



PAN PLEADS GUILTY TO MURDER

Qinxuan Pan, arrested for the murder of Yale graduate student Kevin Jiang ENV '22, faces 35 years in prison.

BY HANNAH KOLTER AND KENISHA MAHAJAN
STAFF REPORTERS

Qinxuan Pan pleaded guilty to the murder of Yale graduate student Kevin Jiang ENV '22 on Thursday, more than three years after the murder.

Pan, a former Massachusetts Institute of Technology researcher, will face 35 years in prison as part of his plea agreement. Pan is due back in court on April 25 for his disposition hearing, which will include his sentencing, according to court records.

Pan's plea, entered in Superior Court in New Haven, concludes a case that made national headlines for the murder of a Yale student and the three-month-long manhunt that followed.

"I can't say this brings the family justice. I hope it does," New Haven Police Chief Karl Jacobson told the News Thursday evening. "I think a 35-year sentence is a large sentence... I hope this brings the family justice."

Molly Arabolos, Pan's attorney, did not immediately respond to a request for comment. New Haven State's Attorney John P. Doyle Jr. also did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Jiang, a 26-year-old student at the School of the Environment, was shot and killed on Feb. 6, 2021, in New Haven's East Rock neighborhood. The shooting occurred just a week after he proposed to his fiancée, Zion Perry GRD '26, whom Pan knew at MIT. Police identified Pan as a person of interest on Feb. 10, but Pan evaded police until May 13, 2021, when he was detained by United States Marshalls in Montgomery, Alabama.

Pan had been held in custody for the past three years, as judges granted Pan and his attorneys multiple extensions to review evidence. In March 2022, Pan's lawyer claimed that Pan was having difficulty reading through documents related to the case because he had limited access to the prison library.

In September 2022, Pan's attorney requested State Superior Court Judge Jon Alander LAW '78 to order a "competency exam." Results from the exam that Alander granted deemed Pan fit for trial in early November 2022.

Pan first faced evidence in court in December 2022 over two days of probable cause hearings. Several witnesses who testified at the hearings described how they saw Pan flee the scene in a SUV and forensic scientists testified that they had found evidence inside the SUV, further linking Pan to the crime scene.

"I hope to see justice soon," Jiang's mother Linda Liu told the News after the first probable cause hearing on Dec. 6, 2022. "Not for money or fame but for the truth."

On Dec. 8, 2022, Alander ruled that there was probable cause linking Pan to Jiang's murder. Two days after Alander's ruling, Pan pleaded not guilty to the charges brought against him.

In April 2023, Arabolos — a public defender — was assigned to Pan's case, replacing his private criminal defense attorneys. Arabolos represented Pan at his hearing on Thursday, during which Pan pleaded guilty.



Pan now faces a 35-year sentence; he was arrested after a three-month manhunt for the murder of Jiang, a Yale graduate student, in 2021. / Courtesy of Tom Breen

Jacobson attributed the guilty plea to overwhelming evidence from the prosecutors that linked Pan to the murder.

"The justice system takes time for a reason," Jacobson said. "I think the fact that he gave a plea shows you that we had an overwhelming case with lots of evidence. I'm proud of the work of the state's attorney's office who prepared for trial and gave them no other choice but to plead out."

Pan's sentencing hearing will take place on April 25 at the New Haven Courthouse at 235 Church St.

Nathaniel Rosenberg and Sophie Sonnenfeld contributed reporting.

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Yale Health stops collecting positive COVID-19 reports

BY TRISTAN HERNANDEZ
STAFF REPORTER

Nearly four years after New Haven announced a state of emergency and students were first told courses would be online for the remainder of the spring semester, the University will end its collection of positive COVID-19 reports and other campus COVID-19 resources.

A Feb. 20 email from Chief Campus Health Officer Madeline Wilson announced that Yale Health would be ending the Campus COVID Resource Line, a phone line for information on COVID-19, on Feb. 23 and positive COVID-19 cases would no longer be reported to the University.

Instructions for those who test positive for COVID-19 are now located on the Campus Health website, which has replaced the dedicated COVID-19 site.

But English professor Katie Trumpener, who currently teaches her classes on Zoom because she is immunocompromised and was hoping to return to hybrid teaching — while masked — next semester, is worried that the lack COVID-19 monitoring may make it unsafe for her to return to the classroom.

"I really miss live university life, including casual interactions with students and colleagues," Trumpener wrote to the News. "But I have to keep weighing isolation against safety."

According to Wilson's email, rapid antigen tests are still available at some campus locations, and undergraduates will still have access to isolation kits in their residential colleges.

The ending of positive case reporting comes as the University has slowly

moved toward relaxed COVID-19 policies since late 2022. Even as campus COVID-19 cases rose early in the fall 2023 semester, the University stuck with scaled-back policies on isolation housing and contact tracing, following the World Health Organization's declaration of the end of the COVID-19 public health emergency on May 11, 2023.

"These system changes do not mean that we are taking our eye off the ball — far from it," Wilson wrote in her Feb. 20 email. "The Campus Health team continues to monitor local and national trends for COVID, other infectious diseases, and other issues that may impact campus public health."

Dean of Yale College Pericles Lewis told the News that other resources, like isolation housing, have not been used much this academic year. In her email, Wilson wrote that recommended isolation for positive cases remains at five days.

"I think the thing is with all of our vaccines, and especially for young people, most people are treating it a little bit more like they would some other virus," Lewis said. "For faculty and staff, because we're older, there's a little bit more risk involved in general, and so we definitely encourage people who have COVID to stay home and follow the CDC guidance."

The current CDC guidance recommends that those who have COVID-19, or suspect they might and do not have test results, should isolate. Upon receiving a positive test result, they should isolate themselves at home for five days.

SEE COVID PAGE 4

City's fifth tenants union forms in response to burst pipe

BY NATASHA KHAZZAM
STAFF REPORTER

When a pipe burst in Alexander Kolokotronis' GRD '23 New Haven apartment, the tenants union leader looked to his neighbors for support.

The Emerson Tenants Union registered with the City of New Haven's Fair Rent Commission at City Hall on Friday morning, becoming the city's fifth tenants union and the first to form against a landlord other than mega-landlord Ocean Management. Union leaders Kolokotronis and neighbor James Blau began efforts to unionize earlier this month after the pipe-burst caused significant water damage and made Kolokotronis' apartment unlivable. Blau, who lives directly beneath Kolokotronis, experienced similar repercussions from the leak, leading both tenants to temporarily move out of their homes.

After being met with little responsiveness from their landlord, a pastor at the next-door Trinity Lutheran Church, the pair shared their concerns with neighbors, who had similar negative experiences with the landlord. Within 27 hours, Kolokotronis and Blau gathered support to unionize from the required majority of renters — 13 of the 18 occupied units signed on.

"It's not just us as a group of tenants that are standing up and trying to have a voice in our building," Kolokotronis said while describing the motivations to unionize. By recognizing the union, he explained, "the city is behind the collective power."

Unlike the city's four previously existing tenants unions —

which all formed against Ocean Management — this is the first that has formed against a small landlord. According to Connecticut business records, the Emerson Apartments were purchased by Trinity Lutheran Church in 2000, which then developed Emerson Apartments LLC, a separate entity that manages the property.

On Friday, attorneys James Giulietti and Jeremiah Morykto issued a statement on behalf of the Emerson Apartments, which noted that the units at the apartment complex were licensed by the city's Livable City Initiative and had been inspected by the New Haven Fire Marshal in 2023. According to the statement, all requirements of these two authorities were "complied with and met." The attorneys also wrote that Emerson Apartments LLC has "had a good relationship with all its tenants" since its formation in 2000.

Raymond Sola, the landlord of the Emerson Apartments, did not reply to multiple requests for comment by the News.

In their request for collective bargaining, the tenants union submitted a letter that listed four topics that landlord-tenant negotiations will seek to address, including timely building maintenance and a multi-year rent schedule, which tenants hope will prevent year-to-year rent increases.

"We have come to collectively see and realize that our eyes, ears, and voice are essential to proactive upkeep that ensures we reside in a clean, safe, and thriving community."

SEE UNION PAGE 6

What to know about New Haven's budget

BY YURII STASIUK
STAFF REPORTER

On Friday, New Haven Mayor Justin Elicker will submit his fiscal year 2024-25 budget proposal, starting the budget adoption process.

Per the New Haven Charter, Elicker has to submit an annual budget proposal no later than March 1. After that, the budget needs to be approved by the Board of Alders; city alders will likely make amendments to it.

"We spend several weeks examining [the budget], asking questions of [city] staff, hearing from residents," Alder Adam Marchand, who serves as a chair of the board's finance committee, told the News. "Then, in May, the finance committee deliberates on the budget and typically makes changes through the amendment process. Then ... it goes to the full board of alders for a vote, usually the last week of May."

The fiscal year 2024-25 is set to start on July 1.

The budget adoption process

Over the next two months, the Board of Alders' finance committee will hold three public hearings to solicit testimony from residents and five workshops with city officials to review the proposed budget in detail.

The committee will then meet to deliberate and amend the mayor's budget proposal. The first committee vote is scheduled for May 13.

Marchand said that the board usually passes the final budget with a "large majority" of votes. He attributed it to the prolonged discussions that happen throughout the budget adoption process and said that all alders who do not sit on the finance committee are still encouraged to share their ideas and input.

Typically, the board adopts the version of the budget that the committee approves, but "every now and then" some amendments are also adopted on the board's floor before final vote, Marchand said.

Last year, the Board of Alders adopted the final budget with the same revenue and expenditure numbers that Elicker proposed, although they did change specific allocations of the funding. This means, Marchand said, that for every amended expenditure to the Mayor's budget, the board needs to also take off some of the Mayor's spendings.

City income and expenditures

Property taxes are by far the largest income source for the City of New Haven. Last year, property taxes accounted for 49.3 percent of city income. They have increased due to the bump in property values after the city-wide revaluation.

This year, the city will not reevaluate its properties, but its planned property taxes income could still be slightly higher, Marchand said, due to new property developments.

New Haven also largely depends on the state for funding. Last year, it accounted for over 40 percent of the budget, of which 22 were allocated specifically for education.

"The charter requires us to pass a budget where the revenue is the same number as the expenditures," Marchand said. "One of our big functions is to be wise fiscal stewards for the city. Each year we try to help the city achieve a stronger financial position."

Elicker has also regularly stressed fiscal responsibility in his remarks

SEE BUDGET PAGE 6

CROSS CAMPUS

THIS DAY IN YALE HISTORY, 1954.
New Haven police arrest a Yale freshman and his date for attempting to climb East Rock. The couple were charged with breach of the peace.

INSIDE THE NEWS

This edition features a special focus on Ukraine, two years after Russia launched its full-scale invasion.
PAGES 6-9



PAGE 3 OPINION

PAGE 6 NEWS

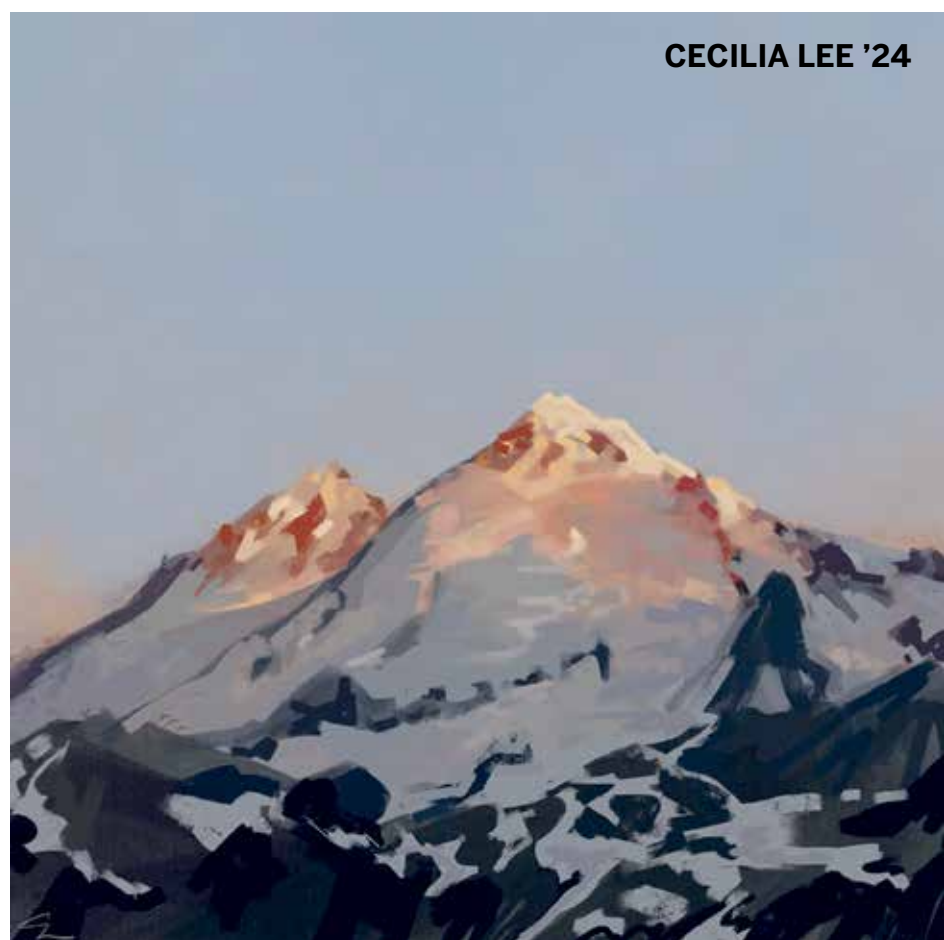
PAGE 7 SCITECH

PAGE 10 SPORTS

PAGE 11 ARTS

TRUSTEE LAWSUIT The ruling stems from a March 2022 lawsuit regarding the Corporation's termination of the petition process.
PAGE 12 NEWS

SOCIETY TAP Yale's annual senior society tap process has begun for the class of 2025.
PAGE 13 NEWS



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| 66 | | S | P | R | Y | | | | | 67 | E | N | O | S | | 68 | E | T | S | Y |

Christoph Marksches

**Apocalyptic Time:
Time in (Ancient Christian)
Apocalyptic Literature**

Monday, March 4
5:30 PM
Niebuhr Hall,
Yale Divinity School

Rarely addressed questions of how apocalyptic literature dealt with the conception of "time" include whether a linear concept of time dominates in the apocalypses.

