americans and their success as nothing more than products of obedience and intense labor.

Take two of the most popular archetypes for Asian American success: the math prodigy and the music virtuoso. In an interview with Amanpour and Company, poet Ocean Vuong expressed how these two stereotypes, albeit seemingly positive, reduced and pigeon-holed Asian Americans. The math whiz’s talent for math is unremarkable and expected, as they are born “naturally” adept at math (I guess being good at math is encoded into Asian genomes). The talented musician is a product of inhumane Asian parents who have forced their children to practice for ungodly hours. What is at the core of these stereotypes is the assumption that these skills cannot and do not exist organically nor are they the product of genuine passion or interest. It is only after obsessive, robot-like hours of toil that Asians can achieve “greatness.”

In the creation of a “better” minority and optimal workers, the model minority myth has also condemned Asian Americans as artless, creativity-lacking machines who only know how to work. It isn’t coincidental that we see a dearth of Asian American garage-geniuses like Mark Zuckerberg or Asian American Walt Whitmans represented in society.

Obviously, this isn’t to erase the impressive Asian American accomplishments in fields of art, writing, music, and sports. How could we forget the classic examples of YoYo Ma, Jeremy “Linsanity” Lin, and I.M. Pei?

However, while these individuals have broken the “bamboo ceiling,” it is worth mentioning that society’s acceptance of these Asian Americans is the exception, not the rule. YoYo Ma’s immense success and world-recognized musicianship does not erase the fact that Asian American classical artists still face stereotypes that their music is “soulless and mechanical,” according to a New York Times article. The mere existence of well-acknowledged and successful Asian American talent does not prove the death of the model minority myth.

So where does that leave us? How can we as a society accept and pursue a more pluralistic, multifaceted perception of Asian American success?

I argue that our answer lies in unconventional heroes like Sean Miyashiro, the bad bitch Asians, the anti-model minority. For us to identify these figures, we must contest existing ideas of success and talent.

In his crassness and disheveledness, Miyashiro would be considered by William Peterson as a “bad” Asian American. With colorful swears and an “I don’t give a fuck” attitude, Miyashiro is vulgar and unapologetic in his rebelling, unintentional or intentional, of the model minority.

If you think Miyashiro is an exceptional bad bitch Asian American to the rule of... well, not so bad bitch Asian Americans, think again. The plethora of bad bitch Asians has yet to be explored.

For example, take a look at the Japanese American youth in the Japanese internment camps during the 1940s. These “zoot suit” wearing teenagers were the most visible symbols of defiance. Rowdy, drunk, and horny, these “zoot suiters” would excitedly dance the jitterbug craze at Japanese-organized cultural events. Stereotype-busters can be found in the most unexpected places, even on shows like Netflix’s “Bling Empire.” These astonishingly rich Asian Americans are anything but labor-obsessed and docile. Their materiality and petty drama is a refreshing alternative to the model minority myth.

This essay serves a bigger purpose than to prove and explain the brilliance of Asian Americans to non Asian Americans. Asian Americans are successful, talented, and creative... because they just are. Understanding and recognizing this, for both Asian Americans and non-Asian Americans, requires a destruction of the model minority myth and its narrow definition of success.

Especially for Asian Americans who want to become creatives and artists, recognizing the vastness of Asian American success is crucial. Possibility is only illuminated by visibility. When we don’t see people who look like us on the television screen, in exhibitions, on the stage, it’s more than discouraging and disheartening. But just because we don’t “see” these bad bitch Asians represented in the media doesn’t mean that they don’t exist. We just need to look harder and in places that we haven’t done so before.

In order to break the stereotype of good, docile Asians, we need our Asian “villains.” Those who curse with an unforgiving vulgarity. Those who swagger into their busy meetings with a lazy confidence. Those who can break from the expectation to perform and be obedient to whiteness.

