

Facilities Management Union Demands Better Working Conditions

BY BROOKE LATHE MAX LIMRIC
Executive Editor Managing Editor

The International Union of Operating Engineers Local 30 labor force is nearing its seventh month in negotiations with departmental and administrative leadership at Fairfield University. The discussion of a new collective bargaining agreement began on March 8.

Director of Special Projects of IUOE Local 30 Andres Puertas shares that the union is discussing the issues that are important to the facilities workers on campus, such as “safety, wages, benefits, etc.”

Puertas references the death of a contractor who tragically died while working on Fairfield University’s Central Utilities Facility on May, 31 2022. He states that “these negotiations fall on the heels of the death of a worker, a contractor, on campus last year.”

In 2019, the union protested on campus and demanded unionized health care, as covered by The CT Post.

Now, four years later, through these current negotiations, they are “holding the university accountable for safety issues as well as issues like livable wages and good benefits for families,” claims Puertas.

Vice President of Marketing and Communications, Jennifer Anderson ‘97, MBA ‘02, speaks on behalf of the university’s facilities department, sharing that “over the past several months, progress has been made on many areas of mutual interest and the University is committed to reaching a new multi-year agreement that is beneficial to the University and our union employees.”

Puertas cites invoices of differing positions that the administration was obligated to hand over as a result of an information request that the union made in preparation for negotiations.

He states “that there are two landscapers who are employed by the administration and part of the facilities department.” He then displays invoices from Allstate Landscaping, explaining that “the administration should be relying on employees to perform a vast majority of the work on

campus and adding employees if necessary.”

Puertas continues that “the introduction of contractors, for example, to perform landscaping duties takes away jobs from the facilities department while introducing exorbitant costs to students, which we are confident are reflected in tuition bills.”

Furthermore, contractors and union workers are given different titles for the same job responsibilities which results in incongruent pay. An example pay rate includes “Group Leader Grounds” for an hourly payment of \$28.13 whereas a “Groundskeeper” is given \$20.90 per hour.

The invoices detail how the Allstate contractors earn more compared to university employees, and in some cases, Puertas states that they “earn double what the facilities workers earn per hour.”

“What exactly is the reason that the facilities department has a grounds crew, yet hundreds of thousands of dollars a year are spent on grounds contracting? Wouldn’t it be more cost-effective, and ethical, to use those funds to provide good jobs in the facilities department?” Puertas asks.

According to Anderson, “As the University has shared with the Union, the University outsources work only in certain circumstances, specifically where: the size of the project necessitates external resources, our existing personnel lack the necessary expertise, a permit is required for the work and/or particular time constraints require external staffing.”

She then references recent data that shows that Fairfield University “pays competitively relative to the market which has



Facilities Management workers displayed an International Union of Operating Engineers flag as they publicly protested for health care benefits in 2019. These demands remain present as negotiations are currently underway.

been shared with the Union.”

“While individual circumstances may vary, in-house staff benefit from full-time employment, competitive wages compared to [the] market, extremely generous benefits including a 9% retirement plan, free tuition programs for University dependents and paid time off. Outsourced workers may not always have year-round employment available or a comprehensive benefits package,” Anderson shared.

While Andres acknowledges that contractors are not provided with benefits such as healthcare, he poses the question: “Why is the administration contributing to the healthcare crisis by not demanding that any worker on campus have sufficient healthcare?”

Puertas goes on to explain that these benefits are not sufficient for the union members, however—especially in healthcare. He describes that the union has come up with its own health plan

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Heroic Senior Student Fights Small Fire in Barnyard Manor

BY MAX LIMRIC
Managing Editor

The residents of a townhouse on 22 block in Barnyard Manor are being hailed as heroes after they sprung into action late Sunday night, Sept. 30, to put out a small fire that started as a result of a candle in a neighboring townhouse.

On their Facebook page, The Fairfield Fire Department shares that “Last evening, the Fairfield County Regional Dispatch Center received a frantic 911 call from a student at Fairfield University reporting a ‘fire’ inside her townhouse unit.” In her call, “she reported that visible fire was seen when she made her way back to her room.”

Luckily, thanks to the quick thinking and selfless actions of Thomas McDuff ‘24, the fire did not spread past the student’s desk.

McDuff first spotted the fire while watching the movie “Wedding Crashers”. When he “heard the alarm going off in the house next door,” he “immediately looked out the window and saw smoke and flames coming out the window.”

In a truly stereotypical college fashion, McDuff utilized the lawn game version of pong they had sitting outside to extinguish the fire. Using the oversized cups in a bucket brigade style, he “rushed back inside and filled up one of the large cups with water” and got to work.

Initially, McDuff attempted to douse the fire from the sidewalk, but he “realized that if [he] popped the screen out in [his] roommate’s wroom, [he] could have access to the roof and get a much easier shot at the fire.”

When asked why he didn’t wait for the Department of Public Safety (DPS) or for the Fairfield Fire Department to respond, he claims “I didn’t want to wait for the fire department as I could tell the fire was small enough that I wouldn’t get hurt and, at the very least, I could help delay the spread until the fire department arrived.”

“Once I got on the rooftop and in front of the fire I saw nearly everything on the girl’s desk aside from her laptop lit up. Luckily, I was able to spread out the water from the pong cup to put the entire fire out without having to go back inside,” he continues.

Junior Frances Harmon, a resident of the townhouse affected by the fire, testified about McDuff’s heroic act.

“He literally climbed the wall like Spiderman ... and I’m pretty sure he was in his slippers,” Harmon said. “If I knew he wanted to put the fire out, I would’ve opened the door for him.”

McDuff’s actions were successful as “when firefighters made entry, it was discovered that the fire had already been extinguished,” writes the Fairfield Fire Department.

Upon investigation, Assistant Chief Phil Higgins “found an unattended candle had caught nearby combustibles on fire.”

According to the National Fire Protection Association, more than one-third of home candle fires started in the bedroom.

Niquita Dietrich, associate director of leadership development and formation for the Office of Residence Life, refers students to the Student Handbook to learn more about preventative measures for fires. She also directs students to the handbook, which outlines prohibited items that can affect fire safety.

Jennifer Anderson ‘97, MBA ‘02, adds that

“the University reminds[s] students that candles are not permitted in residence halls.”

In addition, there were no injuries sustained and the University expresses their gratitude for the students’ actions. Anderson states, “The University would like to thank those that responded quickly to this incident.”

The Fairfield Fire Department attests to the contribution of McDuff’s heroic actions. “The quick actions of this student clearly limited the growth and spread of this fire,” they state.

McDuff also comments on the response his actions garnered from professionals.

“The firefighters were surprisingly really happy with my actions, which was great. One firefighter called me a hero and a DPS officer referred to my actions as ‘sick,’” he adds.

Junior Erica Adams, who also lives in the affected townhouse, echoes the firefighter’s sentiments and thanks McDuff for his actions.

“We were all so grateful that a good samaritan acted so quickly and successfully to minimize the damage. In the heat of the moment, we were all so confused and scared and we were grateful that someone stepped up.”

FALL BREAK HOURS:

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 6TH-TUESDAY 10TH



FRI: 7:30AM-8PM
SAT-SUN: 8AM-8PM
MON-TUES: 7:30AM-8PM



FRI-MON: CLOSED
TUES: 4PM-10:30PM



FRI: 11AM-9PM
SAT-SUN: 3PM-9PM
MON-TUES: 11AM-9PM



FRI: 11AM-8PM
SAT-TUES: CLOSED



FRI: 8AM-3PM
SAT-MON: CLOSED
TUES: 8AM-3PM



FRI: 7:30AM-3PM
SAT-SUN: 8AM-3PM
MON-TUES: 7:30AM-3PM



FRI: 8AM-4PM
SAT-MON: CLOSED
TUES: 8AM-4PM

FOOD TRUCKS



MON-TUES: CLOSED

ROTATING
FOOD TRUCK

FRI-TUES: CLOSED



FRI: 11AM-8PM
SAT-SUN: CLOSED
MON-TUES: 11AM-8PM



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

9/26
11:26 p.m.
A vehicle was damaged in Townhouse 7 Block. The Department of Public Safety is still searching for the perpetrator.

9/27
3:35 p.m.
There was a four car accident caused by a Fairfield University employee who fell asleep while driving uphill. The employee's car hit one car, which created a domino effect. Minor injuries were reported.

9/28
9:20 a.m.
Students were stuck in an elevator in Bannow Science Center. The Fairfield Fire Department addressed the issue and rescued the students.

9/28
9:45 a.m.
Students were stuck in an elevator in Sister Thea Bowman Hall. The Fairfield Fire Department responded to the incident.

10/1
12:45 a.m.
A fire alarm was reported in Jogues Hall after someone pulled a pull station fire alarm and broke its handle. There are no suspects at the moment, but DPS notes this incident would be an arrestable offense.

10/1
2 p.m.
Accidental property damage was reported when a baseball from the baseball field broke the windshield of a parked car.

10/1
2:30 p.m.
The Department of Public Safety towed a vehicle after it had been parked in a handicap spot for six hours.

10/1
10 p.m.
A shade caught on fire in Barnyard Manor as a result of a lit candle. Students extinguished the fire before DPS arrived.

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Kyler Erezuma / The Mirror

Fairfield social work students worked to build an inclusive community dedicated to combatting gun violence during their 'Start at Hello' 5K.

Social Work Club’s 5k Raises Over \$1,500 in Support of Gun Violence Prevention

BY KATHLEEN MORRIS
Assistant News Editor

The Fairfield University Social Work Club rallied the local community to combat social isolation and prevent gun violence through the “Start with Hello” 5K hosted on Sunday, Oct. 1.

The “Start with Hello” program is a weeklong call-to-action spearheaded by Sandy Hook Promise, a national non-profit organization founded by family members whose loved ones lost their lives in the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting on Dec. 14, 2012.

In 2018, social work students began their efforts to uphold their mission of empowerment and inclusivity at Fairfield. These efforts stemmed from the devastating number of shootings that occurred in 2017.

Director of Undergraduate Social Work Kim Oliver, Ph.D. considered how her students’ reactions to the deadly massacre in Las Vegas, Nev. in Oct. 2017 inspired their involvement with the “Start with Hello” initiative.

“The following week, students in my social work class raised the issue and spoke about how sad and disgusted they were that we lived in a society that allowed such violence,” Oliver shared.

A month later, another shooting occurred at the First Baptist Church in Sutherland Springs, Texas.

“Again, my students raised the issue and we spoke about the role of social workers and the response of the profession to the ongoing violence in our nation.”

During the spring semester of 2018, Oliver recalled that the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School solidified her students’ drive to take action.

“I told them that I thought social workers could advocate for common sense laws, use our clinical skills to help trauma victims and I found myself saying, ‘I don’t know what to do, but if you can do something I will cancel the final exam.’”

“That was the beginning,” Oliver declared. “Students organized an event, News 12 came, people learned and vowed to continue the fight.”

Today, “Start with Hello” week has become an annual tradition that has cultivated positivity and garnered thousands of dollars in donations.

Students who are actively involved in the program will be excused from the final exam, as they will be able to demonstrate their knowledge of social

work in a real-world context.

Sophomore Grace Nieszczezewski, a student currently enrolled in Oliver’s “Social Work: An Introduction” course, expressed that her decision to join “Start with Hello” stretched beyond an academic obligation.

