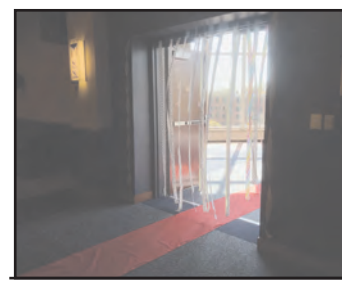




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SOUTHERN NEWS

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Bertolino outlines upcoming semester University will not require students to receive vaccinations

By Sam Tapper
Editor-in-Chief
By Abby Epstein
Managing Editor

Campus life next fall will be as normal as it can be in COVID-19 times. Even with a 1 percent infection rate this spring, President Joe Bertolino said at his Town Hall meeting that he still wants the campus community to follow CDC guidelines and get vaccinated.

The university will not require everyone to get vaccinated. This is because as a state agency, the university does not have the authority to make such a decision. The decision must come from an executive order by the governor, by the legislature or by the federal government.

"While we may not be requiring vaccines at least at this time, unless the governor changes his mind

or the variants become problematic, we strongly encourage every member of our community to get the vaccine," said Bertolino.

The university has partnered with Yale/New Haven Health at three separate locations around the state to give students the opportunity to get vaccinated.

Additionally, unvaccinated students will still need to be monitored for COVID-19 next semester. However, the future of the campus COVID-19 testing center and what will be required is still uncertain.

"That has not been decided for sure," said vice president of Student Affairs Tracy Tyree. "But we do not anticipate the possibility that surveillance testing will continue, especially for those who have not been vaccinated."

See Town Hall Page 2



Camryn Arpino-Brown



Asma Rahimyar



Paul McKee



Therese Ziaks

PHOTOS COURTESY | ISABEL CHENOWETH/SCSU

Henry Barnard Award recipients announced

By Sam Tapper
Editor-in-Chief

The 2021 recipients of the Henry Barnard Distinguished Student Award have been announced: psychology major Camryn Arpino-Brown, chemistry major Therese Ziaks, psychology major Paul McKee and political science and philosophy double-major Asma Rahimyar.

"These awards are the highest honor that the Connecticut State Universities awards to students," said University President Joe Bertolino at his Town Hall last week. "All of these students are worthy of acclaim for their excellence in the classroom and their service to the community."

The Barnard Distinguished Student Award is considered one of the most prestigious awards at the university. Each year, 12 seniors are chosen for the award across the four Connecticut State Universities – four from Southern and Central Connecticut State University, and two from Eastern Connecticut State University and Western Connecticut State University. Southern students who displayed outstanding scholarship and a commitment to community service during their collegiate career have been selected as recipients of this year's Henry Barnard Distinguished Student Award.

"I am extremely grateful to have been selected as a recipient," Ziaks said. "I am very proud to be an Owl and am very grateful for the education and experience I have received at SCSU, so this award is something I will always cherish."

Students must have a 3.7 GPA or higher to qualify for the award. In addition, students who wish to pursue the reward must have demonstrated significant community involvement and leadership. Transfer students will have had to complete at least 60 of their credits here on campus.

"Receiving the Barnard Award is truly bittersweet, because it represents the culmination of my time as a Southern Student," said Rahimyar, who was also the university's

first-ever Rhodes Scholar. "During these past four years, I've met students and faculty who have left an indelible mark on who I am – making it possible to dream boldly about who I would like to be."

Rahimyar plans to pursue masters' degrees in global governance and diplomacy, and refugee and forced migration studies. She eventually hopes to obtain a doctoral degree and empower women in Afghanistan, according to the university's "News at Southern" page.

Arpino-Brown did not offer a comment by press time. However, she is a student that has been heavily involved with the university's orientation programs, as well as being instrumental in the planning of the university's Black Lives Matter rally in the fall and an active voice for social justice on campus. McKee, Bertolino said during his town hall, is a Marine Corps. Veteran and a first-generation college student. He is also under consideration as a finalist for neuroscience programs at institutions such as Stanford and Brown University.

"As much as this award is meant to recognize me, I'd rather it serves as a testament to the phenomenal faculty and students at SCSU that have been instrumental in my personal and professional growth," McKee said. "Look no further than the Psychology Department's Dr. Michael Nizhnikov, Dr. Christopher Budnick, Dr. Kenneth Walters or Computer Science [and] Data Science's Dr. Imad Antonios for some of the best educators, mentors, and friends that the Connecticut State College & University system has to offer."

Bertolino said that McKee has worked with the SCSU Foundation to create an endowed scholarship fund, following a personal donation of \$25,000 from McKee. This marks the first time in school history that a current student has established this sort of fund, Bertolino said.

"If you want just a taste of the greatness that students at Southern have to offer, look at my fellow award winners," McKee said, "how humbling to be here next to them."

Panel discusses hate speech and slurs

By Madeline S. Scharf

On Wednesday, Apr. 21, the Student Activism Committee hosted a town hall, 'Words Matter: How Slurs Impact others.' The panel of students addressed how hate speech is hurtful and what students can do to combat it.

Student Activism Intern Jamil Harp discussed via email interview how the students structured the panel. "The moderators were students Elijah Ortiz & Madison Alexis. The panel consisted of students Marie Perez, Sara Gossman (SGA President), and MCC Director Dian Brown-Albert. I did the opening remarks and Kyle Marshia-Thaxton did the closing remarks," said Harp.

The panel discussed hate speech in the form of slurs. Exploratory major Kyle Thaxton, a freshman, discussed via email interview why the town hall was important. "If we ever want to see change take place, we need to continue to have these vital conversations, even if they may feel uncomfortable," said Thaxton. "By hosting

this town hall, we are able to reflect and confront some of the everyday issues that people of color and the LGBTQ+ community face."

The hope of this town hall is to have meaningful conversations in a safe and welcoming environment. "We need to educate people and create a safe place where students and faculty can come together and stand in solidarity against homophobia, racism, xenophobia, et cetera," said Thaxton.

This town hall was open to any student who wished to attend. Thaxton said he would encourage students to join events like this to be more informed. "I think that non-students of color could greatly benefit from hearing the perspectives of students of color and LGBTQ+ students," said Thaxton.

Slurs are still a major social problem. According to a 2014 study performed via Twitter posts, "there are approximately 10,000 uses per day of racist and ethnic slur terms in English (about 1 in every 15,000 tweets)." This is a widespread issue still causing lasting affects

on people to this day.

The town hall addressed slurs being used as both hate speech and as reclaimed language by the party it was once used to demean. The 2014 study had also found that "Slurs are most commonly used in a non-offensive, non-abusive manner: to express in-group solidarity or nonderogatory description." The town hall entered group discussions about the positives and negatives of reclaiming slurs. It may be empowering to the parties who were once demeaned by them, but also give rise to those outside of the groups engaging in the rhetoric.

"SCSU is in development of a new anti-racism protocol," said Harp. "I know SCSU is looking into identifying/expanding community resources to help with slurs."

However, it is not so easy for the university to overlook such speech. "It is extremely hard for the university to regulate language due to the first amendment and other federal laws that protect free speech," said Thaxton.

Despite these roadblocks, the university is trying to implement new policies to help minority groups affected by hate speech. "The university is trying to implement an Anti-Bias Protocol that would be very helpful in protecting minorities on campus from being verbally, and in extreme cases even physically, harassed from other students," said Thaxton.

