

# Yale Daily News

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## Police union contract negotiations off to rocky start

BY LAURA OSPINA  
STAFF REPORTER

While the Yale police union was distributing flyers to new students and their families on move-in day, warning the newcomers of the dangers of New Haven, behind closed doors, the union's contract negotiations with the University had largely stalled.

Few matters have been resolved so far in negotiations, with Yale Police Benevolent Association President Mike Hall accusing Yale of a lack of commitment to the negotiating process and characterizing one of Yale's contract proposals as "catastrophic." In a statement written to the News, Joe Sarno, the University's director of labor relations, painted the union as being unresponsive to University proposals.

Meanwhile, members of the Yale community also criticized the union's decision to flyer first-year students on move-in day.

Contract negotiations began this February and have stretched beyond the June 30 expiration date for the union's previous contract with the University which was settled in 2018. Contract negotiations will resume on Sept. 13 after nearly a month-long break.

"Members feel that Yale has not demonstrated a commitment to the process, often being unprepared and unwilling to commit to full days of bargaining sessions," said Hall. "Amongst the members, the sentiment is that we don't feel respected or appreciated [by Yale] for the work that we do."

### University and union representatives describe contentious contract negotiations

Hall told the News that Yale denied requests from the Yale Police Benevolent Association to begin contract negotia-

SEE POLICE UNION PAGE 4



After the Yale police union's contract expired on June 30, negotiations have proceeded at a slow pace. / Lucas Holter, Senior Photographer

## Yale to integrate AI into introductory computer science course

BY BEN RAAB  
STAFF REPORTER

For those enrolled in Yale's "Introduction to Computing and Programming," it is fairly common to get stuck while coding. This year, students will have access to a new personal tutor: artificial intelligence.

The course, taught jointly with Harvard University and more often referred to by Harvard's course code of "CS50," will provide students with access to a "CS50 duck," an AI-generated chatbot that can respond to student questions and offer hints to guide them toward an answer.

"We started in spring 2023," David Malan, a Harvard computer science professor who teaches CS50, told the News. "Among our goals ultimately is to approximate, through software, a one-to-one TA to student ratio so that students can ask all the more questions throughout the term, interactively so, as though they have their very own tutor by their side."

Charlie Liu '24, a head teaching assistant for the course, told the News that students have the option to chat with the web-based CS50 duck using a ChatGPT-like interface, or they can have their questions answered by the CS50 duck on the course's Q&A platform.

The AI-based technology will not reduce the need for human staff support, but Liu said that as a result of the AI's around-the-clock availability, it will "amplify the impact of the teaching assistants that we do have."

"By enabling students to ask the CS50 duck questions on a 24/7 basis, CS50's AI tools allow our TAs to focus their time on in-person support for students who need and stand to benefit from it the most," Liu wrote in an email to the News.

The implementation of this tool comes amid an ongoing, university-wide discussion about how faculty and staff should address the growing popularity of AI-based tools such as ChatGPT — a machine learning tool that can generate code and answer questions.

In contrast to ChatGPT, however, which Liu said can often be "too helpful," the duck helps students while still allowing them to gain problem solving skills.

"ChatGPT can be too helpful when answering questions, often giving full-blown answers that can detract from the learning process of solving a problem by oneself," he said. "The CS50 duck, by contrast, pro-

SEE AI PAGE 5

## University scrambles to accommodate large first-year class

BY KAITLYN POHLY  
STAFF REPORTER

When an unprecedented 72 percent of students accepted to Yale last spring chose to join the class of 2027, the University celebrated its successful recruitment season while scrambling to ease the impending possibility of an oversized class.

But now that students have returned to campus, some Yalies are voicing concerns about the University's ability to adapt to its unexpectedly high enrollment.

"Although the admissions office did not expect to enroll a class that was this large, we are very happy that more talented students will receive a Yale education, and we appreciate the Yale College Dean's Office's hard, thoughtful, and proactive work over the past four months to respond and adapt," Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid Jeremiah Quinlan wrote to the News in an Aug. 30 email.

Last April, the University hosted its largest-ever Bulldog Days, the University's annual on-campus admitted students event.

SEE FIRST-YEARS PAGE 5



Questions were prompted about the University's ability to house the ballooning undergraduate student population. / Jessie Cheung, Staff Photographer

## Yale researchers investigate the use of antiviral pill to treat long COVID patients

BY JESSICA KASAMOTO  
STAFF REPORTER

Researchers at the School of Public Health are aiming to provide some hope and clarity for those suffering with long COVID through a new study looking at Paxlovid, an antiviral pill that has been used to reduce COVID-19 symptoms.

The study is being led by Harlan Krumholz, a professor at the School of Medicine, and Akiko Iwasaki, a professor of immunobiology and molecular, cellular and developmental biology. The Yale Paxlovid for Long COVID trial aims to research whether consistent use of the antiviral medication can help improve the lives and symptoms of long COVID patients.

Krumholz, who primarily researches cardiovascular diseases, said that he was drawn to the project not only because of its potential impact on many patients, but also for its innovative methods in conducting clinical research.

"It was becoming clear to me that it was an opportunity both to try to make a contribution to those who were suffering, but also to innovate around how we pursued research ... in a way that was digital, decentralized, democratized and was breaking new grounds in the ways that we were participating with people in our studies" Krumholz said. "[W]e could set an example to others how we could re-engineer the way we are doing studies."

Iwasaki emphasized that because the study is decentralized, it is easier

for people from across the country to participate.

"Participants do not have to travel anywhere to get their biospecimen collected or obtain the medicine," Iwasaki wrote to the News. "Everything is delivered to them. People living in Alabama to Wyoming can participate in the trial ... this is particularly important for people with long COVID, who may be too ill to drive to a study site."

Long COVID is defined in the study as a condition in which participants with prior COVID-19 infection developed symptoms of within four weeks of their initial infection. Those symptoms, according to the study's definition, have persisted for at least three months. The study aims to test whether long COVID is

caused by the persistence of the COVID-19 virus in patients.

"[D]ifferent mechanisms may be going on in different people," Erica Spatz, an associate professor of cardiology and one of the early organizers of the study, wrote. "One of these mechanisms is the persistence of coronavirus in the system. In fact, I have had some patients become reinfected with COVID and suddenly their Long COVID symptoms go away, potentially because their body was able to mount an effective immune response to residual virus. This study of Paxlovid is tapping into some of these theories, namely that there is persistent virus leading to symptoms of Long COVID."

Paxlovid is an antiviral medication typically given to patients for five days during their infectious period.

It works to inhibit a key enzyme that the COVID-19 virus uses to replicate itself. The researchers hypothesized that taking this medication for a longer period of time can help clear the remaining virus and alleviate patients of their long COVID symptoms.

Interested participants take a pre-screening survey online to determine their eligibility. If they meet the qualifications, the patients compile their medical records in a secure cloud-based account and send them to the researchers, who then determine whether the patient should qualify for the study.

Participants are randomly sorted, either receiving ritonavir-boosted nirmatrelvir — the generic name for Paxlovid — or a

SEE COVID PAGE 4

### CROSS CAMPUS

THIS DAY IN YALE HISTORY, 1983. A firefighting class, sponsored by the Undergraduate War Council and given by the city fire department, is held at the fire department's drill tower. The class is open to all University students.

### INSIDE THE NEWS

Two mayoral primary candidates face off in debate  
PAGE 9 NEWS



PAGE 3 OPINION  
PAGE 6 NEWS  
PAGE 7 ARTS  
PAGE 11 SCITECH  
PAGE B1 WKND

NEW HAVEN ARTS A new artspace in Dixwell welcomes a new fellowship cohort.  
PAGE 12 ARTS

WHITNEY AVE A proposal to change the name of Whitney Avenue was thrown out.  
PAGE 10 NEWS

# BULLETIN


**70 YEARS OF SLAVIC CHORAL MUSIC at YALE**


**THE YALE RUSSIAN CHORUS AND ALUMNI**  
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A SCREENING OF

# MY OCTOPUS TEACHER

THE ACADEMY AWARD WINNING DOCUMENTARY

Followed by a discussion  
with  
**PIPPA EHRLICH**  
Co-Director



Wednesday | September 13, 2023 | 4:00 pm  
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Yale



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# OPINION

PUBLIC EDITOR  
EDITOR IN CHIEF & PRESIDENT

## Letter from public editor and editor in chief

In today's edition of the News, you will see a column written by Megan Vaz, who stepped down from her role as city editor earlier this week.

As friends and peers, we above all want to recognize and validate the hurt the elections process caused Megan, as well as others involved. Nothing we say will appropriately acknowledge or make up for these experiences; instead of relitigating or making any excuses, we instead want to use this space to transparently discuss how the elections process here works, prior attempts to improve the system and some of our thoughts for future efforts.

Across four years — in each News election during which we have been Yale students — the process has caused candidates and News members anguish. Given widening campus discourse around the subject, we feel it is important to quickly and directly take action.

Participants involved in the News' elections for editorial positions consist of all outgoing editors and anyone who is running for a board position sitting together in a room. For each race, those running for that position leave the room. They are brought in individually to deliver a speech and to answer questions from the outgoing editor in chief and anyone else. The candidate then leaves the room before the whole group conducts a deliberation of the candidate's merits, weaknesses and insecurities, moderated by the outgoing editor in chief and public editor. The candidate then comes back in for a brief response period where they are expected to address any remaining concerns.

The full day of elections, which involves positions from editor in chief and managing editors all the way to desk-level positions, can last all day. Last spring, elections began at 8 a.m. and went past 9 p.m.

But Megan's column today,

years of internal discussion and our own elections experiences demonstrate that this process can be irreparably harmful.

The elections process has been subject to scrutiny before. The turmoil and tensions promoted during deliberations are often internally blamed for the eventual departure of staffers after losing elections.

Following a tumultuous situation during the 2022 fall elections for last year's board, News leadership made changes, which included introducing a response period and adding the public editor as a secondary moderator. As the News grows and changes, we have consistently strived to learn and do better. Clearly, those changes were not enough.

We, the editor in chief and public editor, began exploring new approaches to elections last spring, and we will continue this work throughout the semester in preparation for next term's elections. Some of our ideas thus far include transitioning from a lengthy spoken deliberation period to preapproved written comments, fostering a more respectful environment within the room and stricter enforcement of the current ban on defamatory gossip.

As a newspaper that strives to promote diversity in our newsroom and in our pages, we actively seek to build trust both internally and externally. We often fall short. Over the next few months, while we reevaluate our elections procedures, we welcome community input and hope to build a better newsroom.

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MEGAN VAZ  
GUEST COLUMNIST

## Why I've quit the Yale Daily News

After two years at the Yale Daily News, I have quit from my role as a desk editor. I can't stay silent on the endemic and toxic elements of the News' culture that have led to my decision. The News often receives public criticism for its content, but not for the harmful environment that staffers have discussed each year I have been at Yale.

Don't get me wrong — I have spent most of my time at the News doing meaningful reporting, forging strong connections with my community and building friendships that will last far beyond this place. But at a certain point, the intensity of the negatives outweigh any of the positives.

I ran for editor in chief during elections last semester. While I received praise from some due to my work and ideas, allegations that misrepresented personal situations were made against me during deliberations when I was not in the room. From what I've been told by over a dozen people, someone spoke about a callous comment I made that caused them harm months before, which from my recollection was not what I said and taken out of context. Everything devolved. Those with control over elections weren't successful in stopping repeated attacks on my character or the faction of the room that interrupted and discredited anyone who dared to speak up for me. I felt failed by leadership, who I believe handled the situation poorly.

As a result, I felt forced to speak in front of 50 people about an incident of sexual misconduct I experienced at a fraternity to contextualize my comment, which I still maintain was not in line with what I recall saying. I want to make clear I don't discount the harm I caused, even if unintentionally. I was still absolutely unfairly villainized by multiple people — including people I had never made eye contact with, let alone spoken to.

This was by far the most humiliating moment of my life. Before this, I had told a grand total of one friend about my experience at the frat. When the editor in chief called me back to the News' building later that day for questions, almost no one would make eye contact with me. When I looked over toward my friends and people with prior knowledge of the situation, they just shook their heads, and one told me, "I'm sorry."

I struggled to breathe and stay composed as I apologized and attempted to explain my experience with sexual misconduct. Some people rolled their eyes. Many scribbled down notes about me to distribute to others around the room.

When I went back to my dorm after my election, I had a panic attack over the phone with my mom. Several people still encouraged me to come back for managing editor elections, and I did. I gave a new speech and tried not to shake and cry in front of the same people who sat by or made popcorn gallery remarks while I was being degraded hours earlier. Once again, I lost, but I agreed to become the City Desk editor. Partly because I love my desk and was still happy with the role in itself, and because I was scared of what quitting would mean for my career in journalism. But mostly out of a lack of self-respect.

Even before elections, my relationship with the organization was souring. Various people made discouraging comments about my candidacy to my face and behind my back.

Certain comments chipped away at my self-confidence and eroded my willpower. Even more disheartening were comments I heard about others. I won't lie and say I hadn't made any questionable comments either, but many things I heard about other people were downright cruel and slanderous. I tried to drop my candidacy thrice and was convinced otherwise every time — including by people who criti-

cized me during deliberations. After elections, I began hearing about the digs and insulting comments some people continued to make about me. Eventually, my sadness turned into resentment and anger. I couldn't fathom that I was expected to be in a room every day with people who spoke about me behind my back, as well as 'friends' who listened to them disparage me. That was when I realized that I could count

the industry doesn't have to be this way. I slowly realized that I deserve much, much better than what the News did to me. I'm not alone. During my two years at Yale, this had been the fourth time a person of color who ran for upper management quit from their editorship after being negatively targeted in elections. Most of their tenures post-elections were short-lived, as was mine. You can only push a person so far before they've had enough.

My breaking point was receiving emails and texts from prospective writers excited to join my desk. At first, I was thrilled to help people along their paths to become more active community members or journalists. But as I made plans for brunches and coffee dates, I realized I felt unable to tell first years and sophomores in good faith to join an organization that has repeatedly tried to destroy its members.

In the words of a former editor who tried to console me after elections, this is "structurally a shitty place because it often props up people who are bullies or status-obsessed." That's what happened before elections with the discouraging comments about myself and cruel comments about others. To get to the top, people feel they need to step on others who might threaten them. As for during my election, I believe that criticizing me felt like a rite of passage or means of participation for some people who chimed in without stake. But those who ultimately dominated the conversation were upperclassman editors with power in the organization. I was a sophomore reporter.

I have been told that leadership is making efforts to improve the cultural and structural problems that have led to the mistreatment of myself and others. But so far, this situation has not been publicly addressed. Organization-wide, the record hasn't been set straight — not about what happened to myself and not about atrocious, unfair or racist deliberations that preceded resignations after the two previous elections.

In addition, casually and not-so-casually disparaging people around elections has become normalized to the point where close friends, including some of mine, have done it to each other. Not to mention the racial biases that have defined experiences here for over a century. It's difficult to change a broken culture from the bottom-up, no matter how well-intentioned the people at the top are. I personally feel I'm enabling all of this by just being at the YDN, period.

## MY ELECTION HADN'T JUST RUINED THE YALE DAILY NEWS FOR ME. IT RUINED YALE AS A WHOLE.

The News has created a hostile environment for some that others gloss over and minimize. There's a retention problem — especially among people of color. I'm the second A-section desk editor to quit in the past two weeks because "maybe this place isn't worth devoting time to anymore."

It's a shame that the place where I once spent countless nights becoming a sharper, more passionate reporter has become the place where I hit rock bottom. More than being a training ground for talent and tenacity, it's become a training ground for jealousy, slander and apathy toward the suffering of others.

**RUTHIE DAVIS** is a junior in Pierston College. Contact her at [megan.vaz@yale.edu](mailto:megan.vaz@yale.edu).

# FROM THE FRONT

*"The ocean makes me feel really small and it makes me put my whole life into perspective."*  
BEYONCÉ KNOWLES-CARTER AMERICAN SINGER

## Researchers investigate the use of pill to treat long COVID patients

COVID FROM PAGE 1

placebo to be taken orally for 15 days. The participants will complete a daily diary cataloging their symptoms alongside other surveys that the researchers will use to create an overall "summary score." According to Krumholz, the summary score standardizes differences in symptoms between patients, since long COVID patients tend to have a large variety of symptoms. The overall score helps the researchers gauge whether the patients' quality of life was generally improved by taking the medication despite the differences between patients.

