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Brownell Hall quarantined

Students placed in temporary isolation after six positive tests

By Jessica Guerrucci
Editor-in-Chief

Out of caution, 152 Brownell Hall residents were quarantined to contain the potential spread of COVID-19 in the building.

"This decision was made out of an abundance of caution after three Brownell residents tested positive during the past two days, following

another three positive cases that were identified in the residence hall during the previous week," Patrick Dilger, Director of Integrated Communications & Marketing, said in an COVID-19 email update.

Dean of Students Jules Tetreault said the six cases do not seem to be connected. He is fairly confident the spike in cases was not a result of

community spread.

However, he said the quarantine, which was held in the residents' own rooms, was to ensure there was not a spreading cluster of cases in Brownell and people's health and well-being were not in jeopardy.

"We decided it was best to do a temporary quarantine," Tetreault said, "and the reason why it's temporary because half

or two-thirds of students were tested on [Nov. 9]. It just so happened that many of them that happened to be in the randomized testing from this week were from Brownell."

In addition to the three positive cases in Brownell, another residential student tested positive, putting the positivity rate at 2.47 percent for the week of Nov. 9 and the cumulative

positivity rate at 0.73 percent.

Emily Rosenthal, Coordinator of the Wellness Center, handled contact tracing following the quarantine and said the cases were not entirely connected.

"As part of our contact tracing and investigation process into each case, we weren't able to see a clear connection between them all—between a few but not

all of them," Rosenthal said.

Tetreault said the six students who were positive, and their contacts had already been quarantined.

Of the 152 students living in Brownell, he said 16 were not quarantining in the building and were instead in the designated quarantine and isolation space.

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PHOTO | ROMA ROSITANI

Brownell Hall, where students had to quarantine until they tested negative.



PHOTO | ROMA ROSITANI

A sign for Brownell Hall, which is located on Farnham Ave.

Residence halls policies change

By Sofia Rositani
Arts & Entertainment
By Donovan Wilson
Reporter

Residential life on campus is already different due to problems posed by COVID-19, but the situation may change again as numbers surge around the country.

As opposed to previous years, campus residence halls have some new rules and alterations. Each person is only allowed one guest signed in at a time and they must be a residential student. Also, as per every other building on campus, masks must be always worn inside the building unless students are within their room.

"Realistically, it has been pretty good compared to other schools in terms of keeping numbers in that sense they've done a good job," said Matthew Kolashuk, an RA at North

Campus residence hall.

The residence halls on campus have been progressively changing throughout the semester in terms of guidelines.

One of the major changes seen this semester is the introduction of an earlier curfew for guests inside of buildings. A guest must be signed in by 10 p.m., Kolashuk said. As numbers continue to rise, students can expect to see more changes along these lines put in place.

"It's possible that more policies will start to pop up if numbers get crazy within the last couple weeks," said Kolashuk.

Kolashuk said he is also confident that the university will be able to maintain low levels of infection amongst the residential population as they have a better track record than other major schools.

See Campus Page 2



PHOTO | SAM TAPPER

Jack Alviti, freshman, moving out of Hickerson Hall.

Commuter testing not required

By Donovan Wilson
Reporter

As COVID-19 numbers begin to rise once again, Southern remains one of the only major colleges in the state that still does not test its commuters.

The University has been testing students randomly each week for COVID-19. Other college campuses that have on-ground students have also been conducting randomize testing of students. While most of those colleges test a certain amount of the entire population of their school, Southern has been testing mainly residential students. There has not been any testing targeted towards commuters as a general group.

"Our screening testing has been of the residential population of the campus, testing about 25 percent a week," said Dr. Jules Tetreault, the Associate Vice President of Student Affairs and the Dean of Students.

There are separate population subsets of the overall campus population that are being tested besides the general residential population, just not those who are commuting. All nurses and athletes engaging in practices are scheduled for tests. Faculty and staff and coaches have also been getting tested by the school.

Residential students have been the main focus. The university feels they provide the biggest threat towards creating a spread. All of those students live amongst each other in a communal

setting, making it harder to strictly follow preventative guidelines.

Which can lead to a spread if not carefully monitored. It is also felt by the school that they have been adhering to state guidelines. According to the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities higher education subcommittees' update on COVID-19 testing on campuses; "Given these criteria, it has been determined that residential students and residence hall directors are subject to testing. No other faculty, staff or commuter students are required to be tested."

According to guidelines set by the state, Southern has been entirely compliant whilst also not doing the bare minimum. The decision to test commuters is left up to the individual institutions. They do not deem it

something to worry about on campus here.

"At this given point it's hard for me to say if I will change our plan going forward. There is no blueprint," said Tetreault.

COVID-19 is an ever-changing situation in this country. Numbers could be at an all-time low in a week and then at an all-time high in a month; therefore, it is hard to determine what could happen to the campus's testing guidelines. They could become stricter in event of an increase or looser in event of a downturn.

Tetreault has determined that Southern has had a very successful semester in terms of COVID-19 numbers. As of this point in the semester, with the results that have been yielded, he does not think now is a time to change gears on the current plan. However, he also says he

has no way of predicting what the case will be next semester.

"When we get notice of a positive case, we find out who they've been in contact with," said Emily Rosenthal, head of the university's COVID-19 contact tracing team.

While the campus does not have mandatory testing for commuters, they do find out where a commuter has been if they report a case. However, there are protocols within the classrooms like mandatory masking, disinfecting of stations and social distancing that are designed to stop the spread of an unmonitored commuter case.

With so many guidelines already in place, Tetreault said there is nothing for the campus to worry about in regards to the current testing procedure.



PHOTO | JESSICA GUERRUCCI

COVID-19 testing located at the Bagel wagon in Engleman Hall.

Social justice committee changes message

By Desteny Maragh Reporter

For this year's Social Justice Month, which traditionally takes place every November, the university will be switching from their usual theme, allyship to anti-racism.

Tracy Tyree, vice president for Student Affairs, said "being an ally

is important, but being an ally is not enough." "Showing up for people of color and saying 'I support you' is not enough, we need to actively do things to become anti-racist," said Tyree.

She said the anti-racist work is all about action. The Social Justice committee provides a learning experience for everyone on campus by

hosting events that push for unity and equality. The two changes that the committee made this year to adapt to the virtual meeting space and to develop a focus was to create a theme and then have a smaller number of programs held for that theme.

This allowed for the programs to connect and since the number of programs decreased, it

has created opportunity to make each program more in-depth.

"Southern has really been looking at race on our campus and ways to become an anti-racist university, in response to the Black Lives Matter movement," said Tyree. She said the committee wants the whole campus to think more intentionally about what anti-racism work looks like, individually and collectively.

This comes after many calls to action plans from several different departments on campus, including the Department of Curriculum and Learning's statement of anti-racism and action.

The department stated they stand in solidarity with Black communities, the Black Lives Matter movement, and everyone working to end police brutality and confront racial injustice.

The department also recognized that statements of solidarity are not sufficient without action.

Jenna Retort, the assistant director in the Office of Student Conduct and Civic Responsibility and coordinator of the Sage Center, said

previously the social justice committee would call for programs representing a variety of issues, but now with COVID-19 they took a new approach.

"Allyship is really about supporting communities but anti-racism is really about making a proclamation to stand up," said Retort.

She said it is important to make "intentional efforts to break down systems of oppression."

The commitments and goals from the social justice committee includes providing forums that encourage critical thinking about societal topics impacting our university, local, and global communities.

The committee provides opportunities to engage in substantive discussions where varying perspectives are welcomed and respected.

The committee identifies and address systemic barriers to equity, access, and success for students. They do this for students within the university and outside of it.

The committee has given ways students can be of support and participate in social

justice month.

One way is to create opportunities for honest dialogues that deepen understanding about issues relevant in classes and work area.