The town hall also addressed how students can combat hate speech if they hear it. "Students need to find the confidence to confront those who use these hateful words," said Thaxton. "Even if you do not say these slurs, you are still responsible for educating your friends and family members about social justice. We, as young people, can no longer be bystanders to hateful speech."

Students who wish to learn more about combating hate speech and slurs are encouraged to reach out and learn more. Harp said, "Students should attend the student activism committee to learn more and get involved."

BOR proposals 'stink,' says faculty

By Ellis McGinley
Copy Editor

CSU-AAUP, the faculty union for the four state universities, held a rally on the Buley Patio April 21, protesting recent contract proposals between the union and the Board of Regents.

The rally featured protesters with handmade signs, speakers from both the four universities

and local non-profits and a giant inflatable skunk. Students were invited to take selfies with "Skunkzilla," who had his own sign: "BOR Proposals Stink!!!"

The BOR and the CSU-AAUP negotiate university contracts every four years. The BOR is a government body of volunteers tasked with overseeing the CSUs: the CSU-AAUP represents university professors

and faculty.

Under the BOR's contract proposals, CSU professors' course loads would increase to five classes per semester, giving them the heaviest course load in the country. The average course load for a professor in the United States is three.

Reverend Scott Marks, founder of New Haven Rising and a speaker at the rally, said "Connecticut State University and

College systems is a powerful engine to change the maps of segregated development. The faculty and staff are core to this success."

Dr. Shelly Jones, a professor from Central Connecticut State University who spoke at the rally, said she specializes in teaching "culturally relevant pedagogies" to future educators.

See BOR Page 2

Town Hall

“Getting the vaccine means campus can start “embarking on a new normal,” said Bertolino. Starting June 1, faculty and staff will begin phasing back in to working on campus. On Aug. 1, 100 percent of staff will be on-ground for final preparation for the fall semester. In the fall, 75 percent of classes will be on-ground or hybrid and the other 25 percent will remain online.

“This is exciting because this shows a growth of more than 10 percent in the number of online offerings compared to fall 2019,” said Bertolino. “The fact

that this has happened has provided us with an opportunity to invest more in our technology and invest more in our instructional technology so students will have more online options.”

With having more class options for students, enrollment is still dropping. Bertolino said there was an enrollment problem before COVID-19, and it has only become worse since. There has been a 20 percent downfall in enrollment from last year’s class.

“Even as we face the reality Southern may permanently become a smaller institution, enrollment remains key,” said Bertolino.

At the end of

Bertolino’s address, Robert Gregory, professor of health and movement sciences asked if there were any positive lessons learned from COVID-19 times that the university can apply moving forward.

“[We have] increased our technology footprint enormously, I think just across every area of the university that provides great opportunity for us moving forward,” said Bertolino.

“Our community is a caring and resilient community and we’re going to continue to focus on the health and wellbeing of all members of our community,” said Bertolino. “We must remain vigilant in the work we are doing.”



PHOTO | DESTENY MARAGH

President Joe speaking during his Town Hall meeting in Buley Library.



PHOTO | BRIA KIRKLIN

Protesters carry signs as they rally on the Buley Patio.

U-Pass fee increases by \$20

By Caitlin O'Halloran
Reporter

The U-Pass feewill increase from \$20 to \$40 for Connecticut State Colleges and Universities, which will be included in students’ tuition.

“For instance, at Southern we currently only charge the mandatory fee and the only people who participate are undergraduates, but you know. If we want to add in all the graduate students at Southern, we could do that, or I suspect we could add in some of the graduate schools, — not all of them — if we wanted,” said Chief Financial Officer of the Board of Regents Ben Barnes.

The increase in price gets each student six months worth of free access to transportation in Connecticut, including trains, buses, and other smaller transit services.

“It’s still a tremendous value, considering you get to ride the train. You could ride the train from Hartford to Greenwich and it would be free,” said the Executive Vice President of Finance and Administration Mark Rozewski.

The cost of the U-Pass may still be benefit for students, as the typical cost for a monthly Connecticut train pass ranges from \$298 to \$495, depending on the line.

“The way it works

is everybody pays, everybody gets the benefit. Obviously not everybody uses it as much, and so some people end up subsidizing others, I believe the state is subsidizing all the students because the cost of the pass is significantly below market,” said Barnes.

A monthly train ticket to Stamford can be over \$100, but with the U-Pass, it saves students the fee of transportation by more than half, even though the price is rising by \$20.

“All other fees that we charge, housing and tuition, they’re all frozen for the next year, so next year’s bill will be the exact same as this year’s except for that fee — the transportation fee — and the reason is that we don’t provide the services, the Connecticut Department of Transportation does and so they had to increase the price, which was always below market and is still below market,” said Rozewski.

The U-Pass program is offered to all CSUs, excluding Quinnipiac and Eastern as there are less public transportation services near these universities that could be accessed by students.

“If you’re at Southern, Gateway, Housatonic or Norwalk, you might have a good reason to want to use the train quite a bit and so for those folks it’s particularly valuable,” said Barnes, “but even on the bus side, I think

a bus pass is close to \$100 a month, I’m not sure exactly the current price so you know, so obviously you know \$80 for the entire year is a pretty good deal if you take the bus.”

The Student Government Association (SGA) discussed the Board of Regents decision, where the U-Pass price increase was discussed, during their committee report.

“The change in cost was accepted by the system office contingent upon regular updates from the Connecticut Department of Transportation about how they plan on better serving participating institutions and how they are going to introduce infrastructure in places throughout the state that host institutions that don’t participate in the program like Eastern for example,” said Vice President of the Board of Student Experience of SGA Brandon Iovene.

“I personally kind of believe in public transportation and I know that not only do we want to help students to be successful by making transportation less of an issue for them, but we also think it’s good to give people the habit of using public transportation,” said Barnes. “We do want to expand the program out to as many students as possible because if you use transportation, it’s an enormous benefit.”

BOR

Jones said, “I get to know each and every one of my students. That means when they become teachers, they get to know their students in authentic ways.”

“As faculty, we get to know our students through teaching and advising. The BOR seems to make decisions based on spreadsheets, not students,” said Jones.

“Students Not Spreadsheets” was depicted on both flyers for the event and posters held by participants.

“We need the BOR to adequately fund higher education so that our students continue to receive a quality education and so that there is equity for all students in the state of Connecticut,” Jones said.

The rally ended early due to severe thunder and lightning, which interrupted a speaker.

Professors have encouraged students to write to their state legislators and senators about the contract proposals. CSU-AAUP

president Dr. Patty O’Neill wrote her own open letter to students, in which she has also included a petition which friends, family, alum, and current students can sign in support of the union.

Earlier this semester, 13 Connecticut senators also signed a letter to BOR Chairman Matt Fleury, saying “in these proposals, we see a clear threat to the working conditions of educators whose expertise and dedication have built the reputations of the State Universities as accessible institutions where working- and middle-class students receive an excellent education.”

The union also proposed the formation of a task team which would research the possibility of a “comprehensive childcare consortium,” according to a newsletter sent out by the CSU-AAUP.