Dr. Christoph Marksches is Professor of Ancient Christianity at Humboldt University in Berlin, which he led as President from 2006 to 2010. He currently serves as President of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities and the Union of German Academies of Science and Humanities.

ACROSS

1 Word repeated by Road Runner

5 Necessities

10 Relaxation destinations

14 Voice below soprano

15 Sir ___ Newton

16 A pop

17 Yahtzee cubes

18 Magna ___

19 T on a test

20 * "The Lion King" song

23 Southern Italy's ___ Coast

26 Mini-burger

27 Fencing blade

28 "Yuck!"

31 Washington's bill

32 *Colloquial hangover cure

35 CPR expert

36 Longtime SeaWorld orca

37 Win, informally

40 *Spooky attraction

44 Golf standard

45 East, in Berlin

46 Milk source

47 Risky

50 "The ___ trick in the book!"

51 Giggle audibly...or a hint to the starts of 20-, 32- and 40-Across

55 Ultimatum word

56 Sag

57 Lyft competitor

61 Profess

62 Waffles eaten by Eleven in "Stranger Things"

63 Sleeveless undergarment, for short

64 Loch ___ monster

65 Like a broken pen or pipe

66 Door turner

DOWN

1 ___ Hatter

2 Yale student

3 And so on; Abbr.

4 Amy of "Parks and Recreation"

5 Rapper Minaj

6 Biblical twin

7 Make a profit

8 Statistics

9 Pyramid schemes, e.g.

10 Time and place of a story

11 Macy's Thanksgiving event

12 Type of angle or pain

13 Shave, as a sheep

21 Natural hairstyle

22 ___ gobi (curry dish)

23 Tennis legend Arthur

24 Palindromic term of address

25 Not much

28 Prefix meaning "culture"

29 "___ up, doc?"

30 "No need to introduce us"

33 Seminoles' sch.

34 Total flop

37 Bro

38 Exploits

39 Ernie's "Sesame Street" pal

40 Coathroom necessities

41 St. Louis landmark

42 Netflix competitor

43 Eccentric individual

44 Takes a short break

47 Mr. ___ (bald mascot)

48 Split evenly

49 Peak performance?

50 "___-daisy!"

52 Strongly encourage

53 Caesar dressing?

54 Take a glance

58 Prohibit

59 Punk rock subgenre

60 Spare bone?

FROM THE FRONT

“Time flies over us, but leaves its shadow behind.”

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE AMERICAN NOVELIST

Yale Health halts COVID-19 reporting, professors weigh in

COVID FROM PAGE 1

Albert Ko, professor of public health at the School of Public Health, told the News that new COVID-19 variants are less

virulent and more transmissible and more people gain immunity, either through vaccination or getting infected. Ko said that the changes to Yale Health’s COVID-19 policy “makes

sense,” but also emphasized that high-risk people, including elderly and immunocompromised populations, are still at risk and should take precautions such as masking and staying up to date on vaccinations.

“This is a difficult situation because COVID is still a disease that’s causing significant mortality in the United States,” Ko said. “The good news is that there are ways to mitigate severe effects.”

Yale Health is located at 55 Lock St.

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Nearly four years after the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, Yale Health will end its COVID Resource Line./ **Karen Lin, Senior Photographer**

Fifth tenants union in New Haven forms in respose to burst pipe



The Emerson Tenants Union registered with the city on Friday morning, becoming the city’s first to organize against a small landlord./ **Natasha Khazzam, Contributing Photographer**

UNION FROM PAGE 1

ing building environment,” reads the letter, which was obtained by the News. Also included is a request to establish a regular meeting between tenants and the management or landlord of the Emerson Apartments to discuss updates and issues regarding the building. Additionally, the letter includes a clause that advocates for the right of first refusal and right to a first bid — both of which serve as “insurance measures” against tenant displacement in case another landlord

purchases the building, according to Kolokotronis. If the landlord chooses to sell the property, the right of first refusal would give tenants of the Emerson Apartments the option to match or refuse an offer on the complex before the landlord can sell it. Similarly, the right of first bid would grant the tenant union the ability to issue the first bid on the sale of the property if union members wish to do so. “For us, this is about being proactive,” Kolokotronis said. “This is a way to guard against corporate displacement. It’s a way to guard against corporate landlords becoming further entrenched in the state.”

Kolokotronis, who has prior experience organizing tenants unions, said that recent events at the Emerson Apartments led him to “connect the dots” with his past housing experiences. While the flooding triggered the unionization, according to Kolokotronis, other incidents of landlord unresponsiveness encouraged residents at the Emerson Apartments to come together in support of the union. Fellow tenant Kenneth Naito MUS ’24 explained that he supported efforts to form a tenants union, especially after experiencing similar living concerns,

including a cracked ceiling and mold, that were met with “no serious action” by the landlord. Wildaliz Bermudez, the Director of the Fair Rent Commission who also officiated the union’s registration process on Friday, explained that the FRC will serve as an intermediary between the Emerson Tenant Union and their landlord moving forward. In addition to granting the Emerson Tenant Union official recognition, registering with the FRC will protect members of the tenant union against potential retaliation from their landlord. Lee Osorio, a field represen-

tative for the FRC, explained that existing conditions at the Emerson Apartments reflect a broader pattern of unsafe living conditions throughout the city. “I would hope that this shows other apartment buildings that this is not difficult to do,” Blau said. “You just need the majority of apartments to sign a letter and you can get certified as a tenants union — it’d be great if that spread.” The Emerson Apartments are located at 284 Orange St. Contact
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FROM THE FRONT

“It’s nice to be important, but it’s important to be nice.”
KERMIT THE FROG THE MUPPETS

Here's what you need to know about New Haven’s budget

BUDGET FROM PAGE 1
and this year’s proposed budget will likely reflect that commitment.
Education is the largest expenditure in New Haven’s budget. Last year, education costs rose by \$8 million to a record high of just over \$203 million, which accounted for more than 30 percent of spending. This increase was largely driven by the New Haven Public Schools teachers’ salary bump, per their negotiated union contract.
In the coming fiscal year, education costs will likely increase further, as teachers’ salary will rise again.
Another large source of expenditure in New Haven’s budget comes from salaries and employee benefits, accounting for 15.7 percent of the budget last fiscal year.
In his past budget proposal, Elicker proposed the creation of 34 new city positions of which the board approved only nine — the largest disagreement on the budget. This year, any added or removed positions by mayor or alders will reflect their priorities for the city.
“When the mayor wants to propose new positions, for example, we try to understand if those positions are really necessary, if they contribute to needed services, if they help the city achieve the policy goals that are in our legislative agenda,” Marchand told the News.
The annual spending that will carry into the next fiscal year is debt service and pensions for public employees, which accounted for 10.43 percent and 13.29 percent of the budget, respectively, last year.
Last fiscal year’s planned spending was \$662.7 million.

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New Haven Mayor Justin Elicker will release a budget proposal on Friday, starting the budget adoption process./ Yale Daily News

New lector Olha Tytarenko to spearhead Ukrainian language program at Yale

BY HUDSON WARM
STAFF REPORTER

Olha Tytarenko — who began teaching Yale courses in Russian this semester — plans to build a Ukrainian language curriculum beginning in the 2024-25 academic year. Yale’s ambitions for a Ukrainian program are not new, but Tytarenko and Edyta Bojanowska, Chair of Slavic Languages and Literatures, told the News that in the face of the war in Ukraine, this objective has grown more urgent. Tytarenko, who comes from a background in education and academia, brings to Yale her fluency in Ukrainian, Russian and English, as well as skills in language pedagogy and research in Russian mysticism and mythology.



COURTESY OF OLHA TYTARENKO

Next fall, the Slavic Languages and Literatures department will introduce a Ukrainian language program, led by new faculty hire Olha Tytarenko — an expert in pedagogy, Ukrainian and Russian.

“I consider it a noble task to start a Ukrainian program,” Tytarenko told the News. “Especially now, during this moment when there is a heightened interest in Ukrainian studies and a need for an understanding of Ukraine, its cultures, history, politics and the relation between Ukraine and Russia.” Tytarenko received a B.A. and M.A. in English Language and Literature from Ukraine’s Lviv Ivan Franko National University. Initially, she planned to teach English as a foreign language — but when she moved to the United States to earn a Master’s degree in Russian and Comparative Literature at Pennsylvania State University, she opted to stay and pursue an academic career. In 2016, she earned a Ph.D. in Slavic Lan-

guages and Literatures from the University of Toronto. Almost immediately after defending her dissertation, Tytarenko began working at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where she said she taught for seven years and completely “rebuilt” the Russian curriculum. She was presented simultaneously with an offer for a tenure-track research-oriented position at UNL and the opportunity to teach at Yale. Tytarenko said that ultimately, she decided to join the Yale faculty so she could build a Ukrainian program. “I thought it would be a very meaningful way to contribute to the Ukrainian cause,” she said. “Because it was challenging to be here and not to be in Ukraine while everyone was in Ukraine.” Tytarenko told the News she found it “surprising” that a robust Ukrainian program does not already exist at Yale.

Since Tytarenko was on maternity leave in the fall and began teaching courses this Spring, she plans to introduce course offerings in Ukrainian in the fall, as the department requires both semesters of instruction. “[Teaching Ukrainian] is something the department has been talking about for a while,” Bojanowska told the News. “But the war in Ukraine made this all the more imperative.” Bojanowska said the department ran a search for a language lector, seeking a lector who was fluent in both Russian and Ukrainian. She said that Tytarenko, trilingual and a “dynamo in the classroom,” was the perfect fit. She added that she hopes that, by having the same lector teaching both languages, students can understand that speaking the Russian language does not equate with a Russian nationalist identity. Tytarenko said she hopes the Ukrainian language department will work closely with the Ukraine House student group, offer extra-curricular community events and become a “hub” for cultural events and exchange. In the future, she also wants to create an interdisciplinary course on Ukrainian identity, culture and mentality explored through the lenses of art, music, folklore, mythology and

literature. She also aspires to teach Ukrainian literature in translation — a skill that she has honed as a translator for several literary works. Tytarenko added that these courses in Ukrainian studies will diversify the Slavic department’s offerings and help students understand the complexities of Ukraine-Russia geopolitical and cultural relations. After the war, Tytarenko said she hopes to forge connections with schools in Ukraine and facilitate exchange programs — though she said this planning feels “premature” now. Alongside being a senior lector and associate research scholar and teaching first- and second-year Ukrainian, Tytarenko endeavors to expand and develop her dissertation — a study of Russian folk mysticism narratives and the mythology behind rebellion — into a full-length book manuscript. She added that this research has resounding relevance nowadays. “We can see the political mythology in supporting propaganda narratives and the place of mythology in nation-building and in the current regime in Russia,” Tytarenko said. In addition to her research in Russian mysticism and mythology, Tytarenko also has experience researching pedagogical practices and curriculum-building. She uses virtual reality and immersive technology to help her students improve speaking and communication skills. She cited an example of a course she taught at UNL about Russia through art, in which students would use glasses to experience galleries, stores, streets and rooms immersively with visual and audio input. “I have seen how effective this is as an innovative tool in boosting motivation for students,” Tytarenko told the News. “Students are more engaged with the learning material they have. They have better focus on the task. They demonstrate better retention of the material.” Tytarenko told the News that the program will have to gauge student interest to determine how expansive offerings in Ukrainian will be. Bojanowska echoed this perspective, urging students to be receptive to classes in Ukrainian.

“The ball is in your court because students now need to come and take these courses,” she said. Although Yale currently lacks its own Ukrainian language program, some opportunities for Yale students to pursue Ukrainian already exist. Jordan Shevchenko ’27 is a half-Ukrainian student taking Elementary Ukrainian II, a Columbia University language course offered to Yale students through a Shared Course Initiative program. “A lot of my Ukrainian family are unable to speak English, so by learning Ukrainian I can communicate much more with them,” Shevchenko wrote to the News. He shared that Yale students, who are in a classroom together, use high-definition video conferencing technology to connect to the Columbia language class, which is taught by a Ph.D. candidate there. So far, Shevchenko wrote that his course focuses on grammar, vocabulary, reading and writing — but students also talk about Ukrainian culture, history and politics through discussions. “Russia’s full-scale invasion is trying to compromise and eliminate Ukrainian culture, and alongside this the Ukrainian language,” Shevchenko wrote. “By learning Ukrainian, one can help combat these measures, and also express their solidarity with the people of Ukraine more easily.” Faculty of Arts and Sciences Dean Tamar Gendler expressed excitement at Tytarenko’s plans for the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures. She wrote to the News that Tytarenko, who has published extensively on the subject of language teaching, will create new offerings that will dynamically accommodate student interests. “Ms. Tytarenko is an expert in language pedagogy,” Gendler wrote. Bojanowska echoed Gendler’s enthusiasm, saying that Tytarenko has the expertise and the passion to build a strong Ukrainian language and culture curriculum. Yale’s Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures was established in 1946.

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At vigil, Ukrainian students urge continued support for Ukraine

BY NORA MOSES
STAFF REPORTER

Ukrainian students spoke about the necessity of continued support for Ukraine at a vigil on Saturday to mark the second anniversary of Russia’s full-scale invasion. About 60 people attended the vigil, which was organized by students from the Ukraine House at Yale. As people gathered at Cross Campus, organizers placed the Ukrainian flag, flowers and candles on the Women’s Table. The vigil featured speeches by Ukrainian students, a moment of silence and a prayer for peace. “Ukrainians are tired of war, but we do not have an option of ignoring it,” Ukraine House President Daria Valska ’26 said at the vigil. “We can pretend it doesn’t exist because it’s not on the front pages anymore. So today I ask you to keep supporting Ukraine, as the war is still as present as it was two years ago.” Valska told the News that the main goal of the event was to commemorate the victims of Russia’s attacks, but also to thank the people supporting Ukraine’s resistance — “first and foremost, the Ukrainian soldiers,” Valska said. At the event, Valska also spoke about the importance of continued support for Ukrainian resistance to Russia. She explained that for many Ukrainian people, the conflict began 10 years ago with the Russian annexation of Crimea. Christina Logvynyuk ’25, a Ukrainian American who has family in Ukraine, also spoke about

her experience learning about the invasion of Ukraine and constant fear for her peers there. “The next few days [after the invasion] were spent in a nightmarish state,” Logvynyuk said. “I was afraid to go to sleep at night out of fear that I would wake up to more mass casualties and rubble. So I would wait to go to sleep at least until the sun rose over Ukraine. That way I knew it had made it another day.” Logvynyuk shared her translation of a poem by Victoria Amelina, a Ukrainian writer, titled “The Losses of the Ukrainian Army.” The poem describes different people killed in the war and emphasizes the personal nature of the losses beyond public casualty counts. Russian forces killed Amelina in June 2023 during their attack on Kramatorsk. The next speaker was Yevheniia Podurets ’26, a student who grew up in Kherson, Ukraine. Podurets spoke about how the war has made her feel “like [her] childhood and life before has forever exploded.” The southern city of Kherson was the first Ukrainian city to fall to Russian control. In November 2022, Ukrainian forces liberated the city. Now, Kherson remains at the forefront of Russia’s offensive and the city has been widely abandoned, with buildings destroyed and streets filled with broken glass. Podurets also said that anyone who believes in the right to freedom should support Ukraine as “that’s the ultimate way to support freedom today.”



