



Kýler Erezuma/The Mirror

With the increase in users, students face frustration with the long wait times and limited access to equipment.

Students Express Frustrations With Crowded RecPlex

By Samantha Russell
Assistant News Editor

Users of Fairfield University's RecPlex have experienced disruptions in their typical gym experiences due to a sudden and heavy influx of gym participants.

These disruptions have created less available space and equipment, as well as more frustration among students. As the spring semester comes into full swing, students have not halted their complaints regarding the situation.

"I have been going to the gym for one and a half years now, and I have never seen it this bad," reported Jacob Engren '25. "The gym has seemed cramped everyday since we got back from winter break."

The Leslie C. Quick, Jr. Recreation Complex, or the "RecPlex," stands as Fairfield University's one and only recreation center available to non-athlete students and community members. Dedicated to inclusive and well-rounded exercise, students have the option of three floors of fitness, ranging from cardio machines, to private exercise rooms and an open weight room. The complex also includes its own gymnasium and swimming pool.

Despite its assortment of opportunities, it seems a space issue has prevailed.

Eli Olken-Dann, the Director of Recreation and Wellness at Fairfield University, attributes a reason as simple as the time of year to this staggering RecPlex attendance.

"Post-Covid, many people are returning to their pre-Covid fitness routines, and this time of year, many fitness centers are seeing an increase in activity level," he said. "It is not uncommon to have larger classes and increased visitation during the first month of the semester."

Brian Kabel, Assistant Director of Facilities and Events, bears a similar perception of the campus issue.

"The start of the Spring semester is typically the busiest time of year for

collegiate fitness centers, and the RecPlex is no exception," he explained. "Patrons are following through on New Year's resolutions, students are getting prepared for Spring Break and with less daylight and colder temperatures, coming inside for a workout is a more attractive option."

Could New Year's resolutions be the culprit of this unsuitable phenomenon? Students and faculty agree that these masses stem from ambitious students with gym-cen

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-Alexander White '25

tered goals. However, these resolutions may not be the only culprit worthy of blame.

Sophomore Alexander White is a university student employed at the RecPlex. The way he sees it, this overpopulation is a "twofold" problem.

"As it's known, a typical New Year's Resolution is working out, which is a good thing. However, when you have 'the largest class in Fairfield's history,' all potentially thinking similar things, the RecPlex falls into an overpopulation issue," he said. "Along with other places on campus, we are having issues accommodating everyone comfortably."

With the university's recent

housing and admissions quandary, which highlighted the over-acceptance of students with minimal, available housing, this explanation is very agreeable.

Although the RecPlex was renovated in 2016, it was not renovated to fit over 5,000 students. The renovations, according to Olken-Dann, were constructed around an average class size of 1,000 students, which is evidently not the case in 2023. In fact, total enrollment increased almost 800 students from the years 2016 to 2021, from an undergraduate and graduate count of 4,559 to 5,311, according to Fairfield University's 2022 Fact Book.

Regardless of which area of the gym they utilize, students have faced dysfunctional and cramped gym experiences that do not seem to be improving.

Sophomore student Natalie O'Brien shares that frustration. "I usually go [to the gym] between 11 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. following whichever morning classes I have, and it is very busy [during that period]."

"I like to use the treadmill, and on the upper floor of the RecPlex the treadmills are almost always full when I go," she continued. "I come with a backup workout, just in case, but usually end up lucky enough to get upstairs right as someone is getting off a treadmill."

While O'Brien has not resorted to changing her gym time or schedule, other students have, although their results do not show much improvement.

Sophomore Megan Farrell reported her countless efforts to make her gym experience this semester just a little bit better.

"I have tried going at different times of the day, changing up my 'split,' or gym schedule, and even performing other exercises to substitute for some of my planned exercises," Farrell explained.

"After doing all of this," she continued, "I have found that switching

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FUSA to Hold 76th Annual Presidential Election

By Brooke Lathe
Executive Editor

The Fairfield University Student Association is now on the hunt for its 76th president as the candidacy process is now in full swing. Feb. 1 marked the beginning of the strenuous, six-part campaign process that will last one month.

What does the FUSA President do?

According to the current FUSA President, Jordan Gale '23, the role acts as the liaison between Fairfield University students and Fairfield University administrators. They represent the student body by communicating their needs while also spearheading some of the biggest school-wide events, such as the Spring Concert and President's Ball.

"Normally, students aren't able to speak directly to President [Mark] Nemec or other higher-up administrators at Fairfield, which is why this role is so important," Gale explains. "I am able to hear student concerns, share that information with those who are in charge and make a difference."

Who Can Run?

Anyone can run to be FUSA's next president except for those in the graduating class of '23 as it is a position for the 2023-2024 academic school year. Students who are looking to run for university office and believe they have the leadership and organizational skills to take on the job are encouraged to sign up on Life@Fairfield.

For those who declare and are deemed eligible (they are in both good academic and social standing with the university), the candidate will then receive their individual petition where they must collect at least 200 signatures to get on the election ballot.

Most candidates will then advertise their expertise through social media, posters around campus, QR codes and more. Petitions will close on Feb. 16, but if a student does not attain the 200 needed signatures, they still have the opportunity to run for president as a write-in.

When will the Candidates Debate?

During the following week on Feb. 21 at 7 p.m., the annual presidential debate will occur in the Lower Level Barone Campus Center. As explained by

FUSA Court Chief Justice Caroline Cody '25, "This event is hosted by the court as we facilitate it and prepare a number of questions [for the candidates] ranging from their platforms to campus-wide issues." The candidates will have to answer questions with no preparation.

The audience and student body will also have the opportunity to ask questions during the debate and hear live answers from each running pair.

To do this, you must write your question on a notecard and hand them in before the start of the debate.

As a result, this nighttime event is a great opportunity to learn more about each candidate and their platform as they reveal their values on the spot.

How Can I Vote?

The voting ballot opens on Life@Fairfield from Feb. 23 to Feb. 28 at 5 p.m. Throughout those days, you will receive multiple emails that serve as reminders, directions and updates for the voting process.

Around campus, you may spot scattered posters and lawn signs with QR codes in academic buildings and residence halls that will bring you to the voting site, making it more accessible. Tables will also be camped out in the Daniel Grace Tully Dining Commons encouraging you to vote.

When Will We Know Who Is Elected?

Two hours after the ballot closes, the results are announced at the election party held in the LLBCC on Tuesday, Feb. 28 at 7 p.m. Refreshments and catering will be provided for attendees.

All students are welcome to celebrate and congratulate FUSA's 76th President.




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Compiled by Kathleen Morris
Information contributed by the
Department of Public Safety.

1/31/23
11:00 a.m.
There was a two-car accident on Langguth Road. No injuries were reported.

2/3/23
10:30 p.m.
Two students were found in possession of marijuana and paraphernalia in Meditz Hall. The items were confiscated and students were referred to the Dean of Students.

2/3/23
10:30 p.m.
An exit sign was ripped down in Meditz Hall. No suspects were reported.

2/4/23
1:00 a.m.
Five students in Meditz Hall were found in possession of marijuana and paraphernalia. The items were confiscated and the students were referred to the Dean of Students.

2/4/23
3:30 p.m.
A student in Campion Hall reported that someone stole a lamp from her room. No suspects were reported.

2/4/23
11:20 p.m.
Meditz Hall was evacuated due to a heavy odor of gasoline. Officers located the source of the odor in a room and removed it. Students were then permitted to re-enter and the incident was documented and referred to the Dean of Students.

2/6/23
11:07 a.m.
It was reported to the Department of Public Safety that a suspicious male was taking photos in the Recreational Complex. The suspicious

New Semester Sees Uptick in RecPlex Users

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up the time of day, what I am working out and what exercises I am doing really has no impact on how efficient my workout is now that the RecPlex is so busy with students.” Farrell further conveyed her frustration in setting aside one to two hours each day just to fit a comprehensive workout into her schedule. There is an unpredictability present in going to the gym right now; students cannot be sure at which time they will be able to truly enjoy their workout, and at which time they will wish they skipped it entirely. Olken-Dann claimed the RecPlex peak times are Monday through Thursday from 3 p.m. to 9 p.m. when the day is ending and students typically finish their classes. Students, however, have expressed that “peak time” is “all the time.” “Whenever I go to the gym, it always [appears that] that time is a busy time. In reality, every time is a busy time,” said Engren. Whether it is 8 a.m. or 8 p.m., the gym has shown itself to be packed. RecPlex staff has come to notice the negative effects this increased participation has brought to its students. White stated that he mainly works on the weekends, which has frequently been the gym’s slowest time. However, this semester is proving to be much different than previous ones. “During one of my shifts, all of the basketballs were out, almost every treadmill was taken, most of the Lower Level rooms were taken and the weight room had tons of people in it,” White said. He further claimed this occurrence had never happened in the past, “especially on a Saturday.”

One of White’s coworkers, Jenna Larochelle ‘25, described a similar situation regarding limited and sometimes a lack of desired equipment, especially basketballs. “At some of our busiest times, around 8 p.m. to 10 p.m., we run out of basketballs,” she said. “For this reason, I do think the field house is affected [by this issue] because people are scrambling to try and get the basketballs they want and open court space.” She continued to say that with the increased amount of intramurals that take place in the RecPlex gymnasium, court availability has decreased as well. RecPlex administration encourages students to utilize their “Live Count” system, located on the university app and on the RecPlex’s website. The system was created during the Covid-19 pandemic to help limit the number of students in each area of the gym; it displays a capacity percentage for each specific section, such as the treadmills and the weight room. Currently, it is used by staff to maintain order throughout the gym and for students to check the capacity of an area before arrival. It is an efficient way for students to plan their visits around large crowds. Students have declared a need for a RecPlex expansion in order to accommodate its eager participants. Farrell, for instance, pointed out the inadequate equipment-to-student ratio. “I hear so many people complain about the fact that we have one bench press and lack many other machines,” she said. “Just looking at the space we have for the weight room can show anyone that we simply need more space.” Kabel stated that RecPlex administration is “continuously evaluating the layout of the floor equipment to best optimize for users.” Before winter break, they rearranged the weight room equipment to create a better flow, and they are now in the process of purchasing equipment most popular to users, particularly treadmills and free weights, such as squat racks and incline bench presses. Some students anticipate this “New Year” crowd to die down within the next month. O’Brien predicted this decline “partially because of the New Year’s resolution rush, and partially because people’s schedules change [with] school work and other activities.” Yet, others are not so confident. With the growing population of the school, a busy gym might be the new norm. Nonetheless, students and RecPlex staff are happy to see such a strong turnout towards physical activity. Farrell relays that a packed gym promotes a “well-balanced college experience.” “I think that it is a good problem for the school to have,” she said. The RecPlex staff and administration has been nothing but positive and supportive towards students during this conflicting time. Kabel ensures the efforts of their team to “identify and execute practical improvements” to establish a “positive fitness experience.” Olken-Dann advises students to enjoy the RecPlex during non-peak times in order to take full advantage of their gym opportunities. Moreover, he expressed the gratitude of himself and the RecPlex for having such devoted users: “We are pleased that the student body, and campus community, find the RecPlex as a place they regularly fit into their mind, body and health routines.”

