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# SOUTHERN NEWS

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## Accreditation potentially at risk Board of Regents new contract may potentially harm universities

**By Ellis McGinley**  
Copy Editor

Faculty and students from the four Connecticut State Universities spoke against new contract proposals at a Board of Regents meeting Thursday, Feb. 18th, over WebEx.

"I want [students] to know the objective, unvarnished, unspun version of what's happening, and then I want them to decide what they're going to do," said English professor Cynthia Stretch.

"This is not about whether I'm gonna get a raise next year. This is about whether Southern is a university next year."

The BOR, Board of Regents for Higher Education, is the government association overseeing state universities. The CSU-AAUP, or the union, is the universities' chapter of the American Association of University Professors.

The AAUP and the BOR negotiate contracts last negotiations took place in 2016. The resulting

contract is effective until August 26th of this year, according to official documentation on the union website.

New contract proposals cut funding to the sabbatical leave committee, renegotiate faculty's academic freedom violation report processes, and increase professors' required.

Course load would increase from four per semester to five. "We really feel strongly that if we do not have the time or resources to do that kind of study or research," Stretch said, referencing sabbatical research or other faculty research, "not just to read what is happening out in our fields, but actually do it, then what we're doing with our students in our classrooms is not the real thing."

NECHE, is the committee for all regional universities. It looks for faculty research as part of its accreditation process.

"If the university loses its accreditation, students can't use federal financial aid. That would mean the BOR is willing to play a game of chicken with your

Pell grant," said Stretch. "It makes no sense that the Board's ideal contract would threaten our accreditation and impede our ability to provide a quality education," said Theresa Marchant-Shapiro, professor of political science.

Marchant-Shapiro also said she used passages from previous union contracts, which this proposal would omit, to help accreditation.

"A pandemic is not an excuse for denying the request for fair compensation and treatment. Budget cuts are not excuses to act like children and call our hard-working faculty whiny," said communications major Tess Buschmann, a senior.

CSCU spokesman Leigh Appleby said "it is unfortunate that a small few... would whine publicly rather than negotiating in good faith."

Appleby was quoted multiple times throughout the meeting. Also cited was CCSU professor Christopher Duocot's experience teaching from a hospital bed. Duocot is



PHOTO | ROMA ROSITANI

SCSU bridge that connects the academic and residential quad.

part-time and does not gain sick leave. BOR Chairman Matt Fleury recognized other points made during the public hearing, such as the critiques of the BOR's age demographic and how they received harsh criticism in "ways which might not be necessarily terribly constructive in terms of collegiality."

The point the Board has made in other interviews: they "do not negotiate their contract in a public setting," making the hearing an exception.

"My advice to a student seeking to learn more... is by tuning into the CSU-AAUP's social media pages

on Facebook, Twitter, and chime into their website for frequent updates," said Joshua Cam, a Southern transfer student from Norwalk Community College.

"Over [at NCC], I was part of their SGA and we've had a plethora of meetings to combat the BOR proposal. We pointed out inconsistencies as well as in their own miscommunication of information. We've even went to the capitol to continue to message of their Students First proposal, which is still an ongoing procedure which has not been given

the proper amount of attention," said Cam.

The Student First proposal is an ongoing initiative to consolidate twelve Connecticut community colleges into a single institution.

"I really want to encourage students to get involved now with the work the CSU-AAUP is doing," Bushmann said in a later interview. "Unfortunately, with stuff like this it's about strength in numbers, and we won't be heard unless we have more students standing with us."

## Campus dinning closures

**By Donovan Wilson**  
Reporter

A couple of cases of COVID-19 within Adanti Student Center's food court staff left Dunkin' and Tres Habaneros temporarily closed down.

With much less students on campus than last semester and COVID-19 guidelines still in place, the student center food court already has much less staff. Then, on top of that, there were two confirmed cases within food court's staff. There was one confirmed case in Dunkin' and one confirmed case in Tres Habaneros, the Mexican food station next to the Grill in the food court.

"School figured that the best solution was to shut down Tres Habaneros entirely but shut down Dunkin' only partially, with some of the options moving to where Bowlful was," said Sodexo marketing director, Elizabeth Floyd.

The Dunkin' was the most major issue, as the contact tracing led to only about four people being in the Dunkin' staff and not quarantining. There are usually four people on at a time and this left no man power to run Dunkin'. So, Sodexo worked with

the school and figured that the best solution was to shut Dunkin's current location and capacity down completely. However, some of the options of Dunkin' such as iced coffee and bagels were moved over to where Bowlful used to be for the time being.

A similar situation happened with the staffing of the normal food court which lead to not having as many people available as would be needed. As a result, Tres Habaneros was also closed down for the same duration of time as Dunkin'. The main difference between Dunkin' and Tres Habaneros in this situation is that Tres Habaneros did not have offerings move over they completely out of commission.

"With the student population being really low already, a lot of the venues on campus are already closed or not operating at full capacity," said Brad Crerar, director of Adanti Student Center.

The on-campus population is the lowest it's been in years and on top of that, there is a global pandemic going on so the food services on campus have been directly affected less students paying for the services

equals less money. As a result of this, not all food venues on campus are even open and the ones that are have cut back more hours compared to last semester. As a result of this, before the temporary shutdown, Dunkin', The Grill and Tres Habaneros were the only options in the student center food court with sandwich options moving to the grill.

The goal is for this shutdown to be temporary, but the situation will develop further as time goes on. The original plan was for this temporary situation to end and reopen as normally as possible on March 1st. However, as with everything in the world of COVID-19, the situation is ever fluctuating but at this time the reopening date for Dunkin' and Tres Habaneros is March 8th, one week later than expected but that is subject to change.

"I think it's great that the school is trying to keep the Dunkin' options available because that's really a hot spot on campus used by a lot of students regardless of how little are on campus," said exercise science major Cassidy Girolamo, a junior.

## Directional signs still outdated

**By Sam Tapper**  
Editor-in-Chief

**By Abby Epstein**  
Managing Editor

Seabury Hall, the Red Bird Buildings, the old Student Center; all buildings on campus that have either been demolished or no longer in use, yet signs still direct foot traffic to them.

Throughout the entire campus sit these blue signs. Some serve the purpose of identifying each building's name, while others can be found throughout the pathways serving as wayfinders, whether it be for families on tours or first-year students, the arrows on the signs are supposed to point people in the right direction.

However, as the university continues to develop, some signs do not accomplish this. According to Interim Associate Vice President for Capital Budgeting and Facilities Operations Eric Lessne, who inherited this dilemma from his predecessor Robert Sheeley, there is a plan in place, albeit far off from coming to fruition.

"We have been actively going through a process to update [the signs],

and we actually went through a phase one of a new campus signage plan," Lessne said, "and due to budget constraints, phase one has not been implemented."

