

# THE CAVALIER DAILY

Vol. 131, Issue 1

Thursday, September 3, 2020

EMMA KLEIN | THE CAVALIER DAILY

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# Letter from the Editor-in-Chief

## To our readers:

With students returning to Grounds this week, we are pleased to present our first print edition of the fall 2020 semester. In this issue, you will find stories about student's responses to attending in-person classes, concerns about living in on-Grounds housing and how the community is navigating the University's reopening plan.

As we find ourselves embarking on yet another historic semester faced with unprecedented challenges and uncertainties, The Cavalier Daily remains committed to pro-

viding the University community with new, relevant and insightful information that inspires critical conversation and impactful action. While most classes are being offered remotely, COVID-19 is still very much a public health and safety threat to the University and Charlottesville communities, and our volunteer staff members and editors are working around the clock to ensure that you can count on us to listen to your voices and keep you informed of important developments.

However, with students located

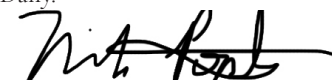
across the globe for an online educational experience — combined with a lack of funding and advertisements — we have decided to print our newspaper less frequently this semester with three issues per month. We will continue to update our online digital content daily through our website and social media platforms, as well as send a daily newsletter to subscribers.

Our goal is to resume weekly print production once health and safety conditions improve and all students are able to return to Grounds. Until then, we will con-

tinue to build a more robust digital presence and experiment with innovative methods of storytelling which convey our collective student experience amidst one of the most challenging times in history.

In this time of shared uncertainty, it is more important than ever for us to stay connected, listen to each other's stories and hold our leaders accountable. You can count on The Cavalier Daily to continue publishing breaking and investigative stories that answer the questions that we all deserve to know. Thank you for your continued sup-

port throughout this unprecedented historic time as we all grapple with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Please join us in our mission of keeping the University community informed and creating opportunities for the next generation of journalists by making a tax-deductible donation to The Cavalier Daily.



Nik Popli  
Editor-in-Chief,  
131st term of The Cavalier Daily

## NEWS



TYRA KREHBIEL | THE CAVALIER DAILY

# COVID-19 AT U.VA. BY THE NUMBERS

Since Aug. 17

155

117

Total positive cases in U.Va. community

Student cases

On Sept. 1

31

28

Total positive COVID-19 test results reported in U.Va. community

Student cases

17,203

55

Students tested negative before arrival

Students tested positive

4,400

Total students moving into on-Grounds housing before in-person classes begin Sept. 8

Case data was obtained from U.Va. COVID Tracker, which was last updated Sept. 2 at 7:20 a.m. The tracker only includes data from testing conducted through U.Va. Health and pre-arrival testing vendor LetsGetChecked.



# On-Grounds housing converted for quarantine

The International Residential College, Johnson, Malone and Weedon and Shea House are the residences being converted

Ali Sullivan | News Editor

Residents of the International Residential College, Johnson, Malone and Weedon Houses and Shea House were given just 24 hours to choose a housing reassignment or remain off-Grounds after learning on Aug. 28 at 8:00 p.m. that their dormitories were being converted into quarantine and isolation areas.

Residents of the three housing communities received the Housing and Residence Life email informing them of the decision just three hours after the University announced its intention to forge ahead with in-person classes this fall. In that Aug. 28 Return to Grounds email, the University's senior leadership alluded to the creation of "additional spaces for isolation and quarantine."

University spokesperson Wes Hester said in an email to The Cavalier Daily that the choice to convert the residences was made in "real time" and "needed to be made quickly and was made after consultation with the Provost [Liz Magill], the Chief Operating Officer [J.J. Davis] and the Vice President and Chief Student Affairs Officer [Patricia Lampkin]."

"This was a difficult decision and we wish it were otherwise," Hester said.

The decision has blindsided on-Grounds housing residents, who said they had no idea their housing was under consideration for quarantine conversion.

Among the students forced to relocate days before their move-in date is fourth-year College student Jenny Ding, who has lived in the IRC since her second year. Amid the tumult of online classes and post-grad job hunting, Ding had found solace in knowing she could return this fall to the IRC — a community that she calls home.

"That was one less thing I had to worry about," Ding said.

The late-night Housing and Residence Life email now leaves Ding and other residents with two options — submit their preference for a new housing assignment or forfeit their on-Grounds housing.