Rev. Bryan Massingale Shares Importance of ‘Spirituality for Racial Justice’ Within the Church

By Grace Lannigan
Contributing Writer

The Regina A. Quick Center for the Arts hosted Reverend Bryan N. Massingale for his lecture “Spirituality for Racial Justice” on Tuesday, Jan. 31. The event was presented by Fairfield University’s Center for Catholic Studies, in tandem with the Office for Mission and Ministry, and Fairfield University Student Organization. Priest in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee and a Professor of Theological and Social Ethics at Fordham University, Father Massingale harnesses his platform as a religious and educational leader to highlight the intersection between spirituality and racial justice. Father Massingale’s connection to the Catholic faith and his desire to bring others into discipleship has compelled him to channel his efforts into re-imagining the way that the Catholic Church and the general public views the intersection between Blackness and human spirituality. “If racism at its core is a soul sickness, then we need to provide a remedy that can reach the inner reaches of the human secret,” said Fr. Massingale while stating that sweeping changes in societal attitudes and dispositions begin with interior changes in the human heart. He also emphasized that in a society where the humanity of Black lives is undervalued, it is our call to lead with love and demonstrate inclusivity. Professor Massingale notes how the Black Lives Matter movement, at its inception, aimed to call attention to the systemic devaluing of Black lives. Similarly, American Catholics must contend with the many ways that the institutions of the Church have been tarnished. More specifically, by certain exclusionary dispositions that have fostered division and disunity as opposed to engendering love and a universal understanding of spirituality. Using the Catholic Sacrament of Penance as a model, Fr. Massingale demonstrates how an uninhibited “examination of conscience” can promote an honest encounter with both personal and historical demonstrations of racism. This entails both self-reflection and proactive listening to the stories of those who have been wronged, both in the Church and in secular society. Harkening back to historical Judaic practices, Fr. Massingale encourages communities to engage in “lamentation”—an ancient practice where members of the community unite to discuss the ways in which society has advanced and instances where it has fallen short. Difficult conversations, he says, will allow us to note the ways in which many American Catholics have neglected to see all people as one body in Christ and members of the universal Catholic community. The word metanoia is Greek for “conversion” or “re-orientation.” As described by Fr. Massingale, the depth of this reorientation is one of internal transformations within the heart and mind. This radical reorientation necessitates us to re-evaluate our views about the sacredness of every person. As an advocate for racial justice, Fr. Massingale notes that an authentic Christian reorientation necessitates us to grapple with our preconceived notions of the intersection between racial justice and spirituality. Racial metanoia is a paschal journey and a call to reimagine a racially just society. The process of engendering justice and equality within the Church begins at the individual level. Still, he states that it is only through the collective recognition of the ways in which the institutions of the Church have fallen short, that we can begin to secure discipleship for all. “Anti-blackness is a spiritual malady, a soul sickness, an interior malformation of a magnitude for which we lack words. An affliction that can only be healed when we learn how to love blackness,” said the professor from Fordham University.

Fr. Massingale also noted that there is a false innocence that happens when we either pretend to be oblivious to a problem or choose to ignore the issue because it does not impact us directly. The first step to combating racial injustice is to recognize the magnitude of its reach and begin to analyze

“ Anti-Blackness is a spiritual malady, a soul sickness, an interior malformation of a magnitude for which we lack words. An affliction that can only be healed when we learn how to love Blackness.” -Fr. Bryan N. Massingale

the implicit and explicit ways that we have participated in the perpetuation of inequality. Fairfield University Student Association Vice President Aliyah Seenauth ‘24 highlighted the importance of students attending events of this magnitude. “It is crucial for the student body to engage in events like these to learn things we may not necessarily hear in the classroom,” said Seenauth, who also co-organized the special lecture. Father Massingale closed the event by reminding the attendees that authentic Catholicism centers around love and acceptance for people of all backgrounds, and that it is only through the collective recognition of the beauty and individuality of each person that will enable us to work towards a society where Black lives are valued and cherished.

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A Commitment to Inclusive Excellence: SDMA Announces New Leadership

By Kathleen Morris
Assistant News Editor

Yolehema Felican '12 has been named Director of Student Diversity and Multicultural Affairs. Felican replaces Pejay Lucky, who now serves as the Assistant Dean for Student Success at Fairfield University's Bellarmine Campus. As a former Fairfield University student, Felican will be the first alumna to assume this role.

"This promotion is personal," Felican stated. "I unapologetically always talk about being the person I needed when I was a student here. So, it makes me look at things with a deeper lens to see who's not at the table."

As the new SDMA Director, Felican remains committed to inclusive excellence. She uses her platform to ensure that every student feels supported, stating that she works "tirelessly to amplify student voices to say, 'This is your school. I'm here to serve you to make your experience the best experience possible.'"

Aliyah Seenauth '24, Fairfield University Student Association Vice President, reflected on Felican's mentorship. "Yolehema has been a mentor to me since my first year. In my struggling times as a woman of color on this campus, I have turned to her for advice and guidance."

Seenauth values Felican's unique perspective as a former Stag. "She was also once a student at Fairfield and I find that learning from her experiences has been helpful. Yolehema is a powerhouse and it is so great to have a female lead in SDMA. I'm looking forward to all she will accomplish in her new position as director," Seenauth said.

Felican recalled a lesson she learned in elementary school: "In the second grade, my teacher would always say, 'show don't tell when you're writing something'. And I live off of that because you should show. I shouldn't have to say, 'you're welcome here' or 'your voice matters'. You should just feel that and you should know that. So, we have to be doing the work actively in order for you to feel that."

Kevin Camy, a member of the Class of 2026, expressed his gratitude for the positive impact Felican has had on his transition to the university.

"Yolehema was my Community Associate in my First Year Experience [course]. She always looked out for me and made sure I was exposed to and aware of every opportunity," Camy said.

After graduating from Fairfield University, Felican earned her Masters in Social Work at Fordham University and previously held the role of Fairfield's Associate Director of Student Diversity and Multicultural Affairs. As of Feb. 6, Karl Uzcategui will have stepped in as the Associate Director.

Previously, Uzcategui worked in the Office of Residence Life as the Area Coordinator

for Faber and Claver Hall and later Dolan and the Townhouses. Most recently, Uzcategui was the Student Success Coach for Online Graduate Programs and is a Doctoral Student in Educational Leadership at Fairfield University.

"As a Fairfield local, first-generation college student, from immigrant parents, I value opportunities to engage with different cultures and customs. My hope is to promote an environment where community members can become comfortable being uncomfortable when engaging in identity exploration," Uzcategui expressed.

Uzcategui continued by saying that "we all have a story that is waiting to be shared if you are willing to have an open heart and mind."

The energy within the Office of Student Diversity and Multicultural Affairs demonstrates the power of the faculty's work in action. The office radiates a palpable sense of joy, a vibrant space with walls adorned with messages of inspiration. Students are encouraged to take advantage of their Open Door Policy and stop by the office to study, grab a snack and hang out.

Located in the lower level of the Barone Campus Center, the office regularly hosts programs that allow students to learn about the rich culture and identities of Fairfield's student body. During the month of February, the office will have a series of events celebrating Black History Month.

On Feb. 16, there will be a showing of "One Love". The film highlights the intersectionality and struggles of the LGBTQ+ community in Jamaica.

Felican discussed the Black History Lunch and Learn, which is "aimed to educate students about the African diaspora

“My hope is to promote an environment where community members can become comfortable being uncomfortable when engaging in identity exploration.”

- Karl Uzcategui, SDMA Associate Director

and learn how Blackness is shown through different cultures." The event will be held on Feb. 21 at 12:00 p.m. in the BCC 206.

The "Lyrically Black" Listening Party will follow on Feb. 24, enabling students to pair their love for music with an educational aspect.

This year marks the two hundred and



Photo Contributed by SDMA Office

From left to right: Yolehema Felican '12 and Karl Uzcategui, Director and Associate Director of the Student Diversity and Multicultural Affairs Office, respectively.

second anniversary of the Tulsa Race Massacre. In 1921, white rioters violently invaded and burned down Tulsa's Greenwood District. Felician described the area as "an economic and cultural mecca." The massacre caused extreme devastation, resulting in the destruction of Black homes and businesses.

To honor lives impacted by this horrific racial terror attack, Reclaiming Black Wall Street will showcase the Black-owned businesses of Fairfield students and alumni. The event will feature vendor tables, displaying the incredible work of Black business owners within the Fairfield community.

The final event will be a performance by the ZuZu African Acrobats on Mar. 1 at 6:00 p.m. in the Lower Level BCC. The group hails from Tanzania, memorializing two thousand years of history through art and entertainment. Their gravity-defying stunts represent the beauty of the Bantu culture of East Africa. Audiences will be invited to engage with members of the cast and enjoy a show that includes human pyramids, contortion and comedy.

Felican underscored the importance of acknowledging Black history beyond this month's celebrations. She emphasizes the necessity of recognizing diversity on a personal and institutional level. "If you want to learn about Black history, don't only take the opportunity to learn

about Black history in February. Seek out other opportunities to learn about Black history that are independent of, or that are outside of February particularly," Felican said.

The onus must not be placed solely on individuals and organizations already doing the work, but on the entire population. "This is all of our jobs ... to be in community and to be in solidarity with the Black community on an everyday basis," Felican stressed. "We want to make Black history part of our routine here at Fairfield, but also in America."

It is evident that the Office of Student Diversity and Multicultural Affairs will continue to initiate meaningful progress in the pursuit of equity on Fairfield's campus.

In her new role, Felican inspires others to remember, "Black history is a part of every day, but we need to actively incorporate it into our everyday. I think if we do that, we're going to be [moving] in the right direction. Once you start to weave that into your every day, that's when things are going to change. It's kind of like making those small steps for that great impact every single day."

For more information, students are encouraged to visit the Office of Student Diversity and Multicultural Affairs in BCC 100.

Details about upcoming programming will be posted on Life@Fairfield and on Instagram @StagDiversity.



Photo Contributed by SDMA Office

The Student Diversity and Multicultural Affairs will be hosting a series of events as a way to celebrate Black History Month. Students are encouraged to participate in them.

Opinion

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A Housing Lottery Survival Guide

By Mary Bevans
Contributing Writer

Where you live on campus has a big impact on your college experience. With many housing options for every class year, there's something out there for you that will best suit your needs. The only thing standing in your way is the housing lottery.

While as a first year, the process may seem daunting, by the time you're in your junior year, you will have mastered its many quirks and have the ability to choose your preferred housing with your group of friends or chosen roommates. But first, you need to know the basics.

As a senior, it's safe to say that I have had my fair share of ups and downs with this system. I attained housing through the Residential College program one year, I've been placed in the supplemental lottery in another and even left for summer break not knowing where I would live.

During my time at Fairfield, I have lived in Regis Hall, 70 McCormick Road, 47 Mahan Road and now Barnyard Manor. This is what I have learned in my experience on the rollercoaster ride that is the Fairfield University Housing Lottery.