With the university currently dealing with budget concerns due to various pandemic-related causes, the new signage plan has been put on hold, according to Lessne.

"If we go the whole shootin' match, both the academic and residential side, it could be seven digits," said Lessne.

"It's quite an extensive proposition. If you think about it - take a look at Engleman Hall. There's probably 450, 500 signs just in that one building. Just throw a number at it, say they're \$12 apiece without having the whole study completed, I couldn't fathom a number for you."

While the inaccuracy can be a problem, Lessne said he "hasn't heard any complaints" as of yet. Mainly because the most highly occupied buildings that students, faculty and staff need to go to are properly marked, like Engleman Hall, Buley Library and the Adanti Student Center.

However, the Academic Science Building, which opened

in 2015, is not labelled on these directional signs. Additionally, the Multicultural Center, which is on the second floor of the Student Center is labeled as same direction as the Science Building and Pelz Gym. And the sign in between Engleman and Morrill Hall still directs people to the old student center, which sits in a vacant, decrepit state by The Ballpark, next to where Seabury Hall once stood before its demolition.

"I thought we did a wayfinding kind of study a few years ago that would've affected the approach to signage, but I honestly don't know what happened to that," said Vice President for Student Affairs Tracy Tyree, who started in 2013 and was not aware of the signage issues. "But I think it matters a lot. Anybody that's a visitor to campus should be able to navigate the campus. Seabury Hall, if they didn't have a reason to look for it, they wouldn't notice. But the Student Center, you know that's a building that people might want to find, and if it's not getting you to the Student Center, that is a huge problem."

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PHOTO | ROMA ROSITANI

Students waiting to place an order at the Adanti food court.



PHOTO | ROMA ROSITANI

Edited directional sign outside of the Wintergreen Building.



# Students say drunk driving has become a problem

By Ana Agraja  
Contributor

By Caitlin O'Halloran  
Contributor  
By Robby Tierstein  
Contributor

Drunk driving is an issue for many college students, including education major Jaylenn Arline, who has known someone who experienced driving under the influence firsthand.

"I have a friend who flipped his car, rolled over a couple of times, obviously drinking a little bit," said Arline. "The good news is that he came out okay. It was kind of a wake-up call for him. So for that reason, I am always a little cautious to not drink and drive."

Drunk driving is an issue for those of all ages and across the nation. It is an issue that has affected individuals such as college students for years.

According to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), in an October 2020 study, the most recent statistics estimate that about 1,519 college students aged 18 to 24 die from alcohol-related

unintentional injuries, including motor vehicle crashes.

According to Alcohol Problems and Solutions, a website organized by a professor in the sociology department at the State University of New York, when it comes to drinking and driving incidents, younger people are the group that are "over-represented" in that category.

"People aged 16 to 24 were involved in 28 percent of all alcohol-related driving accidents, although they make up only 14 percent of the U.S. population," said David J. Hanson, professor of Sociology at the State University of New York.

"I've been in the business for 21 years, I can't even tell you - it's countless - the amount of times that we've had incidents that I've dealt with," said Sgt. Cynthia Torres who works at the Southern Police Department. "There is possession of alcohol by a minor, or if you're under the influence or suspected to be under the influence, under 14-227a, which is operating under the influence statute, a lower standard if there's a minor

intoxicated."

There are many ways that different groups offer exercises and presentations- for individuals to gain knowledge and encouragement- and to prevent future drinking and driving.

In previous years, the University Police did an event where they made students wear "drunk goggles" to give them an idea of what it is like to function under the influence. They have also had an exercise where students drive a certain length with the drunk goggles on in a golf cart, according to Sgt. Torres.

Communication major and Spanish minor Ramsley Exantus said his best option getting home after drinking too much at a party would be to call a relative. Exantus said, over the summer, he was working at the beach in Milford and one of his friends drank and drove.

"My first thought was to call my friend's dad, but I was thinking about him being in trouble, so my second option was to call my brother and basically, he brought his car and drove my friend's

car back to his house," said Exantus. "We snuck him through the window so his parents wouldn't find, and we checked on him the next day and he wasn't in trouble."

According to the M.A.A.D Power of Youth "You Have the Power To Take A Stand" handbook, two-thirds of underage drinking deaths in teens are not related to car crashes and are instead caused by drowning, fires, falls, and alcohol poisoning. Other serious health issues, such as unwanted sex and pregnancy, are dangerous because alcohol takes away the ability to make safe decisions.

"The main focus of our youth department," said Program Manager of the Youth Department of M.A.A.D in Connecticut, Nicole Wichowski, "is preventing underage drinking in general, not just the drinking and driving piece - underage drinking as a whole."

"We have two kind of separate programs here; one is for our youth department and we go out to schools and community centers and educate students on the dangers of underage drinking. Usually,

we do a PowerPoint presentation with some facts and figures, we always share some real-life stories and then we usually have a victim of drunk driving speak or sometimes a defender will come and speak," said Wichowski. "The other program that we have is a court recommended program. This one is for teens who had their first offence, related either to driving offence or if they've had an offence related to the possession of marijuana or alcohol."

The CT branch of M.A.A.D posts remembrances of victims and survivors of drunk driving in Connecticut that occurred every month, their most recent post for the victims of December. They use their Facebook platform to inform as well as offer help and tips for those struggling through this issue.

"I do think that there should be more awareness around drunk driving. It's very serious and it can lead to a bunch of accidents," said special education major Arielle Eighmy, a senior. "That is why it's important for students in college to learn about

drunk driving."

Currently the SCSU Wellness Center has assisted students with "providing a warm and welcoming environment that values a healthy and connected community," according to its page on the Southern website. Those with alcohol issues, or issues related to alcohol and health can go to the center, located in Schwartz Hall, Room 100.

"I think that they could do more breathalyzers, people monitoring people at restaurants, maybe a drink limit for drivers," said elementary education major Kirstin Colwell, a senior. "Like, they were serving one or two drinks depending on the alcohol percentage."

"We try to educate everybody on drinking and driving and underage drinking, how they'll get a fine if they're caught on campus," said SCSU Campus Police Officer, Sergio Nunez. "We try our best to educate as much as we can. We understand they're in college and we know they're going to go out and experience it because they're away from home, but we do our part as best as we can."

## Signs

Continued from Page 1

Tyree also said she "had never ever any reference" to the Red Bird Buildings - which were demolished well before Seabury hall - or even seen the sign, which sits right next to Lot 2 where she parks every day. These buildings were located in front of Engleman.

"It is interesting to think

about changes," Tyree said. "When I got here, the Science Building was not built and the Engleman parking lot went much further, it is just interesting to think about the changes."

Even some of the signs that point to still-functioning buildings are not completely accurate. On the west side of campus, some signs leading to the Wintergreen Building read "Wintergreen Transition Building" while others

have "Transition" blacked out.