According to the newsletter, the proposal received objections on the grounds that the union does not represent students and other staff, who could want to use the

childcare center, and it would be too expensive. It also stated that BOR Chief Negotiator Andy Kripp said, “centers are educational centers, not drop to shop,” regarding how the centers may be used.

The BOR has also presented proposals which, according to the newsletter, may threaten tenure, tenure-track positions, and objections to proposals regarding a revision of Article 3, which concerns sexual harassment in workplaces.

“I’ve been hearing that some people are staying neutral with what’s happening with the BOR’s proposals against our faculty, staff and students. Now, some people don’t understand. They think it’s about pay,” Joshua Cam, a Southern student who transferred from Norwalk Community College, said. “There are students here. They wouldn’t be here for no reason. They wouldn’t be here just for pay. It’s more than just that.”

Cam said, “you can’t stay neutral on a moving train.”

SGA Weekly Body Meeting

By Donovan Wilson
Reporter

The Student Government Association (SGA) held their weekly meeting and focused on student government elections and vaccine related efforts.

“Remember to continue to collect student testimonies on the world language requirement,” said Sarah Gossman, President of the student government association.

The meeting began with an unanimous approval of last week’s minutes before heading into the President’s report. Gossman reported on an overview of what would be discussed later with other student government association members. The discussion mainly focused on the fact that the student government association was nominated for a student organization award at their virtual ceremony.

“Make sure to vote on student government elections,” said Madison Miceli, SGA vice president.

The VP’s report concentrated on reminding everybody to vote in student elections. Student government elections are happening as it is the end of the semester and soon, it will be known who will make up the student government association

next year. This may mean that many officers will no longer hold their positions in the next academic year.

The treasurer had no report for the group as there had not been any proposals made last week. This was the only empty report in a meeting full of updates on events and other campus happenings such as government elections and vaccination centers.

“We will be going forward with using uber gift cards as the main way of getting students to our vaccine sites,” said Brandon Iovene, one of the board representatives.

A large focus from the student government association right now is on the vaccine sites and getting students to them. There was also a lot spoken on trying to work on space utilization and better utilizing underused spaces on campus for betterment of the students and even faculty and staff. There was also a lot of talk about trying to gauge students on how they feel about the campus and compare that to the campus climate survey from before COVID-19.

“The one day I worked in admissions, we only had one student who was having trouble registering for classes and it seemed to be on her end not on the schools,” said Lupita Barajas, one of the board

of representatives.

Class registration has just taken place and it usually has a reputation to cause a lot of gripe with students. However, Barajas reported that students were having a positive experience with class registration, according to collected data and her own experience working in admissions. “We are looking for two more representatives for the last two installments of our meet the reps series,” said Will Valois, representative for board of outreach and communication.

A meet the reps series is run where each representative from the student government has a write up about themselves put out. Valois was mainly scouting out the last two representative to be covered this semester but that is currently up in the air. The monthly wrap up for March is also being finished up and will be out soon and work on the wrap up for April will begin. Gossman also addressed some announcements and concerns which mainly included that the blessings bags event had been moved to be alongside the Deal or No Deal event at the student center.

Iovene said, “The goal is to get as many students vaccinated as we possibly can manage to.”

Students should be optimistic about next year



By Sam Tapper
Editor-in-Chief

These are the opinions of The Southern News Editorial Staff.

It is so hard to believe that this school year, which has been like no other, is drawing to a close — as is my college career. While my typical college experience was taken away in March of 2020, there are reasons for students to be optimistic about returning next year.

Last Thursday, University President Joe Bertolino held a town hall to answer questions from the campus community directly and gave a rough painting of what the upcoming fall se-

mester will look like. The university will not mandate vaccines for students which unfortunately means masks will still be an everyday necessity on campus. As will some amount of social distancing, whether it be the standard 6-foot designation or reduced to three feet for those who are vaccinated.

Still, on-ground events are slowly making their return to campus this semester, especially these past few weeks with the addition of the tent next to Connecticut Hall. By next fall, university faculty and

staff will all be back on campus.

With that in mind, it is safe to say this age of having fun, engaging and interactive events over WebEx and Airmeet may soon be behind us once and for all. This university is heavy on pushing its students to get involved, which has been hard to do so in this new age of Zoom calls. But because of the pandemic, many first-year students missed out on the standard traditions, such as: New Owl Welcome, homecoming and, of course, spring break.

With the exception of spring break, which will presumably be implemented again next spring, Bertolino said next fall he hopes to have many involvement opportunities available for sophomores as well first-years, because he understands what the current freshmen class this year have missed out on.

Heck, Bertolino is always showing up and making friends during New Owl Welcome — that is how I met him for the first time. Even in my time as a peer mentor, there always came a point

where I found myself able to find him and spark a conversation. I can only imagine how he feels not being able to get out and meet students as easily as he once could.

My point though, is that the administration as well as the rest of the faculty and staff on campus understand what has been taken away from students. Nobody asked for this or wanted this to ever happen, and they will do their absolute best to bring some form of what it used to be back.

Campus life will not be a perfect replica of

what was next year. Again, the masks are not going away, nor is the plexiglass. But this school's claim to fame is the opportunities it offers students beyond the classroom — involvement opportunities, resume building opportunities.

While things will be far off from what life was like back in 2019, it is important for students to see that the faculty is trying hard for them. While that may only mean so much to some students, there is a clear reason for optimism as socializing will clearly be more doable.

More grasp for Sexual Assault Awareness Month

By Sofia Rositani
Arts & Entertainment Editor

Sexual Assault Awareness Month is April. This month is dedicated to protecting, understanding and providing a safe space for people who have suffered from sexual assault.

The university has been doing a lot to help with advocating against sexual assault with events like "Take Back the Night," a tradition done all over the country on campuses like ours.

"On average, there are 433,648 victims (age 12 or older) of rape and sexual assault each year in the United States,"

according to Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN).

This is sickening to read as a woman because I should not have to fear going out every day alone, I should not have to fear being alone in public, and most importantly I should not have to fear being alone in my own home. While I know this will never change, months like this help us understand better how to stop a situation like this.

"As long as there have been people who care about making the world a better place, there have been individuals advocating for sexual assault prevention. In the

United States, movements for social change and equality began to gain traction in the 1940s and 50s with the civil rights era," according to National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC). "Although open discussion of the realities of sexual assault and domestic violence were limited at these times, activists for equal rights began to challenge the status quo."

On TikTok, the app everyone has been talking about since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, supposedly, there have been a group of men who are trying to make April 24 "National Rape Day," something

that is disgusting and scary to even think about.

Due to these supposed TikToks (a video I have yet to find after looking through all the videos) many women, including myself, are afraid to go out by themselves or without a weapon. While these are all accusations and many people have yet to be able to find the TikTok, women are still scared to go out and a few users are even comparing it to the movie series "The Purge." "Millions of social media users have viewed or shared reactions to the perceived threat on TikTok, Instagram, Facebook and Twitter. However, neither USA

TODAY nor TikTok could find any evidence of the threat users were responding to," according to USATODAY.

For women who are scared to go out by themselves, including myself, there are many ways to stay safe. Something women have been using for years, and something I just recently bought for protection due to living in a bad area, is pepper spray. You can buy this anywhere, including Walmart, for a cheap price. I have mine on my lanyard with my keys for easy access so if something happens, I have something to protect myself with.

