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# SOUTHERN NEWS

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## Final beam raised and set in place Topping ceremony held for Health and Human Services building

By Jessica Guerrucci  
Editor-in-Chief

The last beam for the steel structure of the future Health and Human Services building was placed with a tree on top a nod to “sturdy and lasting craftsmanship” and a symbol of good luck.

“The topping of a steel and concrete building with a tree is a contractors tradition begun years ago by Scandinavians who believed their Gods lived in trees,” said President Joe Bertolino. “In those days, everything was built with wood and the builders believed they had to appease the Gods whose trees they fell for construction.”

The final beam was signed by several members of the university including President Bertolino, Sandra Bulmer, Dean of Health and Human Services, Robert Prezant, the provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Tracy Tyree, and many others.



President Joe Bertolino signing the final beam being put on the Health and Human Services building.

PHOTO | JESSICA GUERRUCCI

The 94,000 square foot building broke ground last March and is set to open in December 2021. It will be four stories with simulation labs, learning labs and a standardized patient center, all which encourage hands-on learning.

The “topping” event took place outside the

construction site on Oct. 23, between Pelz Gymnasium and Jennings Hall, something Bertolino said was symbolic since the new building will be connected to Pelz.

“Our past, our history, our values, what we stand for, shapes who we are, and shapes our students,”

Bertolino said. “So, from my perspective, this is symbolic of a bridge connecting our past to our future.”

Bulmer said the new building is going to be special for two reasons one, that it will be a space for all the disciplines from the College of Health and

Human services to come together and two, that it was designed to be a good practice-based learning space.

“Right now, our disciplines are spread out in eight different buildings across the campus,” she said. “This building will allow us to come together

to have conversations, to build relationships, and to create, innovate and design new interprofessional programs that will benefit our students for many generations to come.”

Bringing everyone together and placing the final beam and signing it was a way to mark the moment and to pause and see the progress made so far, according to Bulmer.

When it is complete, Bulmer said she’s looking forward to the hands-on learning that will help them be successful in the future.

Prezant said students are going to have remarkable opportunities opening up in the new “state of the art” building. He said it will induce and promote a new type of learning and it is exciting to think about the opportunities residing within what is currently just a steel structure.

“The timing is going to be perfect,” he said.

See Topping Page 2

## Students mental health impacted by pandemic

By Sofia Rositani  
Arts & Entertainment Editor

Since COVID-19 struck last spring semester, students have been slowly adapting to online courses, but according to the Director of Counseling Services Nick Pinkerton, there has been a significant increase in the amount of stress and anxiety this semester.

“As things continue to move forward, particularly when things reach some semblance of normal again, I think the demand for counseling will go up even more than what we were seeing prior to the pandemic, which is a steady rise in demand for counseling,” said Pinkerton.

He said there has been even more disengagement since the pandemic started. There have also been many students complaining about screen fatigue due to most classes online.

“I think what we are in right now is this ambiguous place of what’s going to happen next. I think people are concerned about their health and their safety, and that of their loved ones, because of COVID,” Pinkerton said. He also said that there has also been some major anxiety about the upcoming election.

“I think it’s one of those things where it’s like we are still in this on-going crisis together, so it’s effecting people in different ways and folks are coming in for those reasons; but we are still in this thing together



PHOTO | ABBY EPSTEIN

Counseling Services building located in Engleman.

and we are still using the traditional coping strategies,” Pinkerton said.

According to Pinkerton, isolation has become an issue for students since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic and because of the lack of socializing, he called this pandemic “an introverts dream.”

Following COVID-19, he said an increase in the usage of the app TikTok went up 300 percent, proving people were on their phones more.

“One in five of college students say their mental health has significantly worsened under COVID-19,” according to a survey of 2,086 students by Active Minds.

Psychology major Mackenzie Montesi, a freshman, said since she started college, her mental health has been the same. It has helped her figure out what she wants to do with life. Montesi also said she has not been enjoying online courses due to needing to be in a classroom setting.

“I think if there are more in-person classes,

mental health will get better because you are communicating with people, and getting to see your friends, it just helps like getting out of your dorm,” Montesi said.

She also said she feels more isolated on campus, but goes home on the weekends to help her cope with her isolation.

For psychology major Jelise Nimmons, a junior, mental health has been getting worse since this semester started due to all her classes being online. Some of her courses are asynchronous, which means they do not meet virtually or in person. Instead, she gets work to do-making it harder for her.

“Worse I feel like for most of my classes I am teaching myself so that is kinda stressful,” Nimmons said.

She said she has been in her dorm room a lot more since coming back on campus, but she would not consider herself being isolated because she is seeing her friends and going to go to practice.

## COVID-19 cases rising

By Donovan Wilson  
Reporter

COVID-19 cases are beginning to rise in Connecticut, with positivity rates above two percent. Last week, the university reported a .52 percent positivity rate.

In recent weeks, Connecticut has seen a rise in COVID-19 cases. This has also been an ongoing phenomenon around the country, with numbers as high as they were in March. This has also spiked a scare of a potential second nationwide lockdown.

“There has been a rise around campus but nothing too significant as we have the ability to respond quickly and keep numbers low,” said lead contact tracer Emily Rosenthal.

Naturally, with a rise around the state and country in general, the campus has also seen a rise. According to Rosenthal, the rise among residents and commuters alike has been rather low.

Rosenthal is part of the

campus COVID-19 team. She leads the contact tracer team that finds everyone who’s been in contact with someone who has had a positive case and makes sure they do not spread the virus. There are many sections of the COVID-19 team on campus led by Erin Duff, the COVID-19 Coordinator.

“I am quite comfortable with things. The school does a good job at keeping us distanced and masked so I’m not afraid. There is no need to panic,” said environmental studies major Steven Zoher, a senior.

The lack of a panic around campus can be attributed to the precautions the campus has already taken. Every on-campus class is required to have masks, social distancing and sometimes even plexiglass dividers to prevent virus spread. The school even produces its own hand sanitizer to assure it is always on-hand for students and faculty alike to use.

There is also an aspect of

transparency that can help keep students at ease. The school offers a COVID-19 dashboard, a free service available to all students to watch the COVID-19 numbers on campus. This transparency can help keep students’ minds at ease and display how honest the campus is.

“I really don’t think it’s a major issue; like there’s no reason to freak out. If you’re not comfortable, then stay home, and if you are comfortable then just be safe and there are no issues. We should try to move forwards, not go straight to moving backwards,” said political science major Frank Musante, a senior.

Rosenthal said everything is assumed to run the same. Campus is run in a way where everything is kept under tight watch, so the odds of cases getting out of hand is relatively low.

“We are just taking it week by week as of right now,” said Rosenthal. “Things can change at a [moment’s] notice.”



PHOTO | JESSICA GUERRUCCI

COVID-19 signage that can be seen throughout the campus.