"I know historically [Wintergreen] was meant to be a temporary building," said Tyree, "so I'm sure that's why it's called a transition building. It was put up to be a short-term facility, which is ironic because about three or four years ago, we invested a million dollars in it to upgrade it, because it was clear it was not a temporary building. That's an interesting example

of time passes. So, it was a temporary building or transition building, and I think that's about 25 or 30 years ago."

The Wintergreen Building houses many offices, including the admissions office. Yet, the sign on Farnham Avenue directs those searching for the admissions office away from Wintergreen.

"On the street, those big blocks, they refer to [the admissions office] being where the Alumni

House is now," said English major Chloe Lecy, a senior and a campus tour guide. "I know that's where admissions used to be, but we've moved and they never changed [the sign]."

With the Health and Human Services building scheduled to open in the Fall of 2021 and a new School of Business scheduled to be constructed after, there is added motivation for the signs to be properly updated. Given the current

budget, this is not possible in the immediate future, according to Lessne.

"It would be a good thing to have wayfinding for them, if we could get the budget, it would be advantageous to have the arrows pointing all in the right direction," Lessne said. "Unfortunately, we're stuck in a spot right now where everyone is treading water financially we're taking care of the things that are absolutely necessary at this point."

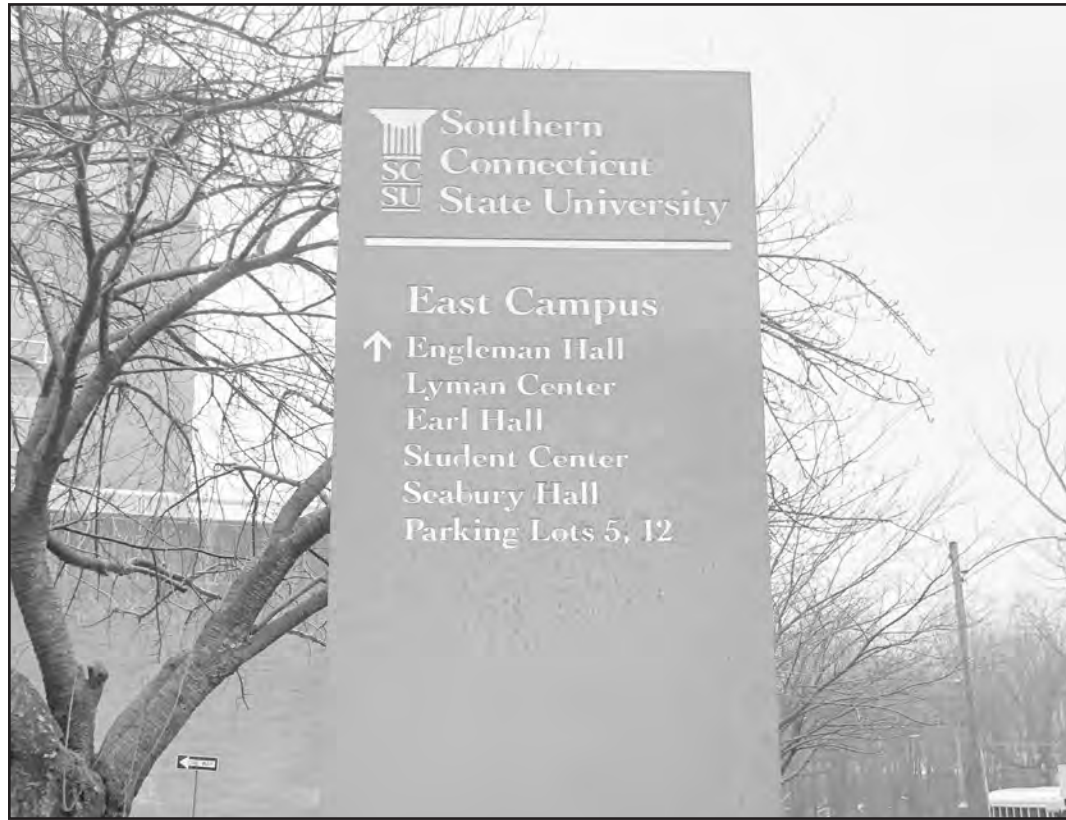


PHOTO | ROMA ROSITANI

East Campus directional sign.



PHOTO | ROMA ROSITANI

East and West Campus directional sign.

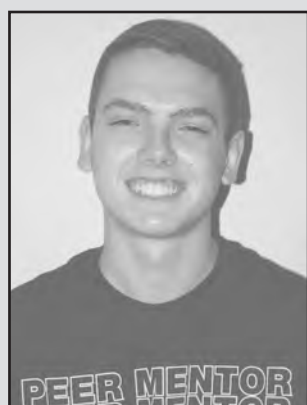


PHOTO | BRIA KIRKLIN

Campus map sign with inaccurate directional cue for the Multicultural center.



## Discussion boards do not replicate conversation



By Sam Tapper  
Editor-in-Chief

These are the opinions  
of The Southern News  
Editorial Staff

A year ago around this time, the discussion board function on Blackboard was new and quite honestly foreign function to me.

The only experience I ever had with a professor utilizing it was to reserve events to cover for a journalism class, which was in-person. Never was it my only means of directly communicating with my fellow classmates, because why would I ever need that?

Well, fast forward to present day and I find myself with three asynchronous courses on my schedule, all of which heavily rely on Blackboard's discussion boards to generate some-

thing that resembles an open classroom dialogue, a luxury both students and educators surely took advantage of while it was a normal facet of education.

Obviously, we must work with what we have right now, and in a pandemic-plagued world that has only shown glimpses of returning to normal, any way we can effectively teach and learn should not be judged too harshly. However, I do not think the discussion boards are giving students the level of benefit that could compare to physical being in a classroom.

Again, discussion boards are now designed by many professors to replicate

what would be an in-class discussion – but I do not believe it does this. It feels more like one long email chain than it resembles anything close to a normal conversation.

For starters, we don't naturally converse or communicate with each other. There is something about a classroom discussion, with openness and off-the-cuff thoughts and opinions coming forward, that cannot be replicated virtually. Every student's replies seem to be something along the lines of: "Hi I agree or disagree with you because" which only scratches the surface of its intention.

The discussion boards

are noticeably one-way streets because thoughts and questions seem to be posed in them, but without the dynamic of a literal face-to-face discussion, answers and follow-up thoughts never come to light.

Graded participation in class discussions is nothing new and is a concept I have always thought beneficial to the rest of the group because it forces everyone to get involved, but the discussion boards are not the same.

By having instructors grade participation by requiring, for example, one discussion board post and numerous responses, I feel

that students become more fixed on just getting the required number of responses rather than what is being said itself.