"Pepper Spray is legal to

purchase, ship, own and carry here in Connecticut," according to I95 Rock.

Take a class in self-defense, when you do not want to get a weapon to protect yourself, use your body. There are many places in Connecticut where you can take self-defense classes I would not be surprised if the university offered it also, this is something to help with keeping yourself safe and healthy.

The final way we can make sure to keep safe is according to Women & Family Centers, "Recognize that sexual violence will not end until men become part of the solution."

Understanding Earth Day and the significance

By Ellis McGinley
Copy Editor

Earth Day looked a little different this year — or maybe there just was not much to see, as even at a university publicly committed to climate leadership and sustainability, COVID-19 continues to put the environment in the backseat.

Earth Day was first pitched by Senator Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin in 1969,

with direct intentions of sparking student participation as it falls between most spring breaks and most finals. The first Earth Day was 1970, and since then, 1 billion individuals are "mobilized" each year and 190 plus countries have become involved, according to the Earth Day website.

This year we did not see many organized activities on campus. I'm only a first-year, so I cannot speak of what

the university might have done prior, but I would have expected a lot from the first university in the U.S to declare a "climate emergency." Instead, I think we can take this Earth Day and the blooming season of spring here in New Haven to reflect on how environmental concerns have had to come second in the wake of the pandemic.

I also am not exactly upset that environmental concerns have largely

come second when it comes to preserving human life. It is just ironic, in a bitter way — only a few years ago, we were banning plastic bags here in Connecticut and disputing plastic straws. Now, disposable plastics are a larger part of our daily life than ever, with masks, take-out containers, gloves and more necessities to safely getting through the day. In parking lots, you can see those iconic blue masks, straps usually broken,

soaking in puddles. Even across campus, you can find cloth masks tossed or abandoned on the sidewalks.

As for other sustainability measures, I'm sure paper waste has skyrocketed with wipes and paper towels. In local hospitals, hazardous waste and PPE has undoubtedly risen too. It is more difficult to organize large group clean-up events, which would require some physical labor and can be

difficult with a mask.

As we begin to afford it, I think it would be best for us to start revisiting both our personal accountability to the environment, and what we should demand from corporations and our government. It would be easier to reduce, reuse, and recycle in a world where industries package their products to be productive for those very purposes, wouldn't it? It's not like they have not had time to think about it.

SOUTHERN NEWS

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Pediatric cancer awareness event

By Roma Rositani
Photo Editor

The Pediatric Cancer Awareness Organization held an event where

students were able to make cards that will be handed out to the Connecticut Children's Medical Center Oncology patients. Students were

encouraged to wear pajamas and post pictures with the hashtag "SCSUCARES" to show support for children who are battling cancer.



Students making cards for the Connecticut Children's Medical Center Oncology floor so they can be handed out to the patients.



Organization members setting up card-making station.



Members of the organization conversing while decorating cards.



Music playing while students make and decorate cards.



Students decorating cards so they can be sent to children who are battling cancer.

PHOTOS | BRIA KIRKLIN

Softball splits doubleheader Seniors collect final home win after uncertain year

By Edward Rudman
Sports Writer

Softball split its doubleheader against University of New Haven on Senior Day Saturday, April 24 at Pelz Field.

UNH won the first game 2-1 in a close affair, but the Owls found their offensive rhythm in the second matchup, winning 5-1 and snapping the Chargers' 13 game win streak.

The Owls are now 13-9 overall and 10-8 in Northeast 10 Conference matchups, while UNH moved to 19-5 overall and 14-4 in the NE 10.

"It was nice to get a victory in that last game," said infielder Sara Buscetto, a graduate student. "Today was a great day and it was really special and we got the win, which was huge."

The doubleheader was the last two home games of the regular season, meaning this was potentially the last time seniors and graduate students would play in front of the home fans at Pelz Field, depending on what happens in the postseason.

The first game of the afternoon saw a defensive battle ensue, as the final

score was 2-1. The Owls jumped out to a quick 1-0 lead in the first inning when outfielder Cailey Botteon scored by capitalizing on a throwing error by the Chargers.

UNH was able to tie the game up at one a piece in the third, also scoring off an error. They eventually took the lead at 2-1 later on in the inning.

The defense stepped up for both sides after the third and neither team was able to put up any more runs for the rest of the game.

The second game saw a continuation of the defensive effort by the Owls in the first and a solid offensive outing.

The Owls once again jumped out to the early lead in the first inning, this time putting up three runs. UNH was unable to respond until the top of the fifth inning when they scored their only run of the game.

In what could have been a momentum-changing fifth inning, the Owls responded right back with a run of their

own in the bottom of the fifth, making the game 4-1 when Botteon scored off of a single from infielder Jayden Delaporta, a senior from Mystic.

The Owls did not let up on the Chargers following the fifth, as Morgan Tuscano, a sophomore, notched a solo home run deep to left field in the bottom of the sixth to make the score 5-1, the game's final score.

"I think the first time they saw us they didn't get to see what team we actually are and then

this time we actually came out and showed them what we got," said Botteon.

The last time the Owls played UNH, they were swept in a four-game weekend series in a performance that the team did not feel accurately depicted their level of play this season. Prior to the second game loss, UNH had been on a 13-game win streak that started on April 5.

The Owls had not been able to beat the Chargers since a 3-0 victory on April 10, 2018, according to the university's athletic website.

Looking ahead for the Owls, playoffs are right around the corner and the Owls have six games remaining on their regular season schedule, all away.

They are currently sitting third in the NE10 southwest division standings, behind Adelphi and UNH.

"Everyone's stepping up and doing their part so come postseason, we're all in good shape," said pitcher Jazmyne Martinez, a senior. "There's no nervous energy at this point of the season, we got it all out. We're just here to win."



Senior players pose for a photo with the rest of the team.

PHOTO | WWW.SOUTHERNCTOWLS.COM



Baseball gets split of series

Column By Mike Neville
Sports Editor

The Owls' baseball team settled for a split in the four game weekend series against crosstown rivals the University of New Haven.

After winning the first game 14-6 on Friday, the Owls would go on to drop the next two. They would lose 4-11 then 3-4 the next day for game one.

Looking to get a split in the final game of the series, the bats and a strong pitching took the stand.

In game one, key contributions at the plate by catcher Billy Sullivan, a freshman outfielder, and Andrew Eng, a junior, allowed for solid run support.

Sullivan went 4-for-6 with three doubles, three RBI and three runs scored on the day. Eng was 3-for-5 with a single, double, and home run with four RBI and three runs scored. He continues to be a power threat for the Owls.

A six-run, sixth inning capped off the victory for the Owls. Pitcher, Spencer Fox, a sophomore got the win.

In game two, Eng continued his success going 3-for-4 with an RBI while Tony Zambito went 2-for-3 with a run scored.

The Owls mustered four runs in game two. Brandon White took the loss.

Despite pitching well in game three of the series on Saturday, Joe Nemchek was not able to get the run support he needed.

Zambito continued to be hot at the plate and Tyshaun Diaz had a daring steal of home to tie the game 3-3 in the fifth inning.

UNH was able to take back the lead in the bottom of that same inning. Having runners on base, the Owls had the chance to score in the sixth and seventh, but it was all for not. The Owls would take the close 3-4 loss.