NORA MOSES, CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER

To mark the second anniversary of Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine, students from the Ukraine House held a vigil on Feb. 24. The vigil honored the victims of the Russian invasion, as well as those who continue to support Ukraine’s resistance. “It’s about staying true to your beliefs and who you are. It’s about carrying a Ukrainian flag under the Russian occupation even if you’ll receive death threats for that,” Podurets said. Ultimately, for Podurets, freedom is about living “in the way that you want to.” After Podurets, Oleksii Antoniuk ’24 thanked attendees for “stay[ing] committed” to the cause at a time when many people are fatigued. Logvynyuk urged students to continue to check in with their Ukrainian peers, saying that she “wouldn’t have been able to get through these last two years” without the support of her non-Ukrainian friends. “Of course, donating is great, but those personal connections, supporting your friends — you truly don’t know what that means to a lot of us,” she said. In the final student speech, Daria Figlus ’26 urged students to advocate for their representatives to continue sending aid to Ukraine. On Feb. 12, the Senate passed a bill with \$95 billion in aid for Ukraine. The bill faces opposition in the House of Representatives, with House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., refusing to put forward the legislation due to pressure from fellow Republicans. “We need your help. Talk to your representatives, vote for the representatives. Write to them. You have a voice here. This is America, a democracy. You have a voice,” Figlus said. “We need them to give us weapons and humanitarian aid. We need help. So speak up. Donate to Ukrainian organizations.” The Ukraine House at Yale was founded in September 2021. Contact **NORA MOSES** at nora.moses@yale.edu.

“Oh, that’s rotten luck. They’ve only got one good jump in them to begin with..” **RON WEASLEY** HARRY POTTER AND THE SORCEROR’S STONE

Humanitarian Research Lab finds Russia targets Ukrainian energy infrastructure

BY CARLOS SALCERIO
STAFF REPORTER

A report from the School of Public Health’s Humanitarian Research Lab, or HRL, has documented widespread and systematic Russian efforts to damage Ukraine’s transmission and power generation infrastructure. The findings in the report potentially implicate Russia in violations of international humanitarian law.

Released on Thursday, the HRL produced the report as part of the Conflict Observatory — a U.S. State Department-funded program that collects and analyzes evidence of atrocities using open-source data and satellite imagery.

The report identifies 223 instances of damage to power generation and transmission infrastructure over seven months in the past year. According to the research, the damage appears consistent with a “widespread and systematic effort to cripple vital power generation and transmission infrastructure across Ukraine.”

“The report is a critical first step toward accountability for Russia’s attacks on Ukraine’s energy infrastructure — attacks that have affected the lives of ordinary Ukrainians throughout the country,” Oona Hathaway, the Gerard C. and Bernice Latrobe Smith Professor of International Law and a contributor to the report, wrote to the News. “It sets out a roadmap for prosecutors, which they will be able to use as they build their cases.”

The Yale researchers focused on the period between Oct. 1, 2022, and April 30, 2023, when Russian officials claimed that a wave of attacks on Ukrainian energy infrastructure was in retaliation for an explosion at the Kerch Bridge in Russian-occupied Crimea on Oct. 8, 2022.

Damage to civilian energy infrastructure — which controls electricity and heating for Ukrainians — is particularly dangerous to civilians during Ukraine’s cold winter months, the report says.

According to the report, the timing and location of the attacks, along with statements from Russian public officials,

are consistent with a deliberate attempt to destroy power infrastructure across Ukraine. But the attacks that the HRL report documented are not concentrated in active military zones.

Instead, the attacks on Ukrainian power infrastructure are spread across nearly all of Ukraine’s administrative regions, including in regions that are removed from the frontlines of combat. The report also determined that the Russian military had targeted power infrastructure beyond the extent needed to achieve a military advantage.

As a result, the researchers believe that Russian attacks may violate international humanitarian law, which requires combatants to take “all feasible precaution to minimize injury to civilians and damage to civilian objects,” the report says.

The researchers also documented statements from Russian officials that described the attacks as political retaliation and intended to cause widespread civilian suffering, motives that might place the Russian attacks in violation of international law, including the terms of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

“These statements, together with the aggregate data, indicate that Russia’s attacks on Ukraine’s power generation and transmission infrastructure may constitute deliberate targeting that is inconsistent with international humanitarian law,” the report said.

To obtain the data, HRL used what they describe as a “fusion methodology,” which combines open-source data analysis and high-resolution satellite imagery to document conflict-related damage to power generation and transmission infrastructure.

These tools use artificial intelligence models to filter through large sets of data and flag imagery that might indicate damage.

To dig through large quantities of data, the researchers feed the AI approximate parameters for imagery — like that of tanks or an explosion — that they expect to find. Attaching these general characteristics to pinpoint a target, Raymond said, is a lot like describing a stolen bike to the police.

“Say you had your bike stolen at Claire’s Corner Copia and had to do a police report to the police department,” Raymond said. “What make or model was it? What color was it? What are other attributes about the bike? That’s going to help us find it.”

In the two years since the start of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the HRL has produced reports that have documented alleged Russian war crimes and humanitarian atrocities in the public eye. Their research has been cited by over 4,000 media outlets, the United States House of Representatives, the U.S. Department of State and the International Criminal Court. The ICC has used their findings as the basis of prosecutions of senior Russian officials, including Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Last February, Raymond and Kaveh Khoshnood, an associate professor of epidemiology and the faculty director of the HRL, authored a report that documented the systematic, forced transfer and deportation of thousands of Ukrainian children to Russia across a network of 43 re-education and adoption facilities. They presented their results, including that the Russian deportation network could constitute a violation of international human rights law, at a United Nations summit later that month.

Since then, the HRL has documented the deportation of children to Belarus by the Lukashenka regime, has located detention facilities for Ukrainian civilians, assessed the destruction of Ukraine’s crop storage infrastructure and identified mass graves. Raymond’s team has documented damage to hospitals and schools, mapped torture and detention facilities and tracked the forced passportization of Ukrainians — mandating that civilians adopt Russian nationality — in occupied areas.

Producing these reports, Raymond told the News, is a paradoxical experience.

“If you do it right, you feel two things at once. One is an immense professional satisfaction on having achieved, hopefully the highest scientific standard of assess-



COURTESY OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF UKRAINE TO THE UNITED NATIONS

In a report released Thursday morning, the Yale School of Public Health’s Humanitarian Research Lab documented Russian targeting of energy infrastructure across Ukraine.

ment of an incident or trend that can be done through these methods,” Raymond said. “The other feeling is the exact opposite: it is a mixture of horror at what happened and frustration, often about a lack of response to it.”

Raymond’s journey to the HRL began with firsthand experiences in disaster response. As an aid worker during Hurricane Katrina, he said he noticed a lack of remote data and communication networks for disaster response. The absence prompted him to begin developing fusion methodologies integrating open source and remote sensing data, just as the HRL used in Thursday’s report.

By 2011, Raymond moved to Harvard University, where he directed the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative’s Satellite Sentinel Project, a program backed by actor George Clooney that used satellite imagery to create an early warning system against mass atrocities in Sudan and South Sudan. The next year, he helped establish Harvard’s Signal Program on Human Security and Technology, which began developing ethical and technical standards digital atrocity monitoring.

Having been at Yale since 2018, Raymond leads the HRL’s efforts to

navigate a deluge of data. His team of researchers includes linguists, imagery analysts and epidemiologists to parse information and identify monitoring objectives. Developing these methodologies, Raymond said, is like being a professional golfer.

“My job is to figure out: do we use the nine wood? A putter? A five iron? And on some holes, you may use multiple golf clubs,” Raymond said. “The ability to know how to select the clubs is as important as swinging, and that comes from the experience of having tried to get a lot of different types of targets in a lot of different ways.”

For Raymond, the objective of digital atrocity monitoring is not to replace witness testimony. Instead, by cross-corroborating sources and creating a “scientifically validated” record of events with high confidence, he said he hopes to elevate witness testimony of humanitarian atrocities.

“I am deeply grateful for their science-informed approach to action,” Megan Ranney, Dean of Yale School of Public Health, wrote in an email to the News.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine started on Feb. 24, 2022.

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After two years, Doctors United for Ukraine continues its work

BY ERIN HU
STAFF REPORTER

In the weeks following Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian medical workers alike from the School of Medicine and School of Public Health began to meet.

According to Alla Vash-Margita, a Ukrainian-American and a professor of gynecology at the School of Medicine, she and many of her colleagues were stunned by the war’s outbreak. Hoping to help, they initially began to donate money to international organizations like the Red Cross and Razom.

“We couldn’t just sit and watch the news and cry,” Vash-Margita said. However, Vash-Margita and others didn’t know if their donations were making a substantial impact. They had little information on where their money was going and how it was being used.

Within months, Vash-Margita and other physicians who attended these meetings founded Doctors United for Ukraine, or DU4U, which aims to provide health support to Ukrainians amid the war. Since 2022, DU4U has sent over \$1.1 million of medical aid to doctors in Ukraine.

“Here at Yale, we decided to create an NGO that would operate on a smaller scale, but would identify needs in Ukraine from Ukrainian physicians that we are in direct contact with,” Vash-Margita, the Co-President and Director of DU4U, told the News. “And then we would try to match those needs.”

Vash-Margita said that the DU4U physicians have contacts in Kyiv, Ukraine’s capital city, and throughout the rest of the country. She herself contacted her medical school — Uzhgorod State University Medical School, located in Western Ukraine — and other physicians working in Ukraine closer to the front lines.

For Vash-Margita, the DU4U physicians’ personal connections have

helped create a network of hospitals and doctors, and they can identify the direct needs at specific hospitals.

“There’s an advantage for most of us,” Vash-Margita said. “We speak Ukrainian or Russian if we need to. We can pick up the phone and call doctors in Ukraine, which we do all the time.”

Rather than trying to provide supplies for the entirety of Ukraine, DU4U tries to fill in the gaps and provide supplementary resources to an existing network of physicians.

According to Nathaniel Raymond, the executive director of the Humanitarian Research Lab at the School of Public Health, this is exactly what a country like Ukraine needs. He noted that because Ukraine already had a high standard of care prior to the full-scale invasion, it did not need a full overhaul of its healthcare system.

“In many cases, groups like Doctors Without Borders and World Health Organization offer to come in because there is no pre-existing health care system or that health care system has been fully destroyed,” Raymond said.

According to Andrey Zinchuk, a professor at the School of Medicine and the vice president and director of DU4U, the nonprofit has three major branches, each with distinct goals.

The first branch, Zinchuk said, seeks to supply targeted precision aid, which includes ventilators, breathing machines, heart valves and kidney devices. DU4U purchased these devices and coordinated their dispersal to various hospitals across Ukraine, including the five major regions of military hospitals.

Vash-Margita noted that, in one instance, this division provided aid to maternity hospitals in Odessa, Ukraine. After hearing reports of women undergoing preterm labor due to stress and inadequate nutrition, DU4U purchased tocolytics, a type of drug that slows or suppresses preterm labor, and sent it



YOLANDA WANG/CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER

Since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Doctors at Yale have started an NGO to work send supplies to Ukrainian Doctors.

to the maternity hospitals.

The second branch helps support mental health providers. For Raymond, it is difficult to transport mental health workers into other areas, due to language barriers and cultural differences.

“You can bring in heart surgeons or burn specialists from anywhere, and they can operate in multiple contexts intraoperatively,” Raymond said. “However, bringing in outside mental health specialists often can cause more harm than good.”

He also noted that many specialists aren’t properly trained to treat trauma-victims.

“Even if you have local capacity to be able to provide large scale mental health interventions, it does not mean that that local capacity is trained to do it with a population that is now conflict affected,” Raymond said.

In response, DU4U has worked to train mental health providers in Ukraine on how to treat Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, or PTSD.

In one instance, Shelley Amen and Ilan Harpaz-Rotem, both Yale psychiatrists who work at Veter-

ans Affairs, traveled to Ukraine and conducted training sessions for Ukrainian psychologists and psychiatrists on how to treat PTSD.

Raymond said that DU4U also supported social works and psychologists through Christian Medical Association Ukraine to provide care for 200 displaced families. By working with existing humanitarian organizations, such as Unbroken and Superhumans, DU4U continues to help those impacted by the war.

“We trained 24 of the psychologists in Warsaw, Poland, a year ago, and then in the fall, we had a trip back again to Unbroken and Superhumans, where we trained psychologists in acute mental trauma and PTSD care,” Zinchuk said.

The third and final branch provides skills and exchanges ideas with Ukrainian physicians.

In 2023, a sponsorship from the Yale MacMillan Center for International and Area Studies brought three Intensive Care Unit doctors and three obstetrician gynecologists to Yale to train for a month. Zinchuk said that D4U4 is planning on inviting ten

more physicians to train at Yale this summer.

Still, Zinchuk said that running the organization has not been easy. He noted that as the war has persisted, donations to DU4U have steadily decreased.

“Initially, finances were not as much of an issue, because in the beginning of the war people were shocked and opened their resources to share with us, so, we were able to raise a lot of money very quickly,” Zinchuk said. “[However], as [the war] loses attention in the world, there’s a downtrend of donations. That’s probably been a key challenge for us.”