Beyond the questionnaires and summary score, blood and saliva samples will be taken from participants before and after treatment. These samples will go through an immunophenotyping analysis in the Iwasaki lab.

"They are measuring thousands of components of the immune system trying to characterize what is active, what is not, what levels are high and what levels are low, what immune antibodies may exist within the course of treatment and how it correlates with people's response," Krumholz said. "Even if the results are negative, it may be that we can identify the signatures of people who are responders and help us understand whether there are subsets of people that might benefit."

Participants will continue to be followed after the 15 days of treatment to see whether the improvement of symptoms is sustained long term.

Rohan Khera, assistant professor of medicine and biostatistics, is leading the analytic side of the project. In particular, Khera is working on decentralized data analysis in the trial. While this study is a good start, Khera said that there is still more research to be done regarding long COVID.

"There is a lot being done, and I think the biggest value will come from research that helps better characterize what symptom constellation defines Long COVID and whether there are disease subtypes representing different pathophysiologies," Khera wrote to the News. "The treatment could then be targeted to the mecha-



A study is testing whether Paxlovid can be used longer term to help treat those with long COVID. / Illustration by Angelique de Rouen

nisms causing the symptoms and challenges to patients."

There are currently patients enrolled from 43 states, and Krumholz said they are aiming to include participants from the

48 contiguous states. As of September, roughly one third of the study is full. The researchers are still screening participants for eligibility. Krumholz hopes to be done enrolling partici-

pants by the end of this year and to get results sometime during the spring of 2024, although it would take additional time for the FDA to approve the use of Paxlovid for long COVID.

The School of Public Health is located at 60 College St.

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## University and police union contract negotiations are off to rocky start

POLICE UNION FROM PAGE 1

tions twice — both in the spring and the fall of 2022. Hall said the union was hoping to get a head start on negotiations as the process typically takes around 16 months.

In a statement to the News, Sarno characterized the scheduling of negotiations differently.

He said that following the YPBA's request to initiate negotiations, the two parties met, and the University offered to extend the current collective bargaining agreement by one year. This would have bumped the existing contract's expiration date to June 30, 2024. The extension the University offered would be limited solely to economic terms and would come with a commitment from the University to begin negotiations for a longer-term "successor agreement," or more simply, a fresh contract, in January of 2023. The University, according to Sarno, also flagged the possibility of a "generous wage increase" effective July 1, 2023.

According to Sarno, although the YPBA agreed to consider and respond to the proposal, the union took no further action until it shared in the fall of 2022 that it was uninterested in an extension. Sarno told the News that when the YPBA later agreed to schedule bargaining dates for the successor agreement, the University responded with "several" dates starting in early February of 2023.

According to Hall, the so-called "catastrophic" proposal also involved a clause regarding workers' compensation for job-related injuries, but he declined to go into specifics. Hall said that union members consid-

ered Yale's initial wage increase offer included in that proposal to be "insultingly low."

Hall expressed further qualms with the ongoing negotiations, including Yale's choice to use negotiators who Hall alleges lacked "real decision-making authority." These negotiators, Hall argued, caused a delay in bargaining and also were behind Yale's initial choice to reject the same bargaining standards that were set in previous contract negotiations.

According to his statement, Sarno contacted Hall in late January 2023 to notify him that Dave Kelly, the University's Associate Director of Labor Relations, would lead bargaining on the University's side. Sarno said that Kelly has over 20 years of experience and meets regularly with University public safety officials, including Yale Police Department Chief Anthony Campbell. Sarno was the University's previous representative who participated in the last contract negotiations with the union, and was also the associate director of labor relations at the time.

As for the bargaining standards issue Hall mentioned, Sarno claimed that it is common for negotiations to occur without parties agreeing on bargaining standards.

"With respect to ground rules, the university made a proposal, which the union rejected without making a counter," Sarno wrote. "From there, the parties agreed to proceed without ground rules."

At the start of negotiations, Yale did not commit to paying members of the union's negotiating committee or agreeing to monthly contract extensions past the July 1 expiration date, according to Hall. Following more discussion and the prospect of collective "job action" by the union,

Hall said Yale agreed to monthly contract extensions with full retroactivity for pay and benefits.

### The last time around

The union hopes to win better paid time off benefits and healthcare co-shares. During the last contract negotiations in 2018, the YPBA agreed to pay small premium co-shares for two-person and family coverage under the traditionally premium-free Yale Health Plan in exchange for being exempt from the Health Expectations Program.

A part of other Yale unions' contracts, the HEP requires workers and spouses to undergo medical testing such as mammograms, colonoscopies and diabetes screenings or pay an "opt-out" fee of \$25 a week. Test results can then be shared with Yale wellness vendors, promptly privacy concerns from union organizers and employees.

Last February, union workers in UNITE HERE Locals 34 and 35 settled a class-action lawsuit with the University over the HEP, arguing that the \$1,300 in annual opt-out fees imposed "financial penalties" on employees and violated their civil rights. In addition to Yale awarding workers checks of up to \$1,300 as part of the settlement, the University also agreed to not charge opt-out fees. Because YPBA was not included in the settlement, Hall said that Yale police union members face disproportionate co-shares compared to other Yale union workers, which Hall said needs to be remedied in this round of negotiations.

The previous 2018 contract dispute lasted 28 months and involved over 70 negotiation sessions. Stalled by healthcare stipulations, such as the HEP and Yale's proposal for officers to continue paying premium co-shares

during retirement, the contract eventually secured higher wages, improved due process and procedural rights protections and premium-free retiree insurance.

The contract made YPBA members among the highest paid officers in the state, according to a statement released by Yale at the time. An attorney for the YPBA also characterized the contracts as "probably one of the best contracts at least in New England, if not the country."

### Yale community criticizes union negotiation tactics

Following the distribution of the union's Grim Reaper-adorned flyers on Aug. 20, city and University officials, including Mayor Justin Elicker and Yale Police Chief Anthony Campbell, condemned the YPBA's "fear mongering" language and imagery.

Hall told the News that any effect the flyering had on contract negotiations remains to be seen when the two parties return to the table next Wednesday. Members are broadly supportive of the flyers, according to Hall. He added that the University response inspired little to no discussion among officers.

"We stand ready to negotiate in earnest to attain a fair and equitable successor agreement for both parties," said Hall. "And we eagerly await a similar commitment by the university."

The YPBA's practice of distributing flyers branding New Haven as a dangerous city is not new. The union has handed out leaflets, particularly to prospective or new students and their families, on at least five occasions during active contract negotiations.

Police unions often engage in "loud" and "provocative" action to attract attention and support to their cause, according to Policing, Law, and Policy Director of the

Justice Collaboratory at Yale Law School Jorge Camacho.

"It's a bit of a political theater, certainly, where they'll take, again, these deliberately provocative positions, one that they may not even kind of genuinely hold, but one that they feel they have to hold in order to arrive at their ultimate political destination," Camacho told the News.

Camacho said looking at YPBA's past instances of flyering strongly indicates that the union's recent flyering was a political stunt, one that he believes will create roadblocks during negotiations. Camacho said that community members are "less deferential" to officers than they were five years ago and further labeled the YPBA's crime-emphasizing tactic as a "vestige" of a past era.

Meera Mishra '26 witnessed the active distribution of the flyers to parents outside of Old Campus. As a leader for the University's FOCUS On New Haven orientation program, which has new first-year students explore the relationship between Yale and New Haven. The program also has students discuss social activism and systems of oppression within New Haven. In the wake of the flyering, Mishra and her co-leader held a discussion with the first-year students about the union's action.

"The general consensus between our FOCUS group was that they didn't support [the flyers] and that they wanted to create a better relationship with New Haven," said Mishra.

During previous contract negotiations, YPBA members lacked a long-term contract between June 2016 and Oct. 2018.

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# FROM THE FRONT

*"Until justice rolls down like water and righteousness like a mighty stream."*

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. AMERICAN ACTIVIST

## Yale to integrate AI into introductory computer science course

AI FROM PAGE 1

vides helpful hints and guides students to an answer, similar to how a human TA would help students at office hours."

The AI duck is inspired by the concept of "rubber duck debugging," a method of debugging code in which the programmer attempts to find the bug by articulating their code line-by-line to a physical rubber duck. Through the process, if all goes well, the programmer can identify the bug by thinking out loud.

The CS50 duck comes with a certain number of "hearts" that

appear beside it on the screen. When a student asks a question, the duck loses hearts; if the hearts run out, the student must wait for them to regenerate before asking more questions.

Charlie Calkins '26, a student enrolled in CS50 this semester, said that he hopes the AI tool will be able to respond to questions written in "plain language."

"I'm excited for the AI duck because it is specific to the class, meaning it will better understand my questions about course material," he said. "A lot of times with online AIs, the bot misun-

derstands your question or gives you information outside the question's scope."

Calkins also speculated that the technology's addition to the course is designed as a way to prevent cheating.

In 2017, the issue of cheating in the course was brought to light as the Harvard Crimson reported that more than 60 students enrolled in the course appeared before the college's Honor Council for cases of academic dishonesty.

However, the "regret clause" in the CS50 course policy allows students to self-report academic

dishonesty in order to avoid larger consequences.

Malan added that, in addition to developing the AI duck, the CS50 team has begun experimenting with AI-led training for human TAs. AI would train TAs "by simulating interactions with virtual students who are struggling with some topic."

This training, Malan said, may soon be able to help address topics in other fields, such as the humanities, arts and social sciences.

Speaking more broadly on AI's role in academia, Malan said that departments outside of Computer Science may soon be able to incor-

porate the technology into their own course instruction.

"CS courses are perhaps advantageously positioned to be early adopters of AI, by nature of being able to write code themselves to incorporate it. But there will soon be all the more apps, all the more APIs, via which academia more generally will be able to leverage AI, either with less code or even no code?"

CS50 has been offered at Yale since Fall 2015.

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J

John Harvard STUDENT

CS50 Duck BOT

ENDORSED

For the Caesar problem, I would like to pass only one argument to the main function. However, I get an interesting error when I try this:

```
caesar.c:11:5: error: only one parameter on 'main' declaration [-Werror,-Wmain]
```

If I follow the lecture and add two variables, this code runs. But it seems inefficient, given that one variable is not utilised. I note that there are certain coding "standards" that govern this behaviour, but I'm not sure that I understand the rationale here.

Is there a more efficient way to write this code?

Comment Edit Delete Endorse ...

It seems like you're trying to declare the `main` function with only one parameter. However, in C, the `main` function should have either zero parameters or two parameters, which are `int argc` and `char *argv[]`. The first parameter, `argc`, represents the number of command-line arguments, and the second parameter, `argv`, is an array of strings representing each of those arguments.

For the Caesar problem, you'll want to use these parameters to access the command-line argument that represents the key. To do this, you should declare your `main` function as follows:

```
int main(int argc, char *argv[])
{
    // Your code here
}
```

Then, you can check if the user has provided the correct number of arguments (in this case, just one additional argument for the key) and handle the input accordingly.

P.S. I am an experimental bot. Quack. Do not assume that my reply is accurate unless you see that it's been "endorsed" by (human) staff. Quack.

Comment Edit Delete Unendorse ...

CS50.ai

**ddb**

Quack. I am CS50's duck debugger (ddb), an experimental AI for rubberducking. Quack. My replies might not always be accurate, so always think critically and let me know if you think that I've erred. Conversations are logged for debugging's sake. Quack.

**you**

My code is not working as expected, any ideas?

```
x = input("Give me an integer x: ")
y = input("Give me an integer y: ")
sum = x + y
print("x + y is: " + sum)
```

**ddb**

It seems like you're trying to add two integers, but the `input()` function in Python returns a string. So, when you try to add `x` and `y`, you're actually concatenating two strings, not adding two integers.

To fix this, you can convert the inputs to integers using the `int()` function like so:

```
x = int(input("Give me an integer x: "))
y = int(input("Give me an integer y: "))
```

Yale's CS50 course will give students access to an AI chatbot that can provide around-the-clock assistance. / Courtesy of Charlie Liu

## 'We'll just admit fewer students': University scrambles to accommodate first-year class

FIRST-YEARS FROM PAGE 1

When it came time for admitted students to make their college enrollment decisions last May, Yale fared better — nearly five percent better — than usual.

The result? A class materially larger than Yale anticipated.

### Gap years

The large class size triggered preemptive efforts by the University to lower fall enrollment in the College's class of 2027.

In a May 11 email obtained by the News, the admissions office encouraged students who accepted their admissions offers last spring to consider taking a year off before matriculating to Yale. The initial deadline to request a gap year was May 1; the office sent the May 11 email to students who had not yet declared intent to delay enrollment.

"I am writing to encourage all newly admitted students to consider the possibility that postponing matriculation — also known as taking a gap year — might be an appealing option," Quinlan wrote in the

email. The option to take a gap year, the office noted, would remain a possibility for those interested throughout the spring and summer.

While 55 students postponed matriculation, 1,647 students still enrolled this year — 90 students more than the class of 2026.

Dunn told the News that while the email did not reflect any "change in policy," it was "initiated in response to the higher-than-anticipated yield."

Following its email encouraging then-enrolled students to postpone matriculation, the admissions office held a virtual information session for students to explore the possibility of taking a gap year.

"We did not see an increase in students postponing their matriculation compared with a typical year, but the message and session were very well received and we plan to repeat them in the future," Dunn wrote.

**Orientation and teaching staff**  
In addition to encouraging gap years to address over-enrollment, the University expanded instructional capacity and orientation options.

Dean of Yale College Pericles Lewis told the News that

the University has hired additional faculty to teach popular multi-section courses and additional teaching fellows to lead discussion sections in popular first-year lecture courses, such as introductory math and English courses, as well as an additional Directed Studies section.

The University also offered a variety of new Camp Yale orientation programs this year to support student transitions into college life. New programs this year included Camp Yale Arts, Yale Reserved and LAUNCH.

Lewis also noted that despite the uptick in enrolled students, the "quality of a Yale education" would not change.

In order to reduce the undergraduate student population to a long-term steady state, adaptations may still be necessary from an admissions standpoint, Lewis told the News.

"We'll just admit fewer students," Lewis said. "So basically if the admit rate was around 4.5 percent this year, it might be 4.2 percent next year. Usually we get more applicants each year, so we might

be even below 4.2 percent ... I don't like turning away 96 percent of the students. But we can't admit 50 percent of our applicants."

### Room and board

Last year, students reported on-campus housing shortages linked to increased enrollment in the class of 2025. An over-enrolled class of 2027 could bring similar issues or exacerbate existing ones.

Lewis told the News, however, that an increased number of students living off campus has helped ease housing concerns. Per Quinlan, no upper-level students were forced to seek off-campus housing, despite the large first-year class size.

In some colleges and buildings on Old Campus, suites that were vacant last year received renovations and updates in preparation for move-in this fall.

Administrators told the News that Yale Hospitality, however, boasts a large capacity and does not expect complications given the large class size.

"We continue to see changes in the student population year after year, and our agile team

doesn't foresee any challenges in supporting that growth," Associate Vice President of Yale Hospitality Rafi Taherian wrote to the News.

Adam Millman, senior director and retail operations manager for Yale Hospitality, cited the fact that even when the Schwarzman Center was shut down for renovations, the office was still able to easily support the entire student population.

Still, some students have noticed changes in day-to-day University dining patterns.

"Even in the first two days, I noticed that Commons seemed even more crowded than last year," Jack Stemerma '26 told the News. "The line kept stopping because they would run out of food too fast and have to wait to make more."

The largest-ever first-year class to enroll was the class of 2025, which featured 1,789 students.

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## NEWS

*"It is good to remember that the planet is carrying you."*

VANDANA SHIVA ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVIST

# Scaled-back COVID policies remain even as campus cases climb

BY TRISTAN HERNANDEZ  
STAFF REPORTER

Amid a national uptick in COVID-19 cases, students are facing a confusing health landscape with testing, masking and close contact protocols.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there has been a 29 percent increase in hospitalizations over the last two weeks. While the University no longer publishes daily COVID-19 numbers, the News spoke to eight students who said they have seen an increase in COVID-19 cases in their classes, friend groups and residential colleges. University health leaders said they have also observed a rise of cases on campus.