“I wanted to take a leadership role in this project in order to raise awareness surrounding the effects of gun violence in youth populations but also to let people know that they are not alone,” she said.

Moreover, Nieszczezewski believes that “many problems can be resolved with kindness and a simple hello. I don’t think enough people realize that.”

At Sunday’s event, a crowd of nearly 200 students filled the RecPlex Field House and listened as Alexandra Lecher ‘24 introduced the event.

“Nearly 11 years ago, we lost 20 children and six adults in the Sandy Hook school shooting,” she acknowledged.

“These children were daughters, sons, grandchildren, friends, teammates, and siblings. Each and everyone had an entire world of existence created around them. On Dec. 14, 2012, these worlds were shattered with the senseless pull of a trigger,” Lecher stated in somber remembrance.

Lecher, a senior social work student, recognized that “these children are only some of the 43,000 Americans killed by gun violence each year, from community violence, mass shootings, domestic violence, gun suicide and various other tragedies.”

She characterized the program as a defining opportunity “to create one community where hope outweighs fear, inclusivity outweighs adversity, and empathy outweighs hostility” where no more “beautiful lives [will be] cut short and ... forever altered by unimaginable grief.”

Fairfield’s First Selectwoman Brenda L. Kupchick attended the event and further emphasized the motivation behind the race, underscoring the reverberating effect of a tragedy that hits close to home.

She reflected on the legislative implications of the Sandy Hook shooting, as “lawmakers were called upon to come up with laws that would address mental health and gun safety in school.”

Kupchick noted that, as a state representative at the time, she witnessed the raw emotion of her colleagues “who met with all of the families who lost their children or loved ones on that

horrible day.”

“It’s beyond just laws,” she declared. “We need to look at the individuals, the people who might feel isolated or disconnected from their community.”

Fueled by Lecher and Kupchick’s

“ I wanted to take a leadership role in this project in order to raise awareness surrounding the effects of gun violence in youth populations but also to let people know that they are not alone.”

-Grace Nieszczezewski
‘26

powerful sentiments, the runners hit the pavement for their 3.1-mile loop across campus.

Volunteers were stationed along the route, providing refreshments and holding up handmade signs to advertise the “Start with Hello” program.

Junior Angeline Miraglia examined the role of social workers in raising “awareness for current issues, such as social isolation, through a compassionate and understanding lens.”

As an upper-class student in the social work program, Miraglia understands that “it is critical for social workers to uphold the dignity and worth of humanity.”

She continued, “Using a social work approach, individuals are called to be advocates for change and can empower others to do the same, whether they are social workers or not.”

Ultimately, the 5k raised \$1,591 in donations, which will be used to finance ‘Start with Hello’ programs and start SAVE (Students Against Violence Everywhere) Clubs at middle and high schools.

The Sandy Hook Promise website outlines three guiding action steps: “See Someone Alone, Reach Out and Help and Start with Hello.”

In her closing statement, Lecher voiced, “I, along with Sandy Hook Promise advocates, work every day to keep anyone else from experiencing the gut-wrenching grief that preventable gun violence brings. Today, I am starting with hello.”

Senators Concerned Over Stag Identity Following Antlers' Removal from FUSA Logo

By JULIAN NAZARIO
Copy, Head News Editor

Fairfield University Student Association senators held their second meeting of the semester on Wednesday, Sept. 27 with a full agenda of constitutional amendments ranging from recognizing Bellarmine and Austin Campus students as FUSA members to changes in their Diversity and Inclusion committee and the new Health and Wellness Committee. However, most of the almost two-hour discussion focused on the organization's rebranding promoted by executive action.

Before the meeting officially started, Senate officials distributed printed copies of the agenda, Bill S60-001 and the organization's constitution to senators and audience members in the lower level of the Barone Campus Center (LLBCC). Between the amendments highlighted, the official logo change, the recognition of Bellarmine campus students as general members of FUSA, a change in name to the Diversity and Inclusion board and the establishment of a Health and Wellness board captured most of the new business discussion.

While the bill was presented by Senators Steven Burns '24 and Ainsley Corriveau '25 at the meeting, no votes were taken as a result of the bill containing constitutional amendments, which are subject to open student scrutiny.

A public forum is scheduled to be held soon in the LLBCC, while the vote on the bill will occur after the university's Fall Break.

"To give you some context, we are analyzing some amendments proposed after getting feedback from many, different members of different boards and branches of FUSA on any updates they might want on the Constitution," said Senate Speaker Burns at the start of their meeting's new business section.

The first amendment change formalizes an executive order signed over the summer by FUSA

President Aliyah Seenauth '24. In the bill presented, it holds that FUSA is a "progressive organization that constantly advances, and is in need of modern representation in the form of a new logo."

However, most senators disagreed with the statement and a 20-minute-long debate ensued over the identity of the 76-year-old organization that represents the university's student body.

Senator Matthew Adamski '24 presented the first question of the debate: "Why is the logo being changed?"

"The University on their end, marketing-wise, has been undergoing many, many changes when it comes to logos for all different offices and departments on campus just to fit their guidelines of color, font, size," said Seenauth when addressing the general meeting of senators.

She also mentioned that the general marketing changes also include "trying to swell away from the antlers symbol on its own."

"So it's always been something that's been discussed [within FUSA]. It first came up for me at the end of last semester, especially when I was still Vice President, and we did kind of entertain the idea of making it something the student body would be more involved in deciding," Seenauth conveyed. "But push came to shove, and Marketing wanted it done for the beginning of this academic year."

The new logo, which will be in effect for at least a year due to Seenauth's executive action, features the standard stag icon that the university uses on its shield and the organization's name and establishment year. The inclusion of the stag, according to the FUSA president, was a result of her advocacy to retain some element of the student body's identity as the marketing-led logo was only a wordmark logo containing the word "FUSA".

Zach Quiñones, the program coordinator of the Office of Student Engagement, was



In a meeting held in the lower level of the Barone Campus Center, FUSA Senate debated association's updated logo.

recognized to speak by the Senators and asked them their thoughts on the new logo.

Senator Adamski highlighted the new logo as "nice" but he preferred the character of the old logo, its cleanliness and the presence of the antlers, a comment that made the audience members and some senators laugh.

"I second that," said another senator in regard to Adamski's antlers observation. Other senators also responded by saying "same."

One of the reasons given to justify FUSA's rebrand was around inclusion. As of the fall of 2022, U.S. News reported that Fairfield University had a 58-to-42 female-to-male ratio. However, while a majority of the campus population was identified as female, the school's mascot is a male deer.

Sophomore Senator Emma Conkling went further into this reasoning that removing the antlers from the FUSA brand would contribute to the overall inclusivity feeling, as the removal of the antlers was done to incorporate the entire picture of the stag.

"A stag is a male deer and we are Stags, so what does removing the antlers do if we are Stags?" Conkling questioned as senators debated whether it was an inclusive move to remove the antlers for the entire icon of the male deer.

Junior Senator Giovanni Young, a former FUSA presidential candidate, also jumped in Conkling's line of questioning.

"I think more along that point, it doesn't solve the problem that they thought they were solving because we are trying to get rid of the symbol of the male deer with a male deer," Young pointed out.

Quickly after Young's comment, President Seenauth responded that she also expressed resistance to the new logo. "I get it. I was not easily willing to change our logo either. As of the end of last semester, I was like 'no, it cannot happen,' but we just finished our 75th year, so sometimes change isn't all that bad," she said.

"If Marketing's notion was to make something more inclusive by getting rid of a symbol that's specifically gendered to a male animal, they did that by putting the entire male animal,

not just a piece of it," Young said in response to a comment made by Quiñones regarding a "concern with the Stag."

In a written statement, Fairfield University Vice President of Marketing and Communication Jennifer Anderson '97, '02 MBA clarified that the antlers have never been part of the university's brand package and that the recent rise of the university at the national level motivated the recent updates in logos throughout the university.

"As we grow in stature and in increased national attention, it is essential that we elevate our brand and identity, and to ensure that it is consistently showcased across all mediums and channels," Anderson said. "Commitment to consistently presented identity builds trust, and a strong, uniform, and universal application of our brand standards elevates the work that we all collectively do."

She encouraged all students and community members to visit Fairfield.edu/brand to obtain more information about the current Fairfield University brand.

In relation to the antlers, she confirmed that around ten years ago, an outside creative agency developed a graphic treatment of antlers "in the context of a larger design effort specifically intended for our admissions viewbook." She further explained that the antlers "were never an official logo of the University."

While the admissions viewbooks do not showcase the antlers' graphic art anymore, some of the informational panels at the Kelley Center still use the antlers' design.

She concluded by stating that "the University's Marketing and Communication division works with schools, divisions, departments and club organizations to help re-imagine their identity within the context of the University's brand. Recent work has included our club sports programs, our campus dining and hospitality, Connect-Inspire-Thrive programming in Student Life, academic programs like Fairfield Start-up and Hackathon, Dolans' new 30-under-30 program, The Research Symposium, Fairfield Bellarmine, WVOF and The Rearview ... just to name a few."



The new FUSA logo (right) closely resembles the original (left). Yet, senators consider the implications of the antlers' removal.

Negotiations Underway Following Workers' Safety Concerns

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

together that would better accommodate and serve the workers, one that they hope the university will take into consideration.

"We have continually offered in negotiations a health plan that is administered by the union and that most union members receive," he explains. "This health plan covers workers and families fully and includes all of the benefits that working families need today. If the administration were serious about providing family-sustaining benefits, they would enter into meaningful negotiations with the union regarding these plans and how to pay for them."

In addition, Puertas raises safety concerns and questions how "diligent the administration is in making sure that contractors have been fully trained in safety rather than just taking the employer's word for it." He holds that "Fairfield maintenance workers are fully vetted and their safety training is a part of their record as employees," but he does not think the same can be said for outside contractors.

Puertas then further considers the death of a contractor on campus and the resulting call to action which necessitates that all workers on campus, including contractors, receive the highest level of safety training in order to prevent another fatal incident.

"We want to reiterate that this is a tragic event and that no one should ever go to work one morning and not return home." He cites an inspection performed by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), in which Puertas states, "As you can see from that data, OSHA issued penalties to the administration."

Conversely, Anderson claims that "The University was not cited by OSHA for any safety violations related to the subcontractor's tragic death. Only the subcontractor's own company was cited for such violations."

She affirms that "OSHA-certified safety personnel are required to monitor all aspects of contractors' work in accordance with applicable standards, law and policies. Additionally, outside contractors are required to take (at a minimum) OSHA safety training."

Puertas holds that "the working conditions and safety of campus workers matter to all students, faculty and staff at Fairfield. This is not the campus of departmental managers only, it's the campus of all students too."

"How the administration treats workers is something that should not be a secret, it should be made public," he affirms.

Anderson explains that "negotiations will continue until

the union and the University have had a chance to submit and fully discuss all of their non-economic and economic proposals." She also asserts that "The University values our employees and the contributions they make to our campus community."

Puertas believes that the facility's workers deserve better treatment as they demonstrate genuine admiration and dedication to the Fairfield community. "The facilities workers on campus and members of the IUOE Local 30 are committed to the university, the students, faculty and staff. They have a genuine admiration for the campus and its mission and have dedicated some of the best years of their lives to the community."