In the final game, Mike Ferrett recorded his first homerun of the season, driving in two runs in the process. Izaiah Walker also had two runs scored. Good pitching by Zach Rogers and a four-inning masterpiece by Tommy Hughes ended the series.

The Owls last home stand will be this weekend versus Saint Rose College.

Men's and Women's track finish first

By Edward Rudman
Sports Writer

The men's and women's track and field teams both finished in first place at the James Barber Tri-Meet at Jess Dow field on Saturday, April 11. The men scored 166 points and the women scored 153. Both programs beat the likes of Northeast 10 universities, including Franklin Pierce and University of New Haven.

"The athletes have gotten better in each meet, which is a good sign. We've been training them pretty hard, all the

groups have been training pretty hard," said Men's Head Coach John Wallin. "As a staff, asking them to compete better regardless of how they feel is a lot and they've been able to do that."

On the track side, the program saw two individual wins. Graduate student, Connor Shannahan won the 5000-meter run with a personal best time of 14:37.56, the program's fifth fastest time in its history.

It is the fastest time since Jay O'Keefe and Andy Kohlbrenner accomplished the feat in 1986, according to

the university's athletic website.

In the 800-meter dash, Carlos Flores, a senior, finished in first place with a time of 1:56.48. Nolan Scott, a freshman, finished in fifth with a time of 2:02.67.

"From the team perspective, it's very exciting. It's been a very long time since we've been able to kind of compete as a unit like that and seeing everyone still being able to perform well is really impressive," said Shannahan.

"Individually, it was exciting to finally get to race again after there being a delay. I hadn't

been able to compete since cross country of 2019 so it was a really long time. It's nice after training for so long to go out and put together a pretty solid performance."

The men took first place in four different field events, including Jack Brown in the pole vault with a height of 4.80 meters, Bernardo Mbaya in the discus throw with a personal best of 44.25 meters, Natanael Torres Barbosa in the shotput with a personal best of 15.14 meters and Jason Sawicki in the high jump with a 1.80 meter leap.

The women, on the other hand, have

competed in half the meets that the men have but still outscored the second place finishers, Franklin Pierce by 53 points.

"I think, overall, everyone's progressed and it's been 11 weeks now of being together training. Each week that goes by, you're seeing the girls learn something new everyday, compounding that from week to week, sharpening their training and their racing acumen," said Women's Head Coach Melissa Stoll. "They're becoming more aware and they're really putting together and using the tools that we're giving them and really going out there and executing."

The track portion saw four first place finishes. Kylie Neretich, a freshman, competed in her first meet of the season as an Owl, finishing in first place in the 100 meter hurdles and in the 400 meter hurdles.

"It felt really good to be back on the track. We've been working really hard to get to this point and we're still not at our 100% yet but we're still definitely working towards," said Neretich. "I thought we all did very well. There's always going to be room for improvement and we can definitely get better but overall, I think we did pretty good."

The Owls finished first in the 4x100 meter relay with a time of 51.04 and the 4x400 meter relay with a time of 4:13.03.



PHOTO COURTESY | WWW.SOUTHERNCTOWLS.COM

Freshman Jade Brennan running for the finishline at the Wilton Invitational meet.

'Nurture' Porter Robinson's first album since 2012

By **Donovan Wilson**
Reporter

For his first album since 2012, Porter Robinson opens up his exploratory and inventive journey with "Lifelike," an overture of whirring electronics and smooth symphonics that translate smoothly into the meat of the record.

"I cherished the flowers beneath my feet but then something must have changed in me," belts out Porter on "Look at the sky," a song that lyrically

sets the tone for an album about changing and finding comfort in depression and anxiety. The song serves as an anthem and a message to the bad nights that we won't succumb to our bad thoughts and fight to live to see morning.

The first single for the album and subsequently Porter's first solo single in eight years was the jittery and beautifully produced "Get Your Wish." He explains this feeling of watching somebody float as you sink and wishing

them the best as you can barely see yourself try to swim.

The symphony floats back to the surface and takes center stage on "Wind Tempos," where they intertwine with sounds of distorted rain, crickets and frogs, making for a twisted ambience of sorts. Vocals float in and out as you feel Porter drift into his own mind.

"Musician" sees a lot of introspection. Porter starts to look at his own career and laments on how he

does it to make him feel the things he needs to feel otherwise he is not happy. These songs are the thoughts, feelings and embodiment of the last eight years of his life.

The blips, blaps and discombobulated sounds of the record are welcomed with acoustic guitars on "do-re-mi-fa-so-la-ti-do." Porter's voice on this song sounds as if it is filtered through a radio and transmitted to us from some other ethereal plane. Sounds of children yelling and playing layer the second half of the song, making it feel as if we are outside, at a playground where a rave is being hosted.

"Mother," an open letter to his mom, a sweet message and displayed over what feels like space invaders forming a rock band. The fuzz of the music coats the vocals and makes the listener fade into space.

"Dullscythe" is essentially 4 minutes of Porter's piano and computer fighting for

supremacy. If a computer glitch was a song, it would be this song. It feels like a bad trip as you descend down from this ethereal space "Mother" created and eventually land back on earth, as giant synths coat the end of the song.

Porter tries his hand at a love song in "Sweet Time." He explains wanting to die for a long time but now does not even want to think about it. He wants to live life twice as to meet this person multiple times because "I'm not satisfied to know you just once."

As the album continues to mellow down and fizzle out, "Mirror," the most direct singing to the listener porter does on the whole album, brings the mood down. It is recognizing what the people who use him want from him and acknowledging what he knows he is worth, loving what he sees in the mirror.

"Something Comforting" is a plea to be told everything is going to be okay. It is essentially Porter telling the listener he is not

okay and needs someone to tell him he will be because he can't foresee it

The acoustic guitars float in once more on the beautiful ballad "Blossom." This song lacks any true structure or chorus and feels more so as a stream of consciousness as a way of saying goodbye to somebody or something.

Porter teams up with Totally Enormous Extinct Dinosaurs, a DJ from the UK for another song around this idea of nature and water. It is like the whole point of this album is Porter saying he is rising from the water and being born again through nature.

The album ends with the somber song "Trying To Feel Alive." Porter ends his spiritual journey by declaring that he's spent too long thinking he needs to feel amazing 24/7. He is telling the listener something we all need to hear right now:

"It's okay to feel hopeless as long as you know you deserve the sunlight when it trickles in through the window."



PHOTO | ROMA ROSITANI

Porter Robinson performing "Nurture" live on a Pixel 4a 5g phone.

Women's lacrosse team's senior day

By **Kenneth Baah**
Contributor

The women's lacrosse team fell to American International College Saturday, 9-19 at home on Jess Dow Field. This continues their three-game winless streak at home. The Owls recovered after a shaky start, keeping the game close in the first half despite trailing 8-6.

Class of 2021 seniors Hailey Gordon, Morgan Chase, Steph Seymour, and Laura Morton were honored as a part of the Senior Day celebrations. Seymour added that it has been hard being a senior, given all the adjustments made due to COVID-19.

"I'm just trying to make the most of everything. Every day and every chance I get with the ball, every practice I get with my teammates," said Seymour. "It's hard being a senior, especially this year because we don't get as many practices as we normally did especially with [COVID-19], we got cut short on a lot of stuff."