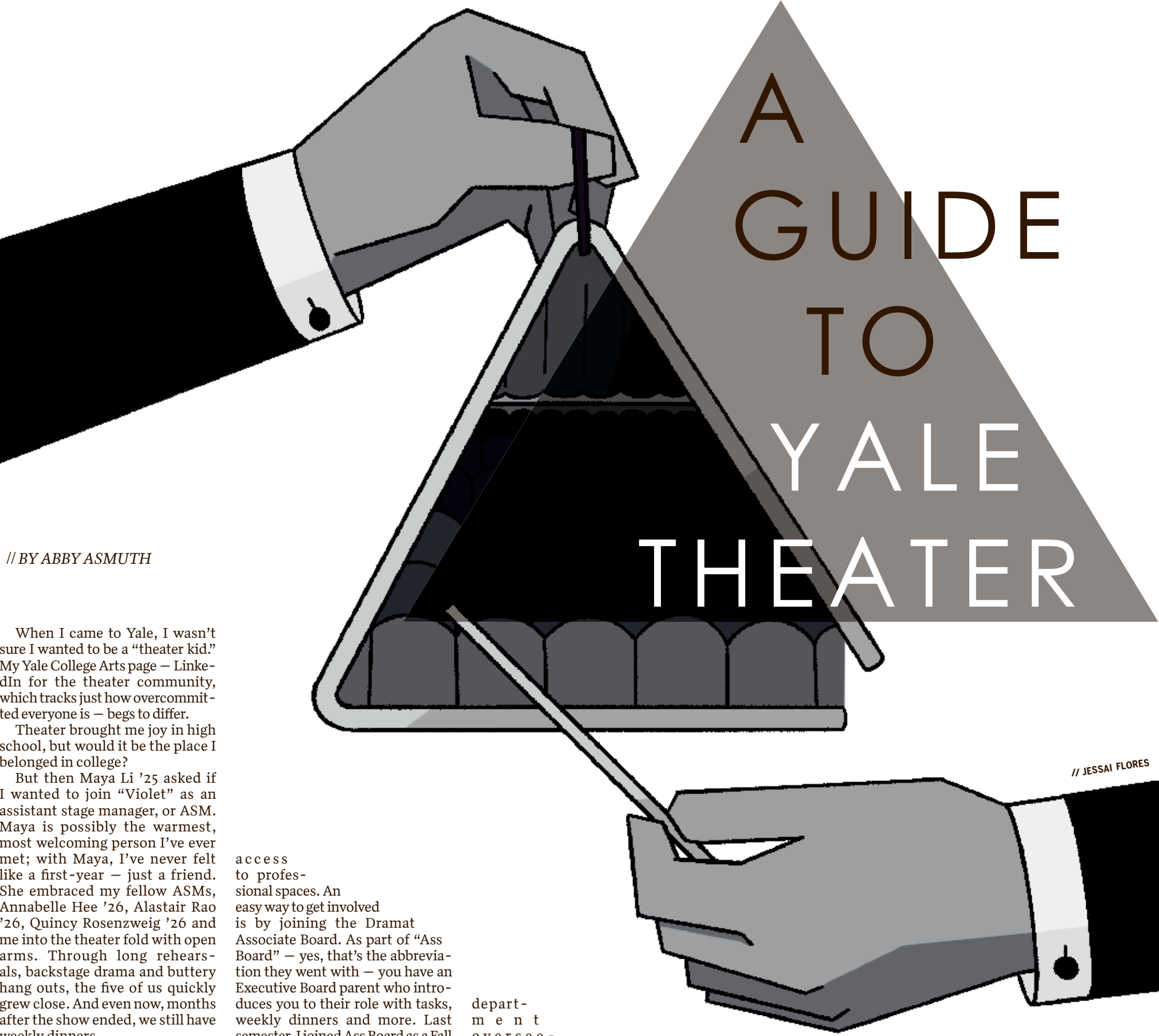
Bro, we need more Bad Bitch Asians.

Contact **JANE PARK** at jane.park@yale.edu.

WKND Recommends

Meditating.