Try imagining a conversation where everyone is more focused on how many times they speak rather than what is being said around them. Nobody would really learn anything.

As somebody who loves conversation and lives for human interaction, discussion boards are not conducive to the way I communicate.

To me, these asynchronous courses feel, at times, less like class and more like a random Reddit thread.

## Trump's acquittal does not confirm his innocence

By Donovan Wilson  
Reporter

Former president Donald Trump was put up for a second impeachment trial after his presidency had ended due to accusations that he had incited the Capitol Hill riot.

Trump had been impeached once before, but was not found guilty, was not removed from office and could alleged. The trial was concerning collusion and rigging the election.

The latest trial was

due to proof that he had incited the Capitol Hill riot, but he was acquitted; not charged with the crime. However, this still makes him the first president in U.S. history to be impeached twice despite not being found guilty.

The vote from the senate during this second impeachment trial ended 57 to 43 guilty and not guilty, respectively. On paper, it would seem this would charge Trump as guilty of the crime but upon further examination, that is not the truth and also

something the general public most likely doesn't know or understand.

If you look into the full rules, there needed to be 67 votes for guilty in order to charge Trump for the crime because it is required to have two-thirds of senate voting guilty, not just the majority of the votes winning for their side.

The main misconception brought up I'd like to touch upon is the belief from many Trump supporters and just misinformed citizens alike that Trump was determined not guilty

but that is not necessarily true. He was not charged for this crime because the senate has a rule that makes it nearly impossible to find the president on-trial guilty. In the end, however, the majority of votes that were casted in the direction as guilty.

There are definitely pros and cons to the Senate needing two-thirds to vote guilty to impeach the president. The major pro is that it makes it super difficult for every single president to get impeached. Which does not cause an

incentive to constantly impeach presidents or simply just put them on trial for that matter. The major con at hand is the possibility that it is virtually impossible to get two-thirds of the senate to vote guilty due to representation of parties and unavoidable biases on both sides.

The system of the impeachment trial needs to be changed to majority vote and make it harder to even get to the trial process. It would make more sense to bar the trial from happening rather than making it

virtually impossible for the trial to end in a guilty verdict.

Every president that's been impeached but not determined guilty has had very clear evidence against them. Had it been brought to a regular trial, as would be done for a usual citizen, they would most definitely be charged with the crime.

While most of this is just hypothetical, it's pretty apparent that a change needs to happen or no progress will be made on indicting clearly guilty presidents like Trump.

## My first-hand experience with battling COVID-19

By Mike Neville  
Sports Editor

About a year ago this time in March, the world was hit with an unforeseen killer known as COVID-19.

Starting in China and working its way into the United States, COVID-19 has killed more than a million people worldwide and over 500,000 in the United States.

Never in my wildest dreams did I think I would contract this sickness that has taken

the lives of so many. My nightmare turned into reality when I was diagnosed with COVID-19 after feeling weak and unmotivated for 2 days back in mid-February.

My mother, a nurse, a frontline worker, has seen the worst of it and advised and cautioned me about the dangers.

Thinking that I was invincible, I put these warnings to the side and did not let it affect my day-to-day activities like going to work, school and the gym.

Throughout the whole

time, I have been doing my best to social distance, although no matter how hard I tried, my guard being down came back to bite me.

What started as chills and an overall feeling of weakness one day turned into a tsunami of symptoms and hopelessness the next day.

When I woke up there was a burning sensation that accompanied the loss of smell and taste. The tell-tale sign.

The worst part of it all was the loss of my voice.

I am a broadcaster and a journalist, so my voice is an important part of my future. The thought of losing it completely after not regaining it in five days was frightening.

As I sat in my bed for over a week thinking to myself if I would ever get out, one positive did come out of this unfortunate situation.

Thinking to myself, I pondered the meaning of life and why I was in the situation to begin with. I have gone over many obstacles since I was young and the conclusion

that I came to was that this was happening for a reason and it is just another mountain I needed climb.

After a little over a week, I fully recovered from COVID-19, tested negative and was able to restart my day-to-day activities.

Although it was only a week it seemed like an eternity, and I would never wish it upon my worst enemy. At the end of the day I owe a huge thank you to my experience with COVID-19.

What COVID-19 taught me is to never second-guess yourself and to be thankful for what you have.

In a world full of uncertainty, one thing is for certain: at the end of this, do not joke around with this unforeseen virus that has killed so many.

Coming from somebody who had it, you must have faith and keep on pushing, because if you do not, the chances of you getting out of the hole you are in may dwindle away.

## SOUTHERN NEWS

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## COVID-19 leads to more stress and change

**By Roma Rositani**  
Photo Editor

With COVID-19 still impacting the campus, the university has undergone more change.

The art gallery in Buley

Library has been showcasing the university's permanent collection rather than students art work. Dunkin was moved to Bowlful temporarily, all to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

The Calming Jar event took place in Farnham programming space, so students could come and relax. COVID-19 has placed a lot more stress on students. Events like these are to help ease that stress.



Students wait for Dunkin at the temporary location.

PHOTO | ROMA ROSITANI



Residential Hall Association staff show their glitter jar creations.

PHOTO | BRIA KIRKLIN



Students at an event making calming glitter jars.

PHOTO | BRIA KIRKLIN



View of the celebrated Bell Tower of Pisa; 1782 by Ferdinando Fambrini.

PHOTO | BRIA KIRKLIN



Large Basalt Vase, 1778 engraving by Giovanni Barrista Piranesi.

PHOTO | BRIA KIRKLIN



Students wait in line at the Student Center food court.

PHOTO | BRIA KIRKLIN



Part of the Nave, Jedburgh, 1852 by John Godfre at the open art exhibit.

PHOTO | BRIA KIRKLIN



## Shea, Owls prepared for 2021 season Baseball team pursues championship with new and familiar faces

By Mike Neville  
Sports Editor

It has been over a year since the baseball team graced the diamond at the Ballpark at SCSU due to COVID-19. After much uncertainty America's national pastime is back at Southern for the spring 2021 season.

"The guys are excited. We've been at it. Now this is our third week after a year layoff and not knowing what was going to happen with COVID, we have the opportunity to be back together again," said head coach Tim Shea.

The winningest coach in the history of the program is entering his 19th season at the helm of the baseball team.

Compared to last year's team, Shea said the experience level has improved greatly but there is unfinished business that needs to be taken care of.

"We only had a 10-game schedule last year. We played a lot of young guys that got experience so that's a plus for us," said Shea. "We returned all of our pitching, so that's

a huge plus and we are really excited where we are at."

First basemen Jack Drewry, a sophomore and one of the young guys Shea talked about, had a very impressive start to the 2020 season before it ended slashing two home runs and hitting well over 300.

"When I wasn't playing, I made sure to hit often and get my swings in, keeping consistent and just being ready for whenever we get the chance to play again," said Drewry.