In the second half of the game, the Owls fell behind conceding seven straight goals. The Owls were on par with AIC in terms of shots goal but were unable to convert them into goals, hitting post twice in the half.

Bayleigh Takacs, a junior, led the team with four goals while goalkeeper, Laura Morton, made 12 saves. The Owls recorded 29 shots, with 22 being on goal. Gordon, psychology major, led the team with four assists but also mentioned that their "passes weren't connecting" all game long.

In a season that has seen many of their games

postponed, head coach Kevin Siedlecki mentioned the team did not have a lot of time to practice prior to them playing AIC on Saturday.

"We had one practice to get ready for this game," said Siedlecki. "We don't have any practices left for the season. We're going to play on Monday at University of New Haven and were going to play Wednesday at LeMoyne."

Siedlecki also added that they are only left to discuss everything for their upcoming games and are unable to break things down on the field in practice. He admits that the season has been difficult for his players given the unpredictable nature of the schedule.

"Every day on is a blessing after the year we've had with, you know, COVID-19, and this is just terrible time to be in college. It's a really tough time for all of athletics. So, making the most of everyday day is all we can do, hopefully enjoy playing the game, and I think that's what we're missing," said Siedlecki.

The Owls face off against the University of New Haven on Monday and wrapped up their season away from home at LeMoyne College. The Owls are currently 2-4 for the season. Despite all the obstacles the team has faced this year, Siedlecki is glad to see underclassmen step up and is optimistic for the future.

Siedlecki said, "We have a lot of a lot of people really stepped up this season. A lot of freshmen played a lot of minutes and have done really well. So the future's looking good."



PHOTO COURTESY | WWW.SOUTHERNCTOWLS.COM

Women's lacrosse team on senior day.

SAGE Center event educates

By **Caitlin O'Halloran**
Reporter

The Sexual and Gender Equality (SAGE) Center held an event to support the Transgender and Nonbinary Community on April 21 in Engleman Hall.

"Especially in recent months and especially in 2021, there's been a lot of legislation and violence against the trans and nonbinary community and so we kind of did this as a way to raise awareness and show other students that there are people on campus that support them," SAGE Center's Graduate Intern Aaron Morabito said.

The event was hosted to educate others on the issues faced by the transgender and nonbinary community, but also for students and those on campus to learn how they can be allies and also help support the community.

"So we want every student and every member of our campus community to feel like this is a place that they can be their full selves," said vice president for student affairs Tracy Tyree, "that they belong here, that they are welcome and that this is their university."

There are bills that will aim to advance the "comprehensive nondiscrimination laws that LGBTQ people so sorely need" and others that "will almost certainly attempt to single out and target LGBTQ people for unfair and equal treatment," according to Freedom For All Americans.

The SAGE Center is an organization that is on campus to provide a positive space academically, culturally and socially for the LGBTQ+ community on campus where they are able to grow.

"I think it's important that students are able to feel that they are safe and supported, especially on their campus because there's no reason any single person should feel discriminated against or have any negative feelings because of what they identify as and it's crazy and heartbreaking that in these times that is something that certain people still can't accept or understand," social work major Stacy Foster, a senior, said.

The Center also works in collaboration with other clubs on campus like the Multicultural Center, and the LGBT Prism Club that offers educational awareness and helps to promote the acceptance of student actions in campus policies and is overall a supportive organization.

"Both the SAGE Center and the Multicultural Center are super important in terms of creating spaces where students that identify with either based on their gender identity or sexual orientation or race and ethnicity identify with people like them to feel like there is a place of community and connection and also to educate

and inform and bring awareness, so that around campus we are creating policies and practices that are inclusive of all of our students and their intersectional identities," said Tyree.

A past event offered by the Center was the Lavender Graduation on April 15, livestreamed on Teams, where they held a ceremony to celebrate and recognize accomplishments of graduating undergraduate and graduate students that are in the LGBTQ+ community.

The Center will also be offering three upcoming events on April 29, including a Photo Contest

that includes different topics where students can enter and win an Amazon gift card. The other event is one where students can join a Zoom meeting and connect with members to discuss different topics in a safe environment. The topic will be about the Chauvin trial that recently occurred and the ongoing oppression of marginalized communities.

Morabito said, "So for the SAGE Center we of course do lots of awareness and education stuff and we also have just our virtual and physical spaces that any LGBTQ+ students can come to if they just want to chat or if they want to meet other people."

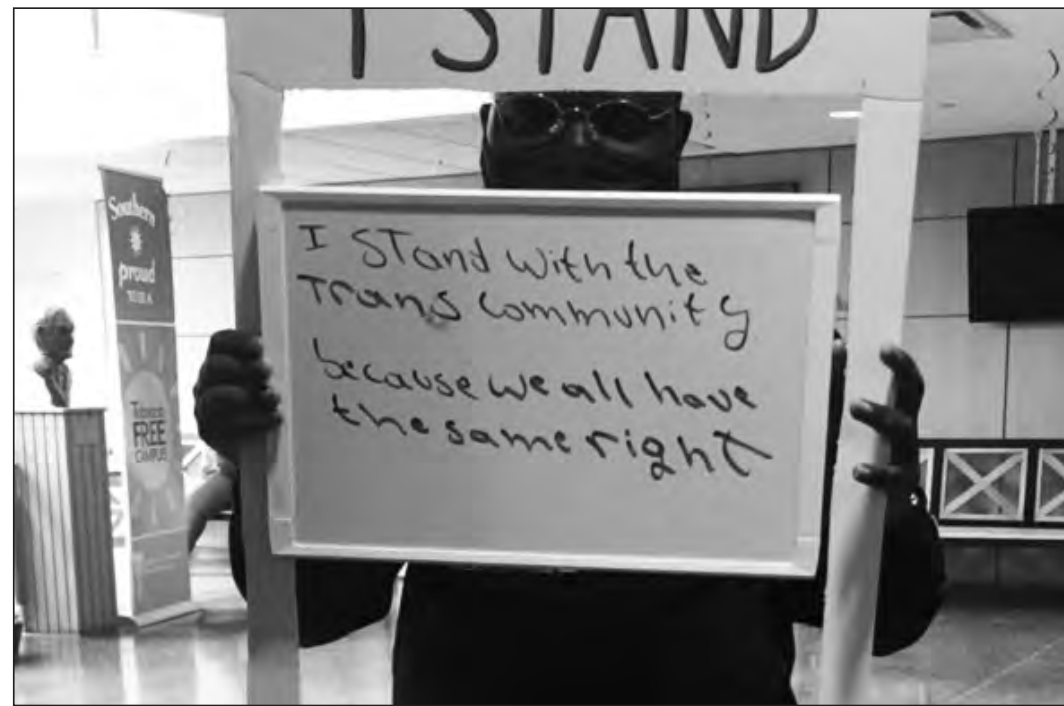


PHOTO COURTESY | @SAGECENTER INSTAGRAM

Inestral Charles holding up sign at the SAGE Center event.