One of the most important things to consider when deciding on your housing is what you need the most. Are you a person who thrives in a socially active area? Are you someone who values their own space or requires more quiet? Is there a specific part of campus you would prefer to live closer to? All of these may seem obvious, but the more you consider them, the more likely you are to be happy with where you are living the following year. The Southside and Village are great choices if you want a more laid-back vibe.

If you're the opposite, consider the townhouses or the quad, depending on which year you're going into.

Next—and I cannot stress this enough—make sure to find your housing group early and quickly. This area tends to burn many students when the lottery comes around. If you already have roommates, congratulations! You're ahead of the game, just make sure to double check you have enough (but not too many) in your group for your first choice and double check you've all added each other as roommates in the housing director portal (which you can find on my.fairfield.edu).

You don't have enough people in your group yet? Don't worry. Residence Life sends out info about the housing lottery every year, what you need to look out for is the link to the roommate finder spreadsheet.

Once you fill out your info, you'll have access to a document with other students' information about what they're looking for. Maybe they want to live in the townhouses but need one or two more people, or a single individual wants to join a group. This document is great, just make sure you reach out to other students before the deadline.

Once you have your group, you'll get an email with your number telling you when you can choose your housing. One of the caveats about the housing system is that, as the name suggests, it's a lottery. Sometimes no matter how prepared you and your group may be, it doesn't always work out. Your group may have to split or your number may be too low. If that is the case, you'll be enrolled in the supplemental lottery.

This works just like the regular one, except there's a little less choice. If you need a roommate or your group needs to consolidate with another, Re-

sLife has a list of students who will need to participate in the supplemental lottery. If you call or email them, they will give it to you, and you will be able to email other people in the same situation.

Keep in mind that just like the regular lottery, there is a chance your number could also be too low this time around. If that is the case, don't panic. You'll be sent a survey where you can list your housing preferences, and ResLife will place you over the summer.

If this happens to you, don't lose hope! People study abroad, they drop out of their group and sometimes they trans-

fer out. There's still a chance that you will be able to live in your first or second choice.

Whatever happens, just remember that you're not on your own. You can call ResLife with questions, ask upperclassmen for more advice, or read through the information booklet that gets sent out.

Even if you don't get your first choice of housing, that doesn't mean your year won't be as good as it can be. As someone who has been through the wringer with housing, take it from me—it will work out!



Liz Morin/ The Mirror

This is the view of the Quad from Campion Hall. The Quad is where first-year students reside and it consists of five residence halls.

Las Vetass Is The Best Coffee Shop Downtown

By Jacqui Rigazio
Assistant Vine Editor

One of the perks of being a Fairfield University student is enjoying everything that our lively college town has to offer. From fancy Italian restaurants to consignment shops, Downtown Fairfield has it all. Taking trips downtown always provides a fun and relaxing break from the daily grind of school and classwork.

For me, visiting downtown Fairfield always includes a visit to Las Vetass Lounge. This quirky and unique coffee shop is without a doubt my favorite spot in town.

Visiting Las Vetass never fails to lift my spirits. Conveniently located between the Sacred Heart Community Theater and Playa Bowls, Las Vetass is in the perfect spot for students to pop in and grab a coffee. What makes Las Vetass stand out

from all other coffee shops is the decor. Neon signs, colorful posters and quotes painted on the walls are what give Las Vetass a homey feel. There is barely any wall space that isn't occupied by some kind of art. Mugs hang from the ceiling and line the perimeter of the coffee shop. These mugs always felt like a nice personal touch to me, since each one has a different pattern and design. The overall decor in Las Vetass is quite random—an assortment of things that I never would think to display in a coffee shop—but somehow it works perfectly to give Las Vetass its distinctive character. Each small detail that goes into the atmosphere brings this local spot to life and is why I keep coming back.

Along with the unique aura, the food and drinks at Las Vetass are definitely worth stopping by for. As a coffee lover myself, my standards are quite high when it comes to a classic iced coffee. Las Vetass has never disappointed. Las Vetass has all the options that any coffee lover would need—espresso, lattes, cappuccinos—you name it! They also have many flavors to choose from, and even some specialty flavors as well.

One of my personal favorites is “the Turtle,” which is a hot or iced coffee with caramel and mocha flavoring. Another specialty of theirs is the raspberry

and white chocolate mocha latte that I am dying to try, along with the Nutella hot chocolate. If you're not a coffee person, no worries! An abundance of smoothies, shakes, juices and teas are also offered for those who aren't in the caffeine mood.

Along with my drink of choice, I am always sure to grab a bite to eat. My go-to meal at Las Vetass is always a breakfast sandwich or french toast. Their breakfast menu provides many options of quality food that have a home-cooked feel which is huge for us college students. Along with breakfast sandwiches and french toast, their breakfast menu offers bagels, muffins, coffee cakes, pancakes and omelets, just to name a few!

If you're not in the breakfast mood, Las Vetass has you covered with a lunch menu as well. Although I've never personally tried their lunch, they have many different sandwiches, grilled cheeses and quesadillas that I will be sure to try on my next visit.

One of the best things about the food and drinks at Las Vetass is the prices. On average I spend ten dollars on a meal and a medium iced coffee, not including tip. These prices are very reasonable and completely worth it to get a quality meal and delicious coffee in a vibey environment. I don't justify spending

money on many things, but I will always drop a few bucks on a visit to Las Vetass.

Once I have my coffee and breakfast sandwich I always whip out my laptop to grind away at some work. Las Vetass is such a productive environment, as it is usually filled with fellow students or Fairfield residents who are zoned in on their own work as well. Typing away on my laptop as I sip my coffee and sit in one of the colorful chairs by the window never fails to make me feel like the main character.

The huge floor-to-ceiling windows at the front of the coffee shop definitely set this vibe, as the sunlight streaming in gives off warm and encouraging energy. This coffee shop is the perfect place to chip away at an essay, read a book or casually respond to some emails. No matter what kind of work I have on my plate, I always feel ten times more productive in Las Vetass.

Out of all the places in Fairfield, it's no wonder why Las Vetass takes my number one spot. The homey atmosphere and quality food and drinks make it a destination for any Fairfield student's bucket list. No matter how many coffee shops I encounter, none of them match up to Las Vetass Lounge.

If you're ever looking for a new study spot or change of scenery, I promise you that Las Vetass is a game changer!



Club Spotlight: Humanitarian Action Club

By Christina Silvestri
Contributing Writer

The Humanitarian Action Club is a service-based club run by the Center for Social Impact. The club's main mission is to raise awareness and funds to support diverse social actions worldwide.

Fellows Julia Neal '23, Evan Keiser '24, Jackie Campbell '24 and Bobby Schattle '25 all work together diligently to brainstorm and organize different events throughout the fall and spring semesters that connect the Fairfield University community to bigger global events that need attention.

The big fall event is named Fall Fest and typically takes place in early November, with 100% of proceeds going to the Connecticut Institute for Refugees and Immigrants.

The festival is held outside on the lawn in front of the Barone Campus Center with a petting zoo, DIY projects and pieing a friend in the face. However, not all of the events are as large as Fall Fest.

For Halloween, club members dressed up in costumes and hosted a “trunk-or-treat” in front of the Caroline House in Bridgeport, Conn.

Here, members handed out hand-made goodie bags and candy to participating kids. The Caroline House provides

immigrant women with English language classes and vocational skills in an effort to help them and their families adapt to life in the United States.

Not only does this allow these children to celebrate Halloween safely, but it also serves as an excellent way for club members to have hands-on experience making a difference.

The Spring semester calls for more fundraising. The big spring event hosted by the Humanitarian Action Club works to raise funds for the Wine to Water organization. In the quad, we host a W|W (Wine to Water) Filter Build, where the club sets up tables and students are invited to assemble water filters to send overseas to places that need them.

It is an easy and accessible way for college students to aid the global water crisis. Fellow Jackie Campbell shared that “I joined Humanitarian Action Club because it's a great group of people that share a want to better their local and global communities.”

“This is my first semester officially as a Fellow, and it's so exciting being able to be more hands-on with our upcoming projects, or help others with theirs,” she continued. The club meets bi-weekly on Thursdays for informational meetings in the Center for Social Impact.



Students of the Jesuit Universities Humanitarian Action Network (JUHAN) build a house for "Habitat for Humanity" in Bridgeport, Conn.

Social Media Is The Modern Day Silent Addiction

By Brooke Lathe
Executive Editor

If I were to ask you to unlock your phone, open up your settings application and show me your screen time, would you be embarrassed? A few months ago I would've run away from anyone who dared to ask me that question and silently lecture myself before opening back up the TikTok app.

So, I made it a point to add it to my resolutions for the new year—something that I pride myself on strictly following. My three major goals are as follows: read 50 books, consistently work out and limit my screen time to an hour a day.

With more than a month into 2023, I have read eight books and showed up to the gym every Monday through Friday. And yet, my lousy screen time average remains at five hours. Why is that?

It seems to be a weekly conversation with friends, family or even classmates that social media has somehow crept upon us out of nowhere, becoming a constant in our daily lives and never leaving. I mean, it's so bad that sometimes I catch myself exiting an app just to immediately reopen it. I'm embarrassed even admitting that but it's the truth and one that I believe others do as well.

I've noticed that we are also just no longer comfortable sitting alone with our thoughts or in mere silence. Most people I know need it to go to bed, including me (even though the bright light makes it harder to fall asleep, so the joke is on us) or bring it to us on our quick bathroom trips. It's the first thing we check when we wake up. We use it to scroll through while using public transportation, when we're eating at a nice restaurant or when we find ourselves bored amidst a conversation.

Our attention span has become tainted due to quick videos and short captions, and it is

a habit that remains because our brain reads it as being productive. As quoted by Nancy Deangelis, Ph.D., CRNP, Director of Behavioral Health, in Jefferson Health, “Social media platforms drive surges of dopamine to the brain to keep consumers coming back over and over again.”

Of course, I'm not saying that we shouldn't indulge in things that we enjoy—hence why I still wanted to allow myself one hour of screen time, not zero. I really enjoy using online platforms to find new recipes that I hadn't thought of, songs I would've never found or fashion trends that I think suit my style.

When these resources become a need rather than a want, however, that's when I think it becomes a major problem.

In 2019, Lee Health ran a survey, in which they found that “40 percent of U.S. online users aged 18 to 22 years reported feeling addicted to social media [and] five percent of respondents from that age group admitted the statement ‘I

am addicted to social media’ described them completely.”

It's a scary reality and one that I want to genuinely improve upon, while still being able to enjoy its presence in small doses. A few tips that I had come up with for myself in the past week to aid me in this process is to charge my phone across the room at night, so I am not tempted to check it if I am having trouble falling asleep and it is not the first thing I look at when I wake up.

Next, is just simply setting up a screen time limit in my settings. If I genuinely need my phone, I can override it, but it will serve as a strong reminder that it's time to pick up a book instead.

I know I'm not the only one who struggles with depending on their phone for quick bursts of entertainment, so I suggest that you try to start thinking of ways to reduce your screen time as well before it's too late to reverse your harmful habit.