That binary choice worries IRC resident and third-year College student Soumil Madhiwala, who fears being reassigned to an on-Grounds apartment with roommates who fail to take adequate COVID-19 precautions. He and his roommate were well-prepared to social distance, and the IRC was at only 32 percent occupancy — making distancing much more feasible.



RILEY WALSH | THE CAVALIER DAILY

"It just makes me wonder how many cases they're actually expecting to have once everyone returns," second-year Curry student Arnaldo Sandoval said.

"Now I have to look out for my safety in terms of who I'm with," Madhiwala said.

Each housing community being converted into a quarantine and isolation area was below 35 percent capacity, according to Hester.

"Of the 4,400 students living in our residences, this decision impacted a couple hundred students," Hester said.

Affected students still have the option to cancel their on-Grounds contract at no penalty, provided that they contact HRL before their move-in date. Students who move into higher-priced housing reassignments will not have to pay more than they were initially charged for the IRC, Johnson, Weedon and Malone or Shea House. If they move into lower-priced housing, they will pay the lower rate.

Residents may also indicate their preference for a single or double room.

Still, questions remain.

Madhiwala wonders whether he will be able to stay with his roommate if he is reassigned. Others speculate whether canceling their housing contract will put them at a disadvantage for finding on-Grounds housing this Spring.

"We are just left in the dark

about everything," Ding said.

With HRL offices closed on the weekend, some residents report that they have been unable to find answers to their housing questions. The only information Ding has obtained, she said, has been through the principal of the IRC, Engineering Prof. Reid Bailey, who said in an interview with The Cavalier Daily that he had not been consulted prior to the University's decision to shut down dormitories.

Bailey learned in a later conversation with Dean of Students Allen Groves that University administration had initially planned to alert students of the decision Friday morning but ultimately delayed the notice.

A source from within HRL — who asked to remain anonymous due to an HRL policy which restricts employees from speaking to the press — said several Resident Advisors had already moved into the residences being consolidated for quarantine. Those RAs received communication of their reassignment to different dormitories nearly an hour after their residents had received communication about the decision from HRL.

Many RAs first learned of the news from their residents. All have been reassigned to new dor-

mitories.

While Bailey is frustrated with the lack of communication, he said the real issue is breaking up a tight-knit community of students — especially one grounded in the celebration of multiculturalism, diversity and inclusion.

"They haven't just moved students," Bailey said. "They've hurt a community."

Ding called the decision to break up IRC — which boasts the largest international-to-domestic student ratio on-Grounds — "hypocritical" in the face of the University's well-publicized efforts toward racial justice, such as the recently-formed Racial Equity Task Force.

Students in the IRC were provided the option to be reassigned to Hereford or Brown College, the University's two other residential colleges. That offer, Bailey said, reveals a detachment between administration and residential college students who choose their housing not for the residential college experience, but for the college's unique community.

"The fact that that is included to placate the concerns or to make it less bad for IRC shows a disconnect, a misunderstanding by the decision makers," Bailey said. "I don't think anybody on the decision-making team has stepped

foot on the IRC since I've been here."

Choosing to move off-Grounds presents other difficulties.

Second-year Curry student Arnaldo Sandoval planned to move into the Johnson, Malone and Weedon Houses Sept. 6. With his classes in full-swing and move-in just around the corner, he has little time or resources to find housing off-Grounds.

"I'm ultimately left to live on-Grounds," Sandoval said.

Hoping for a single bedroom, Sandoval asked to move to Bond House for his reassignment — an option Madhiwala is considering as well.

Madhiwala said he is also contemplating staying at home. If he were to move into a new dormitory, he would be doing so without the community he forged in his two years at the IRC.

"It's almost as if I'm going back to first year as a third-year student," Madhiwala said.

The lack of transparency as last-minute nature of the decision leaves Sandoval wary for the future of the fall semester.

"It just makes me wonder how many cases they're actually expecting to have once everyone returns," Sandoval said.



# RAs submit 10 demands to U.Va. amid pandemic

The RAs anonymously submitted a list of demands to HRL due to a policy that restricts Resident Staff from speaking to the press

Jacquelyn Kim | Magazine Editor

Resident advisors at the University anonymously published a list of demands via Twitter Aug. 28, calling upon Housing and Residence Life to treat Resident Staffers as “frontline workers” and provide them with the “necessary resources to fulfill our role and protect ourselves, our residents and the community.”

