

## Anonymous Note Attacks Sexuality Studies Department at Jesuit Catholic Institution

#### BY **MAX LIMRIC** Managing Editor

An anonymous note posted to the Women, Gender and Sexuality (WGSS) bulletin board in Donnarumma Hall reads: "This is a Catholic University. You are teaching doctrine that goes against the Bible, and God's design for mankind. Shame."

The note, posted sometime between Tuesday, Oct. 17 during the day and 8 a.m. on the morning of Wednesday Oct. 18, attacks the teaching of sexuality at Fairfield University.

In an article published by The Rearview, Vice President of Marketing and Communications Jennifer Anderson '97 stated that there is "reason to believe that the person responsible for posting the note is not a member of our campus community."

Yet, security camera footage reviewed by The Department of Public Safety (DPS) cannot rule out the possibility that the person responsible for the note is part of the campus community to some extent.

DPS states that the note was left by a male and female white couple who also entered the Egan Chapel on Tuesday. DPS states that the couple's age looked to be "too young to be parents, but too old to be graduate students."

Because the authors of the anonymous note entered the chapel the same day they left their note, it could be surmised that memorabilia posted in the chapel or below in campus ministry may have caused the couple to leave the note in Donnarumma Hall.

A poster on the announcements board of the chapel advertises Ignatian Q, a "conference creating community, developing spirituality and affirming humanity for LGBTQ+ students at Jesuit schools." Likewise, in campus ministry, a rainbow flag waves, signifying campus ministry's respect and acceptance of LGBTQ+ identities in religious life. Either the poster or pride flag could have been the reason they chose to leave their note.

Still, their choice to leave a hate-filled note is unknown at this time. Yet, their note may speak to a systemic issue of intolerance of LGBTQ+ identities at Fairfield University.

In 2010, an article published by The

gender identity/expression."

Faculty members responded quickly, condemning the note as concerns rose over the impacts the note may have on the LGBTQ+ community on campus.

Because Fairfield University is a Jesuit, Catholic institution, the church's teachings are at the core of life on campus; Fairfield University's mission statement holds that it is an institution that is "Catholic in both tradition and spirit and celebrates the God-given dignity of every human person."

With the Catholic Church present in the University and University culture, believers in the anonymous notes' statement may feel as if the University rebels against the Catholic Church and its teachings.

However, students are speaking out against this "twisted" and "unkind" use of religion. Specifically, members from the Gender and Sexuality Alliance (GSA), a safe space for LGBTQ+ students as well as an advocacy group on campus for LGBTQ+ students and issues, are speaking up.

GSA executive board members issued a statement to The Fairfield Mirror, reflecting on both the harm the note has on the safety and community that GSA has built, as well as criticizing the anonymous note for contradicting Fairfield University's Jesuit values.

"This kind of behavior is unacceptable and does not reflect the Jesuit values of this school. This is not only ignorant and cowardly, but undermines the safety and community we have tried to build with GSA," it announces.

Junior Nicholas Garofalo, GSA's COSO and Fairfield United Representative, builds upon their statement: "taking time out of one's day to spread hate ... through a twisted and unkind use of religion is completely backward."

Vice President of Mission and Ministry, Rev. Paul Rourke, S.J. echoes students' sentiments and offers his thoughts on the incident.

"As a Jesuit and Catholic university, we affirm the inviolable dignity of every member of our community and strive to be a place of 'radical hospitality;' where all feel truly welcome, loved and empowered. When a group has traditionally been persecuted and marginalized, as is the case with members of the LGBT community, we have a special duty to ensure that we live up to our own high ideals," he states. This is a Catholic University. You are teaching doctrine that goes against the Bible and God's design for mankind. Shame.

The note, found by a professor and confiscated by the Department of Public Safety declares that Fairfield University is "teaching doctrine that goes against the Bible and God's design for mankind."

Fortunately, our community is better and stronger than this note would suggest, but the work of inclusive excellence is never done."

Likewise, declarations issued by the head of the Catholic Church, Pope Francis further negate the beliefs expressed in the anonymous note.

Pope Francis, the first Jesuit head of the Catholic Church, believes that laws criminalizing homosexuality are fundamentally unjust and that being homosexual is not a crime. Recently, Francis also welcomed Sr. Jeannine Gramic and praised her work in which she ministered to gay and lesbian Catholics for decades.

Likewise, Francis has recently suggested that blessings for same-sex couples could be possible. NPR writes that "Francis has also voiced support for civil laws extending legal benefits to same-sex spouses, and Catholic priests in parts of Europe have been blessing same-sex unions without Vatican censure." granted anonymity to protect their identity, affirms Francis' view of acceptance: "As someone who is both Catholic and LQBTQ+, it's hard for me to understand this person's thinking of how God, who is all-loving, does not support love."

Photo Contributed by Dr. Shannon Kelley

They believe that "love is the greatest gift from him we have in this world and I think most would agree."

In an email sent out to all College of Arts and Sciences faculty, Director of the Center for Catholic Studies Nancy Dallavalle alongside Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences Richard Greenwald, Ph.D., addressed the anonymous note and "the issue about the Church and the LGBTQ+ community."

"The posting, which invoked the authority of 'the bible and God's design,' as 'doctrine' is uninformed," she declares. "References to "the bible" always need context."

Dallavella also detailed the "unwavering commitment" that Fairfield University as a Catholic Jesuit institution has to its LGBTQ+ faculty, staff and students, "seeing this support not only as an issue of academic freedom but also as an expression of its mission as a Catholic Jesuit University, a position it shares in common with other schools in the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities."

Fairfield Mirror titled "Fairfield Not LGBT Friendly" referenced The Princeton Review rankings which positioned the university as 19 on the list of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender unfriendly campuses.

Fairfield's ranking has not improved. Instead, their 2024 rankings placed the university as the 14th most unfriendly LGBTQ+ university in the United States.

The company explains that their LGBTQ+ unfriendly rankings are based on " how strongly students disagree that their fellow students treat all persons equally, regardless of their sexual orientation and He continues his statement and explains that those who follow the Church should "never [...] induce feelings of marginalization and exclusion." He believes that "one claiming to defend the Church should never behave in such a way as to induce or deepen feelings of marginalization and exclusion.

Sadly, the note posted had exactly this effect: members of our LGBT community and others associated with [W]GSS have felt targeted and belittled by their note.

Francis' beliefs are beginning to revolutionize the churches' standing on LGBTQ+ identities as his statement directly opposes an explanatory note published by the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith only two years ago in 2021. The explanatory note stated that the church couldn't bless gay unions because 'God cannot bless sin.'

In his new letter, Francis responds to the statement published by the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith because he states that priests cannot become judges "who only deny, reject and exclude."

A student, who requested and was

Rev. Rourke also touches upon academic freedom and refers to the anonymous notes critique of the teaching of WGSS.

"While a person or group should feel free in a university setting to question or criticize academic positions and approaches, the manner of doing so is critically important. CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

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

#### 10/19

12 p.m.

A fire alarm was set off in Gonzaga Hall due to dust from a vacuum. A full building evacuation was required and the Fairfield Fire Department arrived at the scene.

10/20

11 p.m.

A sprinkler pipe burst in Regis Hall, prompting the activation of a water flow monitor. The burst was caused by a student who inflicted accidental damage to the pipe. The Fairfield Fire Department reported to the building and a sprinkler pipe company completed repairs immediately. The Office of Residence Life and the Dean of Students were notified about the incident.



Fairfield Fire Department and Department of Public Safety officials responded to a fire alarm in Gonzaga Hall. Fizz users noted that the incident was caused by a student who hit the sprinkler system with a football.

#### 10/22

4 a.m.

An unknown male individual was seen entering Regis Hall. When approached by the Department of Public Safety (DPS) officers, the male fled. He also came into contact with an Area Coordinator from the Office of Residence Life. Eventually, DPS was able to track down and identify the male. Due to his disorderly conduct, he was thrown off campus and permitted from reentering. If he were to return, he would be arrested on sight.



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## Elizabeth Boquet, Ph.D. Honored with Leadership in Peer Tutoring Award

#### BY **SAMANTHA RUSSELL** Assistant News Editor

Professor of English and Director of the Writing Center at Fairfield University, Elizabeth H. Boquet, Ph.D., will be awarded on Nov. 4 the National Conference on Peer Tutoring and Writing (NCPTW) Ron Maxwell Award for Distinguished Leadership in Promoting the Collaborative Learning Practices of Peer Tutors in Writing.

This distinction honors one individual each year who aids in undergraduate student development "through mentoring peer writing tutors involved in collaborative learning," stated a press release from NCPTW. "NCPTW Ron Maxwell Award recipients are often individuals who have provided extraordinary service to the evolution of the NCPTW organization and conference."

"I hope this award is an endorsement that the work I've done matters to others too," Boquet avowed.

Contributing almost 30 years of professional service and leadership to Fairfield University's English department, Dr. Boquet admits that her interests do not particularly lie in English but in linguistics as a whole. Growing up in South Louisiana, diverse languages surrounded Boquet, complete with various Englishes, Frenches, Kreyols and Houmas—to name a few.

Because of her exposure to diverse speaking and writing patterns, she became intrigued with the intersecting moments of these wide-ranging dialects.

"Writing centers are places where we can try to intervene in these intersections—to talk in rich and varied ways about how to meet educational expectations in meaningful, authentic ways for students."

Boquet worked as a peer writing tutor at her own undergraduate institution, Nicholls State University, in Thibodaux, La. Aside from the typical tasks of guiding idea formation among individuals and small groups, she also learned about the histories and developmental necessities of writing centers.

These experiences and novel knowledge acted as vital factors in unearthing the career possibility of a writing center director.