# Expectations change in online classes

By Abby Epstein  
News Editor

A new environment requires new expectations. Professors had to rethink, and students had to learn, the etiquette of online classes.

"I don't think the expectations I'm beginning with have

changed, but my reaction when students are running into trouble have changed and I'm more willing to allow students to turn something in late," said INQ professor Margot Schilpp.

Students said it seems their online professors have been a little more lenient when it comes to

submitting assignments.

"I think some of my professors understand that people learn in different ways and that online learning is a challenge for a lot of students," said environmental systems and sustainability major Abby Lucas, a sophomore. "I think some of my professors have become

more lenient when it comes to deadlines while still maintaining the expectation that we are understanding the material."

Professors' expectation of being engaged and present in class have not changed with the transition.

"My professors definitely expect us to be engaged and contributing to conversations," said Lucas. "Especially my Spanish class, because we have to be demonstrating that we are understanding the language and practicing."

Biology major Noureen Nassra, a senior, said she has a class where grades are based on the students participation in class. Much of the class relies on collaboration and discussion between students.

One topic that has been brought up within faculty is if professors should force students to turn their cameras on during class.

"It's really hard to talk to a screen of little black boxes with people's names, and yet I'm definitely aware there may be equity issues that students might not want to turn their camera on and

reveal their environment," said Schilpp.

Nassra does not have her camera on during class, because the rest of the class do not. She said even with her camera off, she still makes sure she is listening to her professor.

"I'm the type of student that really needs to focus on what the teacher is saying in order to grasp the material, so I don't go on my phone or anything," said Nassra.

Lucas, on the other hand, is one student that has her camera on during class, unless she is in the locker room getting ready for soccer practice.

"I almost always have my camera on during class because it shows that I am paying attention to the professor," said Lucas. "It sorts of keeps you accountable and engaged knowing that the professor can look to see if you're paying attention."

Every professor has their own expectations when it comes to their online classes. Some online classes require students to come to class with an understanding of the material already, while others teach whether or not students have prior knowledge.

"For one of my classes, the expectations are we come to class with our lecture notes and discussion questions ready and filled out so we can come to class and discuss them," said Nassra. "For my other class, she sometimes posts the lectures beforehand but if not, we got into the lecture blindly and we listen to her lecture for the two hours."

Because of all the change-overs, the University of Connecticut has now created a list of "netiquette" rules for online and distance learning. Some include; apply the same ethical standards as you would for in-person, consider where you are in cyberspace and do not participate in bullying or inciting arguments.

Expectations, collaboration, participation—are all a part of figuring out the etiquette of online classes.

"One of things I think that has been positive about being online is I think it's allowing students who might not ordinarily reach out to other students to do that," said Schilpp, "especially with breakout rooms."



PHOTO | NADINE HILKERT

Abby Lucas, sophomore, taking notes during her Spanish online class.

# SGA dedicates time to leadership and connection

By Desteny Maragh  
Reporter

SGA President and history major Sarah Gossman, a junior, announced that the organization is teaming up with the Office of Student Conduct to host an event for Election Day.

Gossman said "they will be giving out shirts during the event."

Students have a chance to come with their "I Voted" sticker and have an advantage to receive a shirt while supplies last.

Everyone attending the meeting had a chance to vote on shirt designs that would be used for the event.

The Director of Student Involvement and Leadership Development, Daphne Alston, created a poll for deciding between shirt colors.

The three shirt design options were a black shirt with white letterings, a blue shirt with white lettering, and a white shirt with blue lettering.

The votes were cast, and the winner was the white shirt with blue lettering. Gossman said "only 50 shirts will be ordered."

After the shirt selection, Gossman transitioned to speaking about building a stronger organizational bond between the members.

Gossman said "I am realizing that student government work is different for everyone and everyone is in different places, whether that may be remote or living on campus."

She said she wants to begin dedicating more time to leadership and team development.

activities that may help strengthen the bond and connection between members of the organization, which COVID-19 has hindered.

When recalling how student government used to operate before the pandemic, Gossman said "everyone used to be able to have to that in-person experience of leadership boosting."

Prior to COVID-19, all the organization meetings were held in-person and all the members had on-site classes, so meeting and building as a team was an easier task compared to doing it all virtually.

Gossman acknowledged that it is something the organization needs to work on and embraced the potential of online building.

Her solution to this

problem is to simply add more fun.

Gossman said Student Government should "do something fun after the weekly body meeting, so on days when there is time that can be allotted to leave about a half hour to just have fun."

She suggested the organization can either do theme days or other kinds of activities to relax

Gossman said it's "hard to have that on campus connection when things are taking place online."

Overall, this new allotted time is to de-stress and engage in fun team building activities.

Gossman said she wants the organization to "connect as a whole."

As the meeting progressed, SGA representative Brandon Iovene, went over what he has been working on at

the university.

Iovene said he is working to fix the problems in North townhouses with concerned "animal droppings."

Iovene said he has been able to make progress with the "animal droppings" situation and has hopes that the problem will likely be eliminated.

He put an emphasis on how important it is for the university to take extra practice with cleanliness during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Iovene spoke on how the townhouses require major updating, especially when it comes to the front door and controlling air pressure.

This problem has risen, according to Iovene, in the colder months. The door does not do a

great job of keeping out the cold, especially as the winter months are approaching.

Aside from housing problems, Iovene said he has also been looking into fair dietary needs for all students.

Iovene said he has been researching dietary restrictions and is inquiring if there should be more food options provided by the university.

The last thing Iovene mentioned in his weekly report briefing is the breakdown of move-out day for residential students where the policy for residents has recently changed.

Iovene said there are "no set times for thanksgiving move-out, but the residential halls will be closing at eight instead of five."

# Topping

Continued from Page 1

"The timing is going to be perfect," Prezant said. "We're going to get into that building when the pandemic is vanished, hopefully, and it will enliven an already incredibly active part of

the campus."

One of the architects from "Svigals & Partners", Bob Skolozdra, said the process started three years ago and was contracted in 2016, which involved ensuring it's a program they can afford and then going through various design phases.

He said the project is both on schedule and

on budget. To see everyone gathered to place the final beam at the ceremony was exciting, he added.

"This project is going really smooth for construction," Skolozdra said. "We have a great design team, construction manager, we have a lot of different people involved as well

as obviously the state and the college."

Eric Lessne, the Interim Associate Vice President of Capital Budgeting and Facilities Operations said he's been on the project since the very beginning and has been involved in the selection of the architects and the initiation of the project.

He said he's gone through the programming, floor plans and elevations to make sure it meets the needs of the College of Health and Human Services.

When complete, he said he is most excited to see the look on students' faces.

"That's my biggest

kick," Lessne said. "To see students coming and going this is fantastic. It's with every building I've been involved with since I started construction, just to see the end user getting to use the facility, I love that."