Nevertheless, Vash-Margita emphasized the importance of DU4U’s work and its overall impact.

“We cannot save the entirety of Ukraine. We hope, we wish, we could,” Vash-Margita said. “But these small sorts of targeted projects allow us to fulfill their needs and our goals.”

The full-scale invasion of Ukraine began on Feb. 24, 2022.

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“Theories pass. The frog remains.”
JEAN ROSTARD FRENCH BIOLOGIST AND HISTORIAN

Scholarship fund brings student from Ukraine to University of New Haven



WIKIPEDIA COMMONS

In December 2022, the University of New Haven established the Ukrainian Student Support Fund to provide scholarships for Ukrainian students whose studies were disrupted by the Russian invasion. Since then, UNH has welcomed one student from Odesa, Ukraine, on a full ride.

BY LILY BELLE POLING
STAFF REPORTER

Ten months after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, the University of New Haven created the Ukrainian Student Support Fund to assist Ukrainian students whose studies have been disrupted by the invasion. Over a year into the program, it has helped one student continue her studies, support she described as transformative.

In January 2023, UNH welcomed the first student from Ukraine supported by the Ukrainian Student Support Fund. Kate Fedirko, who is from the city of Odesa in southern Ukraine, arrived at UNH as a

transfer student and was awarded a scholarship supporting her tuition, fees and room and board for her five semesters at UNH.

“My heartfelt gratitude extends to the University of New Haven community for granting me this invaluable opportunity,” Fedirko wrote in an email to the News. “Without it, the dream of pursuing higher education in the United States would have remained unattainable.”

Since arriving at UNH, she has become involved with the American Marketing Association Connecticut chapter and several on-campus organizations, such as the Marketing Club and Entrepreneurship

Club. She wrote that she has also gotten the opportunity to network with industry professionals and serve the UNH community as a Transfer Peer Mentor.

“The guidance of Ukrainian professors has been essential in navigating the intricacies of campus life and adapting to the American way of living,” Fedirko wrote.

Currently, Fedirko is the only student from Ukraine to come to UNH with help from the Ukrainian Student Support Fund. In his announcement of the program, UNH Chancellor Steven Kaplan wrote that he hoped Fedirko would be the first of “several students” to matriculate from Ukraine.

UNH is also home to a small group of students with Ukrainian roots, including a few who recently founded the school's Ukrainian Club.

“As we have a small [Ukrainian] population here at the University of New Haven, we as students try to meet at least once every month at the dining hall to talk about our time at the University, how our families are doing in Ukraine, and overall what we can do as students to better educate the student population at the University of New Haven,” Andrian Kadykalo, one of the founders of the Ukrainian Club, told the News.

Fedirko also mentioned that she believes the Ukrainian Club is a great way for curious students to learn

about Ukrainian culture.

Several members of the Ukrainian community at UNH said that they found the creation of the Ukrainian Student Support Fund to be meaningful.

“I'm very happy that UNH is wanting to expand their education outside of the U.S. by creating scholarships specially for students from Ukraine,” Nazar Kadykalo, another founder of the Ukrainian Club and Andrian's brother, said. “Many students in Ukraine currently are no longer able to continue or start their education, as most universities are closed due to damages.” He described the scholarship program as “life-changing” for students in Ukraine.

Despite the creation of the Student Support Fund, Fedirko and several members of the Ukrainian community at NH told the News that they still feel the University could be doing more to support Ukraine.

Andrian and Nazar Kadykalo both mentioned that at the beginning of the invasion, UNH held multiple talks about Ukrainian sovereignty, and many faculty members displayed Ukrainian flags around campus. Since then, they said that most of those talks and flags have disappeared from campus, much to their dismay.

Fedirko said she is hopeful that UNH will allocate more support for students like her to come from Ukraine to New Haven.

“The scarcity of Ukrainian representation on campus weighs heavily on my heart, fostering a longing for greater inclusivity,” she wrote. “As one of the few Ukrainian students, I keenly feel the absence of Ukrainians here and recognize the untapped potential of bright minds back in Ukraine who yearn for similar opportunities.”

As of Nov. 9, 2023, more than 3,790 educational facilities in Ukraine had been damaged or destroyed since Russia launched its full invasion of Ukraine on Feb. 24, 2022.

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International law experts discuss implications of World Court Russia-Ukraine rulings

BY ADAM WALKER
STAFF REPORTER

Two years ago, Harold Hongju Koh, Sterling Professor of International Law and former dean of Yale Law School, represented Ukraine before the International Court of Justice, or ICJ, at The Hague alongside a team of international lawyers. Just weeks ago, the ICJ released its most recent ruling on the Russia-Ukraine war.

In 2022, the ICJ, the United Nations international court tasked with resolving legal disputes between nations, heard several cases on the legal legitimacy of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The cases urged the ICJ to adjudicate claims of Russia being labeled a “terrorist state” and accusations of Russia violating the 1948 Genocide Convention, in which 32 countries sided with Ukraine's genocide accusations against Russia, the largest number of countries to join another nation's complaint at the ICJ.

Since then, the ICJ has announced major decisions on the war, the most recent of which was released on Feb. 2.

In Feb. 24, 2022, Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine, further intensifying the ongoing war, which began in 2014 with Russia's occupation of Crimea and parts of Donbas. Russia, through its 2022 invasion, has killed over 10,500 Ukrainian civilians and injured over 18,500 Ukrainian civilians. Despite calls for peace talks from the United Nations Security Council, the war in Ukraine persists and continues to cause a stream of casualties and the displacement of countless civilians in Ukraine.

“Russia is much more powerful, has many more troops and much more economic power than Ukraine and what's been really going on is a battle between the rule of law and a commitment to democracy against the hard power of autocracy,” Koh told the News. “And what these are suggesting is that international law and the world are on Ukraine's side.”

Koh told the News that the ICJ has rendered several “important” decisions since Russia invaded



CHRISTINA LEE / PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR

The News spoke with experts who reflected on the major rulings from the International Court of Justice concerning Russia's war in Ukraine.

Ukraine in 2022. The first decision, he said, was issued in March 2022, just a month following the invasion, and declared that Russian troops and paramilitary forces should not occupy Ukrainian territory.

Koh emphasized that this decision “sent a message” illustrating the illegality of Russia's actions.

On Jan. 31, the ICJ dismissed much of Ukraine's terrorism accusations against Russia. Ukraine had alleged that Moscow, the capital of Russia, was a “terrorist state,” as they claimed its support for pro-Russian separatists in Eastern Ukraine ultimately led to the 2022 invasion. Among the allegations, Ukraine had also argued that Russia supplied the missile system that shot down the aircraft Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 over eastern Ukraine in 2014, however the ICJ ruled that violations of funding terrorism only apply to monetary and financial support, not supplying weapons or training.

Two days later, on Feb. 2, the ICJ delivered a verdict on the “genocide” allegations in the war. While the ICJ clarified that it lacked jurisdiction to determine whether Russia violated the 1948 Genocide Convention through its invasion of Ukraine, Koh noted that this ruling allowed for the case to proceed regarding whether Russia falsely accused Ukraine of genocide and whether it continued to violate the provisional measures order with Russian troops in Ukraine.

“I think this is really a battle between the past and the future,” Koh told the News. “Russia lost its empire and is trying to return Ukraine to its empire and Ukraine is looking to the future and wants to be an independent democracy more closely associated with Europe.”

When asked about his next course of action, Koh said that he is looking to provide additional leverage for Ukraine in the situation.

Koh spoke about the importance of showcasing Ukraine as a representation of democratic values, the rule of law and a universal commitment to human rights while contrasting Russia as isolated and aggressive.

“In this world, the right values win but that calls on people committed to those values to step up and to understand when those issues are at stake,” he said.

Charles Brower, a law professor at Wayne State University School of Law, told the News that legal observers have described the ICJ's rulings as disappointing for Ukraine's efforts to leverage the international judicial process in ways that could increase pressure on Russia.

He said that the judgments themselves were unlikely to significantly impact the ongoing war between the two nations.

“Even if Ukraine had succeeded on all its arguments, no one expected Russia to comply with any judgments rendered against it,” he explained.

Olena Lennon, national security

professor and expert on Ukraine at the University of New Haven, echoed this sentiment saying that she thinks the ICJ's decisions will not have any effect on the war, given that Russia previously ignored legal orders from the ICJ in March 2022 to suspend all military activities on the territory of Ukraine.

Brower said that the international legal system allows this, given that it operates in a context where the establishment and maintenance of a minimum degree of order has to be the overriding priority and is often under threat. Members of the ICJ are elected by the Security Council and the General Assembly, and the ICJ itself lacks coercive powers to enforce their decisions, Brower explained.

“Given that context, it should come as no surprise that the court's jurisprudence skews towards the maintenance of order and, therefore, may not prioritize achievement of justice in the broader sense,” Brower said.

However, Lennon said Ukraine has not needed official court rulings to convince the world that Russia's violations of international law are a threat not only to Ukraine's survival but to regional and global security writ large.

Referencing countries that have officially condemned Russia's aggression, imposed sanctions on Russia and provided aid to Ukraine, Lennon said that court rulings are not necessary to publicly condemn Russia.

“Serving justice to the Russian perpetrators properly is still critical both to deter similar crimes in the future and to provide healing to the victims,” Lennon said. “However, at this stage, what matters more is other countries' concrete collaborative actions to defend Ukraine and preserve Western institutions by any means possible, no matter how that support is codified.”

Koh has taught at Yale Law School since 1985.

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“Where the legends play!”
TOAD’S PLACE CONCERT VENUE AND NIGHTCLUB

Independent American journalist discusses his reporting in Ukraine

BY YURI STASIUK AND
SABINA BABAEVA
STAFF REPORTER AND
CONTRIBUTING REPORTER

On Friday, independent journalist Terrell Jermaine Starr visited Yale to talk about his reporting on the war in Ukraine.

In a conversation moderated by history professor Marci Shore, Starr talked about his experience as a Black independent journalist in Ukraine and colonialism and race in Eastern Europe. He also discussed how he believes the United States should support Ukraine in its ongoing war with Russia.

“The genesis of my work is really predicated on us better understanding each other, and that we all have to be invested in each others’ safety and security,” Starr said. “The safest, the most progressive thing that we can do for Ukraine is give them guns to fight, because there’s no point of talking about a peaceful Ukraine if they are dead.”

Starr, who grew up in a majority-Black community in Detroit and went to Philander Smith University, an HBCU, said that when he applied for summer abroad programs before his senior year, he picked only African countries as destinations. Nevertheless, he was placed on a trip to Russia.

That new experience shaped him, he said, and after graduation, he spent two years as a Peace Corps volunteer in a small Georgian village. There, he said, he started understanding colonialism and race outside of the United States through conversations with Georgians, who shared their experiences of being discriminated against by Russians as “the Black people of the Caucasus.” Inspired by his time abroad, Starr also did a Fulbright exchange scholarship in Ukraine in 2009. Living in the region, Starr learned about Russian colonialism.

“Western hegemony and Western colonialism [are] not the only hegemony ... and colonialism that exist,” Starr recalled realizing.

After returning to America, Starr worked as a national political correspondent for various American out-

ground in Ukraine, where he currently resides most of the time. He conducts his reporting from the war’s front lines and writes about Ukrainian civilians.

“He is here as somebody who is working outside of an acad-

camera, “language skills, street smarts and Black Jesus.”

Experiences away from home have shaped Starr into an advocate for shrinking the empathy gap across cultures and promoting the idea that the Black community in the United

tatives. “This racism that’s targeting us is now being used to weaponize support for Ukraine. Everybody is in this together. So we’re going to have to make a decision about how much care we have for one another.”

Although Starr said that he does not know if his work will inspire people to take political action, he knows that some will trust him better because “he looks like them.”

He added that he also believes Ukrainians feel that he, as a Black man, can understand them better than foreign white correspondents. He said that he does not operate on the idea of “objectivity,” trying to balance opinions as traditional news media outlets do. He described himself as, instead, committed to being truthful and fair.

“The voice that I’m speaking with ... that I communicate with and the honesty and the moral consistency that I bring to the conversation is not something that would pass a lot of editors,” Starr said. “So I don’t need them.”

Claudia Nunes, a visiting fellow in the School of Environment who attended the event, believes that Starr’s reporting brings the aspect of the physicality of the war to communities across the ocean — and across racial, linguistic and cultural barriers.

“Because he takes the truth this seriously, his reporting appeals to hearts,” Nunes noted. “Our interpretations of what is happening in Ukraine would vary only slightly, not as much as they used to, if we all had access to unfiltered truth. And Terrell gives it to us.”

The event was sponsored by the Poynter Fellowship; the Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies Program and the European Studies Council.



Terrell Jermaine Starr talked about covering a war-torn country and how being Black has impacted his work. COURTESY OF OLENA LENNON

lets, covering both the 2016 and 2020 U.S. presidential elections, but traveled to Ukraine every year. When Russia launched its full-scale invasion in 2022, Starr said he was in Ukraine, staying with his friend, who then enlisted in the army.

He followed his friend and started covering the war from the

emy and outside of a corporate news agency and has been making his own way with a very creative kind of journalism,” Shore said of Starr.

His mission, he says, has become to help cross the bridges between Black and Ukrainian communities with just a selfie stick, a phone

States is in many ways similar to the Ukrainian community in Eastern Europe, he said.

“White nationalism is putting Ukraine’s security at risk,” Starr said, reflecting on the federal bill that would provide aid to Ukraine currently stalled by the Republican majority in the House of Represen-

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New Haven Symphony Orchestra raises money for medical supplies for Ukraine

BY YURI STASIUK AND
ROMA MYKHAILEVYCH
STAFF REPORTER AND
CONTRIBUTING REPORTER

The New Haven Symphony Orchestra organized a candle-light concert on the two-year anniversary of Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine to support Ukrainian doctors.

On Saturday, NHSO performed seven pieces in front of the filled St. Mary’s Church, lit with candles. The concert tickets were sold out, and part of the proceeds will go toward the Yale-based organization Doctors United for Ukraine, or DU4U.

“It was really not so much a fundraising activity but an activity to bring to the forefront what is happening in Ukraine: who is getting hurt, how they are being treated, and what people in the community here can do,” Andrey Zinchuk, professor of medicine at the University and vice-president of DU4U, told the News.