As a result of these negotiations, the union hopes that the administration will value the well-being of the workers on campus above all else.

Puertas states that he hopes the administration will prioritize the safety of all workers who enter the gates, but he stresses that the university should consider the safety of their employees by "ensuring that workers are receiving living wages with family-sustaining benefits as opposed to barely scraping by and paying health care costs that affect their families."

He finishes, "The administration can support better and safer jobs, they just refuse to do it."

Opinion

Editor: Liz Morin
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For almost 150 days, members of the Writers Guild of America were on strike demanding better wages and protections against the rising threat of artificial intelligence. Their strike ended after obtaining a guaranteed five percent wage increase among other victories.

Streaming Services Are Taking Jobs From Screenwriters

BY KAITLYN CONROY
Contributing Writer

Walking down Fifth Avenue this summer, I was greeted with the normal sights and smells of New York City.

Tourists bustled about the iconic avenue, snapping pictures of historic New York artifacts like the Empire State Building and the public library.

If you walked all the way up to 5th and 49th, you would usually be greeted with the sight of Rockefeller Center in all its glory.

This summer was different. 30 Rock was basically shut down, and its employees were outdoors under the blazing summer sun picketing.

On May 2, the Writer's Guild of America announced they would be going on strike.

Their motivations were rooted in better pay, clearer contracts and the new threat of artificial intelligence.

All production of television shows and movies was halted.

Members of the WGA dropped their pens and went outdoors to partake in the decades-old tradition of striking.

What did this strike mean?

Well, all writing for TV shows and movies immediately stopped.

Filming for all projects also stopped. Without writing, there could be no filming.

Since nothing was filming, actors across the country had no work.

However, actors that are a part of the Screen Actors Guild-American

Federation of Television and Radio Artists (SAG-AFTRA) stood in solidarity with the WGA.

Throughout the month of June, rumors were spreading that SAG-AFTRA might follow suit and go on strike, as well.

On July 14 this summer, SAG-AFTRA officially went on strike.

Hollywood was at a standstill now.

At this point, many actors and writers were refusing to do any press for upcoming TV shows or movies.

This was done in solidarity with the strike. The WGA and SAG-AFTRA unions also posted a set of rules for their members to follow during the strike.

This summer, I had the opportunity to intern at TV Guide Magazine.

One of my tasks was to transcribe interviews with actors and screenwriters of TV shows.

However, this summer, TV Guide had a shortage of interviews due to the strike.

I remember some of the employees talking about how the strike was making their jobs a little harder.

If there had been no strike, I would have gotten to sit in on some of the interviews.

However, I never got to since there were rarely any interviews conducted.

Even though I was upset that I never got to have that experience, I still supported the unions' reasoning behind not participating in interviews.

As an amateur writer, I completely supported the WGA in their strike.

Writers are extremely

creative people who come up with the stories of our favorite TV shows and movies. Without them, we wouldn't have the entertainment we have today.

I certainly believe that they earn better pay as well as better contracts.

I think streaming has 100% changed a writer's job.

For example, TV show writers used to write about twenty-two episodes a season.

Now, they are writing at most ten episodes a season.

On top of that, streaming services are canceling popular shows left and right, leaving writers and actors without a job!

Basically, the main problem with this strike is the streaming companies.

While streaming is extremely convenient, it hurts both the writers and the actors.

On Sept. 27, the WGA strike ended.

After almost 150 days of striking, the writers finally returned to work.

The writers finally have a pay raise and a fairer contract.

The WGA released a statement on their website confirming that the union had reached an agreement with the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers.

There is a 5% increase in wages for the writers, which is the largest win for the WGA.

Staffing in the writer's room has also increased, which is another great win.

Now it is time for SAG-AFTRA to reach a fair agreement so that filming can resume.

BANNED BOOKS WEEK

Educators Are Not To Blame For The Increase In Book Bans

BY CHRISTINA SILVESTRI
Contributing Writer

As an English major, my education depends on access to literature, whether it be ancient or modern, conservative or radical.

I use texts to study not only the power of language but also morals and opinions through the voices of others.

Book censorship not only limits English majors but all majors.

Not even just college students. K-8 aged children remain the primary victims of the book-banning crisis.

Restricted access to the information vital to our chosen academic paths will be a detriment to students' ultimate potential.

As I began to write this piece, I reflected on what I previously knew about book bans, which was admittedly not a lot.

However, as I conducted my research, I came across a list from the American Library Association of the Top 100 Most Banned Books in America and found I had only read ten of them.

Now, while some books on this list are new or just not up my street, there are many works that I have not heard of and have since gone on my "to-be-read" list.

Let's start with the basics. Book censorship has been an issue in America for centuries, starting with book burning in the 1600s.

This has snowballed into the issues students face today.

Parents drive local governments to censor what content young people consume.

The Office of Intellectual Freedom via the American Library Association gives three excuses as to why a school or library may ban a specific book.

One, the material was considered to be "sexually explicit". Two, the material contained "offensive language".

And three, the materials were "unsuited to any age group".

American schools, mainly in southern states, have been the quickest to remove a book from children's hands in schools and libraries.

This issue has recently accelerated, especially in the 2022-2023 academic year.

As Pen America reports, the last academic year "has been marked [...] by an escalation of book bans and censorship in classrooms and school libraries across the United States."

This is caused by a small group of outspoken parents who believe that the children in their community must remain untouched by the peaks and valleys of life.

I remain troubled on this topic because these adults are not only attempting to shield children from pornographic content.

One of the top banned books in the country currently is, *And Tango Makes Three* by Jeff Richardson and Peter Parnell.

This illustrated children's book centers around two male penguins who adopt a baby chick.

Apparently, a story about two loving parents adopting a child in need is too provocative for a child.

The most frustrating part of this controversy is that 70% of parents oppose book banning.

However, the other 30% win out often.

Schools and libraries are so afraid of being accused of providing young people with inappropriate materials that they submit to this oppression.

Make no mistake that living in fear of resistance will also stick with these children.

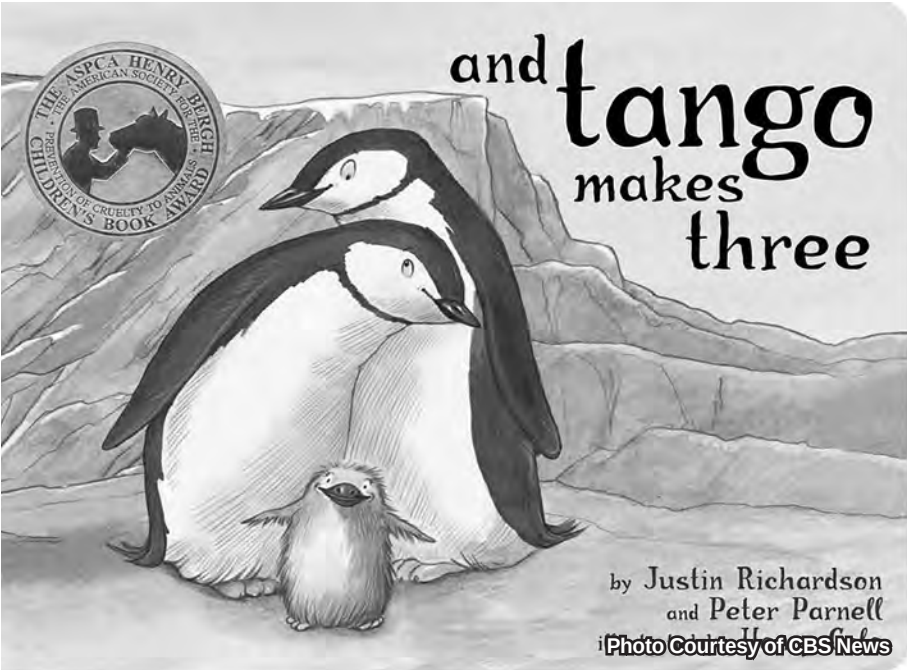
I want to be clear in saying that educators are not the problem here.

While they dedicate themselves to bettering society's children, stuck-up parents are taking away the tools they need to do so.

Book bans have been prevalent around my peers and me, shaping the way we learn throughout our education.

This is a dangerous practice, as it breeds limited minds.

If young people are not fed a diverse and wide variety of information about the world, the world that they live in, how can they be expected to thrive in a changing society?



"And Tango Makes Three" is just one of hundreds of banned books across America. Some parents attempt to ban these books as a way to censor children from controversial topics.

The New RecPlex Hours Are Not Inclusive To Those With Early Morning Classes

By **LIZ MORIN**
Opinion Editor

I'm a self-proclaimed morning person most of the time. During the week, I usually wake up between 5 a.m. and 6 a.m.—just because I love getting my day done early. I can usually function pretty well that early, too, so it's not like I force myself to wake up early and then suffer all day.

I like to throw in a day where I sleep in once a week so I don't burn out, and that's been a really great schedule for me.

One of the main reasons I love waking up early is that I can get my workout out of the way when the gym is quiet.

I wrote an article at the end of April of this year about how the lack of space in the RecPlex is causing students to lose a place where they can destress.

After January of this year, the gym was practically unusable.

This happens at pretty much every gym in January because of the "New Year, New Me" mantra, and I am by no means shaming new gym-goers.

I've always been a big advocate for people who are new to the gym because I understand how anxiety-inducing it can be, and everyone starts somewhere. I think the issue lies with gyms not being prepared for the yearly January rush.

Due to the increase in people last semester, I found that the only time when the gym isn't packed and unusable is right when it opens at 6 a.m.

That had its own separate issues, including the fact that I would wake my roommate

up accidentally every time I went to the gym. Looking back, if I wasn't a morning person and my roommate was waking up before sunrise every morning with the creaky dresser and doors, I would be annoyed, too.

But now, I don't have a roommate, so going to the gym early and enjoying the empty machines has been easy.

However, now I don't "have" to get up early for the gym (Though I would say 6:30 a.m. is still early) because its new operating hours shifted from 7 a.m. to 12 a.m.

This is because intramurals are playing until midnight, so they decided to keep the gym open for the extra hour.

I believe the latest class Fairfield offers goes until 9:30 p.m., so even if you left class and went to change, you still have at least two hours to workout, which is more than enough time.

But the people that prefer morning classes and take mostly 8 a.m. and 9 a.m. classes are limited to an hour at most, especially if you want to be able to go back to your room and shower and change before class.

Even if an hour sounds like a lot, knowing you have a class in an hour, you're more inclined to rush through your workout and not enjoy yourself.

My earliest class right now is at 11 a.m. and I can confirm that even I still feel rushed to finish everything.

The later opening poses a challenge for people who function best in the morning.

This later opening time also means the quiet mornings I loved were almost nonexistent. This is easily explained by the fact that

now, the people who are okay with being up early but not at 6 a.m. for the old opening time are now coming to the gym for opening or a little after.

After being the first one inside this Monday, I lasted five minutes at a squat rack before the first person approached me and asked when I would be done.

Ten minutes later, another person approached me and asked when I would be done.

The gym had only been open for 15 minutes! I couldn't even do what I had planned for the day because I counted 12 people crowding around the last two machines I wanted.

This never would have happened last year.

Last year, there were five people maximum in the gym in the morning.

Plus, the chances of someone wanting to use the same machine as you almost never happened because there was space.

The argument here would be, with the extra hour, why don't you just go later?