“A LETTER TO MY PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE”

TOMMY COPPOLA
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

For those that do not know me, my name is Thomas Coppola, otherwise known as Tommy, and I am the new Editor-in-Chief for The Fairfield Mirror!

I just wanted to take a moment to address a letter to myself that I wrote a year ago in this very column. For context, I wrote this “letter to my future self” when I took on the role of Managing Editor. I'm not going to reproduce the entire piece, but I'll explain my thoughts on the highlights.

For starters, I congratulated myself and then promptly asked myself some questions:

What have you accomplished? Have you continued to make The Mirror a more transparent and responsible voice for the students? Have you held yourself to the highest standards of student journalism as possible?

I have accomplished a whole year as the Managing Editor, elevating my skills in investigative journalism and finding my footing in a constantly moving environment.

I hope I have made The Mirror as good as it can be, and in my journalistic efforts, I have had the chance to write about the new Leo D. Mahoney Arena, construction on Regis West and much more. I also asked myself about the Sports section, which I previously was the editor for, and was curious as to what it looks like now. It looks way cooler now than it did when I was running it, for the record.

I also asked myself how I'd manage the role (no

pun intended) with the new, higher workload of reading every article that comes in, managing the radio show and social media accounts and more. I think I handled it well, I hope, and in my current role, I want to see the evolution of all of those things continually. Although I told myself that “change is scary sometimes,” I think I handled that change with some grace, and hopefully, in my new role, I'll be able to do the same.

Looking more toward the future, I'm excited to see what we're able to do this new year. I think it will be exciting to see where the content of the paper goes and what direction our style turns.

With that being said, I'll treat this second part almost as another letter to myself once my time with The Mirror is up next year. My hope is that the quality of journalism and integrity will continue to rise, and I really look forward to people noticing this. If future me is reading this, I hope that the semesters to come are successful and that the vision for The Mirror is executed to its greatest potential.

As Editor-in-Chief, I want to inspire students and members of the campus community to challenge themselves in their abilities by writing for us at The Mirror.

The diversity of thoughts, opinions, ideas and viewpoints is possibly the most valuable and important part of the entire process of publishing new issues of The Mirror each week, and the content we produce could not function without the hard work of all of our contributing writers and staff!

The Vine



Editor: Abigail White

What Were Stags Up To This Winter Break?



By Max Limric
Managing Editor

Ah, winter break ... I'm sure many of us are missing it now that the semester is starting to ramp up again.

So let's reminisce for a minute and learn about what some of our fellow Stags got up to!

Skiing was a popular winter activity many indulged in over the break.

Junior Tug Senesac skied Mount Snow in Vermont, but also read romantic poetry.

First-year Ben McKeon went skiing too, but he also went rock climbing—indoors, of course.

Additionally, he saw his brothers whom he hadn't seen for a long time.

First-year Zachary Siwec also skied, and states that he "went skiing every weekend at Holiday Valley," a ski resort outside of Buffalo, NY.

Siwec also worked out with his high school crew team over break.

First-year Cara Kochakian's break consisted of the many softball practices and workouts she had to stay on top of.

But she adds that "it kept [her] active and

busy over break."

Additionally, she got her wisdom teeth removed which she states "wasn't much fun," but now that it's over, she's happy to be back.

Others traveled, some back home and others on vacation.

Sophomore Jennifer Fajardo went to Colombia with her family for winter break, where she "had such an amazing time with [her] cousins!"

She also got to see her favorite artist, Maluma, in concert.

Junior Thomas Drillien went back home to Auckland, New Zealand.

There he went on a golf trip with his family and caught up with friends.

Sophomore Nohea Breeden went home to O'ahu, Hawaii and boogie boarded, went



to the beach every day and ate lots of Yakiniiku (cook your own meat).

Junior Jackie Campbell went to Bath, England, but couldn't even take a bath—she was disappointed.

She had tea in the Pump Room and went to the Cotswolds and had a tour guide who used to drive for Jay-Z and Beyoncé.

Others traveled more locally, as senior Ashley Shutt visited her friend's house at the University of Rhode Island and did nothing but eat buffalo chicken dip and watch the "Fifty Shades of Grey" trilogy ... oh, and drink champagne for six hours a day.

Junior Kelly Keating went on a food tour in Greenwich Village, N.Y.

She claims that the best thing she ate was a rice ball.

She promised it looked and tasted better than it sounds.

Senior Alejandro Serrano also took trips to New York, where he hung out with friends and enjoyed exploring the city.

When not in the city, he spent time with his grandma who traveled from Mexico.

Graduate student in the school counseling program Janae Staltaro took her cousin to The Hip-Hop Nutcracker at the Shubert Theatre in New Haven, Conn.

She gives it a 10/10. She also worked as a substitute a lot—like a lot.

Some Stags went on trips, others partook in winter sports and many worked.

While I'm sure we're happy to be back, summer break can't come quickly enough!

Art In Focus: Spring Moon At Ninomiya Beach



Photo Coutesy of embark.fairfield.edu

Dr. Michelle DiMarzo speaks on "Spring Moon at Ninomiya Beach" at Art In Focus Event.

By Jacqui Rigazio
Assistant Vine Editor

On Thursday, Feb. 2, the Fairfield University Art Museum held a virtual "Art in Focus" event to discuss "Spring Moon at Ninomiya Beach" by Kawase Hasui.

This event was hosted by Michelle DiMarzo of Fairfield's Art History & Visual Culture Department.

DiMarzo's enthusiasm and interest in this piece was infectious, and she presented many interesting details about the art.

"Spring Moon at Ninomiya Beach" was gifted to Fairfield University in 2018 and has been in the Art Department's possession ever since.

This piece is of the Japanese woodblock print production technique, which is a very popular artform in Japanese cultures.

Many people would recognize "The Great Wave," which is the most famous Japanese woodblock art piece.

Kawase Hasui, the artist behind "Spring Moon at Ninomiya Beach," was known as one of the last great woodblock masters.

He has created over 600 prints in his lifetime.

The majority of his work is of nighttime landscapes that are lit by the moon, and "Spring Moon at Ninomiya Beach" definitely falls into this category.

DiMarzo was sure to point out the calmness and mood of tranquility that encompasses this work.

Along with this peaceful feeling, many viewers are drawn to the figure who is depicted strolling along the beach.

There is a level of ambiguity surrounding this figure, leading viewers to wonder who it is and what they are doing on the beach.

Perhaps they are out for a peaceful nighttime stroll or maybe they are looking for something that they had lost.

The beautiful scenery in this work of art really transports viewers to the scene, and it is easy to imagine the peaceful sound of the waves lapping against the shoreline in the darkness of night.

The clouds were particularly interesting, as DiMarzo pointed out that there is a darker level of clouds right at the water's horizon.

This leads viewers to question whether this is a darker cloud or if it is another landmass in the distance.

DiMarzo commented on how she wondered if the figure continued their walk along the beach if they would end up on the land on the other side.

The ripples of light on the water's surface are one of the most alluring aspects of this work.

Not only is this a beautiful feature, but the work that goes into carving out wood blocks to create these tiny details is amazing.

At first look, this piece may seem simple to the common viewer, but those with background knowledge of woodblock printing are aware of the true work and attention to detail that goes into creating a piece as intricate as this.

This "Art in Focus" event discussing "Spring Moon at Ninomiya Beach" by Kawase Hasui was very interesting and engaging, as it pointed out many details and interesting facts about this artwork that may go unnoticed by the common eye.

Bundle Up! Best Activities For The Winter Weather

By Erica Schindler
Contributing Writer

Southern Connecticut's cold, windy weather is coming in strong at Fairfield University. With temperatures dropping into the single digits, it can be hard to find things to do while staying warm. Here are some fun activities you can do in your dorm or around campus this winter!

HOST A MOVIE NIGHT IN WITH FRIENDS

This is a great way to spend time with friends without having to spend any time out in the cold. Gather your friends in your dorm for a night in. Netflix, Amazon Prime, Hulu and other streaming services are home to a nearly endless supply of movies.

If you don't have a television in your dorm, apartment or townhouse, movies on these services can be streamed right on your laptop. There are also small projectors available for purchase online that are great space-savers for dorm liv-

ing. Pair your movie with microwave popcorn and other snacks and enjoy spending time staying warm in the great indoors.

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF YOUR LOUNGE'S KITCHEN

If you're living in a dorm this year, you're probably aware of the lounges on some floors of your building. The communal kitchens found in dorm lounges are often an underutilized perk.

While sheltering from the cold weather, take full advantage of this amenity. Baking is a great way to pass time, especially during these cold winter months. Plus, it leaves you with a treat to enjoy once you've finished.

Either alone or with roommates or friends, baking is the perfect cold-weather activity. What you choose to bake is up to you: it can be as simple as premade Pillsbury sugar cookies or as complicated as an extravagant cake recipe. Be sure to clean up the kitchen so that the next baker isn't

left with a mess.

Attend indoor events in your building and on campus

If you want to get out of your room while still staying warm, take advantage of some of the many events offered on campus. RAs in each building regularly host programs for their residents. This is a fun way to connect with the other students on your floor while making a craft or participating in another activity.

Fairfield @ Night also hosts a variety of events for students. Every Thursday, Friday and Saturday night, the organization runs events like movie nights and crafts. These fun, free events are super convenient and a perfect way to do something different on a cold night.

EXPLORE A NEW PART OF CAMPUS

If you're willing to get outside and take on the cold weather, there are plenty of interesting spots around Fairfield's campus to explore.

This winter, visit a part of campus you've never been to before. You can take a trip to the Fairfield University Art Museum.

This is a great way to spend a cold afternoon—you can shelter from the wind and learn a thing or two at the same time. Another great spot on campus to explore is the "hidden" zen garden. This is a beautiful place to walk around; just make sure to bundle up.

BRAVE THE COLD FOR A FAIRFIELD TRADITION

When we eventually (finally) get a snowy day here in Fairfield, head outside to enjoy a classic winter activity: sledding. Every

year, families and students alike can be found gathered in front of the DiMenna-Nyselius Library to sled down the hill. With enough snow on the ground, this big hill makes for the perfect sledding spot. Gather your winter gear, grab a sled and join in on the fun!

Sometimes it seems like there is nothing to do on a cold winter day, but these ideas can help you pass the time until the warmer weather comes along.

Next time you're unsure of how to make the most of a freezing day, pull out this list for some fun ideas.



The Meaning Of Musicality Explored By The Quick Center

By Abigail White
Head Vine Editor

On Wednesday, Feb. 1, the Regina A. Quick Center for the Arts welcomed composer-pianist, Vijay Iyer, in affiliation with the Fredrickson Family Innovation Lab to present "Musicalities: Scenes of Sonic Mattering". Held in the Dolan School of Business Event Hall, Iyer's lecture prompted audience members to reflect upon what musicality really means.

Iyer has released two dozen critically acclaimed albums, and has received honors such as the MacArthur Fellowship, a Doris Duke Performing Artist Award, a United States Artist Fellowship, a Grammy nomination and the Alpert Award in the Arts. As professor of Music and African and African American Studies at Harvard, Iyer's research focuses primarily on the intersections between music studies, Black studies and the sciences.