In addition to returners, incoming freshman are also high on the podium for Shea, who believes

there are some who will make a big impact on the team and be part of a promising future.

"The freshman class is really good. We have two freshman pitchers we are counting on: Mike Szturma and Steve Phillips could be rotation guys right off the get go," said Shea. "We have a couple

infielders, Chad Fedeli and Derrick Jagello, catchers Josh Wettemann, Brandon Keeler."

Shea said transfer student from Binghamton, Andrew Eng, will also be a key part in the middle on the lineup at center-field.

The team usually starts the season with a spring training trip to Florida.

Due to COVID-19, the only opponents this year will be in-conference opponents.

There are a total of twenty-four games on the schedule currently, with sixteen at Southern and 8 away.

Shea said he is making sure his players are doing what they can in order to lessen the chances of anyone on the team contracting COVID-19.

"We need to control the things we can control, masking up not having large gatherings, being socially distant so that it doesn't come and hurt our team," said Shea.

The baseball team is ranked 9th in a ranking done by the Northeast 10 Conference heading into the season, although this does not concern Shea as he is very confident with his core players.

"Rankings are rankings. They don't concern us," said Shea. "We are pretty young but we are deep and it's going to be exciting to see what we can do this season and in the future."



PHOTO COURTESY | WWW.SOUTHERNCTOWLS.COM

Anthony Zambito fielding a ground ball in a 2019 game played at The Ballpark at SCSU.

See Baseball Page 6

## Women's week inspires many

By Edward Rudman  
Sports Writer

The Owls' Athletic Department hosted the National Girls and Women in Sports Week last week virtually from Feb. 22-27, a change from the usual one-day, on-ground annual event.

Each women's program created short instructional videos on their respective sports to create exposure and introduce young girls, ages 5-12, to a wide variety of sports that they may have not been aware of prior and to show them that there are many opportunities for them.

"Collectively, the head coaches and our little team came up with the idea to do the weeklong event to keep them engaged. They're 5-12, so we're not expecting them to sit there for a three-hour event virtually," said Jen Dawson, graduate

intern in the athletic department. "We tried to get a 5-10 minute video of each team showing them the basic skills that go into each sport and have each team talk about what they may be able to use at home if they don't have the equipment there."

In years prior the event was hosted in the Moore Field House, but in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the athletic department will be releasing each of the program's videos throughout the week.

The university also hosted a t-shirt and gift pick-up event outside of the Moore Fieldhouse on Saturday, Feb. 27, from 9 a.m to 12 p.m. Participants who were not able to pick up their gifts will have them mailed by the athletic department.

Even though it will not be the same experience offered in the past, the

athletic department still wanted the chance to expose young aspiring female athletes to the athletic opportunities available to them.

"There aren't many opportunities to learn all these types of sports in one place," said Melissa Stoll, head women's cross country and track and field coach. "So by opening our doors to the community and exposing girls to these sports and essentially saying, 'this is something that you can do.' There are a couple sports that aren't offered in other parts of the country, so the beauty about this particular week and having it be virtual is we're able to have more exposure."

By continuing to host the event, the university will be furthering the progression of female athletes gaining the respect and exposure that their male counterparts receive.

This will also provide them with future opportunities, and is something that has come a long way in recent years, according to Kelley Frassinelli, head field hockey coach.

"For me, my experience was very different. I played sports in the 70's and 80's and back then, I didn't think there was any less opportunity for me then my brother," said Frassinelli.

"But when I look at it now, it's amazing to me to realize what opportunities I didn't have that the male athletes had."

Participation in the event was free, however the athletic department is accepting donations from those who wish to help support events in the future. Those looking to donate to the event can do so on Southern's athletic website.

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PHOTO COURTESY | WWW.SOUTHERNCTOWLS.COM

Takacs passing the ball during a 2019 game.

## Lacrosse captain Takacs a leader

By Edward Rudman  
Sports Writer

Being named captain of a sports team is a great honor to the student athlete who has put in the work and dedication to get themselves into that position. It's an even greater honor when it happens in their junior year, which is what Attacker Bayleigh Takacs achieved

"She brings a steady work ethic and attitude. She always wants to be the hardest working on the team, but she also wants everyone else to be working hard so she's really a leader by example. She is vocal when she has to be," said Head Coach Kevin Siedlecki. "She's a junior captain, the girls voted for her as captain even though she wasn't physically on the

ballot or so to speak."

It is not often that a junior is named captain, as it is usually an honor bestowed upon seniors. Being a team captain requires certain traits, one of them being maturity. Takacs said that she was able to mature at a fast rate due to her sister Alexandra, a senior on the team during her freshman year.

"She was a senior and had her really close friends on the team, in her class and below her, so when I came in I was already so comfortable with them because I had already known them," said Takacs. "Being around all the upperclassmen early on wkind of pushed me to mature a little bit on and off the field. Playing with the older girls really taught me that."

See Takacs Page 6



PHOTO COURTESY | WWW.SOUTHERNCTOWLS.COM

Participants of National Girls and Women in Sports Week 2020 at the Moore Field House.



# Women

The instructional videos created by the women's

programs can be found on Southern athletics NGWSD page.

"This helps give exposure to these girls who may, for one, not know where Southern is and

who we are, but what we have to offer, in terms of sports opportunities," said Stoll. "In the future, if it's something they want to do, they can say, 'I remember seeing that, maybe I'd

like to go to school there.' Sports opens doors to education, and what is education? Education is freedom. It allows you to think and grow and opens up so many avenues."



PHOTO COURTESY WWW.SOUTHERNCTOWLS.COM

Group photo of the participants and students who helped in the "National girls and women in sports" event.



PHOTO COURTESY WWW.SOUTHERNCTOWLS.COM

Group photo of the participants and students who helped in the "National girls and women in sports" event.

# NYFW

"I think NYFW is a way and platform for brands and creative minds to showcase their work on a large-scale," exercise science major Frankie Lembo, a sophomore said. "People from all around the world come with their ideas and designs to share with those in attendance. The pieces shown usually dictate the upcoming trends, so it's dope to see a collective of creatives present their visions."

Although the New York Fashion Week being

switched to an online-viewing format can be upsetting for fashion fans, the benefit is that the show is now completely open to the public and can be watched on their website.

"Again, it's sad not to be able to see the show being done in-person with the cool photos that come from the models on the runway or seeing the celebrities and influential people that attend," Foster said. "It's still better than nothing to have the access to it and it'll be nice to always go back and be able to watch it."



PHOTO | ROMA ROSITANI

Proenza Schoulers virtual runway at NYFW.

# Takacs

During her high school career, Takacs was always aware of Southern because of her sister and her father, who wrestled for the Owls, but that did not necessarily mean it was always her first choice. Takacs admitted at first, she didn't want to go to the same university as her sister and wanted to go farther away from home.