While the RAs recognize in the letter accompanying their list of demands that the task of creating a “meaningful, safe, and equitable college experience for thousands of students” is “no small feat,” they express concerns about the safety of the University and Charlottesville communities.

“[W]e worry as U.Va. Resident Staff that all of the restrictions, guidelines and precautionary measures set forth by the University will fall short of their goal to keep all students, faculty and staff safe, a reality that several universities have already faced,” the letter states. “The University will not protect students, faculty, staff and the greater Charlottesville community if they do not follow through with the needs of their workers on the frontlines, including resident staff.”

The letter and list of demands has garnered signatures from 272 individuals and 16 organizations as of press time. Among the signatories are current and former resident staffers, faculty, undergraduate and graduate students, alumni and Charlottesville community members. Of the 272 individuals, approximately 25 percent are current or former resident staffers.

Student Council was one of the 16 organizations who signed in support, and they passed a resolution Tuesday night in “strong support” of the demands made by the RAs.

The list of demands is divided into two sections — COVID-19 and safety-related demands and equity, inclusion and safety-related demands.

The COVID-19 and safety-related demands include financial compensation and hazard pay, adequate personal protective equipment and risk reduction, revised and clearly articulated policing and COVID-19 guidelines, provisions for food security and housing stability and revised financial aid policies for resident staff.

The equity, inclusion and safety-related demands include RA representation as student employees in the University’s Human Resources system, the

hiring of a third-party anti-racist consultant and professional staff liaison and also co-chair accountability in the form of a democratic election rather than appointment.

The demands were published anonymously because of an HRL policy that restricts resident staffers from speaking to the press. Currently, only the co-chairs of Resident Staff — who are appointed by HRL and not elected by resident staffers — may publicly speak to the press.

Fourth-year College student

condition of anonymity due to the aforementioned HRL policy.

According to Alex, the campaign was inspired by the efforts of resident staff at Cornell University, who organized a strike Aug. 20 that ended that day when the Cornell administration agreed to engage in dialogue. Since Aug. 20, resident staff at other colleges — including the University of Michigan, University of Utah and University of Arkansas — have also followed in the footsteps of those at Cornell.

“The inspiration was Cor-

cumstances amidst the current COVID-19 pandemic and also those which have been common grievances among RAs for many years.

After releasing the statement, numerous former and current RAs reached out to Alex and Carter to commend them for mobilizing a group to finally speak out.

“Things like that [just go to show that] this has been years of people having these same issues with HRL and being scared to voice them because they were

community Aug. 13, while condemning the “intimidating and abhorrent behavior intended to strike fear and sow division in our community” of the white supremacists, she also emphasized that “the University supports the First Amendment rights to free speech and peaceable assembly.”

“The University literally protects the freedom of speech of neo-nazis on our campus but does not do the same for its students who are resident staff,” Carter said. “It’s not student self-governance if I can’t be critical of the governance part of it.”

According to Alex and Carter, RAs were told during their training that only the HRL co-chairs could speak to the media or the press on behalf of HRL or in regards to their individual roles in HRL. The Resident Staff Program Agreement states that “the Chair(s) of the Resident Staff program represents Resident Staff to the University, the press and the public.”

The RAs’ first demand is for the University to provide all HRL employees who are working directly with residents hazard pay compensation for working during a pandemic in the form of a stipend of \$2,226.67 per semester, equivalent to one-third of the housing remunerations RAs currently receive. Currently, RAs do not receive any sort of stipend as a part of their compensation.

Their second demand is for “adequate personal protective equipment and risk reduction” in recognition of the fact that the “risks associated with our jobs as RAs and SRs have increased with the possibility of COVID-19 in the dorms.”

Carter emphasized that hazard pay and additional PPE should be provided for not only resident staffers but also facilities management workers “who are also going into the bathrooms and doing a lot of front-line work.”

Similarly, Alex expressed that the group of RAs who created the list of demands believe that resources should be made accessible to all those who might require them.

“Our letter touched on the issues of RAs, but we wanted it... to be applicable to everyone that interacts with dorm life or things at U.Va.,” Alex said. “Even in our demand about PPE, we [the RAs] want that extra PPE, but also residents should have access if they do need additional PPE and stuff like that. The [demand] about



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The letter and list of demands has garnered signatures from over 270 individuals and 16 organizations as of press time.

Ja'Mel Reed and fourth-year Engineering student Anna Winter are serving as the 2020-21 HRL co-chairs. Although they signed on in support of the demands, they did so in their capacities as fellow students and not officially as the HRL co-chairs.