"We do have a number of cases on campus right now, particularly among undergraduates," Madeline Wilson, chief campus health officer, wrote to the News. "We have reliably seen this phenomenon over the past 3 years when campus is repopulated after breaks. It is a result of social gatherings, shifting variants, and is likely exacerbated by the fact that most folks are probably many months out from their last COVID booster."

Several students said they have seen an increase in people masking on campus and missing from seminars. Some classes, such as the large lecture course "Biology, the World, and Us," had its office hours moved online. All of the students the News spoke to said they knew someone who currently has COVID-19.

But, as cases increase among the student body, several students told the News that they have been confused or found the University's policies lacking.

"I would not say that [the University's policies] are keeping students safe ... that does not seem to be their main goal," Ruthie Davis '24 said. "In a general way, they've kind of left it to individuals to decide but also to navigate COVID caution and being sick with COVID themselves to a fairly significant degree."

When a student reports their positive test result to the University, their suitmates are automatically notified of close contact policies at Yale. In an email

obtained by the News, suitmates of a student who tested positive for COVID-19 were told they were in a "period of monitoring and testing," which includes using grab-and-go from the dining halls and masking in public spaces.

The University does have a form that lets students who test positive for COVID-19 anonymously notify their close contacts, but if a student notifies their contacts non-anonymously or does not log their case with the University, no information is sent to them.

"I had no idea what I was supposed to do," Isabelle Millman '26 told the News. "I didn't receive any official information. I had no idea where to find a test or a mask, and I had to ask around to find some."

Madeline Pitre '26 said that she was left in with no information for 12 hours after she submitted her positive test result to the University, and told her close contacts herself with no official guidance.

She also described feeling confused by how to attend her classes, as professors differed between Zoom, recorded lectures and no online options at all.

"I definitely felt that most of the responsibility was left up to me," Pitre said. "Especially when it came to my classes, it seemed my professors had to individually decide how they wanted to proceed. This lack of standardization definitely made my situation even more stressful."

According to CDC data, there were 89 hospitalizations in New Haven County during the week of Aug. 19, but Yale experts said the hospitalization data is a "lagging indicator" and may underreport cases. Gregg Gonsalves '11 GRD '17, an associate professor of epidemiology at the Yale School of Public Health, told the News that it is "hard to discern" the actual number of cases.

Wastewater levels, according to Davis, can show the level of the virus present in a whole community with less of a chance of underreporting. She added that while not as accurate as the University reporting the amount of cases, the wastewater levels are comparable to numbers back in August 2021.

Wilson told the News that the recent increase of cases come

from a low baseline, and national COVID-19 levels remain markedly lower than August 2022 levels.

She added that while the University is watching COVID-19 indicators closely, they are "not recommending any major policy changes" at this time, but will re-evaluate if the situation worsens.

"We are watching indicators closely and will certainly be re-evaluating policies around masking and gatherings if the situation on campus or in the greater New Haven community worsens," Wilson said. "At this time I am cautiously optimistic that things will quiet down by the end of the month."

Last week, President Peter Salovey tested positive for COVID-19 and attended the opening ceremony virtually. He told the News that his infection highlighted the caution still needed in regards to the virus.

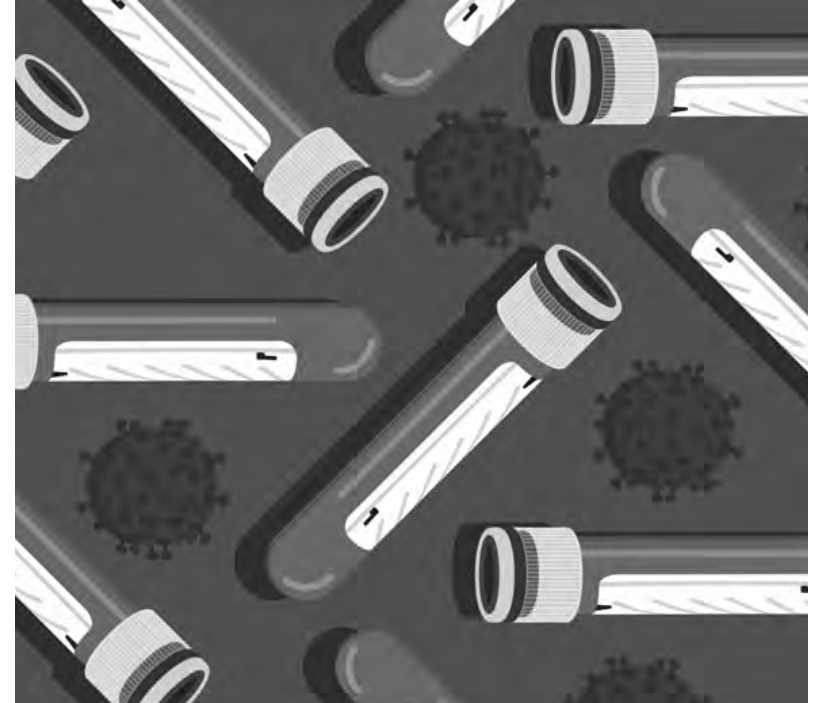
The current uptick comes as the University has adapted its COVID-19 policies since Connecticut ended its public health emergency order last spring.

The University created a new Campus Health Office earlier this summer, which will work to support the health of the Yale community as it navigates routine and emergent public health threats. Additional vaccinations are now optional for students, staff and faculty, although the University "strongly encourages" that community members get all forthcoming COVID-19 booster shots.

"Overall levels of immunity on campus are high due to prior vaccination and infection, and we hope that most will take the opportunity to get the updated COVID vaccine and boost immunity further," Wilson said. "We are continuing to promote preventive measures and continue to ask Yale community members to report positive tests to the university so that we can provide guidance on isolation and recommendations for close contacts."

In her email, Wilson said that vaccines still protect from serious illness, but their protective abilities decrease as time since the last booster increases. She added that new variants are still emerging, which "may allow the virus to evade the current high levels of immunity."

The University's policies state that if a student gets COVID-19,



ZOE BERG / SENIOR PHOTOGRAPHER

With campus cases on the rise, students express dissatisfaction with the University's COVID-19 guidelines on close contact tracing and isolation housing.

they should notify the University and isolate for at least five days — which could be in a dorm room or in Arnold Hall, according to Yale College Dean Pericles Lewis. For close contacts, the CDC's policy is to mask for up to 10 days following exposure and to test for COVID-19 if any symptoms are experienced.

"We don't have a centralized [isolation housing system] like we did last year, because the numbers have been low and it didn't seem to make sense to take a whole dorm for that purpose," Lewis said.

Lewis added that there is, however, "some space" for students to isolate in Arnold Hall. If someone's roommate has COVID-19, they are given the option of staying in their room, staying with a friend or moving into temporary housing.

Despite this, some students are not satisfied with the University's policies. Davis brought up the lack of guidelines, beyond just close contact, that leave students and faculty on their own to navigate COVID-19, such as classroom flexibility for students who do not want to contract the virus.

"What remains notable to me is just that at this point in the pandemic, the fall uptick along with campus cases was predictable," Davis said. "I don't think peo-

ple want to get sick. Sure, people might not want to wear masks. But people also don't want to get sick — and it's still Yale's responsibility to adapt to COVID in a way that holds onto that as an important goal."

Davis also noted the lack of support systems for those who test positive, such as dedicated dining hall hours or clear communication from health centers. Students who test positive are currently allowed in dining halls during regular hours to get food to-go.

Lewis told the News that the University is expecting students to take necessary precautions to keep the Yale community safe.

"We're hoping that people will take precautions and test in coming weeks because we certainly don't want COVID in the classroom," Lewis told the News. "A lot of the older faculty may never have had COVID, even though we've all been vaccinated multiple times now it can be serious, especially for people who are immunocompromised."

The University offers free flu vaccines and COVID-19 boosters to all Yale faculty, staff, students and Yale Health members.

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# Yale announces policy changes after SCOTUS affirmative action ruling

BY MOLLY REINMANN  
STAFF REPORTER

In a Thursday afternoon email, Dean of Yale College Pericles Lewis and Dean of Undergraduate Admissions and Financial Aid Jeremiah Quinlan offered the Yale community an update about the University's efforts to promote campus diversity work since the Supreme Court's June ruling against race-conscious admissions.

According to the message, the College has been taking steps to continue attracting students from underrepresented backgrounds and promoting a culture of diversity and inclusivity while complying with the law. Per the email, these steps include updates to Yale's undergraduate admissions process, an expanded admissions outreach plan, new talent pipelines and a commitment to supporting a culture of belonging.

"The most important message I want people to hear is that even if the law has changed, our values have not," Quinlan told the News. "We still want to be attracting students from underrepresented backgrounds to Yale, even if the law around how we consider them in the process has changed."

The email opened by announcing the dismissal of a 2021 lawsuit filed against the University by Students for Fair Admissions, the plaintiff in the cases against Harvard University and the University of North Carolina. SFFA decided to dismiss the lawsuit, the message explained, after learning of the changes the University has made to comply with the SCOTUS ruling.

Among these changes are several updates to Yale College's admissions process, including "extensive" new training for admissions officers on how to evaluate applica-

tions without access to a student's self-identified race.

"[The new training] is going to be a significant undertaking for a very experienced staff like that at Yale," Quinlan told the News. "I think it's going to be a challenge. But I think we are up for the challenge in the Yale Admissions Office."

Quinlan added that the trainings, which began this week, are set to continue past the November early action deadline and through the end of the 2023-24 admissions cycle.

The message also pointed to the new application essay prompts for the current admissions cycle.

This year, students will respond to one of three short-answer questions. Students can write about a time they discussed an important issue with someone holding an opposing view, reflect on their membership in a community or describe an enriching element of their personal experience.

"We believe these questions will invite students from all backgrounds to reflect on the experiences that have shaped their character and strengths," the email read.

A final announced change will incorporate place-based data from The Opportunity Atlas, an interactive tool that measures the relationship between geographic location and economic mobility, in Yale's undergraduate admissions process.

The use of the Opportunity Atlas tool will supplement the admissions office's existing use of the College Board's Landscape tool, which provides data about an applicant's high school and neighborhood.

The adoption of the Opportunity Atlas and the furthered use of Landscape will give the admissions office a more "consistent, data driven way" to understand students' backgrounds, explained Mark Dunn, the senior associate director for outreach and recruitment at the Office of Undergraduate Admissions.

"I'll make very clear, this is not a proxy for race," Dunn told the News. "We have done no research that looks backwards at the racial composition of applicants or admitted students based on any Opportunity Atlas pieces. We are not using it as a way to get around the prohibition on the use of race. We think, though, that this is a good moment when we are losing one piece of information, to be gaining another different piece of information that is valuable for us and our process."

While Thursday's email outlined many tangible changes to the admissions office's practices, commentary on certain aspects of Yale's admission policy were absent from the communication.

YCC president Julian Suh-Toma '25, YCC president told the News that, while he felt "proud" of the University's efforts to continue to promote equity and inclusion, he hopes to see communication soon on Yale's test-optional policy and its use of legacy admissions.

"While we pursue other changes to admissions, we hope that Yale will remain test optional, increasing accessibility for students of all backgrounds," Suh-Toma wrote to the News. "We also urge the administration to consider the YCC's previously stated demand to eliminate legacy admissions. We also hope to see the implementation of formal feedback in admissions from Yale's cultural groups, including AASA, MENA, BSAY, Mecha, and NISAY. We look forward to working with present and future administrators to pursue necessary progress as we strive to create a better Yale."

Beyond updating its process, the admissions office announced in the message a continued commitment to expanding its outreach efforts to students from underrepresented backgrounds.

Per the email, the admissions process begins before applications are read, with outreach efforts to ensure that the applicant pool includes high achieving students from a breadth of backgrounds.

"We've seen an incredible diversification in our applicant pool, both in terms of strength and numbers of students applying who identify as Black, Latinx and Native," Quinlan told the News. "Part of that is because of the K-12 education pipeline diversifying in this country, but also because of the [outreach] work that the Yale Admissions Office has done, and we need to redouble those efforts."

Driving the office's goals to expand its recruitment reach, Dunn explained, is its plan to hire two new full-time staff members who will work primarily on outreach.

Examples of outreach initiatives the office hopes to expand in the future include widening participation in the Multicultural Open House, increasing the reach of the Ambassadors Program and launching new outreach efforts through Small Town and Rural Students (STARS) College Network.

Dunn explained that, with the addition of these two new hires, the office will also be able to further commit itself to long-term initiatives to build a pipeline of high-achieving applicants from diverse backgrounds, a goal delineated in the email.

Quinlan explained that pipeline-building is distinct from outreach. While outreach initiatives focus on prospective students in their junior and senior years of high school, pipeline building initiatives are longer-term, focusing on high school freshmen and sophomores.

Examples of these initiatives include expanding early educational outreach to students in grades 8-10, developing a college preparatory

summer program for high-achieving students from underrepresented backgrounds within the next two years and developing programming with Yale Pathways and New Haven Promise.

"We really feel that, at this moment, it is incumbent upon Yale and all of us to really think about investing in being at the table for college prep for students from minoritized, low income and first generation backgrounds," Dunn said. "We can and should do something meaningful in this space, and it's not just about the pool of applicants to Yale College. We think we have a greater role to play. And finding the right way to do that is something that we want to continue to grow."

The email concluded with a reaffirmation of the College's commitment to attracting, welcoming and supporting students from all backgrounds. It pointed to Yale's four cultural centers, as well as the newly established Office of Educational Opportunity, as means for supporting a culture of belonging at the College.

These efforts are all continuing to develop, Lewis and Quinlan explained in the email, pointing to a webpage where future updates would be posted.

"Our priorities today remain unchanged from June: fully complying with the law, continuing to support a diverse and inclusive community, and maintaining a world-class admissions process that considers each applicant as an individual," the email from Lewis and Quinlan read. "We are confident we can preserve these priorities going forward."

On June 29, the U.S. Supreme Court declared race-conscious admissions unconstitutional.

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# ARTS

*“For whatever we lose (like a you or a me),  
it’s always our self we find in the sea.”*

E.E. CUMMINGS, AMERICAN POET

## NXTHVN, artspace based in Dixwell, welcomes latest fellowship cohort

BY CHLOE EDWARDS  
STAFF REPORTER

NXTHVN, an art space based in New Haven’s Dixwell neighborhood, announced nine new artists who are set to participate in their fifth cohort of studio and curatorial fellows.

The fellowship program runs from August 2023 to May 2024 and includes photographers, painters and curators from Omaha and Akron to Cape Town and London. The purpose of NXTHVN’s program is to provide artists and curators with the resources necessary to make a name for themselves in the art world.

“Although it is fairly frequently mentioned, visibility and representation are so important for historic redress, contemporary rearticulation and future worldbuilding,” curatorial fellow Clare Patrick wrote to the News. “I’ve seen how powerfully an artwork can catalyze reflection and action by making visual the necessary conversations which can be continued through an exhibition, in social spaces or the walk home afterwards.”

Through the fellowship, each artist receives \$35,000 and each curator receives \$45,000 to put toward their work. In addition, they are also guaranteed studio space and subsidized housing, as well as mentorship, critical evaluations and hands-on training.

Kalia Brooks, NXTHVN Director of Programs and Exhibitions, noted how the organization amplifies the voices of creatives while simultaneously bringing attention to current and critical humanitarian issues. The vision behind the organization, she wrote, is to encourage collaboration among budding artists and entrepreneurs.

“We position our Fellowship as a launching pad for advancing artistic careers,” Brooks wrote.

NXTHVN was created by Titus Kaphar and Jason Price and has served as a space for connecting artists and curators since 2019. This fifth cohort of fellows, or “Cohort 05,” features artists and curators from as near as New Haven, Connecticut to as far as Adamawa, Nigeria.