Fairfield University's Writing Center was founded in the early 1980s by Dr. Mariann Regan, Professor Emerita of English. Boquet classifies Dr. Regan as a brilliant and "deeply humane" individual and hopes the Writing Center can maintain her spirit of curiosity and humanity.



Dr. Boquet works as Director of the Writing Center and mentors students in writingfocused peer tutoring.

alike, and adds that literacy and language instruction, as well as English teachers, play a key role in that school experience: both inside and outside the classroom. Contrastingly, she notes with apparent regret that English teachers bear the reputation of the "correctness police," a concept that brings her physical pain.

"I am the very last person who is going to correct your grammar. I am the person who is going to be curious about your

66

Writing centers are places where we can try to intervene in these intersections—to talk in rich and varied ways about how to meet educational expectations in meaningful, authentic ways for students.""

#### -Dr. Elizabeth H. Boquet Director of the Writing Center

usage—how it connects to your identity, your communities, your personal history," she confessed. "We will never build a more just, more inclusive world if we're busy focusing on error and on what people are doing wrong."

Instead, Boquet emphasizes the importance of changing focus from correction to breakdown and understanding. The rewarding aspect of mentoring students at Fairfield, she continues, is the opportunity to work with so many others who share that commitment toward the greater good.

Upon receiving this Maxwell Award, Dr. Boquet uses the word "surprised," along with "meaningful." The National Conference on Peer Tutoring in Writing acted as a critical organization toward her own professional development. Early in her doctoral program at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, she assisted the university in preparing for the conference; through this experience, Boquet learned first-hand about professional organizations. "This organization at its heart centers students as knowledge-makers and honors the essential work that students do with each other and with those of us professionals in writing centers," she stated. "So to be, at this whole other end of my career, recognized for my contributions to this amazing organization over these past thirty years is incredibly meaningful to me, beyond what I can express." Whether she is delivering keynote speeches to publications centered on peer writing tutors, supporting and mentoring students or serving as editor for The Writing Journal, Boquet has demonstrated thoughtful leadership throughout her scholarship and history with NCPTW. Committee members further applaud her extensive work and collaboration with undergraduate student researchers as authors and co-researchers.

Professor of English at Fairfield University Sonya Huber undoubtedly agrees with the selection of Dr. Boquet as this year's winner. "This doesn't surprise me at all," she said. "She's a visionary, an advocate and just a wonderful human being."

Huber gives additional acclaim to Boquet's devotion to her students and her community. Professor of English and long-time friend of Boquet, Betsy Bowen Ph.D., provides more testament toward the scholar's leadership.

"She is reliably the first person I ask to read drafts, even messy drafts, of my own writing. She is, clearly, a leader in the field of composition, and that's unusual for a scholar from a relatively small university," Bowen expressed. "Of all that I've learned from her—and that's a lot—I most value what she has taught be about trusting students' capacity to learn and lead."

Language in America, specifically the English language, has encountered numerous challenges throughout its existence. Boquet remorsefully describes the English language as a colonial one, in which it "gobbles up nearly every language in its path." Moreover, the global spread of the English language has resulted in serious accounts of violence and oppression towards non-English speaking groups.

Nevertheless, Boquet affirms that we must grapple with that quandary.

Despite its issues, the English language also represents numerous possibilities for society. She contends that it stands as the result of vast, ongoing language contact, which she deems "our starting point."

"I'm not afraid of language change. That's what languages do. That's the beauty of them. That's not work we can leave to other people," she advised. Through the Writing Center, these changes and intersections of language are continually built upon. The Writing Center relishes interpersonal work by collaborating with various other Academic Commons and partnering with the library. This year, a new collaboration with the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures was inaugurated to offer multilingual writing tutoring, an effort in the works for the Center for quite a while. Dr. Boquet will be honored with the Maxwell Award at the business meeting of this year's National Conference on Peer Tutoring and Writing in Pittsburgh. She concludes with personal recognition for the hundreds of peer, graduate and professional tutors she has had the opportunity to work with.

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An admired scholar herself, colleagues of Boquet offered similar testimonies to her own, trailblazing successes. Professor and Chair of the English Department, Nels Pearson Ph.D. asserted that while the department was thrilled to hear of Boquet's Maxwell Award, they were certainly not surprised.

"Beth has been a pioneer and a leader in the teaching of writing through peerto-peer and collaborative student work for over two decades, both at Fairfield and nationally," he began. "In her scholarship and teaching and advocacy, she asks to think deeply about how and with whom we communicate, especially on crucial issues such as violence, identity and language and dialect bias. As director of the Writing Center, she has had a transformative impact on so many student lives."

Boquet acknowledges the weight that school can place on students and teachers

"Their kindness, curiosity and commitment have kept me in this work, learning from and with them, all these years."

#### Fairfield Art Museum Receives \$56,000 Grant to Expand Operations

BY COOPER AITKEN **Contributing Writer** 

An organization called Art Bridges, which has previously supplied grants and loans to the Fairfield University Art Museum, recently announced a three-year, \$56,000 grant to the museum to help expand its opening hours as part of the organization's Access for All initiative.

Starting Nov. 2, the museum will be open from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Thursdays for the next three years. Currently, the art museum in Bellarmine Hall operates until 4 p.m.

Fairfield University Art Museum director Carey Weber explained that the new hours on Thursdays come as a request from their visitors.

"Lots of people over the 13 years that the museum has been open have told us that they wished we were open longer hours, as our regular hours were Tuesday through Saturday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.," said Weber.

The Art Bridges Foundation has the mission of expanding access to American art in the United States. As Alice Walton, the organization's founder, explained on the website, "everybody deserves access to art. Art is hope, it's opportunity, it's education, it's all of the things we all want."

With the new grant, the museum hopes to integrate a new audience of night-goers who would probably not be able to visit the museum within the five hours of operation.

Art Bridges is associated with the Crystal Bridges Museum, which often loans pieces of art to museums along with a grant, to increase the accessibility of that art and the museum where it is being exhibited. Art Bridges previously gave Fairfield University a loan for a piece of art and a grant for an exhibition, however, the COVID-19 pandemic interrupted the exhibition's visibility.

However, Weber has applied for the loan of a museum painting called "Flags" by Childe Hassam, whose current loan expires in 2026. When the painting goes on display along with an exhibition at Fairfield University, the extended hours will still be available for many months for anyone to visit.

"We were thrilled that they gave us enough money to do that for three years, which happened to coincide with the amount of time until the end of the loan of the painting we've asked for in 2026." said Weber.

Currently, the museum is displaying an exhibit dedicated to Arthur Szyk, a Polish Jewish immigrant whose art represented the plight European Jews experienced during the first half of the 20th century. In light of the rise of extremism in the United States, especially anti-semitic rhetoric and violence, the museum argues that "this exhibition provides a platform for conversations on the urgent topics of human rights and social justice."

"In Real Times - Arthur Szyk: Artist and Soldier for Human Rights" is open until



Beginning on Nov. 2 and with the expansion gifed by Art Bridges, Fairfield University's Art Museum will now be open from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Thursdays.

Dec. 16, and the extended hours of the museum will be able to expand access to this politically and socially meaningful art.

Weber also commented on this exhibit, saying, "This current exhibition of work by Arthur Schtick has had the most student impact of any show we've ever done."

In addition to the five or six different exhibitions a year, the museum also hosts around 60 programs a year, ranging from drawing parties and de-stressing with art evening events, to craft collective parties. Several of these events and many others are available to view and sign up for on the Life@

Fairfield website.

Through these events and the new extended hours, Weber hopes to broaden the presence of the museum on campus life. By combining access to thought-provoking exhibits and outreach events, such as art parties, the museum hopes to be a place that students want to visit.

"Being open until eight o'clock gives more flexibility to create those kinds of programs in the future, and make it a place where people can feel like they can just hop in and come and hang out," explained We-

# **Student Organizations Validate Inclusivity In Campus Community**

#### CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The people who posted this note without permission on a faculty bulletin board showed little evidence of desiring serious and respectful dialogue, and violated the values of our community," he states.

Yet, because Fairfield University is a private university, academic freedom is not guaranteed. However, Fairfield's Purpose Statement acknowledges the right to academic freedom. "Fairfield University understands that academic freedom applies to all faculty engaged in those activities (eg. classroom teaching, published research, production of artistic artifacts) that reflect the academic expertise of a faculty member."

It should be noted that Fairfield's status as a private university allows them the right to choose the courses they offer and they rely on the Jesuit value of cura personalis for this. In their website, they explained Fairifeld "supports and reflects Fairfield University's mission of educating the whole person and offering ongoing opportunities for transformation."

Students also note that Jesuit teachings promote education about diverse identities instead of censorship of diverse identities.

Junior Rishi Black believes the author of the note desires to "silence our existence because we make you uncomfortable" when referring to LGBTQ+ identities.

They note that these Jesuit values "don't say to condemn someone because of their identity, but to instead be understanding and learn about people unlike yourself, as that is what it means to be a person with and for others. [The] WGSS department is right where it needs to be for a Jesuit institution."

Cura Personalis, in conjunction with Fairfield University's mission statement which holds that "as a Catholic institution, we welcome individuals of all beliefs and traditions who share our passion for scholarship, justice, truth and freedom, and we value the diversity their membership brings to our community," affirms their devotion to a well-rounded



education.

Junior Phil-Jay White corroborates Black's statement about the attempted censorship of LGBTQ+ identities and notes that "if you read between the lines of the note, you'll see that the bigger conversation is about privilege-not sexuality. The author holds such privilege that they can condemn the teachings of people who are different from them-and with that, completely disregard the challenges queer humans face and have faced throughout centuries."