WEEKEND *APPLAUSE*



// BY ABBY ASMUTH

When I came to Yale, I wasn’t sure I wanted to be a “theater kid.” My Yale College Arts page — LinkedIn for the theater community, which tracks just how overcommitted everyone is — begs to differ.

Theater brought me joy in high school, but would it be the place I belonged in college?

But then Maya Li ’25 asked if I wanted to join “Violet” as an assistant stage manager, or ASM. Maya is possibly the warmest, most welcoming person I’ve ever met; with Maya, I’ve never felt like a first-year — just a friend. She embraced my fellow ASMs, Annabelle Hee ’26, Alastair Rao ’26, Quincy Rosenzweig ’26 and me into the theater fold with open arms. Through long rehearsals, backstage drama and buttery hang outs, the five of us quickly grew close. And even now, months after the show ended, we still have weekly dinners.

And this kindness isn’t exclusive to Maya. So many others have encouraged me to be part of this community — to grow through the collaborations, roles and opportunities it offers.

The people of the theater community are exceptional: talented and driven and compassionate.

With so many shows and organizations around campus, it can feel like there’s a steep learning curve to getting involved. Even with a few productions under my belt, I have lots to learn. Still, I’ve compiled everything I do know into this guide. Hopefully, this offers some insight on how you can become part of theater at Yale — or even just understand how the shows you see are made. Prepare for loads of abbreviations!

The Yale Dramatic Association (The Dramat)

The Dramat is Yale’s largest undergraduate theater organization. Run by an Executive Board of 11 elected students, the Dramat puts on six full-scale shows every year.

There are two mainstage shows, each produced by an Executive Board member. These shows hire professional designers, employ student crew heads and involve dozens of students as actors, assistant designers, assistant stage managers, crew members and more.

The other four productions — two “Ex’s,” the first-year show (froshow), and a commencement musical — are proposed and led by separate student teams. AJ Walker ’26, who directed this year’s froshow, reflects, “I feel like as a first-year trying to get to know what theater at Yale is like, the Dramat was great because they gave me the resources to know how to put a show together.”

Typically, Dramat shows are the largest productions Yale undergraduates put on — with big teams, full sets, impressive budgets and

access to professional spaces. An easy way to get involved is by joining the Dramat Associate Board. As part of “Ass Board” — yes, that’s the abbreviation they went with — you have an Executive Board parent who introduces you to their role with tasks, weekly dinners and more. Last semester, I joined Ass Board as a Fall Mainstage Assistant Producer and met so many fantastic first-years and upperclassmen alike.

“What sets the Dramat apart in Yale theater is the continuous community it provides,” President Lily Pérez said in a statement to the News. “The Dramat has given me opportunities to build and sustain relationships with people over time in service of a season of shows, rather than individual productions. For those curious about administrative theater/arts administration, the Dramat is the closest analogue to the professional theater landscape in terms of scale and structure, too!”

Creative and Performing Arts Grants (CPAs)

To me, CPAs are possibly the most unique part of Yale theater. With CPAs, any student can put on a show — big or small, high or low time commitment. CPAs widely range, with this semester’s shows including student renditions of “Spring Awakening,” “Kiss of the Spiderwoman,” “The Wiz” and “Coriolanus,” as well as student-written productions of “Long Way Down” and “for colored girls” and so, so much more.

Through the residential colleges, anyone can apply for funding to put on a show of their choosing. The process isn’t competitive and almost everyone gets some funding (albeit, not always as much as they want) and a venue in one of the residential college theaters.

Playwright and director Hank Graham ’24 has presented many of his original works as CPAs. “My favorite thing about the CPA system is that it really allows us to be making educational theater — learning by doing and learning by failing and trying again, and figuring things out by ourselves,” says Graham.

Once a CPA application is approved, Undergraduate Productions (UP) the administrative

department overseeing all shows, also assigns a Peer Mentor to each project. CPAs are a great way to get involved in theater with friends — as either an actor or a member of the production team.