"I am a music maker who has made it my practice to explore the limits of what I think music is," he said.

Referring to himself as a "reluctant" music scholar, he explained some of his early academic work and his development of the conception of "embodied music cognition." To Iyer, music is the sound of bodies in motion. Black music makers, Black

musical systems and Black methods are constantly confronted by the Eurocentric frameworks of music theory, musicality, etc. In examining the heavy western influence on the idea of musicality, Iyer emphasized that music is "first and foremost embodied human action." Music is the sound of bodies in motions. It is the

the human body can be constructed and policed. As our conception of what music is is heavily based on western standards and ideologies, there are various groups that are "hurled outside the musical world."

So, what is musicality? Iyer prompted audience members to ask themselves. A lot of times, this term

everyone has it. But can musicality emerge from the most unlikely circumstances from objects that may not even be considered musical? Can musicality emerge from the everyday happenings of life?

Iyer presented the audience with some examples from his own life. He and his sister banging noisily on a

memories, though these instances may not seem like our typical understanding of "musicality".

In a tweet, Iyer asked his followers "What's not musical but feels like music to you?" and shared his findings with the audience in his lecture. Some of the responses included cooking, poetry, laughter, white noise, wind, construction, sunlight, everything and more. They are thoughts, conceptions, objects, noises. Again, none of these are inherently musical, yet they feel like music to people, creating what Iyer defines as a "larger space of sonic mattering."

The end of the lecture was reserved for questions from a faculty panel including Michael Ciavaglia, professor of music, Dr. Tommy Xie, Professor of Journalism and Dr. Martha LaMonaco, Professor of Theater as well as questions from the audience.

As I grew up playing piano myself, I was fascinated by Iyer's conception of musicality. It is true that we learn there is a certain way music should sound, there are correct notes that should be played and there are certain types of music that are "real" music.

But Iyer emphasizes that musicality has no one meaning. Musicality is special, yet everyone has it; everyone has "musical memories". There is a larger space of sonic mattering.



Left to right: Dr. Martha LaMonaco, Dr. Tommy Xie, Michael Ciavaglia and Vijay Iyer at the "Musicalities: Scenes of Sonic Mattering" Event.

sound of everything we do.

"Both music and the human are political and ideological formations," Iyer explained.

He claimed that both music and

is used as a catchall. It implies that there is one correct way to make music; that there is one correct way music should sound. Musicality is considered something special, but

piano, his violin instructor pushing the leaf of a plant with his bow, his father honking the horn to the beat of the car stereo. Iyer explained these to be some of his fondest "musical"

Study Tips To Survive The Semester

By Fiona Killeen
Contributing Writer

Coming back to campus after a long and restful winter break spent with family and friends can stir some anxious feelings in the minds of students.

It may seem daunting to think about jumping back into the academic world of exams and deadlines. Luckily, the start of a new semester provides the perfect opportunity for students to reevaluate their studying approaches and consider adopting new methods. I have compiled a list of some of my most used strategies for battling academic anxiety.

If you feel like your method of studying has become ineffectual, it may be time to branch out and test out some new strategies. Experts in education have recommended retrieval and chunking as two effective and practical styles of retaining information. Retrieval involves recalling information that you previously learned by bringing it back into your mind. This is in contrast to cramming which can increase panic and lower long-term comprehension. Retrieval can enhance your ability to retain information

by reinforcing connections between your memory and material. “Chunking” is preferable if you need to retain information in your short-term memory. It incorporates separating information from larger groups into smaller, more manageable sections. This studying approach can be beneficial for improving your synthesizing capabilities since it allows a student to break down concepts into smaller groups.

It can be easy to become so wrapped up in studies that you neglect to participate in activities that are purely for enjoyment purposes. After all, the hallmark Fairfield traditions contribute so much to what being a Stag is all about. Thinking about the exciting activities that

you are going to take part in such as attending a basketball game at the Leo D. Mahoney Arena can also offer a source of motivation during grueling work weeks. Being able to look forward to an event can also help make a demanding week go by faster.

Yoga has been shown to reduce stress and promote relaxation. Practicing yoga can encourage your brain to release endorphins that boost your overall mood and help lessen stress levels.

The RecPlex offers weekly yoga classes among its other extensive fitness offerings. Think about attending a yoga class to take a break from academics while simultaneously working to alleviate anxiety.

Whether it’s thinking about long-term goals such as graduation, or an exciting summer internship, it can be helpful to keep sight of the end goal.

Sometimes it can seem monotonous to go each week, committing countless hours to complete tedious assignments. To combat this feeling of tedium, it can be auspicious to consider the bigger picture and your future achievements.

and ready to concentrate. Using a timer to manage and track your breaks can be helpful since it keeps you on schedule.

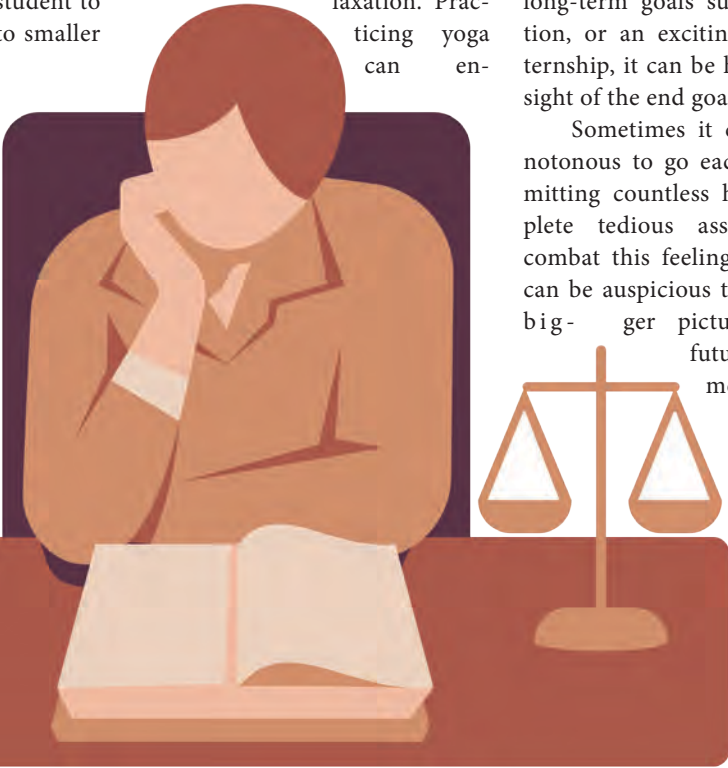
The Pomodoro method is a studying technique that emphasizes time management. The method incorporates completing 25-minute focused intervals of work. After completing 25 minutes of work, you then allocate a five-minute break.

This process is repeated three times before taking a 30-minute break and starting the cycle again. This strategy can effectively increase accountability for staying on task while also making assignments seem less daunting.

The winter months of the spring semester can appear bleak with periods of bitter coldness and long hours spent studying demanding material.

Taking time to look ahead to the warmer sunshine-filled days of studying in the quad on the picnic tables or taking a stroll next to The Sound can provide a source of encouragement.

Remember to keep everything in perspective and avail yourself of all of the comprehensive resources for academic success that Fairfield provides.



By Brooke Lathe
Executive Editor

Calling all burger and mushroom lovers, I have a new recipe for you! I recently noticed that I’ve been eating a questionable amount of red meat every week and started to brainstorm substitutes that could replace one of my go-to hand-held dinners.

And then I remembered when my mother ordered a portabella mushroom burger and sweet potato fries from a diner in New York City. What a healthy, affordable and tasty change? I quickly ran to Stop & Shop, grabbed the ingredients and got to work in my kitchen. Here is what I came up with ...

Directions:

Wash and cut the sweet potato into ½-inch thick slices.

Coat them in garlic powder, onion powder, chili powder, salt and pepper.

Put the fries into the air fryer at 380 degrees for 12 to 15 minutes. Flip them halfway through.

Wash and de-stem the portabella mushrooms. Sprinkle garlic powder, onion powder and chili powder on the tops.

Put a pan on medium to high heat with a tablespoon of olive oil. Place the mushrooms top side down, flipping them every few minutes. Wait until they are soft (around 6-8 minutes).

Place cheese on top of the mushrooms. I love pepper jack on mine, specifically the “Go Veggie” brand since I don’t eat dairy.

Optional: I also love McDonald’s Big Mac sauce on my burgers so I whip up a single serving, makeshift version. Put the mayonnaise in a bowl with equal parts ketchup. Add chili powder, onion powder, garlic powder and apple cider vinegar.

Toast your roll, spread your sauce on the bun and place your mushrooms on top!

Ingredients

- 2 Portabella mushrooms
- Cheese of your choice
- 1 Sweet potato
- 1 Roll
- 1 tbsp. Garlic powder
- 1 tbsp. Onion powder
- 1 tbsp. Chili powder
- A dash of salt
- A dash of pepper
- 1 tbsp. Olive Oil

Tunes To Try! Fairfield's Current Jams

By Erin McGetrick
Contributing Writer

As we enter February and the days get somehow colder, spring feels like ages away. Since music guides most of us in our daily lives around campus, it's essential to create a winter playlist to get us through the next few chilly months.

Many associate winter with feelings of calm, sorrow or chilliness; literally and figuratively.

The 1975's recent album has some pop-rock slow jams that are easy-listening tracks, including "When We Are Together" and "All I Need to Hear."

The album "Sling" by Clairó has a wintry feel in that it sounds like it could be played on vinyl in front of a crackling fire.

The tone of her voice mixed with the 70s-inspired folk makes for a calm and notable listening experience while doing work.

Taylor Swift's "evermore" gives a similar feel, with songs like "ivy" and "champagne problems" that make you feel like it's

snowing.

The Weeknd's first project "House of Balloons" has been on repeat for me as I lounge around on chilly days, with its dark themes and chilled R&B sound.

Other essential albums include "Stranger in the Alps" by Phoebe Bridgers, "For Emma," "Forever Ago" by Bon Iver and "Wasteland, Baby!" by Hozier.

In preparation for new music being released later this year, I encourage you to listen to the three singles dropped by Boygenius, an indie rock band composed of artists Phoebe Bridgers, Julien Baker and Lucy Dacus whose full album releases March 31.

Lana Del Rey precedes their release by one week with her album "Did You Know That

There's a Tunnel Under Ocean Blvd?" the lengthy title track already out and providing a melancholic, dreamy ballad to our playlist.

With Frank Ocean headlining Coachella in April, one can only hope he has plans to drop new music considering it's been seven years since he released his critically ac-

claimed album "Blonde."

Let's wishfully dream and revisit Ocean's work this winter, including tracks like "Pink + White" and "Ivy".

Stuck reflecting on the past? Familiarize yourself with some oldies this winter season.

"Friday I'm In Love" by The Cure can be a weekly reminder that Fridays are indeed the best day of the week and they are never too far away.