Life at a Jesuit Catholic institution is impacted by religious teachings, just not in the way that the anonymous note wishes. For example, the Magis Core Curriculum is "rooted in Jesuit ethos" as the University believes it "supports and reflects Fairfield University's mission of educating the whole person and offering ongoing opportunities for transformation."

The Congregation for Catholic Education declared in May 1994 that "The Church's Presence in the University and in University Culture" guarantees "in institutional form, a Christian presence in the university world."

Director of Student Diversity and Multicultural Affairs (SDMA), Yolehema Felican '12 details the role her office has as "the SDMA office is committed to fostering an inclusive environment and creating a sense of belonging for all students regardless of their identity. One of our top priorities is to ensure a safe and affirming environment for LGBTQIA+ individuals."

Likewise, Director of FUSA's Diversity and Inclusion

A pride flag is displayed in the Office of Student Diversity and Multicultural Affairs, demonstrating a commitment to LGBTQIA+ allyship.

Board, Maria Bentacur '24 "truly believes that our campus community is suffering from a lack of education, and that is our main goal going forward for the rest of the year" and "wants LQBTQ+ students to know that they will always have a voice within our community."

The "Christian presence" in universities today allows the teaching of sexuality and endorses programs and offices such as SDMA, GSA and FUSA D&I Board which actively work to promote the belonging of all identities on campus.

Garofalo comments on the change in thinking as there is now a lack of tolerance for those who use religion to rationalize hate—not a lack of tolerance of LGBTQ+ identities.

"As the world becomes more and more accepting, I believe that those who share in the beliefs of the authors of the note are setting themselves up to simply not fit into society. Their lack of empathy or understanding will prevent them from opportunities and relationships," he proclaims.

And although religion may still be be used to spread hate; today, at Fairfield University, students, faculty, staff and religious leaders affirm that "a Christian presence in the University and in University Culture" centers on love and acceptance of all identities-not the hate and attempted censorship of LGBTQ+ identities espoused in the anonymous note.

# Opinion

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# Student Livelihood Should Come Before Religious Policies

#### BY **LIZ MORIN** Opinion Editor

I was raised Catholic, went to a Catholic high school, spent years getting confirmed and attended Church regularly, but I'm not religious. I feel like religion is such an individual journey, so I won't detail why I don't associate with religion beyond my general lack of belief in a higher power and disagreement with Church practices.

Before my first year at Fairfield, I wondered what it would be like to attend yet another religious school.

My high school very clearly advocated for popular Catholic beliefs, and they didn't hide it.

Websites that revolve around abortion or satanism were blocked by the school's wifi.

School-wide masses were required, even for non-Catholic students and if you were caught skipping, you would get detention. I wasn't sure if a religiously affiliated college would be different since students are now adults.

Fairfield promotes itself as inclusive to all religions, even providing services that will get students to any religious service the campus does not offer.

This was a pleasant surprise, as nothing but Catholicism was discussed in my previous years of schooling. Campus Ministries' emphasis on service is great, too, providing service options around the Fairfield area. I always thought that was more of what religion was about—helping others in need.

That being said, I think there is a fine line to how much religion should actually impact the policy of a religiously affiliated university, in this case, Fairfield.

If the school is going to advocate for itself as being inclusive of all religions, that should include students who do not associate with a religion at all.

The Fairfield student body is not the same person; copy and paste. Everyone has their own beliefs and different ways they go about their beliefs. Therefore, some policies or actions at Fairfield have hurt some students mentally and physically.

For example, contraceptives are not provided to students on campus, as covered in an opinion article by Kaitlyn Drake '23. Catholicism is against premarital sex and contraception, so they are



There have been several instances on Fairfield's campus where actions have occured in the name of Catholic belief and teaching that have affected specific groups.

not provided on campus.

However, what harm would be done if they were provided? Students who align with the Catholic view of contraception don't have to use them (though I would argue that's not entirely safe), and students who utilize them are much more likely to be safe from STDs and any other illness that may come from unsafe sex.

This policy at Fairfield is harming many students' physical health because of a religious belief that not every student agrees with.

In 2014, Fairfield's Students for Life organization placed 915 pink crosses in front of the Barone Campus Center to symbolize the 915 aborted fetuses a year. I can not imagine the pain any woman on campus at the time who went through an abortion felt when they saw this.

Former students Michael Leabouf '15 and Riley Barrett '17 wrote a response to this incident for The Mirror back in 2014.

"We have many friends who have received contraception ... even gotten abortions from our local Planned Parenthood clinic. We don't appreciate seeing pale pink 'baby graves' scattered across the lawn, and our mood certainly won't improve when our peers shove leaflets down our throats about the "Planned Parenthood" experience." When Fairfield addressed this in 2014, part of their quote was, "As a Catholic institution, we, of course, stand by the teachings of the Catholic Church that include respect for all life."

How about the livelihood of the students on campus? This is an organization that Fairfield appears to be proud of despite its lack of inclusion for all students—what the school claims its message is.

Not apologizing and instead standing by the "baby graves" is deeply harmful to many students' mental health on campus and can create an unsafe environment.

In 2010, Fairfield was ranked by Princeton Review at #19 for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) unfriendly campuses. Thirteen years later, not much has changed.

Recently, a note was posted in Donnarumma saying, "This is a Catholic University.

You are teaching doctrine that goes against the Bible and God's design for mankind. Shame." Fairfield has yet to address the student body about this, showing yet again that they are trying to bury this under the rug.

Jennifer Anderson '97, vice president of marketing and communications, commented in an article for The Rearview stating that there is "reason to believe that the person responsible for posting the note is not a member of our campus community."

Not only do they attempt to bury the note, but the administration attempts to bury the fact that those who wrote the note are members of the Fairfield community who attend mass services at the Egan Chapel.

The homophobic culture on campus reflects poorly on the Fairfield administration's lack of condemning homophobia. This is not the first case of homophobia I've seen on campus.

I can count the number of times I have been called homophobic slurs, either as a "joke" or a genuine attack on my identity—Fairfield's silence on this culture around campus speaks volumes to who they prioritize.

If Fairfield is going to claim to be inclusive to students, that cannot just mean they offer religious services and community service. It means they need to support all of their students, which means acknowledging that some Catholic teachings are extremely harmful to students on campus. After all, isn't it a common Catholic saying to "love thy neighbor"?

## Activism On Social Media Should Be Created By Users Who Are Informed On The Topic

#### BY **FIONA KILLEEN** Contributing Writer

Whenever a political event receives attention, I see social media influencers' comment sections flooded with calls to discuss or spread awareness on the topic. In this day and age of cancel culture, it sometimes seems that choosing not to use your platform to elevate awareness is cause for cancellation.

While digitally-based activism can be advantageous in accomplishing things such as engaging people who may not usually follow current events. I think there can also be ramifications. thinking about spreading meaningful information.

However, there is a tradeoff between this ability to access information easily and the correlated misinformation. I'm sure that social media companies can monitor accounts for falsified information.

Yet, a continuum exists between falsified and maybe just misleading information.

Complications regarding the discussion of political issues can arise when accounts that carry a lot of influence post videos or infographics that contain misleading or incomplete information.

Instagram stories last just a couple of seconds, and only so



Social media does present benefits when considering how to spread political happenings easily. People experiencing devastating occurrences can gain traction for their cause by posting to platforms that can reach massive global audiences. The audience that these apps attract has the potential to view accounts of people who are on the ground experiencing these issues firsthand.

When viewers develop that personal connection to an issue that comes with seeing someone living through these conditions or experiences, it has the power to intensify the response to help solve a current event positively.

Of course, there sometimes can be bias involved in this, however, viewing these first-hand accounts in combination with learning about topics from researched and impartial sources can be tremendously valuable.

Additionally, since such an immense amount of the population consumes social media, people who are not usually politically active can absorb information about current events in convenient and manageable ways.

People who go on Instagram to see what their friends post can also easily learn about a current event through a post or Instagram story. In this manner, social media allows for a more simplified and straightforward information-sharing method.

Digital activism does have considerable benefits when

much information can be included in those few seconds. Similarly, Instagram posts can only present as much information as the captions and small squares allow.

Comparatively, long-form news channels usually run multiple programs daily that can sometimes portray the entirety of a story more thoroughly.

Most nights before I go to bed, I spend time scrolling on my phone and watching TikTok videos.

During the past few years, I have noticed an increased demand for social media influencers to discuss current events and utilize their platforms to spread awareness of global affairs. When thinking about the reach that many digital creators have, sometimes garnering millions of views on apps such as TikTok, it would make sense for people who are passionate about certain topics to ask for help in spreading that message.

This phenomenon can go astray when people are placing increased pressure on creators to discuss complex topics they do not have any background knowledge of.

Similarly, if digital creators are not committed to actually carefully researching a topic before posting, misinformation can easily spread. To combat this, people should look to informed and prepared individuals to spread awareness on complex topics.

While social media can be an outlet for gathering a baseline



Social media is frequently used today as a form of activism, but it can often lead to misinformation.

or preliminary introduction to a headline, I do not think that political opinions about worldly topics should be shaped by short-form videos.

There is also an argument to be made that sometimes, using your platform to leverage the voices of those who are more educated on a topic should be seen as equally valuable as a contribution to presenting information yourself.

When utilized responsibly, social media can effectively focus on pertinent topics that deeply affect people. I also think that most efforts to support current events on social media are well-meaning.

Going forward, it would be beneficial for people to follow social media accounts created by people or organizations dedicated to putting in ample effort to research topics impartially and in their entirety.

# Kevin McCarthy's Removal From Office Emphasizes The Divide Of Political Parties

#### By **Liz Morin** Opinion Editor

If you don't know what the Speaker of the House means or who it is, you probably do now with all its coverage these last few weeks. But if you still don't, I'll summarize briefly.