In 2022, DU4U already partnered with NHSO to raise money for medical supplies and training in Ukraine.

This year, NHSO originally planned to host just one candle-light concert on Friday, Feb. 23. When DU4U reached out and asked for help again, the tickets for that first show were almost sold out.

Elaine Carroll, chief executive officer of NHSO, told the News that she was worried there would not be enough seats for all those who wanted to come to support DU4U, and the Orchestra decided to give another concert, which was sold out as well.

“[DU4U] told us about the work that they were undertaking to bring support to ... victims of the war in Ukraine, and that inspired us,” Carroll said, recalling the initial partnership between NHSO and Du4U in 2022. “When they approached us about wanting to do a second event, we were very happy to accommodate them.”

All people who attended the concert on Saturday had the option to donate proceeds from their tickets to DU4U. Concertgoers were also encouraged to



NHSO performed a candle-light concert on the two-year anniversary of the Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine to raise money for Doctors United for Ukraine. ROMA MYKHAILEVYCH/CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER

make an additional donation to an organization. As of Sunday, Zinchuk does not yet know how much the organization was able to raise that night.

According to Zinchuk, DU4U will use the raised money to support its efforts in Ukraine, which include delivering the needed medical equipment, providing mental health support for war-affected civilians and training doctors in Ukraine. The organization also previously brought six doctors to study at Yale and hopes to expand this program in the future. After the concert, the organi-

zation awarded Yale professor Ilan Harpaz-Rotem for his work teaching mental health providers during his trips to Lviv, Ukraine.

“So much of the success [of the concert] is because of the real passion that the doctors have for what they’re doing,” Carroll said. “They were so generous with their time in promoting the event. They had wonderful suggestions.”

One of the DU4U’s suggestions was to start the concert with the “Melodia” by Ukrainian composer Myroslav Skoryk. After this piece, NHSO, headed by violinist and concertmaster David South-

orn, also performed compositions by Felix Mendelssohn, J.S. Bach and “Four Seasons” by Antonio Vivaldi.

Marc Anthony Massaro told the News he attended the concert because of the “level of musicianship” of NHSO and the professionalism of its performers.

“Something I was unaware of was how exceptional the acoustics are in St. Mary’s Church. I had no idea it would sound this good,” Massaro said.

Tim Taylor said he was impressed with NHSO’s command of Vivaldi and called the performance “phenomenal.”

Similarly, Allen Gibbens came to the event to listen to NHSO performing “Four Seasons.”

Michael Schaffer told the News that he found the piece by a Ukrainian composer to be “fabulous” and said it spoke to the ability of people to be resilient and optimistic no matter what the circumstances are.

St. Mary’s Church is located at 5 Hillhouse Ave.

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SPORTS

Appel, Bassinga and Guerrier win bronze



YALE ATHLETICS

The Bulldogs finish off their Indoor Season at the ECAC and IC4A Championships in Boston, Mass. March 1 through 3.

T&F FROM PAGE 14

team captain who earned a bid to NCAA Nationals in the fall.

The men's relays also performed strongly, with the distance medley relay, 4x880, and 4x440 teams all earning the Bulldogs points. Featuring Leo Brewer '25, Cirrito, Owen Karas '26 and Andrew Farr '26, the distance medley relay team took fourth, as did the 4x880 team featuring Brian Gamble '27, Calvin Katz '25, Tanish Chettiar '26 and Austin Montini '25. The 4x440 team took sixth, featuring a squad of Jacob Kao '25, Aaron Miller '25, Colson and Simon Jupp '25.

"We qualified a lot of people to the finals and did a decent job hanging in there with some tough competition," Captain Appel wrote to the News. "I'm proud of all the men who scored, and am pleased with the effort the team put for-

ward. As individualized as track and field can seem, the beauty of competing at the collegiate level is that at conference meets it is a team sport and everyone's contribution counts. Over the weekend we, as a team, didn't place how we wanted and we are going to double down for outdoors to get rid of that bitter taste in our mouths."

On the women's side of events, Guerrier led the team with a third-place finish in the 500m, clocking in at 1:13.04. Kyra Pretre '24 had the next highest finish for the Bulldogs, earning fifth place in the mile with a time of 4:41.50. Linde Fonville '26 earned sixth place finish in the 1000m, clocking in at 2:50.18, Juliette Kosmont '27 took home sixth in the 60m with a 7.61-second finish, and Victoria Guerrier '27 took home sixth in the 800m with a PR of 2:08.10. Team captain Isabella Bergloff '24 earned eighth in the

shot put with a PR of 13.57m.

The women's relays performed strongly, with the 4x880 team consisting of Fonville, Pretre, Molly Harding '26 and Kalista Villatoro '27 taking sixth and the 4x440 team consisting of Mira Thakur '24, Bridget Vitu '25, Gloria Guerrier and Victoria Guerrier took third.

"Getting 8th place at Heps is never an ideal outcome, but there were some parts of the weekend that were promising for the years to come," Captain Bergloff wrote to the News. "We saw more depth in our events than we've had in a while, with 7 individual athletes scoring, only two of which were seniors."

The Bulldogs finish off their Indoor Season next weekend at the ECAC and IC4A Championships in Boston, Mass. on Friday, March 1 through Sunday, March 3.

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Bulldogs triumph over Dartmouth

W BASETBALL FROM PAGE 14

Although the second quarter was less offensively productive for the Bulldogs, their defense proved proactive and effective against Dartmouth, holding them to only six points through the entire ten minutes of the period. More Bulldogs stepped up to the line and added to the point total, including Nyla McGill '25, who went two-for-two at the free throw line. As the Blue and White ran off into their locker room at the half, they led 34-20.

Coming back onto the court at the sound of the third-quar-

ter buzzer, the Bulldogs quickly went to work, adding six unanswered points in a row to their lead from three different players. Successful steals and rebounds by Christen McCann '25 and McGill led to offensive successes that extended the Bulldog margin significantly. The Big Green defense had no answer for Brenna McDonald '24 and Jenna Clark '24, who racked on basket after basket to lead their team to victory, 78-42.

McDonald and Clark were the main culprits for the stacks of points that Yale amassed throughout the game, though

everyone on the court played a hand in the resounding victory against the Big Green. McDonald and Clark both earned double-doubles, with Clark banking 17 points and 12 assists and McDonald registering a career-high 30 points and 12 rebounds. Mackenzie Egger '25 and McGill combined for 14 rebounds.

The Yale women's basketball team looks forward to their homecoming to John J. Lee Amphitheater in New Haven to face Cornell (7-16, 1-10 Ivy) on March 1 at 4 p.m.

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YALE ATHLETICS

The Yale women's basketball team looks forward to their homecoming to face Cornell on March 1 at 4 p.m.

Both games finish with success

W LACROSSE FROM PAGE 14

The game saw contributions from several players. Chloe Conaghan '24 and Taylor Lane '25 provided assists, while Bella Saviano '26 and Emmy Pascal '26 showcased their skills in forced turnovers and ground balls.

"My favorite moment of the weekend was Taylor Everson and Taylor Lane's rebounded goals," Conaghan wrote to the News. "One of our big focuses for the game was crashing to the net on every shot and taking advantage of offensive rebounds, so it was great to see a small thing like that translate into crucial goals that put us ahead early!"

Sky Carrasquillo '25 and Taylor Everson '25 each secured hat tricks,

marking Carrasquillo's second hat trick this season. Yale's first three games have seen seven hat tricks from six players.

Looking ahead, the Bulldogs will travel to New Jersey on Saturday to compete against #23 Princeton at 12 p.m.

"I can't wait to show the Ivy League who Yale Lacrosse is this season," Conaghan wrote to the News. "It will be a gritty game, and I am looking forward to seeing us dominate on both ends of the field."

Princeton University (1-1, 0-0 Ivy) will be their first Ivy League game of the 2024 season.

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YALE ATHLETICS

Princeton University (1-1, 0-0 Ivy) will be their first Ivy League game of the 2024.

Yale unlikely to be first seed after Cornell loss



YALE ATHLETICS

Yale's next matchup is against Dartmouth in Payne Whitney Gymnasium.

M BASKETBALL FROM PAGE 14

ers, who capitalized almost every single time. Toward the end of the quarter, it looked as though Cornell was gaining traction, shooting two jumpers and a layup in a row to close the gap to six points. Just as the time dwindled to one second, McGill drove for a layup to take back the momentum. Going into the fourth, the Bulldogs led 46-38.

The last quarter of the game continued Yale's momentum, with the Bulldogs ahead by no fewer than four points. Yale bested Cornell 66-59.

The crucial game kept the Blue and White in the contest for the Ivy League tournament, as Brown and Penn, the two teams alongside Yale in the race for the

fourth and final spot, both lost their games.

Head Coach Dalila Eshe told Yale Athletics that she was up-front with her team about the necessity of this win.

"We told the team, when you made the decision to be a Division I athlete, you made the decision to embrace pressure," she said. "We told them this was a must-win game, on the road, which has been a bit of a monkey on our backs."

Continuing Ivy play, the Bulldogs return home to John J. Lee Amphitheater to face the Quakers on Friday for the second time and the Princeton Tigers on Saturday.

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ARTS

‘Vivienne Westwood of New Haven’ debuts runway show

CODY SKINNER
STAFF REPORTER

New Haven recently played host to a showcase of vibrant knits and hand-crafted cut-and-sew garments by local independent artist and designer MINIPNG.

Held on Feb. 24 at MINIPNG’s store on Audubon Street, the fashion show was the first from Eireess Hammond, known by the nickname MINI, and brought together a selection of her fans and members of New Haven’s local art community.



CODY SKINNER / CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER

Among the attendees was Zoe Jensen, who is the founder, publisher and co-editor of Connetic*nt Magazine — a quarterly zine featuring local Connecticut artists. Jensen, who initially met MINI during an interview for the magazine, contributed to the show’s lookbooks.

“I am a huge fan of Mini. I think she is such a visionary,” Jensen remarked. “She is kind of like the Vivienne Westwood of New Haven ... She leans into this punk fashion in a way that’s extremely feminine and coquette. It’s focused on sus-

tainability and community-building in a similar way.”

The showcase spotlighted MINI’s hand-made knitwear, a craft she had spent the past three years teaching herself. MINI shared that each piece requires between a day to a week of effort to complete. The intricate pieces are comprised of a variety of different yarns — including mohair, alpaca, sheep and other Italian-sourced wools. She uses a technique of weaving scrap yarn into her projects as she works, creating a collage-like effect of different gauge, color and texture.

Models of all sizes donned the garments, demonstrating the fabrics’ elasticity and versatility. Because of the knitting techniques employed, the one-size-fits-all knit pieces accommodate a range of body types.

Pieces had purposefully undone hems and loose threads dangling off them to further emphasize their properties as imperfect hand-crafted goods. Many models wore the colorful knits with angel wings and glittery make-up, underscoring the show’s fairy-like theme, as pop music scored the event from speakers at the front of the showroom.

“I would love to do more [runway shows],” MINI said. “I may do something in the summer, and maybe something in the fall, like a three-time-per-year thing.”

MINIPNG, founded in 2019, traces its roots back to MINI’s side-project while studying pre-law, where she began making and selling clothes on Depop. Gradually, her designs gained traction, allowing her to open her own brick-and-mortar storefront in 2022.

She is now involved in Connecticut’s art scene, showing her work and holding events in her New Haven store. She further spoke about her ambitions to open another location in New York within the next few years.

Attendee’s applauded as MINI rushed out after the models’ final lap. Following the showcase, the storeroom opened up for retail, where attendees were able to purchase pieces from the show. The venue featured local jewelry maker Skye and her brand Cielv, a shirley temple booth, and afterwards, a music set by Qween Kong.

Skye initially attended a trade school in New York with aspirations of becoming a jeweler. However, her interest in crafting



CODY SKINNER / CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER

Local independent artist and designer Eireess Hammond, known by the nickname MINI, showcased new knitwear during a fashion show on Feb. 24.

non-traditional jewelry led her to establish her own handcrafted silver and solder jewelry business.

“I met MINI through another event I was vending at Plush,” Skye said. “She happened to be there that day and she saw me. She said ‘I would love you,’ and she had another event later that month, and said ‘would you like to vend?’

We’ve been tight ever since then. She’s a doll. I love what she does, and all of the work she did today was super amazing.”

MINI was a pre-law student at Wittenberg University in Ohio before turning to fashion.

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Feb Club nears its end

ALI OTUZOGLU
CONTRIBUTING REPORTER

Feb Club, a senior-year staple of Yale College, unites the graduating class with a party every night during the month of February.

Events are held at different locations, from the Founder’s Suite in Benjamin Franklin College to the historic Luther House, and the music ranges from reggae to 2010s pop. The events are planned and organized by Desmos, a senior society.

Most weekday events have a more nonchalant atmosphere, according to Alex Hoang ’24, while Fridays and Saturdays tend to be busier with more dancing. Given the range of experiences and music that Feb Club offers, it provides an occasion to build class spirit and appreciate student performers.

“Because of the COVID restrictions during my first year at Yale, we did not have many outlets for meaningful connection,” Hoang, who has participated in Feb Club, said. “During the first night, I realized how long it had been since our class year was last united.”

Hoang recalled not knowing what to expect. He added that there was a lot of anticipation, and everyone seemed excited to come together.

The first night of Feb Club occurred at Luther House on Feb. 1, with three bands performing different genres.

“I think the most fun gig I’ve done so far is the Feb Club’s opening party in Luther,” said Owen Wheeler ’24, lead singer of the band Public Discourse. “Our goal [as a band] is just to be electric.”

Sameer Sultan ’24, bassist and social media manager of the newly founded band Scerface, recounted his experience performing for Feb Club.

“Our first performance was for Valentine’s Day, and our second performance was yesterday at the senior [masquerade],” Sultan added. “There was a variety of music, and people were dancing. I thought, ‘I haven’t seen this many people in my class in the same place for a while.’”

Themes for Feb Club have included “Caribbean x Afrobeat,” “Techno & Tequila” and “Grad Night.”

Each event had a photo challenge, which required challengers to complete tasks including posing like a DJ and taking pictures with a senior who would not be graduating in the spring. Those who attend all 29 Feb Club parties will be dubbed “All Stars.”

To ensure student safety, each event had three sober monitors.

The final Feb Club event will take place on Thursday, Feb. 29.