Students can volunteer at nonprofit events staged on campus and in local communities, respect others' right to divergent points of view and use critical thinking and knowledge to support perspectives.

The committee said by joining social justice and free speech with critical thinking in and out of the classroom, they prepare students to engage with societal issues on campus, as well as in local communities, the nation, and the world.

In President Joe Bertolino's letter on social justice, he said "as a public institution, it's critical that we engage in courageous conversations, taking time to listen, taking time to hear."

"We have a commitment to ensuring that all members of our community have a voice," said Bertolino, "and a mutual agreement to ground that voice in dignity, respect, kindness, compassion and civility."



PHOTO | JESSICA GUERRUCCI

Social justice banner on the front of Buley Library.

Brownell

Continued from Page 1

The remaining students who had not been already placed in isolation and quarantine or were part of randomized weekly testing, were tested on Nov. 12 and Nov. 13, the results coming in over the weekend.

Brownell residents were notified on Nov. 11 of the quarantine at a hall meeting with Rosenthal,

Tetrault, COVID-19 Coordinator Erin Duff, Vice President of Student Affairs Tracy Tyree, Director of Residence Life Rob DeMezzo and Brownell Hall Director David Lee.

At the meeting, the quarantine process was explained, and they answered any questions.

Professors were notified of the quarantine and arrangements were made for the students to get food.

With case numbers

rising at both the university and across the state, Rosenthal said everyone in the dorms was asked to quarantine until they can complete the testing process.

"Once we get everyone tested and everyone's results, then we can hopefully end the quarantine and release the students," Rosenthal said. "But at this point, we just want to get a handle on the situation and prevent any further spread."

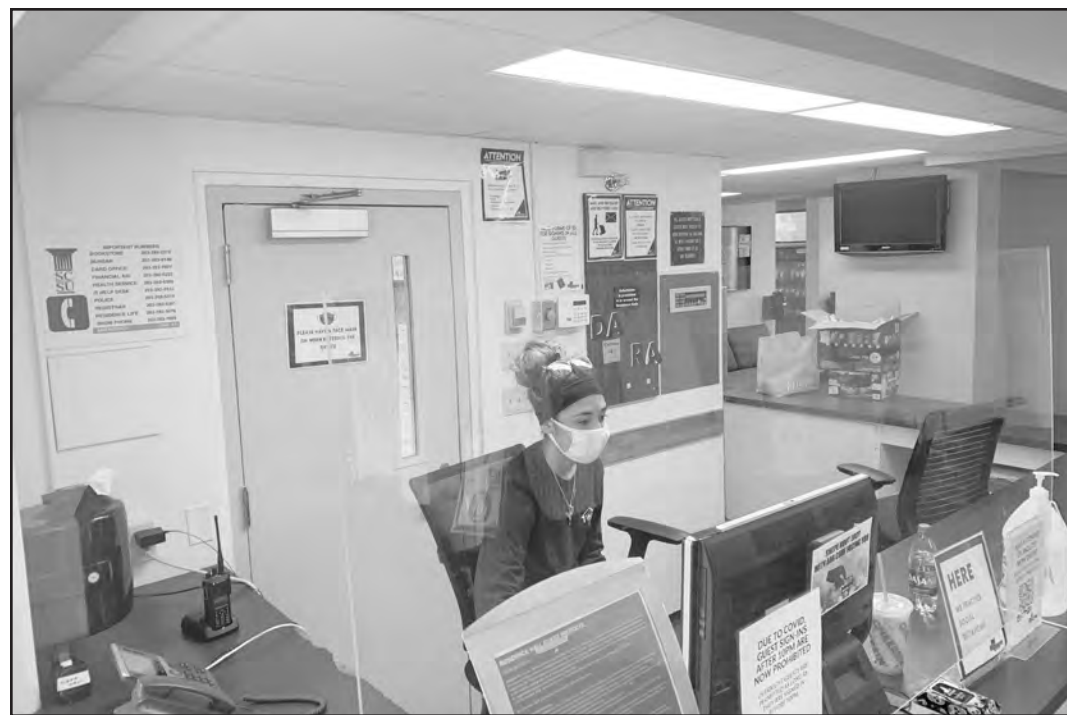


PHOTO | SAM TAPPER

Mercedes Valentin, an on duty desk attendant at Neff Hall.



PHOTO | JESSICA GUERRUCCI

COVID-19 testing entrance for students outside of Connecticut Hall.

Campus

Continued from Page 1

"We do want to use this time to do everything we can to actually get some works done in the residence halls," DeMezzo said.

Nursing major Tracy Nham, a sophomore,

lives in North Campus Mid-rise, said she thinks the university is doing a good job trying to stop the spread of COVID-19-but the university can always do better.

She also said commuters should get tested next semester since some are on campus every day or at least a few days out of the week. Even if

they are not on campus they are still spending time with residential students.

"I'm hoping that things get better next semester, COVID-19 and social distancing and events," Nham said. "But based off college students' behavior and the rise in cases, I do not know how well it is going to go."

Want to get involved in student media?

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- General Assignment Reporter
- News Writer
- Layout Editor

WSIN Radio

open positions:

- News Director
- Webmaster
- Programming Director

Crescent Magazine

open positions:

- Editor-in-Chief
- Copy Editor

SCSU TV

open positions:

- Programming Assistant

*Other editor positions for clubs will become available depending on selections made for leadership positions.

Applications are due by Friday, Nov. 20.

Follow this link to apply: <https://forms.gle/7rM2BR4WGE29hCTi7>

For any questions, feel free to reach out to guerrucci1@southernet.edu.

I'm thankful for my roots at Southern News



By Jessica Guerrucci
Editor-in-Chief

I remember standing outside the newsroom door my freshman year, ultimately deciding I was too scared to go in. Now, three years later, my greatest memories from my time here are in that room.

When I decided to study journalism, I don't think I understood what I was getting myself into. All I knew was that I loved to write. I wasn't a leader; I wasn't sure what I wanted to do with my life or what I was capable of.

When I started as a reporter at the Southern

News, I fell in love. Some hate the deadlines, but for me it was a rush. I loved the feeling of nailing the perfect ending to a story. I loved being able to meet the most unique people and share their stories.

There's just something about seeing your name in print that makes you feel proud.

From that, I found a growing confidence in my ability to write and I found comfort in meeting and talking to new people—still, though, I didn't ever think I'd ever become Editor-in-chief.

But I was told to think bigger.

Southern News advisers, Prof. Simoneau and Prof. Harris always had my back and helped me believe in myself. They and the other professors I've had in the journalism department have taken the time to make sure that I am successful in whatever I do.

As managing editor and now as editor-in-chief, I've grown considerably. Every person that has passed through that newsroom has shown me how I can improve upon

myself, and they've helped me find my voice and confidence.

I felt so in my element on those Monday days doing layout. I stepped up and became a leader. Helping the staff layout and problem solving each little issue never felt tedious to me because I truly loved what I was doing.

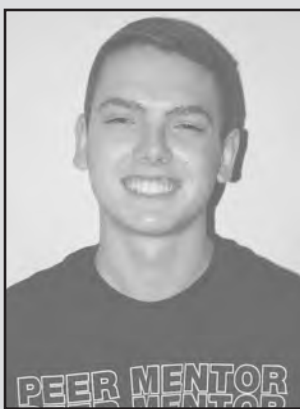
Not only have I been part of the team, I've met some of my best friends who have been there to cheer me on no matter what I do—and as we all go on in life, I hope to do the

same for them.

As a journalist, the stories we tell leave an impact. The connections we make are invaluable. We have the ability to make a difference and I'm excited to see where this profession takes me.

I'm proud to have been a part of the Southern News, Crescent Magazine, Society of Professional Journalists and of course, the journalism department—and while I'm excited to see what I do next in life, I'm thankful that I set my roots down here.