Performance Groups

There are a variety of performance groups on campus, each with their own niche.

For instance, the Yale Artists Cabaret, or YAC, produces musical cabarets that bridge the gap between performance groups across campus. Founders and artistic directors Lauren Marut ’25 and Soleil Singh ’24 tell the News: “We have people who do acapella, opera, theater — and we wanted to found an organization that offered a low stress and really just fun time commitment for performers to put together a musical theater review.”

The Asian American Collective of Theatremakers (AACT), on the other hand, aims to create a welcoming space for Asian American artists to collaborate. The group was founded just this past year, as president Sam Ahn ’24 saw a need for a centralized Asian American theater community. “It’s been amazing to see the excitement that AACT has generated among Asian American students, especially those who have never done theater before!” says Ahn.

Other campus groups include — but are far from limited to! — Teatro de Yale, The Opera Theater of Yale College and Yale Children’s Theater.

Some of these groups receive funding through CPAs, while others have their own funds. On the whole, these groups are open and exciting environments for people to get involved in a type of theater that especially interests them.

Theater, Dance and Performance Studies (TAPS? TDAPS? Who even knows anymore...)

Senior Theses

As the last major type of theater performance around campus, some senior theater majors put on productions as their theses. The senior serves as principal actor, director, designer or writer — sometimes, multiple seniors run the thesis together. These productions are sponsored by the department and usually run out of 53 Wall Street’s blackbox theater.

While a senior may lead the show, students of all years can get involved — as I did with “Violet”! I’ve found senior theses to be an accessible middle ground of Yale theater: less intensive than a full-scale Dramat production, but more inherently structured than CPAs, as the theater department is involved. For me personally, being part of a senior thesis was a wonderful way to get to know some phenomenal seniors I would’ve never met otherwise.

Yale Drama Coalition (YDC)

Overseeing all of these student groups is the YDC: the umbrella organization for Yale theater. YDC primarily operates through its Board, which collaborates with both administrators and student leaders to improve accessibility, fairness and community across Yale theater. The Board has both elected and appointed positions; anyone is eligible as long as they have attended at least two meetings. As such, the YDC’s weekly meetings are all open to everyone.

“Everyone’s welcome — and that’s our number one goal,” says YDC Vice President Marissa Blum ’24.

YDC hosts season previews, a

chance for all shows to advertise themselves, and runs monthly casting cycles, ensuring casting is equitable for all. Returning next fall is the Collaborative Arts Matching Program, or CAMP, an opportunity for writers to workshop their original works and for actors to be matched to the stage reading that most aligns with their interests and availability.

“The reason that I’ve continued to be part of the Yale Drama Coalition is the people,” reflects YDC President Jeffrey Steele ’24. “Being part of this board has really helped me support my friends, meet new people in theater, and give everyone a chance to find an avenue to do what they want to do as best as we can.”

How to Learn About & See Shows

All upcoming shows are listed on the Yale College Arts website. The website notes upcoming shows both in the next week and for the rest of the semester. Each show’s individual page includes information on its premise, actors, production team, as well as how to reserve tickets.

How to Get Involved

Just reach out! Check out the Dramat, UP and YDC’s email newsletters; join Ass Board; or even reach out to members of performance groups as listed on Yale College Arts. You will undoubtedly be met with helpful and eager responses. I know I would love nothing more than to pay Maya’s kindness forward by welcoming more people to Yale theater.

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WKND Recommends
Learning how to play a banjo.

The Subtler Sense

// BY GIOVANNA TRUONG

As the former president of not one but two juggling clubs, I am known on this campus for taking my entertainment very seriously. But in the age of algorithm-exploiting minute-long videos, the word “entertainment” sounds like an insult. Entertainment, consumption of which brings on a sugar crash — entertainment, a distraction from real life or at least from the life of the mind.

And yet, let us not return to a “simpler time” of threepenny operas with their overwrought moral dicta. These, too, can rot the teeth out of your head, even if you floss like a dentist with an ice pick.