In their letter, the RAs requested a response from HRL by Sept. 1. However, HRL has yet to release a response as of press time.

Alex and Carter\* — two resident staffers who spearheaded the efforts to create the list of demands — agreed to speak with The Cavalier Daily under the

nell and seeing how much support they had garnered [from their community],” Alex said. “I thought we could do something like that if we all worked together.”

Alex and Carter reached out to other resident staffers they thought might be interested in collaborating on this campaign and assembled approximately 20 people to work on creating the letter and list of demands. For the 2019-20 academic year, HRL employed 218 RAs.

Together, the group of RAs compiled their concerns, both those relevant to the unique cir-

scared to lose their job,” Alex said. “How can you be proud of yourself as an institution or a part of the University ... and have people who are scared to speak up and voice their concerns?”

Alex and Carter each expressed frustrations with HRL’s blanket restrictions surrounding media coverage, pointing to how the University has previously emphasized the importance of the freedom of speech, particularly in the wake of the white supremacist rallies of Aug. 11 and 12 in Charlottesville.

In then-President Teresa Sullivan’s message to the University





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In their letter, the RAs requested a response from HRL by Sept. 1. However, HRL has yet to release a response as of press time.

housing stability is also something that we would want there to be for residents if we went online. It's bigger than us, and we know that and realize that."

In their demands, the RAs also draw attention to what they see as the potential establishment of a "culture of actively policing and shaming students" that would run the risk of students not self-reporting symptoms or reaching out to the proper services in fear of retribution and also the risk of marginalized students in particular perhaps feeling overpoliced, given the fact that Black and Asian students are disproportionately policed on Grounds.

The RAs demand that HRL "acknowledge that Resident Staff cannot constantly police residents to maintain six feet of social distancing in dorms and wear masks in all dorm areas but their rooms." Additionally, they emphasize that "[c]onstantly needing to be hyper vigilant in our halls is traumatizing and detrimental to the mental and physical stability of RAs and SRs."

Alex and Carter also believe that the conversation about students policing each other should be expanded to include a critical eye at the University's relationships with police and policing culture in general. According to them, interactions with police were not discussed during their week-long RA orientation, and, when asked by an RA about concerns regarding potential interactions with police, HRL staff did not have an adequate answer.

"When people brought it up in a different conversation, [HRL staff] were like, 'Oh, I haven't really thought about that,'

or 'I don't really have an answer,'" Alex said.

Alex expressed frustrations with what they see as a lack of preparation and thought regarding potential police interactions with students and residential staffers.

"If you really have nothing to say, it means that it hasn't been in your conversations over the past few months when Black and brown people are dying at the hands of police, and you guys didn't say anything, make a statement or anything," Alex said. "The policing is not only within the dorms, but it's a bigger issue within HRL that there's such a huge reliance [on police] ... and there's no consideration of how a resident staffer might feel about that situation."

Carter added that, in light of the University's "supposed efforts to be more diverse and equitable," the University and HRL's "dependence on police for safety is ridiculous."

Additionally, the RAs' demands include provisions for augmented meal plans — given that community kitchens in dormitories will be closed — and for financial compensation in the event of students being sent home due to COVID-19 for the fall semester.

When students were sent home in March during the spring semester, those living in on-Grounds housing received prorated refunds for housing and meal plans. However, RAs did not receive any of the value of their dining or housing plans.

In April, Student Council passed a resolution "calling for equitable compensation" for RAs

and was in conversation with HRL and Andy Petters, associate dean of students and director of residence life. Ultimately, however, RAs did not receive any form of compensation for the remainder of the spring semester despite many of them having reported that they were continuing to provide support for their residents after move-out in March.

Because RAs receive compensation in the form of housing and meal swipes, their remunerations are processed as an outside scholarship in the calculations for their individual financial aid

packages, thereby impacting the grants and work-study opportunities for which a student might have typically qualified had they not become an RA.

Thus, the RAs have included a demand for revised financial aid policies that would not impact the typical financial aid packages that RAs would receive, citing the impact on students of low-income backgrounds.

"The University often talks about being a best-value school, and their whole strategic investment plan is that they are one of the best-value schools in the nation, but undercompensating RAs to make it a best-value school for residents is not being a best-value school," Carter said. "Making it a best-value school for first-years but undercompensating RAs is so exploitative."