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COURTESY OF SAMEER SULTAN

The month-long series of themed parties celebrating the graduating class has hosted bands like Public Discourse and Scerface.

Judge rules in favor of Yale Corporation’s right to end alumni petition process

BY BEN HERNANDEZ AND BEN RAAB
STAFF REPORTERS

Yale has the right to regulate alumni appointments to the Yale Corporation, a Hartford district court ruled late Sunday night.

The ruling stems from a lawsuit filed in March 2022 by alumni Victor Ashe ’67 and Donald Glascoff ’67, alleging that the Corporation’s 2021 decision to end the alumni petition process for a position among the governing group was a violation of Yale’s 1872 charter.

“Don Glascoff and I are disappointed in the decision on the Yale Corporation,” Ashe wrote to the News. “We are reviewing our options but an appeal is likely. This decision, if not reversed, means Yale can deny any meaningful alumni participation in the election of Alumni Trustees. Alumni views can be ignored.”

Before its abolition in 2021, the petition process allowed alumni who acquired three percent of eligible alumni voters’ signatures to have their names on the ballot for the alumni fellows election. Six of 19 spots on the Yale Corporation are reserved for alumni fellows.

The decision was made to prevent “issue-based candidacies,” and candidates who sought to gain a seat on the Corporation to promote specific platforms, according to a 2021 announcement made by then-Senior Trustee Catharine Bond Hill GRD ’85.

University spokesperson Karen Peart wrote to the News that Yale is “pleased” with the decision.

Ashe, Glascoff and Eric Henzy, the lawyer representing them, allege that the University’s decision is an overstep of the regulations outlined in an 1872 amendment to the University’s charter – which designates six seats on the Yale Corporation for alumni and allows them to vote on candidates.

Specifically, they claim that the Corporation can only regulate the time, place and manner of the elections. Other restrictions, such as removing the petition process and raising the number of signatures required, are in violation of the amendment’s original language, they argue.

Yale, represented by Connecticut law firm Wiggin and Dana LLP, says that the University is entitled to full regulatory authority of the elections process.

Judge John Burns Farley concurred with this claim in his decision and granted the University’s motion for summary judgment.

“The charter does not impose on [Yale] an obligation to conduct alumni fellow elections in any particular manner,” he wrote in the decision.

Opponents of the change argue that it allows the Corporation too much control over Yale’s direction. The only other path onto the ballot is through the Alumni Fellow Nominating Committee, which is made up of several Yale Alumni Associa-



DAVID ZHENG

The ruling stems from a March 2022 lawsuit alleging that the Corporation’s termination of the petition process violates the terms of an 1872 amendment to Yale’s charter.

tion officers, three University officials and one successor trustee from the Corporation.

Scott Gigante GRD ’23, co-founder of the climate activist organization Yale Forward which supported a petition candidate in the 2021 election, told the News that he does not consider the decision reached in the case as a loss in the fight to reinstate the petition process. Instead, he said he sees the decision only as a confirmation that “the fight” will not be won by legal means.

Gigante added that although he cannot speak to the legality of the decision, he believes it was “morally” incorrect.

“The fight to reinstate a petition for alumni to be able to get ballot access for the alumni election, independent of a body run and organized by Yale, will continue,” Gigante said. “When you’re playing a game where your opponent controls the rules it’s very hard to win, and you have to be very creative so we’ll have to figure out what that creative solution looks like.”

Per the Alumni Fellow Election website, this year’s election for Alumni Fellows will launch in early spring and close on Monday, May 19. The University Charter states that all alumni and honorary degree holders are eligible to vote, but Yale College students are only eligible if they have held their degrees for five years.

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Dueling events promote Democratic ward co-chair slates

BY ETHAN WOLIN
STAFF REPORTER

Opposing slates of Democratic Town Committee ward co-chair candidates held events to mobilize support in the Hill on Saturday, a week and a half before voters in eight wards will decide the fate of the latest challenge to New Haven’s presiding power structure.

A slate of mostly incumbent co-chair contenders drew about 50 people, including top Democratic leaders, to a morning rally in Trowbridge Square Park. A smaller gathering at the Hill Museum in the afternoon featured candidates tied to New Haven Agenda, the first coordinated attempt in over a decade to dislodge the lowest elected rung of a party infrastructure dominated by Yale unions.

Speaking forcefully at the event for party-backed co-chairs, Mayor Justin Elicker attributed the rival slate to continued disappointment from last year’s mayoral election. Tom Goldenberg, the Republican-endorsed candidate whom Elicker routed at the polls, serves as the treasurer for New Haven Agenda.

“There’s an element of, I think, bitterness that’s coming out of November,” Elicker said. “We as a community came together and overwhelmingly crushed the opposition, not because they were weak, but because we are strong as a community, and we are going in the right direction.”

The co-chair challengers disagree. At their event, the challengers pointed to concerns ranging from poorly paved streets to uncontained garbage — and a general complaint that Yale’s UNITE HERE unions exert too much control over city government. New Haven Agenda fashions itself as the champion of community voices, rather than special interests, and has no policy platform.

DTC co-chairs — two in each of New Haven’s 30 wards — organize Democratic voters in their neighborhoods and participate in picking party nominees. They go uncontested in most election cycles, but this year New Haven Agenda candidates qualified for the ballot in eight wards, setting up elections for Tuesday, March 5. Registered Democrats can vote for their ward’s co-chairs.

“These are democratically elected positions,” Goldenberg said. “We should be happy to have choice.”

Both sides have begun to canvass voters and picked up their efforts with the events on Saturday and new campaign flyers. Vincent Mauro Jr., the DTC chairman, said he takes the



ETHAN WOLIN / CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER

Campaigning for the March 5 Democratic Town Committee elections heated up on Saturday, prompted by the first coordinated attempt in over a decade to reshape the local party leadership.

challenges seriously. He has prepared voter identification lists for co-chairs and volunteers to mobilize their supporters for what are expected to be low-turnout elections.

The 9:30 a.m. rally in Trowbridge Square Park in the cold on Saturday brought a show of force from elected officials, such as Elicker, State Senate President Pro Tempore Martin Looney and State Rep. Juan Candelaria. Speakers and attendees, including UNITE HERE union organizers, shared a sense of closing ranks to defend their own, as suggested by the incumbent slate’s name, Dems for Dems. Candelaria called the crowd a “family.”

“When I was asked to step up as a co-chair, I said yes,” Ward 3 co-chair Angel Hubbard said. “We can organize together to make sure we elect those who are helping to push for

more safety in our streets, more programs for our youth and the resources we need to make more opportunity available for all.”

After 20 minutes of speeches, the crowd milled around, taking coffee and donuts from a table. Many then dispersed into the neighborhood to knock on doors.

About four hours later and less than a mile away, a group of New Haven Agenda candidates and their guests gathered at the Hill Museum for an event billed as a “meet and greet.” The museum mainly displays works by local artist Gregory “Krikko” Obbott but on Saturday also featured an installation by Joe Fekieta, a candidate for Ward 4 co-chair, who had assembled flowers and trash he collected in the streets.

Jason Bartlett, a Ward 6 challenger and former city official who is lead-

ing the New Haven Agenda coalition, told the group of fewer than 20 people that many residents have asked him what a DTC co-chair does.

“I always say, just to keep it simple, that we’re at the very bottom,” Bartlett said. “We’re out there to talk to constituents, to talk to the voters, to figure out what’s on people’s minds, what do they really care about?”

After four other candidates introduced themselves, an attendee asked whether they were qualified for the co-chair roles, which focus less directly on local policy than on political work like getting out the vote. In response, Fekieta proposed offering gift cards to people who show up at the polls — or even a raffle for a free car, an idea that prompted laughter.

To Goldenberg’s surprise, Ward 6 Alder Carmen Rodriguez and the ward’s two incumbent DTC

co-chairs, cheered at the rally in Trowbridge Square Park, came to the New Haven Agenda meeting as well. Rodriguez declined to comment on the challenger slate’s prospects come March 5, but said the competitive co-chair races brought increased political activity to the Hill.

“To be honest with you, it’s exciting to see,” Rodriguez said.

The Hill has the highest concentration of contested co-chair races, in Wards 3, 4 and 6. Elections will also be held in Ward 7, which includes parts of downtown New Haven and East Rock; Ward 12 in Quinnipiac Meadows; Ward 18 in East Shore; Ward 28 in Beaver Hills and Ward 30 in West Rock.

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“I’m not a diva. I’m a tadpole trying to be a frog.”
TONI BRAXTON AMERICAN SINGER-SONGWRITER AND ACTRESS

Board of Education announces two student improvement plans

BY MIA CORTÉS CASTRO
STAFF REPORTER

The New Haven Board of Education announced two new plans to improve student performance around the Elm City at their public meeting on Monday evening.

In the meeting, the Board of Education approved a plan — required for all Connecticut public schools — to increase educator diversity in public schools. It also approved a submission on behalf of Augusta Lewis Troup School to the Commissioner’s Network, a state-wide program that aids low-performing schools.

“Our vision with this plan is that every student and educator in New Haven Public Schools is seen, heard and valued,” Madeline Negrón, the Superintendent of New Haven Public Schools, said. “We cultivate trust and eliminate obstacles to foster diversity, equity and inclusion. We commit to cultural competence and linguistic diversity that extends to the heart of our district where diverse educators mirror the beautiful mosaic of our student population.”

Both of these plans were presented to around 40 public members and 20 staff members from schools around New Haven as part of Negrón’s Superintendent Report. This crowd, as well as five members of the Board of Education, gathered in the gymnasium of Ross Woodward Elementary School. More public members and the remaining members of the board attended virtually via Zoom, which was projected on a screen for the crowd to see.

Increasing educator diversity in New Haven Public Schools

The plan to increase the diversity of educators in public schools around the city is part of a state-wide effort to improve representation in classrooms.

In place since July 1, the plan requires each Board of Education around Connecticut to submit a plan to increase educator diversity. With the deadline of this plan’s submission coming up on March 15, the Board of Education went over the specifics of the plan to clarify their next steps.

Negrón talked the audience through the importance of the plan and the impact it will have on student performance, presented statistics that demonstrate New Haven’s current diversity and explained the plan’s steps and goals.

Negrón also presented the planning team’s eight members, mostly faculty at various public schools.

“This was definitely a mandate that we embrace, not something that we feel is being pushed on us, because it does align with the core values of our city,” Negrón said.

Nearly 30 percent of New Haven-employed educators are people of color, and 89.5 percent of New Haven Public School students are students of color. These numbers are more or less equal to those of the other three major cities in the state. Across the state, only 11.2 percent of public school educators are people of color.

However, Negrón noted that while New Haven’s teacher diversity exceeds that of Connecticut overall, the diversity of New Haven itself does, too — making the state’s general ratio of teachers of color to students of color higher than the Elm City’s.

Negrón quoted the National Council on Teacher Quality to emphasize the importance of diversity in education.

“It is possible to measure real gains made by Black students who experience even just one Black teacher, in how much they learn and the rate in which they graduate, including from college,” Negrón quoted.

Through this plan, the eight-person team hopes to improve representation in classrooms, in the hopes that students are more engaged in learning when they see people like them. The plan prioritizes recruiting more educators of color, addressing their challenges when teaching to improve teacher retention rates and adapting educator application processes to reach a broader audience.

The plan also set forth a goal to formulate a career pathway program into education for students of color to increase the number of New Haven Public School-educated teachers and staff members.



MIA CORTÉS CASTRO/CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER

The two new plans aim to improve diversity ratios in public schools around the city and student literacy in various subject areas.

The planning team predicted a 15-percent increase in educators of color, a 12 percent increase in applications from educators of diverse backgrounds and a 15 percent increase in the retention rate of educators of color, all by the end of the 2026-27 school year.

At the end of the presentation, Board of Education member Edward Joyner urged the board to keep in mind the implications that strongly pushing diversity recruiting can have on the quality of educators at the schools. Joyner brought up that the plan must not be the end-all-be-all of recruitment and retention, however, because diversity is only one quality that constitutes a good educator.

“It’s not always necessarily true that because a person is diverse, or maybe from the same background as a lot of students, that that person cares about those cases of education,” Joyner said.

Troup partakes in Commissioner’s Network Turnaround Plan for student achievement

During the 2022-23 school year, Augusta Lewis Troup School was selected by the Commissioner’s Network to partake in its program through the Connecticut Department of Education. The program selects 25 schools around the state that have been identified as low-performing to provide financial and instructional support, helping them develop curricula that will enhance learning in whichever areas of study students of that school are performing worst in.

This March, after a year of planning and coming up with a Turnaround Plan and committee, or a plan detailing how the school will use the network to enhance student performance, Troup will submit its plan to the Connecticut Board of Education. The prospective start date for the plan if the submission is accepted is July 2024.

“Our teachers are going to get professional development in any environment, not only language arts classes, but also in math, science and social studies,” Eugene Foreman, the principal of Augusta Lewis Troup School, said. “It’s important because we have a lot of support in place for reading, but we need a lot more support for writing.”

Troup’s turnaround plan focuses on improving literacy “across the curriculum.” In a presentation projected for the public, Foreman used the acronym TACO — Talent, Academics, Culture and Climate, Operations — to detail the tweaks to daily school life that will be implemented to improve literacy.

The TACO Turnaround plan includes developing learning plans that reflect teacher and student needs, improving instructional practices to maximize student learning and engagement, improving attendance and communication and implementing extended learning opportunities. The plan highlights reading, writing and math as its focus areas, with a particular focus on literacy.

“We want to ensure that students understand that I don’t write something down and hand it in ... it’s a process,” said Caroline Apgar, assistant principal of Augusta Lewis Troup School. “So that’s going to be a critical piece to the work that’s going to happen.”

The presentation also included a list of the ten members of the team who will help with the plan’s implementation. These team members are all either educators or faculty members at Troup.

If Troup’s plan is accepted by the state, they will receive the Department of Education’s support for three to five years as they implement the strategies detailed in the plan.

The next New Haven Board of Education meeting will be held on March 11 at Ross Woodward Elementary Magnet School, located at 185 Barnes Ave.

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Behind tomb doors: Yale’s society tap process

BY KAITLYN POHLY
STAFF REPORTER

For many Yale seniors, Thursday and Sunday nights are defined by their society. On these nights, groups of approximately 15 carefully selected students gather to meet, socialize and bond.

