



The Recorder

November 17, 2020

Volume 122 | Issue 6



Former Vice President Joe Biden, Democratic presidential nominee, left, and Senator Kamala Harris, Democratic vice presidential nominee, wear protective masks while holding hands outside the Chase Center during the Democratic National Convention in Wilmington, Delaware, U.S., on Thursday, Aug. 20, 2020.

GETTY IMAGES

SGA Struggles To Launch

BY RYAN BROOKS
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

The Student Government Association (SGA) has endured many challenges this semester, just like many other Central Connecticut student organizations.

Last week, the SGA fall elections for commuter and first-year senators were held; in total, 16 positions were available, but only eight candidates ran.

By comparison, according to SGA President Briana Kuo, in a typical year, anywhere between 15 to 20 candidates end up running but this year is anything but typical.

“What I’ve observed with the lack of students on campus, and everybody trying to function in their everyday lives, is that a lot of people just don’t have enough time to be on an organization like SGA,” Kuo said. “It takes a lot of your time.”

Responsibilities of SGA members include two hours of office hours, two meetings a week and committee tasks.

Kuo said that the club has faced a slew of resignations from senators that were part of the organization prior to this semester. Some partly due to an increase in responsibilities with fewer senators on the council, but others resigned due to poor communication, resulting from corona virus and the new virtual format.

“When we could have meetings in person, you can bounce ideas off one of [the other senators]. You can say ‘I don’t like that idea, let’s try this.’ Now, with these [virtual] meetings, a senator says let’s do this and everybody just agrees,” Kuo said.

At-Large SGA Senator Johanna Zukowski agrees that the club no longer functions as smoothly as it could or did in the past.

“This is my fourth year in the Senate,” Zukowski said. “I’ve seen [the SGA] at full membership and full function, and right now, it’s not.”

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Biden Wins Presidency, Trump Denied Second Term

BY SAMANTHA BENDER &
RYAN BROOKS
NEWS EDITORS

In one of the most controversial presidential elections in history, former Vice President, Joe Biden, is the apparent winner of the 2020 presidency. As of 3:30 p.m. on Nov. 7, Biden had received 279 electoral votes to current President Donald Trump’s 213.

“America, I’m honored that you have chosen me to lead our great country,” a tweet on Saturday from Joe Biden (@JoeBiden) stated. “The work ahead of us will be hard, but I promise you this: I will be a President for all Americans —whether you voted for me or not. I will keep the faith that you have placed in me.”

According to CNN, it was Pennsylvania’s 20 electoral votes that placed Biden ahead with the 270 electoral votes needed to win.

Though Election Day 2020 marked the end of a lengthy voting period, it also marked the start of a protracted counting period.

The Associated Press, along with many other major news organizations, expects the state of Georgia to go into a recount. However, President-elect Biden holds a lead of just over seven thousand votes as of 4 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 7.

North Carolina, the other state that has yet to be called, is expected to go to Trump.

The current President has spent the ensuing hours following President-Elect

Biden’s victory at a golf course in Virginia.

The Trump campaign has filed numerous lawsuits questioning the vote-counting methods in several states; however, thus far, none of them have been successful.

In the fight for Congress, Democrats are expected to hold onto the House of Representatives, despite Republican gains. However, the Senate is still up for grabs, as there will be two “runoff” elections in Georgia that will determine control.

Biden’s running mate, now Vice President-elect, Kamala Harris, will be the first woman to be elected Vice-President in American history. She will also be the first woman of color to serve in the executive branch.

Connecticut Reverts to Phase 2.1 After Spike In COVID-19 Cases

BY SAMANTHA BENDER
NEWS EDITOR

On Monday, Governor Ned Lamont announced new restrictions for some businesses, including rolling back to modified Phase 2, that became effective Friday, Nov. 6.

Connecticut had previously been in Phase 3 for a month, but after a spike in cases statewide, the state is now in Phase 2.1.

Business sectors including restaurants, entertainment and recreation venues, indoor as well as outdoor events at commercial venues, are subject to a 10:00 p.m. closing time.

For restaurants, Phase 2.1 entails “up to 50 percent capacity indoors with 6 ft. spacing and/or non-porous barriers,” according to the official state website.

The last service for in-person dining is at 9:30 p.m., although takeout and delivery may continue. The phase allows

a maximum of eight people per table.

Ethan O’Day, Central Connecticut senior and waiter at Buffalo Wild Wings, is experiencing the effects of the new mandate firsthand.

“I rely on late-night customers,” O’Day said. “We close at about 10:30, so reverting back an hour does take away some money and with 50 percent capacity again, that means there are less for me to take care of and make money.”

O’Day is concerned about the financial impacts individuals statewide will face as a result of the decision.

“As a CCSU student who lives off-campus and pays for everything like rent and bills, this isn’t something I’m looking forward to in a financial standpoint,” O’Day said.

This sentiment was shared by Renee Noel, University of Connecticut senior and waitress at Sadler’s Ordinary and Blackledge Country Club, who fears the

25 percent decrease in capacity will result in less hours at her jobs.

“I don’t believe having 50 people in a room is much different than having 75 people in a room,” Noel said. “One of those 50 people could have COVID so I feel like if we’re trying to be COVID safe we either need to shut everything down completely or open everything back up. I don’t think 50 percent versus 75 percent capacity really makes a difference.”

As far as 24-hour diners go, the state website says that they may reopen for indoor dining for breakfast at 5:00 a.m.

“Events previously scheduled to take place prior to Nov.9 may still take place in accordance with the Phase rules that were in place in their municipality prior to the announcement of Phase 2.1,” the website goes on to state.

With the holidays approaching, Connecticut nears a high-risk time to spread the virus through more individuals

traveling and larger, longer gatherings.

Kasey Simpson, junior at Simmons University, agrees with the timing of the governor’s decision.

“I think it is important to put the health of Connecticut’s citizens before the economy. I believe this should have been contained months ago,” Simpson said.

“I believe that since cases are rising, the action is justified. Healthcare workers are also overwhelmed and overworked. We have seen that the hospitals cannot handle a wide-scale breakout. For all parties, I believe this is the right step,” she continued.

Prior to hosting holiday events, individuals are recommended to conduct pre-party screening, limit attendance, use outdoor spaces, invite only local attendees as well as use disposable items such as single-use plates, utensils and to-go containers.

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'I Couldn't Believe What I Was Watching' Students React To First Presidential Debate

BY RYAN BROOKS
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Though it was anticipated to be a tense environment during the first 2020 general election debate, most of those who viewed the event were left uninformed, shocked and "outright disgusted." While there was a lot to address from the debate, some Connecticut college students had a lot to say about the "inappropriate" actions and behavior of the candidates that night.

"The tone of the debate was disgusting and depressing," Cameron Clarke, Central Connecticut senior, said. "While I knew that this debate would be low quality, I did not anticipate it to turn south so quickly."

Clarke was not alone. According to a CBS News poll taken after the debate, 83 percent of viewers thought the tone of the debate was negative, and 69 percent of viewers "felt annoyed" by the end of the

night.

President Donald Trump and former Vice President Joe Biden exchanged increasingly personal verbal blows, including attacks on financial history, political careers and mockery of each other's families, specifically against Biden's son, Hunter.

"I know Hunter, Hunter got thrown out of the military, He was thrown out, dishonorably discharged for cocaine use, and he didn't have a job until you became vice president," Trump stated during the debate. Biden denied these allegations, while also jabbing back at the president, calling Trump a "clown" and the "worst president America has ever had."

Young voters also shared a feeling of letdown as neither candidate provided in-depth details of their policies or plans for the presidency. It seemed that there was a consensus among the students that neither candidate presented a forward-looking vision that

was appealing.

"I expected the debate to be a chance for both candidates to get their true opinions and plans out as well as get a chance to address their opponents points," CCSU sophomore Alina Peele said. "That expectation was not met, I've seen high school students debate better than them."

Later on, Chris Wallace, debate moderator, prompted Trump on his willingness to condemn white supremacists and the "Proud Boys," an all-male violent hate group. This particular moment during the debate conjured significant outrage, leaving some viewers less than satisfied.

"What do you want to call them? Give me a name," Trump said. "Proud Boys, stand back and stand by."

"President Trump telling the Proud Boys to stand by [is] antithetical to everything our nation should stand for," Clark stated.

"Trump was asked to address white supremacy and

he just kinda glided over it for me," Peele said. "It showed me what he truly felt about the situation."

While polling suggests that Biden won the debate by a comfortable margin, students were left unimpressed.

"It was just argumentative and chaotic," Pascale Joachim, a sophomore at University of Connecticut, said. "I couldn't help but laugh at some points because I couldn't believe what I was watching."

In terms of who she thought won the debate it was "Biden, by default I suppose."

The remaining debates will remain as scheduled with more health and safety plans being implemented. This is in part due to Trump recently testing positive for coronavirus and approximately 11 positive cases by people involved in preparations.