A group of University employees announced last week the formation of a wall-to-wall union and launched their #ActFastUVA campaign, which demands that the University address student, worker and community concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic and racial injustice. Although the union signed on in support of the letter and list of demands created by the RAs, resident advisors are ineligible to join the union because they are not technically University employees and are not on the official payroll of the University.

In order to join the union, the RAs would need to be represented as student employees in the University's HR system, a demand they have also included in their list. The designation as student employees would grant RAs benefits and protections in the form of set processes for

grievance resolution, protection against retaliation and employee relations, which are currently not codified within HRL according to the RAs.

In reflecting upon their experience last year as a returning RA this year, Alex characterized the relationships and interactions between HRL and resident staff as having been "always [messed] up."

"I think that [the University] gives us a little bit, and people are [excited], but [the problems are] deeper than that," Alex said. "[The University gives us] little things that keep people going. I think I and other people feel like now, more than ever, was the time to hit them when they're vulnerable, and it's an open wound. They know that they're messing up."

As a first-time RA, Carter was excited to become an RA but expressed disappointment with their interactions with HRL thus far.

"I personally don't feel supported by HRL as a first-time RA," they said. "I was ready to take on the role of RA, but under a pandemic I would really just expect them to do more. They're really a quintessential example of trying to operate business as usual."

Additionally, Carter emphasized that the RAs must prioritize their own health.

"Yes, I care about this work, and I want to protect students, but, ultimately, I'm not a martyr."

*\*The names in this story have been changed to protect the sources' privacy due to an HRL policy that restricts resident staffers from speaking to the press.*



EMMA KLEIN | THE CAVALIER DAILY

"Yes, I care about this work, and I want to protect students, but, ultimately, I'm not a martyr," an anonymous HRL staffer said.



# Students question return to on-Grounds housing

Guidelines for living in on-Grounds housing present health concerns for residents and staff

Patrick Roney | Senior Writer



EMMA KLEIN | THE CAVALIER DAILY

Some RAs are especially concerned about the balance between fulfilling their responsibilities as advisors and keeping themselves safe.

As the University welcomes back students, Resident Advisors are tasked with ensuring that students adhere to University guidelines in order to protect the community from the spread of COVID-19. However, with the University committing to an in-person semester, some RAs feel uncomfortable with current policies and the lack of agency given to them.

A letter from UVa. Resident Staff circulated Aug. 28 demanding that Housing and Residence Life prioritize their public health and address concerns about racial equity. Demands include RA housing stability and whistleblower protections for staff to speak freely about HRL without retaliation from the organization. The letter also calls for HRL employees to receive \$2,226.67 stipends and increased personal protective equipment such as face masks and gloves.

One RA spoke with The Cavalier Daily on the condition of anonymity about HRL policies. Part of their frustration stems from the lack of communication between HRL and RAs. Despite having to move in two weeks earlier than residents in order to attend orientation training, RAs found out about their move-in delay at the same time as residents. Plans changed drastically as they had to adjust on short notice.

Some RAs are especially concerned about the balance between fulfilling their responsibilities as advisors and keeping themselves safe.

“We’re employees of the University but we’re being completely treated like commodities,” they said. “All that matters for them is having RAs here because they need us here, so they can have residents here so they can charge room and board.”

Second-year College student David Bass is returning to live in on-Grounds housing this fall and says he feels confident in his decision because he and his roommates will avoid risky actions by wearing masks and not attending gatherings with more than 15 people.

“I think that if everyone follows the University’s guidelines diligently, then yes [the policies] are enough to keep me safe,” Bass said. “Preventing COVID-19 is a very easy task if everyone follows directions.”

Like Bass, second-year College student Quinn Feeney said she feels safe living on Grounds during the semester. She plans to live in a bubble with her roommates to minimize contact with others to reduce her chances of contracting COVID-19.

As for HRL’s guidelines, Feeney wishes the University provided clearer details as to how the policies will be enforced. Ultimately, she re-

alizes that the University is placing responsibility for prevention on its students.

One aspect of prevention may involve students like first-year College student Emma Mei, who said she is willing to report classmates who do not adhere to University policies of social distancing. Based on behaviors she’s observed on social media, she said she does not trust fellow members of the University community to prevent an outbreak.

Another factor that makes Mei wary of this semester is the University’s COVID tracker, which, as of Wednesday, shows 155 total cases in the University community — 117 of which are student cases. The rise in reported University cases make her afraid of catching the virus when more students come back to Grounds which would lead to her missing class time and school work.