The Speaker of the House is the spokesperson for the majority party in the House. Right now, it is the Republican party.

They essentially explain legislative action and the parties' plans to other officials. They also lead business plans and debates to make their legislation look better.

Basically, think in a group project, the person you pick to present the work out loud. If the person in the group project was second in line to the presidency after the vice president.

Republican Kevin McCarthy was the Speaker of the House up until Oct. 4, when he was voted to be removed from his position. Republicans had been building up a list of grievances with him throughout the year.

For starters, it took 15 rounds of votes for him to enter office, so not many people wanted him in the position in the first place.

He was a part of debt ceiling negotiations with President Joe Biden, but he failed to successfully get his point across, which greatly upset his party.

Some even marked this moment as his betrayal of the Republican party, according to USA Today.

"Rep. Dan Bishop, R-N.C., [told] reporters he would consider bringing the motion to vacate to the floor over the debt ceiling deal."

On Sept. 30, the government was at risk of shutting down due to lack of funding, so McCarthy created a plan to increase government funding until November.

This plan did not get enough votes, but the fact that he worked alongside Democrats frustrated his party again.

It was Rep. Matt Gaetz who initiated his removal from office, but it was a majority of Democrats who voted to remove him. This is a big deal—it is the first time ever that a Speaker has been removed from the House. The House is required under the Constitution to have a leader, which it does not, so now the House is stuck until it can find a new speaker.

They have a temporary speaker, Rep. Patrick McHenry, but they're trying to find a new speaker. This is where it starts to affect everyone.

Whoever becomes the next Speaker is one of the faces of the party in Congress, and right now, no one seems to know who it will be.

Rep. Jim Jordan ran three times but was recently removed as a possible candidate. Now, the list of nominees consists of Rep. Tom Emmer, Rep. Kevin Hern, Rep. Byron Donalds, Rep. Jack Bergman, Rep. Jodey Arrington, Rep. Mike Johnson and Rep. Pete Sessions.

This is concerning to me, considering the radical views of these representatives. Rep. Tom Emmer seems to be leading the group after Kevin McCarthy endorsed him, but I'm not sure how it's possible to endorse a man who has made obscene and offensive remarks about abortion rights despite the fact that he is not an election denier and rather middle ground in some aspects.

Rep. Kevin Hern has actively voted against himself, so I'm not sure why they would want someone in office who doesn't want to be there.

Rep. Byron Donalds is a member of an ultra-conservative group called the House Freedom Caucus.

His campaign website actually describes him as "everything the fake news media says doesn't exist: a Trump-supporting, liberty-loving, pro-life, pro-2nd Amendment black man."

I also want to point out the lack of female Representatives as The House is only 29% female. Very telling.

Kevin McCarthy was no dev-

removal from office to an extent. He's not really a reliable person and he put forth many plans that he just backed away from. However, I believe that some of the reasoning for removing him shows how torn apart our government is.

The eight Republicans who voted against him were never satisfied with what he put forward and got upset over things like negotiating with Democrats or failing to succeed with his discussion with Biden over the debt ceiling.

Politics should not be based on someone's relation to an opposing party.

We live in a world nowadays where a Republican agrees with a Democratic policy, they're essentially blacklisted.

Take Nikki Haley, a Republican running for the Republican presidential nomination.

I'm no Nikki Haley fan, but surprisingly, she took a more moderate stance on abortion, saying, "Can't we all agree that contraception should be accessible?" and "No more demonizing this issue. We're going to humanize this issue."

Her comments pleasantly surprised many people, but others made it about parties.

One user in X, formerly known as Twitter, said, "The Republicans are off message! All they need to do is tell the truth. But no. They pander to the Dems. Idiots!"

Pander to "Dems?" An anti-abortion woman saying that abortion is a personal issue and shouldn't be controlled by the government automatically makes

" A politician who refuses to work with an opposing party is no politician. They're a power-hungry individual who can not admit their



On Oct. 4, Kevin McCarthy was removed as Speaker of the House. His removal has emphasized the divide of political parties and their lack of ability to prioritize the people of the United States.



### WGSS Committee Responds to Anonymous Note

#### By WGSS Coordinating Committee

The Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies (WGSS) Program has written this statement in response to the anonymous, hostile note placed on our bulletin board in Donnarumma last Tuesday. For over three decades at Fairfield University, our program has never been "ashamed" of any of its courses, nor will it ever be. We stand by our mission to challenge the cultural, intellectual, social and political assumptions about sex, gender and sexuality systems as they intersect with race and ethnicity. WGSS is an essential part of academic life at Fairfield, for we place all women's lives and experiences, including all members of our LGBTQ+ community, at the center of inquiry. Students in WGSS critically engage issues of race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality and other key components of identity and the ways they intersect. We examine systems of dominance, knowledge production and hierarchies of power.

Eight Republicans and 208 Democrats. Eight does not sound like a lot, but the Washington Post explains it well.

This article states that "Republicans have only a slim majority in the House, so to pass legislation that Democrats oppose—or to keep a speaker the Democrats despise—they have to be nearly unified.

They can only afford to lose five Republicans on key votes, and McCarthy lost eight."

It did not help that he wasn't particularly likable to a majority of the Democratic party as well. He had pretty much nobody on his side. il's advocate, but he was willing to work with Democrats regarding the government shutdown, which is what politics is all about.

A time when both parties could work together happily is something of the past, causing situations like these. I was particularly nervous when Jim Jordan was the only possible nominee. He not only openly denies the results of the 2020 election but has no experience in putting forth legislation.

"This is a guy that has basically made it very clear that his whole goal isn't to govern, it's not to legislate, it's to destroy the Democrats," said CNN senior political commentator Adam Kinzinger.

I understand McCarthy's attention.



her bow to Democrats?

I'm not old enough to remember a world where we weren't so divided by party, but I wish I could experience it at some point. Now, the Republican party has put forth multiple potential speakers who are extremely farright.

Not only is this harmful to members of society whom these representatives are openly trying to take the rights from, but it's also harmful to our government. Having someone like this as the Speaker of the House is incredibly damaging to our future, and we need to start paying more We are proud to offer a Minor and a Major in WGSS at a Jesuit Catholic University, and we will continue to do so undeterred even in the face of such small-minded acts of bigotry, ignorance and cowardice.

The WGSS Coordinating Committee

Dr. Shannon Kelley Dr. Emily Orlando Dr. Elizabeth Hohl Dr. Maggie Labinski Dr. Anna Lawrence Dr. Rose Rodrigues Dr. Johanna Garvey Dr. Niall Brennan Dr. Rachelle Brunn-Bevel



# A Brilliant Black Box Theatre Performance: Theatre Fairfield Presents "Dollhouse"

#### By ABIGAIL WHITE Head Vine Editor

From Theatre Fairfield comes another outstanding production: "Dollhouse". This modern retelling of Henrik Isben's play, "A Doll's House" ran in the black box theater from Oct. 17 to Oct. 21 and featured incredible cast members, a gorgeous set and an tine, Nora's high school best friend who reinformative talk-back after the show conducted by Fairfield English Department's Dr. Emily Orlando. and Dr. Shannon Kelley.

"Dollhouse," by Broadway's most published female playwright, Theresa Rebeck, tells the story of a woman, Nora, as a figure from her past comes back to dig up past events. Nora is comfortable in her marriage to Evan, played by Angelo Corsini '25, but it is all based on lies.

When Evan was sick, she turned to an old friend, Niel Fitzpatrick to help her embezzle money from her dying father. Now Fitzpatrick is back and ready to expose her secret. Being the modern retelling of Isben's original play, there are some small changes from Isben's original script, but the same messages are conveyed.

The lead role of Nora was played brilliantly by Katharine Gutkoski '26. Nora is such a complex character, a housewife who feels obligated to stay in her marriage, yet is not quite happy.

As her past with Fitzpatrick is sprung upon her, we see her struggle with the decision to keep it a secret from her husband, or to let it out. We see her struggle to choose whether she should stay with her husband, or if she should leave him.

The subtle, and not so subtle, misogynistic actions of Evan's character (the actions that would prompt Nora to leave her a small intimate space. The actors explained Theatre Fairfield's production of "Dollhouse".

Corsini's performance on stage. We see her torn when an old friend, Dr. Damian Rank, played by Ben Dressel '26 confesses he loves her and tells her he is sick, and dying. Hearing those two things at once, sets Nora up for even more confusion in her feelings.

Nora Jocobi "26 played the role of Christurns after divorcing her husband in search of a job. Jacobi embodies the complexities of this character masterfully on the stage. The audience could not help but laugh at her sarcastic remarks throughout the script but could also elicit empathy as she detailed her traumatic past with her ex-husband. This "polarizing" nature is what Jacobi describes in the talk-back as one of the most interesting parts of playing Christine's character.

Similar complexities were demonstrated in the performance of Neil Fitzpatrick by Ryan Carrigan '27. While he starts out as the villain, the most hated character for attempting to blackmail Nora, audience members realize throughout the course of the play that he is not as bad as he may seem. Carrigan claims in the talkback that if he can gather this sympathy from the audience for his character, then he is doing his job as an actor.

Perhaps one of the most exciting parts of this production was the audience's reaction and enthusiasm to the scenes that were played out on the stage. Especially as the love triangle that emerges between Nora, Evan and Dr. Damian Rank (after he professes his love for her), the audience is completely engaged and animated.

The black box theater, located in the

marriage) are demonstrated perfectly in in the talk-back that they could see each and every person in the audience. They agreed that they love and feed off the audience's reaction but in such a small theater setting, it can also present some interesting challenges in staying focused and not breaking character.