However, as she got deeper into the recruiting process, the Owls became the top spot for her and she wanted more than anything to play with her sister once again.

"As I got older and a little more mature, I realized I didn't want to go that far from home and I would do anything to play with my sister one last time," said Takacs. "It was kind of an easy choice, I would say. Southern was always on the back of my mind and I'd gone up to see a lot of my sister's games while I was still in high school, so it was always kind of home away from home."

Now, in her junior year, Takacs looks to help lead her team to a more successful season than in years past.

In her first two years, the Owls have gone a collective 4-18, with the team going just 2-15 during her freshman campaign and finishing last in the NE10 standings. Despite a pandemic-shortened season and a 2-3 record before the shutdown, Takacs and the Owls saw more success, as she led the team with 12 goals on the year.

Her play, Siedlecki said is fueled by her high IQ and understanding of the offense.

"She sets herself up on the most difficult spot on

the field for offense," said Siedlecki. "She likes to be the assister. She sees the field very well and she likes to see the field and sort of be the quarterback, gets the ball to the right spot and then somebody else scores the goal. She's very happy to take that assisting role and run the offense, that kind of leadership is important."

Even though the 2020 spring season was cut short, Takacs showed how dangerous and effective she can be running the offense. Starting in all five games played, Takacs

led the team with 12 goals and 7 assists and was tied for first in points in the Northeast 10 conference with 19, according to Southern's athletic website.

"I have been on so many teams throughout my sporting career and Bailey is one of the best teammates that I've ever had," said Attacker Hailey Gordon, a senior. "She's so caring and so dedicated to this sport, but most importantly, she's so dedicated to being the best teammate that she can be and a good friend."



PHOTO COURTESY WWW.SOUTHERNCTOWLS.COM

Takacs during one of the Owls' home games in 2020.

# Baseball

Every player also got an extra year of eligibility thanks to COVID-19, like Mike DeMartino and Tony Zambito who have been key parts of the team since their freshman year.

"Since we get eligibility back, I am going to be here an extra year, get another degree and stick around for my final year of eligibility," said Zambito.

The thought of not playing again never crossed Zambito's mind since his competitive drive is high and history for him is on the line.

"Since day one I've wanted to break the steals record held by Nick Lamberti somewhere in the 70's so I have been trailing him for a bit hoping for a full season so I can snatch that from him," said Zambito.

Tony and Shea shared the same mindset when it comes to playing. They just want to get on the field again after such a long hiatus.

"I just want to get out there with my teammates, bats will take over, pitches will take over when the time comes," said Zambito. "I haven't played in over a year and ill be here until someone tells me to go home."



PHOTO COURTESY WWW.SOUTHERNCTOWLS.COM

Owls huddling during a baseball game in 2019.

## Interested in joining student media?

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## Rachel Cunningham-Exavier reaches out

By Donovan Wilson  
Reporter

Rachel Cunningham-Exavier, assistant director at the Office of Career and Professional Development, uses her platform at the university to reach out to the campus population and offer advice on how to become a leader as an oppressed minority.

Leading As A Woman Of Color was an online event hosted by Cunningham-Exavier held at 3 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 23rd. The event was not only to introduce her to the campus population but to also allow her to speak her story and spread her

message and wisdom.

“College is where I really discovered my identity because I was finally completely on my own and totally living for myself,” said Cunningham-Exavier.

Most of the information was presented through a PowerPoint that went over her life, phase by phase. She started by explaining her childhood and how the ethnicity she was born into helped to begin to sculpt her. As she began to grow up, she discovered Christianity. Her religion began to also shape her identity as well. Cunningham-Exavier then goes into explaining about how college and her eventual careers helped

her to fully come into her own identity entirely and who she is and how she attacks life.

A large portion of her presentation also focused on how to overcome discrimination in the workplace, something that currently plagues the workplace for minorities in general, but specifically women of color like herself. She goes on to explain many bosses she had early on in her professional life would push her down and try to give her less opportunity due to her skin color and gender. She dealt with this by pushing down the emotion and gathering the facts such as what others were offered that she was

not and would always present those facts when she felt wronged rather than acting out of anger.

“We’ve been hosting these workshops not only to coincide with Black History Month, but to connect the campus to their resources and faculty and staff members,” said Daphney Alston, a part of the Student Involvement and Leadership Development offices and host of the meeting.

Student Involvement and Leadership Development have been hosting these workshops to connect different members of the campus who have a relevance to Black History Month,

the upcoming Women’s History Month or anything else going on in the world to their students. This workshop specifically felt like much less of a workshop and more of a personal conversation students had the opportunity to sit in and learn from. In fact, the meeting itself started with Alston and Cunningham-Exavier just having a conversation about their families as people poured in, and it helped relax the mood.

“Does the fatigue of suppressing emotion ever get to you?” said Aaron Morabito, student and a audience member.

The end of the presentation opened

the floor to two very interesting segments, one quite normal and one that really made this conversation seem so much different than the typical one. One of these segments was the typical Q & A that most workshop conversations have but the subject matter led to deep questions on the subject of leading as a minority.

However, the final section was opened up for the audience members to then explain about themselves in brief what Cunningham-Exavier had explained about herself.

“Self-care is key to being a leader as a woman of color in this world,” said Cunningham-Exavier.

## ProCon hosts virtual night with Melissa Villaseñor

By Caitlin O’Halloran  
Contributor

Comedian, actress and Saturday Night Live cast member Melissa Villaseñor was part of a live Q+A hosted by SCSU’s Programs Council on Feb. 24.

The Q+A was hosted by Madison Ross from East Tennessee State University and Victoria Amador. It was put together by Central Connecticut State University, University of New Haven and Eastern Connecticut State University.

Melissa Villaseñor has made many milestones in her career, one big one that she is the first-ever Latina cast member on SNL.

“Tomorrow, we start rehearsing and do rewrites and see how to make the sketch funnier,” said Villaseñor in the live event, “Friday, we rehearse more sketches. Sometimes we film those pre-tape sketches, the ones that aren’t alive. That happens on Friday. Three different film units and three pre-tapes that we film all on Friday on top

of every rehearsal in the studio.”

Villaseñor started off on “America’s Got Talent” 10 years ago where she became a semifinalist, then began doing voice work for cartoons such as Adventure Time, Family Guy and TripTank. Then in 2016, Villaseñor joined the 42nd season of Saturday Night Live.

On “America’s Got Talent,” she made it to the finals with a series of celebrity impressions including Miley Cyrus, Natalie Portman, Barbara Walters and Kathy Griffin. Her audition ended in a standing ovation.

One question throughout the live that came from East Tennessee State University was “was it difficult rising to the top while being a female comedian?”