During their time at NXTHVN, every selected fellow will also mentor a New Haven



COURTESY OF ADRIAN ARMSTRONG

2023 marks the fifth year of NXTHVN’s fellowship for artists and curators.

public high school student interested in the arts.

At the end of each fellowship term, the cohort of fellows presents their work in an exhibition at an acclaimed art gallery. Last year’s cohort, “Cohort 04,” presented their exhibition “RECLAMATION” at the Sean Kelly Gallery in New York City.

Giving each member the freedom to interpret the theme as they saw fit, the exhibition demonstrated how concepts such as beauty, sexuality and religion can be reclaimed from Western standards and prototypes, according to the Sean Kelly Gallery’s website. At the heart of the exhibition was giv-

ing voice to trauma victims and challenging the notion of what Black femininity looks like.

In a similar vein, NXTHVN leaders have said that the artists and curators in Cohort 05 are bringing their experience to the table using a spectrum of media to convey their takes on how sexuality, race, culture and community intersect.

One fellow, Eric Hart Jr. told the News that he seeks to reject control by highlighting Blackness and queerness in many of his high-contrast black-and-white photographs. One photograph, “Resistance, Mister, Mister No.3,” depicts a puppeteer man wearing gloves and lace stock-

ings. Another titled “When I Think About Power No. 1,” shows a Black man with acrylic nails.

Another artist in Cohort 05, Adrian Armstrong, said he explores the Black experience through collage in his works “ALL IN THE FAMILY” and “WE DANCE BECAUSE WE ARE HAPPY, WE DANCE BECAUSE WE ARE FREE.” Issuing a counter-narrative to how Blackness has been historically studied, written or drawn about in Western media through a trauma lens, Armstrong said his work showcases a joyful celebration of Black lives and values.

“Foregrounding the lives of Black people, our subjectivity

and history are central to how I approach my Curatorial practice,” Marquita Flowers, Cohort 05 member, wrote to the News. “I view Blackness as a broad spectrum that is inclusionary of more than an African-American experience. I believe Black subjectivity informs global movements.”

For Flowers, art curation and analysis represent a way of honoring her immediate ancestral history, withstanding attempts to erase and create “counter-factual” narratives.

NXTHVN is located at 169 Henry St.

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## Improv and comedy groups on campus look for first years to say ‘Yes! And...’ join this fall

BY LUKAS NEL  
STAFF REPORTER

Hundreds of Yale comedy group enthusiasts gathered on Sunday to watch the annual Improvaganza, a tradition in Yale’s comedy scene, and a sketch comedy collaboration between two student groups.

Sketch comedy groups Red Hot Poker and The 5th Humour performed their sketches in Linsly-Chittenden Hall, while later in the night, five of Yale’s top improv comedy groups — Just Add Water, Purple Crayon, Lux Improvitas, Exit Players and the Viola Question — showcased their wit and humor in a series of

15-minute improvisations. Both performances left the packed audiences in fits of laughter.

“It was the best attended Improvaganza I have ever seen,” said Director of Just Add Water David DeRuiter ’24. “We unfortunately had to turn some people away at the door because there weren’t enough seats. The energy was excellent. There are a lot of first years that seem really excited about auditions this year, which is the goal. That’s why we do this.”

This year marked a notable spike in attendance for both types of comedy groups, signaling the resurgence of arts and performances post-pandemic.

According to Abigail Sylvor Greenberg ’25, Purple Crayon co-director, even the balconies of the auditorium were full. Sylvor Greenberg is also Director of Internal Affairs at the News.

“It’s awesome to feel how excited and energetic all the first years are about doing comedy,” Sylvor Greenberg said. “We remember when we were in our first year, and we just thought that there was a possibility that we might like to do this, and we tried it out and we loved it. So, it just feels really good to see that in the next generation.”

From short to long to experimental to musical, the improv groups displayed the rich diversity of styles Yale’s comedy scene has to offer.

The Purple Crayon, a long-form improv comedy group, specializes in a type of comedy

called the “Harold,” which takes three separate storylines and ties them together towards the end of the performance.

In contrast, The Viola Question’s signature style is short-form improv sprinkled with “a joke-a-second comedy,” said Director Tess Levy ’25.

On the musical end, Just Add Water, Yale’s musical improv comedy group made a unique impression with their live pianist and iconic jumpsuit outfits. JAW Director DeRuiter noted that his group is the “first, best and only” musical improv group at Yale.

“What sets us apart, apart from having excellent colorful costumes, is the fact that we have a live pianist who improvises music and as he does so, we improvise lyrics and voice over,” he said.

Lux Improvitas showcased their specialty in story-based longform improv. Group member Truman Pipestem ’24 described their skit as a “monoscene” where the performers never changed locations, sticking to the setting of a sauna which they took from a live audience suggestion.

The Exit Players Co-director Will Gonzalez ’24 said he hoped to show first years what being in an improv group is like. His group focuses on longform experimental improv.

Gonzalez said his favorite part of participating in improv at Yale is “having fun in general, especially at a place like [Yale.] [It’s] just fun to meet once or twice a week and have fun with your friends and goof off a bit.”

Audience member Adam Buchsbaum ’27 enjoyed the event, particularly the scenes of The Viola Question. “It was really funny, really quick and really showed the wit [of the group],” Buchsbaum told the News.

Fellow attendee, Kevin Zhong ’25, said he was captivated by an opera-inspired skit by JAW, noting that it was “awesome” how the performers took on the difficult song-style for their skit.

On the other end of Yale’s comedy world, Red Hot Poker and The 5th Humour features sketch comedy — skits that are written and rehearsed prior to the show. Their “Sketch Comedy Recruitment Show: A Back to Skool Special” also proved to be very popular.

“I think that there’s definitely a lot of first year interest as freshmen come to shows to figure out what they’re looking to get involved in at Yale,” Red Hot Poker social chair Noah Bradley ’25 said. “I also think that buzz certainly helps us get people who we don’t directly advertise to just through word of mouth.”

As the curtains closed on the sketch comedy collaboration and Improvaganza 2023, audition slots have now opened for new members to try and laugh their way into whichever group’s comedy style they enjoy the most.

The Exit Players was founded in 1984, making it Yale’s oldest improv group.

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LUKAS NEL/ CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER

“Improvaganza” and a sketch comedy collaboration with two student groups on Sunday kicked off the beginning of the comedy audition season.

## ARTS

*"Water does not resist. Water flows. When you plunge your hand into it, all you feel is a caress."*  
MARGARET ATWOOD, CANADIAN WRITER

# A cappella rush starts on a high note

BY MAIA NEHME  
CONTRIBUTING REPORTER

Yale's a cappella community kicked off its two-week rush process this weekend with the annual Woolsey Jam on Saturday and Marsh Jam on Monday.

The University's 17 undergraduate a cappella groups — sans senior-only groups Whim 'n Rhythm and Whiffenpoofs — performed one song each at Woolsey Jam and two songs each at Marsh Jam.

During the jams, members also discussed what sets their groups apart from others and organized audition sign-ups for later this week.

The performances involved one or more soloists, four-part harmony and beatboxing. Some groups, such as the Society of Orpheus and Bacchus and the Spizzwinks(?), incorporated skits and dialogue into their songs.

The end of the Marsh Jam marked the official start of rush, which involves auditions, callbacks, singing desserts — hour-long concerts by individual groups — and rush meals. The process culminates in tap night on Sept. 20, during which some rushees will be officially inducted into the groups.

"[Shades of Yale is] obviously catered toward African-American students, and I think it's really important I'm a part of those [types of] groups because that's a significant aspect of my identity," said Ayannah Obas '27, who came into the rush process with her eyes set on the a cappella group, which emphasizes music of the African diaspora. "Being a part of that group ... would just [put] me in a space where I feel comfortable at Yale."

However, after attending both jams, Obas was impressed by the other groups' sheer talent and tight-knit bonds. Ultimately, she signed up to audition for five a cappella groups, including Shades of Yale.



COLLYN ROBINSON / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

The official two-week a cappella rush process is now underway following this weekend's Woolsey and Marsh Jams.

During the jams, there were some technical issues that posed challenges for both the groups and their prospective rushees. Former Head Rush Manager of Mixed Company Ivana Ramirez '25 highlighted the difficulty of performing in Woolsey Hall due to the space's layout.

"The echo delay ... makes it really difficult to hear each other, and the design of the room also means that music tends to go very flat," she said. "We have to be very in tune with each other, both literally and also in a mental capacity."

Woolsey Hall was constructed with ideal acoustics for organ performances. However, this causes choral performances to have excessive resonance and impedes performers' ability to hear themselves sing.

Cyrus Rivers '27, a rushee, also noted the drawbacks of holding the first jam in Woolsey Hall.

"It's a tough space to do a cappella because it muddles the sound a little bit," he said. "It was hard to judge the sound of a lot of groups based on that location."

Other first-year students cited initial hesitation to rush because of the apparent intensity of the groups' selection processes. Both Nneka Moweta '27 and Kyle Sheng '27 described rush as a "scary" process on account of the word's typical association with Greek life.

Some students who lacked high school performing arts and singing experience felt especially intimidated about rushing a cappella. Most auditions include a pitch-matching component, and some callbacks involve a sight-singing exercise, both of which can be challenging for untrained singers.

"Are they going to use this as a plus or minus when they're deliberating about me?" Shades of Yale's Co-Head Rush Manager Tobias

Exsted '26 said, recalling his anxiety during his rush process in fall 2022. "Should I bring up my lack of experience? Is that going to be something that hurts me?"

Yale's Singing Group Council, which consists of four upperclassmen a cappella members, oversees the rush process. The SGC aims to ensure that all rushees receive the support they need to make it through the chaos of rush, according to SGC Co-Chair Abigail Yadegar '25.

Each year, the SGC creates a handbook that all groups must follow in order to make the rush process as consistent as possible.

Both Exsted and Yadegar noted that in previous years, the rush process fostered a cutthroat and competitive environment. They described some groups undercutting each other in hopes of securing the most talented first-year students as members.

However, the SGC has made several recent changes that have aimed to make rush a more inclusive and friendly process.

One such change requires groups to maintain consistent rush budgets, which govern expenses like callback gifts for rushees.

"These changes ... ensure that every group has a fair shot during rush, regardless of their financial background," Yadegar wrote to the News.

This rule was created because some of the older, well-established groups have far greater endowments and budgets than newer groups. For instance, the century-old Spizzwinks(?) cover all members' travel and lodging costs during their quarterly tours.

Additionally, last year's SGC eliminated gender-based descriptions for groups, instead requiring groups to identify themselves by vocal parts — such as a "soprano I/soprano II/alto I/alto II group," rather than an "all-female group" — according to Ramirez.

Although Ramirez and Exsted believe that the SGC's work is important, they acknowledge that it also makes the rush manager's role more challenging. Exsted characterized the constant back and forth between the SGC and a cappella groups to ensure that no handbook rules are broken as "bureaucratic."

Ramirez told the News that, despite its flaws, rush is a largely positive experience because of the connections rushees form with their classmates and upperclassmen.

Exsted encourages first-year students to get involved in a cappella or other campus organizations, discussing the sense of community he has found through Shades of Yale.

"It just never really feels like it's something that's draining me," he said. "At the end of the day, we like to strive to make ourselves feel like a family. And it's definitely felt like that to me."

A cappella auditions will begin at 5 p.m. on Thursday and conclude on Sunday evening.

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# Student productions announce casting calls for this fall

BY JANE PARK  
STAFF WRITER

Yale Performing Arts is set to have a busy upcoming fall season with casting cycles soon opening for upcoming plays, musical theater stages and other performances throughout the next month.

The Yale Drama Coalition held their Season Preview show on Aug. 27 at the Off-Broadway Theatre, an event which gave shows with September, October, November or December casting cycles a chance to introduce themselves to prospective actors and production members. With a total of over 21 shows listed for those fall semester casting cycles, the Season Preview included a mix of genres and performance-styles, from household-name shows like "West Side Story" and "Little Women" to student-written, original productions like "Gaucho."

"I think many people in theatre will tell you that there were a lot of shows going up all at once [last year], and there were a lot of people almost competing for the same resources because there were so many shows," said YDC President Jeffrey Steele '24. "This year, there seems to be a sense of more collaboration, which I'm excited for. There seems to be more people who are bonding together to work together on shows rather than everyone having a separate show, which I'm hoping will lead to less shows being canceled and more shows going up successfully and much healthier processes."

The Season Preview re-introduced organizations such as the Yale Dramatic Association, Yale Artist Cabaret, YAC, and the Shen Curriculum for Musical Theater — a curriculum the Department of Music and the Theater and Performance Studies Program administer offering master classes.

In addition to existing theater-making groups, the event showcased three of many student-written productions including "Gaucho," "Jazz" and "Education," written by Emma Ventresca '26, Zyria Rodgers '21 and Chesed Chap '25, respectively.

"Gaucho is about the story of a young boy who dreams of leaving a pastoral, traditional life in favor of something more modern and cosmopolitan," said Ventresca. "There's a lot of elements of magical realism in Latin American literature in the show."

In addition to newer productions, the fall semester casting cycle includes long-established shows such as "West Side Story," "Natasha, Pierre & the Great Comet of 1812" and "Little Women." However, Elsie Harrington '25, director of "Little Women," has emphasized her desire to adapt the well-known classic with a "unique retelling."

"It is thrilling to become a part of that legacy, but it would be easy for the actors, and myself, to fall into the trap of trying to emulate book Jo, or movie Beth, or a preconceived perception of Laurie," Harrington wrote in an email to the News. "Little Women feels particularly relevant to a college campus where, just like Jo and the other sisters, we are all trying to figure out how to forge our own paths in the world, changing our minds on what those paths might be, and often wishing we could just stay seventeen forever."

There are multiple casting cycles throughout the semester for student productions. The varied audition timelines offer flexibility to prospective actors and production members so they can avoid overlap between productions. These casting cycles space out casting opportunities so that students can have the chance to join productions throughout the



COURTESY OF JEFFREY STEELE

The Yale Drama Coalition highlighted old-time classics and original student-written productions that are set to take the stage this fall.

entire academic year.

Steele said he is looking forward to the hopefully improved accessibility of this year's productions.

"From what I did hear from a lot of newer theatermakers in particular and newer students was that they felt like they had a very hard time accessing the theater last year," he said. "So many of them would just try and start their own productions, but then they felt like they didn't have the resources necessary to do so, and that wasn't really the fault of the University. It was just because you need designers and actors, but if there's 15 actors already for a different show, and your show's going up the next weekend, that's 15 people that you can't put in the same show, because there's a limited amount of time to put something up."

With two mainstage performances

and various pop-up events throughout the year, YAC is a student-run concert where 10 to 15 acts perform musical theatre songs, relating to a certain theme. Last year, YAC opened the fall season with "Origin Story," a villain-themed Halloween show.

"10:59 P.M." is the theme of YAC's first show this year, slated to go on in October. The term "11 o'clock numbers" refers to the moment in a musical, usually in the second act, where the protagonist reaches an epiphany through a grand, musical climax. These musical numbers have earned this name from occurring towards the end of the show, near 11 o'clock.

"Our shows aren't just sites to marvel at talent but to enjoy the experience it comes with..." YAC Co-Artistic Director Lauren Marut '25 told the News. "The YAC community is incredibly loyal and broad, and because our shows recur so often our audience members (and

performers) see each other quite frequently. We build our shows to engage a social experience, not just a spectatorial one."

Through the course of the semester, each of these student-run productions will be featured on stages across Yale's campus and tickets will become available as the performance dates approach.

"I trust that our board can adjust to what the needs of what people are and what the community says is going wrong, because that's ultimately our hope," Steele said. "We're driven by other people trusting in us to help make things better. I'm feeling really inspired about the changes we're making."

There are over 130 undergraduate arts organizations registered on the Yale College Arts website.

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## NEWS

*"The sea is a desert of waves, a wilderness of water."*

LANGSTON HUGHES AMERICAN POET

## Two mayoral Democratic primary candidates face off in debate

BY YURII STASIUK AND OLHA YARYNICH  
STAFF AND CONTRIBUTING REPORTER

Justin Elicker and Liam Brennan, the two mayoral Democratic primary candidates, faced off in a largely civil and informative debate Tuesday night.