> The talk-back, at the conclusion of the show, directed by Dr. Orlando and Dr. Kelley, demonstrated a lot of the literary references and connections in the work as well as why this play is still relevant to us today. Kelley connects the content of the play to Betty Friedan's "The Feminine Mystique," and the idea of women as "eternal children." In an argument on stage between Nora and Evan, Evan compares his wife to a child.

> She is not taken seriously by her husband. She is bending to his every will. And with a lack of financial independence, she

finds herself trapped bedding to his will.

This is a larger issue that is presented in the work of Friedan as many upper-class married white women, who are not required to work, who are reliant on their husband's income and who spend their days at home, fall into a state of depression but "Dollhouse" demonstrates a need for women to be taken seriously. And it is the final line that Gutkoski delivers, as Nora leaves Evan, that so powerfully conveys this message: "I will be worth waiting for."

Congratulations are in order to director Jan Mason, the actors and everyone behind the scenes who made this production such a success. Check out Theatre Fairfield's website, theatre-fairfield.org, to learn more about their upcoming productions.

You will not want to miss a chance to see this incredible group on campus!



Regina A. Quick Center for the Arts, is such Katharine Gutkoski '26 and Ben Dressel '26 perform as Nora and Dr. Damian Rank in



By ERIN MCGETRICK **Contributing Writer** 

Halloween is one of the most joyous days



loween costumes growing was a lion costume that everyone in my famup and the memories they ily wore at some point," Ellie Kilmartin '24 tells experiences. have associated with them. me. She also notes that she and her mother Family tradition was dressed up together one year, which was spe-

is a reminder that there are very few individual

Other students shared hilarious photos with me to show off their sillier costumes.

of the year, but especially for kids. Endless amounts of candy, parties thrown during the day at school and wearing the coolest costumes are just some aspects that make this holiday so special in your younger years.

As we get older, our views towards Halloween and perhaps our appreciation towards it changes.

We attend haunted houses and trails, watch scary movies and attend parties at night instead of trick-or-treating. There's nothing wrong with the way we celebrate this holiday as we grow out of childhood, but it's sweet to reminisce about those simple pleasures.

I asked some Fair University field students to look back at their Halfavorite

important in the Kilmartin household growing up, one specific costume being shared amongst all the siblings.

"There

cial to her. "We were 70s go-go dancers."

Kilmartin says that her most iconic costume, however, is Sharpay Evans from "High School Musical". Or perhaps when she was a bee, in which she says, "my mom says I would wear the costume everywhere."

> Senior Emma Jardin also has some familial memories associated with Halloween. "When I was twoyears-old, my parents and I were clowns all together," she claims, but unfortunately did not show me a picture.

> > Jardin also discussed the more obscure costumes that became more popular as we entered our middle-school years. "One time, my friends and I were nerds," she says, "and another time, we were all different colored crayons." I found this amusing considering that I was a green crayon in the fifth grade, which

Nicole Dorsey '24 was wearing a black dress, black leggings, black boots, a black jacket and black lipstick in this specific photo of her younger self.

When asked to describe what exactly she was, she responded, "probably a goth girl."

Senior Ava Alicea showed me an adorable picture of her as a baby dressed completely in red with red shoes to match, and a giant apple costume thrown over her, even covering her head with a stem sticking out of it.

This reminded me of all the silly costumes parents have put their children in for decades and how much fun they probably have with that power.

My personal favorite costume growing up was a Snow White dress that I believe was worn for multiple years in a row. At least I was costefficient!

Although we should look forward to all the Halloween celebrations that are coming up within the next few weeks, it's fun to look back and remember how mystical the holiday was during our childhoods.

# FAIRFIELD'S HAUNTED HISTORY GHOST STORIES IN DOLAN HALL

#### By CAITLIN SHEA **Contributing Writer**

With Halloween right around the corner, it is not just the brisk fall air making the Fairfield University students feel a chill down their 403. spines, but the possible presence of an otherworldly being.

Sitting atop a hill on the outskirts of campus lies the eerily beautiful Dolan Hall.

built here on campus, it is a breathtaking glance back into the past.

Now acting as a residence hall placed items within the for upper-class students, some parts of the building have been left untouched by time, creating the perfect atmosphere for lost spirits to dwell.

As the frightful tale tells (and as was reported by The Mirror in whispered voices and spouts 2003 and 2018), a nun, who was rumored to be with child, was found

dead on the fourth floor of the old convent.

It is said her spirit still haunts the halls of Dolan Hall, specifically the room where she devastatingly lost her life, room

To this day, the poor unfortunate souls who find themselves living amongst the dead on the fourth floor report sounds of running up and down the long dreary One of the first chapels to be hallways, only to look and see nobody there.

Similarly, reports of misrooms, or even fans and lights possessing a mind of their own, changing speeds and flickering intensely.

Loud banging noises, of cold air leave students uneasy and chilled to the

bone.

wonder, whether or not they are truly alone, or if a vengeful spirit dwells.

Alumna Erin Bailey within the chilling halls of the old building.

Over the course of her stay there, Erin experienced what could be believed as some paranormal activity.

> Describing how early one morning, around 4 a.m. to be exact, Bailey shares that "the fire alarm went off only in our apartment, even though each of us was sleeping."

Now this could be chalked All of this leaves one to up to a technical malfunction, but could there be a possibility that something, or someone, was telling them to get out?

Similarly, a roommate's show-'23 found herself living er caddy was found in the middle of the hallway one morning, with no trace of who would've-or could've-moved it, as "no one knew who did it."

> Founded in 1942, it's easy to believe that students are not the only souls to live on Fairfield's Campus.

> Dolan Hall being one of the oldest buildings to stand on campus, it is not so far-fetched to believe that a spirit may still find themselves trapped within the long dark halls.

> For students who find themselves living in the old convent, they may discover that they have an undead neighbor, who may or may not make their presence known.

# FREATS TO SPICE OWEE

#### By BROOKE LATHE **Executive Editor**

for a good spooky grazing dish. NOT DOGS

In the midst of football season and fall weather, a hot dog is One of my favorite parts of one of my favorite filling meals. throwing a party is making sweet You can cut each hot dog to look like a detailed finger or buy puff pastry dough to turn them into mummified pigs in a blanket. My recommendations will always be Saugy Dogs (or Hebrew National) and Pillsbury Dough.

of each other in a new cookie to make a bat. Any of these can also be easily added to a cupcake to make it more filling.

#### RICE KRISPIES

balls, witches and vampires. I'd say you definitely have to have a steady hand for this one, though!

#### PRETRELS

With a little bit of chocolate, With food coloring and some vou can make a cluster of pretzels into a spider web on its own or as a cupcake topper! You can also use the single, thicker rods as something to decorate with frosting or chocolate as well. My favorite, however, is simply a smaller pretzel sticking out of a Re-

ese's cup, creating a witch's broom look.

There are so many treats that you can make to match the autumn and nearing Halloween aesthetics-these are just a few of my favorites that I have tried for myself. If none of these catch your attention, I suggest just trying to make your regular day snacks in a different way. You would be surprised at how many everyday treats you can make spookier with just a little bit of creativity!

treats to match the vibe, and spooky Halloween parties are no exception! During the month of October, there are so many different recipes you can create and decorate to cater to your aesthetic. Ranging from sweet to savory, here are my favorite ideas when looking for adorable and tasty snacks that your house guests will love.

#### CHARCYTERIE BOARD

Everyone loves a good board—you get to pick on so many staple and light treats like crackers, grapes, cheese and whatever else you add. I've seen a few different styles on social media that you can try out like making a prosciutto and brie-shaped hand or a hocus pocus witch creation. Honestly, it's a great way to be creative and unique by finding your own style you want to try out. Either way, this is definitely a top contender

Chocolate-covered strawberries

There are so many different ways you can decorate a chocolatecovered strawberry! For ghosts to pumpkins, just find colored dipping chocolate and pipe the faces on. These will be sure to go fast as they are light and refreshing. Some may dare to say they are even healthy!

#### QREQS

Oreos give you abundant opportunities as well. You can put small straight pretzels into the cream and eyes on the top to represent a spider or break one in half and stick the two halves opposite

shaping, you can make Rice Krispies into anything your heart desires. A couple of drops of green and you can turn a block of cereal into a zombie or a few drops of orange can make a pumpkin. Similar to other designs you could also make ghosts, mummies, skeletons, candy corn and more.

#### CAKE POPS

Cake pops are super easy to make-just buy a cake mix, bake it in the oven and crumble the hot loaf together into little balls. With frosting, chocolate and sprinkles you can make them into several fallinspired shapes or symbols. Some creative and scary ones include eye-



# FRIGHTENINGLY FUN FILMS WATCH THIS HALLOWEEN

#### By FIONA WAGNER **Contributing Writer**

Are you looking to get into the Halloween spirit? Do you need some recommendations for some spooky movies? If you answered yes to those questions, then you have come to the right place. Here is a list of some of my personal favorite Halloween films that I think anyone could enjoy.



#### "SCREAM"

If you're going to only watch one Halloween movie, I say watch "Scream." "Scream" is a classic '90s slasher film, and personally my favorite Halloween movie of all time. From the iconic opening scene to the incredible plot twists at the end, it is a perfectly calibrated movie that serves up horror, comedy and suspense in equally successful amounts.

The movie follows a teenager, Sidney Prescot, as she deals with a serial killer, Ghostface, hunting her and her friends. Ghostface is a classic killer that is both funny and sharp. "Scream" has many sequels



which are actually good, but nothing beats the original. If you're looking for a smart, self-aware horror film, look no further.