“I think it was difficult when I thought about it,” said Villaseñor “When I wasn’t thinking about it, I felt like the more I just had fun and focused on like, creating whatever brought me joy. That is how I kept moving.”

When asked about one of the impressions she is most fond of,

Villaseñor said she loved her Dolly Parton skit that she got to play on one episode of SNL. In the Dec. 12 episode, cast member Colin Hanks made a comment about how active she’s been in trying to get her Dolly Parton impression in an episode.

“I love watching SNL because the characters are always so funny and the skits they do about relevant topics are always great to watch,” said marketing major Gavin Scully, a senior. “I’m upset that I missed the Q+A she had. I feel like I would’ve gotten some more insight as to where her inspiration comes from.”

When asked who she would wish to have dinner with, living or dead, Villaseñor answered that when she was a child, it would be Jim Carrey all the way. Then when she began watching SNL, she said that Dave Carvey left a big impression, and when she was 12 years-old, she figured out she could do his singing impressions from SNL.

When growing up, Villaseñor said that Dave Carvey and Jimmy Fallon had the biggest influence



PHOTO | ROMA ROSITANI

Melissa Villaseñor on a computer screen during ProCon event.

on her in wanting to do what she does now.

“I know they are dudes but look there are a lot of gals I looked up to as well. Gilda Radner, there are so many.”

Villaseñor stated that one of the upcoming projects she is working on is a book. It will include

drawings, activities and stories and will include personal things such as what it takes for her to get into the “silly, joyful, weirdo” character within herself.

“Are there any tips or advice you would put towards female comedians who aspire to be in the business?” asked Ross.

“Finding a group of pals was really important. That felt like – it becomes a family of comedians, brother and sister, you feel safe with that certain group. I think it’s important to make your friends and always be professional, kind and work hard,” said Villaseñor.

## Snow continues to fall during spring semester

By Bernadotte Sufka  
Opinions & Features Editor

Snow is still falling in February. It has now become a great time to go out and have fun or stay warm inside. It is also a great time to have fun with friends on campus amid busy schoolwork.

“I like to sit in and watch movies, from action-packed to warm and family type movies. I’ll go out in the snow and sometime have a snowball fight with friends or go sledding,” said psychology and marketing major Niah Mesidor, a freshman.

“I like to cook/bake as well, so for fun I’ll make fun and new treats to keep me from the thought of how cold it is,” said Mesidor.

The university’s student community gets creative during these times of snowfall. Although it may get icy outside, students

are advised to go outside carefully and slowly. Plows are quick to clean up the walkways and parking lots to ensure a safer and clear area.

“I live on campus, but anytime it snows, I happen to be at home. I just like to look outside as if it’s my first-time seeing snow or watch a horror movie,” said biochemistry major Aleah O’Brady, a sophomore.

“I am not a fan of snow because it always ruins my plans especially the ones I look forward to,” said O’Brady.

So far, Connecticut had 12-plus inches of snow this winter. On-ground classes have already been canceled twice this semester to ensure the safety of students and faculty. The weather is still cold, and the snow continues to pile up on campus throughout the first months.

Many students are still seen outside heading to class and staying warm against the cold. The first month back on campus has been successful despite the icy weather. Activities and college life continue amid the COVID-19 regulations as well.

“When the snow is at least a foot deep, I like to let my dog out so I can watch him dive in and out of it like a dolphin. I find it very fun,” said marketing major Christopher Parker, a freshman.

Outside of classes, most students make use of the snow for self-enjoyment and fun. It is a time to let loose and de-stress about the semester. February is the starting month of this semester and many more snow days may come after.

With campus activities and most classes still online, it makes this

semester seem flexible with a delivery of good persevering workflow. Among that, students are met with snowfall and not an expectation of classes being cancelled.

The weather plays a large role within the campus community as it controls a lot of factors. Already, some walkways are still a bit slippery. It is very cold, the cancellation of on-ground classes remains at a high percentage.

Having fun with snow becomes something needed. It is a distraction and something to relieve oneself. Many students have already had their fun on campus and at home, it is an activity to revisit during this time.

The snow has not melted yet and is still everywhere on campus. The start of this semester has brought fun activities and safety guidelines to



PHOTO | ROMA ROSITANI

Snow piled up near light pole.

readdress. This month started out with snow,

but it is best to go out and make the most of it.



## RAs decorate floors specific themes

By Donovan Wilson  
Reporter

RAs, or resident advisors, have always put effort into decorating their halls, but with COVID-19 raging on and causing students to be spending more time in their resident halls, RAs have gotten very creative with their decorations in an effort to boost morale.

Being an RA comes with many of responsibilities, including looking over everyone in the hall, making sure everyone stays orderly and keeping everything is clean and in good shape.

COVID-19 has not changed those responsibilities but it has limited the full experience of being an RA. A big part of being an RA is holding events, although those are much more limited than they used to be. As a replacement for these programs and events, RAs have put a lot of effort into filling their halls with immersive themed decorations.

"I want the residence hall to be what the residents want to see and help make that a big thing for everybody," said Abdel Ben-Toukour, an RA located in

Chase Hall.

Ben-Toukour and his co-RA decided to decorate their section of Chase Hall to look like a foot locker as they both love sneakers and clothing. A lot of this decision was also made by the fact that Ben-Toukour happens to work at a clothing store and has some insider information as to how to make the most realistic set up.

The decorations themselves include representations of clothing and shoes and a prominent sneaker wall that features Ben-Toukour's favorite shoes and the favorite shoes of his residents.

A lot of the theme was based on feedback from Ben-Toukour's residents on what they wanted to see as a theme. He took this approach because it reflected what his previous RAs had done, which resulted in a video game theme for the floor where he lived. The Foot Locker theme was a result of a large interest in athleticism and sneakers.

Schwartz Hall RA, Xavier Swilling, chose streaming as his floor theme. Many of the decorations include cutouts of streaming companies

such as Netflix, Spotify and Hulu.

"My floor theme is streaming and TV channels. I wanted to choose something that I enjoyed and that I thought that other people could relate to as well. Seeing as most people use some sort of streaming platform on a daily basis," Swilling said.

Swilling had different ideas than Ben-Toukour has, in terms of his decorations, and decided to stick with something students have been doing during quarantine and breaks from class.

The process behind picking this theme was very similar to that of Ben-Toukour's as he also wanted to have a theme he knew everybody would enjoy and relate to. The decorations themselves consist mostly of the logos to different streaming platforms and more television related things hanging up around the hall.

"I had no experience prior to COVID so this is my first semester as an RA. Due to this, I am obviously not getting the full experience but it's still been a really good experience," Ben-Toukour said.