The next Presidential debate is scheduled for Thursday, Oct. 15th, following the first vice-presidential debate on Wednesday, Oct. 7.

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SGA Struggles To Launch

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

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Much like Kuo, the Senator attributed some of the resignations to the new realities brought on by the pandemic.

"There are a lot of [difficulties] in the sense that we used to be able to promote with posters and conversation and be able to walk to the Department of Student Activities for help. Everything is online now, which makes [communication] that much harder," Zukowski said.

In an effort to gain more members, Kuo, and others, suggested the SGA hold a special election in which there would be a major social media campaign to get students to run for office, which would include reaching out to other clubs, dorm directors and professors.

On a positive note, the club is attempting to move forward with a variety of social justice initiatives. These initiatives include a possible 3-D diversity sculpture mural on campus and sending CCSU students to a diversity inclusion conference to speak.

However, emblematic of the struggles the club has faced this semester, both members of the committee assigned to handle this, have resigned.

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The Green Party of the United States Fighting For Their Spot

BY CAITLIN RISH
CONTRIBUTOR

Tomorrow, the nation's most tumultuous political battle in a generation will reach its conclusion.

For the past four years, Trump's supporters have seen, with glee, the tough talk that attracted them to his candidacy. They've also watched him select Supreme Court Justices who may drastically change the judicial structure of the nation in a more conservative direction.

Conversely, the opposition to Trump says his administration has influenced a rise in racial tension and orchestrated the dismantling of women's rights by giving support to restrictive abortion laws in states, including Alabama and Georgia.

In the midst of social

upheavals, in the midst of this crucial election, each voting demographic is being closely analyzed.

Many voters, who are intent on replacing the current president, fear that this election will be a repeat of 2016's surprise defeat of the Democratic candidate, in part due to liberal voters who rejected 2016 presidential candidate Hillary Clinton for the Green Party's Jill Stein.

Trump's win was slim, underlined by the fact that Clinton actually won the popular vote. The margin was so narrow that many Clinton supporters and Democratic Party partisans directed their frustration towards Stein.

This was not the first time a nominee was considered a spoiler. Ralph Nader, the Green Party presidential nominee in the 2000

election, was considered to have taken votes from Al Gore.

According to exit polls, Nader garnered 97,000 votes in a race that was decided by 537 votes in Florida.

Popular publications, such as The Washington Post and Politico, have written articles comparing Stein to Nadar and how their candidacies siphoned votes from Democratic candidates.

Now, The Hill and The New York Times are among several papers that have reported Grand Old Party (GOP) fundraising for Green Party candidates. Still, it is clear that Green Party voters would even cast a vote for the Democrat on the ballot?

Ronna Steller, the secretary of the Green Party of Connecticut, does not think so.

"Well if you look at the numbers from the 2016 election,

about half of the voters who came out for Jill Stein are voters who would not have voted in the presidential election at all had there not been a Green Party candidate," Steller said.

Stellar claims with rank-choice voting this would no longer be an issue.

Howie Hawkins, the Green Party president nominee, would like to see an expansion of the method because it has potential to give third party candidates a chance at becoming more viable.

Hawkins, above all, does not want voters to worry that a vote for him is a vote for Donald Trump.

With the current system, a Green Party member must meet strict petitioning guidelines to be put on the ballot.

"In Connecticut, we have to earn our ballot line every single

election, so if our candidate does not get 1 percent of the vote then in four years, we have to collect 7,500 valid signatures," Stellar said. "You actually have to collect a whole lot more to make sure you have the 7,500 valid signatures for our 2024 candidate to be on the ballot and that isn't just true for president."

Stellar believes active organizing on the local level is most important for the Green Party to stay in the fight. Like Hawkins, Stellar is holding out hope that choice-rank voting will catch on.

"It's worth looking into and it might help our party, but I think it would in general help democracy as well," Stellar said.

However, Democratic voters are hoping that those who vote Green will think pragmatically about who they will choose.

Elihu Burritt Library Taking On Covid-19 A Page At A Time



Second floor of the library is setup for social distance studying. RYAN BROOKS

BY RYAN BROOKS
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

The Elihu Burritt Library, which once was home to student traffic, looks emptier this semester. With the dangers of corona virus on everyone's mind, library staff have transformed how the building functions, putting safety at the forefront.

On Oct. 9, library staff released a newsletter detailing some of the changes they've made.

"Many laborious tasks were undertaken to prepare the physical library for safe opening, including creating new signage, installing stanchions to close the stacks, setting up tables to quarantine returned books, and establishing new lending and other procedures," Susan Slaga-Metivier, Head of Reference and Instruction, wrote in the newsletter.

The newsletter also revealed that the library requires masks at all times, food and drink are not permitted and hand sanitizer is readily available at the library entrance.

"We consider ourselves a holder of all this great information and we want to make this information available to all our students," Carl Antonucci, Director of Library Services, said.

Antonucci stressed the lengths library staff have gone to in

order to keep both the students and themselves safe.

"We've taken all the hard-copy periodicals off the shelves, we scan the text-books and send them to students so that way they don't have to [touch] books that other students have handled," Antonucci said. "A lot of our reference librarians are at home [where] it's virtual and they are able to take all the questions the students have."

As the semester approaches its midpoint, many students are now beginning to focus on research projects and papers. To assist students in these endeavors, library staff have created a service called "Book a Librarian," where students can virtually access librarians in an innovative way.

"If you have a research project you need to do, you can meet for a brief chat session, but you can also book a librarian as part of a longer session where they can guide you through a database or screen-share to help you with whatever you need," Antonucci noted.



Printing services in the library are currently unavailable for use. RYAN BROOKS

As part of the new safety guidelines, the library does not offer printing this semester. Printing is available, however, in the student center.

While there are new ways students can attain library information, some students still choose to go to the library for other purposes.



Computers have been permanently locked from student use. RYAN BROOKS

"Say you have a Hyflex class and you meet in the classroom somewhere on campus, then you have an online class but you don't have time to get home, a lot of students then come to the library where there is great WiFi," Antonucci said.

However, of those who have decided to go into the physical library, Antonucci revealed that there have been some minor violations of library guidelines.

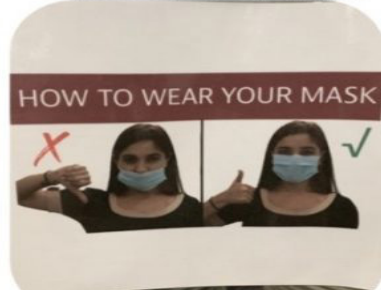
"We have had some violations where some people haven't been wearing the mask, they've been sneaking into the stacks, and eating food together. So, we've had to tell them, in a nice way, please stop. But people for the most part have been understanding."

Overall, most of the activity revolving around the library has been conducted online with a large reduction in on-campus interactions. According to Antonucci, the gate number for the library this September was 4,066 which is a dramatic drop compared to the 58,243 from Sept. 2019.

Those that are a part of the 54,177 that haven't visited the library this semester, and have overdue books, Antonucci said not to worry.

"There will be no penalty at all. We want to make it as easy as possible for students to return their books. They can even mail them back to us or leave them curbside with your name on them if you don't want to go into the building," Antonucci said.

Sodexo Adjusts To ‘New Normal’



Sodexo has implemented many different protocols to ensure workers and student safety in the dining halls.

SANDRA MCNAMARA

BY AMARILIZ TORRES
CONTRIBUTOR

After campus closed in March, Central Connecticut's Sodexo team has continued worked to bring its students the nutrition they need as the pandemic forces them to adapt to new protocols and safety measures.

Jonathan Small, general manager of CCSU's Sodexo team for five years, noticed that the student population has decreased significantly since the start of the semester.

"When we opened, our numbers went down drastically from what we thought we were going to have for student population to what it is today," he said.

Small and his team developed campus modifications within the dining halls and other eating areas, as well as closing the popular dining spot Zime in Willard-DiLoreto.

"We had to make modifications...to the right-size dining program based on the

number of students that were eating with us, and we're still looking at that constantly because we had a close," he said.

Sandra McNamara, a catering receptionist for the Sodexo team, also noted catering services are being limited for student activities with production decreasing from 100 percent to 20 percent this semester.

"Catering has changed greatly for on-site activities," she said "They would have 'X' amount of money to spend to put back into the school to generate commodity clubs and now you see that's very limited."

Despite production decreases, the CCSU Sodexo team has been able to keep its services and employees safe.

"Once a week, we do a random testing of about 15 people a week. The employees have been safe and therefore it's not transferring over to my customers," Small said. "We actually have COVID teams that make sure that everything's well. Restrictions mask are used and then we close down twice a day for an hour, and they clean everything."

Aside from the safety measures initiated, they have also implemented additional safety designs in their facilities.