Joni Mitchell's "Blue" oozes winter vibes with standout tracks like "River," although only Apple Music listeners can enjoy this one.

"Storms" by Fleetwood Mac is the perfect folk-rock song to play as you watch the sun go down at 5 p.m. over another day at Fairfield.

If you're choosing to ignore the cold weather and are mentally on a beach somewhere tropical, it might be time to check out Miley Cyrus' new song "Flowers," a groovy song about independence and self-love.

Or perhaps Raye and 070 Shake's "Escapism.," a current viral track that is reminiscent of a Friday night in summer due to its fun dance beat and the inability to resist singing along.

Keep with this playlist because according to Punxsutawney Phil, winter isn't ending anytime soon.

What To Watch: TV's Latest

By Brooke Lathe
Executive Editor

I'll be honest. My watching game has kind of been lacking recently due to my New Year's resolution to read more books (eight down so far, woohoo!). And after watching the annual Emmy's award night, my list of shows to binge has grown exponentially.

So, taking into consideration my personal, friends and academy viewers' opinions, here are the shows that I suggest you should turn on if you have the time to spare this semester.

Show: Kaleidoscope
Where to Watch: Netflix

I actually did get the opportunity to sit down and watch the entirety of "Kaleidoscope" over winter break. When I was scrolling through the Netflix home page, I saw that the show was number one and trending which piqued my interest. After I realized that Giancarlo Esposito was one of the main characters, however, I knew I had to make the time for it.

The mini-series is eight episodes long that are all named after colors.

The fun and unique thing about this show is that you can watch it in any order, and are actually encouraged to watch it in something totally random. The only rule is that the episode named "White" needs to be the season finale. My watching order was "Yellow," "Violet," "Orange," "Green," "Blue," "Red," "Pink" and "White".

The plot is based around a brilliant thief and a group of criminals who attempt to steal \$7 million in an elaborate heist.

We watch as they plan their break-in, their escape and the issues that come with. I thought it was super action-packed with lots of unforeseen twists and silly humor—the perfect trio!

Show: White Lotus
Where to Watch: HBO Max, Apple TV, Amazon Prime Video (Season One)

I haven't gotten to watch "White Lotus" yet because I don't have any of the streaming platforms it's offered on, but it's on the top of my list once my roommate gives me her HBO password. All of my coworkers and friends have been buzzing about it.

It's a miracle they haven't spoiled it for me yet. "White Lotus" was also the "most-winning show" at the 2023 Emmy's, taking home five trophies for the night, which built the anticipation even more.

So far, the show has only two seasons. The first six episodes are centered around money whereas the last 13 revolve around relationships; but all of them contain four subplots of different, extremely wealthy groups within the same hotel. This social satire drama is all the hit right now.

Show: Normal People
Where to Watch: Hulu

So many people have told me to watch the show "Normal People" on Hulu after it was adapted from Sally Rooney's novel. Maybe they know I'm a sucker for romance.

The series has 12 episodes that follow Marianne (Daisy Edgar-Jones) and Connell's (Paul Mescal) friendship and their on-again-off-again relationship.

With Rooney's talent for powerful character development, the strongest aspect of the show seems to be how the main characters change from young kids to adults both apart and separately.

If you are someone who enjoys watching those slow-burn relationships play out, this seems like your next show to binge.

Show: Succession
Where to Watch: HBO Max, Hulu

My screenwriting professor told me that "Succession" was one of the best television series streaming right now and that if I never watched it that I would be doing a disservice to myself. Does that scare you into wanting to watch it too? This dark comedy has been on the screen since 2018 and has its fourth season making an appearance on March 26, 2023.

Viewers watch as the Roy family who owns Waystar RoyCo, a media conglomerate company, fight over the reigns after their father's health starts to plummet. The four children reside in New York City as they sacrifice, backstab and more.

Show: Abbott Elementary
Where to Watch: ABC, Hulu, HBO Max, Amazon Prime Video, Apple TV

I've seen so many short clips of "Abbott Elementary" on TikTok, and every time I find myself rewatching it three, four or five times a row because I'm laughing so hard. From what I saw, it's filmed similarly to "The Office" since it's posed as a "mockumentary" which is usually as interesting as it is hilarious.

The show follows a group of teachers who work at a Philadelphia public school, and despite the hardships of their job such as screaming kids and poor pay, they are determined to provide their students with a good education.

These are only a few of the many shows that are on my "to-watch" list that I've heard endless great reviews about.

If you have the time and access to any of these streaming platforms, I would say these are the perfect options for you to click "start" to.



COFFEE BREAK

SATIRE, GAMES, PUZZLES AND MORE

Editor: Elizabeth McLaughlin
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The Mirror Staff Favorite TV Shows Word Search

- Love on the Spectrum
- The Walking Dead
- Gilmore Girls
- House of Cards
- Money Heist
- The Last of Us
- New Girl
- The OA
- The Office
- Friends



Fairfield University Trivia:



- What year was Fairfield University founded? _____
- What is the name of the Admissions building on campus? _____
- What was the name of the basketball arena before Mahoney Arena? _____
- In which building on campus is the Media Center located? _____
- Who is the current FUSA President? _____
- What is the name of Fairfield University’s mascot? _____
- How old did Fairfield University’s mascot turn this past week? _____
- What was the name of the student newspaper before The Mirror? _____
- What is the coffee shop mentioned in Opinion this week? _____
- When was the last time the (former) Fairfield Football team won the MAAC? _____
- How many gates does Fairfield University have? _____

SPORTS

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Feb. 8	Feb. 9	Feb. 10	Feb. 11	Feb. 12	Feb. 13	Feb. 14
Men's and Women's Swim & Dive MAAC Championships Buffalo, N.Y. 6 p.m.	Men's and Women's Swim & Dive MAAC Championships Buffalo, N.Y. 10 a.m. (Prelims) 6 p.m. (Finals) Women's Basketball at Iona University New Rochelle, N.Y. 7 p.m.	Men's and Women's Swim & Dive MAAC Championships Buffalo, N.Y. 10 a.m. (Prelims) 6 p.m. (Finals) Men's Basketball at Rider University Lawrenceville, N.J. 7 p.m. Women's Tennis vs Stony Brook University Trumbull, Conn. 8 p.m.	Men's and Women's Swim & Dive MAAC Championships Buffalo, N.Y. 10 a.m. (Prelims) 3 p.m. (Finals) Women's Lacrosse vs Holy Cross College Fairfield, Conn. 1 p.m. Men's Lacrosse at Lehigh University Bethlehem, Pa. 1 p.m. Women's Basketball vs Quinnipiac University Fairfield, Conn. 2 p.m.	Men's Tennis at Brown University Providence, R.I. TBA Men's Basketball vs Mount St. Mary's Fairfield, Conn. 2 p.m.	No games scheduled.	No games scheduled.
 <p>Photo Contributed by the Sports Information Desk</p> <p>Both the men's and the women's swimming and diving teams head to the MAAC championships this week.</p>				 <p>Photo Contributed by the Sports Information Desk</p> <p>The Fairfield women's tennis team started out their Spring campaign with an 0-2 record.</p>		

Opinion: Eagles, Chiefs Battle for the Lombardi Trophy

By Alexander Regan
Contributing Writer

The Super Bowl is upon us. Kansas City Chiefs versus the Philadelphia Eagles. One seed versus one seed. Travis Kelce versus Jason Kelce. Chiefs head coach Andy Reid versus his former team. How can the Chiefs win? How can the Eagles win? What will be the final score, and who will be the most valuable player?

To start, let's set the stage. Both teams are healthy. Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes has a high ankle sprain; however, he looked good in his game

versus the Cincinnati Bengals and will be ready to go. For the Eagles, their goal in the Super Bowl should be to copy what the Tampa Bay Buccaneers did to neutralize Patrick Mahomes in the 2021 Super Bowl: get to Mahomes as quickly as possible and do not let him hold onto the ball for long.

The Eagles should have no problem with this because they have four players with double-digit sacks, and got through the San Francisco 49ers' offensive line in the National Football Conference Championship game. On offense, the Eagles need to continue to run the ball but need to establish a passing game in the red zone. The Chiefs allowed the most passing touchdowns (33) in the regular season. The Chiefs' defensive goal should be "bend, don't break". The Eagles are going to score, but they can try to hold them down.

The Chiefs have to get the ball out fast. Mahomes is not as mobile due to his ankle, so let your playmakers do what they do best. Seventh-round rookie Isaiah Pacheco has been phenomenal in the playoffs, averaging 5.5 yards per carry and 10.83 yards per catch in the playoffs. On defense, pressure ... pressure ... and more pressure.

Jalen Hurts thrives in clean pockets, and his rushing threat makes defenses focus on containing him. Chris Jones (15.5 sacks) and Frank Clark (third all-time in playoff sacks) need to have great games. They also need to lock down the red zone. The Eagles are the third-ranked team in red zone scoring and have a 90% conversion rate on QB sneaks. Hold them to field goals. With all that said, I think the Eagles come away with the win, 27-24. Jalen Hurts wins the Super Bowl MVP with two total touchdowns (one of them being a rushing touchdown). Be ready for the best game of the season on Feb. 12.



Photo Courtesy of @thron10designstudio Instagram



Photo Courtesy of @sbnation Instagram

The Chiefs and the Eagles will face off in the 57th Super Bowl on Sunday, Feb. 12.

In this week's issue...

- Callie Cavanaugh and Jake Wojcik Join 1,000 Point Club (Page 14)
- Men's Basketball Makes Way Into Final Stretch (Page 15)
- Women's Basketball Topples Rider After Loss to Manhattan (Page 15)
- Fairfield Football Reunites in Radiant Return to Campus (Page 16)

Callie Cavanaugh and Jake Wojcik Join 1,000 Point Club

By Brooke Lathe
Executive Editor

January seems to be the month of success as two Fairfield basketball players, women's basketball graduate forward Callie Cavanaugh and men's basketball redshirt guard Jake Wojcik '23, recently earned their 1,000th career points, an achievement that only few have accomplished as a Stag.

With a halftime buzzer-beating three-point shot, Cavanaugh attained her 1,000th point against Manhattan College on Jan. 7. She played an integral part for the Stags that night, scoring a team-high of 16 points in their 52-50 win.

"It's a surreal feeling," Cavanaugh explained. "It was definitely a goal of mine, but I also didn't see myself actually getting there. Going into college, it was tougher adjusting to the game."

She also joked about how her peers kept more track of the accomplishment than her. "My family and friends counted down more than me," Cavanaugh laughed.

"I didn't realize how fast I would get to 1,000 since I was around 200 points away at the beginning of the season. As soon as I scored the basket, it slipped my mind until people around me were celebrating—but then it was a huge moment for me," she explained.

Originally a Panther for the Florida International University, Cavanaugh netted 161 points for her 2017-18 season down south. After transferring in 2019, she's been able to score 973 points for Fairfield in four seasons.