Although there are now more than 55 of these exclusive groups, the process to join them remains elusive.

“Going through the tap process is inevitably stressful as there is a decent lack of clarity to how the process works,” Harry Pew ’24 told the News, reflecting on his society tap experience last year. “You hear about friends and classmates receiving letters and interviews for weeks while many choose to not talk about it at all.”

This year’s tap process officially began on Thursday, Feb. 15, when societies were permitted to begin contacting prospective members, according to an email from the Yale College Council to the junior class. Some — but not all — societies offer interviews, which were permitted to begin on Thursday, Feb. 22, per the message.

Yalies will begin to officially receive membership offers in April, with “Pre-Tap” on April 11 to kick off “Tap Week.” Over tap week, societies extend bids to rising seniors, and on “Tap Night” — on April 18 — those students may formally accept an offer.

“As they have every year now for over a decade, nearly all of Yale’s senior societies have agreed to follow the same dates, procedures, and code of conduct during the Tap process, and to communicate this information to the junior class,” YCC President and Vice President Julian Suh-Toma ’25 and Maya Fonkeu ’25 wrote in their Feb. 14 email, which included a letter signed by the Society Assembly. “They do so in an effort to be as transparent as possible with juniors who may wish to join a society and to ensure that the Tap process is a

safe and rewarding experience for all who participate in it.”

While the oldest societies were founded as all-white and all-male groups, they have become more diverse since their inception. Skull and Bones — Yale’s oldest society, formed in 1832 — tapped its first Black member in 1965 and did not admit its first woman until 1991.

Skull and Bones is part of a select group of “landed” societies, Rhea Cong ’24 said. This means that the society owns a “tomb,” or a private building, on or close to Yale’s campus. All of the so-called “Ancient Eight” societies — Skull and Bones, Scroll and Key, Wolf’s Head, Elihu, Book and Snake, Berzelius, St. Elmo and Mace and Chain — are landed.

Cong explained that for her society, each member is allowed to ‘tap’ four juniors for consideration in the group’s longer selection process. Each society’s tap process is unique: for Samantha Prince ’24, each member of her society is permitted to select three juniors for consideration. Membership offers are not extended until April’s “Tap Week.”

“We try to go for a mix of people,” Cong told the News. “Some people you know really well and some people who you think would fit the group well, but maybe you’re not best friends with. There’s definitely a lot of diversity in who gets tapped because we want people who can each contribute something different to this space.”

Alumni have varying levels of engagement with their societies. Prince’s society has an Alumni Coordinator who communicates with the larger alumni base. Other societies have active Boards of Directors that help facilitate the tap process. Some societies do not allow their alumni to contribute to the tap process at all.

Following the first round of initial taps, many societies conduct one to two rounds of interviews. Invitations for these interviews are delivered in secret. Some invitations, Prince said, do not even disclose which society they are from and usually just include



MARISA PERYER/CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER

Selected by current members of each society, rising seniors can be ‘tapped’ to potentially secure a spot in one of 55 groups.

a time and meeting place. Some include a mysterious message, like “We’ve been watching you.”

“The style of the interviews can vary a lot between societies,” Pew told the News. “The society will then deliberate and come to a consensus for which juniors to push forward to the next interview round and so on until they have around 20 remaining.”

Pew, Cong and Prince are all in different societies.

Following interview rounds for the societies that conduct them, Pew said, there is a “pre-tap” night when selected juniors are told they have spots in societies. According to Pew, selected juniors are often invited to parties or gatherings to meet with current society members and other selected juniors offered spots in the group. From there, they can decide whether or not to accept.

For juniors who receive multiple “pre-taps,” these events are crucial in determining which society to join. For juniors who do not receive any pre-taps, the spots that end up opening up are their final chance to secure membership in one of the groups. Prince described this as the “scramble week,” which this year will begin on April 11.

“The scramble is basically what happens when people who don’t have taps for society try to find them and societies with open spots, maybe from people who had multiple taps and turned them down, try to find people,” Prince told the News. “That process is very stressful.”

Prince speculated that there is a spreadsheet among the society tap chairs — the seniors in charge of the process for each group — containing lists of those who have not received taps and who have or have not confirmed their tap. She noted, however, that she was not sure about its existence this year.

Cong, Prince and Pew all touched on the fact that the societies try to fill specific demographics and “niches” for their group every year. Some of the niches that they pointed to were a cappella singers, fraternity members and varsity athletes. This is in an effort to make the group as diverse in perspective, interest and background as possible.

Prince also touched on the concept of “tap lines.” The examples she gave included a gymnastics team tap line and a Rhythmic Blue dance group tap line. This would mean that every year,

a member of these groups would tap a rising senior on their team or in their club for their society in order to keep the line going.

“I think there’s at least some value to the tap lines,” Cong said. “Because you know that these people will have had very different Yale experiences. You’re going to hear these people’s life stories, and you’re going to hear more about different corners of campus.”

All three, while they have greatly enjoyed their time in society this year, described the tap process as “stressful” — especially since students and their friends may fill the same niche and thus may be competing for the same singular spot in many of these societies.

“I would tell rising seniors to realize that it is out of your control,” Prince said. “Try not to judge yourself. Let the purpose be to just meet a new group of people that you wouldn’t have met otherwise.”

In their joint letter, the societies pledged “to avoid any hazing” in the tap process, “from interviews through Tap Night.”

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SPORTS

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“As individualized as track and field can seem, the beauty of competing at the collegiate level is that at conference meets it is a team sport and everyone’s contribution counts.”

MATT APPEL ’24 MEN’S CROSS COUNTRY TEAM CAPTAIN

T&F: Three Yalies earn podium finishes at Ivies

BY PETER WILLIAMS
STAFF REPORTER

On Saturday and Sunday, Yale’s track and field teams headed to Cambridge to compete in the Ivy League Indoor Track & Field Championships.

Against their seven Ivy rivals, the Elis took home seventh in the men’s competition and eighth in the women’s competition. Many athletes set personal records and earned points for the Bulldogs, and three athletes — men’s team captain Matt Appel ’24, Brian Di Bassinga ’26 and Gloria Guerrier ’27 — notched top three finishes in their events.

“There were some very good performances across the board, but we can’t be satisfied,” men’s head coach David Shoehalter

wrote to the News. “There is a great deal of room for improvement, and I am confident that we will see big improvements moving forward.”

On the men’s side of events, Appel and Di Bassinga led the scoring for the Bulldogs, with Appel’s 18.13m hurl in the shot put earning him third and Di Bassinga’s 15.29m PR in triple jump earning the team a second bronze. Kit Colson ’25 came in next for the Bulldogs at fourth place in the 60m with a finish of 6.81 seconds. Thomas Cirrito ’24 also secured points for Yale, taking fifth in the 800m with a time of 1:50.98. Sean Kay ’24 took home seventh in the 5k with a 14:20.07 finish, a solid finish for the cross country

SEE T&F PAGE 10



Yale’s men’s and women’s T&F teams competed at the Ivy League Indoor Track and Field Championships this past weekend, with three earning bronze medals.

YALE ATHLETICS

WLAX: No. 21 Yale dominates Quinnipiac and Temple



YALE ATHLETICS

The women’s lacrosse team clinched victories against Quinnipiac and Temple.

BY COLETTE STAADECKER
CONTRIBUTING REPORTER

The No. 21 Yale women’s lacrosse team (3–0, 0–0 Ivy) took on Quinnipiac University (0–3, 0–0 MAAC) in a midweek game and Temple University (4–2, 0–0 ACC) on Saturday, securing two hard-fought wins.

The Bulldogs clinched a commanding 20–8 victory against Quinnipiac University (0–3, 0–0 MAAC) on Wednesday afternoon at Reece Stadium.

The Blue and White dominated from the beginning, securing an 8–2 lead in the opening quarter. This early advantage enabled Yale to rest their starters for most of the remaining game.

Yale demonstrated their depth by holding onto a five-goal lead starting from the second quarter. The game saw goals from 11 different players, with a total of 12 players contributing points for the Bulldogs.

The Bulldogs have 10 wins and zero losses against the Bobcats since 2013.

A total of 31 players made appearances for the Bulldogs, with first-year midfielders Ashley Kiernan ’27 contributing two assists and Karina Herrera ’27 netting two goals in their Yale debuts.

“It honestly was just great to see all the hard work pay off after this fall and preseason,” Herrera wrote to the News. “I am beyond thrilled that my first

debut went well and that I was able to share my first collegiate point with an assist from one of my fellow first-years!”

On Saturday, the Bulldogs traveled to Philadelphia to take on Temple, securing a 13–5 win against the Owls. Temple started the season undefeated until they were beaten by the Bulldogs.

Temple netted the game’s opening goal, but the Bulldogs fought back, scoring the next 10. Yale maintained a strong defense, keeping the Owls scoreless from the 9:18 mark of the first quarter until the 0:46 mark of the third quarter.

SEE W LACROSSE PAGE 10

WBBALL: Elis earn resounding 78–42 victory over Dartmouth



COURTESY OF RENA HEDEMAN

This weekend, the Yale’s men’s and women’s track and field teams split up between Boston and New Haven,

BY MEREDITH HENDERSON
STAFF REPORTER

The Yale women’s basketball team (7–17, 4–7 Ivy) ventured to Leede Arena in Hanover, New Hampshire, for their second battle against Dartmouth College (7–16, 1–10 Ivy) of the 2023–24 season.

The Bulldogs hoped to dust off the two losses they surrendered to Princeton University (20–4, 10–1 Ivy) and the University of Pennsylvania (13–11, 5–6 Ivy) from the previous weekend. With a win against Dartmouth, the team was keeping their hopes for a bid in the Ivy League tournament alive.

The last time these two teams met was Jan. 20, when the Bulldogs barely held on to the win,

48–46. This time, they ensured that their lead would be far out of reach by the time the clock wound down to zero.

In the first quarter of the game, the Blue and White quickly jumped out to an eight-point lead, one they never lost throughout the entirety of the contest. It seemed the Bulldogs rarely missed a basket, often going on multiple hot streaks at a time. The lead grew as a result of a team effort, where five Bulldogs contributed to the tally of points in the first, and even more played defensive roles on the court. The first ended with the momentum skewed heavily toward Yale and only heading further in that direction with the score at 21–14.

SEE W BASKETBALL PAGE 10

M BBALL: Yale clinches Ivy tournament

BY BEN RAAB
STAFF REPORTER

The Yale women’s basketball team (6–15, 3–5 Ivy) extended their win streak to two with a victory over Cornell University (7–13, 1–7 Ivy) this past weekend.

The weekend prior, the Bulldogs defeated the University of Pennsylvania Quakers (11–10, 3–5 Ivy), 74–68, after forcing an overtime. They rolled into Ithaca, NY confident, especially given that Cornell dropped their previous game to Harvard (13–8, 6–2 Ivy), 52–63. This game was the first

time this season that the Bulldogs and the Big Red battled.

The first quarter began with the Big Red winning the tip-off, though holding possession for no time at all before Nyla McGill ’25 stole the ball and passed to Brenna McDonald ’24. Although Cornell jumped to a five-point lead early in the first quarter, a three-pointer by Kiley Capstraw ’26 and a jumper by McGill tied the game up at 5:59. From there, the Bulldogs and the Big Red fought back and forth for the lead, but eventually met up in a tie going into the second.

In the second, the Bulldogs retaliated against one another with points on either side. Soon, however, Yale broke away from the back-and-forth when Mackenzie Egger ’25 and Jenna Clark ’24 shot for seven consecutive points. The Bulldogs ran off the court at the half, leading 27–20.

After the half, the gap widened as the Blue and White increased their lead by as much as 12 points in the third quarter. Turnovers proved fatal for Cornell, which relinquished the ball into the hands of Yale’s top scor

SEE M BASKETBALL PAGE 10



ZOE BERG, SENIOR PHOTOGRAPHER

The women’s basketball team surged over Cornell with their second straight victory, 66–59.

STAT OF THE WEEK

195.400

A PROGRAM RECORD SCORE FOR THE BULLDOGS GYMNASTICS TEAM EARNED LAST WEEKEND AGAINST UPENN.

WEEKEND

DITCH DAY

// BY NORA RANSIBRAHMANAKUL

You descend the foothills, picking up your friends and passing the city on the way, traversing the big open fields and farms of the valley. Did you know we’re technically valley girls? And then it’s up again through coastal mountains. The highway snakes its way through the giant golden hills until you look down to the Bay. Pull some sweet driving moves and descend. The highway narrows into a two-lane to cross the wetland. “Freakin ‘Out on the Interstate” comes on, the windows roll down, the wind rushes in and you’re hurtling across the bridge.

A detour in Petaluma: home of maximalist coffee+bread+flower shops. Pick up some chai latte, toast. Hit Sonoma County. Marvel at trees taller than everything in your town. The hills are bright green and speckled with cows. It is a painting come to life outside the windows of your car. The Pacific Ocean opens up before you, and you’re winding with the road along the seaside cliffs of Highway 1. The sky is cloudy, but the surfers swell in and out with the waves, rushing in to hit the rocks all along the coast.

You pull into Portuguese Beach,

finally. Walk to the edge of the cliff and see your friends down below. The wind is cold the sand is cold the water is cold but you are happy to be wrapped in blankets together. There are communal baguettes and beach volleyball games and mussel shells that look like blue and white porcelain inside.

Though you are one of the last people sitting on the beach, you must head back across the state. The sun makes an appearance through the clouds and the hills have soft spotlights shining down on them. Backwards you go, to pizza and bookstores in Petaluma and the narrow wetland road. Somewhere along the way you, realize California is the most beautiful place you’ve ever seen. The music is perfect and your friends are perfect and the day is perfect, but you’re saying goodbye to it all.

You’ll think you’ve missed the sunset, but as you approach the tall bridge there will be one last gift. “Where’d All The Time Go” plays, and you’re singing as you ascend. The sky and water light up in one last flash of orange and purple and gold.

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// NORA RANSIBRAHMANAKUL



// NORA RANSIBRAHMANAKUL



FeBRUTALary or FUNuary?

*Were you waiting
for February to end?*

// BY ANNA PAPAKIRK

February is finally finished. Fortunately?
Fact: February contains the fewest days of any month.

Fiction: February contains the fewest days of fun of any month.