One for me, I have night classes, and I would never want to immediately go to the gym for an hour and a half after five hours of back-to-back classes.

The second is that the gym is at its peak hours from the late afternoon to 8 p.m.

As a self-proclaimed morning person, my day is over by 8 p.m., and I'm asleep by 9 p.m.

So am I expected to give up what I used to love as my morning time just to get a slightly less busy gym?

And honestly, it's more likely for college

Fall Facility Hours (beginning September 5, 2023)

DAYS	Monday – Thursday
HOURS	7 a.m. – Midnight

DAYS	Friday
HOURS	7 a.m. - 9 p.m.

DAYS	Saturday
HOURS	9 a.m. - 9 p.m.

DAYS	Sunday
HOURS	9 a.m. – Midnight

Photo Courtesy of www.fairfield.edu

The recent one-hour change in business hours of the RecPlex to accomodate intramurals did not considered for students with morning classes.

students to be up past 10 p.m. than up at 5 a.m., so I doubt that it's quiet.

I understand the thought process of staying open an extra hour.

If intramurals are there for an extra hour anyway, why not keep the whole place open?

However, I find that specifically catering to the time of intramurals is unfair to students who like to work out early in the morning, and it is not inclusive.

There was nothing wrong with their hours, and they were inclusive to both morning and night people. The gym now is undoubtedly more useable than it was in January, but these new times pose aggravating inconveniences for those who enjoyed the early hours.

Do Not Fall For The Lie Of Graduate School

By **SAMANTHA RUSSELL**
Assistant News Editor

Graduate school is the place for highly ambitious business professionals seeking a top management position.

Or, that used to be my definition of grad school, at least.

Traversing through Fairfield University as a Communication and Digital Journalism major, the opportunity to attend grad school never crossed my mind.

It was simply not something I needed to do, especially as an aspiring journalist.

All I needed to do was get a job at a local newspaper, continue writing and reporting and eventually

reach "The New York Times," right?

Evidently, the shock on my face when all of my friends expressed interest in the extra schooling turned that dismissal into confusion.

Do I need to go to grad school?

Granted, most, if not all, of my friends here are a part of the Dolan School of Business, pursuing careers in marketing, accounting and all the like. For them, it makes sense.

The discussion on grad school is interesting when one looks at the increased vitality of college degrees.

In 2023, every job application asks for your "education," a strategy implemented to judge your college experience—or lack thereof.

And, there are always the wide eyes and backhanded comments at Thanksgiving dinner when you tell your great aunt that you have opted for a trade school over a university.

With this rise in significance, it is no surprise that graduate school is becoming just as popular.

In recent years, graduate school has become increasingly accessible to students.

Post-pandemic, the creation of online or hybrid courses and programs has gained greater attractiveness among post-grads.

Moreover, programs, such as Fairfield University's accelerated

bachelor's/master's program allow students to obtain their master's in five years.

These potentially less rigorous or demanding options provide students with a new way to uplift their educational expertise.

If I could do grad school from the comfort of my bed, why wouldn't I?

Yet, in my junior year of college, I am still unsure of whether graduate school is the place for me.

If anything, a couple of years off after that May 2025 ceremony will allow me to take a breath, live a little bit and genuinely think about the options ahead of me.

With that thought, I do not believe that everyone must attend grad school to succeed.

Law students have to go to law school. Medical students have to go to medical school.

These occupations already have their specific schooling after college.

I, however, do not follow either of those career paths nor do hundreds of other students.

In fact, multiple established communication or journalism professionals, either in conversation or via speech, have told me the best way to make it in the journalism industry is to write, write, write.

My profession requires me to be in the field, learning, not sitting in a classroom for another two or three years.

The same concept applies to teachers.

Aspiring teachers become student teachers in real classrooms, and they learn

about their jobs through hands-on involvement and practice.

Last week, I overheard a professor advise a public relations major that her best bet after school is simply to work.

In addition to career specifics, grad school is not a "now or never" type of deal.

As I mentioned earlier, grad school will always be there for me, whether I'm 24, 34 or 64.

Plenty of adults earn their master's after meeting several professional goals.

That being said, it is not something anyone needs to rush into.

Organizations would surely love to see those additional years of studying on an application, yet they would also love to see real-world experience in their requested field.

When I stand with my diploma in one hand and my cap in the other, I will feel ecstatic about the next chapter in my life.

A chapter filled with writing, reporting and communicating feels much more rewarding than a chapter hidden behind more books and screens.

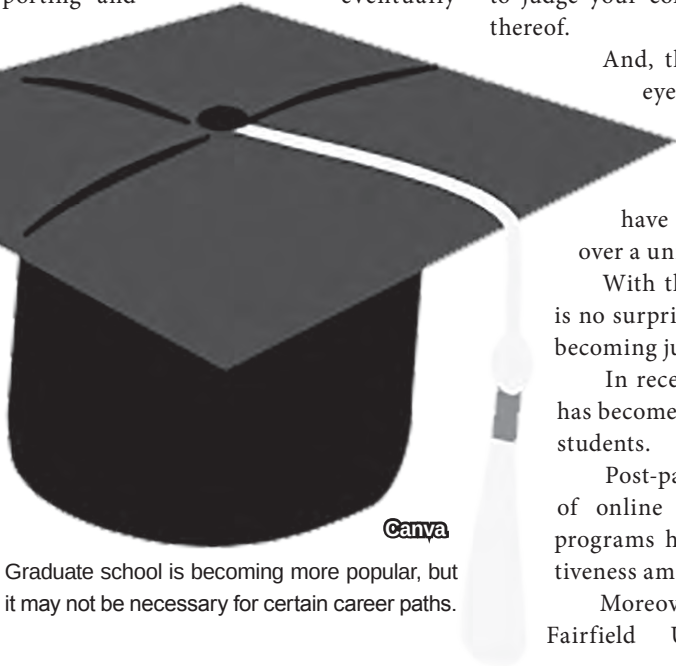
My opinions are not meant to diminish those who choose to attend graduate school.

I admire their discipline and determination to become the best in their profession.

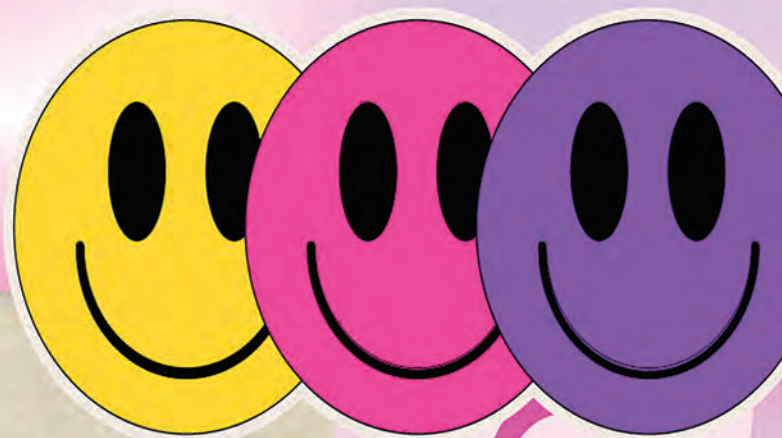
Nonetheless, it is not for everyone; right now, it is not for me.

I will not say I am ready to ditch the books; someday, I may return to them.

Still, I am ready to start pursuing the future I have longed for years. And I will really need a homework break, too.



Graduate school is becoming more popular, but it may not be necessary for certain career paths.



THE VINE



PRES BALL!

THROWBACK

TO THE 2000S



EDITOR:
ABIGAIL WHITE



Throwback To The 2000s : Songs, Snacks And Swag At Pres Ball!

By CAITLIN SHEA
Contributing Writer

The 2000s called, and they want their Presidential Ball back! This past Friday, Stags from all grades donned their brightly colored butterfly clips, shutter glasses and LED bracelets in order to celebrate Fairfield University Student Association's 20th annual Pres Ball. While the never-ending rain-

storms seemed to cast a gloomy shadow over the celebration, the clouds could not dim the flashing lights of the electric dance floor. With iconic Y2K fashion trends, memorable hits from the early 2000s and delicious food, it was certainly a night to remember. **More Butterflies, Please** In order to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Pres Ball, FUSA challenged the students of Fairfield

to take a trip back to the 2000s, and they did not disappoint. Vibrant greens, oranges, pinks, reds, purples, yellows and blues took over the dance floor in the form of dresses, shoes, glasses and ties. Stepping into the tent, students were immediately taken back in time. Tables were set up with brightly colored tablecloths, and at each was a selection of LED bracelets and shutter glasses set to heighten any outfit. Balloons were dispersed throughout the area, as well as blow-up telephones, boom boxes and microphones, enhancing the 2000s theme and creating a perfect space for celebration.

Fire Burnin' On The Dance Floor It would not be a 2000s celebration without some of the year's greatest hits. On the dance floor, many found themselves dancing along to Pitbull's "Hotel Room Service," and "Give Me Everything". Swifties could find themselves singing along to "Love Sto-

ry," "Red," "Blank Space" and "You Belong With Me." For fans who prefer the slower songs, "How to Save a Life," "Hey There Delilah" and "My Heart Will Go On" were played. Hit songs such as "I Write Sins Not Tragedies," "September," "Girlfriend" and "It's Tricky," could be heard as well. A playlist that ensured a night of exhilarating dancing. **You gonna eat your tots?** Where there is a party, there is food and FUSA went all out. For those with a sweet tooth, an entire candy bar could be found. Airheads, Rice Krispies, Ring pops and so much more to fill anyone's sugar needs.

Pres Ball is held at Bellarmine Hall where students can take pictures with President Mark Nemec.

For anyone looking for something a little more filling, mac n' cheese bites, chicken nuggets, pigs in a blanket, spring rolls, waffle fries, egg rolls and so much more could be found.

A delicious mix of sweet and savory to provide just enough energy for a night of fun!

Taking a trip back to the 2000s for this year's Pres Ball, FUSA did an incredible job providing a night full of celebration.

Their diligence and quick thinking on their feet to accommodate for the rainfall did not go unnoticed.

Stags were able to dance the night away, creating memories that will last them a lifetime.



FUSA's 20th annual Pres Ball took place on Friday, Sept. 29, with the theme of an early 2000s Throwback.

COZY UP WITH SOME FUN FALL FLICKS

By FIONA WAGNER
Contributing Writer

In the wise words of "Gilmore Girls" Taylor Doose, "Breath in folks. Smells like fall." The start of the fall season means new shows and movies to binge! Here is a list of a couple of my favorites that I think are worth a watch.

Gilmore Girls "Gilmore Girls" is undoubtedly the most talked about fall show, so I had to mention it. I'm sure a lot of people have seen the show, but even if it's your 10th rewatch, "Gilmore Girls" will consistently deliver the cozy, autumn vibes. For those who haven't seen it, the show follows a mother-daughter duo, Lorelai and Rory as they navigate through life, relationships, small-town drama and more. "Gilmore Girls" is the perfect show to binge-watch all weekend long, or even have on in the background.

Shelter "Shelter" is a new thriller, mystery show on Prime Video and it's sure to get you in a spooky mood. Based on the YA book series, the story follows Mickey Bolitar, who is struggling to come to terms with the death of his father in a road accident. He begins a new life, living with his aunt, but mystery and death follow him as he deals with a missing person's case, a creepy old neighbor and a decade-long drama following his father. "Shelter" is full of crazy plot twists and jam-packed storylines, perfect for any fans of "Stranger Things".