Students need to continue to be cautious until break



By Sam Tapper
Managing Editor

These are the opinions of The Southern News Editorial Staff

Thanksgiving break is a week away—one week until the campus shuts down and classes shift back to fully online. One week sounds like an instant, but our guards must be as high as ever in the home stretch.

As a university, we are one of the lucky ones to have made it this far. Many colleges and universities across the country—even here in Connecticut—did not make it.

However, a lot can happen in one week, and we are beginning to see that.

We will not be fully out of the woods until we all get sent home, and even then, the virus is not going away.

As of Nov. 12, the university surpassed 100 positive cases according to the Campus COVID-19 dashboard, a number that should not be overlooked.

One positive case is too many, that much is known. But to reach the triple digits is at the very least unnerving, especially because over 75 percent of positive cases come from commuters, making it harder to isolate and trace.

Along with the numbers in the Nov. 12 dashboard, there was a notice reporting that all Brownell Hall residents will be quarantined to "contain the potential spread of COVID-19." According to the release, the quarantine period will only last until Nov. 16, barring any building-wide outbreak.

As of Friday, Nov. 13, the University of Connecticut announced that its entire campus community would be quarantined due to a rapid spike in positive cases in Storrs.

The quarantine

period will last until everyone is sent home for Thanksgiving break. According to The Hartford Courant, UConn's Associate Vice President and Dean of Students Eleanor Daugherty wrote a memo to students saying, "we don't have the COVID spread under control." Stop me if this sounds eerily familiar.

The point is, a lot can happen in a week; A lot can change; a lot can go wrong. While I understand that we all want to see our friends before the near

two-month hiatus, we cannot let that cloud our judgement window.

If we are all careful, this last week will be just like the previous ones: tough, but manageable. However, if we are not careful, we could end up like UConn.

It would not take much to have us all end up quarantined in our respective residence halls, with nothing to do but attend our online class and wait for one of Sodexo's premade meals. So now, we must ask ourselves if that is really the direction we want to go.

Legendary Jeopardy host Alex Trebek will be missed

By Ellis McGinley
Copy Editor

Something I have missed most while at the university is a small family tradition practiced with my parents: nightly games of "Jeopardy!"

For a family of competitive nerds like us, there was little other bonding activity as intuitive as a game show dedicated to competitive trivia, which we stumbled upon a few years ago.

We would tally points on our fingers, jeer at categories we knew were right up someone else's alley—try beating an English major at

'Literature,' or worse yet, a PhD in biology at 'Science.' (Although neither is quite so hard at keeping up with a teenager when the 'pop culture' category rolls around.)

In short, "Jeopardy!" was an installation in our home. It was a rite of passage when I first convinced my partner to play with us; even more so when they once beat my mother. Some families have dinner at the table. We duke it out over trivia.

So it was a somber day for us, like many, when after a lengthy battle with pancreatic cancer, the 80-year-old host of "Jeopardy!" passed away

on Nov. 8.

A constant, reassuring presence on the trivia program, Alex Trebek was a fixture of game show television.

He was born in Canada, July 22, 1940, although he was a United States citizen for twenty-two years at the time of his death.

His career began with the Canadian Broadcasting Program as a news anchor, and after multiple gigs hosting game shows in both Canada and the U.S, he would come to be the face of "Jeopardy!" in 1984.

Trebek has had seven Emmy Awards and stars on both the Canadian

and Hollywood Walks of Fame. He was also a member of the Order of Canada, a high honor.

I got the text from my dad while preparing for class. I rushed to fact-check against the nearest headlines. We had all been hopeful when he fought his cancer, from his reassurances on television and his unfettered presence on our living room screen every night.

But it was true. It's strange to mourn a celebrity: it isn't as if I knew him personally, of course, but he had a presence in my life and in the lives of so many. He leaves a wife and

children, his own family, as well as mine and a range of fans who will mourn his calm, steady hosting.

I think part of the appeal of Trebek and "Jeopardy!" is how truly steady it was. It isn't particularly intense, as far as game shows go. The stakes aren't anything as wild as a million dollars or a shiny new car (although it is certainly possible).

It's very easy to play along, too: my own family count points on our fingers and rush to shout answers before the other. It's even played in classrooms. The show itself is never mean-

spirited; the harshest Trebek might have ever been is a baffled question after one of the contestants shares their strange life anecdote as part of their introductions each episode.

Whatever his charm, whatever the show's formula, "Jeopardy!" was a surprising beacon in a time of both personal and global chaos. I'm grateful to Trebek for the odd role he played in my family bonding, and I know I join a good company when I say he will be missed.

The final episode of "Jeopardy!" involving Trebek is set to air Christmas 2020.

SOUTHERN NEWS

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Southern News welcomes any and all comments and suggestions. If we make a mistake, please contact us and we will publish a correction or clarification in the next issue.

We are the student newspaper of Southern Connecticut State University, and we welcome the writing of all Southern students and faculty.

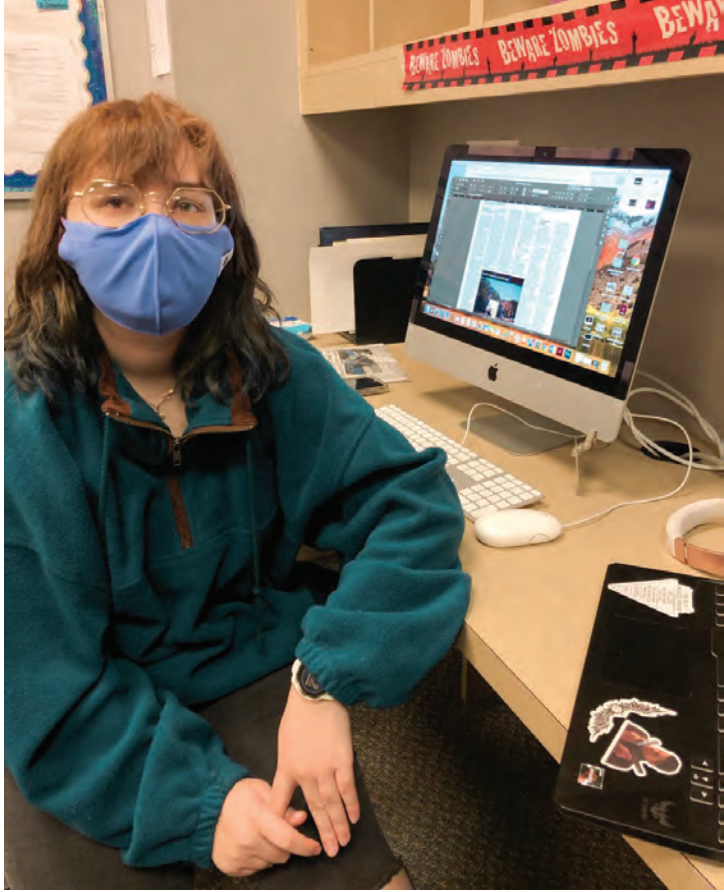
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PHOTO

COVID-19 changes the newsroom



Sofia Rositani, sophomore, arts and entertainment editor lays out her section.



Mike Neville, senior, sports editor lays out his page while maintaining a six foot distance.