"All the personal protection equipment from the masks to the gloves to the hand-washing to all the plexiglass on tables and plexiglass of separating students from employees," Small said "The ticket booth out front, which is where students could check-in for meals without having to touch anybody or anything."

McNamara explained there has been a push to promote the proper use of masks around their facilities.

"I think we found students would keep them low and we have our management tell them that's not the proper way," she said, "keep their masks [on] and cleanliness, which we try to promote as much as we could."

Besides the safety measures, Small believes his current situation has taken a toll on students, who miss certain aspects of the Sodexo experience.

"There have been things I know can be a little bit more difficult to handle...I give them credit, it's been hard for them," he said. "They like pancake Fridays with Steve, you know, there's things that they miss that we missed."

He wishes the program to be re-instated in the future.

"We would love to go back to what we were doing because we had a really good program," Small said. "I was really proud of the program that we're running and I'm happy with the program we have today."

As for upcoming ideas for holidays, he is still looking for ideas and is not proud of the limited resources.

"I'm not as proud as I was because it's just, we don't have the ability to do all the things that we could do... I can't have a buffet as a big Thanksgiving special right now" he said.

Even so, the Sodexo team wants to hear ideas from students, faculty members, and parents that could aid them for this season.



Sodexo takes extra precautions when it comes to serving students food in dining halls and catering.

SANDRA MCNAMARA

Central Clubs Are Navigating A New Virtual World

BY ABIGAIL MURILLO
CONTRIBUTOR

Some clubs have found member involvement challenging due to the transition from the on-campus to the online campus experience. But club leaders are persevering and continue to recruit new members while also getting their current members to participate during meeting times.

Errol McDonald, president of the United Caribbean Club, said that ever since meetings have been virtual, it has drastically affected the number of people participating in club activities.

"We have 100 members that signed up for the club, but back then, we had 15 to 20 members on a regular basis," McDonald said. "The transition has

affected us with everything being virtual, we have maybe one club member come, and she became our club secretary."

Since life on campus hasn't been the same due to complications of the coronavirus pandemic, clubs and organizations have tried holding events in new, innovative methods as an effort to keep students engaged. a

"Now, since everything is virtual, we do have events [because] they are the biggest thing that we can do to keep our name alive. You know, in virtual, you can send people invites and wonder if they are going to clock in. But, when we had our first event like a couple of weeks ago, which was our aa paint night, that was a success," McDonald said. "We had 40 people, 20 in person and 20 online do our paint night task, we had a food truck from

Wing-it-on and that drew a lot of people in from campus."

While some clubs are struggling to find new ways to bring in more members, others have not noticed any differences in the way they run their meetings and have maintained their club attendance.

Megyn Jasman, president of the Psychology Club, said that the transition to virtual meetings is not as impactful as other clubs, and they are maintaining their club attendance.

"We had our first guest speaker on Sept. 9th, which was a success," Jasman said. "A professor was able to come into our meeting and talk, we also plan on doing other things as well. We promote heavily so that students know that the resource is there so they can still get involved even though we're online. Right now, there's

an average of 20 people that come to our meetings, from our major or any other major."

Jasman also addressed some of the concerns the Psychology Club has when it comes to hosting on-campus events or trips.

"We are going to stay strictly virtual, it seems very difficult to try to book space on campus, and we don't want to take the time to do that because it seems like too much of a risk," Jasman said. "We don't want anyone to feel uncomfortable; we never want anyone to be at risk for their health."

Central Connecticut's Student Activities and Leadership Development (SALD) is also working actively with clubs to ensure they are developing programs that can be both live and/or virtual.

EDITORIAL

And So The Election Is Over, What's Next?

Well that was... interesting? We're not sure if there is a word to perfectly summarize this election year because frankly it was a challenge to keep up with everything and still manage to remain sane throughout all of it.

While Election Day has come and gone, with Joe Biden as the newly elected President of the United States, there is still so much to work to be done.

All the problems in our country cannot be simply be resolved because one presidential term is over. Unfortunately, these issues existed long before the Trump or even the Obama Administration and will continue onto the next term, and potentially several more following it.

This is because one person cannot fix nor create the decades worth of racism, prejudice and inequality that have run rampant through this country. If anything, Donald Trump is a simply raindrop that broke the poorly constructed dam keeping America's issues from flooding. This is not to understate the damage done by the Trump presidency, but rather just the grim reality that faces the United States.

When that dam broke, a different side of Americans broke through as well. In some cases, it showcased a side of hate, violence and disgusting behavior. While it was painful to see the true colors of our country break through during the 2016 presidential campaign, it came at no surprise at all that this was the America we are living in. There have been underlying issues involving various social, health and economic factors for years, specifically those concerning race, gender, religion, economic status and immigration laws.

But along with that hate, there was signs of compassion, unity and political activism that broke through. Most people have used this presidential election as motivation to become politically active; whether it was registering to vote, participating in grassroots campaigns or even learning about their own local government, people got involved! And that shouldn't stop now.

While Biden winning the election might be a sigh of relief for a lot of people, it means nothing without the continued advancement of activism. The last four years might have seen crazy, but that is only because there was a light shining on it. Many of the terrible things we watched, read or heard about for the first time this year are not new things at all. Racism, corruption and misogyny are in all reality staples in the American foundation, and if you think electing in a new person is all it takes to change that, we've got some bad news for you.

Don't stop the fight now. Voices (and votes) are being heard, but that's only the start. Start researching more about local politicians, their policies and what they are campaigning for. Forget about party alignment, listen to what they are saying and, more importantly, how they say it.

Though our country is at odds within itself, the last four years have been a much needed wake up call for millions of people. We may not agree with all of the opinions being shared, but the important take away is that they are sharing. People are more proactive, and more so than ever before, Americans have a platform for their voice, no matter who they are.

Now is not the time to lose this momentum.

We would be too hopeful to say that the generations of wrongdoings could be fixed in four years, that's impossible. It will take us time, patience and motivation to do that. America is nothing without its people, you and us.

As a whole, we have to take a look at our country and face the facts: the issues that America has are not going to be easy fixes, so people have to remain energized and motivated because we've still got a lot of work to do.

Editor's Column: Get Back In The Kitchen and Try Again!



BY ISABELLA CHAN
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Serena Williams once said, "I've grown most not from victories, but setbacks... a loss can be a gift. A chance to grow." People tend to forget that just because one fails doesn't mean nothing is gained. With all of our failures, we remember that we're all human and that we're all bound to make mistakes; our defeats are lessons and reminders of who we are.

When I think of failures I've learned from I automatically think of my experience in the kitchen, specifically when it comes to making pancakes. That's right, those fluffy, buttery flapjacks are one challenge that I've constantly found myself struggling with. And within that struggle of making hotcakes, there is a much bigger lesson about failure that I've learned.

My burnt pancakes may not be the best when it comes to flavor, but they hold a constant message for me that I use in my everyday life: the skills I don't have do not define me because they are compensated for in the skills that I do have.

Even though I cannot master the art of this delicious French cuisine, I've realized that sometimes the easiest of tasks aren't actually all that easy for everyone. My constant failures in the kitchen with pancakes makes me realize not everyone has the same skills in life as others do. So while one person may be a phenomenal chef, someone else could be an awful cook but an amazing writer.

Yes, it's a stretch to say that I've learned this from a few burnt pancakes, or a lot of them, but it's true. Take my twin brother and I for example, he can whip up an amazing meal in 25 minutes or less, while I could interview, draft and start writing an article in the same amount of time.

My pancake failures don't mean I'm incapable of anything, they just mean that I have better skills somewhere else. So with every crunchy bite I take of my sad breakfast creation, I look at all the other skills and accomplishments that I have—and regret not making toast instead.

As straightforward of a task it may be—especially when using the mix that says "Just Add Water!"—it is a task I am confident with struggling with. My lack of skills in the hotcake department has left me countless of times with an empty tummy and inedible flapjacks. But I never walk away feeling defeated or angry... just slightly hungrier than before.

Of course I've had other failures in life that I've faced but my defeats in the kitchen have always seemed to stick out to me like the burnt pancakes of the batch. While I've seen others excel flipping flapjacks, I fail gracefully and with a smile because I know who I am and who I am not.

I might not be a masterchef, because I clearly lack the skills in that area, but I have other options that I'm ready to discover. I refuse to limit myself and continue to keep trying, even if I end up with soggy pancakes (yes, that is possible too). Because I know that within that ugly stack, I'm bound to have at least one edible hotcake waiting for me.

Masked Rage

BY JULIA CONANT
ASSISTANT LIFESTYLE EDITOR

It had been one week since students first flooded back to campus, hopefully not carrying any deadly diseases with them. The third floor of Elihu Burritt Library had quickly become my go-to quiet place to attend online classes. With my boyfriend at the other end of the table, the only other people within close proximity were two girls doing schoolwork at an adjacent table.