#### HALLOWEENTOWN

Switching to a less gruesome movie, "Halloweentown" is comfort at its finest. I'm sure a lot of people, like me, watched this film on Disney Channel every Halloween growing up. The movie follows Marnie, who discovers the land of Halloweentown full of witches, warlocks, vampires, ghosts and any other supernatural creature you can think of.

She learns that she comes from a long

line of witches and she must channel those powers, with the help of her siblings, to save Halloweentown. It's the type of movie that fills you with joy and nostalgia, while still delivering on all those Halloween feels.

#### HOCUS POCUS

Similar to "Halloweentown," "Hocus Pocus" is another staple in my childhood. The story follows Max Dennison, a teenager who recently moved from California to Salem, Mass. with his little sister, Dani. On Halloween night, Max lights a candle that accidentally unleashes a coven of three mischievous witches who wreak havoc on the town.

I have seen this movie about 100 times and every time is as good as the last. Even though the movie is very nostalgic to me, I think anyone could enjoy the gripping plot line, hilarious witches and spooky music.

#### "NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET"

If you are looking for something a little scarier, "Nightmare on Elm Street" is a classic Wes Craven slasher that a lot know and love. This movie centers around a group of teenagers who fall prey to Freddy Krueger, an undead child killer who can murder people in their sleep. Freddy Krueger is one of the most infamous Halloween villains in movie history and you will be sure to have nightmares after watching.

Kreguer has knives for hands and his burnt face terrifies the main character, Nancy. There is something so chilling about being tortured in your dreams in a place where you have no control. Even though the first is the best, there are plenty of sequels and different versions of "Nightmare on Elm Street," even one featuring Jason from "Friday the 13th."

#### "THE CONTURING"

Another horror film that I highly suggest watching is "The Conjuring." This film centers around paranormal investigators, Ed and Lorraine Warren, who work to help a family terrorized by a dark presence in their farmhouse. This film goes back to the basics of horror and thrill, which makes for a perfect Halloween fright.

It is extremely well-directed and the build-up of suspense will leave you on the edge of your seat. It's remarkably retro yet extremely effective with thrills and chills that any horror fan would love.

From delicious witches and masked killers to giant pumpkins and haunted houses, I hope you can use this list to find a great movie to watch.

After all, Halloween is less than a week awav!



#### By Isabella Sagarese **Contributing Writer**

As one may have seen, the idea of the "Boo Basket" has been circulating around TikTok and other social media platforms since the beginning of October.

Boo Baskets are the perfect way to celebrate Halloween with those you care about. They are not just exclusive to relationships: you can give one to your friends too! Here are some ideas for what to stuff yours with

First things first, you need a basket. An aesthetic wicker one or a cute plastic Halloween one is perfect for putting your items in.

Orange crinkle-cut paper would make an excellent filler for the bottom of the basket.

Next, throw in a cozy item to elevate the spirit of a comfortable, warm fall.

A blanket, slippers, cozy socks, Halloween pajamas, sweatpants or a Halloween sweatshirt is a great addition to the basket.

What's better than snuggling up under a blanket in Halloween pajamas?

Then, a fall activity such as Legos, a puzzle or a movie are some ideas for something

fun you can do together. Some great LEGO options are the Halloween Cat and Mouse set and the Disney Hocus Pocus: The Sanderson Sisters' Cottage set. Pop in a classic Halloween DVD like "The Nightmare Before Christmas," "The Addams Family" or "Casper" for some spooky nighttime vibes.



For your girly friend, nail polish, claw clips, skincare items, jewelry or a candle is an awesome way to personalize the basket and add some flare!

> Bonus points if you add a stainless steel cup.

> > Other possible items to include in the basket would be a bouquet of flowers or cute fall room decor.

Small fabric pumpkins and Halloween window stickers would be perfect to put in a dorm room.

Finally, fill in the empty spaces with your friend's favorite snacks, drinks and of course, After all, it is Halloween!

# WHAT'S THE HAPS? HOW TO CELEBRATE HALLOWEEN ON CAMPUS

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#### By Sophia Cossitt-Levy **Contributing Writer**

Since Halloween is just around the corner, many may be wondering what to do to celebrate. Here's a list of all the Halloween activities happening around campus:

#### Movie Night!

There are six Halloween movies being shown around campus this upcoming week.

Stop by the ground floor lounge at Regis Hall on Oct. 24 at 8 p.m. for "Haunted Mansion."

Another movie, yet to be announced, is playing at Meditz's first-floor lounge on Oct. 26 at 8 p.m.

Sister Thea Bowman Hall is hosting on Oct. 28 at 9:30 p.m. Go visit the first-floor lounge to watch "Halloween Night II," and grab some wings and pizza while you're there.

Jogues Hall is playing "It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown"

on Oct. 30 at 8 p.m. in the kitchen lounge. There will be apple cider donuts, candy and apple cider.

Feel free to go in your pajamas!

Visit Campion Hall's pajama party to see "The Nightmare Before Christmas," playing in the first-floor lounge on Oct. 31 at 7:45 p.m.

"Halloweentown" is playing Oct. 31 at 8 p.m. in Loyola Hall Commons. Make sure to have a Crumbl cookie while you're there! Trick or Treat

#### Activities!

Join RA Kylee at Campion Hall on Oct. 22 at 6 p.m. for Trick or Trivia.

Also at Campion is Trick or Treat Candy Jars on Oct. 25 at 7 p.m. This one is in the

and SRA Safa are hosting Trick or Treat Goodie Bags at Bowman Hall on Oct. 31 at 10 p.m. Don't forget to go Trick or Treat-

fourth-floor lounge with

RA Nicole. And RA Erika

ing around the library with Academic Commons on Oct. 31 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. While you're there, be sure to vote on which department you think has the best-decorated pumpkin!

#### Halloween Treats!

On Oct. 23 at 8 p.m., stop by Loyola Commons for Pumpkin Pie Picasso Night. If you're in the mood for some Halloween cookies, visit Gonzaga's first-floor lounge on Oct. 28 at 8 p.m. to bake some cookies.

#### Show off your costume!

Go to Late Night Commons' Halloween Costume Party on Oct. 27 at 9 p.m.

Or if you want to wait until Halloween to wear your costume, visit Meditz Hall's first-floor lounge on Oct. 31 at 5 p.m. to take some pictures in your costume!

If you think you have the best costume, stop by Gonzaga Hall's ground floor lounge for their Halloween Costume Contest on Oct. 31 at 8 p.m.!

There are definitely a lot of ways to celebrate Halloween that you don't want to miss!

I hope this gave you some ideas for what you want to do this Halloween!

By ERIN MCGETRICK **Contributing Writer** 

Friendship bracelets, glitter, themed outfits and 13's written on hands: Taylor Swift mania is all around, including your nearest AMC movie theater.

The global superstar embarked on the first leg of her world tour "The Eras Tour" in March of this year, performing in the biggest stadiums for several nights in a row in each city. According to CNN, the tour is projected to have made \$2.2 billion in just North American ticket sales alone and has boosted local U.S. economies. The tour has become somewhat of a phenomenon, sparking the Ticketmaster debate within the U.S. Senate when millions of fans lost out on tickets. For those who were unable to go and perhaps watched the concert through social media videos and live streams (#erastour having 25 billion views on Tik-Tok), Swift announced that "Taylor Swift: The Eras Tour" would be shown in AMC theaters nationwide and in more theaters globally. The energy was palpable in the Norwalk, CT AMC: young girls wearing arms full of friendship bracelets and cowgirl boots were waiting in line for snacks with their parents. The employees looked like they'd been filling up the themed Taylor Swift popcorn buckets and cups all day, nearly running out.

they first went on sale. While the songs or visuals didn't surprise me, I did not expect the movie to so brilliantly emphasize the magic that the show emanates.

Jaylor Jakes The Screen

With "The Fraz Jour" Movie

All attendees at the physical show were given wristbands that lit up in harmony with the music to create a visual spectacle within the crowd.

The film highlights the radiance of this ct of the show and how it makes each

"Reputation" set which is the four songs Swift performs from her 2017 album "Reputation". It was her comeback after the public feud with Kanye West and Kim Kardashian in which Swift decided to embrace the snake title given to her.

The film enhanced the dramatics of her performance, showing the wild stage effects and increasing the sound of the music and crowd to escalate the hype of the theater audidelighted faces of those in the crowd who looked like they never wanted that experience to end. During the credits, "Long Live" plays a song Swift wrote and continues to dedicate to her fans.

Taylor Swift is a marvel that continues to defy entertainment expectations, the film making \$123.5 million globally in its first weekend according to Variety.

"Tavlor Swift: The Eras Tour" emphasiz-

I had seen "The Eras Tour" myself twice, section during being fortunate enough to snag tickets when the film was the

audience member feel as if they are a part of the concert itself, showing the hearts that are made during "Lover" and the snakes during "Look What You Made Me Do".

A sense of nostalgia was felt among my friends and myself when older hits like "You

Belong With Me"

and "Enchanted" started playing.

We couldn't help

but quietly sing

along and dance,

in addition to the other members

of the crowded

theater. The at-

mosphere was

bubbly and joy-

ous, elevating

the experience to

A standout

new heights.

ence.

As Swift finishes her astounding threehour performance, she takes a bow with her dancers while fireworks light up above her.

es the impact of Swift's artistry and the brilliance of the world's biggest pop star.