By Roma Rositani
Photo Editor

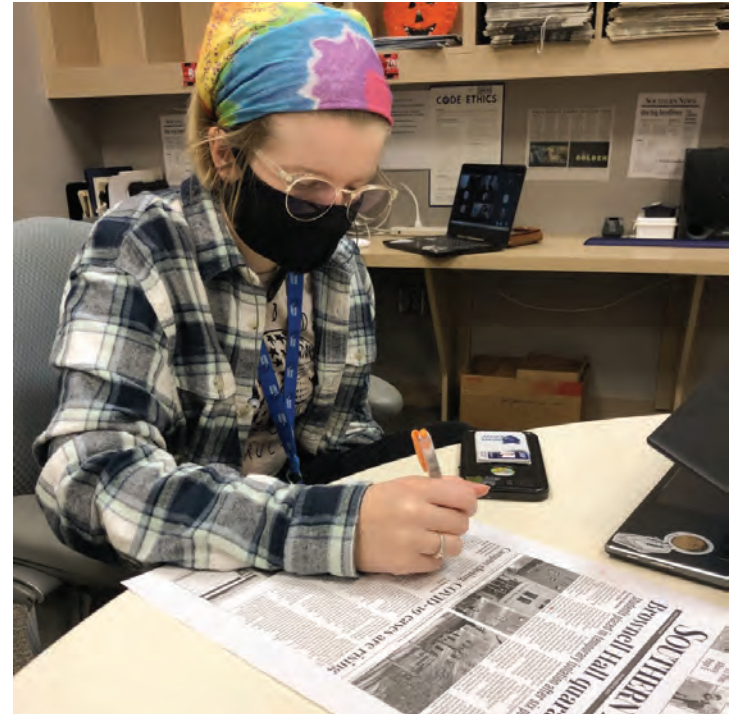
When the university shut down in March, the Southern News moved entirely online.

When the staff returned, the room was changed to adapt to COVID-19 restrictions.

For most students,

Monday's are a regular morning, but for editors, it's layout day, which means masks and social distancing.

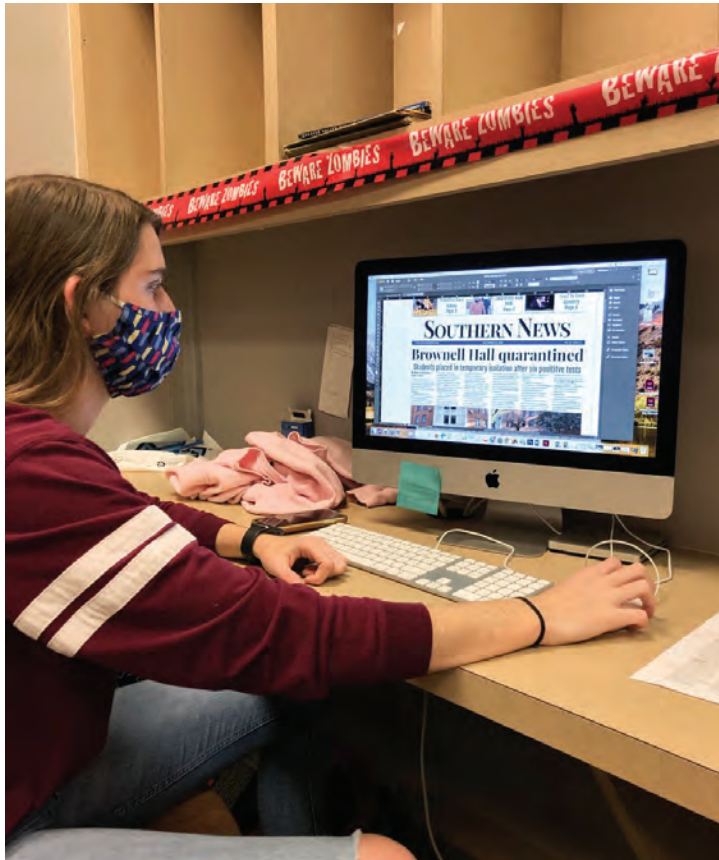
Due to COVID-19, desks and computers are placed six feet apart, and meetings are held in a hybrid format to not go over the eleven person capacity placed in the room.



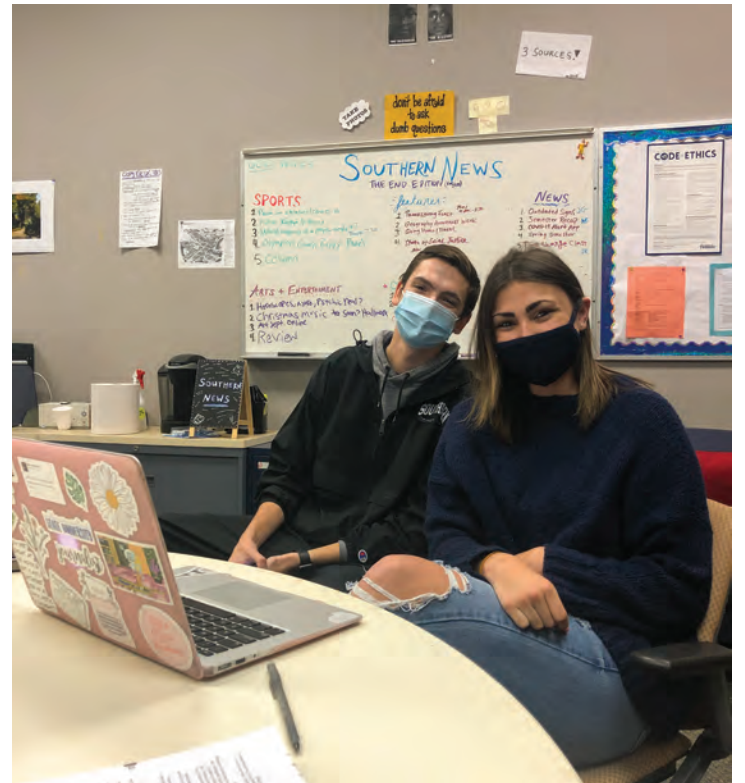
Ellis McGinley, freshman, copy edits the paper while meeting safety protocols.



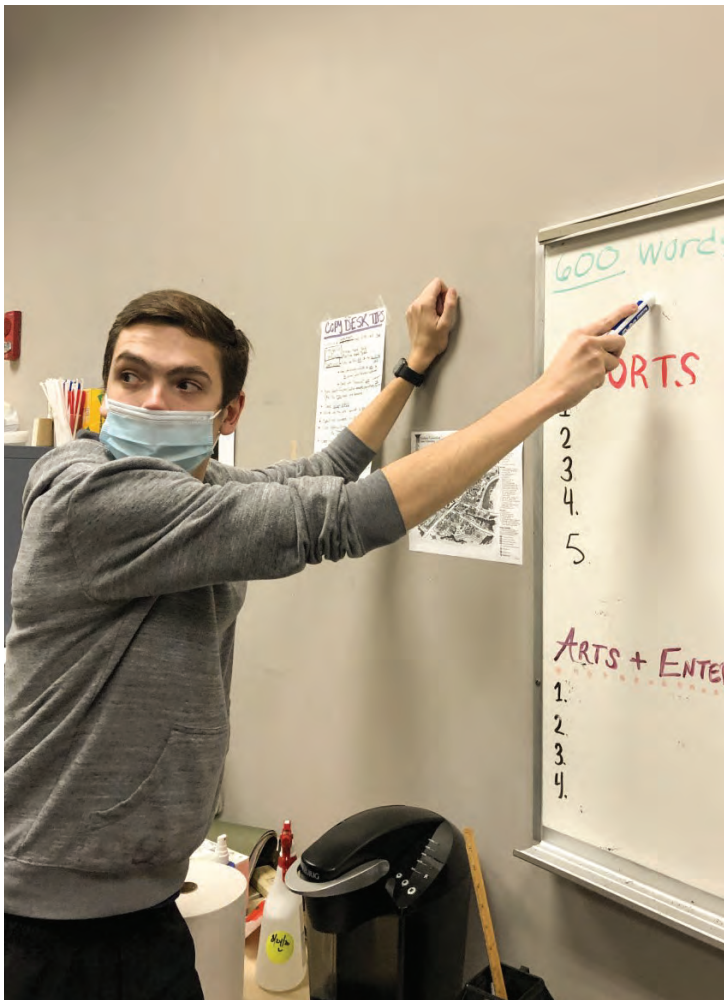
Wula Cham, freshman, one of the copy editors at the newspaper looks over a page.