See Page 4 for more photos of Topping Ceremony



PHOTO | JESSICA GUERRUCCI

Signatures of staff members on the final beam for the Health and Services building.



PHOTO | BRIA KIRKLIN

President Joe Bertolino giving a speech during the Topping Ceremony.



## Young majority of voters can impact the election



By Jessica Guerrucci  
Editor-in-chief

These are the opinions  
of The Southern News  
Editorial Staff

Election day is right around the corner and this may be the first time that some college students are voting in a presidential election. With a push for more young people to vote, students and faculty are now encouraging each other to head to the polls.

With COVID-19 helping young people realize how much politics impact their lives, there's been a lot of outreach beyond campus and on social media educating people on why they should vote.

Here at the school, a "voter teach-in" was held on Monday, Oct. 26 to help educate students on the

volatile history of voting rights and the importance of it. It was a win-win, because students also had the opportunity to register to vote.

Students have also been seen going out and encouraging others to vote off campus, according to an NBC Connecticut article, "College students urging peers to participate in the political process." Members of both the College Republicans and College Democrats went door to door leaving pamphlets and information concerning voting and candidates.

Even for those too young to vote, Andreina Barajas,

a Student Government Association Rep-at-Large said in the article that she'll be out working the polls on election day to fulfill her civic duty.

"That's honestly the reason I wanted to get involved because I won't be able to vote but I wanted to still make a positive impact. I've been volunteering with poll heroes, so we've been registering a lot of young poll workers. We're trying to get more students involved in politics so they know what's going on and that they know that they could still make an impact even though they're not 18 and able to vote," Barajas

told NBC.

According to a CNN poll, when it comes to young voters, 51 percent of registered voters ages 18 to 34 say they are very or extremely enthusiastic to vote in 2020, compared to the 30 percent of registered voters in that same age group who said the same in 2016.

To reach a younger crowd, social media has also gotten involved with a voting facts banner at the top of Instagram and a "Make a Plan to Vote" buttons on Snapchat that guide people through the registration process. This makes it easier than ever to

educate people too.

In the classrooms, I've had professors asking if everyone is registered and ensuring that they can guide anyone through the process if needed.

Regardless of who anyone is voting for, Donald Trump or Joe Biden, every vote counts, and young voters have the opportunity to make an impact on this election.

So, make sure you head to the polls on Nov. 3 or make sure you get your absentee ballot in so we can all play a part in what will be a historic election and take responsibility for our own futures.

## Spike in cases should require commuter testing

By Sam Tapper  
Managing Editor

The COVID-19 dashboard released each week has been an invaluable resource for students and staff alike, giving the campus community the transparency it deserves regarding the widespread presence of the virus on campus.

So far, the dashboard has shown no evidence of a major outbreak, as there have been seven positive tests among residential students for the entire year,

three faculty/staff self-reports, and zero positive tests recorded among those in and around athletics, according to the university dashboard released on Oct. 20.

As a student who lives on campus, these numbers are comforting, at least, as comforting as the news of positive tests among students possibly could be. However, there is still one factor of the dashboard that is of looming concern: commuter positives.

Residential students are subject to being selected for a random test any given week-

and it doesn't matter if they are a commuter student are not. While I understand the need, as somebody who has on-ground classes with commuter students, this system worries me. So far, according to the dashboard, there have been 38 total positive tests among commuter students.

The process of commuters reporting positive cases to the university's COVID-19 team is strictly under an honor system. Current protocols, commuters are to get tested for the coronavirus themselves

as needed. The university does not require they get tested regularly in order to come to campus.

This is not necessarily a bad plan, but there are several holes. The biggest one in my mind is this: commuters likely will not schedule tests for themselves unless they are either traveling out-of-state or have already experienced symptoms. If the circumstances are the latter, then there is a much bigger problem than just one positive case.

Commuter students come-and-go to campus all the time, many of

them coming from all over Connecticut. Some are even commuting from across state lines, requiring that all commuters get tested every two weeks and must report negative results to be allowed to come to campus. Maybe it is setting up additional testing centers around campus specifically for commuters, requiring they come get tested once a week, albeit on their own time.

I do not know the right answer to this equation, and I cannot say it is a surprise that there is no concrete plan for

commuters like there is for residents, because this is as complex as it gets. But what I do know is that a commuter student could experience mild symptoms and still come to campus, potentially passing it on to an entire classroom or club of people, before they even get tested.

We have been lucky in terms of keeping the prevalence of COVID-19 on campus. The situation is not over yet.

Currently, it is far from resolved, and commuter positives could prove to be the university's Achilles heel.

## Reslife gives more housing options for residents

By Ellis McGinley  
Copy Editor

The University's ResLife recently announced that students living on-campus will be permitted to leave their belongings in their dorms over winter break if they are remaining in the same dorm for both semesters.

Previously, it had been decided that students would need to bring all belongings home through this upcoming January, regardless if they would be moving into dorms or not. As a first-time resident who has spent an awkward amount of time trying to work out

how I was going to get all my stuff home, this comes off as a huge relief.

There was hardly enough room in my home for the bins I packed before I moved in. I never thought I would leave with more physical objects than I had brought, but I rapidly found out that I was nowhere near as prepared for the semester as I thought.

Within the first hour of living as a resident, my roommate and I found ourselves at the campus bookstore, purchasing the largest fan we could find. Neither one of us had any idea how to get it home, again writing it off

as a problem for later.

In the months since, we also came into the possession of a vacuum, new coats and shoes, blankets, and two more fans. Notably, we have not invested in new boxes yet.

Besides, wrangling awkwardly sized fitted sheets onto a stiff dorm mattress and putting my desk back together is not the welcome I dream for myself when we come back in January.

It is also a powerful incentive for residential students to stay on campus, one that comes after the university's previous decision to give residential students early

registration times than their commuter peers.

While this puts commuters at a clear disadvantage for determining their spring schedules, letting residential students leave our belongings in dorms does no obvious harm (assuming everyone cleans out their minifridge well enough).

I know the convenience of leaving my bedding, desk supplies, fans, and everything else I will not need at home was enough to convince me to stay in my double for another semester. I will admit to briefly entertaining the idea of a single, or even a fully online schedule,

but it really cannot be understated how much easier this will be for all of us.

I still worry, though, what would happen if the university announced our spring semester was to be fully online.

Even then, I would almost rather come back to New Haven and pack up the second half of my things than figure out how to bring them all in one trip.

I will also be staying overly optimistic that Connecticut and Southern's community will maintain the incredibly good fortune we have had in keeping our COVID-19 numbers

on the low.

Residents may also be concerned about leaving valuables or objects susceptible to humidity or temperature changes. Yet, living in a dorm, it is understood that there is not always a well-controlled climate.

These are problems that will be negated by common sense and a little extra care when deciding what does and does not make the cut to return for the winter.