#### Sports

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# Sports

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Oct. 25	Oct. 26	Oct. 27	Oct. 28	Oct. 29	Oct. 30	Oct. <b>31</b>
Men's Soccer at Saint Peter's University Jersey City, N.J. 2 p.m.	No games scheduled	Women's Swim- ming/Diving vs vs Providence College Fairfield, Conn, 3 p.m.	Women's Cross Country 2023 MAAC Champi- onship Montgomery, N.Y.	Women's Soccer MAAC Cham- pionship First Round TBA	Men's Golf at Bucknell Veterans Intercollegiate Southampton, N.Y.	Men's Golf at Bucknell Veterans Intercollegiate Southampton, N.Y.
Women's Soccer vs Saint Peter's University Fairfield, Conn. 7 p.m.		Men's Swimming/ Diving vs Providence College	Men's Cross Coun- try 2023 MAAC Championship Montgomery, N.Y.	Field Hockey at College of the Holy Cross Worscester, Mass. 12 p.m.		
	0.88	Fairfield, Conn. 3 p.m.	Men's Swimming/ Diving vs Wagner College	Volleyball at Quin- nipiac University		
LAC		Field Hockey at Merrimack College	Fairfield, Conn. 10 a.m.	Hamden, Conn. 1 p.m.		
ngs		North Andover, Mass. 4 p.m.	Women's Swim- ming/Diving vs Wagner College Fairfield, Conn. 10 a.m.		10	
Photo Contributed by the The field hockey team en season undefeated at hor	ded their regular	5		Senior Ella Scott was n	Photo Contributed by the amed the MAAC Offensiv	

## Sacred Heart, Merrimack to Join Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference Next Season

**By BILLY MCGUIRE** Assistant Sports Editor

Just a year after the addition of Mount Saint Mary's University, Fairfield University will be joined by some company in the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference next season.

Merrimack College and crosstown foe Sacred Heart University will be joining the MAAC as full-time members beginning on July 1, 2024, expanding the conference from its current size of 11 full-time members to 13. The two universities are currently members of the Northeastern Conference (NEC), which will see the number of full-time members drop from nine to seven as a result of their impending departures.

"This is a significant and exciting day for

student-athletes, coaches, administrators, alumni and fans to the MAAC."

"Merrimack and Sacred Heart are two institutions that share our emphasis on the overall well-being of our student-athletes," said MAAC President and Quinnipiac University President Judy Olian, according to a press release.

"We're a conference that has always prided itself on the academic focus of our student-athletes, their character, alongside their athletic distinctions. All of us in the MAAC are enthusiastic to expand the conference with these two schools as they share our values and commitment to the academic, athletic and personal growth of our students."

The addition of the Pioneers will take

universities, as both schools have invested in upgraded facilities in recent years. Fairfield opened the Leo D. Mahoney Arena last November for its volleyball, men's basketball and women's basketball teams, and Sacred Heart opened its doors to the Matire Family Arena this past January, home to its hockey program.

For more information about the news, please visit www.maacsports.com.



the MAAC as we welcome two outstanding institutions to our conference," said MAAC Commissioner Travis Tellitocci, according to a press release.

"The addition of both schools extends our presence in major metropolitan areas, elevates our brand and enriches our conference. We are proud to welcome the Merrimack and Sacred Heart the Battle of Fairfield to new heights, as both schools will be facing each other more often. Traditionally, both schools have faced off against each other once per season in their respective sports in non-conference play, but with this change, they could be facing each other at least twice per season and possibly more often in MAAC tournament play. This is an exciting time for both

#### Tommy Coppole/The Mirror

Merrimack College and Sacred Heart University will join the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference next season, expanding the number of full-time members from 11 to 13.

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# Field Hockey Clinches Share of Regular Season Championship

BY BILLY MCGUIRE Assistant Sports Editor

The Fairfield University field hockey team played host to a two-game home stand this past week at Lessing Field. The first game took place this past Friday, Oct. 20 against conference foe Rider University, with game two commencing two days later on Sunday, Oct. 22 against Long Island University.

Game one saw the Stags put on a spirited effort, as they downed the Broncs in a 4-1 triumph. The keys to victory featured strong ball possession and capitalizing on penalties. Fairfield scored three of their four goals off of penalty corners. They also outshot the Broncs by a lopsided 16-4 margin.

After a loose ball got Rider up early, the Stags earned themselves a penalty corner and ran away with it. As forward Lucie Vincent '27 buried a shot past the Rider goaltender with some help from hybrid midfielder and defender Noor Hellemans '27 and graduate student defender Frances Mirabile to find the equalizer ten minutes into the game. Eight minutes later, they obtained their second penalty corner, and sure enough, they took full advantage again, as Vincent made a quick feed to hybrid midfielder and forward Catalina Ness '27 to put the Stags in the driver's seat for the first time.

They weren't finished yet, as yet another penalty corner was awarded to the herd as Mirabile and Helleman sought defender Pilar Mengotti '26, who sniped one through to make it a 3-1 advantage at the 22-minute mark. Vincent, at even strength, then scored her second goal on the outing with some help from Helleman, Noor and Mirabile to make it 4-1. That was all she wrote, as Fairfield put the game in the



Field Hockey fails to continue to miss a beat, as they are currently 6-0 in NEC conference play and 12-3 overall on the season so far.

books at that score.

"Our execution was excellent today," Coach Kane said, according to the game's official press release. "From the insertion to the final touch, we were able to put practically every shot on goal that came from a corner. It's something that we constantly work on during our training."

Two days later, Fairfield clinched a portion of the share of the Northeastern Conference regular season championship with a win over the Sharks of Long Island University. The Sharks proved

that they have certain limitations in Stag Country, as they were held at bay in a 2-0 shutout.

Not much action took place early on, but Fairfield got their first goal at the 25th minute mark off the stick of forward Dominique Van Der Zee '27 with an assist from midfielder Augustina Casteluchi '25 off of a penalty corner. She was then joined by Vincent on the score sheet, who scored off a cross from the right to center circle from defender Catherine Fitzgerald '27. Fairfield goaltender Payton Rahn '24

made three saves on the day, securing the shutout for the herd.

"LIU was a well-organized team and their goalkeeper played really well," Head Coach Jackie Kane said, according to the game's official press release. "But we generated chances and took advantage when the opportunity was created. Payton made an incredible save at the end to keep us in front by two."

In other news, Vincent was honored as the NEC Offensive Player of the Week in addition to obtaining Rookie of the Week honors. She has been a

force for the Stags this season, as she has averaged 1.47 points per game in his maiden season in the red, white and black. In addition to her nine goals, she also has 22 assists in 15 games.

The Stags will next play Merrimack College in Andover, Mass., on Friday, Oct. 26, before bussing to Worcester, Mass., to take on the College of Holy Cross to close out NEC regular season play on Sunday, Oct. 28. The Stags carry a 6-0 conference record along with a 12-3 overall record on the season.

# The Weekly 5x4

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



Tommy Coppola Editor-in-Chief



**Brooke Lathe Executive Editor** 



Max Limric Managing Editor

Jen, Kathleen and I are



Julian Nazario Copy, Head News Editor

I'll probably do a last



Kathleen Morris Assistant News Editor

What are you dressing up as for Halloween?	A pirate, tentatively.	Max from "Stranger Things" season four, specifically when she is possessed mid-air.	Jen, Kathleen and I are tourists.	I'll probably do a last minute thing.	As a tourist, I'll be don- ning a tacky Hawaiian shirt as a tribute to the late great Jimmy Buffett!
How do you feel about Sacred Heart and Merrimack join- ing the MAAC?	This town ain't big enough for the two of us.	All I'm focused on is our own basketball team.	No comment.	Whatever.	Well, Merrimack just won their conference, so I'm sure they will test our Stags.
Candy Corn?	My brain says yes, but my dentist says no.	The jumbo sized bag in my pantry tells you all you need to know.	As a child, immediately yes. Now, no.	Tbh, I'm not a fan but they are not that bad.	I prefer the real thing, on the cob and doused in butter.
Favorite pumpkin flavored item?	The Trader Joe's pump- kin alfredo sauce. I'm being 100% serious.	My mom's pumpkin bread. Emphasis on my mom's.	Pumpkin cheesecake that my mom made and brought down for me.	We got this thing back home called "barrigui- tas de viejas" that I'll die for.	I am also partial to my mom's signature pump- kin bread. Brooke, we may need to host a taste-off!

# Summers Drives Stags to Success in Lehigh Invitational

By: **Ryan Marquardt** Head Sports Editor

On Friday, Oct. 20 and Saturday, Oct. 21, the Fairfield University men's golf team traveled to Bethlehem, Pa. to partake in the Lehigh University Invitational at the Saucon Valley Country Club.

In the two-day event, the Stags finished in a tie for ninth place with Monmouth University in the 13-team field. Overall, the Stags as a unit shot 35 over par, shooting 23 over par on the first day and improving to twelve over par on the second day according to the official scoreboard.

The Stags ended just one shot shy of Binghamton University, who shot 22 over par on the final day of the tournament. Hometeam Lehigh University finished first at 11 over par with a three under par on day two, which was the best round by any team in the tournament. Lehigh finished nine shots ahead of Siena College who placed second, followed by Towson University and Lehigh University (B).

Junior Colin Summers placed third overall in the event, playing even par through the two rounds. On the par 72 course, Summers shot even par on both days, falling just two shots short of first-place finisher David Hurly of Lehigh. Hurly shot even through the first day and two under par on the second day. Second place went to Nolan Crowley of Siena College who shot one under in the tournament.

Following Summers for the Stags was graduate student Patrick McCarthy, who tied for 29th in the 78-player field. McCarthy shot nine over par overall, starting with an eight over par in round 1 followed by a much improved one over par in round two. The third-ranked Stag was Anthony Naples '27, who finished tied for 38th place with an 11-over score in the tournament. Naples shot seven over par on day one followed by a four over par in round two.

Peter Crowe '27 finished at 15 over par with a plus eight day, followed by a plus seven day which placed him at 57th overall.