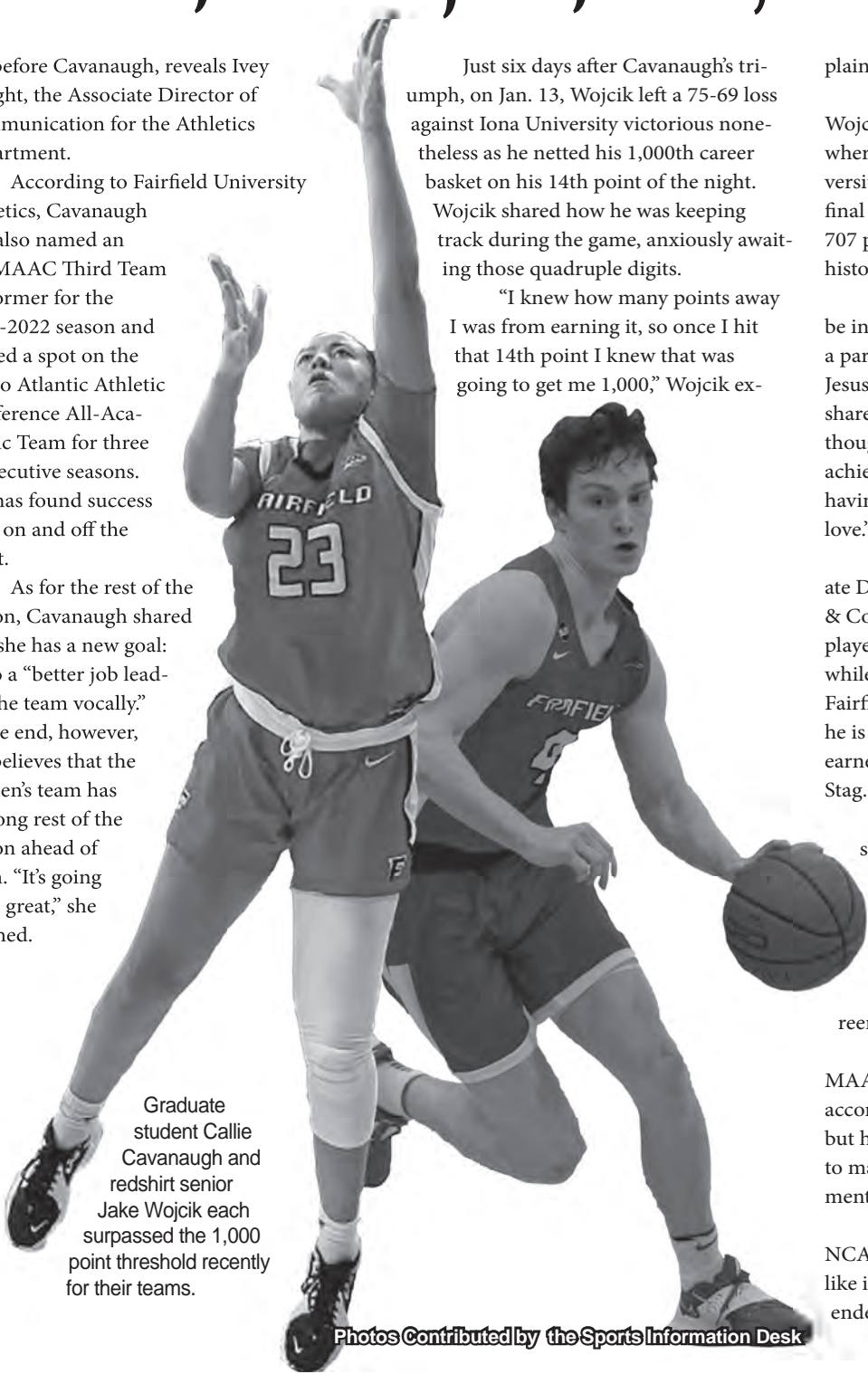
"A lot of great women have come through and made an impact on this program and it's an honor to be a part of something so special," Cavanaugh shared. "Right before me will be my ex-teammate Lou Lopez-Senechal '22," she continued, "and there's no one I'd rather be next to on the banner."

Only 35 female basketball players have made their way onto the 1,000-point ban-

ner before Cavanaugh, reveals Ivey Speight, the Associate Director of Communication for the Athletics Department.

According to Fairfield University Athletics, Cavanaugh was also named an All-MAAC Third Team performer for the 2021-2022 season and earned a spot on the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference All-Academic Team for three consecutive seasons. She has found success both on and off the court.

As for the rest of the season, Cavanaugh shared that she has a new goal: to do a "better job leading the team vocally." In the end, however, she believes that the women's team has a strong rest of the season ahead of them. "It's going to be great," she finished.



Graduate student Callie Cavanaugh and redshirt senior Jake Wojcik each surpassed the 1,000 point threshold recently for their teams.

Photos Contributed by the Sports Information Desk

Just six days after Cavanaugh's triumph, on Jan. 13, Wojcik left a 75-69 loss against Iona University victorious nonetheless as he netted his 1,000th career basket on his 14th point of the night. Wojcik shared how he was keeping track during the game, anxiously awaiting those quadruple digits.

"I knew how many points away I was from earning it, so once I hit that 14th point I knew that was going to get me 1,000," Wojcik explained.

Two seasons prior to joining the Stags, Wojcik was shooting in a navy blue jersey where he earned 346 points for the University of Richmond. Now, in his third and final season with Fairfield, he's racked up 707 points to date, allowing him to join Stag history.

"I think it's a great accomplishment to be in the books, but it's also great just to be a part of the point club with my friends like Jesus Cruz '22 and Taj Benning '22," Wojcik shared. He goes on to explain that even though it was constantly a dream to earn this achievement, he was "always grateful just having the opportunity to play the game I love."

According to Drew Kingsley, Associate Director of Athletics/Communications & Content Strategy, only 45 male basketball players have scored 1,000 points or more while having an athletic career at specifically Fairfield University. For Wojcik, however, he is impressively only one of five to have earned 1,000+ career points as a transfer Stag.



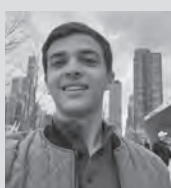

Wojcik is one of the team's top scorers, totaling 131 points for the 2022-23 season. His strong suit, however, is obvious whenever he has the opportunity to step up to the free-throw line. Wojcik has attained an impressive 86% free-throw average for his career, and an average of 84% this year.

Wojcik also made the Preseason All-MAAC third team for the 2021-2022 season, according to Fairfield University Athletics, but he is still awaiting the overarching wish: to make the 2022-2023 NCAA tournament.

"The same old goal is to go to the NCAA tournament and win our league just like it is for the rest of my team," Wojcik ended.

Weekly 5x4

Your 2023-24 5x4 Columnists: Tommy Coppola, Brooke Lathe, Max Limric, Julian Nazario, Billy McGuire

Because we have witty things to say ...						
	Tommy Coppola Editor-in-Chief	Brooke Lathe Executive Editor	Max Limric Managing Editor	Julian Nazario Copy Editor, Head News Editor	Billy McGuire Assistant Sports Editor	
	What did you do over Winter break?	Stressed myself out ahead of the new semester.	I was waiting tables at my hometown restaurant!	I laid in bed and cried over a winter course.	Went hiking in the rain-forest back home.	Went on a cruise and hung out with friends and family.
	What are you looking forward to most this semester?	Honestly, just getting back into a good routine.	Fairfield basketball games and warmer weather.	Starting new tutoring opportunities!	A drama-free semester, what's wrong with people here?!	Getting back into the swing of things and seeing what good things lie ahead.
	What is your favorite pizza topping?	Can't go wrong with Pepperoni.	Buffalo chicken is an obvious no brainer.	A good veggie pizza is one of my favs. As long as it isn't soggy.	Pepperoni, chorizo and bacon is the ultimate mix.	Not a huge pizza guy, but if I had to choose it'd be meatball.
Who do you think will win the Super Bowl?	Eagles without a doubt, because I think Jalen Hurts has an awesome story.	The spectators because they get to watch Rihanna perform live.	I only just learned who was in it after reading the sports article to be honest, and I can't even remember the team names anyways.	I'm rooting for the Chiefs, but I know the Eagles will win.	As a Giants fan, I despise the Eagles. But I reluctantly believe they will win ... they're too loaded up front.	

Men's Basketball Makes Way Into Final Stretch

By Billy McGuire
Assistant Sports Editor

The Fairfield University men's basketball team has a lot to be excited about this season. The new, state-of-the-art Leo D. Mahoney Arena has been a massive success for the program, ushering in a new era and rejuvenated energy that hasn't been seen in quite some time. Attendance has been a major hit as student interest has skyrocketed with multiple sellouts so far during this ensuing campaign.

In addition to the added excitement surrounding the arena and reinvigorated fanbase, the Stags have also seen their quality of play improve from last season. Although their current record stands at 10-13 to go along with a Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference record of 6-7, they have been competitive in most of the games they have played in, with their biggest deficit coming at the hands of non-conference opponent Wagner College by 16 points.

The Stags kicked off their MAAC campaign on Dec. 1 against Manhattan College, falling just short by three points in a tough 56-53 loss. A key takeaway from this contest was the Stags pulling down 22 offensive rebounds, the most boards they've picked up in a game since a Jan. 4, 2010 tilt with conference foe Niagara University, in which they picked up 20 of their own boards.

The Stags finished with 44 boards overall in the contest in comparison to Manhattan's 29. Unfortunately, poor shooting from the field and an inability to hold on to their lead came back to haunt the Stags, as Manhattan came back to win after trailing by as many as 11 points.

The Stags had a much more memorable night two days later, in which they christened their new home by hosting Saint Peter's University in a sold-out, energetic Leo D. Mahoney Arena. They benefited strongly from their robust and vigorous home-field advantage by dominating the Peacocks, fresh off of an National Collegiate Athletic Association tournament appearance last season, by taking the win, 67-55. Graduate guard Caleb Fields played all 40 minutes by adding 19 points to his name, sinking in two threes and by going five-for-seven from the free-throw line.

Forward Supreme Cook '24 made his physical presence known, as the 6' 9 star from East Orange, N.J. pulled down 11 boards for the third straight game to go along with 11 points en route to his first double-double of the season. Forward Allan Jeanne-Rose '23 and guard Jalen Leach '24 joined Fields and Cook by joining the double-digit club, collecting 11 and 10 points respectively in a memorable night for the team.

The Stags played their second home contest of the season by hosting crosstown rival Sacred Heart University. In a contest that should be simply described as a "nail-bitter," the Stags pulled away with a last-second victory as Fields hit the game-winning layup with 0.9 seconds left, putting them in front of the Pioneers, 61-59. The Stags at one point led by as many as eight points, before later on trailing by as many as nine after three-consecutive Sacred Heart three pointers. They stormed back thanks to key free throws, winning inside the paint by bringing down rebounds, and displayed lockdown defense that stagnated the Sacred Heart offense, who failed to put up any points in the remaining 3:13 of play.