Both candidates are participating in the New Haven Democracy Fund — a public program that provides campaign grants and matching contributions in order to limit the impact of private money on city politics. As a requirement of the program, the candidates met in an hour-long debate hosted by the fund and the New Haven Independent at Hill Regional Career High School.

During the debate, Elicker and Brennan agreed on what they see as the major problems facing New Haven: landlords who mistreat their tenants, a lack of affordable housing, outdated zoning laws and a significant shortage of teachers. But the candidates disagreed on how to approach these problems, as well as whether the other has the appropriate experience and skillset to implement solutions the city needs.

"We have some different policies, but ultimately, this is about experience," Elicker said at the debate, pointing to his two terms as mayor.

Elicker touted his achievements in governing the city since he took office in 2019. He cited his administration's successful negotiation with Yale to increase the University's voluntary payments to the city and the launch of the COMPASS non-violent crisis response team.

Elicker also pointed to the city's negotiations for higher teacher salaries but received pushback from Brennan, who argued that his administration resisted a salary increase. Elicker responded by noting that Brennan was not present during negotiations as Brennan had turned down a seat on the Board of Education back in 2019.

In his responses, Brennan accused the Elicker administration of not having a clear vision of the city's devel-

opment, not setting ambitious goals and failing to communicate effectively with residents.

"I don't know where the city wants to go. Do you know where the city wants to go?" he asked Elicker during one exchange.

New Haven leaders and politicians, Brennan said, think too small and too often accept the status quo. Instead, he pledged to campaign on behalf of those who want to do "bigger things" to change the city.

Reflecting on his four years as mayor, Elicker said that the city's governing structure makes it hard to get things done. Citing his work to streamline infrastructure projects, Elicker said that he is working on modernizing city departments to increase that rate of reform.

"We are doing a lot, and we need to do more on pretty much every issue," Elicker said, summarizing his reelection campaign message.

Fielding questions about whether he had enough experience to run the city, Brennan said he believes his experience "holds up" to those of former incoming mayors in New Haven.

He cited his previous executive roles with the Connecticut Veterans Legal Center and the Connecticut Public Corruption Task Force at the Department of Justice. While at the DOJ, he said he oversaw dozens of agents, while simultaneously working on dozens of cases. Brennan recently served as the Inspector General of Hartford.

The debate heated up when the candidates clashed on public safety.

Elicker criticized Brennan, saying that Brennan "does not believe in arresting drug dealers and does not believe in arresting people with illegal weapons."

Brennan fought back, clarifying that supports decriminalizing drug possession — not drug dealers as he claimed the Elicker administration has. Brennan said the city should instead shift its focus toward supporting harm reduction programs resources.



OLHA YARYNICH / CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER

The candidates agreed on many issues, but differed on their approaches to drug use and ending the flow of illegal guns into the city.

Elicker insisted that the New Haven police under his administration have only arrested drug dealers, not users. Brennan countered Elicker's claim, saying that over 300 people were arrested for drug possession in New Haven in 2020.

Elicker argued that the statistic Brennan cited was too far in the past and no longer relevant, saying, "We're in 2023."

On the issue of illegal guns, Elicker also highlighted his administration's success in removing hundreds of illegal guns from the streets, while Bren-

nann advocated for using subpoena power to cut off the "gun pipeline" before they reach the streets.

Following the debate, attendee Robert Gibson expressed his appreciation for the democratic process in New Haven.

"We have two candidates, both equally capable of being mayors, squaring off to share their ideas with the public," Gibson said. "It's good that people can compare them to come to a conclusion about who's the best person for the job."

New Haven resident Mary Giannotti told the News she thinks Elicker is "sharper" but also a choice that would continue the status quo.

"I think that Liam is a breath of fresh air and probably falls a little bit more in line with my politics leaning left as compared to Justin," Giannotti said.

Voters will participate in Democratic primary elections on Sept. 12.

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## Mayoral candidate fails to make primary ballot after court ruling

BY HANNAH KOTLER  
STAFF REPORTER

Mayoral candidate Shafiq Abdussabur saw his attempt to qualify for the Democratic primary ballot fail in court last week.

Superior Court Judge Paul Doyle dismissed Abdussabur's lawsuit on Aug. 29. The Abdussabur campaign filed a lawsuit against Democratic Registrar of Voters Shannel Evans and City Clerk Michael Smart after they disqualified Abdussabur from the primary ballot for New Haven mayor for failing to acquire enough signatures. The Abdussabur campaign hosted a press conference Thursday afternoon where he questioned the validity of the petition verification process of Connecticut's Registrar of Voters.

"We found gross inconsistencies around the process," Abdussabur claimed in the press conference.

The defense filed a motion to dismiss Abdussabur's complaint. Following an online hearing on Aug. 28, Doyle issued a memorandum explaining his decision to dismiss the suit due to the Purcell doctrine, a principle named for the 2006 Purcell v. Gonzalez Supreme Court case that prohibits courts from interfering in ongoing elections.

"In the present case, the Democratic primary election of September 12, 2023, began when Smart printed and made absentee ballots available on August 22, 2023," Doyle wrote in the memorandum. "With voting already having begun and election day approaching, the Purcell principle is applicable to the present case."

At the press conference, Abdussabur shared the results of an internal audit that he claims found over 1,623 valid signatures, which would qualify him for the primary ballot. The campaign displayed 10 pages of petition signatures to prove what they argue shows a lack of transparency at the Democratic Registrar of Voters. The campaign stated they will not appeal the court's decision but instead pressed for the development of a fair process at the registrar's office.

Patricia Kane, the attorney representing Abdussabur, urged press conference attendees not to blame the campaign for failing to get on the ballot.



HANNAH KOTLER / CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER

Abdussabur's campaign presented petition signatures he argues were unfairly tossed out and demanded Connecticut amend its petition verification process at a press conference.

"This is a failure of the process in Connecticut...an inconsistent standard was applied, which means no standard was applied," Kane said.

According to Abdussabur, the campaign submitted over 2,700 petition signatures from registered Democratic voters in New Haven, exceeding the 1,623 signatures a candidate requires to qualify for the primary ballot. The Democratic Registrar of Voters counted only 1,406 valid signatures. Abdussabur pointed to specific pages where the registrar counted fewer signatures or rejected entire pages where his campaign found invalid signatures.

Abdussabur stated that the registrar did not mark which signa-

tures were rejected and did not give a specific reason for their rejection.

"These are the things that I believe when you don't make available to the public, this is why people don't want to vote, this is why people lose faith in government," Abdussabur said.

Evans did not respond to a request for comment.

Kane added that there is no way to fact check the registrar and suggested an alternate ballot qualification system where candidates could pay a "small fee" to be on the ballot.

The campaign did not get the chance to present pages of petition signatures in court since the lawsuit was dismissed.

At the press conference, Abdussabur admitted that approximately ten

petition pages were improperly filled out, and one hundred signatures were not from New Haven residents, but denied that any signatures were illegible or had invalid addresses.

Kane also spoke about the implications of the judge's decision to apply the Purcell doctrine. She argued, citing a Yale Law Journal article, that the Purcell doctrine is a Supreme Court emergency ruling used predominantly in the American South and West as a tool supporting voter suppression.

"I think Connecticut legislators have to take a hard look at whether [the ruling] advances democracy," Kane said. "Does it aid candidates in getting on the ballot, or is it just a barrier... It's

completely narrowing the window, in the entire process in which a person who has a genuine complaint can seek a remedy. It's devastating, it's visceral."

Abdussabur has submitted enough signatures to qualify for the Nov. 7 general election ballot as an unaffiliated candidate, but said he is assessing whether he will continue the campaign.

"We are still evaluating the viability of our run for November based on this outcome," Abdussabur concluded.

Abdussabur's campaign headquarters is located at 347 Whalley Avenue.

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## NEWS

*"High and fine literature is wine, and mine is only water; but everybody likes water."*  
MARK TWAIN AMERICAN WRITER

# City alders throw out bid to rename Whitney Avenue

BY ETHAN WOLIN  
CONTRIBUTING REPORTER

The New Haven Board of Alders voted unanimously on Tuesday evening to drop a measure that would have renamed Whitney Avenue.

Robert Lucas SOM '23 initially raised the idea with several alders in February, suggesting a change because the street's namesake, Yale alumnus Eli Whitney, invented the cotton gin, which caused an expansion of slavery. But when the proposal came up for discussion in a committee meeting in July, no one showed up to voice support for it — not even Lucas, who by then had moved to Washington, D.C. full-time.

After Tuesday's vote, Lucas told the News he had not intended for his emails to alders or their staff to set in motion a formal legislative process to rename the street, one of New Haven's most prominent.

"These steps before the committee and then the board are just one step toward awareness," he said. "So to me, I think of it as a positive development overall."

Lucas, who now works at the World Bank, began his push to reconsider the use of Eli Whitney's name in a News op-ed in February, while he was still a student at the School of Management. Whitney, a 1792 Yale graduate, is best known for inventing the cotton gin, which led to a surge in demand for enslaved labor in the American South.

In the op-ed, Lucas proposed that the street should instead adopt the name of the trailblazing physicist Edward Bouchet, who became the first Black person to receive a doctorate at an American university when he was awarded one by Yale in 1876.

Lucas said he also believes Yale should rethink the name of the Eli Whitney Students Program for non-traditional undergraduates. Last spring, after contacting the program's advisory committee, he did not receive an answer other than that his message was received, Lucas said.

"I had no illusions when writing my article back in February that one article could change the mind of an entire community or the University," Lucas said. He is considering writing a second piece on the subject.

He pointed out that the Eli Whitney Students Program began in 2008, so Whitney's name, in reference to the program, is less deeply rooted around campus than those of other historical figures with ties to slavery who have been memorialized at Yale.

It took years of protests for Yale to grant Grace Hopper College its current name, replacing its old name commemorating the prominent pro-slavery advocate John C. Calhoun in 2017. Calhoun graduated from Yale in 1804. In Lucas' view, Whitney's legacy similarly runs counter to the University's values.

"John Calhoun was a thought leader and a proponent of slavery. Eli Whitney helped operationalize it," Lucas said. "Yet this is the entrepreneurial spirit that Yale wants to project."

University spokesperson Karen Peart wrote in an email to the News that Yale follows the approach set out in 2016 by the Committee to Establish Principles on Renaming. She did not address Lucas' criticism of the University's using Whitney's name.

Lucas was the target of antisemitic flyers that appeared along Whitney Avenue in April, claiming that he was a Jew with "anti-White hatred." Lucas is not Jewish.

After contacting a few alders in February, Lucas judged that a proposal to change Whitney Avenue's name to Bouchet Avenue would stand little chance of success without support from the alders' constituents. The idea nonetheless became an item on the docket of the City Services and Environmental Policy Committee.

At the committee's July 6 meeting, the only person to testify about the Whitney Avenue issue, New Haven resident Anstress Farwell, opposed renaming the street. Farwell said she thought Edward



ETHAN WOLIN / CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER

The proposal's main proponent, Yale grad Robert Lucas, said he still views increased awareness as a victory despite legislative failure.

Bouchet deserved to be honored elsewhere, such as in the name of a local school. She said she disagreed with the idea that "someone has to lose something for someone else to gain something."

Ward 10 Alder Anna M. Festa, the chair of the committee, told the News that she has no opinion on renaming.

"If the public supports it," Festa said, "we like to listen to the argument and have a discussion."

When it came time for the alders to address the Whitney Avenue proposal on Tuesday evening, Festa stood and, mentioning the lack of public testimony in favor of the change, urged her colleagues to grant what's called "leave to withdraw." They did so in a voice vote.

The hourlong Board of Alders meeting also included a celebration of recently trained EMTs and unanimous votes on a series of other items. The alders gave the city

approval to apply for and accept a set of federal public works grants. They also authorized the New Haven Police Department to take in a service dog donated by the non-profit group Puppies Behind Bars.

The Board of Alders meets in City Hall at 165 Church St. — just over two blocks from where Whitney Avenue begins.

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# Hamden mayoral candidates differentiate themselves on economic policy

BY JOSIE REICH  
CONTRIBUTING REPORTER

As Hamden residents have been feeling the pinch of high taxes, Democrats will head to the polls next Tuesday to decide which primary candidate to send to the general election in a mayoral race focused on taxes and budget priorities.

First-term incumbent Mayor Lauren Garrett is facing a primary challenge from Hamden Board of Education member Walter L. Morton IV. Garrett has held the office for one term. She successfully primaried former Hamden Mayor Curt Leng in 2021 after previously running for the office in 2019.

Both candidates told the News their top three priorities if elected: Garrett said she would center improving the town's fiscal health, economic development and infrastructure investments while Morton said he hopes to focus on lowering property taxes, increasing public safety and investing in education.

"The first priority is getting a hold on taxes and seeing how we can get the commercial growth we need as well as residential growth," Morton said. "I see how the town's financial issues really permeate everything we can do, from staffing to programming to all types of services."

Morton's vision includes lowering property taxes to attract new businesses and scrapping a plan to build a new community center. He described himself as a "big proponent of universal Pre-K," citing his past support for the policy as a member of the Hamden Board of Education.

According to a 2021 Municipal Fiscal Indicators report released by the Office of Policy Management, Hamden had the highest debt per capita of any municipality in Connecticut at \$20,567.

The 2023-24 Hamden budget increased the tax rate by 0.9 mills, the New Haven Register reported. The mill rate is the tax rate used to calculate property tax. The town's mill rate was 55.48 in the 2022-23 fiscal year, the third highest of any Connecticut municipality and 15.73 mills higher than neighboring New Haven.



Hamden Democratic mayoral candidates adopt platforms reflecting growing concerns over Hamden's high taxes.

Garrett meanwhile highlighted economic successes as she told the News that the bond rating, pension accounts and fund balance have improved under her administration. Alongside economic successes, Garrett spoke about how her administration's aims to improve cycling and pedestrian infrastructure across town by adopting the "Complete Streets" policy.

"The improvements that we're seeing for our finances, the Complete Streets policy that we have in place for our infrastructure improvements, were all done under my administration," she said. "While my opponent might also support those things, I'm the one who's done the work."

Her economic plan includes loosening zoning laws to attract new businesses, developing more traffic control infrastructure and improving the town's sustainability in order to attract grant funding. Garrett noted that since Hamden's enrollment in Sustainable CT, a municipal certification program, in 2017, her administration oversaw the town's first sustainability certification.

Ted Stevens, a Hamden councilman and chair of the town's Economic and Development Committee, is running for reelection as the eighth district council member on the same slate with Garrett. Stevens said he and Garrett are cam-

paigning together on a platform of fiscal responsibility.

Stevens said that their plan for stabilizing town finances "would probably involve tax increases for a few years," which he called "a realistic and practical approach to take but not necessarily a popular one."

Deborah Johnson, a 35-year resident of Hamden, said she is worried about the possibility of further tax increases.

"Our taxes are now going up again. [Garrett] knows that's a major problem," Johnson said. "It's something that she inherited."

Johnson said she is unsure of who she will vote for but leans toward Garrett. Despite her financial concerns,

Johnson reflected that "she's come and it's been a breath of fresh air."

Although Garrett won the Democratic Town Committee's endorsement, Morton raised over four times as much money as Garrett in the first quarter from January through March, and almost double the amount the mayor raised in the second quarter from April through June, the New Haven Register reported.

As of 2020, Hamden had 4,509 registered Republicans and 20,186 registered Democrats.

The polls open at 6 a.m. in Hamden on Sept. 12.

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COURTESY OF LAUREN GARRET AND WALTER L. MORTON

## SCITECH

*"In time and with water, everything changes."* LEONARDO DA VINCI ITALIAN THINKER

# COVID-19 here to stay? Yalies voice concern.

BY OMAR ALI  
STAFF REPORTER

Plastic's use has been cemented in As Yalies settle into the rhythm of campus life, COVID-19 cases continue to rise across New Haven County and Connecticut at large. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the number of weekly COVID-19 hospitalizations in the region has more than doubled since July.

Although levels remain low compared to this time last year, cases across Connecticut have been steadily increasing over the past several weeks. The most recent available CDC data indicate that there were 184 new COVID-19 hospitalizations in Connecticut during the week of Aug. 19, up from 80 weekly hospitalizations at the start of July.