Yet, despite her trepidations, she will live on Grounds this semester in order to focus on her academic work and receive some experience at the University, though she still does not feel safe returning.

“Honestly [UVa.] seems more concerned about making sure the money that they’ve put into this prevention pays off,” Mei said. “They’re not willing to back out now, even if it could be detrimental to student health. But

at the same time, I feel like as a first year that I really do want to get that first-year experience.”

Another factor that makes Mei uncomfortable returning is the lack of information she has received about her housing situation. Despite her move-in date being days away, she has not received any contact from her RA and is still unclear about acceptable practices for dorm life. For instance, students are still unsure about whether friends from other dorms are allowed to visit, or who will supply the disinfectant wipes used to wipe down common spaces in the bathroom.

The University’s current guidelines include having 15 people or less at all gatherings, wearing face masks at all times — unless with roommates — and maintaining six feet of social distance. In residence halls, access to spaces will be limited to building residents and select staff only, overnight guests will not be permitted and only two visitors will be allowed to assist a student during move-in, according to University policy. Students who live on Grounds will also receive designated sink, stall and shower assignments.

The RA considers HRL’s policies to be impractical and unable to actually protect students, and also claims that HRL has provided contradic-

tory information about safety protocols. For example, HRL staff supposedly informed RAs at a training session that gatherings could exceed the 15 person limit if all the attendees lived in the same dorm, then notified RAs later via email to say gatherings may never exceed 15 people.

The RA fears that instead of adjusting policies to learn from the faults of other universities — such as the University of North Carolina and the University of Notre Dame — the University has only emphasized repercussions if policies were to be broken.

“These policies aren’t robust enough,” the source said. “People’s lives are at stake.”

They added that the lack of consistent information and impractical policies has led to low morale among RAs. Under current HRL guidelines, an RA will not know that a resident tests positive for COVID-19 unless the student tells the RA themselves. The policies prize protecting personal privacy above general public health, according to the RA.

“I don’t feel safe,” the RA said. “There’s nothing in place to keep us safe. You can follow all the guidelines, and I still don’t know if it’s effective. Plus, we don’t actually have a way to properly enforce [policies]. It’s a ticking time bomb.”

University Spokesperson Brian Coy told The Cavalier Daily that the University aims to stop a potential virus outbreak by providing informational resources to returning students, such as guidance on isolation and quarantine. In addition to these resources, all returning students signed a pledge affirming that they will adhere to health guidelines both on and off Grounds. The University encourages students to take measures to protect themselves and their community.

Coy also added that the location of quarantine and isolation housing will not be disclosed in order to protect student privacy. He stated that the University expects the number of quarantine beds to fluctuate depending on the facilities available to house COVID-19 positive students.

“The University is working hard to make our return to Grounds as safe and successful as possible for our students, faculty, staff and Charlottesville neighbors,” Coy said.

HRL did not respond for comment.



# Die-In held to protest on-Grounds instruction

Around 50 students and Charlottesville community members gathered against the University's fall reopening plan

Erin Rafferty | Staff Writer

A “Die-In” demonstration held by U.Va. Young Democratic Socialists of America, Charlottesville Democratic Socialists of America and the United Campus Workers of Virginia at U.Va. attracted approximately 50 protesters to symbolically pretend to lie dead on the Lawn on Sept. 2, in protest of the University's reopening plans.

The purpose of the demonstration was to express to the University that no lives should be expendable in the choice to move forward with on-Grounds instruction, which is set to begin Sept. 8. Demonstrators chanted the slogan that titled the YDSA's demands — “no in-person classes, no acceptable losses.”

“I am hoping the admin realizes our lives, students, workers and community members are at risk,” said Sarandon Elliott, a third-year College student and chair of U.Va. YDSA. “U.Va. admin are gambling with our lives and well-being, and it's a bad bet. We have seen so many campuses shut down and people get sick because Universities wanted to take chances. I want U.Va. to care about us and do the right thing.”

The University's chapter of YDSA organized the event to occur shortly after the release of their demands for administration to pursue actions such as a reversal of the decision to convene in-person classes this semester, a reversal of tuition increases for the 2020-21 school year, a firing freeze and hazard pay for all employees required to work in-person.

The demands were endorsed by the three host organizations, as well as the University Democrats and the University's Organization of Young Filipino Americans.

Similarly, the UCWVA also recently released their #Act-FASTUVA campaign asking the University to abandon in-person learning and cancel move-in for undergraduate students.