A mass email sent by Dr. Zulma Toro five days prior revealed that the number of Central students diagnosed with COVID-19 had increased. By August 27, 11 commuter students had tested positive.

"Failure to wear a face mask, maintain physical distancing and limit indoor gatherings to 25 people... may result in suspension or expulsion from the University," the email threatened.

Though it was probably not the safest option to linger on campus when it wasn't necessary, attending my virtual classes in the library beat doing them at home.

One upside to online classes is that you can get away with using your cell phone when you get bored.

While scrolling through Instagram Stories, one from the library's page appeared.

"Blue Devils! You MUST wear masks at all times in the library," the story read. "We will call the COVID-19 hotline to report repeat offenders."

As if anyone would be dumb enough to take off their mask in a building full of "Keep Face Covered At All Rimes" signs.

But someone was that dumb. Correction: two someones.

Both of the girls at the adjacent table had their heads in their books and their masks pulled under their mouths.

Beep-beep-bee-deep!

My boyfriend checked his phone to see a screenshot of the Instagram Story and a message from me, telling him to look over at the next table.

We texted back and forth, making fun of and complaining about the girls.

The temptation to pipe up and say "do you mind if I ask why

you're not wearing your masks?" was strong.

And so was my temptation to tell a librarian, or the COVID-19 hotline, or any authority figure in sight. But my fear of confrontation was stronger. Glaring angrily at them every few seconds would have to suffice.

A janitor walked by wheeling his garbage can and cleaning supplies. My devilish smile was conveniently covered by my mask, which I was competent enough to be wearing. These girls were about to get what was coming to them.

Except they didn't. Because they pulled their masks on when the janitor walked by and pulled them right back down when he walked away.

How do people get accepted into college when they are this stupid? Sure, you prevented an encounter with the janitor, but by not wearing your mask you invite an encounter with sickness. Labored breathing, chills, loss of taste or smell.

Or even death.

And even if the symptoms don't affect you, the "invincible" young college student, imagine all of the people you could spread the virus to who will experience symptoms. That pool of potential exposed people only becomes bigger when you don't wear your mask.

Keep your gosh darn masks on, idiots. We're still in a pandemic.



Proper mask wearing techniques.

Baby Yoda Sneaks Onto Campus



Baby Yoda takes sanitary precautions.

@CCSU_BABYYODA



Baby Yoda poses in front of the CCSU logo.

@CCSU_BABYYODA



Baby Yoda, "trying to catch [his] snackie snack."

@CCSU_BABYYODA

BY JULIA CONANT
ASSISTANT LIFESTYLE EDITOR

One of Central Connecticut's newest students is small, green and ... a baby?

A toy version of Baby Yoda from the Disney Plus show "The Mandalorian" is the main subject of an Instagram account called @ccsu_babyyoda. Baby Yoda, also known as "The Child," is photographed across campus while searching for their "snackie snack," which is a frog.

"I haven't eaten my favorite snack since I got here," Baby Yoda said in an interview. "I normally stalk the pond but sometimes my friends bring back food from the dining hall."

On September 13, Baby Yoda made his first public appearance on CCSU's campus, posting a photo on his Instagram. The tiny, green cutie posed on the arm of the big blue chair outside of the Student Center.

When asked why Baby Yoda chose CCSU of all the universities on earth he said, "This is my home. I was brought here and enjoy the campus and events, as well as some special friends I've met along the way."

In regards to starting the Instagram account Baby Yoda said he joined social media in an effort to make these trying times a little better.

"My favorite part of my Instagram account is watching it gain followers and seeing the positive comments I get," Baby Yoda said. "I love replying to fans."

Speaking of fans, Baby Yoda has amassed over 400 followers and frequently receives positive comments on his posts.

"It's crazy to think 400 people have an interest in little me," he admitted. "I started for fun and after a few weeks it took off. I didn't think I would have a following this fast and it's nice hearing people talk about me, as they wonder who is helping behind the camera."

Baby Yoda has gained a high level of notoriety amongst the campus community. Just ten days after Baby Yoda's first Instagram post, he was featured as a special guest at a Kahoot game for the Actuarial Club; graphics promoting the event featured a large photo of him.

"I've met with some clubs, been to a few events and now can add being interviewed to my list of fun," Baby

Yoda shared.

In addition to the collaboration with the Actuarial Club, Baby Yoda has been pictured with merchandise from the Gerontology Club and C.A.N.

Despite being so well-versed in campus culture, the creator of the @ccsu_babyyoda account remains a mystery but Baby Yoda said they enjoy being unseen.

"I like to be sneaky and I think it's funny nobody has seen me in person before, besides some very special friends," he added.

Despite not wanting to be seen, Baby Yoda posts photos of himself all around campus.

Campus is fun for pictures," Baby Yoda said. "My favorite place to be is the top of Welte Garage because it has lots of art for me to take pictures with."

"Thank you everyone for following me and I hope you have laughed at least once. Where should I go next and when should I [reveal] my friends that help me? If you're not following yet, join me on my adventures @ccsu_babyyoda," he answered when asked if he had any words to share with his fans.

NETFLIX IT

The Queen's Gambit

BY ABIGAIL MURILLO
CONTRIBUTOR

The new Netflix hit-series "The Queen's Gambit" is based on a 1983 fiction novel of the same name by Walter Tevis. It is set to be adapted onto the screen by a shocking collaboration between Heath Ledger and Allan Schiach.

But, Ledger's passing in 2008 stopped production and what could have been his debut as a director.

At the age of nine, Beth Harmon (Anya Taylor-Joy) suffered childhood trauma when she lost her mother in a tragic accident. She was sent to Methuen Home for Girls; an orphanage where her unique talent for chess blossomed.

Harmon is different from the other girls, who were taught to prioritize etiquette, whereas she spent her time with a lonely janitor who taught her the principles of chess in a basement.

The series begins to get darker as Harmon becomes addicted to medication given to the orphanage children. Though she slowly creates a dependency on the drugs, it gives her an astounding imagination of possible chess plays in her mind.

Harmon begins to unleash her skills at a high school chess club. Many of the boys underestimated her because of her gender but Harmon quickly wins the matches against all of them to their disbelief.

And this is just the beginning.

A few years later, she is adopted by a semi-welcoming couple. This allows Harmon to come back to her obsession and become the best female chess player with

only one obstacle in her way: "The Russian."

The suspenseful show demonstrates real-world issues of drug addiction, alcoholism, tragedy, mental health and the mind of a child leading up to her womanhood.

While the show centers around the game of chess, you don't have to be a player

of the game in order to understand some of the aspects of the story. As you follow the story-line and get to know the different characters, you develop a connection to them.

Watching Harmon's thought-out chess moves based on her life offers a sense

that her wins are the audience's wins and her losses are the audience's losses. That's what keeps viewers on the edge of their seats. Before you know it, your eyes are mesmerized to the screen and you'll keep watching until the very end without knowing.



This new Netflix Series features breakout actress Anya Taylor-Joy.

NETFLIX

New Music, New Month, New You

BY MAURIAH JOHNSON
LIFESTYLE EDITOR

It's now November and there has been a flood of new music that is just waiting to be blasted from our speakers and poured into our minds for the rest of this semester. The final spooky week of the season saw the release of new albums from some fan-favorites. You can listen to these albums on just about all music platforms. If you're looking for one to tune into then join Apple Music, which offers a free three-month trial and is \$5.99 a month for students.



LOVE GOES BY SAM SMITH

Smith has surely become one of the most open LGBTQ+ artists in mainstream music and there's no denying why with his soulful music history — especially the iconic 'In The Lonely Hour.'

Things have surely changed for Smith since his initial ground breaking album but his heart and voice still remain the same butter-smoothness it was years ago.

'Love Goes' was supposed to be released earlier this year under 'To Die For,' which is one of the songs on the album, but when the coronavirus pandemic hit Smith realized his work wasn't truly finished and thank goodness he did. 'Love Goes,' still has his heart-gripping tracks, though Smith gives a spin outside his 'usual' providing: life-affirming pop, acoustic guitars, cinematic strings and disco. The 57-minute album is an easy listen and flies by.

MISSUNDERSTOOD

The YouTube star turned R&B artist proves that an audience and revenue can ascend from different platforms, especially when you have a melancholic voice to match your 70's to 90's personality.

Still making her debut in music, 'Missunderstood' gives Queen Naija the perfect segue into the audience she is trying to reach and the story she has been dying to tell. The album's major single, 'Pack Lite,' has only given a sneak peak into what else the album offers with features from: Wale, Jacquees, Russ, Mulatto and more. If you're looking for an underground artist climbing her way to the top, Queen is your girl.



POSITIONS BY ARIANA GRANDE

This album definitely has to be Grande's sultriest one yet. A complete difference from her mournful 'thank u, next,' that broke everyone's heart along with her own after that tragic death of Mac Miller.