In a world where colors and light are always trying to grab us, our last measure of control becomes regulating what sounds enter our ears or what rhythms move our bodies. These subtler senses, measured in neat logarithms, demand our focus, like whispers drowning out screams.

But, seeing as you’ve known me for three paragraphs already, you should be able to guess that sounds themselves do not earn my blanket endorsement.

Listen, I love yodeling along to the Professors of Bluegrass as I walk down Prospect Street and bumping Unorthodox in the shower — I would venture to say I like it even more than the next guy. And I have no problem with the AirPods-sporting Yalies who are too oblivious to their surroundings to see my bike approaching their khaki-clad tibias. Well, I guess I have one problem with them.

After a while, though, this digital sound-entertainment, too, becomes an intellectual fallback, more due to habit and less due to delight. I have often found myself singing on the way back from theater rehearsal simply because I have nothing else left in the attic.

But every week here at Yale, entertainment swings back hundreds of years into the past. Almost every Friday night, something magical happens. And you should trust me about magic, because I’m a juggler.

It happens in the Slifka Center for Jewish Life after the overstimulation of Shabbat dinner, when everything has died down a bit and folks have gone off to pursue the mitzvah of sleep.

From among the ravaged places set with almost-

People tip the page numbers, flip for each other and share bentschers in solidarity, inclusion and community.

Almost before everyone can get their bearings, a voice emerges with a note, perhaps a quick and quiet beginning of a melody. The surrounding peo-

variations. Some belt, like rock stars living their moment, as the rest of the group collectively eases off to let them shine. Some experiment with harmonies, getting stranger and jazzier until laughing all the way back to the melody. Some, like me, stick to small ornamentations

I — and neighbor.
I — in neighbor.
I — am neighbor.

The first time I experienced this phenomenon was my pandemic-sophomore year under the big Shabbat tent of Lot 38. In the wide, empty night, our voices floated up through the sloped vinyl into the sky, bursting with light in the star-speckled darkness framed by Murray’s tower and Hillhouse Avenue.

As a way of passing time, it is transcendental. It dawned on me a few days ago that I was in the presence of people who simply loved life. This was evident from the fact that Shabbat forbids “progress” — no electronics, no writing, no work. Inscribing a melody in time — for music can only be understood by moving through time — creates a cavity in the week in which to slow down, to form complex and beautiful eddy currents. The singers and the listeners make the music for its own sake, for the love and pain of time.

We in 2023 can cue practically any band in the world just by grazing a cell phone. But Shabbat transports us back to a time when we could only hear such music if we got a bunch of people together to sing for us or to learn an entire orchestral arrangement. The fleeting minutes of Friday night empower us to be bolder in our creativity and to feel the tension in the bonds of the human family.

So I invite you this Friday night — and, as a bonus, Saturday afternoon — to add your voice to the sea of song. Step away from “entertainment” as a distraction from life and dive into enjoyment of life. It doesn’t matter if you’re Jewish or not, whether you think you’re good at singing, or whether you’ve done it a hundred times or zero. Hear — feel! — what your siblings have to offer as we float along in time together.

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empty bottles of wine, one table emerges as the “bentching” table, usually indicated by the appearance of a stack of slim, handsome, blue softcover books called “bentschers.” To bench — literally, to bless — is to say grace after meals. And after some almost-silent speed-reading, the songs — called zemirot — begin.

Someone suggests the name of a song, usually in Hebrew or Aramaic. Everyone flips furiously through the bentschers until someone finds and calls out the correct page number.

ple nod if the note is right — or offer a guiding glissando if the note is too low or too high.

Finally, the note-bearer begins. Without a conductor, the ones who know the melody pour their voices in. The song fills and swells for a couple of stanzas until everyone has caught on and joined in, with or without words.

At some point a couple of choruses in, the magic happens. Everyone has found their place, their volume and the melody. And then, the harmonizers enter. To the theme come the

here and there, building up the courage to end a phrase ascending while the rest descend.