Abby Epstein, senior, lays out the news section on layout day while wearing a mask.



Managing Editor Sam Tapper (left) and Editor-in-Chief Jessica Guerrucci, holding the weekly hybrid meeting.



Sam Tapper, senior, managing editor of the newspaper giving out editing tips.



Bernadotte Sufka, sophomore, lays out the opinions and features section.



Bria Kirkin, sophomore, photographer for the newspaper looks through photos on her camera.

Frassinelli reflects on milestone

Alum celebrates 26 years as head coach of field hockey team

By Abby Epstein
News Editor

From student athlete to a coach, Kelley Frassinelli an alum of Southern enters her 26th year of coaching the Owls Women's Field Hockey team.

"It was a program I have started, and I have love for the school. For me this is my alma mater and I just wanted to see the program do what I knew it could," said Frassinelli.

She started her career in field hockey in sixth grade when her middle school physical education teacher introduced it to her.

"I would credit her as being the best coach I ever had, and she never played a day in her life," said Frassinelli.

She described herself as the type of athlete that was hesitant at first if she was not sure how to do it perfectly.

"I really worked hard to perfect what I did and listen to what the coaches were telling me and try to fix it right away. So, it pushed me to be a better player and I did eventually grow to love the game to this day," said Frassinelli.

Her career continued into college where the decision to play field hockey, along with doing track and field ended up being at her father's alma mater.

"It just worked for me," said Frassinelli. "It's a Division II school and the competition was different, but I also didn't want the pressure of a

Division I institution to do something I love. So, I was able to play field hockey and also run track and field while I was here."

Haing majored in exercise science, coaching as a career was not on Frassinelli's mind when she graduated college.

"It just kinda happened," she said. She started as the assistant coach after college and the head coach ended up not coming back the next year, so Frassinelli accepted the job.

"I stayed for six years doing that part-time with working full-time and then I needed to step away for a few years because I felt it needed more. The program needed more, and I couldn't do that, so for a couple years I stepped away," said Frassinelli.

Throughout her coaching career, Frassinelli said her style has evolved over the years.

"As you progress along the timeline you realize the kids change, that you have to change a little bit; but the foundation, the respect, what is expected of those athletes doesn't change," said Frassinelli. "That core value has to stay the same."

Senior Jessica Maier said Frassinelli was persistent with recruiting her and showed how much she wanted Maier on her team.

"She just kept reaching out, she just kept emailing me that she had a spot for me on her team, and she was just very persistent and made

herself known that she wanted me, and that she wanted me on her team," said Maier. "I think that persistence made me want to come play for her."

Maier said she is grateful she has been coached by Frassinelli for her college career. She also said Frassinelli does not just teach the players to be a better athletes but life lessons to build their character.

"In the recruiting process I saw that was she was very authentic but over the past four years I know that she is a wonderful, wonderful woman," said Maier. "I love her so much and I'm thankful I've had the opportunity to be

coached by her and just know her in general as a person and not just a coach."

"You gradually get more and more every year, whether it's equipment, whether it's practice facilities, or whatever it is, I think it's just the evolution of time," said Frassinelli. "The kids now have their own locker rooms for the most part, they have full equipment from head to toe. We were lucky if we got a mouth guard."

Along with playing and coaching Field Hockey, Frassinelli was inducted into the Connecticut Field Hockey Hall of Fame in 2005. She will be inducted into the SCSU

Athletics Hall of Fame in 2021.

"It was great, very flattering how they felt about the person that I am," said Frassinelli. "I'm just always in that mindset that I'm doing something because I love to do it or it's the right thing to do."

To her players, Frassinelli is more than a coach. She is a mentor and someone who her players feel they can come to about personal problems.

"She's really great," said Maier. "I always like to call her my second mom, she has my best interest at heart, and I know anything I bring to her she's got my back and I love that about her."



Semester without sports

Column by Mike Neville
Sports Editor

The fall semester for the Owls has been anything but ordinary. COVID-19 ended fall sports before they could even begin.

The only thing the athletes could do is practice and keep their fingers crossed that COVID-19 will not steal spring sports away too.

Although the Owls have attempted to keep athletics relevant through the "Owl or Nothing" podcast and Athletes Fighting Injustice, a feeling of hopelessness has been felt throughout campus.

The campus community is not the only one that is struggling with the fact that Friday night lights, and basketball games at Moore Field House may be a thing of the past.

It is now incredibly hard for athletes to focus and, some of them at least, try to grapple with the fact that their careers as athletes may be over.

In order to play, some athletes have made adjustments and preparations to stay an extra year.

For some athletes, though, this is not the case, and others look at it as a second chance to play the sport they love.

C.J. Seaforth of the men's basketball team plans on coming back for one final year to continue his collegiate career.

Seaforth said that when his time at the university comes to an end, he plans on going to Europe to play basketball overseas.

Although many do not have the same aspirations as Seaforth and others, the way that I look at it, it is like this is a redemption tour.

This is an opportunity for athletes to showcase their talents one more time in front of the big stage and essentially rewrite history.

By rewrite history, I mean getting the most out of an extra year and putting COVID-19 behind us once and for all.

The spring semester now has its own set of concerns. While the country awaits a new administration to tackle COVID-19, athletes await a verdict on whether they will have an opportunity to compete.

For now, all we can do is reflect. For the Owls, they can reflect on the success the programs have had, and look ahead to a future.



PHOTO COURTESY | SCSU_FH INSTAGRAM

Coach Frassinelli (third from left) with her coaching staff outside.

Students discuss sports in spring

By Edward Rudman
Sports Writer

As the fall semester inches closer to ending, the possibility of sports having a spring competitive season is still up in the air depending on how the COVID-19 pandemic develops over the next months.

Collegiate athletic

programs all over the country have dealt with the pandemic by implementing rules and regulations that promote social distancing in order to still remain active.

"In comparison to other schools in the area and elsewhere, I think we've done pretty well especially as far as being in a city like New Haven," said marketing major Nick Thomas, a

senior. "Other schools around us have started closing early and have also had higher positivity rates than we do."

Athletics used a plan revolving around phases, similar to what states have been following when reopening over time, doing its best to deter the spread of COVID-19 and give its athletes the best chance they can get to have to train

and possibly compete next spring.

For the majority of the scheduled time frame that permitted athletics to practice, the various Owls programs were able to train with only a few positive cases.

However, as a second wave of the virus begins to escalate and the number of positive cases rising, the potential of competitive seasons in the spring could be in jeopardy.

"I think the chances of having a spring season are slim, but I haven't lost hope yet. Hopefully over the winter break, the school can come up with a good plan and be prepared for the challenge," said business management major Tyler Zolkowski, a junior. "We've done a pretty good job so far this semester so I don't think it's out of the question."

Fall practices are wrapping up for the semester, following a two week pause in training due to the rate of positive cases on campus rising. Training resumed once the threat of spreading the virus subsided.

Positive cases have begun to soar in the United States, with rates

much higher than what was previously seen in the spring and summer during the beginning of the pandemic, yet students and athletes remain hopeful a competitive season will be able to take place.

"I'm pretty optimistic that we'll be able to have a spring season. We managed the fall COVID practices pretty well, especially compared to other teams in the conference," said member of the football team Nate Shilling, a junior. "Plus, Pfizer announced a vaccine and there's plans for a four to six week lockdown soon to hopefully counteract the spread of the virus."

Unfortunately, the ability to have a spring season competition will be out of the schools hands, as it will ultimately come down to the progression of the COVID-19 pandemic and if the next impending outbreak can be controlled in time.

"The chances of a spring season happening as of right now are looking slim in my opinion," said Thomas. "But, it's still possible if we are more disciplined when it comes to the COVID guidelines and procedures."



PHOTO | SAM TAPPER

The entrance to Jess Dow Field, closed off to the public due to COVID-19.