Knives Out "Knives Out" is perfect for you if you're looking for a classic whodunit that will keep you on the edge of your seat. It takes the typical murder mystery trope but adds a modern spin to it. Director Rian Johnson masterfully weaves suspense, dark humor, incredible dialogue and intense sound, making it a perfect watch from start to finish. The cast is completely stacked, with fan favorites including Chris Evans, Daniel Craig, Ana de Armas and Jamie Lee Curtis. If you give this movie a try and love it, guess what, there's a sequel!

You've Got Mail Don't you just love New York in the fall? "You've Got Mail" is a late 90's rom-com at its finest. Meg Ryan and Tom Hanks play opposite in this classic movie about two bookstore owners falling in love online, while simultaneously hating each other in real life. It's the perfect enemies-to-lovers trope set that gives you all the New York autumn feels. If rom-coms are your thing, I highly recommend adding this one to your list.

So, curl up with a warm blanket, grab a slice of pumpkin pie and

get in the autumnal mood with these fall favorites. Whether you enjoy an engrossing thriller or a sweet romance, there is something for everyone to enjoy this season.



Get The Best Cup Of Coffee On Campus



By **ABIGAIL WHITE**
Head Vine Editor

Fairfield’s campus is now home to three coffee locations—Dunkin, Starbucks and Peet’s Coffee! So the big question arises: Which location is host to the best cup of coffee? And while each coffee spot is great in its own way, I am going to list out some of the perks of each location as well as list out some of my favorite drinks from each spot to de-

termine



which is my personal favorite.
STARBUCKS
I’ll start with Starbucks as it is the closest to my home in Barnyard Manor and quite frequently becomes a pit stop on my way to class, the library, etc. One thing I love about the Starbucks on campus is that you can get food and drinks for a meal swipe if you have a meal plan.

As a senior, I have a partial meal plan, and love that I can stop into Starbucks to grab a coffee or some food before class, without completely depleting my dining dollars. Students can either get a drink for a meal swipe or if they choose to get food, they can get a tall coffee included with the meal swipe. Either way, it has saved me a lot of money so far this semester.

The one downside to the Starbucks on campus is its size. Located in the Dolan School of Business, it

is convenient for students who take classes in that building. However, it is quite small and can often get crowded when the line gets long. For me, it is definitely more of a grab-and-go location as there is no seating in the Starbucks itself.

PEETS
Peet’s Coffee is Fairfield’s newest coffee spot and is located at the front of the DiMenna Nyselius Library, where there used to be a Dunkin. Having been there quite a few times now, I am definitely a fan! I will admit that the coffee is not my favorite, however, I love the iced tea lemonade that is served.

The location is extremely convenient for those who are planning to spend hours in the library studying. I, myself, have stopped in to grab some caffeine in the middle of a long study session. Like Starbucks, students can use their meal swipes to get coffee, which is a plus!

DUNKIN
When I first came to Fairfield as a freshman in 2020, Dunkin’ was the only coffee spot on campus, with one location in the Bar-one Campus Center and one in the library.

Now, the only one that remains is in the BCC, and it still remains a constant stop for me. Whether I am leaving The Tully and am on my way to class, or planning to sit and study in the Mezz, Dunkin’ never disappoints.

One thing that is so great about Dunkin’ is its central location. In the BCC, it is convenient for just about everyone on campus. You can grab a drink, sit with friends, take it to the Mezz for a study session or bring it with you on your way to class. And as the Strawberry Dragonfruit Refresher is one of my favorite drinks, Dunkin’ wins some extra points from me. Students can also get just about any coffee flavor, iced teas, hot chocolate, bagels, breakfast sandwiches, muffins and, of course, doughnuts. And the hash-browns are a favorite Saturday morning treat for me and my friends.

After careful consideration, I would have to say that Dunkin’ remains my favorite coffee spot. Though I would probably say that Starbucks is my favorite in terms of the quality of coffee, and though I have recently taken a liking to Peet’s, I can never go wrong with Dunkin’!

STUNNING PERFORMANCES AT THE SOUND ON SOUND MUSIC FESTIVAL



By **BROOKE LATHE**
Executive Editor

The second annual Sound on Sound music festival took place this past weekend on Saturday, Sept. 30 and Sunday, Oct. 1—and I had tickets! I had no idea this event took place last year, but I’m so thankful I heard about it this time. I saw so many talented musicians, ate delicious food and danced side-by-side with a herd of strangers on what turned out to be a sunny, breezy, beautiful day.

While I couldn’t attend the Saturday concert, their line-up was definitely something I would’ve enjoyed as they featured performers such as Lord Huron and Red Hot Chili Peppers. However, I was incredibly excited to go on Sunday and watch Mt. Joy, Hozier, Alanis Morissette and John Mayer.

Other bands earlier in the day included Snacktime, Calder Allen, Gin Blossoms, Cautious Clay and Margo Price.

My friends and I ended up leaving my apartment at 3 p.m., and we took our first steps onto the field about an hour later as the drive, walk and check-in took a bit longer than expected.

With the constant rain in the past week, the ground was caked with wet mud but we were able to find a clearing to lay our blankets down on and enjoy Mt. Joy and other performers I hadn’t heard of prior to the day: Dispatch and Ben Harper & The Innocent Criminals. I was pleasantly surprised by both, especially Dispatch.

Before Hozier came on, we knew we

wanted to stand and get closer to the stage so we decided to take our blankets and seek out a meal. Vendors included Freskos, Liberty Rock Tavern, The Tasty Yolk, Garelick & Herbs, LemoNate’s, Micalizzi’s, Little Pub and more.

I ultimately decided to refresh my freshman memories by indulging in an OG Chicken Sandwich from Liberty Rock, and while the line lasted quite a while I was not disappointed following my first bite.

Finally, as the sun was setting, Hozier made his entrance onto the stage—I was in awe! I’ve always wanted to watch him live and felt so lucky to see him, among other talented artists, for only \$100. As expected,

his performance was nothing short of perfect. His voice had such a clear tone and emotion, he joked around with the audience and he played my two favorite songs “Would That I” and “Work Song” (I wish he sang “Like Real People Do” though!). Of course, he ended with “Take Me To Church,” which was also stunning to experience in person.

Not too long after Alanis Morissette ran out in a tie-dye tee and gave the crowd a performance of her hit songs “You Oughta Know,” “Hand In My Pocket” and more. I’m not the biggest fan of Morissette, but I will say I had fun watching her have fun.

She was jumping, spinning, laughing and screaming along to her songs which

made them all the more enjoyable. She ended with her song “Thank U” while displaying tweets reading what her fans were thankful for on the back screen—I really liked this and felt like it sent a nice message to festival-goers.

Before we knew it, it was 9:30 p.m. and John Mayer was in front of everyone by himself with only a guitar! Apparently, he is on a “solo tour” which means he has no band with him and he plays all of his songs acoustically.

While I was a little disappointed I didn’t get to hear his hits “Gravity,” “Waiting on The World To Change” and “New Light” because of the need for backup instruments, I absolutely adored and admired him for performing by himself—how intimidating that must be!

His voice was just as smooth and clear as he sounds on the radio and I loved the way he felt so comfortable on stage.

Mayer kept bringing up the fact that he was born just a few miles away from the festival and shared childhood memories with the audience in between playing “Slow Dancing In A Burning Room” and “Your Body Is A Wonderland”. It was all-around magical and I have been playing John Mayer’s songs on repeat since!

Sound on Sound was undoubtedly one of the best concerts I’ve been to. The area was stunning, the vendors were diverse and the line-up was fabulous.

I’ve already set a reminder to be on the lookout for tickets when next year rolls around and I definitely think you should too!



Brooke Lathe/The Mirror

Hozier performed at the second annual Sound On Sound Festival in Bridgeport, Conn. alongside Alanis Morissette, John Mayer and more.

AUTUMN EATS AND SWEET TREATS!

BY JACQUI RIGAZIO
Assistant Vine Editor

October is here, which means that fall is finally upon us.

As much as I love hitting the beach in the summer heat, nothing compares to a crisp fall day.

Autumn is undoubtedly my favorite season, and each year I look forward to when the leaves start changing colors and the weather gets a little cooler.

When I can wear pants and a sweatshirt without being either too hot or too chilly, I am in my prime.

Above everything else, my favorite part about fall is definitely the food.

Pumpkin-flavored everything, apples baked into various desserts and hot drinks to warm you up on a cool day are unbeatable.

I definitely don't take these seasonal foods for granted, as I can be found buying pumpkin spice lattes and apple crisps all throughout the season.

I am not the only one psyched about fall food! Junior Emma Gantert shares that her favorite fall food is the pumpkin scone from Starbucks, saying "it is so yum!"

Junior Emily Aschenbrenner can also be found stopping by Starbucks for a fall beverage.

She says "The pumpkin-flavored coffees at all the coffee shops is such a favorite!"

Having the leaves change while drink-

ing a hot pumpkin latte is a favorite fall feeling."

True to her word, Aschenbrenner was drinking a pumpkin spice latte as she shared this with me. As a fellow PSL lover myself, I couldn't agree more!

Sophomore Tashfia Ahmed echoes this sentiment, agreeing that a pumpkin spice latte is the perfect autumn beverage.

Junior Kate Enriquez is a huge apple crisp fan, and shares "my mom often makes it for family parties so it always reminds me of spending time together and enjoying the fall season!"

There really is nothing better than a warm apple crisp on a chilly fall day—especially topped off with vanilla ice cream and whipped cream!

Following along

the apple wave, Pia DiGesualdo '26 says that her favorite fall-time treat is apple cider donuts because "they're warm and sweet, perfect for a fall morning!"

I completely agree, and just the other day enjoyed an apple cider donut while drinking my morning coffee.

No better way to start the day!

Sophomore Paxton Van Der Walt's go-to autumn food is "the pumpkin bread from Trader Joe's.

It is so good and I stock up on it whenever I go because I'm scared that they will run out."

Paxton is really coveting that pumpkin bread for fall, and I don't blame her!

If anyone can't find pumpkin bread in the isles of Trader Joe's, you might want to hit Paxton

up.

Junior Sam Healey shares that his favorite fall food is "probably apple pie, or any kind of pie, really."

You definitely can't go wrong with a nice pie during fall time, especially when Thanksgiving rolls around.

I, for one, am a fiend for the leftover pies from Thanksgiving dinner, they make such a perfect fall-time dessert (or even breakfast ... no judgment here!)

Sophomore Chris Santomero's ideal fall meal is "pasta and meatballs with Sunday sauce."

I have no clue what this "Sunday sauce" entails, but pasta and meatballs always hits on a crisp fall night.

Junior Ella Panasci shares that her most loved meal for autumn is "without a doubt my mom's chili.

We would have it every Sunday while watching football and it just reminds me of fall with my family."