Grande's 'Positions' proves that she has picked herself up and left the good girl behind with an album that is flirtatiously unpredictable in every way. Should these songs be played out loud with your parents in the car? Not too sure. But as always, her vocals are undeniably superb and this album is one for the young adults waiting for Grande to come into her own womanhood. Stay tuned for the 14-track album's awesome features from: The Weeknd, Ty Dolla \$ign and Doja Cat.

The Return of Coffee and Kala

BY JULIA CONANT
ASSISTANT LIFESTYLE EDITOR

Students looking for a welcoming and comforting outlet from the stress of midterms last week could have found one in "Coffee and Kala," an evening open mic event.

The first "Coffee and Kala" event of the semester was held last Thursday, Oct. 15, from 6 to 8 p.m..

Live jazz music played at the top of the hour to drum up anticipation and attention from passersby. Central Connecticut staff and students alike gathered underneath the Vance Lawn tent to support the talents of the university's community.

Once the audience had settled in, Nehway Sahn, founder of "Coffee and Kala," offered some opening words.

"This is an event we used to hold in The Africana Center before coronavirus hit," Sahn began. "The lights were low, we had some jazz and it was just a place and a space for people to share what they had. There were artists on campus that I didn't even know were artists until they came to "Coffee and Kala," which was amazing."

Back in May and July, "Coffee and Kala" held virtual open mic events where students showcased their talents over Zoom.

"Zoom meetings were cool, but the magic of "Coffee and Kala" comes from the intimacy, the close connections, the live music and art, the coffee, the kala," Sahn wrote on the "Coffee and Kala" Instagram page, "and without all that I had no idea how to handle it or what to do."

Thankfully, Sahn did not have to work around this inconvenience for long. With

CCSU's campus now open again, clubs and organizations have been able to hold events so long as social distancing guidelines are followed. With that being said, "Coffee and Kala" was finally able to return to its original, intimate in-person format.

By the time the performances began, almost every table under the tent was filled. Attendees were encouraged to grab light refreshments such as water, tea, snacks and, of course, coffee.

Performances ranged from instrumental talents to spoken word to singing original songs. Topics of racial equality, identity and love were touched upon, as well as many others.

Students were encouraged to pre-register, however a sign-up sheet was provided for those who were inspired by the pre-registered acts and felt brave enough to perform on a whim.

The energy under the tent only grew as the evening went on. The live band who played at the beginning of the night improvised beats for performers to freestyle to. The impromptu collaborations could have been mistaken for planned acts the way they flowed together.

Sahn expressed her gratitude for the turnout throughout the night. While providing some closing words at the end of the night, Sahn was met with a round of applause. And though no specific date is set for the next "Coffee and Kala," Sahn assured the audience that "we'll do this again."

For those who missed the live open mic, or for those who want to experience it again, the event was recorded and uploaded to @coffeeandkala on Instagram. And be sure to give them a follow while you are there so you do not miss the next "Coffee and Kala."

OPINION

Really? Wear Your Mask

BY TYCHELL PINCKNEY-NICKSON
CONTRIBUTOR

I am fuming with anger as I leave another day of work because someone gave me a hard time when I asked him to wear a mask. I just lost my aunt to COVID-19. People do not understand how serious the virus is until it affects their personal lives.

She had already been battling thyroid cancer for several years while being a dedicated member of her church and helping raise her grandsons. Any time you would see her out, she was wearing a mask.

She was a fashionista, so it had to be a specially designed mask.

Just like the infected person she unknowingly came in contact with, the customer I encountered could have COVID-19 and not know it.

All I did was ask the customer if he had his mask. No answer. I asked again, making sure that he heard me. Still no answer. I waited until he got to the counter. I asked again if he had a mask. He finally told me no.

I told him that he needed to have a mask for one of us cashiers to serve him. He got upset and started to storm out, while I politely said, "We have four signs. All we ask is

that you respect our rules."

He was boiling. He made a few more remarks, saying, "screw you," and leaving the store.

Now, this was not the first time that I had been treated poorly because I asked someone to wear a mask. It's usually a snide remark or a sarcastic question that leads to something irrelevant, but eventually they put on a mask.

This customer just might have been having a bad day. I expect to be blamed because of a loss of a sale, but I lost my aunt because of negligent actions such as that. I had to sit behind the two granddaughters she left behind while they bawled their eyes out at her funeral.

My aunt lived in Bloomfield but would travel to Hartford daily because that was where her church and her close family lived. Even before coronavirus, my aunt would Lysol her entire house from upstairs to downstairs and would even wipe all the doorknobs and surfaces. Sometimes when I would come to visit, I could still smell the chemicals.

According to the Health and Human Services, there are 5,048 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Hartford and Bloomfield as of Nov. 6.

When the pandemic started, I was not taking it

seriously. I thought that this was a huge scam for the retail market to profit from us buying cleaning supplies; I would go on social media and see how people were fighting over toilet paper.

But it became serious when my mom's co-worker lost a family member to COVID-19. Suddenly, I started thinking about my great-grandmother who has heart problems, my grandma, who has diabetes and my aunt.

The seriousness of the virus did not become real until my grandmother told me that my aunt was admitted to St. Francis Hospital and Medical Center on Tuesday, Sept. 22.

I was in the middle of doing an essay for my sociology class when she told me and become so distraught that I could not continue.

While my aunt was in the hospital, my mom would call and put her on speaker so that everyone could hear how she was doing. The first time, she sounded fine. Then she was put on a respirator because the mucus had started to build up and she could no longer breathe on her own. It was hard to listen to her constantly coughing and wheezing.

Then on Sept. 30, around 4 am, her suffering stopped.

At least now she can rest while buried in the cemetery right next to Mt. Calvary Baptist Church in Hartford.

HOW TO

Getting Into Graduate School



Getting into graduate school is an option for anyone looking to continue their education.

PIXABAY

BY NDENGO MWILELO
STAFF WRITER

For some students, this very well is their last year in college as an undergraduate but their journey continues.

What is your next plan after graduating from college? If you have no idea, that is fine. You should know that graduate school is one of many options. Now is the time to begin thinking about what to do and what not to do to complete the process and there are a few important ways to do so.

Jason Sikorski, a psychology professor, assisted in conducting a workshop on how to get into graduate school for psychology and other programs while also talking about the application process behind it. This included the importance of research in psychology, building a good relationship with faculty, maintaining good grades and writing a personal statement.

The chances of getting into the school of your choice comes with preparation. Understanding this requirement can increase the opportunity to be accepted into your chosen program.

"The key to this process is to do more than what you did to think about graduate school when you came here for the first time," Sikorski said. "A lot of students say... they want to be this type of psychologist, or they just want to go to graduate school in psychology. There is a lot more to it. There are many different branches of psychology; there are many different graduate programs in psychology."

The Application Process

The earlier, the better. Once you decide to attend graduate school, the application process is an important part. Sikorski explained that to understand the application process better is to know your program of interested

and to begin looking into graduate programs, such as evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the program.

What are additional requirements, or when to apply? Most importantly, is there a standardized test that is required for the program? Apply to as many places as possible, Sikorski recommended.

"I wish I can tell you that applying to graduate school is the same for everyone. I wish I could tell you that the rules for applying to different programs are all the same, but they are not," Sikorski said. "There are different writing prompts; there are different application requirements. This means you are going to be spending a lot of time to do it right if you decide and apply to graduate programs."

Letter of Recommendation

A letter of recommendation is an essential piece of the

application process. It is a powerful part that identifies you as an individual and why you should be accepted into graduate school. This letter can also allow the institution to see you as a person who will help grow its vision.

Building and maintaining a good relationship with your professors will get you to a good start. The more your professors knows you, the better it will be to write a recommendation letter. Sikorski advises students to give their letter writers about one to three months' notice.

Personal Statement

This is the moment to convince the school why you are interested in the field you are applying for. You can share past experiences that are relevant to the program. This is also an opportunity to showcase why you are qualified for their program compared to other candidates.

Sikorski added it is important to start writing your statement soon because only time will help you polish it.

The Importance Of Research Experience

To all the students interested in psychology, research is vital because it helps you understand the world around you. Suppose you have not done any research, no need to be too hard on yourself. Sikorski's mantra for graduate school is to move forward and "control what you can control."

Diverse Experiences

We live in a diverse society as students; you are required to have the ability to communicate with people from all walks of life.

"Cultural competence is valued in any discipline within the field of psychology," Sikorski said.

How To Be Content While Being Single



Learning to be comfortable by yourself can create a better pathway later on when you decide to be in a relationship.

PEP MONTSEERRAT

BY SHWAR ZAIDI
CONTRIBUTOR

Staying single can be challenging, especially when humans are naturally social beings who want someone to understand them, love them and be there for in a romantic way. However, life isn't worthy or not valuable just because you are on your own. There are benefits to being single and you can do so many things if you open your eyes.