My final concern might be of an inconvenience to the janitorial staff, but we will have to trust students to sanitize and clean our dorms for the coming of next semester.

## SOUTHERN NEWS

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# PHOTO

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## Final beam placed on future building



President Joe Bertolino signs his name on the final beam before it is placed on the steel structure.

**By Jessica Guerrucci**  
Editor-in-Chief

A topping ceremony was held on Oct. 23 where the final beam in the steel structure of the Health and Human Services Building was placed.

The 94,000 square-foot building, which broke ground in March, is set

to be completed in Fall 2021, and is meant to be a “practice-based learning space” that will bring together several disciplines currently spread across the campus, according to the Dean of the College of Health and Human Services Sandra Bulmer.

A tree was placed on the final beam, which is

a Scandinavian tradition. They believed their gods lived in trees. It is a nod to “sturdy and lasting craftsmanship” and a symbol of good luck to the owner.

**For more on the Topping Ceremony, see Page 1 in the News Section.**



The final beam, topped by a tree, is lifted by a crane to be placed on top of the future Health and Human Services building.



The final beam is received by construction workers on top of the steel structure.



Skanska workers stand near the construction site during the ceremony.



Dean of Health and Human Services Sandra Bulmer claps as the final beam is placed.



Bulmer addresses the crowd to talk about the future building.



University leaders Bulmer (left), Eric Lessne, Bertolino, Mark Rosewski and Robert Prezant pose in front of the structure.



Skanska construction workers pose in front of the structure.



The final beam signed by members of the university.

PHOTOS | BRIA KIRKLIN



## Former Owl football great continues legacy Offensive coordinator Bergeski shares knowledge with team after time in France

By Edward Rudman  
Sports Writer

Whether it's in Europe or stateside, Chris Bergeski lives and breathes football.

Bergeski, the offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach for the Owls, is in his 12th season and continues to be a big part of the football program.

"This fall, we're focused on working through some tweaks and issues that we may be having and just working on our consistency on both ends, as coaches and as a player," said Bergeski.

Bergeski played wide receiver for the Owls during his collegiate career and is the third all-time for receptions with 148, fourth all-time in receiving yards with 2,260 and fifth in touchdown receptions with 23, according to the athletic department website.

He earned All-Region

and All-Conference honors during his junior year with the Owls.

After graduating from Southern, Bergeski spent a year on the Owls sidelines as a coach and afterwards, went to France to play professionally. He served as a player-coach for Thonon-Les Bains for a year.

"It was a really cool experience, different than anything I've ever been around. It's still football, the rules don't change, there's nothing that was different there. The big difference was the variety of competition," said Bergeski.

When he played in France, Bergeski was competing against many different kinds of experienced players. He said there was a wide variety of talents from all collegiate levels.

"It was just so different having all those different types of talent all paying

for one team, each week was so much different from the other depending on who we played," said Bergeski.

Bergeski helped develop younger players who were a part of the youth program for Thonon-Les Bains.

"A lot of those kids really didn't know what was going on, we really tried to teach them fundamentals, structure, technique. Anything you could imagine," said Bergeski.

After returning to the states, Bergeski came back to Southern to serve as the receivers coach. He said his time in France helped train him to become a better coach here in the U.S.

"It was looking at the sport with a whole different lens," said Bergeski. "Focusing on youth, focusing on a whole different coaching staff, structure and



PHOTO COURTESY | CHRIS BERGESKI

**Bergeski providing direction for players during practice.**

offense, I was able to soak that all in as a player."

He said it felt great to be back at the school where he played but it took some used to getting to.

Bergeski said, "I was coaching my roommates. I was coaching guys I had played with. At first, it

was definitely a different experience for first couple meetings, you know, super nervous, that kind of thing. But the guys made it really easy and I realized that this is just who I am."

12 years later, Bergeski still finds himself coaching at Southern and his

players are grateful for it.

Tight end Dylan Brady, a senior, said, "He puts us in the position to win. He's never worried about the upcoming game. He's focused on that day and what we need to do." a team to get better that day."

## Owls Abby Lucas climbing the ranks

By Edward Rudman  
Sports Writer

One of the most important goals for freshman on the Southern women's soccer team is to improve on and off the field, something Head Coach Adam Cohen strives for in his players. That is certainly the case when it comes to Goalkeeper Abby Lucas, a sophomore.

"She's done what we hope our student athletes are going to do," said Cohen. "Here's what we hope: when they come in as freshman and they go home over Thanksgiving or Christmas, that their

family sees a change. An improvement. A growth. And that's what Abby's done. She's in her second year now with us and I think every step of the way, she has grown and improved, especially her confidence."

Lucas' introduction to athletics started back when she was 5 years old and began to take dancing lessons of many styles.

As she grew older, she started playing soccer and basketball, however eventually focusing primarily on soccer.

Her road to Southern and becoming a goalkeeper was not always a smooth one.

Lucas learned to persevere long before her arrival on the Owl's soccer team.

"In high school, I had a lot of injuries. Once I knew that I couldn't play due to an injury, I figure out how I can still be a part with the team," said Lucas. "Mentally, knowing that you're going to get through it and if I want to be active physically, I need to be okay mentally. You have to motivate yourself to keep going."

Lucas could not play last year due to injury, however, that did not stop her from being a part of the team. She took up a manager role and

participated as much as she possibly could.

"Abby is a really kind person; I would call her the perfect teammate. She's caring, she's cares about you, she cares about the team. She's not necessarily looking to only improve herself but improve the team as a whole. Her mentality is great, she's a team player, and honestly, even though she's had so many injuries she's still a huge part of the team and plays a big role on our team," said Goalkeeper Abby Allen, a junior.

Lucas plays one of the most important positions for her sport and is fortunate enough to be surrounded by a cast of goalkeepers who have a lot in common with each other.

Lucas and Allen have a close relationship that has only strengthened over the course of the past year.

"We're actually very close and we're kind of very similar people. We're caring with each other and have those laughs that a lot of the time other people wouldn't understand what we're talking about, but to us, it's just us," said Allen. "Surprisingly, Abby and I have a whole lot more in common than just being goalkeepers and having the name Abby."

Coincidentally, both Lucas and Allen are triplets, which Allen said helped build their foundation as teammates and friends.

"I remember the first time we met at Conn Hall, we were going through all the things that we had in common and it was insane," said Allen.

With her sophomore year underway, Lucas is focused on improving and hopes she can get some valuable playing time to show her progression and skills as a goalkeeper

## Owls and Huskies help in foodshare

By Edward Rudman  
Sports Writer

Southern Athletics continues to take part in community service and is giving back to the area, as the men's basketball team paired up with UConn and Foodshare, a food bank in Bloomfield, Conn., for a food drive.

"You got to give back. We've all been blessed and fortunate enough to be pretty okay in life and there's a lot of people out there struggling, especially during COVID," said Head Coach Scott Burrell. "Being able to put smiles on faces, putting food in their car, knowing they need it, it hits you and you realize you need to do more to help people."