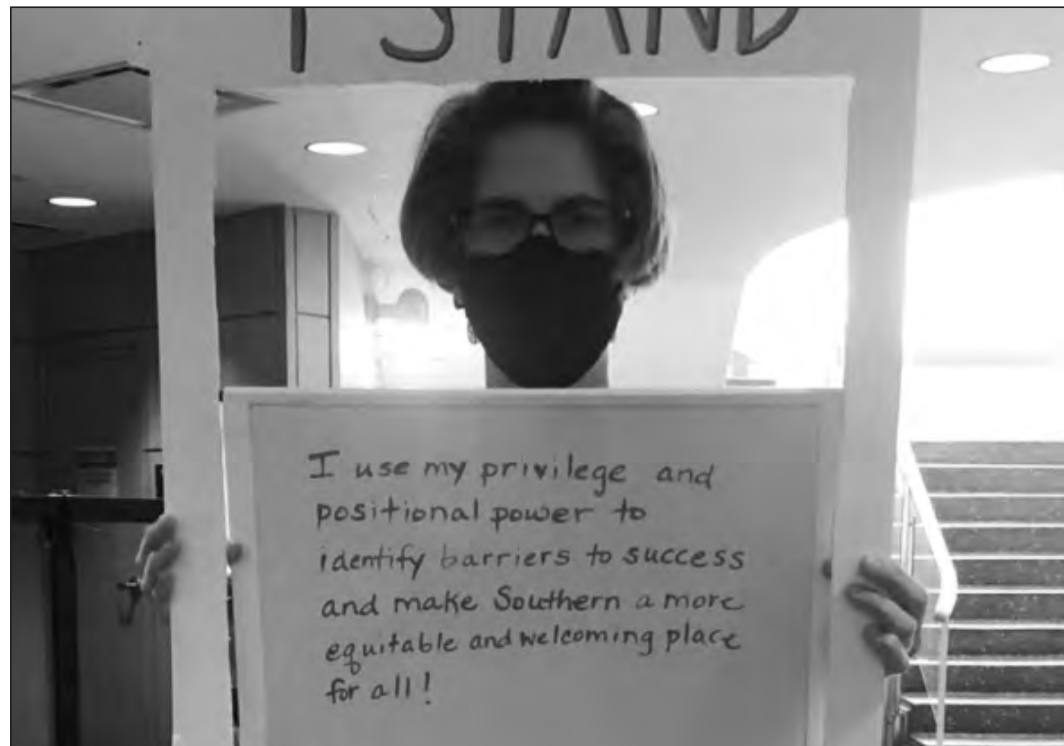


PHOTO COURTESY | @SAGECENTER INSTAGRAM

Advisor for SAGE Center, Tracy Tyree, holding sign at the SAGE Center event.

Big Event Week offers excitement

By Caitlin O'Halloran
Reporter

Big Event Week was held in a tent throughout the entire week with various different clubs and organizations hosting activities for students.

"Given where we are and the dynamic of the campus right now, we morphed the Big Event into kind of a week-long series of events. So like SGA did COVID bag making and Pediatric Cancer Awareness Organization, (PCAO), did card making and (OZP) did dog toys, so we've been doing things each day just to kind of make it a week of events," said Assistant Director of Student Involvement and Leadership Development Eric Lacharity.

Pre-COVID, this week-long event would typically be one day towards the end of April where students would get together with different New Haven organizations and clean up.

"We would work with different neighborhoods, specialists in New Haven to identify different areas that needed either clean up, parks revitalized, painting, things like that, so it was just like a refresh of our community in New Haven and then we'd work with different schools as well who had some clean up needs, different elementary schools in New Haven," said Assistance Director of Clubs and Organizations Daphne Alston.

Due to the pandemic, the Office of Student Involvement decided to make this event through the entire week so students still get a chance to be involved and participate in various activities.

"So we just have a lot going on during this one week, we've had really good attendance I would say for the in-person events that we've had, students love game shows so we've been doing a lot of those, we did Deal or No Deal, we've done

Bingo, we've done Let's Make a Deal and trivia," said Lacharity.

Towards the end of the week, there were some issues with the tent that caused some of the events to be relocated outdoors or to other locations on campus.

"We've got an airbrush frisbee event where students can get out of their rooms and like have an artist spray paint a fresh frisbee for them with any design they want it's just another thing to try to get students together," said senior weekend program and biochemistry major Matt Berry, a junior.

The airbrush frisbee event was supposed to be held in the Activities Tent, but due to difficulties, it was moved to the Res Life Quad where students could stop by and participate in the event.

"I thought it was pretty interesting I didn't really have a frisbee, so I have a friend that likes to throw frisbee all the time so I thought it was cool," said

journalism major Devin Hollister, a sophomore.

The games like Let's Make a Deal, Bingo and Deal or No Deal were held multiple different days in the tent to give students a chance to stop by and join in on the events.

"It's just an opportunity for students to get out of their rooms, maybe back on campus if they're a commuter and I think as the week has gone on people have been like 'oh my god, they gave away \$300 to the winner of trivia, I'm going to Bingo tonight for sure,' so that's been really funny to watch and the goal is fun, the goal is just interaction, networking, whatever it is just to get students to be with each other and have a little fun and maybe win some gift cards," said Lacharity.

There will be an event celebrating all of the student organizations on Wednesday evening where different groups will be receiving awards such as Student Organ-



PHOTO | CAITLIN O'HALLORAN

Students outside participating in event.

ization of the Year, Program of the Year, Member of the Year and others. "It's just a really good way for us to keep the giving and community relations that we typically have as a

Southern community and just finding a safe way to do it within this pandemic and just for students to also be able to have a fun activity, connect with each other," said Alston.

Virtual colloquium

By Madeline S. Scharf
Reporter

On Friday, April 23, the College of Education hosted a virtual colloquium. Alberto Carvalho, Superintendent of the Miami-Dade County school district, and Jahana Hayes, Connecticut's 5th congressional district representative responded to questions.

Gregory Bernard, Director of Alumni Relations, introduced the event. The program was intended to be informative to future educators. "We want to address the challenging times," said Bernard, "while also keeping focus on social justice." The discussions dived into the challenges posed in the last year, as well as how the world of education has changed because of it.

Life has not been easy for Superintendent Alberto Carvalho. As a young man who grew up in Mexico, and immigrated unaccompanied at 17, Carvalho was motivated to come to America. "I came to this country to study. I came to this blessed land," said Carvalho.

Having immigrated, Carvalho knows the value of diversity. "The diversity of our nation is what makes us great," said Carvalho. His school district has made strides to further establish equality in schooling.

The COVID-19 pandemic caused a lot of unforeseen consequences. Students needed to learn virtually. This created difficulty in low-income houses, where the proper technology could not be afforded. "Technology

really became an indispensable reality for students," said Carvalho. His district did all it could to both prepare and adjust to the changes due to the pandemic. Many electronic devices were given to students unable to afford them, and Wi-Fi hotspots were established so they may have access to the internet.

Inequity in school districts is an ongoing problem, brought to light more with the struggles of last year. From the pandemic to the protests over the summer, inequality was highlighted. Superintendent Carvalho strives to continue promoting equality in his district, saying, "there is ongoing professional development to deal with equity."

Connecticut's 5th congressional district is represented by Jahana Hayes, a former Southern graduate. Hayes also won National Teacher of the Year in 2016. Her switch from teacher to politician was not an easy one. "I never wanted to be a politician I still don't," said Hayes, "I want to be a teacher."

But Hayes said her experience as National Teacher of the Year changed her perspective. "I realized how much politics effect the classroom," said Hayes. She then decided to transfer into politics. When discussing politics that would affect the education system, "they need the voice of an educator in the room," said Hayes.