Veteran's Day annual celebration goes virtual

By Jessica Guerrucci
Editor-in-Chief

The 45th Veteran's Day program was held virtually, paying tribute to student veterans through a video featuring President Joe Bertolino, Jack Mordente coordinator for veterans and military affairs and student veteran graduates.

"A veteran is someone who at one point wrote a blank check payable to the United States of America - for an amount up and including their life," Mordente said in a campus wide email.

In the message, Mordente said how on the 11th hour of the

11th day in November 1921, the body of an unknown World War One American soldier was buried at Arlington National Cemetery in what became the personification of dignity and reverence for veterans. It became known as Armistice Day.

Then 17 years later, in 1938, congress declared it a national holiday. It wasn't until World War Two when it was realized that WWI was not "the war to end all wars."

In 1954, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed a bill stating that Nov. 11 would be known as Veteran's Day, one that would honor veterans and acknowledge and

thank them for their service.

One graduate featured was Sgt. Stephanie Blazzi, a 2020 graduate with a degree in business. She serves in the Connecticut Air National Guard.

"Being a veteran is important to me because I like to give back to the community," Blazzi said. "I love what I do. I'm a tactical aircraft controller."

She said Veteran's Day is about giving back to the community that serves them, meaning working with Veterans and working with them.

Another student, Cpt. Michael Kuszpa is a 2020 graduate and a candidate for the doctoral program

in education leadership. He served nine years in the army as combat adviser in Afghanistan.

"This day, not only do we recognize veterans, we recognize their experiences," Kuszpa said. "We recognize decisions veterans made to face adversary, to face discomfort, to go ahead and be part of something that is bigger than themselves."

He spoke about his experiences overseas, and how he had an interpreter with him who helped him communicate with the locals. He said they faced armed insurgents and climbed through mountains to accomplish

their mission.

Bertolino said the Veteran's Center, which was established in 1975 to accommodate the hundreds of Vietnam veterans flooding into college, has been a resource to those students.

"Southern was the only institution of higher learning in the state and one of only a handful in the entire country to have a full time Veteran's administrator," Bertolino said about Mordente.

As a result, he said student veterans at the university have received personal attention. Several services, such as the Veterans Drop-in Center have been used

by other institution throughout the state.

The center provides counsel, academic advisement, GI Bill and Tuition Waiver Certifications and liaison with state and federal agencies.

Calling the services vital, Bertolino noted the sacrifices being made on a daily basis by men and women, as well as the generation of veterans that came before them.

He said these young men and women have unfailing served with honor, courage and dignity.

"To all of our student veterans, past and present," Bertolino said, "we thank you."



PHOTO | JESSICA GUERRUCCI

The Veterans Center on the bottom floor of Engleman Hall.



PHOTO | JESSICA GUERRUCCI

Stone in front of Buley Library that commemorates those who served in the military.

Harris named first female vice president-elect

By Jessica Guerrucci
Editor-in-Chief

It took 48 vice presidents and 232 years - but the news came with Joe Biden being named president-elect that the United States will have its first female vice president.

"Thinking about Kamala Harris, the significance that comes with her, being a vice president-elect and all the things, she carries with her," said Yi-Chun Tricia Lin, director of Women's and Gender Studies. "She's Asian-American and African American at the same time."

The news came on Nov. 7 breaking what Harris called "one of the most

substantial barriers" that exists in the U.S. with the California senator being named vice president-elect.

"While I may be the first woman in this office," Harris said during a victory speech in Wilmington, Del., "I will not be the last, because every little girl watching tonight sees that this is a country of possibilities."

Lin said she was doing laundry when the news broke.

"I just remember having goosebumps," Lin said. "It was kind of numb. I was initially feeling the goosebumps and not exactly how to respond because it's been quite a time for years."

Calling Harris, a "cultural legacy," not just because of her heritage, but also having attended Howard University, a historically Black college has produced many distinguished politicians and intellectuals.

Harris called attention to Black women, Asian, White, Latina, and Native American women who throughout the nation's history have paved the way for her victory, saying they are the "backbone" of democracy.

Environmental systems and sustainability major Abby Lucas, a sophomore, said it will be nice to have someone in government who reflects her own gender.

"It's kind of hard picturing me growing up being able to be in a job at that position because I've only ever seen men in that position," Lucas said. "So, seeing a woman finally, it gives me hope."

She said she hopes that Harris will inspire other children and women across the country to maybe do the same.

"I think it's shattered the glass ceiling," she said. "That's one of the highest places - if a woman can be there then she can be anywhere."

Justin Gendron, president of College Democrats, said Harris being named vice president-elect is a good first step.

While he wasn't a supporter of Harris in the primaries, he still prefers her over Donald Trump.

"She mentioned [in her speech] trans women of color, she mentioned how people are disproportionately affected by all these policies," Gendron said. "So, I think it's a great first step. That was the first time either gay people or trans people, especially trans women of color have been mentioned in a vice-presidential speech."

Despite not necessarily agreeing with all her policies, Gendron said having a woman as vice president will help break the glass ceiling, setting no limits on what little girls

believe they can achieve when they grow up.

"A little girl can look at her government and see her reflected," he said.

While a woman is yet to take on the role of president, Lin said she sees it happening in the future.

She said there's excitement that came with Harris being on the ticket and the fact that Joe Biden, a staple in D.C. politics, was willing to take a chance on her.

While women have been in politics for a long time, Harris will be the first to hold one of the highest-ranking positions in government.

"It's monumental," Lin said. "There's really no other way to put it."



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION | SAM TAPPER

Kamala Harris speaks to a crowd about Biden and being the first female VP.



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION | SAM TAPPER

Kamala Harris during her speech as first woman vice president-elect on CNBC.

Inclusivity

Continued from Page 8

"I think what we need to see more of on TV is a more realistic person in the community played on the screen. Also, people who are nonbinary or

pansexual; we need to make sure like kids that are feeling like they could be that can feel comfortable," said Velez.

According to CNN and GLAAD, 38 characters on television in 2019-2020 were explicitly transgender. Five were nonbinary (or someone who does

not identify as a man or woman.)

ten percent of all regular, recurring characters on TV are LGBTQ+, up 8.8 percent from last year.

"I would love to see more actors, directors, lighting designers, costume designers, sound designers, and everyone behind

the scenes of LGBTQIA+ productions to be part of the LGBTQIA+ community, especially the transgender community as they are one of the most discriminated against identities reported by statistics in the U.S.," said Hoerner.

Notably, the Oscars also have recently released

a diversity initiative set to take place in 2024. It requires inclusion of racial and ethnic groups, women, the disabled, and LGBTQ people.

To qualify for best picture, at least 30 percent of the cast and crew will need to come from one of the four marginalized

groups of people..

"I think also something I'd like to see more diversity, like we said, in terms of, you know, we need more people of color that are queer," said Morabito. "The kind of smaller communities within the LGBT community just to be more represented."

COVID-19 vaccine may keep numbers low

**By Desteny Maragh
Reporter**

A preliminary analysis shows that the first effective coronavirus vaccine can prevent more than 90 percent of people from getting COVID-19. Some students at the university want to take it.

The developers, Pfizer and BioNTech, had described finishing the vaccine as a “great day for science and humanity.”

Mikael Dolsten, chief scientific officer, for Pfizer, said in an interview with Nordic Life Science; “We are sharing data from our

COVID-19 vaccine clinical trials with the U.S. Federal Drug Administration in real time, so they can evaluate at the earliest possible time whether the safety and efficacy threshold has been met that would enable us to make the vaccine available.”

“We are working with an ambition to share the vaccine in a fair and equitable way across the globe for the people with the most urgent needs.

The vaccines are promising because of their potential for high potency and ability to boost immune responses, engaging several arms of the immune system, such as antibody-producing B cells and anti-viral T-cells,” said Dolsten.