In New Haven County, according to the CDC, there were 89 new hospitalizations during the week of Aug. 19, a nearly 30-percent increase from the week prior.

"We have seen the same general uptick in cases on campus that have been reported elsewhere, as students travel to campus and gatherings bring people together again," wrote Madeline Wilson, Yale's chief campus health officer, in an email to the News.

But experts believe that COVID-19 cases may be even higher than the newest CDC reports suggest. According to Gregg Gonsalves, an associate professor of epidemiology at the Yale School of Public Health, the hospitalization data is a "lagging indicator," meaning that the rise in hospitalizations is a delayed measurement of a previous spike in COVID-19 cases.

The current COVID-19 case load, he explained, is difficult to measure accurately.

"Over the past few weeks we have seen a rise in COVID hospitalizations, which ... suggests that there has been a rise in cases preceding these admissions," Gonsalves wrote in an email to the News. "Since many people are not testing or don't have the resources to do so, how many cases we have locally [is] hard to discern."

The difficulty in estimating current COVID-19 cases might be exacerbated by lenient reporting requirements for when people test positive.

According to Choukri Ben-Mamoun, a professor of microbial pathogenesis and pathology at the Yale School of



ILLUSTRATION BY ARIANEDE GENNARO

Environmentalists, students and professors say that sustainable research practices will remain a critical area to address.

Medicine, at-home, over-the-counter rapid antigen tests are increasingly popular tools to screen for COVID-19. Testing at home, he noted, rather than at certified facilities that are required to report new COVID-19 cases, might be causing a potential underreporting of COVID-19 diagnoses.

**An Eris wave**

Despite difficulties in estimating COVID-19 numbers, Gonsalves believes that the U.S. is in the midst of a "summer surge" likely driven by new variants of the coronavirus. Notable among these, experts say, is the EG.5 variant of the virus, also known as Eris.

A descendant of the Omicron variant responsible for 20.6 percent of all COVID-19 cases in the U.S., Eris is currently the domi-

nant and fastest-circulating variant of the disease in the country.

According to Michael Cappello, a professor of epidemiology and infectious diseases at YSPH, new variants like Eris may be more contagious or better at dodging immunity acquired from previous vaccination or infection. Such factors could be driving the uptick in symptomatic cases.

Because the new variants can more easily evade "short-lived" protection from a previous COVID-19 infection or vaccination, Cappello explained, people might be at greater risk of developing the disease as they become "more relaxed" and less likely to take precautions like wearing a mask and washing their hands.

"The new variants ... are potentially more transmissible and perhaps less susceptible to vaccine induced antibodies, but it's a bit early to know

for sure whether they will present a greater risk to the Yale community in terms of severe illness leading to hospitalization," Cappello wrote to the News. "For now, the current CDC and Yale guidelines are appropriate to follow, but as with any fluid situation, students should remain alert to changes in recommendations."

In response to the uptick, Yale continues to monitor COVID-19 cases on campus and requests that those who test positive report their result to the University, Wilson told the News. Free rapid antigen tests are also available to students at residential colleges and in designated locations, such as the Yale Bookstore.

In January, Yale Health expanded its infrastructure to create a new Campus Health Office, helmed by Wilson, to coordinate the University's health response, including vac-

ination registration. She noted that the University also plans to roll out free COVID-19 and flu vaccines in October, with information about accessing them set to be released after Labor Day.

"Overall levels of immunity on campus are high due to prior vaccination and infection, and we hope that most will take the opportunity to get the updated COVID vaccine and boost immunity further," Wilson wrote. "While we are vigilant, we feel we are well-equipped to manage the inevitable cases on campus this fall."

**Looking ahead**

Public health experts told the News that they expect fall and winter to bring a resurgence of COVID-19, particularly since most mitigation measures have been dropped across the country and at institutions of higher learning.

"COVID is likely seasonal similarly to other respiratory diseases," Jeffrey Townsend, Elihu Professor of Biostatistics at the School of Public Health, wrote to the News. "As the summer comes to an end, it is likely to begin to increase in prevalence in alignment with other respiratory diseases."

Townsend noted that because many people will be over six months from their last COVID-19 booster as winter approaches, they will be at increased risk to variants like Eris. Other factors, such as a reduced reliance on protective measures, such as masking, and frequent gathering in closed-air environments will likely also play a role in this season's transmission.

However, public health faculty whom the News contacted for comment agreed on the key steps needed to reduce the burden of COVID-19 in the coming months.

Both Cappello and Gonsalves recommended staying up-to-date on vaccinations, getting the next vaccine booster in the coming semester, wearing a mask in crowded indoor spaces and testing for COVID-19 if feeling ill.

"You don't want COVID. Even if you are young and healthy, risks still remain for you, and ... while you may not get seriously ill, we are all one or two degrees of separation from those at higher risk," Gonsalves said. "Getting through this means getting through this together."

Connecticut's COVID-19 public health emergency declaration ended on May 11, 2023.

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## Research team develops cancer vaccine with \$25 million grant

BY CARLOS SALCERIO  
STAFF REPORTER

A joint team of Yale, University of Georgia and Emory University scientists have received a \$25 million government grant to develop an mRNA cancer vaccine.

Founded in 2022 to fund high-risk, high-reward research programs, the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health selected the multi-institutional team to receive its inaugural award. The scientists aim to orchestrate immune system responses using mRNA to provide a personalized defense against foreign invaders.

"It's an accelerator of a project that has already been going on for probably five years," Richard Edelson, a dermatology professor at the Yale School of Medicine and one of the study's principal researchers, said. "It galvanizes our group and gives us the chance to push harder and test."

Inspired by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, a federal program that funds scientific defense initiatives and technological developments, ARPA-H aims to apply a similar approach to the medical field. The program is designed to catalyze breakthroughs in the prevention, detection and treatment of major diseases like Alzheimer's, diabetes and cancer.

Additionally, ARPA-H recognizes that some of the most innovative and high-impact health-care ideas may not fit traditional funding mechanisms due to factors like high risk, large costs, long timeframes and complex

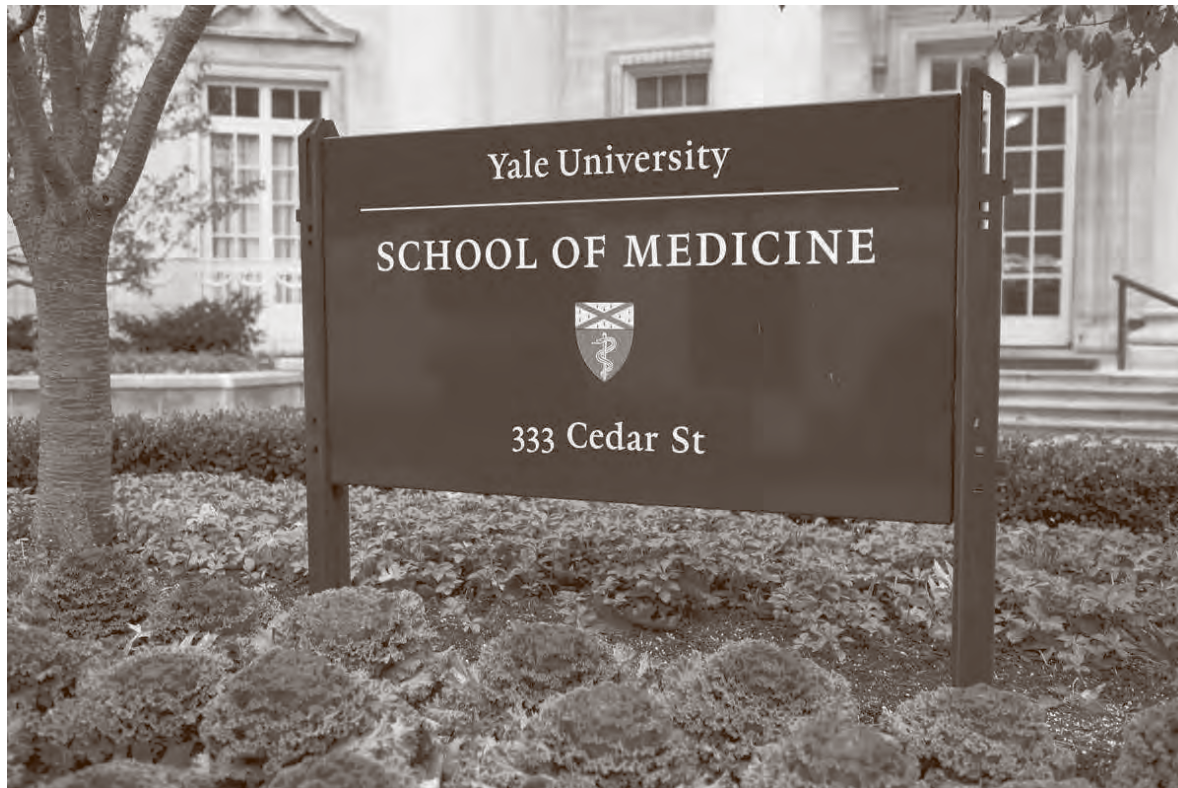
coordination. The program seeks to level the playing field between the commercial biotechnology sector and fundamental research, which is often funded by the federal government.

"ARPA-H will pursue ideas that break the mold on how we normally support fundamental research and commercial products in this country," President Joe Biden said in March 2022. "[These are] ideas so bold no one else, not even the private sector, is willing to give them a chance."

The team that earned this chance is led by co-principal investigators Edelson and Philip Santangelo, a biomedical engineering professor at the Georgia Institute of Technology and Emory University. Though their labs are 900 miles apart, a strong intellectual bond links Edelson and Santangelo's research together.

"I think it's the team that makes these things happen," Santangelo said. "You get out way more than you put in if you're working with the right team, and that's when big things happen."

The research combines Santangelo's expertise in mRNA with Edelson's expertise in dendritic cells. mRNA, the basis of the COVID-19 vaccines, is a cell's genetic messenger, providing instructions to ribosomes within dendritic cells for building specific proteins. These proteins, when placed on the outer membrane of the cell, allow dendritic cells to detect foreign invaders. Dendritic cells serve as regulators in immune responses. Then, the cells present those invaders to killer T cells, which surround and engulf the invaders.



ERIC WANG / CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER

The joint team of researchers is looking to use the grant money to revolutionize cancer defense by orchestrating immune responses through mRNA technology.

Santangelo and Edelson told the News they seek to develop synthetic mRNA that will carry instructions for cancer-specific antigens to dendritic cells.

By programming dendritic cells with synthetic mRNA, researchers can precisely instruct the immune system to target cancer-specific antigens without attacking healthy cells. Healthy cells that were modified to include unrecognized proteins using mRNA might have otherwise been treated as a foreign entity.

Still, Santangelo and Edelson must overcome several hurdles. One particular challenge, according to Edelson, is protein processing.

"[Protein processing is] trying to figure out which nanoparticles fragment from that protein will be effectively processed and presented by that person's dendritic cells to their T cells," Edelson said. "There's a lot of intelligent guesswork that goes into finding out the specific mutations that may arise."

Santangelo recognized that breakthroughs often involve considerable

complexities and difficulties. Even with this conservative approach, he said he is confident that progress will come out of the research.

"We're not naive, we know how difficult this stuff is," Santangelo said. "We have to pick our winners to move forward into the clinic, but I would say that certainly there should be winners."

ARPA-H is led by Dr. Renee Wegrzyn.

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# SPORTS

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*"It was amazing to wear the Yale jersey and to represent the University. It was also good to play against tough competition. Even though the High Point loss was tough, I think the team took it as an opportunity to learn and get better."* **BETSY GOODENOW** WOMEN VOLLEYBALL PLAYER '27

## WSOC: Elis pick up first road win since 2019

BY ANDREW CRAMER  
STAFF REPORTER

As most Yalies attended their first classes of the semester last week, the women's soccer (2-1-1, 0-0-0 Ivy) team flew west to face the University of Washington Huskies (4-1-1, 0-0-0 Pac-12) and the Seattle University Redhawks (2-4-0, 0-0-0 WAC).

After surrendering two second-half goals in a 2-1 defeat against the Huskies, the Bulldogs cruised to a 4-0 victory against the Redhawks, marking their first win away from home since 2019.

"UW was fast, physical, and very good in the air," Ashley Kirschner '26 said. "There were a few moments where we shut off as a team and they took advantage, but I think we all want that game back and know we deserve a better result since we play a much better brand of soccer than they do."

The Bulldogs jumped out to an early lead against the Huskies, as Kirschner beat the Washington keeper off a slick pass from Nana Yang '25. The goal came in the 23rd minute and the Bulldogs were able to preserve their 1-0 lead heading into the halftime break.

For Kirschner, the goal was a little extra special, as the Washington native was playing in front of a large contingent of her friends and family.

"It felt very surreal playing in front of all of my people," Kirschner said. "Our support crowd for Yale was probably bigger than both of the schools we played, which meant the world to have support on the road. My grandparents, parents, cousins, old soccer coaches, high school friends and neighbors were all able to come see me play and I felt very fortunate to be able to return my thanks to them with a goal against UW."

However, the Huskies began to impose their will on the game in the second half. The home team came out of the locker room with an increased

level of aggressiveness, which translated into 11 corner kicks for the game. Many of those kicks took place in the second half.

The Huskies were able to convert two of these corners in the 57th and 71st minutes to take a lead, and the Bulldogs never regained their first-half mojo to mount a comeback.

"That was a tough loss for us," goalkeeper Marisa Shorrock '24 said. "Our team played really well together and we would definitely love to get that one back. At the end of the day, we got beaten on set pieces. They had 11 corner kicks in that game and have been very successful in the past. It's a tough way to lose but we definitely turned it around for our second game of the trip."

The loss was the Bulldogs' 18th consecutive loss on the road, with their last victory away from home coming at Penn on Oct. 26, 2019. Last year, the squad was undefeated at home with seven wins and one draw, but lost or drew each game outside of New Haven.

However, the Bulldogs finally broke through in their matchup against Seattle, with an offensive barrage right from the start.

Meredith Phillips '25 created the first opportunity, dribbling down the left wing before sliding a ball across the box. It trickled past several defenders, before Ellie Rappole '25 blasted a shot into the bottom right corner to take a 1-0 lead in the ninth minute.

It seemed like that would be the score heading into the locker room. However, in the final minute of the half, Regan Lundstedt '26 controlled a cross off her chest, and fired a shot off the left post. Although it caromed back out, first-year forward Addison Bray '27 collected the rebound and scored her first career goal.

"Scoring my first goal was such an amazing feeling!" Bray said. "I felt a rush of adrenaline come over me and honestly the ball felt like it was moving in slow motion. Celebrating

with my teammates after that goal is something I will never forget!"

The Bulldogs were not satisfied with their 2-0 lead, as Yang scored in the 55th minute, and seven minutes later, Rappole notched her second goal of the game to bring the score to 4-0. The Bulldogs maintained the lead for the remainder of the game, and first-year Kyla Holmes '27 came in to get her first experience in net for the final 11 minutes.

The trip to Seattle also marked a homecoming for Andie Miller '27. She explained how special it was to start her career so close to home.

"It was surreal to play at the fields just minutes from my house where I watched college teams play while growing up," Miller said. "It was also super special to be able to have all the people who helped me get to where I am today come to watch me play, including my parents and sister, grandparents, high school friends and teammates, coaches and more!"

The shutout against Seattle also marked the first time this year Yale did not allow a goal. However, it continued a streak of nine consecutive games allowing two goals or less, including five straight shutouts to end last year.

There are several explanations for this defensive streak, but inserting Shorrock into the starting lineup late last year must rank among them. The senior keeper earned conference defensive player of the week honors last week for her late-game heroics against UMass.

"[Shorrock] is the best!" Bray said. "She has been killing it in the goal. I have never been more confident with who I have as my last line of defense."

The Bulldogs fought last night against Seton Hall in their return to the Bulldogs' home turf.

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## VOLLEYBALL: Bulldogs begin season at West Point

BY MEREDITH HENDERSON  
CONTRIBUTING REPORTER

This past weekend, the Yale Bulldogs women's volleyball team 1-2, 0-0 Ivy) opened their season at the Black Knights Invitational in West Point, New York.