Chris Smith, UConn's all-time leading scorer and former teammate of Burrell, helped organize the event and contacted the Owls' head coach about getting the program involved.

"All the UConn players still stay in contact with each other. So, I talk to Smith all the time. We have a group chat of like seven of us, so we talk often. He mentioned the event and the company he did it with, I did something for them during the break when COVID first hit. So, joining up with them, it was an easy sell and it's for a great cause," said Burrell.

By the end of the event, the two teams had filled approximately 2,000 trunks with food for those in need. Foodshare has been a prominent force during the COVID-19 pandemic, as they are closing in on filling 200,000 cars since the beginning of the outbreak, according to FOX61.

On top of giving back to the community and people in need, Burrell was also happy about getting his current team and his alma-team together to have some interaction with each other off the court.

"It's special, everyone knows of UConn but it's great to have Southern out there and doing things for the community, getting the notoriety that they well deserve and doing something for a great cause. It was great to see those guys have a little camaraderie while helping out a lot of people," said Burrell.

Smith has also started his own company called "Wear Ya Mask," which aims to give ordinary people a non-confrontational way to encourage others to consider the safety of those around them and wear their masks. Smith decided that a portion of the proceeds from selling t-shirts and masks will go to Foodshare to further help the community.

The two basketball programs utilized their platform as athletes to help others, something the players and Burrell hope they can do again soon.

"It was great to get out there and show that we're all in this together," said forward Greg Jones, a senior. "As a community, we still have each other and I feel like it was great for the teams to give back to show that while the community supports us with what we do, we're going to support them right back. It shows people on the team, it's not about yourself all the time, it's much bigger than you and I think it's good the team saw that."



PHOTO COURTESY | WWW.SOUTHERNCTOWLS.COM

Lucas (left), Allie Smith and Allen share a laugh together before a game.





## Women's hoops will be one to remember

Column By Mike Neville  
Sports Editor

After winning just four conference games and finishing last season with a tough 10-18 overall record, the Owls women's basketball team is reloaded and projects to exceed last year's underwhelming results.

This year, Head Coach Kate Lynch, entering her sixth season, has a roster of 13 players - eight of which are newcomers. However, the five she returns include star forwards Kiana Steinauer and Jessica Fressle, both graduate students.

Lynch will know exactly what her team is getting in Fressle and Steinauer, as both are equipped with experience and can each go off for 20-plus points and 10-plus rebounds on any given night. However, the rest of her lineup seems to be up in the air.

The backcourt will likely see the most change this year, after the departure of last year's starters: Ednaija Lassiter and 1000-point scorer Imani Wheeler.

Amani Boston, a sophomore, saw an exceptional amount of playing time as a freshman last year and could step in as Lynch's new starting point guard after showing glimpses of elite potential. Her speed is comparable to that of her predecessor's, and the toughness she brings will be key parts to her role on defense.

At 5-foot-7, Boston averaged seven points per game and a season high of 18 points against Adelphi, last season's number one team in the NE10.

Joining Boston in the backcourt will likely be the 6-foot-1 Alexa Kellner, a sophomore who was a regular in the starting lineup last year. While Kellner brings height to an otherwise shorter lineup, her three-point shot is where she is most valuable, as she scored over nine points per game on 33 percent from three.

Last season, Lynch utilized a starting lineup of three guards. This year she has the option to do the same, as guard Patricia Conroy, a senior transfer from Division I University of Albany, could join Boston and Kellner.

Conroy played in 29 games last year for the Great Danes, starting eight and averaging 4.6 points per game. She only averaged 3.7 points per game for her career but the transition from Division I to Division II could play to her benefit.

A healthy Owls team can be a very dangerous group this season, and if all goes according to plan, we could see this team make a deep run come the NCAA Tournament.

# Halloween to look different this year

By Desteny Maragh  
Reporter

Halloween used to be beloved holiday among students, but because of COVID-19, many students are now anxiously anticipating its arrival.

"There's nothing to do, nowhere to go," said psychology major Ashley Raymond, a sophomore.

Raymond says COVID-19 has hindered the excitement Halloween she once had.

"Growing up, I have always loved the end of year, because it's like a trifecta of holidays," said Raymond.

She recalled past Halloween's where she and her family or friends would go door to door, knocking and yelling "trick or treat" all night.

"Getting all dressed up is my favorite part of Halloween," said Raymond.

Raymond said if there was not a pandemic, "I would have been Wednesday from Addams family, I like the fact that she seldomly shows emotion."

Although Raymond said she will not be going door to door, she said she will still play her part and leave candy out in a bucket in her front yard for trick-or-treaters to take.

"I've decided that I'm going to celebrate with my boyfriend by carving pumpkins and watching scary movies," said Raymond.

Another student who is saddened that Halloween won't be as interactive as it used to be is communication disorders major Kasey Chambers, a freshman.

Chambers said COVID-19 is playing a major role in the holiday's interest decreasing.

"I like the fact that

Halloween is like that one day of the year where you can just let go and be free to wear or be whoever you want," said Chambers. "There's something freeing about Halloween, I wish it happened more than once a year."

Chambers said her typical Halloween usually consisted of going to a haunted house with her friends and handing out candy with her family.

"Halloween used to be my favorite holiday because it allows me to live as any fictional character I want for a day, I think that's the part I'm going to miss most," said Chambers. "It's pointless to just dress up and sit in the house, so I'm just going to watch movies all night."

She said because she lives with her grandmother and elderly are the most susceptible to getting infected, she does not want to take the risk.

Chambers said she hoped the pandemic would subside by now to give her a chance of celebrating but since not, she is trying to keep safe by limiting her exposure outside as much as possible.

"The thing I am most disappointed about not doing is going to the 'Trail of Terror.' It is open and running but the risk of going is just too large to take for me," said Chambers.

"Hopefully next year is different," said Chambers. One student trying to still hold onto the holiday spirit is theatre major, Francie Ortiz, a senior.

Ortiz said she will be painting her face for Halloween and will be wearing a costume.

She said "prior to COVID-19, I would go trick or treating and hand out candy," said Ortiz.

The intimacy that comes

along with celebrating Halloween is the main reason why many are canceling the holiday this year. Still, she said many people are trying to find other creative ways to celebrate for the kids.

Ortiz said she knows there's not much to do that is safe and still fun, but she will be trying her hardest to still make the most of the holiday.

Theater major, TJ Blotney, a senior, said "Halloween is pretty much canceled for me and family."

"Honestly I plan on staying home and catching up on some homework," said Blotney.

He said he'll miss being able to see kids enjoying themselves around his neighborhood wearing costumes and trick-or-treating.

"I think people will still be going out," Blotney said, "but I won't be taking part."