Learn about yourself

People say that when you are in a relationship, is the only time you can be worthy of being loved. That is false! Nobody can love you as much as you can love yourself. You have to learn about who are you as a person and your inner workings. It's important to be gentle with yourself and

to be alone at times to reflect; you can feel at peace when you realize your worth and the world moves differently when you become your own best friend.

A partner can never hold up the expectations and love that you have to give for yourself. There are loads of people in relationships who are miserable or not happy because they depend on others to love them. So discover yourself and love the person you are/can be in order to realize what you can offer to the world.

Go out and meet new people/opportunities

To find a relationship, you have to put yourself out there to be seen. It can boost your self-esteem to take risks and be spontaneous. If you want to meet new people, then go to a club or try something new like karaoke or volunteering (while also being safe with a mask and safe social distance methods).

You get to know who you are when you try new things

and along the way, you meet engaging and unique people that you can click with and learn from. And who knows, maybe your right person will pop up too!

But, putting yourself out there would help you become busy with your own life and enjoy what the world has to offer. You do not need to wait for the perfect person to come and have the life of the party. You can go out there and do what you love to see what new experiences can help you grow.

Be grateful for what you have

Do you have a family who loves and support you? Be grateful and appreciative of them because some people do not have that luxury and support. If you have friends that care about you as well, go call them up and thank them while planning a hangout. Some people long for a simple, loyal companion by their side, romantic or not.

Do you have hobbies and goals you are passionate about? Is food or shelter provided for you? Do you have two eyes and a heartbeat? Count all of your blessings because all the good that comes in your world is a miracle. Just because you are single doesn't mean nobody cares about you or that you are not loved. Look around you and see how much of an impact you make on other people's lives through work, family, friends and study partners. It would be a weight off your shoulders when you count what you have versus what you don't. Count your blessings.

Have Faith

Lastly and most importantly, have faith. That means not giving up; keep going out there to meet new people because one day, you will find that special someone that will spark a connection. Stop longing and looking so hard but rather have hope that it will come when the time is right. Enjoy life because it is too short. Find yourself, love yourself and you will see that one day you will have what you wish for.

5 Ways to Elevate Your Ramen Game

STORY AND PHOTOS BY CHRISTOPHER CACERES
CONTRIBUTOR

I must have cooked instant ramen more than any other food in my life. As a kid, my mom would buy ramen packs in bulk. It's what my brother and I ate while she was at work, it's what I eat in college when funds are low and it's even gotten me through the occasional hangover. Instant noodles may seem like a sad excuse for a meal with their MSG packed broth, flaccid noodles and tiny freeze-dried nubs of vegetables — and it could be — but with a little ingenuity and minimal effort ramen has the potential to become a satisfying, mouthwatering meal packed with rich flavor.



USE YOUR OWN BROTH

Replace those salty MSG filled packets with your own broth. I typically use whatever I have lying around my apartment; personally, I like Trader Joe's chicken bone broth, but you can use whatever you prefer. If you're trying to be salt-conscious, go for a low sodium option.

SAUCE IT UP

If you're like me, there is always a least half a dozen open bottles of sauces in the fridge. This is the perfect opportunity to put them to good use. Incorporate your favorite sauce to the broth for depth of flavor. Don't be afraid to experiment. I normally stir in a tablespoon of soy sauce, hoisin sauce and a few dabs of sriracha.

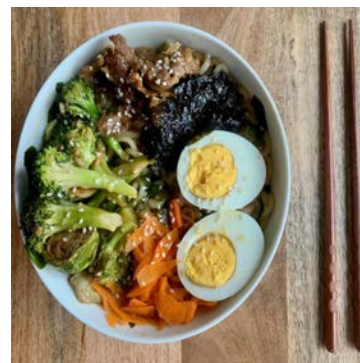


USE THOSE VEGGIES

This is where it starts to get exciting. Browse your fridge for any vegetables that need to be used up. Look for mushrooms, carrots, cabbage, spinach and more. Bonus points if you happen to have bok choy in the fridge. If you don't have fresh vegetables, you can always toss in frozen veggies like peas, corn and broccoli.

PROTEIN

I love eggs. I add them to just about everything and instant ramen is no exception. I like to boil an egg separately for six minutes to create a firm, yet gooey yoke. But don't stop there. Add some chicken, tofu, pulled pork, steak or whatever leftover protein you have from last night's dinner for even more savoriness.



TOP IT OFF

Top off your ramen with a few extras for added texture and color. Add some citrus like lime and fresh herbs like chives or cilantro. I normally top my ramen with a pinch of sesame seeds, pickled onions, a couple strips of nori (dried seaweed), chopped up scallions and a few drops of sriracha and roasted sesame oil.

RAMEN RECIPE

Cook Time: 10 mins
Total Time: 15 mins

INGREDIENTS

1 tablespoon cooking oil
1/3 cup grated fresh carrots
1 handful broccoli
1 cup broth

1 cup water
1 package instant ramen
1/2 cup your choice of protein
1 large egg
2 nori sheets sliced
Pinch of toasted sesame seeds
Sriracha and soy sauce to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

Add the oil and broccoli to a small pan and sauté over medium heat for about two minutes.
Add the broth and water to small sauce pot and bring to a boil.
Once boiling, add the uncooked ramen noodles. Boil for about 3 minutes, or just until they are tender. Do not overcook the noodles!

Stir 1/2 tablespoon of sriracha and 1 tablespoon of soy sauce to broth.
Turn the heat down to low, then incorporate vegetables.
Crack the egg into the broth and let sit for about six minutes, or until the egg whites are cooked and the yolk is still runny.
Transfer the soup to 1 or 2 bowls, then garnish with nori and toasted sesame seeds
Add a few extra dabs of sriracha to taste.

OPINION

Ranking the Best (And Worst) Possible Trades of the 2020 NBA Offseason

BY RYAN JONES
MANAGING EDITOR

The 2019-2020 NBA season was easily the strangest ones in recent memory, but nature is healing. Twitter is back to being dominated by trade rumors and transactions, including some that have already broken the internet (keep reading for more on that). In an offseason as busy as any other sports regular season, let's take a look at some of the best (and worst) possible trades floating around right now, as well as rank the ones already done.

DONE DEALS

Los Angeles Lakers acquire Dennis Schroder, send Danny Green and pick #28 to Oklahoma City Thunder

Though trades technically can't be formalized until Wednesday's Draft, Rob Pelinka and the 2020 Champion Lakers are already busy with trades. After winning the championship in dominant fashion, the Lakers are not in a place where they need another superstar talent. That being the case, I don't think they could have made a better move with this trade. Though Danny Green had a storied legacy clutch threes in the postseason, it was clear during the 2020 Playoffs that that man is long gone. Danny Green most likely won't be that bad for the Thunder, but the writing on the wall is already

up. In a "win it or bust" market like L.A., if you're not an integral part of a championship team, you could get traded at the drop of the hat.

What the Lakers got back, however, is a younger guard who fits perfectly into LeBron James and Anthony Davis' big man game. This becomes increasingly important if Rajon Rondo and Avery Bradley leave the team in free agency. The 28 pick is really not much to give up for a proven talent in such a mediocre draft, and swapping Green's contract for younger money is never a bad move. While not the biggest trade of the year, I think this one could have the biggest impact.

Phoenix Suns acquire Chris Paul, send Ricky Rubio, Kelly Oubre, Ty Jerome, Jalen Lecque and 2022 first-round pick to Oklahoma City Thunder

The Thunder continue to blow things up, stockpiling more picks and expiring contracts. Remember the Paul George and Russell Westbrook trades? It's been clear since then that the Thunder are stockpiling assets for the time being. Despite this, Paul had one of the greatest playoff runs of his career before losing to the Houston Rockets. Paul crushed the choker narrative that had been circling his name since his time with the Clippers, and could prove to be the perfect running mate and mentor for Phoenix's two headed beast that is Devin Booker and Deandre Ayton. The biggest question mark regarding this trade is the contract. Paul is still owed \$80 million over the next two seasons,

and injury concerns have plagued Paul the past few years.

This move is another huge win and haul for the Thunder. After this and the Schroder trade, OKC has 17 first-round picks between now and 2026. What they do with these picks is of course crucial, but in the NBA is no word holds more weight than "assets," just ask Danny Ainge.

POTENTIAL TRADES

No news has shocked NBA Twitter more than that of James Harden and Russell Westbrook wanting out of the Houston Rockets. The Rockets have shot themselves in the foot a bit thanks to their past few trades, but could be entering rebuild mode by trading away the faces of their franchises. Let's look at where they might be headed:

Westbrook is a dominant scorer with the ball in his hands. Playing along side James Harden, who is *checks notes* also a dominant scorer with the ball in his hands...probably wasn't the most genius pairing. Westbrook knows this, and wants his next destination to be somewhere he can "be Westbrook" (according to an article published in the Houston Chronicle). As always, NBA players are incredibly vague in where they'd like to suit up next, and Westbrook is no different. Does he want to go to a contender? Or be the big fish in a small pond, which is what made his infamous triple double season in OKC so fun to watch? No one knows for sure.