The reigning Ivy League Champions sought to extend their dominance to the 2023 season, facing High Point (4-3, 0-0 Big South), Liberty University (6-0, 0-0 ASUN) and Army West Point (1-5, 0-0 Patriot). Head coach Erin Appleman spoke to the News about her team's first weekend.

"We were just really excited to be able to play someone in a different color," Appleman said. "I think that was really important for us to see where we were and what we needed to work on. I think we're still trying to figure out the lineup, so I think the energy was really high and the

ing the 2023 Black Knights Invitational title. Notably, both Audrey Leak '24 and Mila Yarich '25 posted 12 kills, while Carly Diehl '25 proved a key player in keeping the battle close with 8 kills, 2 aces and 1 block. Diehl was named to the All-Tournament Team.

The first victory of the season for the Bulldogs came in their match against the Army Black Knights on Sunday, Sept. 3. In a dominant first two sets, Yarich came out swinging with 17 kills. Leak had 10 kills and Fatima Samb '25 had 7 blocks to aid in a successful 2-0 start. The Knights then fought back to extend the match with a 25-19 win of the third set. However, Goodenow put an end to the Knights' comeback with one of 8 kills for the final point.

Going into Sunday, Somera emphasized the team's need to improve every day, regardless of outcome.



YALE ATHLETICS

Yale's volleyball team opened its season at the Black Knights Invitational on Sept. 1.

team was really excited to travel to Army to play High Point, Liberty and Army."

The opening game saw the Bulldogs take on the reigning Big South Champions, the High Point Panthers, on Friday, Sept. 1. Captain Maile Somera '24 began her senior season with a career high of 27 digs and first-year Betsy Goodenow '27 excelled with 11 kills and 2 blocks. Despite battling to win the first set, the Bulldogs fell to the Panthers 3-1. Dylan Maberry, a senior Panther, had a career-high 25 kills in the match.

Goodenow, the standout in the High Point game, said she was just excited to play.

"It was amazing to wear the Yale jersey and to represent the University," Goodenow said. "It was also good to play against tough competition and see how we measured up. Even though the High Point loss was tough, I think the team took it as an opportunity to learn and get better."

The next day, the Bulldogs faced the undefeated Liberty Flames and their returning ASUN Setter of the Year, Delaney Dilfer. Despite winning the first set 26-24, the Elis failed to extinguish the Flames, who rallied back to take the game, 3-1. The Flames would go 3-0 in the tournament with wins against Army and High Point, claim-

"Win or lose," she said, "you have to attack the next match with a fresh mindset and have confidence in your preparation."

During the tournament, the 2022 second-team All-Ivy player surpassed the 1000th dig mark of her career.

Erin Appleman is celebrating 20 years as women's volleyball's head coach, and the 2022 Ivy League Coach of the Year returns with hopes based on improvement, not on tangible success.

"For me, I always want to be the most improved team. We're just trying to get better every day," Appleman said. "Obviously the team has goals of winning the Ivy League Championship again, but for me, it's much more about our performance on the court every single night and playing at a consistently high level."

She stressed that the team's hard work in practice and their energy on the court has continued to match her expectations as a coach.

The Bulldogs return to the court this weekend at the Yale Invitational, hosting Sacred Heart (0-4, 0-0 NEC), Rhode Island (1-5, 0-0 A10), and the University of Connecticut (2-4, 0-0 Big East).

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## MSOC: Bulldogs look to next game after loss

BY JOAQUÍN FERNANDEZ-DUQUE  
STAFF REPORTER

Team 150, which began training for the first week of the season, the Yale men's soccer team (0-2-0, 0-0-0 Ivy) dropped consecutive contests against undefeated University of West Virginia (4-0-0, 0-0-0 Sunbelt) and University of Massachusetts (2-1-1, 0-0-0 A10). They will look to turn the season around starting with their game against University of Connecticut (2-1-0, 0-0-0 Big East) this Friday.

"Something that we've all learned is that there are no easy games in college soccer," midfielder Max Rogers '25 said. "No matter who we're playing against, we have to ensure that we come mentally and tactically prepared and ready to compete physically."

The season opener against West Virginia remained tied and evenly contested until a controversial handball call in the 33rd minute gifted the Mountaineers a penalty, which Yutaro Tsukada converted to go up 1-0. After halftime, West Virginia was able to extend their lead with a goal in the 52nd minute by Marcus Caldeira. The game finished with a final score of 2-0 in favor of the Mountaineers.

In the Bulldog's second game, played at UMass Amherst, they were able to stay within a goal of their opponent until nearly the end of the game, when the Minutemen brought the final score to 3-0. Goals were scored in the 16th and 81st minutes by Alec Hughes, and in the 74th minute by Brad Moccio.

The losses provided some valuable lessons for the team as they look forward to the season ahead.

Despite the losses, coaches and players alike were able to find some positive takeaways from the first week of the season.

"In game, I think our defensive press and structure, when set, has been good, but we need to improve on our counter-press and defensive transition," head coach Kylie Stannard said. "I think the group is coming together well on and off the field and the relationships and continuity will only improve."

Team captain Jake Schaffer '24 agreed with his coach's defensive assessment, attributing some of the goals they conceded to the team's own mistakes, rather than opponents breaking them down defensively.

Among more positive takeaways, Rogers mentioned that there is a sense of calmness and composure amongst the group in the wake of the first two games. He was proud to see the team continue to fight for the full 90 minutes in both games regardless of the score line.

Additionally, Rogers said the team was happy with the first years getting their first taste of college soccer and doing well. Schaffer also mentioned the team's youth when reflecting on the first two games.

"We are a relatively young team," Schaffer said. "And it is going to take a couple games for

us to settle in. Each game is an opportunity to grow together."

The Bulldogs will meet their next opponent, UConn, at Reese Stadium at 7 p.m. on Friday. UConn will come to New Haven looking to pick up their third win of the season, having beat Holy Cross 4-0 and Siena College 3-1.

The Huskies are not undefeated, however, picking up a loss against Long Island University.

"UConn is our intrastate rival and the perfect opportunity for us to turn the tide after a disappointing weekend," Rogers said.

When asked about Friday's opponent, Coach Stannard told the News that the Bulldogs have a lot of respect for UConn and consider the game a big test.

Even so, Stannard made sure to keep the focus on his team. "They are a very good team and we will be prepared for them," Stannard said, "But, as cliché as it sounds, our main focus right now is on us and making sure we are improving and coming together."

After Friday, the Bulldogs will travel to Dallas, Texas to face Southern Methodist University on Monday Sept. 11 before returning to Reese Stadium to host University of California Irvine on Saturday Sept. 16.

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YALE ATHLETICS

The Yale men's soccer team lost to West Virginia and UMass, and are now focused on the in-state rivalry game against UConn at home on Friday.

**STAT OF THE WEEK**

**7**

THE NUMBER OF BULLDOGS WHO HAVE SCORED FOR THE WOMEN'S SOCCER TEAM THROUGH ONLY FOUR GAMES.

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## YTV: President, VP on Salovey's Departure

*On Aug. 31, University President Peter Salovey announced his intent to step down from Yale's helm this June. Multimedia Managing Editor Collin Robinson sat down with the Yale College Council President and Vice President to discuss the upcoming change in university leadership.*



# THROUGH THE LENS



## FAXON LAW ROAD RACE

*Read more on the News' website below*



Photos by Elena Unger

## WEEKEND

/BRI ANDERSON



# MEANINGFUL, NOTABLE and BRILLIANT

As the school year roared rather than dwindled to a close in May, I looked toward the summer with hope. I was moving into my first apartment and had no real plans for the next three months except to relax and take a much-needed break. I was overwhelmed and tired, and designed a summer void of any internships or time-consuming activities. But in the time I was back home in Georgia before my lease started, I found myself consumed with Instagram and LinkedIn. Almost no one I knew was taking the summer for themselves. My worries soon morphed into: Did I make the wrong choice? Am I falling behind?

It's ironic that a summer of nothing, one that I optimistically planned to be filled with endless and exciting possibilities, brought such a pessimistic train of thought. I suddenly felt as if I had spent my first two years at Yale in a rat race, trying to arrive at some imaginary goal post so far in the distance I couldn't even see it. It quickly became clear that a summer doing nothing wasn't getting me any closer to whatever that nebulous goal was. As I scrambled to fill my empty days with something meaningful and notable, something that would make me feel like I wasn't falling behind my peers, I discovered that bad things really do come in threes.

In the span of a month and a half, my childhood dog passed away and both of my grandfathers died suddenly. I went into my job at the library one morning and two hours later I was on a plane to Orlando, hoping that I would make it in time to say goodbye to my granddad.

He died twenty minutes before I landed.

My worries about Yale melted away and I was consumed with grief. It's strange to realize that you have no grandfathers anymore. My granddad was almost 90, but I never imagined he would die — at least not any time soon. I learned a lot from him. He was the type of person that could tell you how to fix something and the type to tell you not to pay for anything you could fix yourself. He served twenty years in the Air Force and spent part of that time teaching physics. He helped me in high school and occasionally college with my math homework. He was one of the most brilliant people I have ever met. Such a wealth of knowledge gone in an instant.

But when I talked with my family about what we remembered most about my granddad, it was not just that he was smart. Everyone remembered his dedication to his friends and family. There wasn't a story that I wrote for the News that my grandfather didn't share on Facebook. There was never a time when I doubted just how proud of me he was. At 88, he drove with my family all the way to Connecticut and made the walk up to my fourth-floor first-year dorm in blazing heat just to see me move into Yale.

Looking back on all these moments made me realize that when I myself look back on my college experience, I want to have good memories, and good memories only. I don't want to think about how miserable I made myself worrying about what the guy next to me was doing. I came to college to improve myself, to get a better education than I could have going to college back home. I came here to put myself out there for the first time and to make friends. None of these goals are dependent on a summer internship, perfect grade or sparkling resume. It's hard to remember that there is a life out there beyond the Yale bubble and the corporate world. It's not a race to some unknown point in the distance. You don't have to be the smartest person in every room.

At your funeral, how do you want to be remembered? As a brilliant person, or as someone that was brilliant, but also kind? Or brilliant, but overwhelmingly true to themselves? I know that I'd want to be remembered the same way I remember my granddad: one of the kindest, most helpful people I had ever met.

// BY BRI ANDERSON

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// BY MICHAELA WANG

I forgot to pack lunch. My friends and I had driven out to a rural part of southern Virginia, and I severely underestimated the amount of time it would take to get back. Hungry and in need of an air-conditioned retreat, we stopped by a Wawa.

I was surprised by the amount of parking space in what seemed to be a coral reef along the fast-moving current of the parkway; people were not just here for gas, but stopped to buy food, let their dogs lap up some water, and chatted with other patrons as their gas tanks filled. With one hand, a shirtless man held up his baggy shorts; with the other, he balanced a bowl of soup, a foot-long hoagie, and a gallon-sized drink concerningly colored like a unicorn mane. The car next to me brandished a Blue Lives Matter sticker. A swarm of motorcyclists, clad in leather vests and tattoos, revved up their engines. Tread lightly at a Wawa in the middle of nowhere.

However, upon entry, the scent of just-toasted hoagies and artificial vanilla coffee spellbound me with the familiarly unfamiliar. I stalled, marveling at the comfort foods: a hoagie station that looked like a mini Subway (a metaphor I know may offend); a unending counter of fountain drinks, coffees, and slushies; soft and cheesy things wrapped in a parchment paper and snuggling under fluorescent warming lights; oily hot dogs tumbling on a roller. Why had I slept on this well-beloved chain of the Delaware Valley, despite spending the first 18 years of my life here? Now I finally understood the fandom: this place satisfied all your needs but moreover all your wants, a dreamland for the bored traveler or hungry local. I wanted to scroll through the infinite options on the touch-screen menu (Pita wraps? Spaghetti and meatballs? Burrito bowls?), but my friends seemed impatient if not a bit embarrassed by my newfound excitement. I left with a bacon ranch wrap, but I wanted to return for more.

Spending much of my time in transit this summer both nationally and internationally, I grew to depend on convenience stores as reliable stops for hydration, a bathroom, snacks, and even meals. Ultimately, I came to a new understanding of the purpose and place of a convenience store. Despite their ubiquity, most convenience stores are not filled with placeless comforts and disappointments. Rather, these microcosms of regional culture are personalized and patronized by local communities.

# The Spot of the SUMMER: Convenience Stores

Despite growing up in Northern New Jersey, with a Quick Check a stone's throw away from everyone's house, I never understood the lure of convenience stores. Coming from an immigrant family for whom the concept of a superstore is foreign, the idea of a roadside convenience store where you can purchase anything from a pregnancy test to jelly donuts is even harder to comprehend. We couldn't see its purpose beyond greasy road trip snacks and dark, dank single-stall bathrooms. Why bother going in when every convenience store contains the same, standard stuff? So we thought.

This narrow mindset was compounded by the ways that convenience stores exuded the beach-going white culture of the Jersey Shore and the broader Delmarva Peninsula. In middle school, I remember how the popular girls would visit their shorehouses and post Snapchat stories of themselves sneaking out to convenience stores in an act of youthful rebellion, buying everything that would please a prepubescent teen after 10 PM. Maybe a "dirt cup": a cup of chocolate pudding interspersed with layers of Oreo crumbles and topped with gummy worms. Or, magnanimous ICEEs from 7-Eleven whose flavors go by colors. Convenience stores seemed to encapsulate everything wrong with America: excess and exclusivity.

Yet, only at 20 years old have I discovered the whole side of the convenience store industry that celebrates regional quirks. For Texans, Buc-ee's houses the famous Beaver Nuggets and Buc-ee's branded everything.

For New Yorkers and Vermonters, Stewart's serves up signature ice cream flavors like "Adirondack Bear Paw" and "Crumbs Along the Mohawk." And there's so much more I have yet to explore.

Still, however, the regionality of these spots did not completely erase their exclusivity. That is, until I experienced the 7-Elevens and FamilyMarts in Taiwan.

Upon emerging from the grotto of Taipei Main Station, dehydrated and under-rested from a 15-hour red eye flight, I spotted a store with a crowd swarming around it. It was a FamilyMart, a Japanese convenience store franchise. The store itself had very little foot space, but I tried to edge my way in to see what the bustle was all about. Expecting to find American derivatives of snacks and drinks, I instead was delighted to see a plethora of local foods. Tropical fruit nectars filled with aiyu jelly. Steamed egg. Sandwiches lathered with kewpie mayonnaise and stuffed with pork floss. There were food stands just like at Wawa, with roasted sweet potatoes instead of pastries, steamed buns instead of breakfast sandwiches, and braised tea eggs instead of those cold boiled eggs with mysterious blue spots. People in work attire clawed to find the biggest steamed buns, shoveling it into plastic bags to munch on on the way to work. A mom holding hands with two young children, about to take them to school, gestured to the different steamed bun fillings. An old man, moving delicately, scooped up two tea eggs from the flavorful cauldron --

one for him and one for his wife. I watched something I thought was so American be taken up by my people as their own.

As I traveled across the city, FamilyMarts and 7-Elevens pushed against the American-ness of convenience stores and enabled me to learn about Taiwanese culture. I loved watching the customer demographics ebb throughout the day. In the morning, I found people on their way to work and school. During the day, I joined dehydrated tourists in the relentless search for bottled water. Looking down through the hotel window at night, I observed the bachelor sitting on the bar stool and leaning on the skinny counter-top, shoveling the microwaved ready-made bentos as he dazed out into the street. Amid the intractable city or a rural nowhere, these ever-present posts remind us of our common humanity.

Convenience stores are imperfect, filled with ironies. As much as they can reflect and serve their local communities, large national brands can also displace smaller businesses. Throughout American history specifically, gas station grocers have both played a crucial part in welcoming groups of color while also excluding others. But I find that the most intriguing irony is its rootedness to a place; despite seeming like a stop on your way to a destination, their personalities make them destinations in their own right.