Even if you cannot hear it, you can feel it. Hands slam on tables, chests vibrate, throats strain to reach and climb and join the union.

The energy is unmatched. The act of singing, of pushing out breath, fills the chest even as the lungs empty. Each person is connected to all of the people, their voices the weft running through the warp of the text. As Leyvik Halpern writes in his Yiddish poem “Subway Dawn,”

Should we silence the shower singer?

// BY ANDREW CRAMER

We have classrooms. We have common rooms. And we have a gleeful abundance of library reading rooms. Yet, when it comes to a space for deep thinking, these all pale in comparison to the mighty shower.

It offers unparalleled privacy. Sure, does my head maybe pop a little bit over the top of the door? Yes. Can I hear when somebody is watching “Too Hot to Handle” while they brush their teeth? Yes. And do I eavesdrop just a little because, even though I feign a lack of interest, it’s kind of entertaining? Of course. We all do.

But in spite of these occasional distractions, the shower is a place of bliss. I’m a night shower kind of guy. For a while, in fact, I was even a morning shower hater, but a recent revelatory experience has shown me that starting the day under the nozzle can be euphoric in its own right. Same goes for cold showers. They’re not my default, but I can respect them. But, if there’s one hallmark of the Andrew Cramer shower that almost never changes, it’s the silence.

Showering is the only regularly scheduled time I have for my thoughts. During the day, there’s always a class or a meeting or a meal with a friend or some other event. Homework and job applications and other busyness seem to eat at more of my free time. And even when I’m walking to and from all of these

places, I usually put in headphones to listen to music or call my parents and friends. By the time I get in bed at the end of the day, I usually just want to fall asleep. None of this even mentions the easiest distraction of them all: the omnipotent iPhone.

So when am I supposed to think or reflect on my day? Exactly. The shower is our final refuge in the epic struggle to maintain thoughtfulness.

As an aside, one could counter that meditation is an

obvious answer to this problem, but I just can’t get into it. And even if I could, I’m pretty sure it encourages emptying our mind. I’m aspiring for the opposite effect: more time exploring our own minds.

Many of my best and worst article ideas have been mentally drafted in the shower. With no distractions, there’s nothing to do but let the imagination run wild. In the same five minutes, you can ponder the Chick-Fil-A paradox — if you know, you know — and generate a thesis that you don’t really believe in for an Intro Ethics paper.

There’s something wonderful about getting so lost in thought that I just keep putting conditioner in my hair because I forget whether I already did.

When necessary, to be clear, I can shower as quickly as anyone. I’ve had a few five-minutes-or-less showers in the last week. But they aren’t as magical. There’s something special about grasping at profundity while a hot stream of water pounds on top of your ducked head.

However, not everybody sees the world this way. In fact, two of my bathroom buddies, or floormates as you might call them, skew all the way in the opposite direction. They bring a speaker into the bathroom with them and blast — I mean, we’re talking max volume — some tunes. I ini-

tially resented this. Who were they to set the vibe for the entire floor? What gave them the right? Of course, I never voiced this concern.

Fortunately, they have immaculate taste; We’re treated to the likes of Joni Mitchell, Taylor Swift and Billy Joel, to name a few. And even more fortunately, they’re both stellar singers. They sing harmonies to songs I didn’t realize had harmonies, and they sing in that joyous way that you only hear from somebody singing without an audience. Does this make me a voyeuristic listener? Maybe. But that label is a small price to pay for the radiant energy they bring.

So I’ve arrived at a dilemma. Was I wrong all this time? Is it time to accept my fate and admit that even the shower must fall to the overwhelming force of entertainment?

I think not! It’s possible to hold both of these seemingly contradictory beliefs at the same time. I will steadfastly maintain that the shower should be a place to retreat to your thoughts. But sometimes, just sometimes, it’s nice to have a distraction, to have a break and to have a little splash of joy.

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WKND Hot Take:

I love house music.