Pfizer and BioNTech released only sparse details regarding its clinical trial, and much of the info was based on the first formal review of the data by an outside panel of experts.

The company said the analysis found that the vaccine was more than 90 percent effective in preventing the disease among those trial volunteers who had no evidence of prior coronavirus infection.

BBC health correspondent Laura Foster said a COVID-19 vaccination is “possibly the only way for things to get back to normal.”

Pfizer plans to ask the Food and Drug Administration for emergency authorization of the two-dose vaccine later this month, after it has collected the recommended two

months’ worth of safety data.

Pfizer executive said by the end of the year, it will have manufactured enough doses to immunize 15 to 20 million people.

“The public health efforts, although significant, have so far not been able to substantially reduce the spread of the disease and a vast number of fatalities have occurred,” said Dolsten. “Knowing that, and with the number of COVID-19 cases increasing worldwide, a vaccine is likely the only way of eliminating the threat of ongoing pandemics.”

Students at the university said they are ready for COVID-19 to be a thing of the past, and they are ready for a vaccine to eliminate the pandemic.

“So many people have died from it,” said communications major Paige Herold, a freshman.

“The world as we know it has changed so much in so little time that it almost seems crazy that one vaccine can make everything go back to normal,” said Herold.

While debating if she would take a vaccine if presented with one, Herold was stuck on the idea for a while, bouncing

between the options.

Herold decided that she would take a vaccine but only if it was approved by the government and had real chances of it working successfully.

Another student who said they would take the vaccine is studio art major Jayla Francis, a junior.

Francis said “90 percent is a chance of the vaccine working, I would take it right now.”

Public health major Brandon Jensen, a senior, also said he would take the vaccine.

Jensen said he’d do anything, even take a vaccine, if that meant “no more COVID.”

For Jensen, life has changed drastically during the pandemic because it has stopped his ability to visit family and friends living in other places.

Jensen said the main reason he would take the vaccine would be so he could visit his grandmother in Maine.

“It’s been such a long since I’ve seen my grandmother. She’s spent these past months in isolation and it’s pretty depressing knowing she’s alone,” said Jensen.

“A vaccine would give me the chance to see my grandma, so I’d take it immediately.”



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION | JESSICA GUERRUCCI

COVID-19 sign posted to enforce mandatory guidelines

Religious services continue amid COVID-19

**By Sofia Rositani
Arts & Entertainment Editor**

Student religious organizations, such as the Newman Society and Hillel Jewish Student Organization, have started to hold services both virtually and in person again since the university shutdown in March.

“The only room we could use, because we had more than five people, was the theater, because it could seat enough people and the chairs were already closed off so there was social distancing already

there,” said Chaplain James Furlong.

The priest wears his mask when giving the eucharist to students at Mass, and has stopped giving it to them by mouth, Furlong said. Instead, they are hand out the eucharist and those in attendance are able to eat it once they are socially distanced from the priest.

They usually get 12 to 15 students a week, but most students are commuters this semester due to COVID-19, according to Furlong. “[It] isn’t too big of a number, but look at what

Jesus did with 12. So that’s how we look at it, we are small in number but strong in spirit,” said Furlong.

The Hillel Jewish Student Organization is meeting at the Remembrance Garden to do their weekly Shabbat service every Friday, said Taylor Lubin, treasurer of Hillel.

“We reflect on our week. We leave the bad things that happen in our past and we like to say it’s a new beginning because Saturday is our day of rest,” said Lubin. Lubin said they had about three to four

people join online, with about seven people in-person.

During Shabbat, Lubin said they include the students joining virtually by talking to them or asking them to read a prayer. They also have their Shabbat dinner together via Microsoft Teams, which is the platform students use to attend the event virtually.

Lubin joined Hillel recently because she said how she wanted to be more involved her religion.

“Last year they didn’t have an eboard because our Rabbi, Rabbi Barbara,

just joined so there was not a full e-Board. So this year we are really trying to make it where we celebrate holidays with everyone,” said Lubin.

“About 68 percent of incoming college students said they attended a religious service in the last year, an all-time low in the history of the survey, and down more 20 percentage points from the peak. In contrast with the fraction of Nones, this curve is on trend, with no sign of slowing down,” According to Allen Downey, a professor at Olin College.

Psychology major, Julian Serrano, a junior is a part of the pagan religion but attends the Catholic Masses the Newman Society puts on.

“The people here are fun; they give me a lot of guidance especially. We are very inclusive too you don’t have to worry about any discrimination or anything like that and we have a lot of fun,” said Serrano. “I am always learning something new about Christianity and Catholic people and what they believe in, more specifically they believe in Jesus Christ and the power of God.”



PHOTO | SOFIA ROSITANI

Chaplain James Furlong and Julian Serrano in the Intefaith Office.



PHOTO | JESSICA GUERRUCCI

Outside of the Interfaith Office on the second floor in the Student Center.

Diversity podcast discusses social issues

By Sofia Rositani
Arts & Entertainment Editor
By Bernadotte Sufka
Features & Opinions Editor

The Diversity in Higher Ed. Podcast, hosted by Vice President of the Diversity and Equity Programs Diane Ariza and Alum Shante Hanks, brings social issues, diversity, equity, and inclusion into a podcast for anyone with a Spotify account.

"These conversations are very focused on diversity in higher education, what does that mean when it comes to how students think about it, how do you think about it in the spaces of a classroom, what does that look like as a peer educator, so we want to have dialogues around that in difficult not easy answers," Ariza said. "But we want a space where we can educate as well so that if your challenge was racism or bias in a classroom, for example, and you are having some issues with it, how can we educate ourselves to what that is and be better."

There have been three

podcast episodes so far. They were focused on the election. Ariza said she would like to do more with the podcast with students and faculty.

"I would like to bring in the agitators because it's easy to bring the champions and those who buy into the work, but I want to bring in the naysayers and talk about why this is so difficult to talk about. I want to bring in more students that see this as so difficult that they would never raise this in their classroom," Ariza said.

She said her favorite part of this podcast was working with the students because they had good energy and were not afraid to talk about their work. It gives her motivation to continue doing the podcast and more student-driven episodes.

The students who were in the student activist episode are planning a town hall for work with other students.

Student activist Jamil Harp was in an episode of the podcast talking about what it is like being a student activist

while in college, how it looks in the community and where it needs to improve.

Harp said he had a great time doing the podcast and that he would definitely do it again.

"I hope students learned a little bit more about my journey and hear about some of the things in which they could do I think any other student can sit on a podcast just the same way I sat on one and speak about what they want to see at Southern," Harp said.

Introducing the new diversity podcast on campus has brought the COVID-19 guidelines into effect as well. While podcast episodes are held in person with multiple people, it was moved virtually for one person who was a guest on the podcast.

"I wish the podcast would be in-person. It would have been more interesting," said Jonathon Wharton, a professor in the political science department.

"It was not clear, and I feel badly about it. I

apologize for that. I know in podcasts it's usually done in person and you could see people's reactions and be a part of everything," said Wharton.

For launching the first podcast, problems could occur and for the first time, it went well. Diane

Ariza was the host of the new podcast.

"What I really respect about her is that, and I wish people would know that she's not just a vice president or administrator. She's also a well-known academic as well. That's one of the main things I really

respect about her," said Wharton.

Wharton said he is glad Ariza understood his points on the political side during the podcast and added it. She went along with his view and maintained a professional attitude, along with her experience.