Hayes discussed a few things she is working on in Congress. "The top thing I am doing at the federal level is funding I.D.E.A.," said Hayes.

Individuals with

Disabilities Education Act, or IDEA, is a law put in place for those who require special education assistance.

The law is described on their website as "a law that makes available a free appropriate public education to eligible children with disabilities throughout the nation and ensures special education and related services to those children."

Superintendent Carvalho seconded Hayes' support of the act. "What are we saying as a country when we do not help the most vulnerable?" questioned Carvalho.

The progression of school systems continues to be a main topic both presenters discussed.

The pandemic has helped in an odd way for the uninformed. Before, many were unable to see the struggles of many students or understand the inequality in learning. "These problems have long existed," said Hayes. "Never again can someone say they don't see the struggles."

Because with the students working from home, adults in their lives are now more aware of issues in the classroom that may plague students.

There may be hope for the future. Superintendent Carvalho sees positivity from the hardships of last year.

The hope that this new normal can help students flourish and grow is sustaining educators across the nation.

"What sustains me is seeing a strong light at the end of the tunnel," said Carvalho. "Seeing vaccines, paying closer attention to protocols. A new normal is being established."

Yoga exercises go online

By Madeline S. Scharf
Reporter

The university's recreation and fitness center has been hosting online yoga sessions. It can be accessed at any time on their Instagram under their IGTV tag.

Yoga has been a form of exercise and relaxation and has picked up popularity in the last few decades. It is popular for its versatility and the many ways it can help people.

Yoga has been practiced for many years. According to the University of Rochester Medical Center, "yoga is a 5,000-year-old discipline from India. It was developed as a practice to unite the mind and body. There are many branches of yoga."

The recreation and fitness center began doing these Instagram videos online back in April 2020. This was towards the beginning of the pandemic. Having these yoga videos may encourage students to be more active during the lockdown phases of the outbreak.

According to a study by Run Repeat, the pandemic has been positive for those who previously did not often exercise. "People who normally exercise up to 1-2 times/week have increased exercising by 88% on average," said the study.

Students who want to begin exercising more during the pandemic may find yoga to be a good start. "Yoga's gentle movements are a big reason for why it's so popular," said the study by the University of Rochester. "Yoga is good for people who haven't been active in a while."

Some yoga is good for the body's overall health. In a video on their Instagram entitled "Part 1 Hip-Opening Flow," Speech-Language Pathology major



PHOTO | BERNADOTTE SUFKA

Yoga event poster seen on OwlConnect.

Danielle Ott, a senior, explains how this move may improve the body. "This (yoga pose) will help prevent lower back pain and pain in the legs."

According to the University of Harvard Medical School, Ott is correct with her statement. "Yoga can help people with arthritis, fibromyalgia, migraine, low back pain, and many other types of chronic pain conditions."

Pain relief is not the only benefit to yoga. Yoga is also meant to help calm and relax the participant. "A session generally begins with breathing exercises to relax the body and help free the mind of worries and distractions," said a Harvard article.

Relaxation is key during the pandemic. The CDC has acknowledged the mental toll of the social distancing guidelines, and how the shift from normal life to this new, quarantined life is taxing. "Many of us are facing challenges that can be stressful, overwhelming, and cause strong emotions in adults and children," said one CDC article. "Public health actions, such as social distancing, are necessary to reduce

the spread of COVID-19, but they can make us feel isolated and lonely and can increase stress and anxiety."

The CDC recommends relaxing via meditation and exercise, which are both found in yoga. "Take care of your body. Take deep breaths, stretch, or meditate. Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals. Exercise regularly," said the CDC.

The recreation and fitness center also has videos entitled "Mindfulness Meditation." These videos are a guided meditation. The meditation is credited in the caption as being something "to ground yourself in the present."

This video also encourages students to engage in other mindful activities. The caption touts "Doing activities such as eating or walking without distractions. Taking time to notice your environment. Checking in with how you feel throughout the day. Taking a deep breath. Reflecting on your day. Journaling."

These activities are meant to ground and relax the participant, leading to lowered stress.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

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University film festival awards students

By Ellis McGinley
Copy Editor

SCSU TV, the university's student video production organization, hosted their 13th annual film festival on April 22 in the Adanti Ballroom.

"Originally it was going to be an all-online event, but thanks to the guidelines put in place by the institution, we're able to have the event in-person with a max capacity of 25. Tonight, we're showcasing films from students from all different kinds of categories, from documentary, narrative, avant-garde," communications major Zachary Rockman, a senior, said.

SCUFF, or the Southern Connecticut University Film Festival, is open to submissions from any student within any major. Currently, it appears most submissions come from students within the Film, Television and Digital Production concentration within the communications major, as well as journalism. The films are shown by category, with each category's winners receiving a "50-dollar Visa

gift card," according to Rockman, and 100 dollars for the "Best in Show" winner.

Submissions could not exceed ten minutes, had to abide by the film standards set by the Motion Picture Association of America and could not exceed an R rating.

The first film shown that evening was the "Spoiler Spectre," by Jonathan Meyers, a communications major. Written, directed and narrated by Meyers, it told the story of a ghost haunting university students via telling them spoilers for films and even real life. "After multiple complaints, SCSU hired the only paranormal investigator they could afford: Bigfoot hunter and cryptozoologist Johnny B. Boomerang," the narrator tells the audience, over footage of a man dressed similarly to Steve Irwin dramatically swinging a boomerang in front of Buley.

The film received multiple laughs from the audience.

Other submissions included a documentary by theater major Sebastion Cordero, a sophomore

about online reality games, where participants can simulate reality TV games like "Survivor" or "Big Brother" over virtual platforms. Other documentaries included a day in the life of a local New Haven artist, a visual tour of state parks along the Connecticut shoreline, and a series of clips of friends practicing skateboarding.

Emmanuel Soares submitted his short documentary, which shared a behind-the-scenes look into the creation of "Pippin," the university's 2019 musical. He interviewed both students and faculty and put together footage from rehearsals and opening nights to follow the creation process of the show.

"I actually submitted one of my work projects from this last year. I'm a freelance visual effects artist for DJs and artists," communications major Jonas Shivers, a junior, said. "Since COVID we've moved to online formats, so I submitted a section from one of my past shows I just called it Bending Realities."

The theme for the event

was "Retro-Futures." A red carpet where streamers welcomed guests, who were given glow sticks, and stars and rocket ship decals adorned the walls. Balloons which looked like aliens also filled some of the empty seats, and the front table featured a small spaceman and various other galactic decor.

Guests were given free t-shirts with UFOs on the front and the SCUFF logo on the back. In previous years, the event also provided "free food," according to Owl Connect, but COVID-19 restrictions prevented this.

The event included a panel of judges who reviewed each film. Winners from each "slate," or category, have not yet been posted on the SCSU TV media, but students may keep an eye on Instagram and YouTube for updates.

"We actually have a surprising turn-out, for it being COVID," Rockman said. "Next year, I'm hoping - I won't be here next year - but I'm hoping the climate is a little bit more normal. I'm hoping that people know about it for next year."



PHOTO | ELLIS MCGINLEY

Film Festival entrance from an inside perspective.



PHOTO | ELLIS MCGINLEY

Film festival entrance for attendees.

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