February often gets a bad rap for feeling like the longest month despite only having 28 days (or, in this year’s case, 29 days). For everyone, it just seems to drag on — we aren’t still riding the New Year’s energy and excitement, and spring hasn’t quite yet sprung.

At the beginning of the semester, when I was mapping out my major assignments and assessments for each course, February was filled to the brim. The work just kept piling on. As soon as I would begin to feel relieved after finishing one assignment, I would quickly have to gear up and begin working on or preparing for the next one. I even had a midterm on the 29th! Is that allowed?

Most people anxiously anticipate the end of this month, but is it worth the rush? Is February so brutal that we should excitedly march into March without soaking up all that February has to offer? I’ll admit, I was a member of the “Fast-Forward Through February Club.” I patiently waited for the month to end. However, I owe February an apology. If I had just spent a little extra time searching, I could have found that February is in fact filled with felicity.

I didn’t even have to look too far past the first day to find good news this month. On Groundhog’s Day (Feb. 2), Punxsutawney Phil did not see his shadow. What does that mean for us? Spring is on its way! I don’t know if it’s just placebo, but ever since then, I have already started to see early signs of spring: the sun has made an appearance after a long period of hibernation, the weather decided that we don’t have to wear our heaviest coats anymore

and the birds are happily chirping and singing because they, too, know that spring is on its merry way.

Despite this major development, which I thought could cheer me up for the rest of the month, an avalanche of work — and actual snow, for that matter — struck down during the second week: two midterms and a paper. Struggling through the storm of work, I managed to find some silver linings amidst the clouds.

On Sunday, Feb. 11, after studying for most of the day and preparing for the hectic week that lay ahead, I found some snippets of fun. I enjoyed a super-special Super Bowl dinner in the Branford dining hall, complete with nachos, wings and the most delightful chocolate and peanut butter cupcakes. While I wasn’t able to watch the entire game, my friend was able to find a live stream just in time for the halftime show. Then, a few days later on the 14th, I enjoyed a delectable Galentine’s dinner, and finished off the night with a treat from Claire’s. The difficult week seemed to be taking a sweet turn.

Near the end of the month, when midterms started lightening up for me, more events and celebrations appeared on the horizon. There were endless formals to attend, whether it was the annual first-year formal or formals for clubs and social groups. The end of the month brought multiple occasions to dress up and have fun, which for me, was a delight because I felt like I had been living in sweatpants for the entirety of February.

When looking back at this month, perhaps it was filled with more excitement than I gave it credit for.

However, with that being said, I’m somewhat relieved that March is here.

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WKND Recommends

Hiking Sleeping Giant

Let’s grab a meal

// BY NICOLE VILORIA

This phrase is commonly laughed at yet so frequently said. Do you find it to be genuine or ingenuine? Is it something you frequently take? Feel free to take an earnest or humorous take on this!

“A Brain for 2, Please!”

My brain has changed, but I think it’s my fault. I betrayed it. I didn’t protect it enough.

Ever since I transferred to Yale last semester, I’ve been excited to nourish my brain with knowledge, experiences and especially with new people. Yale is the perfect place. Dog trainers with perfect GPAs. Frat boys who intern at the White House in the Summer. Polyglots who think about taking a shit in more than one language. You want to find a niche talented person? You find it at Yale. It is the same all around. In classes, residential colleges, Good Nature Market (G Heav) late at night after having gone out partying, the Yale Running Club. Everywhere, but there is a place where all these people congregate. There is a place where all this talent goes to the trash and it’s reduced to raw instincts.

Dining halls.

Back in Miami Dade College in the Padrón Campus, people shared funny stories after class. Almost always, the conversation would move to OTG (our version of the dining hall). Friendship made. At Yale? There’s a protocol involved. Let’s break it down. Okay, well, it’s followed by two questions.

“Would you like to grab a meal sometime?” which translates to “could I use your name to finish filling up my G-Cal this week?”

“When are you free?” which translates to “tell me you’re free so I can tell you all the ways in which I’m not free.”

After getting used to my system, which helped nurture some of the best friendships I’ve ever met, this protocol felt like my fifth course. Now? Well, I’m already in level two.

Back when I arrived at Yale, I loved this system. Everyone is so busy, but they are nice enough to open their brains to you ... I know, right?! Kindness overflows here! Community service? Bah! I already opened up my time to five people in need this week.

With that out of the way, let’s explain the brain idea. I’ve always loved to read. I went through a dystopian era, to a thriller era, to a literary fiction era. This obsession for appreciating literature turned into my obsession for writing about crazy characters in fiction and immortalizing my emotions in poetry. My brain thrives off of writing and reading. However, it took me a long time to realize that it’s extremely difficult to maintain both activities in check. When I wasn’t writing, I was reading a lot. And vice versa.

I never realized the same could happen with people. I’ve shared meals with a bunch of people at Yale, and again, I

used to find it fascinating. I would call my mom after every meal ended and exclaim, “you won’t believe whom I just had lunch with! This person wants to work for NASA! They have created an app! They are also Venezuelan!” But the most hilarious one is the following: “I think I finally made a friend.” Week after week, I went through these interactions. Serotonin rising. Illusions about staying up late gossiping. Sometimes, I eat with people I find cute. I find myself idealizing the “afterwards” of eating with a cute girl. I call my friend back in Cornell, tell her everything.

Spring semester of 2024 comes. I realize how much I have been appreciating cool people, longing for being closer with some of them, imagining these interactions leaving the dining hall. But, I also realize something in my dorm stinks. So, I spent weeks looking for it. What is it? What is this smell that’s not letting me sleep? What is this smell that makes me not want to be in my dorm? Or not to be with myself ... ? Damn, it’s me. My brain is rotten. It lost all its color, all its shiny appearance, all its original knowledge. I fried my brain.

How many of those cool people are my friends today? Well, conversations with my mom got shorter. “What happened to that girl who invited you to that party?” Oh yeah, it was all part of the community service package she was offering that week. “What happened to that girl who loves writing as much as you do?” Oh yeah, she looks the other way when I try to smile at her on the sidewalk.

That’s when I realized I’ve done the equivalent of reading a lot and not writing. I’ve been appreciating the grandeur in other people and not appreciating and further nurturing my own. Don’t get me wrong. It’s still fun to get to know new people while struggling not to get my sweater stained with the meat from the arepa in Commons (and spending the next 30 minutes cleaning the stain in the bathroom to not lose that precious sweater). But, I gotta be careful. It’s the same as with writing, a good writer can’t get consumed and discouraged by all the good writing there is out there. They can consume a lot of it for inspiration, but there comes a stopping point when you just gotta do a lot of writing and not putting anything else into your brain.

As someone who thrives off of knowledge, I have to keep a balance between obtaining it by exchanging information with other people and obtaining it by creating and retrospecting. On another note, I’ve learned that not all conversations at Yale will get you to find people you can trust your murder history with. They might inspire you to add more people to that (fictional) record, though. Too many of these, however, can fry your friend as they did mine.

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// ELIZABETH WATSON

WKND Recommends

Listen to “Michael in the Bathroom”

The Yale classes you should probably take next year

- This Monday, Yale Course Search will open with the 2024-2025 course listings. If reading that sentence doesn't already make you want to throw up -- congratulations, you don't know how to read.

Personally, my only requirements for courses here are that I can either 1) fantasize about the professor while I stare blankly into space or 2) fantasize about my seminar crush while I stare blankly into space or 3) fantasize about the subject of study while I stare blankly into space. Unfortunately, this has meant I've spent most of my valuable Yale education picturing Julius Caesar going down on Calpurnia, and wondering whether Nietzsche's mustache would tickle.

I was able to get a sneak peek at the various courses that are being offered next year, and I've decided to dedicate this week's SOTW to a noble, academically focused pursuit of making sure my readers have the best schedule possible. Find below some standouts from next year's offerings (although beware, they might fill up quickly):
- ECON 156: How to Properly Bring Up Your Banking Summer Internship in Conversations Where No One Asks About Your Banking Summer Internship

Course Description: This course teaches students the various rhetorical techniques necessary to ensure they can talk about their JP Morgan internship in every human interaction they have, even when it's completely unnecessary and/or inappropriate. Upon completion, students will be able to navigate funerals, anti-war protests and pillow talk knowing how to tastefully mention how they'll be spending their summer in "the City."
- BIOL 334: The Human Body: Limiting Bowel Leakage After Dining Hall "Flounder"

Course Description: Yale students are faced biweekly with questions like, does someone important in Yale administration have an uncle with a failing Flounder fishery? Am I the last person at this school with working tastebuds and a normal gastrointestinal tract? This course aims to answer those questions, and so much more. No necessary prerequisites, although students with a keen academic interest in aquatic bottom feeders -- or a personal interest in feeding on bottoms -- are particularly welcome.
- SOCY 123: The Difference Between Meaningful Friendships and People You Go Out With

Course Description: Enrollment limited to sophomores and juniors who are beginning to ask themselves, "If I only hang out with them when I'm drinking, are they really my friends?" Additional questions that'll be covered include, "Are they really your best friends, or were they just the first people you met freshman year?"
- ANTH 269: Male Friendship I: Activities that Allow You and Your Bro to Make Eye Contact

Course Description: Let's face it: you and Brad are best friends, but you've never had a good look at his face. When you hang out you play video games, watch football, degrade women and stand side-by-side while looking at various third objects. This course will teach you (and your bro) ways to sit opposite of each other and look directly into one another's eyes. Prerequisite to "ANTH 270: Male Friendship II: Am I in Love With My Bro?"
- PLSC 277: How to Identify Future Presidents, Collect Their Blackmail

Course Description: Brady (President of the Buckley Institute and the Involuntary Celibacy Club) has convinced your 84-year-old "there were good people on January 6" history professor it's reasonable to abort himself, let alone fetuses. But Brady's got charisma and is just average-looking enough that his face could be put on campaign posters without putting people off.

So yes, in a few decades, the Brady who only brushes his teeth at night will probably be the leader of the Free World. But he also anonymously slut shames women on Fizz -- and there's your window.
- CHEM 499: Is my TF into me?

Course Description: Half-semester course (the answer is yes).
- BIOL 102: Ensuring Your Girlfriend Finishes

Course Description: Introductory biology lecture course with no prerequisites. NOTE: in the past students have taken this as a "gut," but understand the intellectual and physical effort that this course demands. We typically recommend that students take this Credit/D/Fail, along with a lighter course load. If the course reaches capacity, priority will be given to economics majors.
- Happy bluebooking!
<3 SOTW



The Secrets & Sentiments of Benjamin Franklin

// BY ORAH MASSIHESRAELIAN

Benjamin Franklin sailed the ocean blue ...
Shoot, that's not it.
Benjamin Franklin never told a lie ...
No, no, that's not it either.
So who was Benjamin Franklin? Today, I set out to discover exactly that.
I hop and skip over to the Franklin courtyard and find him right where I expect to, as tarnished and brassy as ever. There he is: the man, the myth, the legend of Benjamin Franklin, carved out in bench form.

"Hello, uh, Mr. Franklin."
There is no reply. I clear my throat -- perhaps this will draw his attention ...
"Hello ... um ... Hello, Mr. --"
"Please, call me Benjamin," Mr. Benjamin interjects.
"Oh, alright," I reply suddenly, hoping he didn't catch my glimmer of hesitancy when I first arrived or sense my sudden intense fear that someone would see me talking to a bench.
"Why don't you have a seat," he says in an inviting tone. "Who, me?" I think to myself. "Where?"
"Right here, to my right." Mr. Benjamin concludes, as if reading my mind. I furrow my brow with confused suspicion and slowly sit down, joining Mr. Benjamin on the bench.
I inform Mr. Benjamin that I'm looking to learn more about him and ask if he'd be interested in a short interview. He humbly obliges, though I almost see a subtle smile playing on his steel lips.
I begin by asking Mr. Ben about his hobbies, outside of laying the foundation for the American ethos.

I'm taken aback when Mr. Ben starts telling me about his secret career as a rapper. He went by Ben Frank. "It was marvelous," he recounts. Naturally, I asked him to drop me some beats, but Ben Frank politely declined. "On that note, though," he continued, "I did spend some time beating eggs as a part-time chef." It was at that moment that Chef Frank revealed to me that he was actually the mastermind behind the renowned "Frankfurter."

"Wow ..." I mutter under my breath. "Mr. Chef Ben Frankfurter, I have to say I'm sort of speechless. I never knew this side of you."
"Yeah," Ben Frank sighs, looking downcast. "Everyone always thinks 'Mr. Founder this', 'Mr.

America that', but what ever happened to 'Mr. Heart and Soul'? I know what you're thinking, 'Benjamin, you're looking an awful lot like the Tin Man these days, and you know what they said about his heart and soul ...' Well, that I veto! I may present differently now, but I was once a man of emotion, of love, of fervor!"

"Mmm" I reply, nodding my head ever so subtly, eyebrows slightly raised.
"If you don't believe me," he continues "you can ask my wife -- she can attest to the passion I --"
"Right, right" I hurriedly cut him off in a sudden state of rushed panic. I'm not interested in hearing about Bench Benjamin's sex life.
"Please, allow me to finish." Mr. Benjamin continues in an ever-diplomatic tone.
Oh no.
"I spent some time as a dancer in my career, and my wife -- always my No. 1 fan -- could tell you about how hard I hit those boogies and whipped those Nae Naes."
"What?" I think to myself.
"That's right," he counters my unspoken doubt. "But I had my academic side, too. I spent my summers doing research in New Haven. Discovering chemicals and such. Ever heard of benzene? All me."
"In fact," he continued, "they considered me a scientist so mad that I became Mary Shelley's muse for 'Frankenstein' "
"Huh," I reply, wondering how much of the world as I know it is Benjamin Franklin-coded.
"And lastly, in my free time, I enjoyed modeling cars. I was the first to envision the Bentley."
"This is all extremely impressive. Is there anything else you want to share?"
"I'll leave you with one piece of Frank advice. During the extended time I spent with my fellow Founding Fathers, I learned that the most important thing is to poke fun at each and every opportunity. Sometimes, that means opting for creativity and imagination over truth and reality."
"Like ... making things up?"
"Precisely -- it makes for the greatest fun." He finishes with a wink, or perhaps the sun simply flashed across his brazen eye at just the right moment to bring an illusion to life.
Great fun indeed ... well played, Benjamin.

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WKND Recommends
Apple cider beer.