The Stags then hosted another non-conference, in-state foe at Yale University on Monday, December, 12, taking the loss, 77-64. After coming out of halftime with a 29-24 lead, Yale dominated the second half by putting up 53 points in comparison to the Stags' 35. The Stags continued their homestand by hosting yet another non-conference, in-state opponent in the United States Coast Guard Academy on Sunday, Dec. 18. They rebounded with an 86-45 victory in a dominant offensive performance. All active members contributed with at least two points apiece, with Cook leading the way with 21 points while bringing down 13 boards, a steal and a block. Guard James Johns Jr. '26 made his presence known by putting up 11 while collecting eight rebounds in a well-rounded team victory.

The Stags were scheduled to play their final non-conference opponent of the season by hosting Drexel University on Thursday, Dec. 22 before being postponed. They returned to action on Friday, Dec. 30 by hosting conference foe Marist College. The Stags took down the Red Foxes in a 73-54

MAAC, only allowing an average of 63.9 points per game.

The Stags closed out their seven-game homestand with close losses to Siena College and Niagara University, falling short in those contests 70-61 and 77-69 in overtime, respectively. The Siena

Photo Contributed by the Sports Information Desk

Senior Allan Jeanne-Rose averages 9.3 points per game and 4 rebounds per game this season.

game got off to a rough start, as the Stags found themselves trailing by as many as 18 points in the first half and by as many as 16 with 13:09 left in the second. Long and Jeanne-Rose led the team with 19 and 15 points, correspondingly. The Stags were down by five points with 1:30 to play before guard Jake Wojcik '23 tied the game with 0.1 seconds remaining by making both of his free throws to send the game into overtime off of a last-second Niagara foul. The Stags got outplayed in overtime, 14-6, handing the game to the Purple Eagles. Cook and Fields each put up 17 apiece while Cook brought down 17 boards, which tied the most by any MAAC player in a game up to that point in the season.

The Stags proceeded to go on a two-game road trip, first by making a short trip to New Rochelle, N.Y. to face Iona College, falling short, 75-69. A highlight in that contest was Wojcik putting up 16 points, which helped him cross the threshold of achieving the tremendous milestone of 1,000 collegiate career points. Lang added 18 of his own while Cook added 14 in addition to making his presence known on defense by committing three blocks against star Gaels center Kelly Junior Joseph.

Next, the Stags traveled to the Garden State in a contest against Saint Peter's University in Jersey City, N.J. The Stags swept the season series against the Peacocks, winning a close contest 56-52 after overcoming a seven-point deficit coming out of halftime. Wojcik led the way with 17 points, with 15 coming in the second half. Jeanne-Rose had a well-rounded game by putting up 10, bringing down four boards, dishing out three assists and by blocking four of the Stags' season-high nine blocks during the contest. A major key to their win was limiting Saint Peter's to a 27.6% shooting from the floor, 12.5% from distance, and 77.8% from the stripe.

Read full article at www.fairfieldmirror.com

Women's Basketball Topples Rider After Loss to Manhattan

By Trevor Russell
Contributing Writer

The Fairfield University women's basketball team fell to Manhattan College 53-46 in a tightly contested game last Thursday, Feb. 2. This loss now puts them at a 7-5 mark on the road this season.

The Stags came into the game riding a three-game winning streak and a win would have made it a season-best four-game streak. Mimi Rubino '24 and graduate student forward Callie Cavanaugh led the way for the team with a combined 28 points. However, their strong performances were not enough as their late push fell just short of them getting the road win.

The Stags played well for most of the game but a poor shooting performance in the second quarter which saw them only net two points led to a double-digit half-time lead for Manhattan. Despite this, the squad was only down one point against the Jaspers with just over a minute remaining but could not get that final push to steal a victory on the road.

Fairfield bounced back from that loss however with a 62-59 victory over Rider University at home on a Sunday game that featured a great second-half performance where the Stags scored 38 points and shot 54% from the field. The team had their



The women's basketball team is preparing for their two upcoming games this week at Iona University and vs. Quinnipiac University.

best bench performance of the season with 40 of their 62 points coming from the bench. Forward Mackenzie Daleba '24 led the scoring on the day with 16 of those bench points. Guard Kate Peek '26 also had a productive game in which she contributed nine

points on three three-pointers. Peek and Daleba have been exceeding their season averages in almost every game in recent play. Redshirt Junior Guardurd Izabela Nicoletti Leite '24 also had a strong performance in which she

came off the bench for the first time for Fairfield. She was on a triple-double watch as she played well in all areas of the game finishing with 10 points, seven rebounds, and a career-high seven assists. The Fairfield women's basket-

ball team is about three-quarters of the way through their season after their game on Sunday versus Rider and has a record of 13-9. This places them in 4th in the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference and they will likely enter the MAAC tournament with a seed in the top half of the conference. They have performed well in the MAAC so far and have a 9-4 record in conference play.

They are looking to finish the regular season with some strong performances. Last season they won the MAAC tournament and made it into the March Madness tournament as a 15-ranked team.

They lost their game against number two-seeded University of Texas at Austin 70-52 but it was a unique achievement to make the tournament and to go up against such an established program. Texas was one of the best teams in the tournament and ended up losing to Stanford University in the elite eight round. The Stags will have to play well in the MAAC tournament again this year if they hope to make the prestigious tournament once again.

The team looks ahead now to an away game at conference-leading Iona University on Feb. 9 before returning to Leo D. Mahoney Arena to face off against Quinnipiac University on Feb. 11.

Fairfield Football Reunites in Radiant Return to Campus

By Ryan Marquardt
Head Sports Editor

On Feb. 3 and 4, Fairfield University did something that was a long time in the making and hosted former Fairfield football players from the 1998 Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference championship team back on campus for a reunion. The Fairfield football program lasted from 1996 until 2002 when the program was cut. The team saw a lot of success, most of which came under head coach Kevin Keisel who coached from 1996-2000 and in his five seasons with the team he only had one season below a .700 winning percentage.

That one season was the program's first where it went 1-8, followed by a 7-3 season and then back-to-back 9-2 seasons which included winning the MAAC championship in 1998. When Kiesel left in 2000, the team was 34-17 and stayed around .500 in its final two years.

The team and the football program as a whole owe its history to Bill Miles who funded much of the program and was the main reason for the school starting its football team. Miles joined Fairfield's Board of Trustees in 1973 and was its chairman from 1978-1989, according to his obituary. Then in 1992, he became the vice president for administration. Miles passed away in 2004 after giving so much to the Fairfield community throughout his life.

Another member of Fairfield's faculty who played an integral part in the football program's success was Reverend Victor Leeber, who was a founding faculty member at Fairfield and the "Father of Athletics" at Fairfield as stated in a press release after his death in 2009. Father Leeber founded five varsity sports programs and was chaplain to multiple teams, including the football team. He played an important role in many of the player's lives; when asked what impact Father Leeber had on the team, team captain Lomax Edwards '00 stated that "he was instrumental to the team, being the biggest supporter and he helped a lot of guys with tutoring and being an inspiration on and off the field."

Fellow captain and quarterback Jim Lopuznick '00 also stated that the team "always felt protected by the Lord and the angel of a man with us," when referring to Father Leeber and stated that Mr. Miles "always had a smile on his face." As can be seen, Father Leeber aided many



Fairfield University welcomed back the 1998 MAAC championship team (pictured above) to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the title.

"It is a tribute to these guys and their friendship and unity which is the reason they were so successful and is why they are all here. Fairfield looks beautiful and it's wonderful to be back."

**-Kevin Keisel,
Former Head Football Coach**

athletes both on and off the field throughout his storied career and life at Fairfield.

The team itself was one driven by grit and toughness as they started the 1998 season 1-2 and then proceeded to rattle off eight straight victories to finish the season, including multiple fourth-quarter comebacks throughout the season, one of which was against Duquesne University who was heavily favored in the matchup. The team had the number one total defense in D-1-AA in yards per game, rush yards per game and they had the number one scoring defense in D-1-AA.

The idea for the reunion began roughly 18 months ago and came to fruition due to both Steve Mirasolo '02 and Pat Grugan '01 remaining in contact with both the team and the administration to help set it up with Vice President of Athletics Paul Schlickmann and Associate Director of Athletic Development/Associate Director of Athletics Mike Jarvis being two of the main players in on the administrative side. Schlickmann stated that "I think it's fantastic, it's special on multiple levels. Really good to get them back and feel connected to each other and to the University. I'm really glad we could reform the connection...bringing family back to a place they loved."

The players felt similarly with Mirasolo stating that "It's been a long time coming and was something we always wanted. Everything just lined up, the new arena, Mike Jarvis helping, the 25th anniversary. Any other year and it wouldn't have worked."

The event itself began on Saturday, Feb. 3 with roughly 70 of the 90 former players attending, most of whom brought their families along with them totaling roughly 200 people. On Saturday afternoon, the alumni and their families were invited to the Walsh Athletic Center where they were welcomed with a few words along with lots of hugs, laughs and love from their former teammates.

Everyone then went down to the weight room to reminisce and catch up some more along with seeing their new plaques, which are hung in the weight room thanking the new members of the Monarch program.

The Monarch program is when members of a Fairfield sports team graduate and pledge to donate some amount of money back to their program each year.

The football team had over 30 alumni sign up to become Monarch members since it became available to them recently and each has their own plaque in the weight room which is where the money will be going since there is no football program for them to donate to. This

way the team and the players can contribute to Fairfield sports and help out all of the sports programs while getting reconnected with Fairfield athletics.

The evening then continued in the Dolan School of Business Event Hall where there was food and drinks along with Fairfield football hats for the alums and their kids with a highlight video from the '98 season, along with a montage of photos from the season playing on the projectors. Once again, there were lots of laughs and hugs as the players reconnected and told old stories, returning to the campus many of them had not been back to in 20 years.

The reason being many of the players felt neglected by the school, Edwards stated that "the school did the right thing putting this night together. We felt a little alienated [when they cut the program]. Feels good to be back. It's great to see everyone, re-connect and see the great things on campus that have been added."

The night continued on and multiple players gave speeches, as did coach Kiesel, all of which included lots of laughs, along with plenty of stories about the team and their great season with some impressions of coach Kiesel, which garnered the most laughter. Each speech also contained gratitude toward the university, to Father Leeber and Bill Miles along with a remembrance of two players who have passed since graduating, 1998 MAAC Rookie of the Year Dan Fitzpatrick and Ralph Danise '02, all of whom were great members of the football program and were deeply missed by the alumni.

All of the players were very happy to be back and to be reconnecting with old friends. "[It's] awesome to hear how football impacted all of the players' lives along with the friendships and the brotherhood we have," Grugan stated.

"It's so special to be back 25 years later and experience the special team," Lopuznick stated.

The night then ended with some final remarks and some team pictures taken with the old MAAC trophy. Then the players went back to their hotels to return to campus Sunday, Feb. 4th for mass at 11 a.m., then all of the alumni were invited to the men's basketball game vs. Iona University at 2 p.m., where the captains of the team were brought out to center court and honored during a break in the game.

The weekend concluded and the players went their separate ways after enjoying the opportunity they had to reconnect with old friends, introduce new family members to Fairfield, and enjoy being back on campus while being welcomed by the school.



Coach Kevin Keisel and the 1998 captains were honored at half-court during a men's basketball game.