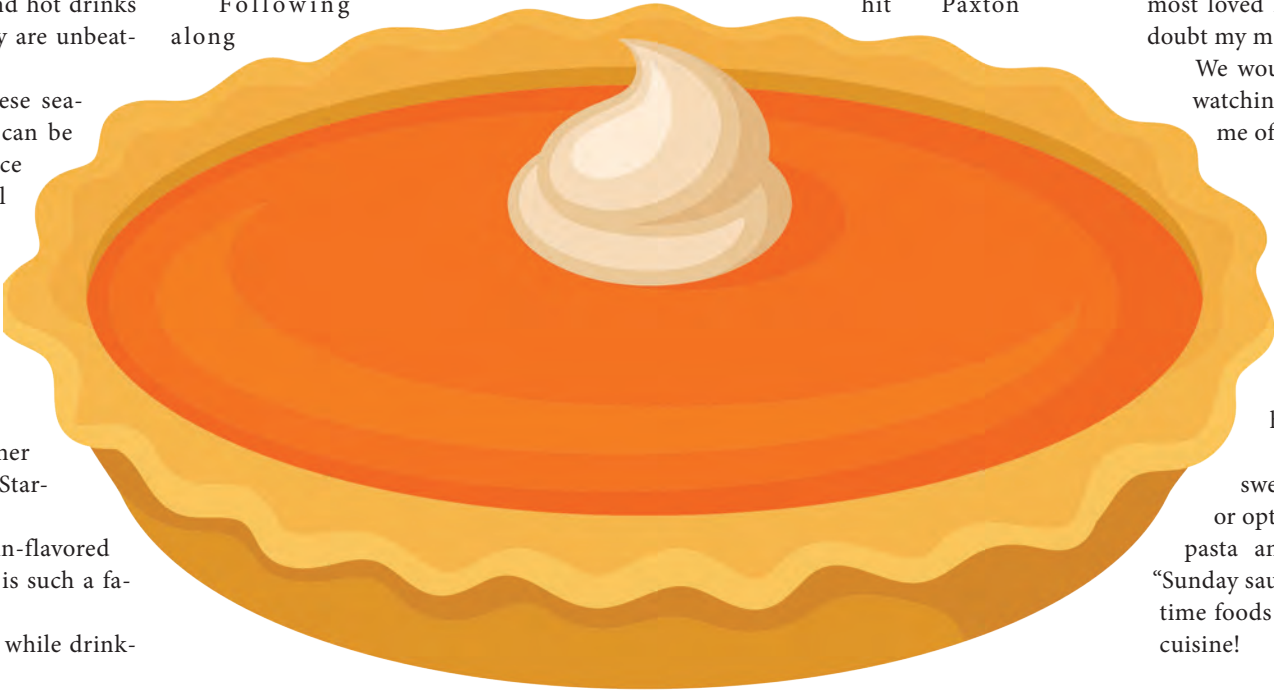
Such a good pick, Ella!

My dad's chili recipe is definitely the fall-time meal I miss the most from home.

After gushing over how good chili is, Ella and I are now intensely craving it.

Good thing I'm headed home for fall break soon!

No matter if you prefer the sweetness of an apple cider donut or opt for something more filling like pasta and meatballs (and potentially "Sunday sauce"?) it is undeniable that fall-time foods take the cake for best seasonal cuisine!



An Internship Abroad: Working At Ukraine Fashion Week

By AMY MAGAGNOLI
Contributing Writer

One of the most incredible journeys you can begin when studying abroad is partaking in an internship. This experience not only enhances your academic learning but offers so much more, as it allows you to connect with a foreign culture that you would never be able to achieve when sitting in a classroom.

My time with IPR London at Ukraine Fashion Week granted me the extraordinary opportunity to submerge myself in a world I have always dreamt of.

When I first arrived, I had the privilege of stepping backstage, where I was able to have the unique opportunity to observe models as they tried on a variety of outfits, and were receiving professional hair and makeup styling in preparation for the show.

It was such an inspiring experience, especially as this was my first-day interning, and I was able to witness all of the anticipation and excitement that went on before the show.

A few hours before the start of the show, I had the opportunity to meet with the IPR team. During this meeting, everyone was assigned their respective responsibilities to

make sure the show ran smoothly and effectively. I was extremely fascinated to be able to listen to the discussions and absorb insights into the diverse responsibilities held by a public relations agency to enhance the utmost success for high-end occasions.

I had the responsibility of welcoming and guiding guests to their designated areas. It was a fascinating experience to be able to observe the wide array of outfits chosen by the guests of the show, as each individual had a unique outfit that expressed their individuality and personality.

The most amazing part of this experience was the fact all interns and members of the team were able to stand together and watch the show once it began. Differentiating itself from the typical fashion shows, this particular event held a distinctive purpose—extending an incredible show of support to Ukraine Fashion during a period of deep challenge for the people of Ukraine.

The show supported Ukrainian fashion brands such as KSENIASCHNAIDER, ELENAREVA and Nadya Dzyak while they introduced their Spring Summer 2024 collections at London Fashion Week. This support, when unleashed during the show, revealed an immeasurable amount of beauty, as so much love filled the entire room.

This show had a large impact on me in which I came to a realization that fashion is so much more than how we dress and express ourselves as individuals. Fashion is a way of bringing all individuals together, no matter where everyone is from, in times of need.

As the Ukrainian Flag was worn while walking down the stage by designers, the beauty of this convergence was something I had never been able to see before. Between cheering and clapping, it felt so rewarding to be a part of the success of something with such an admirable cause.

Despite the diverse appearances and styles of those in attendance, whether as spectators, participants or behind the scenes, all individuals at the show shared the common purpose, to offer unwavering support to Ukraine during its most challenging times.

The opportunity to intern for a company that plays a pivotal role in supporting and facilitating events like these is something I wouldn't have the chance to experience if I were still studying in the U.S. at the

moment.

I am filled with gratitude for this remarkable experience, and I am excited for future opportunities and learning experiences that I have yet to experience this semester.



Photo Courtesy of @iprlondon Instagram

While studying abroad, students can work at internships that provide opportunities such as working at Ukraine Fashion Week.

Forecast: A Sprinkling Of Rainy Day Activities

By **SOPHIA CROSSITT-LEVY**
Contributing Writer

Over the past week or so at Fairfield, we’ve had long stretches of rainy days, leaving many wondering what to do.

So, here’s a list of some cozy rainy-day activities to participate in on campus.

Catch up on some TV shows:

A few good ones to check out are “Gilmore Girls,” “Only Murders in the Building” and “Ted Lasso”.

Not feeling a TV show? Try a movie—“You’ve Got Mail,” “Knives Out” and “Barbie” are all good choices.

Organize a game night with friends:

See who’s best at Scrabble, Monopoly, Life or Clue.



Even better, these items can be borrowed from our library—just make sure you look under their “Library of Things”.

Get off campus:
Want to get off campus and go out and about? Head downtown and check out one of Fairfield’s many restaurants.

If you’re not sure where to go, Molto, Colony Grill and Chef’s Table all have fantastic menus! Before you head back to campus, grab some frozen yogurt from 16 Handles.

Head to the Community Theatre:
For another off-campus activity, head over to the Community Theatre.

Throughout October, they’re showing some Halloween movies, including “Ghostbusters” and “Beetlejuice”.



Start a new book:
It’s a good way to pass the time, and the library always has some good choices. Some of my favorites are “A Good Girl’s Guide to Murder” by Holly Jackson, “Before the Coffee Gets Cold” by Toshikazu Kawaguchi and “Plain Bad Heroines” by Emily M. Danforth.

Check out Life@Fairfield:

Still not quite sure what to do?

Check out Life@Fairfield. Rain or shine, they always have an activity to go to!

Even though our rainy week at Fairfield may be coming to an end with a forecast of sunshine and warm weather next week, I hope you’ll keep these in mind the next time you’re stuck inside for a rainy day.

From Drab To Fab: Tips To Decorate Your Dorm

By **GIANA RUSSO**
Contributing Writer

As a junior here at Fairfield, many students assume that I live in either the Townhouses or in Barnyard Manor.

However, I reside in Mahan, along with three other roommates, in an apartment-style home.

Having half of a room to decorate can seem difficult, but being faced with a single and a living room is a challenge.

Below are some things that have helped me when decorating shared rooms the past two years, as well as my apartment this year.

One of the most important things to do before purchasing decorations is to choose a color scheme.

Whether it be monochromatic or a grouping of shades, it will ultimately make the room more cohesive.

Shopping for rugs, bedding and other decorations is made much simpler when there is a color to narrow down the search.

The first step of decorating a dorm is to cover the cinderblock walls, usually in rooms for first-

years and sophomores. Some of the best ways to decorate are with posters, which can be purchased at the annual poster fair in the Lower Level Barone Campus Center (LLBCC), or on Amazon, which has plenty of posters that ship within a couple of days. I would recommend buying canvas-style posters, simply because they are less likely to

rip, making them easy to transport and reuse. Students frequently decorate their walls with images of bands, movies, artists or aesthetically pleasing photos. Shutterfly allows an individual to print photos of the student and their friends, which is another popular decoration choice. Lighting is incredibly important, given the harsh artificial lighting pro-

vided by the university isn’t a favorable choice. Big lamps are enough to light up a room with a warm glow, rather than an aggressive white bulb. There is also the option of LEDs, a well-liked option by students all over campus, and sunset lamps, which offer less setup while maintaining the same bright colors. If you, like me, live in apartment-style housing on campus, the living room, kitchen and bathroom all need to be decorated properly.

Blankets and pillows for the couches in the living room make it appear homey and lived-in.

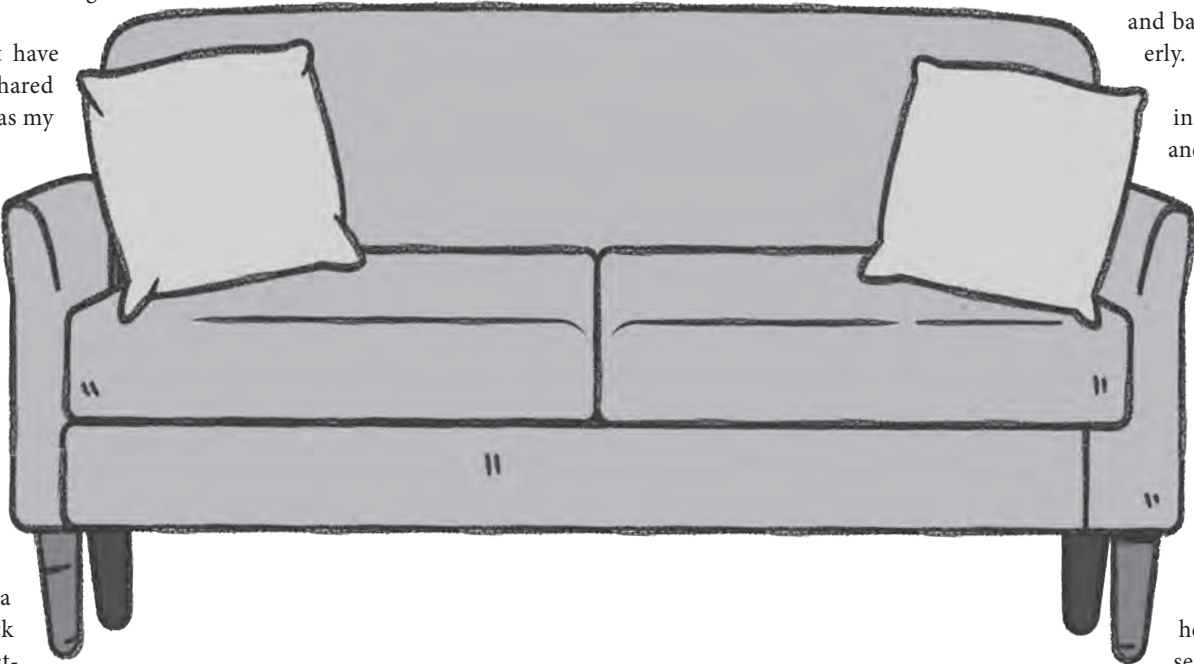
Adding decorative dish towels or a poster in the kitchen can liven up what is a typically monotone atmosphere.