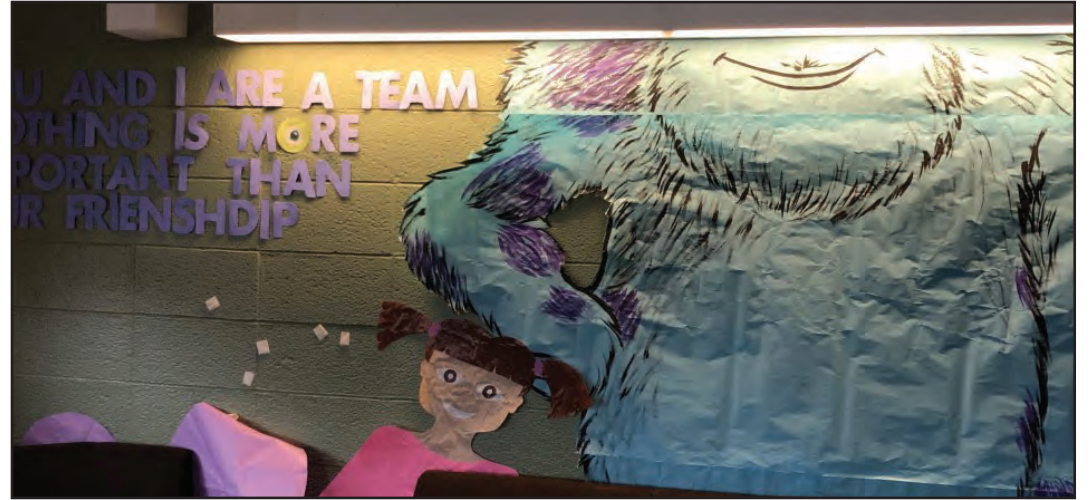


PHOTO | ROMA ROSITANI

Chase Hall decorations, this floors theme is "Monsters Inc."



PHOTO | ROMA ROSITANI

Banners of the "Harry Potter" houses shown on a floor in Chase hall.

## "Punk rock aerobics" in new video

By Bernadotte Sufka  
Features & Opinion Editor

Green Day is back with new music. "Here Comes the Shock" is their new music video, released last week on their official YouTube channel. Their new album, "Father of All," has been released too.

The video featured a punk-rock girl leading some exercise-like moves. It starts with the typographic display of "Punk Rock Aerobics with Hilken." It added to the visual of the song and enhanced an exciting appeal.

Overall, the music video featured the girl doing aerobics exercises as the song played. Some moves mentioned included "Whack Jack," "Iggy's Punch" and "You Be the Star Air Guitar."

I found the video did not go too deep with acting or a back story. But it did definitely express the girl's personality and physical appearance.

She wore two ponytails tied up, bright pink workout clothes and a sparkly fanny pack around the waist. She was in a room with pink posters hung on a wall as well.

It felt like a simple music video setup for "Here Comes the Shock." Although the energy did go great with the song, as the cardio workout continued throughout the entire video.

I found this was a good tactic to get up and jam out to the rock song. The girl's moves are easy to follow and the viewer can get a good cardio workout in. I find that to be a clever way to enhance the quality of this new song.

The song was short: it

is two minutes and thirty-five seconds. This concept felt somewhat new for the band but still portrayed the punk rock visual.

Billie Joe Armstrong, lead guitarist and singer, maintains his rock title to this day. The band has been together since 1985 and does not plan to break up.

"Some of you are asking about Green Day and if there's anything wrong or if we're breaking up," said Billie Joe Armstrong, in a 2018 interview with Billboard. "The answer is no. I am having fun with some of my friends. I am what you call 'a musician.' Some

people have a hard time calling it that sometimes," said Armstrong.

Green Day has not lost their marathon of releasing new music. I am not a hardcore fan but upon seeing an upload from their YouTube channel, I felt excited to see them return with more content.

I find that the band stayed within their roots of producing their unique beat of rock within the genre. It is not the exact same feeling you would hear from an older Green Day song. I feel that time has passed, but the new song was okay for the most part.

This is not their best song, but it was not the worst either. It still stayed strong within being called a Green Day song for sure.

So far, the band has not mentioned any future events for a tour. They had planned on having a huge one last summer but was cancelled due to COVID-19. It had definitely upset many fans nationwide for the most part.

They are not calling it quits for music yet. From their latest song, "Here Comes the Shock," the group is yet to reschedule a tour hopefully and keep producing more music.



PHOTO | SOFIA ROSITANI

Opening to the new Green Day music video showing "Punk Rock Aerobics."

## NYFW becomes a virtual event

By Caitlin O'Halloran  
Reporter

New York Fashion Week has taken a different approach for the second time during this pandemic by switching to virtual mediums for its audience.

"I feel as though the shortened schedule and time allowance puts more of a rush on designers to debut their fall styles and takes away from the creativity aspect of the runway presentation," speech language pathology major, Taylor Oliver, a graduate student said.

The show started on Feb. 14, showing off numerous designers and their Fall 2021 collections, and ended on Feb. 18.

The New York Fashion Week schedule has been renamed to the "American Collections Calendar" by The Council of Fashion Designers of America chairman, Tom Ford. This is to mirror the growing number of numerous different American designers that will be showcasing their designs later in the season or in places other than New York, according to Women's Wear Daily.

Despite the pandemic, fashion designers Jason Wu and Rebecca Minkoff held in-person yet socially distanced fashion shows. The event was limited to 16 guests, with temperatures taken and face masks required.

Every designer had a half-hour time period to show off their new collections through the platform the CFDA used, Runway360. All of the shows can be viewed on their nyfw.com website.

"Fashion is something

that I'm really interested in, and it kind of sucks that it's being taken to a virtual platform because of everything that's going on because I always loved seeing the models walk down the runway in the normal, traditional fashion but I'm happy they're still having a show at all, amidst the pandemic," social work major Stacy Foster, a senior said.

Some of the designers that showed their fall 2021 collections were Veronica Beard, Alice + Olivia, Markarian, Tadashi Shoji, Badgley Mischka, Anna Sui, Monse, Adeam, Victor Glemaud, Rodarte, Tanya Taylor, Anne Klein, Dennis Basso, Cinq à Sept, Jonathan Simkhai, Bibhu Mohapatra, Nicole Miller, Rebecca Minkoff and Christian Cowan, according to WWD.

Some well-known designers that did not show their collections included Michael Kors, Ralph Lauren, Marc Jacobs, Brandon Maxwell, Tommy Hilfinger, Christopher John Rogers, Pyer Moss and Tory Burch.

"It was a little disappointing but still understandable not to see some of those big names show at Fashion Week," said Oliver. "I feel like people look forward to those designers the most because their brand is so well known and relatable."

From September to October of 2020, TikTok launched their own event called #TikTokFashionMonth, where they partnered with a variety of fashion companies and hosted two live streams per week, featuring designers like Louis Vuitton, Saint Laurent and Prada.

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