Two pumpkins that were painted at an event on Monday, Oct. 19 at 'Paint a Pumpkin' in Brownell Hall.

PHOTO | BRIA KIRKLIN

## Virtual 5K run held across Connecticut

By Bernadotte Sufka  
Features & Opinions Editor

A virtual 5K was held across Connecticut from Oct. 22-25, encouraging students to get out and run. Even during the new COVID-19 restrictions, it can still be held, but within an individual setting rather than students gathering in large groups to start the run.

"Our campus recreational and fitness department has been connecting with several of our other counterparts across Connecticut including Eastern, Western, Central, UConn and a handful of others," said Assistant Director of the Fitness Center Jessica Scibek.

She said they wanted to do something collaborative and bring people together around activities such as recreational and fitness.

"One of the things the subcommittee pulled together were the actual logistics across colleges in Connecticut to do fitness and something fun. That's where the Virtual 5K came from," said Scibek.

She participated in the 5K as well with a time of 34 minutes and 15 seconds, a pace of 11 minutes and two seconds per mile.

Students were able to register for this event via OwlConnect, through the university's recreational and fitness Instagram page or on the website itself at

ctcollegiate5k.org. Those who registered and finished the 5K were able to post a picture of themselves and time recorded on Instagram using the hashtag, #CTrunstogether.

They offered five free registrations to students who commented on the post and say where they would run or walk. The post itself held the even amount of comments for free entries on the first come, first serve basis.

"On Instagram they promoted the advertisement for it, and I was interested in it because I'm a track athlete and I enjoy running," said nursing major Maria Rita De Souza, a sophomore.

She said she was excited to run in it and one of the reasons why she applied and registered was because I enjoys doing distance running and for school spirit.

De Souza finished her 5K in 21 minutes and eight seconds with a paced of six minutes and 49 seconds per mile.

The event was new to the university and included an estimated 718 registrants from faculty/staff and alumni as well. There were even participants from Massachusetts who walked or ran.

"I saw the event on OwlConnect and Instagram," said exercise science major, Elliott Via, a sophomore.

Via completed the 5K in 20 minutes and 10 seconds with a six

minute and 30 second mile pace.

"I am excited to run it and I know exactly where I'm going to run; tomorrow, midafternoon and I'll run the 5K at West Rock," said Via.

A free t-shirt would also be given to participants who ran it and it would list the colleges that participated. The event was open for four days, from Oct. 22 to Oct. 25.

Next year, they plan on expanding this virtual 5K outside the state and collaborating more with other colleges to keep

this virtual connection continuing.

"We're happy to have so many people being active during this stressful period of midterms and chilly weather. We're proud of all the students who did it," said Scibek.

She said next month they plan to do a treadmill 5K event in person at the fitness center.

"We'll have it open for a few days to have more people be available," she said. "We're still trying to make opportunities for students to be active and

participate."

The fitness center has more events coming for many people and will not come to an end, even during this time of COVID-19. For having this virtual 5K happen for the first time and be successful, events such as so will continue and be open to students.

"It was exciting to team up with other schools for the one purpose to get everybody moving and bring some positivity to what we can do versus all the stuff we can't," said Scibek.



PHOTO | WWW.CTCOLLEGIATE5K.ORG

The logo for the virtual collegiate 5K event that took place on Oct. 22-25.



## Triay works to combat littering and pollution

By **Tayla Eriksen**  
Contributor

With COVID-19, comes the threat of pollution by Personal Protective Equipment, the rise of single-use plastics, and heavier human traffic in outdoor parks. Gabriela Triay has found ways to combat these issues in her everyday life.

Triay, who currently lives in Middletown, Conn. and is a graduate student studying environmental studies, recognizes how COVID-19 has impacted the environment in more ways than one.

She said she has seen a rise in littering, especially of masks and PPE. This rise, she said, can be linked to the heavier traffic flow on the hiking trails and in natural parks in

the area, due to influx of people having nothing to do during the peak of COVID-19.

A way that Triay said she combats litterers and keeps trails clean is by making sure she “always has a bag with her” to clean up any litter. To reduce single-use plastics, she tells herself everyday “let me remember my water bottle” so she won’t have to use single-use plastic ones.

Despite the negative consequences Triay has seen since COVID-19 hit, there have been shown positive impacts from this global pandemic.

A good example has been the decrease in travel, which she said reduces the speed of warming in the atmosphere.

She said that travel will surely increase again, but people need to find ways

to slow down the speed of the warming atmosphere by finding ways to make transportation cleaner.

She said she recently did a presentation on fuel-cell electric vehicles which reduces the use of gas and vehicles emitting CO2. She said that using fuel-cell electric vehicles will be a cleaner way of transportation.

Despite these challenges, Triay has big plans for herself in the future.

She said she “would love to one day move out of Connecticut to New Hampshire or Maine with her boyfriend and possibly live in a mobile, energy efficient home.”

She also said she would love to use the knowledge she has learned in her studies to help others on how to adapt to climate change and find new

ways of living to be more sustainable.

“The world changes so quickly that I don’t even want to pinpoint a certain job because there’s so many different jobs I could do also,” said Triay.

She said some other personal ways she practices being sustainably conscious is by asking herself about how her choices, like how buying new products will impact the environment.

She said she enjoys educating her friends as well about sustainable lifestyle changes.

“Sustainability is a journey not a destination,” said Triay, quoting one of her professors Steven Axon. “We can’t all be perfect all the time, but we can at least make an effort to change little habits in our lives slowly.”



PHOTO COURTESY | GABRIELA TRIAY

Gabriela Triay enjoying a day of canoeing.

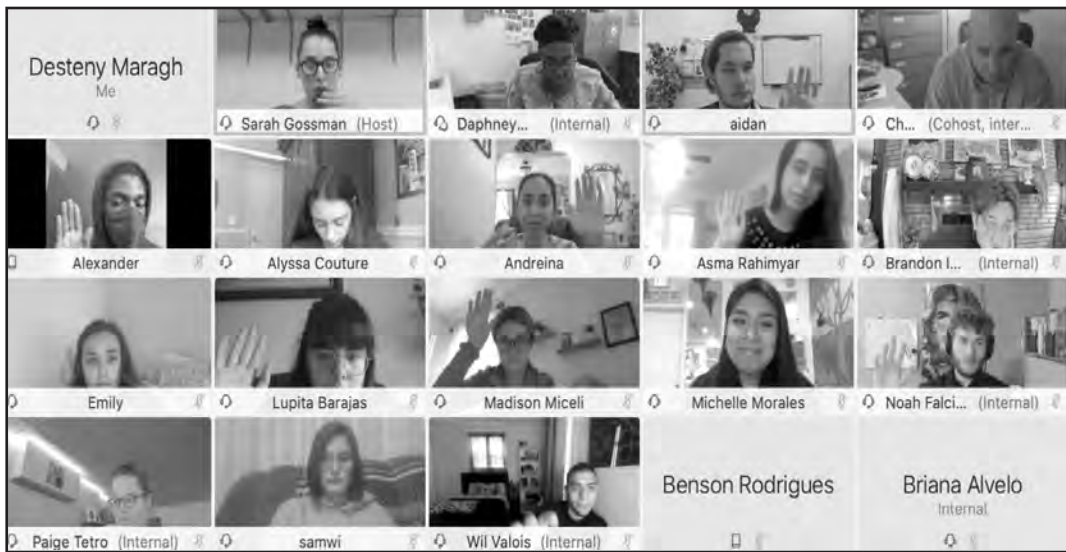


PHOTO | DESTENY MARAGH

SGA members at the weekly body meeting held via WebEx.