Putting plants on the windowsill is not only decorative but can actively help them grow.

Rugs outside the shower can make the bathroom look less university-like and more cozy.

Decorating can be stressful, but going in with a solid plan makes it all the more enjoyable.

Patterns, colors and themes can help limit what is normally an expansive search with overwhelming options.





COFFEE BREAK

SATIRE, GAMES, PUZZLES AND MORE

Editors: Brooke Lathe, Max Limric, Kathleen Morris



WHAT IS THE BEST FALL MOVIE?

JOIN THE DEBATE!

DM US ON INSTAGRAM @FAIRFIELDMIRROR TO WEIGH IN!



Snickerdoodle Mug Cakes!!

5 tablespoon almond flour

1 tablespoon coconut flour

2 tablespoon sugar

¼ teaspoon cinnamon

⅛ teaspoon baking soda

⅛ teaspoon cream of tartar

A pinch of salt

1 large egg

2 tablespoon melted butter

1 tablespoon heavy whipping cream

¼ teaspoon vanilla extract

1. Mix wet ingredients.
2. Mix dry ingredients.
3. Divide the batter into two mugs.
4. Place in microwave for 1-2 minutes.
5. Enjoy :)

The Mirror Staff's Favorite Fall Activites

Eating Seasonal Fall Foods

Apple Picking

Throwing a Football Around

Pumpkin Carving

Corn Mazes

Baking Fall Desserts



SPORTS

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WE ARE STAGS

Oct. 4	Oct. 5	Oct. 6	Oct. 7	Oct. 8	Oct. 9	Oct. 10
Women's Soccer at Quinnipiac University Hamden, Conn. 2:30 p.m.	No games scheduled	Men's Tennis at ITA Northeast Regional Championship New Haven, Conn. All Day	Men's Tennis at ITA Northeast Regional Championship New Haven, Conn. All Day	Men's Tennis at ITA Northeast Regional Championship New Haven, Conn. All Day	Women's Golf at Quinnipiac Classic Walingford, Conn. All Day	Women's Golf at Quinnipiac Classic Walingford, Conn. All Day
 Photo Contributed by the Sports Information Desk Senior Kyla Berg took home MAAC Libero of the Week honors after an impressive week.		Women's Tennis at ITA Northeast Regional Championship Cambridge, Mass. All Day	Women's Tennis at ITA Northeast Regional Championship Cambridge, Mass. All Day	Women's Tennis at ITA Northeast Regional Championship Cambridge, Mass.	 Photo Contributed by the Sports Information Desk Graduate Student Maria Beltran tied for 15th overall in the women's golf Yale Invitational.	
		Field Hockey vs Sacred Heart University Fairfield, Conn. 4 p.m.	Men's Rowing Head of the Housatonic Shelton, Conn. All Day	Field Hockey at Saint Francis University "Herd for a Cure"		
		Men's & Women's Swimming at Fairfield Invitational Fairfield, Conn.	Women's Rowing at Head of Housatonic Shelton, Conn. All Day			

First-Years Lead the Charge for Cross Country in the Paul Short Run

By BRADY CARTER
Contributing Writer

The Fairfield University men's and women's cross country teams traveled to Lehigh University's Goodman Campus Cross Country Course this past Saturday, Sept. 30, to participate in the Paul Short Run. This was the third meet of the season for the Stags and they were looking to build off of their performance at the Jasper Fall XC Invite in Montgomery, N.Y., on Sep. 16.

Out of an extremely competitive pool of 47 teams from the East Coast, the Stags placed 45th. The top three placing teams in this race were Central Connecticut State University, Shippensburg University and George Washington University, according to the event's official recap.

The individual champion in this race was Jacob Ireland of Columbia University, finishing with a blazing time of 24:36.8 for the 8 kilometer course. The runner up was Samuel Whittaker of Central Connecticut State University with a time of 24:42.9, followed by Elyas Ayyoub of Long Island University with a time of 24:59.2 which would be good for 3rd place in the event.

As for the Stags, the first to cross the finish line was Alex Petersen '26, continuing to build

on his strong season as he finished the course with a time of 28:05.8. The next finisher for the Stags was Olli Muniz '27, who clocked in a time of 28:10.5. Coming in third for the Stags was Kenny Power '27, who finished with a time of 28:13.4.

The next pack of Stags to come in would be graduate student Robert Dillon, Jack Putnam '26 and Chase Orcuich '27. They would finish the course in times of 28:29.3, 28:34.2 and 29:23.9, accordingly. Ryan Lindley '26 crossed the finish line in 29:45.3 and rounding out the Stags' top 8 was Colin Shand '27, who finished the 8k course with a time of 30:15.5. As for the women's cross country team they placed 39th out of 43 teams in a strong pool of teams from up and down the east coast. The top three placing teams in this race were New York University, Duquesne University and Lynchburg College.

The individual champion in this race was Lauren Tunnell of Virginia Commonwealth University, finishing with a blistering time of 21:11.0 for the 6 kilometer course, according to the event's official recap. The runner up was Christine Mancini of La Salle University, with a time of 21:13.4, followed by Grace Richardson of New York University, with a time of 21:22.4,



Photo Contributed by The Sports Information Desk

The women's cross country team will compete in the NEICAAA Champinship this weekend. which would be good for third place.

The story for the Stags' was the incredible performances of the first-years. All of their top three runners were first-years and their top runner was Mia Strazzella '27, who clocked in a blistering 23:42.2. She was followed by Natalie Haracz '27 and Isabella Colabastitto'27, who finished with times of 24:08.7 and 25:04.1 respectively.

The next pack for the Stags' were a pair of Senior captains in Catherine Lanahan '24 and Emily Dalla Riva '24. They finished the 6 kilometer course with times of 25:14.5 and 25:16.7, respectively.

The final pack of Stags that rounded out the top 8 were Megan Furlong '26, Claire Mason '24 and Michaela Kenny '27. They finished the course with times of 25:28.7, 25:52.6 and 26:08.1 respectively. Next weekend, the Stags travel to Boston, Mass., to compete at the New England Championships at Franklin Park on Saturday, Oct. 7.

In this week's issue...

- Women's Basketball Kicks Off First Slate of Practices (Pages 14)
- Men's Soccer Comes Up Short in Close Battle Against Niagara (Page 15)
- Stags Enhance Leadership Skills Through Student Athlete Advisory Committee (Page 15)
- Stag Spotlight: Graduate Student Patrick McCarthy (Page 16)

Women's Basketball Kicks Off First Slate of Practices

BY BILLY MCGUIRE
Assistant Sports Editor

The Fairfield women’s basketball team held their first practice of the season this past Monday, Sep. 25 at Walsh Athletic Center Gymnasium. This is the first of many for the Stags, as they enter their second season with head coach Carly Thibault-Dudonis at the helm, seeking to improve after finishing with a 15-15 overall record to go along with their 11-9 record in conference play.

The Stags’ roster heading into the season is mixed with established veterans, underclassmen and transfers. Leading the charge this season for the

squad are senior guards Mimi Rubino ‘24, Janelle Brown ‘24 and forwards MacKenzie ‘24 and Dayna Tirado ‘24 along with redshirt guard Izabella Nicoletti Leite ‘24 and graduate student guard Nicole Gallagher ‘24. They will be helped by transfer guards Kendall McGruder ‘25 and Emina Selimovic ‘25 in addition to the other players on the active roster.

The first slate of practices have shown glimpses of the fast-paced, up-tempo style of play that the Stags seek to execute as they enter year two of the Thibault-DuDonis era. She wants to play a more team brand of basketball instead of the shoulders resting on one person, as she seeks to build

a system that focuses on passing, screens and an up-front, aggressive form of play on defense.

Despite some growing pains to start the season, Thibault-DuDonis believes that all is progressing well thus far.

“Practice has been going really well so far,” the second-year bench boss elaborates. “We’re really focused on continuing to build the foundation of our program and I think we’re starting to see some sort of chemistry develop, which is important. We’ve got a lot of work to do, but it’s still early on and we’ve got some time before our first games in November.”

The Stags are just a little over a

month away before their first tilt of the season, tipping off against Lehman College on Nov. 6. Some of the other non-conference opponents that the Stags will face prior to transitioning to their conference season includes Vanderbilt University on Nov. 12, Rutgers University on Nov. 20 and St. John’s University on Dec. 7, the latter of which will be held at Leo D. Mahoney Arena.

Thibault-Dudonis believes that the exposure to bigger-name programs on the national scale will help the Stags become stronger as a unit.

“I think it will be great challenges, you know, I think our non-conference is set up so we can be successful heading into MAAC play,” Thibault-Dudonis says. “As far as we are concerned, we are not that concerned about who we are playing, all we can do is get better in practice and win every game that we can. That’s what it is all about.”

Her players also have a high level of confidence heading into the season, feeling that they can continue to build off of what they started last year and carry it into this season.

“I’d say the first two practices are going really well,” Rubino explains. “We’re bringing a lot of intensity obviously. We have some new players coming in and they are very talented. We have been bringing a lot of intensity to our practices and we are using that to build a strong level of chemistry. We are very energetic but we want to stay positive. We are working hard and we are very excited for this season.”

“I love it so far, I thought coming in this summer and connecting with my new teammates worked out really well,” Selimovic, a former Siena

College transfer, says. “It was really important for me to come in and build connections not only with the returners but also the incoming freshman. This team is all about family, they are very supportive of each other and place a strong emphasis on building relationships early on, and I think it has helped me so far.”

Additionally, players such as Brown and Rubino are being counted on for leadership positions as they look to lead the Stags to their second MAAC title in three seasons. Both players are embracing their high rankings in the team leadership hierarchy heading into the season.

“I’m embracing it, I’m just applying myself to be a leader out here on the court,” Brown states. “I have to understand that not everything is going to be positive all the time, but it’s important to remind my teammates to have a positive mindset every time we go out there. Just being around my teammates and being around other leaders out here, it is just important to pick everyone when things don’t always go our way.”

“I have been fortunate enough to be around a lot of great leaders throughout my years here,” Rubino, the Pequannock, N.J. native explains. “I’m super excited for my senior year and since I’m in that spot now, I’m hoping to step up a little more. I want to be in a good leadership role and help this team to a championship, so I’m very excited to see how this season turns out.”

The women’s basketball team is just starting its journey, and if you want to find out more information about the program and Fairfield athletics in general, please visit www.fairfieldstags.com.



Photo Contributed by The Sports Information Desk

The women's basketball team began their first slate of practices last week, officially kicking off a new year.

The Weekly 5x4

Five People. Four Questions. Because we have witty things to say.