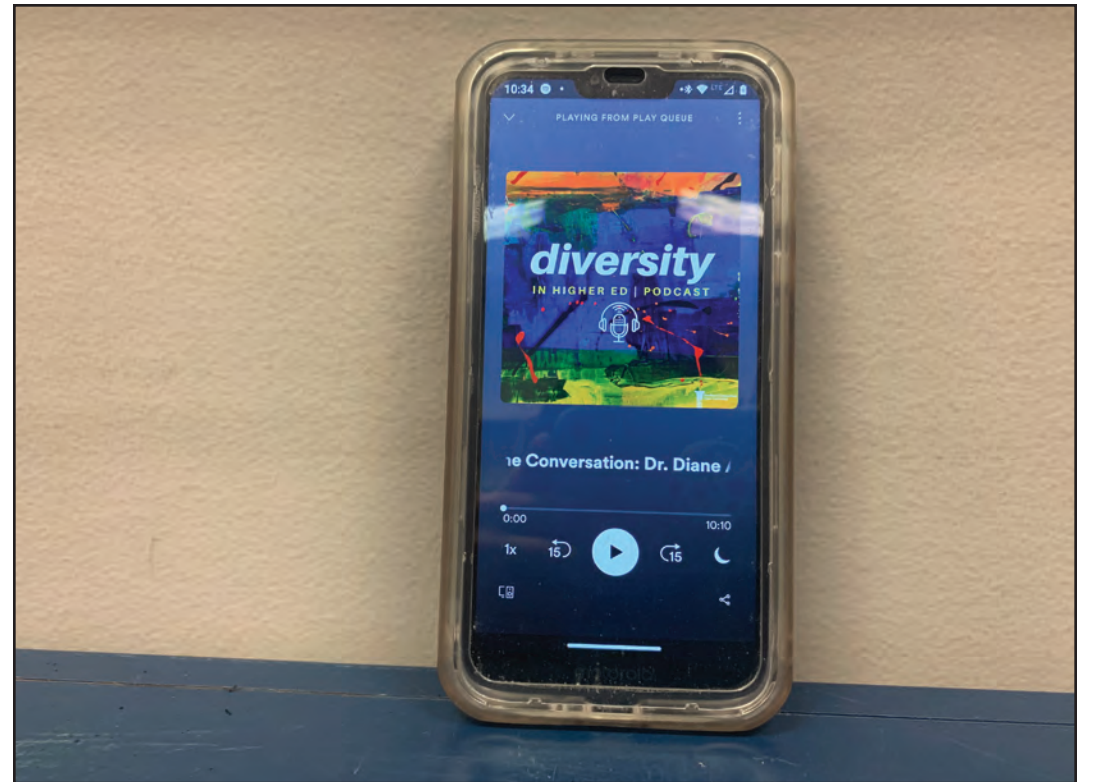


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION | JESSICA GUERRUCCI

Diversity in Higher Ed. Podcast with Diane Ariza on an Android phone.

Thomas Rhett sings about life

By Sofia Rositani
Arts & Entertainment Editor

Everyone has that one guilty pleasure. Mine is country music. I grew up listening to both rock music and country music, so it was no surprise that I slowly fell in love with both genres.

My ultimate favorite country singer is Thomas Rhett. When he released "What's your Country Song," I freaked out, because I had no idea he was releasing a new song. This song, weirdly, made me feel nostalgic for a place I have never been to before. In my mind, Rhett can never write a bad song, especially since many of his songs are about his children and wife.

This music video shows scenes of nostalgia for the viewers, such as attending a high school football game, driving around with friends and having a first relationship.

"The lyrics of this song stir up so many vivid memories for me; I think everyone has that one song that takes them back to a specific moment in time," Thomas points out. "I wanted the music video to visually capture that same thing and instantly transport anyone watching back to that familiar feeling or place in their mind," according to ABC News Radio.

This week, Rhett has been getting many different accomplishments, such as being nominated for awards at the Country Music Awards and hosting at this year's CMA Country Christmas Special, with his wife Laura Akins.

In the song, he brings up many different

country songs in his lyrics.

"Do your exes live in Texas?" is a lyric which is based off the song "All My Ex's Live in Texas" by George Strait and "that ain't your truck in her drive?" is based off a song title his dad wrote called "That ain't my truck" by Rhett Akins. There are many other lyrics such as "who's your strawberry wine?" from a song by Deana Carter titled "Strawberry Wine." With this Rhett brings back the old country within the new by using these song titles, he gives those who have listened to country for a very long time that feeling of nostalgia and make them remember if "you [were] country back when country wasn't cool?" which ironically was another song title by Dolly Parton.

One of many things I like about Rhett is how

passionate he is about his music and family, which for him goes hand in hand. All his songs are about his family. "Remember you young" is a song he wrote about his children and "Die a happy man" he wrote about his wife. He was a father and husband before he was a musician, which I love because not many celebrities are like that.

Listening to "What's Your Country Song" brings me back to high school, which may not have been too long ago but it made me think about the times my mom and I would get food while waiting for my siblings to get out of practice and she would tell me the craziest stories from her childhood. This song brings me back to my childhood in Vermont where I felt free from the complications of life, it

really hits hard and will be stuck in my head for who knows how long.

Something I enjoy about Rhett's music is that he sings with such passion, his lyrics always mean something to him.

During his concerts he always brings his daughters on stage to sing an unreleased song called "To the guys that date my girls." Seeing this live is very emotional and you can see the love in his eyes when he sees his daughter dancing to the song.

"Everybody got a small-town anthem Everybody got a story to tell. Everybody got a hallelujah. Everybody been through a little hell."

These lyrics speak to me because this year has been hard for everybody, but when I turn on my music, I feel better and Rhett has captured this perfectly in his new song.



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION | SOFIA ROSITANI

Thomas Rhett's music video for "What's Your Country Song."

Inclusivity in TV shows increases

By Ellis McGinley
Copy Editor

Last week, the hit TV show "Supernatural" appeared to confirm a romance between the two lead males. In the scene, one character, Castiel, informs the other, Dean Winchester, that he "loves him" and his love led him to create an oath resulting in his death.

Fans of the show have been waiting for a romantic revelation since Castiel was introduced in the third season. This will be Supernatural's 15th and final season on air.

To some university students, though, "Supernatural" is less-than-familiar territory.

"I haven't gotten to rewatch the show, especially the later seasons recently, but I feel as though this reveal is presented in an un-stereotypical, open and loving way. It could be great representation for the community," said theater major Lauren Hoerner, Secretary of PRISM.

"I haven't heard of Destiel? I'm assuming it's a ship name for someone," said freshman Sam Gontarz, a student ambassador with the SAGE Center.

However, the scene can open deeper conversations about LGBTQ+ representation in television.

"I think that LGBTQ representation has come a long from what it was, but do I think we can expand upon it? Yes, of course. I feel like we have only touched the surface of what LGBTQ+ is," said social work major Justyn Velez, a freshman.

"I think there have definitely been improvements over time," said Aaron Morabito, SAGE

Center graduate intern. "But I still think there's obviously more room to grow always. Like with the example with the couple from "Supernatural", they're still both to my knowledge, you know, white gay men."

Castiel, played by Misha Collins, and Dean Winchester, played by Jensen Ackles are both white, cisgender men. Both actors are also heterosexual.

On finding more content with LGBTQ+ representation, Morabito said "I think trying to find sources that either were like the actors, or the people themselves are queer, and they're not just playing a queer character. Or companies that have worked with queer people to produce whatever show or episode or whatever it is that they're doing."

"I watch a lot of Cartoon Network because my younger brother and I both enjoy their shows, and recently there have been a lot of LGBT rep," said English major Madeline Scharf, a sophomore.

"Worst example? Probably whatever they just did with Destiel where two grown men awkwardly stare at each other and finally use the queerbaiting they have hyped up for years," Scharf said.

"Queerbaiting" refers to a marketing tactic where a television show, film, or other media hints at an LGBTQ+ relationship or character but does not make it explicit.

This is often perceived as an effort to attract LGBTQ+ consumers without alienating those uncomfortable with the LGBTQ+ community.

See Inclusivity Page 6