## New SGA representatives

By **Desteny Maragh**  
Reporter

The Student Government Association held elections and the new representatives for the undergraduate student body have been elected.

Undecided Kyle Thaxton, a freshman, is one of the new representatives at large.

Thaxton is still exploring the realms of education history or business administration as possible major paths.

“I serve as one of the many elected SGA Representatives-at-Large at Southern,” Thaxton said. “The role of every SGA Representative is to represent the student body and ensure that their concerns and voices are heard and acknowledged by the school administration and faculty.”

He said he is here to empower his peers so they receive an equitable and memorable education.

“As a member of the Board of Student Experience, I have a responsibility to raise students’ concerns about things that impact their general experience, excluding academics, at Southern,” said Thaxton.

He “wanted to become more involved on campus and hone my leadership skills. Also, I really wanted to be a voice for the LGBTQ+ community and for other marginalized groups that may feel as if their voice has been lost in the chaos of today’s world.”

“One of the many goals that I have is to ensure that the North Campus Townhouses that we use for our school’s COVID-19 protocols are appropriately meeting the needs of our isolated and quarantined students,” said Thaxton.

He said he uses Instagram as a tool to make students aware of what he has accomplished.

“As an individual representative and what SGA have done or plans to do in the future,” said Thaxton. “I think we need to continue to develop a strong link between SGA and the student body and I hope that I can be a major contributor in this effort,” he said.

Thaxton said he is hoping to “see more social justice events” like the Black Lives Matter, one that was held earlier this month.

“I intend to hold the school administration accountable for any policies that go against or contradict its social justice message,” said Thaxton.

Another new rep at large is political science and economics major Michelle Morales, a sophomore.

Morales said she now sits on the Board of Student Experience. Her position overall as an SGA Representative is to act as a liaison between the student body and the university by being a voice for her peers.

“I identify with several populations present on campus such as the first gen and Latinx community, and I wanted to see more people like me in leadership

positions to not only reflect our diverse student body but to also empower others to get involved,” she said.

Morales said her goal is to help make Southern a more diverse and inclusive place.

“SGA reps have an opportunity to have a seat at the table,” said Morales. “When important conversations are happening, we can advocate for student needs and improve our experience here at Southern.”

She said she hopes to bring more attention to commuter issues, given that commuters make up a significant portion of the population at Southern.

“I also want all students to feel supported during these difficult times by listening and voicing their concerns,” said Morales.

Another new rep is sociology major Andreina Barajas Novoa, a freshman. “I wanted to advocate for the needs of commuter students and to help Southern achieve what it means to be a social justice University,” said Novoa.

She said she believed the only way to accomplish both things were to join SGA and help be the change she wants to see.

“My goal is to put words into action by advocating for commuter students and people of color,” said Novoa. “It’s important to ensure that SGA is composed of a diverse set of students being in terms of ethnicity or commuter/resident status.”

## Women talk about politics

By **Sofia Rositani**  
Arts & Entertainment Editor

Women who are a part of politics sat down for an hour on Thursday, Oct. 23 to talk about being a woman in a political position in Connecticut, and how they worked their way to be in that position.

This virtual event was sponsored by the Office for Student Conduct & Civic Responsibility, the Political Science Department, the Journalism Department, and the College Democrats and Republicans. The host was Professor Theresa Marchant-Shapiro.

Originally supposed to be in-person event, due to COVID-19, it was held virtually on Facebook live through the Southern Facebook account.

“We were able to get these four amazing women to come and talk to our Southern students about what it’s like to be a woman involved in politics,” said Marchant-Shapiro.

The four women who spoke at the event included Office of Lt. Governor Susan Bysiewicz, State of Connecticut, Rep. Themis Klarides, Minority Leader, Connecticut House Republicans; State Representative Robyn Porter, Connecticut House Democrats; Rep. Rosa Rehimbas, Connecticut House Republicans.

Bysiewicz is one of the four women who spoke during the event about what got her into the position she is in now. She said that she noticed the issues in Middletown that effected her and her

family on a daily basis such as, crime rates, a nuclear power plant being decommissioned, and the public-school system.

“I thought to myself after a couple of days, you know what my husband is right and I should stop worrying about all of these things and this would be a job where I could do something about all of these issues that were of concern to me,” Bysiewicz said.

The women on the panel came from diverse backgrounds and political parties.

One was Klarides, who is a minority leader for the Republican party, while Porter is a representative of the Democratic party.

“I am truly grateful for all the women, but also the men, who then knew enough to be able to provide all us citizens the equal opportunity to vote. And I think with that gave an equal opportunity to have our voices heard,” said Rehimbas.

Rehimbas also said giving women these roles brings unique perspectives and experiences to these jobs.

“The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex,” as written in the Constitution of United States of America.

This amendment came to be after women marched for the right to vote 100 years ago, also called Women’s Suffrage. While women did finally get the right to vote, Black women were still unable to due to

the Jim Crow Law years later. Some of the women who did get the right to vote did not help the Black men and women get their rights, according to Porter.

“We are the birthers of nations. Without women the world doesn’t exist so the fact that we were left out from the beginning, and Black women and women of color are still struggling to have the right to vote,” Porter said.

Porter continued with saying that many of the women who fought for the right to vote did not help when it came to the Civil Rights march allowing rights for Black men and women.

Marchant-Shapiro said the gender gap has widened since women got the right to vote because they want to see more family issues talked about, such as the children in cages at the border, and since the last election the gender gap has gotten wider and the country is seeing more women run for office.

“According to the polls, that gap is widening this year, just looking in on the Trump policies and not seeing it as for family or pro-women in the way they want to see it,” Marchant-Shapiro said.

The women on the panel were complimenting each other at the event and were aware of other’s political differences and beliefs.

“We often say that women were given the right to vote and we know that is absolutely not true,” Porter said. “Women fought hard for the right to vote.”



PHOTO | SOFIA ROSITANI

State Representative Robyn Porter CT representative of the Democratic Party.



## Halloween activities build community

By Donovan Wilson  
Reporter

Halloween season is one that usually excites college students, but this year things are much different. The campus is doing its part to help kids adapt.