How do you feel about Taylor Swift and Travis Kelce’s relationship?	Tommy Coppola Editor-in-Chief	Brooke Lathe Executive Editor	Max Limric Managing Editor	Julian Nazario Copy Editor, Head News Editor	Abigail White Head Vine Editor
What do you think of the new FUSA logo?	It feels like a big marketing play that is getting old fast.	I want to make it known that I listened to “New Heights” before the swifties did.	Don’t care.	<< Let’s just keep the NFL as a football league	I haven’t paid much attention, to be honest.
What is your go-to coffee shop on campus?	I am a big fan. I’ve always liked the University seal so I think it looks great.	I haven’t gotten used to it yet—I’m not the biggest fan of change.	I love FUSA, but not everything needs to be made minimalistic.	Kinda nice, would prefer a bigger Stag tho #SaveTheAntlers	It’s definitely going to take some getting used to for me too.
Are you a fan of the new RecPlex hours?	I frequent Dunkin’ most days, unless I find myself near Starbucks in DSB.	None. Chef’s Table is the only coffee I drink. Hi, Mickey!	Dunkin’, but for a breakfast sando when I’m in a rush.	Starbucks but my 8am politics class is making me switch to Dunkin.	Can’t go wrong with Dunkin’!
	I am indifferent. I think it should still be open early but I like the extra hour at night.	I’ve never used the RecPlex before 11 a.m. so it hasn’t affected me.	As a RecPlex employee, I will refrain from voicing my opinion.	I go now in the mornings, and 7am works fine for me!	I am an evening gym-goer, so the new hours don’t affect me too much.

Men's Soccer Comes Up Short in Close Battle Against Niagara

By **TREVOR RUSSELL**
Contributing Writer

The Fairfield University men's soccer team's Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference home slate got underway this week with a home match against Niagara University on Saturday, Oct. 2. The match was a matinee affair, with a 2 p.m. kickoff after an early morning of showers in Fairfield.

The Stags had previously played two games against conference opponents, with away matches at Mount St. Mary's University and Rider University the previous two weekends. They lost the matches 2-1 and 2-0 respectively and were looking to get their first MAAC win of the season under their belt.

The match started with Fairfield maintaining the bulk of possession, which would become a trend that would continue throughout the game. They had a great chance just four minutes in when forward Alex Marin '24 received the ball inside the box and turned to shoot. However, he was slightly off balance and leaned back just a little too much, sending his left-footed shot sailing just over the crossbar.

The Purple Eagles opened up the scoring four minutes later when a through ball skipped past the Fairfield defenders and was slotted home by the Niagara striker. Fairfield would continue to keep the foot on the gas for the rest of the first half, pressing deep into Niagara's half and continuing to test the goalie with

shots, but they were unable to even up the scoreline heading into the break.

The Stags came out of halftime looking to get a quick goal and almost did when Asher Rosen '27 hit a rocket from outside the box just one minute into the second half. The shot was just high, however, it looked like the goalie might have just gotten a finger on it, and it deflected off of the bar and out of play.

The Purple Eagle's goalie continued to foil the Stags chances when he made two extremely difficult saves, one from a Dylan Medeiros '26 header and another from Thomas Drillien '24. Niagara would go on to slot one more past the Fairfield keeper, sealing the 2-0 victory.

"I think we could have scored a goal early and should have had at least two or three goals based on how we attacked," Head Coach Carl Rees said according to the game's official recap. "We need to have more composure in the final third. I think [it] created more chances but this sport can be very punishing."

Although Fairfield ended up losing, they outshot their opponent 16 to five. In addition, they had nine shots on goal, a much higher number than Niagara whose only



Photo Contributed by the Sports Information Desk

Senior forward Raz Amir has two assists this season with eight shots on goal but is yet to find the back of the net. two were the goals they scored. Niagara's goalie Jamie Barry had a stellar performance in which he had a career-high nine saves. The Stags had many would-be shots deflected or blocked before they could reach their target, as Niagara was packing the box and bringing back their midfield during many Fairfield attacks. They also out-possessed Niagara and had possession inside their opponent's half for most of the time they had the ball. The win was the first for Niagara on the season, and they will look to build upon it when they face off against Siena College at home next Saturday. Will Pierce '26 has been in great form as of late, and although a strong performance wasn't enough to push the Stags to victory, he was awarded MAAC Rookie of the Week earlier this season as recognition for his excellent play. The team has had a tough time getting their footing to start the season, but looks to get back on track when they travel to Buffalo, N.Y. to take on Canisius College this Saturday, Oct. 7. It is another afternoon game with play slated to begin at 1 p.m.

Stags Enhance Leadership Skills Through Student Athlete Advisory Committee

By **DANNY McELROY**
Contributing Writer

The Fairfield University campus features many groups and organizations that work in plain view and behind the scenes to support the community, but one lesser-known organization is the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC).

Established in 1989 at the national level, the SAAC is a National Collegiate Athletic Association initiative that provides student-athletes with a means

of sharing their campus experiences and providing input on rules and policies pertaining to collegiate sports, both at the conference and national level.

Therefore, Fairfield's committee works directly with the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference alongside our conference rivals to communicate relevant news and coordinate certain programs and initiatives on behalf of all Fairfield student-athletes.

Each varsity team has three players on the committee, with existing members

selecting teammates who demonstrate great leadership qualities to take on the role after they graduate.

Though the SAAC is heavily involved with the development and change of conference and national guidelines and regulations, its efforts also involve providing an inclusive and safe campus environment for student-athletes. One such example, as noted by Fairfield committee co-president Joseph Stocchetti '24, is the "green bandana project".

"Chosen student-athletes on each

team will walk around campus with a green bandana on their backpack," Stocchetti said. "They act as a person to talk to when you are going through something and are in need of some inspiration or guidance."

Stocchetti, a member of the men's soccer team, believes these smaller scale and more personal initiatives are equally as valuable to the SAAC as the conference and nationwide input the students are afforded.

"We want all students to know we are here to help."

Stocchetti also believes that the SAAC's reach extends beyond the internal affairs of athletics programs, noting that the connections fostered by the committee often lead to greater turnout at home games and help equip student-athletes with skills they'll use in their lives going forward.

"[The SAAC] brings real-world scenarios into the college setting," he said, "as there are roles for everyone that are crucial to having operations run smoothly and precisely."

Since expanding to encompass all three divisions of collegiate athletics in 1997, the SAAC has trickled down to each individual university, and the NCAA itself has a committee of select student-athletes representing universities across the country that works most closely with association officials. Ultimately, it is the agency given to each and every student-athlete that makes the SAAC such a valuable part of the Fairfield community and the collegiate community at large.

"Many people love being involved and having a voice for themselves," Stocchetti said, "and that is exactly what you can expect from all of our members."



Photo Courtesy of @stagssaac Instagram

The Student Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) works to foster a more stablized culture for their respective athletic programs.

Stag Spotlight: Graduate Student Patrick McCarthy

By TOMMY COPPOLA
Editor-In-Chief

Background/Early Life

One of the Fairfield University men’s golf team’s longest-tenured members is looking to close out his final season strong.

Graduate Student Patrick McCarthy grew up surrounded by golf. Though he found interest in other sports such as basketball, he has golfed since he was a young child. According to him, his time in high school helped him fully realize his passion for picking up the clubs.

McCarthy’s family is no stranger to the sport, as his father played golf at James Madison University and his brother, Michael McCarthy, played golf at Loyola University Maryland. The Bethesda, Md. natives attended Gonzaga College High School in nearby Washington, D.C. and continued their golfing careers into their college years.

His cousin, Denny McCarthy, is a part of the Professional Golfer’s Association of America (PGA of America) and has played in over 150 events according to his official online profile.

With this in mind, it is no surprise that Patrick has continued to play and love the game of golf

This season

Currently, McCarthy’s mind is set on “gearing up for the second half of the season.” According to the men’s golf team’s official schedule, the squad has participated in three events with three more on the horizon. The team currently sits in the tail-end of a three-week break.

Looking to the future, the team will square off in the Sacred Heart University Fall Classic in mid-October, the Lehigh Invitational a week later, and finally the Bucknell Veterans Intercollegiate just a week after that.

Out of the three events they’ve taken on, McCarthy called it a “pretty solid start so far,” noting that successful efforts form Anthony Naples ’27 has helped the team prevail in the early stages of the year.

In the Ryan T. Lee Memorial Collegiate, Naples scored a -5, sharing third place with

Villanova University’s Peter Weaver and the United States Military Academy’s John Heckel, Jr. McCarthy slotted in the 32nd spot, helping Fairfield University to a sixth place finish out of 17 total teams.

Reflecting on his personal play this year, McCarthy spoke to his success in ball-striking but acknowledges that there is room for improvement in his short game.

“So, over the next couple of weeks, I’m really going to work hard on my putting to kind of gear it up for the second half of the season, and have a strong second half,” McCarthy shared.

McCarthy and the team most recently competed in Yale University’s MacDonald Cup on Sept. 23 and Sept. 24, which takes place at The Course at Yale in New Haven, Conn. Fellow graduate student Shane DiVincenzo placed fifth overall, propelling the Stags to a fifth place finish in the tournament out of 12 total teams.

Fairfield University Playing Career

When thinking back on the highlights of his playing career at Fairfield, McCarthy looks to his win at the Hartford/Tumble Brook Invite back in 2021, his sophomore year. According to the official player leaderboard, McCarthy took the top honors with a score of 68, staying just two points ahead of 2023 Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference winner Killian McGinley ’23, who tied for second.

In his 2022 campaign, McCarthy posted the second lowest scoring average in Fairfield golf history, which has pushed the Stags to the brink of success.

“The last three years, we’ve kind of been right there knocking on the door to win the conference championship, which we haven’t won yet,” he explained. “Just to see how far the team has come in the last few years, that’s just a great thing to be a part of.”

McCarthy also spoke to the challenges he has faced over the course of his playing career as a Stag. He referred to himself as “on the bubble” to make the conference championship roster back in the spring of his second year, but after a top-ten finish in the conference at an event, he made the lineup.



Photo Contributed by The Sports Information Desk

Graduate Student Patrick McCarthy competed in nine tournaments in 2022 averaging a 76.26.

“That was kind of a challenge that I faced that I overcame, which was pretty cool,” he shared.

Beyond The Golf Course

Knowing he had the intention to play golf in college, he decided to come to Fairfield after being a “late bloomer” in high school golf. “[...] I’ve obviously fallen in love with the school,” he shared. “It’s probably been some of the greatest years of my life.”

In terms of his personal career, he feels as though golf has helped him develop high aptitudes in “competitiveness and mental toughness,” citing that golf has helped him become a fierce competitor. He mentioned that golf is additionally a great social outlet;

playing for leisure with friends or keeping things competitive makes it so that one can “never get sick of it.”

McCarthy graduated from Fairfield last fall, but is currently pursuing a Master of Business Administration in Finance. Once he finishes that program in the spring of 2024, he will assume a new role at Deloitte, working in financial consulting.

Though he will be entering his career, McCarthy plans on sticking around in the game of golf. He plans on playing in amateur golf tournaments at the state level for the future.

“It’s definitely going to be a sport that’s going to be a part of my life for hopefully as long as possible,” he mentioned.



Photo Contributed by The Sports Information Desk

Patrick McCarthy (second from left) holds his award from the 2022 Hartford Hawks Invitational Tournament on Sept. 20, 2022 in Hartford, Conn., where he finished in 32nd place.