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# How To DODGE YOUR OPFS

// BY HANNAH KURCZESKI

For the purpose of this article, an "opp" is defined as the following:

Opp (noun)

1. A person that is, in any way, shape, or form, in opposition to someone else, whether by fact or delusion.
- Ex: an ex-lover, -friend, or -roommate

It was a drizzly March morning when I saw him for the first time in the light of day. He huddled under an umbrella as he rushed along one of the stone walkways that criss-crossed Old Campus, and I hoped beyond hope that he wouldn't see me. This can't be how we meet again, I thought as I ran a hand through my rain-soaked hair and dug through my pocket for chapstick to cure my ever-cracked winter lips. As our footsteps brought us closer and closer, I knew there was only one thing left I could do:

Pull out my phone, look down, and pretend that I didn't see him.

We all have those people that we don't want to see, whether it's your ex-suitemate or that messy Halloween hookup. It doesn't seem to matter how much time passes; it's always weird.

I never had to deal with these so-called "opps" back home—which is ironic for someone from a small town. Maybe that's because there wasn't much to do, or maybe it's because Yale is so much larger that the likelihood of gaining an opp is much higher.

My friends and I now have several opps between us, and unless one of them reads

this and tells me otherwise, I think we've managed to navigate it pretty well so far. That doesn't mean it's been easy, of course, so to help all of you future opp-havers out, I've compiled a short guide on how to dodge your opps—or not.

When debriefing friends on opps in public, use code names. It sounds extremely middle school-esque, I know, but Yale is smaller than you think it is. What the opps don't realize is that they're not just your opp. You're going to discuss your opps with your friends, because why wouldn't you? And thus, they will now become the shared opp of you and your closest friends. When having these debriefs, it's safest to just assume that someone will overhear so avoid name-dropping. There's nothing worse than a text from an opp saying that they heard you were talking about them. Some of my favorite past code names that I've heard/used include Dairy, Tostito, and Rotisserie Chicken.

Mark your territory. Not like a dog—that would be weird. By this, I just mean that you shouldn't let yourself be chased out of the spaces you love. Don't avoid the Berkeley dining hall just because your opp is in Berkeley. You belong just as much as they do. There are 13 other dinings halls for a reason. If they want to avoid you, they can eat somewhere else, which brings me to my next point:

Recognize that you are the opp of your opps. Let that sink in. It's important to be self-aware. Do with this what you will.

Explore new places. This is not to counter #2, but to add to it. If, for instance, you decide that seeing your ex is a little too painful, avoiding your opps could be a great excuse to explore somewhere new! If we're still going on the example of dining halls, I recommend Hopper and TD. No one ever goes there, so they've got an opp-free guarantee!

Travel in a pack. Seeing an opp in public is so much better with friends than when you're alone—although the latter is when it always seems to happen. When you're with friends, opp-spotting transcends awkwardness and just becomes funny. But if you do happen to be alone, then:

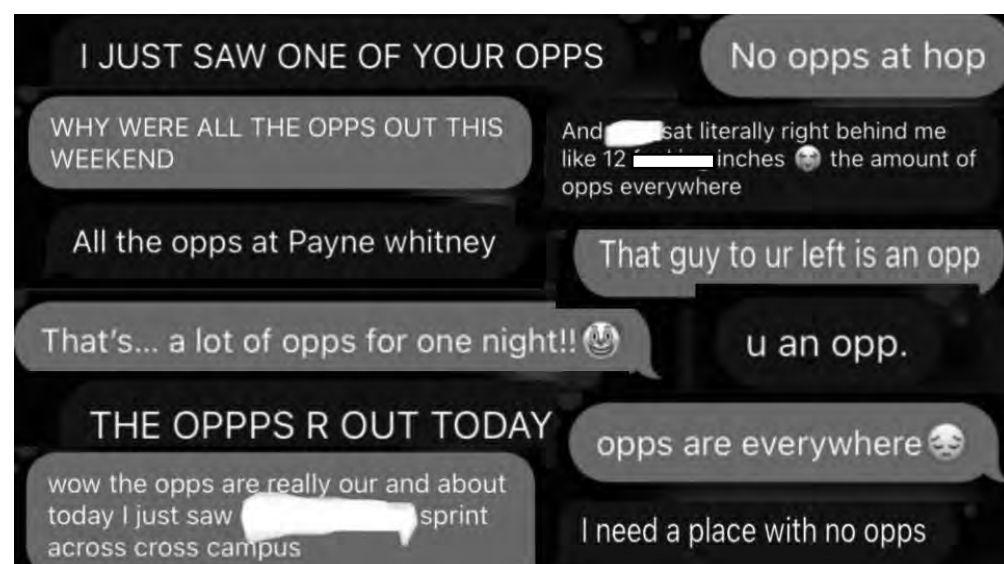
Remember that it's all for the plot. If you see "Rotisserie Chicken" while you're walking to section, so what? It's funny. It's unserious. You're the main character, and the TV show of your life just needed a little spice to bring the ratings up, so the producers decided to bring back that one character from season two; that's all it is.

Pretending you don't see your opp is usually pointless. 95% of the time, they can tell you're pretending because they're doing the exact same thing: burying their head in their phone so they can pretend they don't see you. This might be a fine arrangement for some people, and if it works for you, great! Just don't delude yourself into thinking they didn't notice, because they did, and it was just as awkward for them as it was for you.

Don't be afraid to say hello. This goes against my earlier anecdote and might seem counterintuitive, but trust me: acknowledging your opps early on can help prevent the awkwardness that lingers from the embarrassing breakup/hookup/falling out you had. You don't have to avoid them. In fact, maybe opps aren't meant to be dodged at all. Aren't we mature enough to be cordial to one another and not dwell on drama of the past? Can't we move on with our lives? Acknowledging your opps is almost like dethroning them. It's asserting your dominance; it's saying, "I'm not scared of seeing you anymore. You don't matter to me." And isn't that a beautiful thing? Both me and my friends have un-opped several opps this way.

Now that I've broken the record for using the word "opp" the most in a single publication, I hope you've gotten a better grasp on how to broach the awkwardness of opp-mess. Whether you decide to un-opp or plan to just avoid them for the rest of eternity, there are plenty of ways to dodge your opps. There's no one-size-fits-all solution because every opp is different. But as the great William Shakespeare once said, "to opp, or not to opp: that is the question"—and only you can answer it.

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Graphic courtesy of Hannah Kurczeski

## WKND Recommends

Ice on your wrists.



# SUMMER

## with a side of existential dread

// BY HAILEY TALBERT

“Everything eats and is eaten. Time is fed.”

Adrienne Lenker repeats in the chorus of “Ingydar.” Though morbid on the surface, I like to think of “Ingydar” as my song of the summer, a reminder to savor days of leisure and warmth before they are eaten away by winter.

My home state is Maine, a place where life is dictated by the seasons. As soon as wild blueberries carpet the forest, a light layer of frost replaces them. As soon as pine trees don coats of green, they are forced to shed needles. As soon as I adjust to summer, autumn takes its place.

These patterns of change grow my appreciation for the rare summer moments when the sun peeks through clouds, cherry tomatoes ripen in my garden and the ocean’s surface is warm enough to swim in.

“Songs,” Lenker’s Indie Folk album, houses the track “Ingydar.” The song confronts the album’s focus on the persistence of change. “Ingydar” is composed of tableaux and remembrance: from a dead horse named Ingydar whose “eyes are blueberries, video screens, Minneapolis schemes and the dried flowers from books half read,” to listening to the “tambourine of the beech leaves.” something like, these images allude to mundane, rural changes. Lenker’s imagery is startling, a stark contrast to the familiar chords she strums on the guitar. Who would think to describe a horse’s eyes as “dried flowers from books half read?” Adrienne Lenker would.

The charm of Lenker’s music lies in her ability to paint fluid landscapes, reminiscent of faulty memories. Lyrically, she recreates the cyclical rhythms found in nature, describing when in

the “early evening, the pink ring swallows the spherical marigold terrain.” Lenker sees memories of the seasons as fragile and temporary, but as something to be embraced.

“Ingydar” allowed me not only to accept, but to appreciate the many changes life brought as the summer slowly faded. “Ingydar” helped me pack my bags, and move away from home for the first time.

Come autumn, I look forward to watching the green leaves on Old Campus cascade down to decompose and crunch beneath boots to serve the never-ending reminder, “time is fed.”

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# 86 TEMPLE STREET

// BY JESSICA SÁNCHEZ

I’d spent all afternoon in the stacks. It was a Saturday, and I was fast approaching the one-month mark of my time at Yale. I couldn’t have felt more stressed, lonely or desperate for a moment of quiet familiarity. I turned to Bow Tie Criterion, the movie theater at 86 Temple St.

That evening, I went to watch “The Eyes of Tammy Faye” on my own. Already, it would be the fourth movie I’d seen at the theater, but it would be my first solo. It was one of the best film experiences I’ve ever had. I curled up in my seat in the middle of the screening room, laughing louder and crying harder than anyone else in the theater. Bow Tie was there, exactly as I needed it. And I hope it always will be.

I’ve seen 29 movies at Bow Tie. I’ve taken advantage of many a half-off Tuesday. I’ve done matinees and late-night showings. I’ve gone on opening night, and I’ve gone on the last night of a film’s run. I’ve seen blockbusters and indies, comedies and horrors, in packed crowds and completely empty theaters.

Movies take up over half of my heart, so you can imagine that as I did research on colleges my senior year of high school, proximity to a movie theater was high up on my list of must-haves. After my acceptance and before I even stepped into New Haven, I made a playlist for the walks I expected to take from my residential college to Bow Tie. I knew I wouldn’t be home unless I had a theater to call mine. And, thankfully, 86 Temple St. is only a 12-minute walk from Davenport’s front gate (11, if I’m really booking it).

It’s eight from when the rain



minutes Davenport you’re running in after a showing of “The French Dispatch,” wearing high-heeled boots that are part of a “fancy outfit” you and your friend agreed to wear to the showing just for the fun of it.

It’s 15 if you’re walking from Morse after picking up a friend who’s dying to watch “Dear Evan Hansen.” It’s 20 from Audubon Street after a thrift pop-up, and you’re wishing it was 10 because “No Hard Feelings” starts in five and you’re half-regretting scouring the clothing racks for more clothes you don’t really need.

But reading about Bow Tie’s dark future broke me. I feel utterly lost imagining a future where there is no theater in the entire city of New Haven showing new releases, a future where the city’s downtown loses a center for art. Because what movie theaters do — what Bow Tie Criterion at 86 Temple St. does — is allow access to art on-screen. Bow Tie Criterion removes you from your surroundings only to place you within the world of its film. You live another life for an hour or two. Bow Tie’s love language is fresh popcorn with extra butter, a cherry Coke and a pack of Reese’s Pieces (that you only tip into your hand at the loud moments of the movie).

Bow Tie is the first place I talk about when I’m asked what there is to do in New Haven because it holds so many of my favorite memories. The theater is an influence on projects in my classes, an inspiration for my playlists and a place to spend time with friends and strangers such that the city feels more like home than ever. It’s a landmark on my map of the city. I’m lost imagining a future where New Haven doesn’t have Bow Tie.

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//MICHELLE FOLEY

### WKND Song Recommendation:

Desafinado by Kali Uchis.

"TUNE YOUR HEART WITH MINE THE WAY IT USED TO BE  
JOIN WITH ME IN HARMONY AND SING A SONG OF LOVING  
WE'RE BOUND TO GET IN TUNE AGAIN BEFORE TOO LONG  
THERE'LL BE NO DESAFINADO WHEN YOUR HEART BELONGS TO ME COMPLETELY"

# SONGS of the SUMMER: Our Top Picks



// BY KARLA CORTES  
ADITYA DAS

Still searching for those elusive songs of the summer? We've got you covered! From rising artists to current stars, from house to hip-hop, we've found 12 songs from this year that can be that classic crown jewel of your summer playlist. So buckle up for some warm chords, feel-good hooks and catchy melodies!

1. "4EVA (feat. Pharrell Williams)" | Kaytraminé

What happens when you combine KAYTRANADA's grooves, Aminé's charisma and Pharell's funk? You get not only one of the best house songs in recent memory, but one of the most potent summer songs of the year! Jam-packed with witty verses from Aminé and ending with an ethereal instrumental section, this is the perfect dance song for any playlist. It's a victory lap for three extremely successful artists who prove why they deserve to be at the top.

2. "BESO" | ROSALÍA, Rauw Alejandro

Despite now being broken up (yikes), ROSALÍA and Rauw Alejandro's "BESO" is still one of the best love songs of the year. With heartthrob lyrics like "te queda pequeña la luna" (the moon is too small for you) over infectious reggaeton production — it's pure ecstasy. What's there not to love about it?

3. "Big Steppa" | Amaarae

You may know Amaarae from her viral "SAD GIRLS LUV MONEY" collaboration with Kali Uchis. But recently, she followed that big break with her sophomore album "Fountain Baby," jam-packed with criminally underrated dancehall, afrobeats and pop tracks! One of the many highlights is "Big Steppa," a timeless afrobeats track laced with gorgeous horns and blissful strings.

4. "SIDEKICK (with Joyce Wrice) - BONUS" | Jordan Ward, Joyce Wrice

Another underrated track from an underrated artist! With great chemistry between Jordan Ward and Joyce Wrice, one of the funkier and groovier hooks of the year and sweet synth chords, this is an infectious feel-good track! Play during a lazy afternoon on Cross Campus for the best listening experience.

5. "Booty Drop" | DoeChii

DoeChii is one of those artists that can simply do it all. "Booty Drop" is a song that can't be defined by a singular genre: it straddles pop, jersey club, melodic rap and trap in just under three minutes. Between the lush keys, attitude-filled sample and effortless vocals, DoeChii proves that she is not an artist to be overlooked.

6. "Barbie World (with Aqua)" | Nicki Minaj, Ice Spice, Aqua

I have never seen more pink in my life than I have this summer. And with the reign of Barbie came the reign of "Barbie World." Ice Spice has been the it-girl ever since she hit the drill scene with "Munch (Feelin' U)." And to continue her rise to superstardom, she teams up with rap legend Nicki Minaj to create yet another mega-hit.

7. "AMERICA HAS A PROBLEM (feat. Kendrick Lamar)" | Beyoncé

Not being the type to spontaneously groove to a song, Beyoncé's empowering vocal tone and Kendrick's rhythmic flow had me shifting side to side all summer (I didn't even roll my eyes when it came on the radio!). With hints of house, dance, R&B and soul, "AMERICA HAS A PROBLEM" is perfect for in-room dance sessions, pretending you actually made it to the Rhythmic Blue Dance team.

8. "LEFT RIGHT" | XG

A revived breath to the old era of celebrity and musical girl groups, XG brings out an early 2000's inspired R&B anthem for the "ready to make the first move" girls. Play it before you text your situation to hype yourself up and get ready to

be inspired by the equally confident members of XG.

9. "Ant Pile" | Dominic Fike

The cover of two young (and unassuming) girls with a look of regret on their sun-kissed faces and the album name "Sunburn" already qualifies this song as a summer essential, but the coming-of-age lyrics and basement-rock-band-esque chords Dominic Fike adds make its case even stronger.

10. "Rush" | Troye Sivan

The message might be a little misinterpreted by those outside of the Troye Sivan (and by association, queer) community, but it's a dance-pop tune with an impressive music video that embraces sexuality and masculinity. Troye Sivan captures blissful queer freedom through this tropical summer hit.

11. "Alone" | Kim Petras, Nicki Minaj

With a background instrumental that I immediately recognize from 2000's YouTube videos, "Alone" by Kim Petras and Barbie herself transform this instantly recognizable trance-pop rhythm with clever verses of their own. With lyrics depicting the insistence of getting someone's attention, Kim Petras and Nicki did that and gave it to us. I'd categorize it as the perfect track to imagine yourself dancing to in a European EDM club.

12. "Cruel Summer" | Taylor Swift

Whether you heard it first from a re-release edit of "The Summer I Turned Pretty" or your initial listen of Taylor Swift's "Lover," it's here to make a comeback with its celebration of 1 billion streams on Spotify. Its dreamy pop base and softly pounding synth accents qualify it as the perfect embodiment of the interpretation for desperation and commitment to find reach for a summer fling.

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## WKND Hot Take:

Bats are cute.