On Monday Oct. 19, there was a Halloween themed social event on campus titled “Nightmare On Farnham Street.” The event was hosted by Farnham RA Aleeki Shortridge in the Farnham residential hall building. “Since nothing’s going

on, I wanted us to be able to do something as a floor that includes social distancing. I love my socials in the lobby, it helps make life as normal as possible for the freshmen,” Shortridge said.

The event encouraged everyone to come in costume, just like a normal Halloween celebration. The host herself dressed as what she referred to as the “devil that wears Prada.” While not all students came in costumes, a group of students did arrive dressed as fairies.

“Our RAs are awesome at building a community aspect. It helps us to chill out and get out of the routine of homework,” said psychology major Connor Elci, a freshman.

Besides celebrating the holiday, one of the major aspects of the event was building community in a time of isolation. Providing activities for the residents to do together helps them to meet people and feel less alone. It seems important to RAs and residents alike that these events help them meet

their community. This event included many Halloween-themed activities this included pumpkin painting, and making slime. The students were then allowed to take their creations home.

“I came because I didn’t want to do my homework. It’s a good way to interact during COVID-19 and have somewhat of a normal college feel to things,” said psychology major Kaytlyn Caban, a freshman.

As with many socials, food was a key aspect. The food served were fun sized

bags of chips and candy. The drink selection was water and Hugs juice.

Music was also a part of this event. The night started with Halloween-themed pop songs and transitioned into a playlist of Disney Halloween themed songs. The rest of the night was a spattering of general hits ranging from Michael Jackson to BTS to many other popular culture themes

“It’s just very fun and creative and makes us as creative as possible and helps us meet new people,”

said special education major Nitza Pinto, a freshman.

The entire lobby was covered in Halloween place mats. That tied in with the music, candy and costumes really made the whole thing feel like a giant celebration of Halloween.

As always, social distancing was applied here. All attendees were required to be wearing their masks and stay six feet apart at all times. All this allowed for a healthy environment to meet new people.



PHOTO | BRIA KIRKLIN

Students painting pumpkins one of the activities at the event at Farnham hall.



PHOTO | BRIA KIRKLIN

Students in costume painting a mason jars at the Nightmare on Farnham Ave event.

## Students addicted to ‘Among Us’

By Donovan Wilson  
Reporter

What started as a meme has become a world and campus-wide phenomenon called “Among Us.”

The multiplayer mobile game “Among Us” revolves around a crew in a spaceship. It typically is about ten people in one of three maps. There are around eight crewmates and one to three imposters.

Crewmates attempt tasks around the map. The imposters have to kill the crewmates without getting caught and once a member is found dead, a meeting is held to hopefully vote out the imposter responsible – however, many people try to deceive each other.

“I think I am addicted to the game because it’s a murder mystery. It takes strategy but also teamwork. You have to make a strategy whether you are the imposter or the

crewmate,” said psychology major Jacquelyn Jurewicz, a sophomore.

One of the reasons people are attracted to “Among Us” is the strategy it takes to master the game. Some people might play singularly, but the way to get ahead is teamwork. Whether an imposter or a crewmate, players are on a team and can use that aspect to the players advantage to get ahead in the game or ignore it, which may end in the players untimely demise.

“There isn’t a lot of skills required to be good at it, which is another reason why I think a lot of others really took to it. Like I play rocket league and to be really good at it. You need over 1000 hours but for ‘Among Us,’ you could be really good just after a week of playing,” said biotech major Miles Bagoly, a junior.

Another big reason for the games huge and

sudden popularity is its accessibility. The game is only \$5 on a computer and entirely free on a phone with the downloadable content being optional, so it is affordable for almost anybody.

The gameplay is also intuitive and can be picked up easily within about three games, making it very easy to sink a lot of time into.

“With the right group of people, it enhances the experiences. I think that’s the lure to “Among Us” over the aforementioned Town of Salem or Werewolf Online, which can be arranged, but it’s harder to manage,” said psychology major Jacob Adorno, a sophomore.

“Among Us” is beginning to become more popular than its peers. Games like “Town Of Salem” share a similar concept but have taken a backseat compared to the game. Its accessibility and more strategic nature

definitely led to this aspect.

Customizability is another large draw to the game. Players get to pick their name, color, hat, skin and even how the game runs if they are the one in charge of the lobby. Players also have the option to buy pets who will follow them around during the game and one of them is a mini version of the players character that will remain where they were killed for the rest of the game, if you are indeed killed.

The game has blown up this year, yet it is not new; it was originally released back in 2018. However, during the summer and the quarantine of this year, games of a party like multiplayer nature rose to popularity, specifically “Among Us” and “Fall Guys.” The latter has begun to dip significantly in popularity but with new updates planned, “Among Us” is getting bigger.

## Revived series brings suspense

By Jessica Guerrucci  
Editor-in-Chief

Just in time for Halloween, this spooky series has returned for a second volume, bringing us more “Unsolved Mysteries” that leave viewers wanting to know more.

The second volume brings suspicious deaths, missing children, spirit encounters and more.

The opening episode featured the murder of Jack Wheeler, a former White House aide, whose body was found in a landfill.

The episode shows Wheeler in the days before his disappearance wandering around. This led me to believe that he just lost it, especially after the episode mentioned he had bipolar disorder.

Other theories arose that he was assassinated by the United States government because he knew something he shouldn’t.

The fifth episode was the one I found the most haunting. It was about the disappearance of JoAnn Romain after attending a prayer service in January 2010. Police first ruled it a suicide, saying he simply walked into the water, but her daughters thought otherwise.

It took two months until her body was found in the Detroit River, 35 miles from where she was believed to have died – but the water which she supposedly walked into was only a few feet deep

and had no current.

By far the most bizarre thing to happen was in episode three, when they let a death row fugitive go Christmas shopping in 1973 unsupervised and expected him not to escape.

The most powerful episode was “Tsumani Spirits,” which tells the stories of the spirits who live in the Tohoku region of Japan after they were killed in March 2011 after being hit by a 9.0 magnitude earthquake.

I do think it’s possible that these ghosts still haunt the island. Interestingly, it was claimed they don’t know that they’re dead.

“A Death in Oslo” was the most mysterious of all.

A woman was killed in a hotel. She checked in under a false identity and years later her death and her identity have remained a mystery. I just found this one to be frustrating since they really had no evidence to go off of.

The final episode of the season was the most heart wrenching. It focuses on two toddlers that vanished from the same New York City park in May and August 1989.

All of these other stories seem bizarre and unlikely to happen, but stolen kids could. Of all the episodes, I think that this one has the potential to be solved.

So if you’re looking for a series to give you some chills around the Halloween season, “Unsolved Mysteries” Volume Two is definitely worth the watch.



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION | SOFIA ROSITANI

“Among Us,” the virtual multiplayer game being played by a student on an iPhone XR