After some early rumors circling the Clippers, the Charlotte Hornets have emerged as the most likely candidate to land Westbrook in a trade. The Hornets have a lot of money tied up in contracts that seemed bad when they were signed and even worse now. Westbrook is still tied up to a \$131 million contract over the next three years, and for a team not really on the brink of contention, this would probably require moving around some pieces. Listen, if Westbrook isn't having fun being on a contender, then that's completely understandable. The media is more critical than ever before, how can you hate on a guy going down to Charlotte to have some fun, make some money and drop some buckets? If Westbrook goes to a small market team, he will be brought in with open arms by the fans. Going somewhere like L.A. just seems to further the possibility of harsh criticism and an environment where Russ can't cook.

Harden wants out, that's clear, and he wants out big. According to multiple ESPN reports, the former MVP is eyeing Brooklyn as a possible destination to team up with Kyrie Irving and Kevin Durant. I truly don't see how this deal would work, but boy would it be insane to watch. That team would shatter of every offensive record book in history and also might give up the most points in NBA history. I'm not even mad either, it's chaos, and there's nothing that spells a return to normalcy for the NBA like chaos.

Marshall Sees Bright Future Ahead for CCSU's Strange Season

BY RYAN JONES
MANAGING EDITOR

Last year, Central Connecticut men's basketball had one of the youngest teams in the country with seven freshmen. This year, the Blue Devils will not have a single rookie on the roster.

This step back from the youth movement has its reasons, of course. With such an inexperienced roster last year, CCSU was only able to pick up four wins throughout the season.

For sure, there were nights when the young stars for Central were firing on all cylinders. Their athleticism is something that can not be questioned after watching some of the Blue Devils jump out the gym, but their decision making kept them out of a number of games. In some ways that was to be expected. There were a lot of players getting their first feels for the speed of college basketball. Now with a year experience under their belts, Marshall is very excited for the future of Blue Devil basketball.

"The focal point is that we are definitely a much better team than we showed last year," Marshall said. "We're ready for this year."

This year, the Blue Devils will be returning four starters as opposed to one last year. Sophomores Myles Baker, Greg Outlaw and Jamir Reed all averaged over 20 minutes per game in their freshmen campaign, and look further develop their games which

showed vast potential last year.

The importance of junior guard Ian Krishnan on this Blue Devils team can not be understated. After missing most of the first half of the season, Krishnan lit things up for CCSU last year. He led the team in scoring with 12.5 per game, there were some nights it seemed as if he could pull up from anywhere on the court and knock a shot down. With an expanded role this season, Krishnan has the potential to have a breakout year for the Blue Devils.

In an interview with the Recorder, Marshall praised the work ethic of his players throughout what can only be described as a chaotic offseason.

"With the toughness of the COVID and how difficult it made it to do things, [the team] came back great," Marshall said. "They came back in great shape, got their mind right and definitely came backed focused. Their bodies changed, their intelligence for the game changed and it has definitely had its effects on the court."

The challenges the pandemic has brought with it can not be understated. More than ever before, players and coaches have to be focused on one game at a time. The schedule is something that can be changed at any time, and because of the smaller size of a basketball team compared to football, one positive test will shut down all basketball operations for weeks.

Flexibility is a top commodity for teams this year, something

Marshall very clearly understands and is preaching to his players this season.

You got no choice but to have [flexibility]. It's one of those years that as a team and as a coach you gotta come to your principles and stick to your principles no matter what."

For Marshall, these principles have shined in a clear way so far. When asked to define the team in a word, Marshall pointed to tenacity in describing his guys.

"They've been extremely tenacious throughout this offseason," Marshall said. "It's been very tough on these players, yet they have come to work hard. Their mindsets are set on trying to do the right thing."

The right thing Marshall refers to is two fold this year. On top of getting ready to play in games, Marshall pointed out that staying healthy is another factor at the forefront of everyone's minds.

"We can talk about what we want for this season," Marshall said "but if one of us gets it it halts our season for a couple weeks. As long as we're doing the right thing, we'll be fine. Not only the players but the coaches as well, it's going to take a collective effort to get through this."

Throughout all of the sports being played so far in the pandemic, there has of course been one glaring component missing: fans. Leagues like the NBA have ushered in virtual fans while the NFL and NCAA football has actually worked with putting fans in the stands, albeit it socially distanced and only in a select few states.

The Northeast Conference basketball schedule is not yet official* for the Blue Devils, but everyone is in general agreement that its focus will be reducing the travel done by teams. With that being said, it can be assumed that there will not be any cheering fans for the foreseeable future in New Britain, however Marshall is not worried on its impact on players.

"I'm sure it will be difficult for some of the kids, but I think it will also be a lot like AAU where there aren't many fans watching," Marshall said. "It will be something to get used to, but it's not like we're the only school to go through it. It will be just like practice but with another team there," Marshall added with a laugh.

*UPDATE: Since the writing of this story, NEC officially released 2020-21 basketball schedule on Nov. 16.



The CCSU men's basketball hopes to begin conference play soon.

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SEE BACK PAGE STORY FOR MORE DETAILS.

A Pandemic Abroad: Heijningen Talks Volleyball in World of COVID-19

BY RYAN JONES
MANAGING EDITOR

The COVID-19 pandemic has kept us all close to home for what feels like an eternity.

Eline Van Heijningen, however, is far away from her home in the Netherlands, playing on a court in America.

Heijningen joined the rest of her Central Connecticut volleyball teammates in quarantine dorms on campus this past August. For the six other players quarantining together, their lives were not much different than their ones at home. Heijningen, however, would have to learn the norms of an America that has been ravaged by the pandemic, an America different than the one she left in March when CCSU was first shut down.

"In the Netherlands we were doing pretty well, we didn't really have to wear any face masks except for public transportation," Heijningen explained, "so it was quite the transition when I first got here."

The Netherlands that Heijningen left was living in a



different world than the one she would come to see in America. After an initial spike in cases in the spring, the Netherlands had been mostly quiet on new cases up to her August departure. Since then the country has faced a new spike in cases, however.

Heijningen kept herself up to date on the happenings in America through the news when she was home this summer. The decision to come back to CCSU knowing there would not be any games played this fall was a tough one, but Heijningen is focused on getting back to 100% after an ACL tear prematurely ended her season last year.

"I considered maybe not going until I heard how well CCSU was planning things," Heijningen said. "For me it was an easy decision to come here because I would be working with the trainers, I was itching to get back on the court since November. I knew it was a little bit of a risk but I knew everything was planned well."

Volleyball was the first team at CCSU to begin practicing in small pods. Because there are only 14 players on roster, they will soon start full team

practices. Heijningen and the rest of the team are more than willing to sacrifice normalcy for safety in these early weeks.

"Obviously it's very different," Heijningen said. "We all went to get on the court and scrimmage together as a team but I do feel like it's the smarter and safer option right now."

The camaraderie and energy that comes from being with the whole team is what has been missed most for Heijningen.

"Knowing that every week we get a little bit closer to somewhat normal" has kept her sane through it all so far. "If we do this right and it all goes well we'll be a little bit closer to normal."

Heijningen will be taking the extra year of eligibility granted by the NCAA due to the pandemic and said it was a "no brainer" for her after she missed last season.

The future is uncertain for volleyball, but playing games in the spring is a real possibility for the team along with other spring sports.

"I just want to get my body and mindset back on playing," Heijningen said. "After a big injury like that your mindset is just a little bit different from before."

Heijningen's next game might be this spring, it might be next fall. No matter what, she's training like it's tomorrow.



Heijningen and her teammates hope that they can play together in the near future.

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"Move the Chains James"



Tyshaun James looks forward to taking a bigger leadership role next year.

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BY RYAN JONES
MANAGING EDITOR

For most of his life so far, the sounds of the fall for Tyshaun James have been whistles, quarterback cadences and the roar of fans cheering as he stepped onto the football field. This fall, these staples of football have been replaced with the sound of crunching leaves and the sights of Connecticut's state parks.

Just like the rest of us, James has had a lot of new found free time thanks to the pandemic. Some have learned to knit, others have watched seasons of shows in the span of days. James has chosen to get outside during the pandemic.

"In the summertime with the pandemic

going on, I just started going hiking," James said. With his basement at home turning into his offseason weight room, James and three of his friends hit the weights in the morning, then traveled to a different hiking spot almost everyday, snapping pictures along the way. He visited too many to recall a favorite, but still remembers a particularly eventful hike near Quinnipiac.

"It was supposed to be an hour long hike and we turned it into about four hours after we walked off the trail," James said. "Luckily it didn't get dark or else we would have been out there all night."