Junior Colin Summers placed third overall in the Lehigh invitational this past weekend which helped the team to place ninth overall.

Rounding out the Stags unit was graduate student Shane DeVincenzo and John Bushka '25, who shot 19 over par and 20 over par respectively. DeVincenzo placed in a tie for 70th and Bushka finished in 75th.

The Stags as a team averaged 3.33 strokes on par three holes, being +13 overall on par threes in the tournament. This ranked them at seventh on par threes. The Stags did not fare as well on par fours, with an average of 4.38 strokes and shooting 38 over par on the tournament, which was good enough to place them ninth on par fours.

The Stags were better on par fives with an average of 5.08 strokes as they were three over par on par fives in the tournament. This placed them seventh in the tournament. Lehigh held the best average score on both par fives and par fours, averaging 4.75 strokes per par five and 4.18 strokes per par four. Siena College held the best average score on par threes, averaging 3.13 strokes while losing just five total strokes on par threes.

Towson led the way with 107 total pars, and Fairfield fell five short of them for the fourth most pars. Lehigh led the field in both birdies and eagles with three eagles in the tournament, three other teams had one and the rest had none. Lehigh tied with Siena for 32 birdies, leading the Stags who had 17, which put them 11th for birdies in the tournament.

McCarthy led the player field in

terms of average score on par threes, with an average of 2.75 strokes, ending the tournament two under par on par threes. Summers went one under on par threes, averaging 2.88 strokes, one over on par fours while averaging 4.05 strokes and was even on par fives, leading the Stags in both par four and five averages. Summers also led the Stags with 24 pars, placing him in a tie for the sixth most pars. Summers also had six birdies on the day, fellow Stags McCarthy and Crowe each had four birdies.

The Stags men's golf team will play in their final tournament of the fall on October 30 and October 31 at the Veterans Intercollegiate at Sebonack Golf Club in Southampton, N.Y.

# **Volleyball Continues Dominant Effort in Homestand Sweep**

By **DANNY MCELROY** Contributing Writer

A weekend sweep of Canisius College (3-1) and Niagara University (3-0) helped the Fairfield University volleyball team improve to 11-1 in the 2023-2024 conference season, strengthening their hold on first place in the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference.

Leading the way for the Stags across both contests was outside hitter Allie Elliott '26, who put down a combined 29 kills in the two outings, including 15 kills and 20 dig double-double against Canisius on Saturday, Oct. 21.

A slow start for the Stags saw them drop the opening set to Canisius 25-20, their first loss in a frame since a 3-1 victory over Quinnipiac University on Oct. 6. Then they faced a deficit as great as 22-15 in the second set, but battled back and held off a set point to steal a 26-24 win.

The third set was even more competitive down the stretch, with Fairfield facing another set point down 26-25, but three straight kills from outside hitter Mikayla Haut '25 put things out of reach for the Golden Griffins 44 by totaling 46 across the four set contest.

In a quick turnaround for the Stags, Sunday's tilt against Niagara was handled in straight sets, thanks in large part to a stifling defensive effort that limited the Purple Eagles to a .099 hitting percentage.

Supplementing Elliott's game-leading 14 kills, was a 12 kill afternoon from middle blocker Maya Walker '26.



The Stags imporved their record this year to 11-1 with wins over Canisius College and Niagara University.

and the Stags snuck out a 28-26 win.

"Part of being a good team is finding ways to win when you aren't at your best," head coach Nancy Somera said in the game's official press release, "and that's what we did for a large part of today's match."

The trio of clutch time points in the third frame were part of a season-high 21 kill afternoon for Haut, which along with 10 digs earned her a third double-double in the month of October.

With momentum firmly on the side of the Stags, they cruised to an easy 25-13 fourth set victory to close out the match. Also setting a new season high in the match was setter Blakely Montgomery '25, who eclipsed her previous best assist mark of The victory is made all the more impressive for the Stags when considering the fact that Niagara entered the contest on a four-game winning streak, including back-to-back triumphs over Marist College and Quinnipiac, the closest competitors to Fairfield in the MAAC standings.

"[It] was a great defensive match with some amazing, scrappy plays on both sides," Somera stated in the game's official press release. "Niagara is a solid team that's trending in the right direction."

The Stags will now enjoy a week of rest before heading to Hamden, Conn. on Sunday, Oct. 29, looking to complete a season sweep of Quinnipiac. First serve will be at 1:00 p.m.

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# **Cheerleading Team Juggles Competition With School Spirit**

BY: BILLY MCGUIRE Assistant Spotrs Editor

Whenever you attend a basketball game at Leo D. Mahoney Arena, there is a good chance that you are sitting in one of the two fan sections behind the corresponding baskets. You notice the squad that tries to get everyone going. You know who is being described here?

fox

No, no. It's not Lucas the Stag. It's the cheerleaders of course!

The Fairfield University cheerleaders are a unique and dynamic group. They operate in a bit of a different way than most athletic teams do. They practice three times a week, on Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday evenings, and in the spare time that they receive to work on their craft, they have two goals in mind.

The first one is working on getting Stag Country fired up as they cheer on the red and white herd on game days, and the other being renowned as one of the top cheerleading units in the nation, by participating in competitions that lead up to the National Collegiate Athletic Association College Nationals championships in April in Daytona Beach, Fla.

The crew is looking forward to these challenges, as they are taking things one step at a time. The leadership unit, led by Maddie Allegretta '25, Becca Kowal '24 and Alexa Pope '24, embrace the opportunities, and are doing their best to lead their team into doing some very special things.

"It's always really exciting when you are starting a new season because you get all the new people, new dynamics and new talent in here," Allegretta elaborates. "Right now, it's important to see what works and in which areas people excel in. So yeah, we're really excited. We've been practicing for about a month now, and things are going well and we're looking forward to the start of the season."

"I would say, with this being my

fourth season on the team, the team has progressed in terms of talent and intensity over the years and it's exciting to see which the direction the program will go as we all continue to come together and develop," Pope, a Bronxville, N.Y. native exemplifies. "We're pumped up for the great season that we have ahead of us."

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Preparing to cheer for two athletics teams and a national competition tournament does not appear to be an easy task. But they do not seem bothered and are ready to go out and execute to the best of their abilities.

"Game day mindset and competition mindset are two completely different things," Pope explains. "Game day is more high energy. You're trying to address the crowd and trying to get everyone going during games. I'm excited to cheer for basketball but on the other hand, competition is more, I don't want to say serious, but it's more intense. It's more of a 'get your head in the game' mindset. You're competing against the best teams in the country."

"I think probably going off of what Alexa said, there are definitely different ways on how we prepare for game day and competition," Kowal says. "I think now with the brand new, beautiful arena, we want to be a valuable presence. We want people to come, see us and know that we are a competitive team on campus and not just look at us as a group that goes out and performs on game days."

"Competition is definitely, for us, more serious. I think in games, if we make one mistake, no one notices as much. At competition, when the spotlight is more entrenched on us, you can't let small mistakes get in the way. A lot of times we try to practice some of the skills that we will bring to competition at games, and obviously we can't do a full competition routine at halftime. We will, however, try to integrate pieces of our competition routine into the game day experience as well."

The head coach, Taylor Wilkes,

A lot of items are on the squad's

agenda this season. But how are they

going to be successful? By coming

together as a team and executing to

the fullest of their abilities. Allegret-

ta, Kowal and Pope, named captains

at the start of preseason, understand

this and know that they bear respon-

sibility for leading this pack into the

"I've been cheering since the

third grade, and cheerleading is just

a big part of my life," Pope explains.

"This team is a family and even

though this is my last year, I want

to go out and do the best I can as a

moving forward in the right direc-

ing because I love it here so much,"

you meet your best friends and have

some of the best experiences of my

this amazing legacy we have to the

underclassmen. I think we have great

life, and I want to help carry on

Kowal points out. "This is where

tion."

leader to make sure that we continue

"I try not to think about it end-

journey that is this season.

Becca Kowal '24, Maddie Allegretta '25 and Alexa Pope '24 were named captains of the cheerleading team. agrees that these three students are the engine in what potentially may make this team a powerful unit.

"The goal is to obviously go down to Daytona for NCAA College Nationals, and our girls know that," Coach Wilkes says. "We obviously have a lot of work to do, and as long as we hit our routine and do our best out there on the mat, we will be fine. That's all we can ask for. In the end, the result kind of lies in the judges' hands, so we have to accept the results no matter if we like them or not. That's a big goal for us this season, and I think we should be fine."

Wilkes, a former cheerleader herself, also touched on how her experience on the mat has helped her become a leader behind the bench.

"I mean, I think with being the coach my schedule hasn't really changed over the past several years," coach Wilkes jokes. "The good news is that cheerleading has consumed my life. It is different. I miss being on the court and being out there for competition, but I think as any athlete will say, when you're

participating in a sport, there's still a thrill there.

"I think there's a thrill there as a coach, but it's definitely different than as a player. For me, it's just exciting to see our program be built year after year, and so for me as a coach, and having been on this team myself, it's just super rewarding seeing this program excel. I just can't imagine being a part of another program," Wilkes finishes.

The gang appears poised and confident as it is ready to take on the challenges it has in front of them. They aim to do this by making Stag Country proud by being a passionate and energetic squad. You can catch the cheerleading team at all of the home basketball games this season, with the women's team tipping off their home campaign on Monday, Nov. 6 against Lehman College, and the men's kickstarting theirs against Mount Saint Mary College on Monday, Nov. 13. For more information on the Fairfield University cheerleading program, please follow their Instagram at @fairfieldstagscheer.





leadership here."



The Fairfield University cheerleading team can be found in front of the Red Sea at every home game in Leo D. Mahoney Arena, cheering on the teams alongside student supporters.