On the football field, the last word you could describe James as is lost. He tore apart opposing teams' secondaries, leading the Northeast Conference with 14 touchdowns

and flat out dominating in just about every other stat you can count. So I had one question for him:

Why are you so good?

For James, the simply stated question has a much more complex answer.

"Self discipline plays a part," James said. Growing up, James said his parents instilled that in him; if he wanted to be good, he had to do it for himself.

"My dad told me if you want to be good, you have to work out. As soon as he told me that I just started working out and taking things way more seriously."

James also credited his support system for keeping him motivated.

"My mom, my dad, my sister, they definitely drive me to be a better person, because my parents worked so hard for what they have. My sister's always doing what she had to do in school," James said. "Having a supporting staff like that around me, I don't ever want to let them down or fail because they're always doing what they have to do in life."

James' position on the depth chart is listed as wide receiver, but the former Middletown High School quarterback has yet to show any limits as to what he can do for an offense.

"I call myself like an athlete more than just a receiver," James said.

James' track record speaks for itself, though no one can sum it up better than the man himself.

"I feel like that's what separates me from lot of other guys," James said. "I'm not just a one dimensional person, I've ran in a touchdown, I've caught a touchdown and

thrown a pass in a game already."

Like his head coach Ryan McCarthy, James sees the cancelling of the season as more beneficial than making one up in the spring.

"Having this type of year I get to really take my time and learn new stuff and really hone in on the things that I'm not so good at because you can always get better at stuff like that," James said.

James had shoulder surgery to repair a torn labrum at the end of last season. Now fully healed, James is focusing on sharpening his skills to get ready for a regular looking season next fall, a statement certainly scary for NEC defensive backs.

"Hopefully that just stays strong how it is now. I've been fully healed, working out and practicing and stuff like that," James said. "So hopefully that stays good and goes on from there and I just become a great leader on and off the field to my teammates."

Heading into his senior year, James sees himself as the "old guy" on the team. Being a good leader has never been more pertinent to him.

There is no question that James will be a name seen at the top of CCSU football's record books for a long time to come. For James, of course, these records mean little to the end goal: winning.

"I honestly don't know any of the accolades [at Central] I'm not even sure where to find them," James said with a laugh. "I just go out there and play. I want to score as much as I can but I also want to win another championship. I always told my family and myself I want to be the best player to ever play at Central."

Reaves Previews Pandemic Season



No official schedule for the season has been released.

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This is Coach Reeves first full season as head coach.

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BY RYAN JONES
MANAGING EDITOR

When Kerri Reaves stepped in as interim head coach for Central Connecticut women's basketball, nothing could have prepared her for what her first full season would look like.

"I can't think of anything more weird," Reaves said. "It is unlike anything I've ever dreamed of or thought about ever in my college coaching career."

The 2020-2021 college basketball season is certainly unlike any other in the NCAA's history. Until September 16, there was no confirmation that one would be taking place at all. Now a month removed from the NCAA's decision, plans are starting to become more concrete as to what this season will look like.

For CCSU, no official schedule has been released, however according to Reaves the women's team will be playing their conference games much earlier this season than usual, alluding to weekend series starting in mid-December. This expedites the start of the regular season, which normally would not start before New Years. Starting these games early would also eliminate some non-conference games from the schedule, though it was already expected that there would be less of these taking place.

Reaves said the situation right now with scheduling is a fluid one. "We just kind of have

to roll with the punches. You know what I mean?"

"These guidelines are put in place for the health and safety of everybody involved with the programs, so there's no sense in being frustrated or angry about them," Reaves said. "It's just the way it goes. Everybody's looking out for our best interest."

Reaves assured that the team and herself are locked in and ready to face whatever this season throws at them, but also acknowledged the difficulties it can pose on the players.

"My concern on a daily basis was really about our student athletes and the type of experience that they're going to have," Reaves said. "We have some really intelligent kids on our team that are planners. They need structure and it's been tough on them with not having classes meet and things like that."

Perhaps no demographic of student athletes have been impacted more than this year's class of freshmen.

"My heart goes out to them," Reaves said. Though the season will be taking place this year, all summer workouts and meetings did not take place, something Reaves considers critical in the development of incoming players.

The campus climate has not helped ease the transition either as student athletes aren't leaving their dorms for class and are left without any real opportunity for team bonding outside of practice. "It's a lot on them coming in and then you throw a college basketball practice schedule on top of that," Reaves said.

Despite the challenges they've faced, Reaves said she's admired the freshmen's "ability to adjust and roll with the punches. I'm very, very impressed with their mentality so far."

Any semblance of structure and scheduling is welcome for Reaves, who is happy to see the state of basketball trending that way.

"When we were told 'this is when we're definitely going to be able to start practice,' it gave myself and the team some structure or something to look forward to rather than just kind of going with the flow, not knowing what was going to happen or when it was going to happen," Reaves said. "It's very reassuring to know that we have definite games, definite dates and definite things that we need to do by definite times."

When college sports were originally put on halt in March, the NCAA likewise announced an additional year of eligibility would be granted to spring athletes. Since then, this has also been done for fall and winter athletes. In a move that was widely praised, its ramifications on how college basketball teams are built have yet to be seen.

Reaves said this extra year granted is "a really big shakeup in the basketball realm." This is especially true for seniors, who will be using this year to further hone their skills.

"That takes some pressure off of them," Reaves said "but I think most definitely, especially with some of the transfer rules that are coming down from the NCAA combined with the extra year of eligibility, it makes

recruiting a little more difficult because you just don't know what your team's going to look like from 2021 spring to 2021 fall. That's just the way it's going to have to be for right now but I do think it's going to have major impacts on recruiting classes from now for the next two or three years."

Reaves was quick to praise the older core of the Blue Devils, specifically noting the attention to detail they've had along with the leadership role they've taken in these unprecedented times.

"It's not just one player," Reaves said. "It's a collective group of our senior class that have done a really, really good job. I expect big things from them and more importantly, I think they expect big things from themselves, which is more important than, having me yell at them all the time. They know what they expect from themselves and they've set the bar high for themselves."

When asked to describe this season in a word, Reaves said "focused." Perhaps more than ever, being able to keep a clear head can be difficult. Reaves said the team knows that winning comes at a cost, hard work, and is ready to pay that price.

"I want them to get that," Reaves said. "It started in the winter, went through the spring and the summer with our meetings and now it's coming to fruition on the court and in the weight room. It's a long road to success and we're meeting every challenge. I just want them to know that they work really, really hard and it's for a reason. And it's going to pay off in the end."

NEC Officially Announces 2020-21 Basketball Schedules

BY RYAN JONES
MANAGING EDITOR

For the first time since March 10, Central Connecticut athletics has a game to look forward to.

The Northeast Conference announced the schedules for the upcoming men's and women's basketball season Monday, finally giving a definitive look into how this season will take place.

The schedule will still have the Blue Devils playing in 18 conference games, however the format of these games will be different than year's past. The Blue Devils will be playing a conference opponent in a two game series every week, primarily on Thursday and Friday. The men's season kicks off on December 8 and 9 against Fairleigh Dickinson, the women's team will be playing their opening series against St. Francis Brooklyn on December 14 and 15.

The postseason and it's structure have also been changed this year. The NEC Tournament will only have four teams competing instead of eight, making the first round of the playoffs a semi-finals game. The higher seeded team will host the lower seed.

In the NEC's press release, Commissioner Noreen Morris said the move to have less teams in the playoffs was due to a "strong desire to minimize the financial impact on schools, reduce postseason travel and remove one layer of potential

exposure that may impact our ability to safely complete the tournament."

The financial impact of this season is a serious concern in the NEC. Many schools make a lot of the money that goes towards the athletic budget in road games against big name schools. With smaller school teams less incentivized to travel and bigger schools likewise not doling out the money they typically would in a normal year, keeping the budget low was likely a focus for most teams in the NEC.

The schedule released only contains conference opponents, but this does not rule out of conference games, which can be scheduled at the discretion of each team, according to the NEC's press release. The men's team already has one game outside of the NEC scheduled in Mohegan Sun's "Bubbleville." The tournament played at Mohegan Sun will feature 45 teams, and CCSU is scheduled to play the University of Maine on November 27, according to Mohegan Sun's website.

As far as the conference schedule goes, there is only exception to the rule of two game series, in state opponent Sacred Heart, who CCSU will play in separate weeks. The reasoning behind this is not confirmed but could just be more flexibility given both teams play in Connecticut. This also makes an even nine games on the road and nine at home for both teams.

Both CCSU teams are scheduled to play in two of these series before a winter break. The season will resume on January 7. For the men's team, the conclusion of the regular season is scheduled for February 26. On the women's side, the regular

season ends on March 1. Both teams will be facing Wagner in their final conference series. There are six mid-week make up dates incorporated into the schedule as well.



NEC finally announces CCSU's 2020-21 basketball schedule

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