Before lying silently still for the 15-minute “die-in,” participants sat in a large, socially-distanced circle on the Lawn to write letters that demonstration organizers plan to give to University administration.

“I don't want to see any of my graduate student instructors be compelled to give in-person instruction when they have personally lost family members to COVID, and when they've personally experienced great hardship due to the pandemic,” said one third-year undergraduate student who

participated. “The [University] administration's decisions are not reflective of the best interests of students, workers and the Charlottesville community.”

The letters will be a part of a letter-drop campaign YDSA is organizing, according to André Zazzera, a member of UCW of Virginia and a graduate student in the School of Data Science.

“The letters that participants wrote to University admin were a way for us to be able to authentically represent the voices of our

risk, she noted that many community members that will be put in danger may not have the same resources or safety nets as professors or students.

“This city is full of workers who do not have healthcare or have poor healthcare, who have complex medical issues that have been untreated for years,” McVey said.

McVey noted that she thinks the University does not have Charlottesville's best interest in mind, especially when many com-

everybody in this town,” McVey said. “And, frankly, the community members are sick of being bled dry by this university.”

Zazzera also expressed that students should follow appropriate safety guidelines and hopes that members of the University community act with respect. However, the organizers argue that the University will be at fault when cases begin to rise drastically, workers are laid off and students are left in precarity when the University goes back to online

Elliott also acknowledged that the pandemic disproportionately affects Black people across the country, a point that McVey reiterated.

A report by the Center for Disease Control showed that the percentage of Black coronavirus patients was higher than the percentage of Black people that make up the population. Doctors at the University hospital were among the first to notice this trend, according to UVAToday.

Across the United States, COVID is impacting communities of color the hardest, and that's definitely going to be the case in Charlottesville as well,” McVey said. “Given the disregard for people of color that runs through the University's history, it's not surprising to see their indifference about this decision.”

Elliott and the YDSA additionally called for the opportunity for students to choose credit/no credit as a grading option if the University is going to put them at risk. The UCW union discussed the importance of providing proper personal protective equipment for the University's Resident Advisors and facilities management workers, including extra hand sanitizer and masks.

Zazzera and Elliott both were impressed with the turnout for the “Die-In.” The organizers felt they had an appropriately-sized group of people to get the message across without putting any participants in danger, as everyone was able to properly social distance in the space on the Lawn.

Ultimately, Zazzera wants the University to acknowledge the efforts the community is willing to put forth to change administrative decisions. The demonstrators are committed to fighting for safety and standing in solidarity with those put at risk by the administration's plans to reopen.

“Whether they be students, workers or Charlottesville residents, UCWVA is not going to stop being present and demanding justice until we get it,” Zazzera said.

Elliott wrote to The Cavalier Daily that she hopes students continue to fight and organize for what they believe in.

“I do want students to remember how U.Va. has treated us during this time,” Elliott said.



EMMA KLEIN | THE CAVALIER DAILY

Before lying silently still for the 15-minute “die-in,” participants sat in a large, socially-distanced circle on the Lawn to write letters that demonstration organizers plan to give to University administration.

community,” Zazzera said.

Lillie McVey, co-chair of Charlottesville DSA, believes the main concern with resuming in-person classes is the impact that the spread of COVID-19 will have on the Charlottesville community at large. She emphasized the importance of students limiting their exposure to the community to protect the people of Charlottesville.

McVey anticipates that allowing students to come back will lead to an instant spike in cases that will harm workers. While University students are also at

community members are in positions where they cannot limit their exposure.

During an online meeting, the Charlottesville Human Rights Commission declared its intent to send a letter to University President Jim Ryan urging him to not bring undergraduate students back to Grounds. In July, Charlottesville Mayor Nikuyah Walker called the University's plan to reopen “a recipe for disaster.”

“The University always likes to say that they are at the heart of this community but just continues to make policies that hurt

classes.

After the 15 minutes of demonstration across the grass and on the steps of the Rotunda, several representatives from the host organizations spoke to the crowd.

Elliott talked about the University's fault in the potential outcomes of the spread of COVID-19, pointing to student housing circumstances as one of the issues the University is facing. The lack of affordable on-Grounds housing has forced students who have been locked into off-Grounds leases since the winter to return to Charlottesville, she said.



## LIFE

## U.Va. faculty, students discuss impact of cancel culture

As the social climate of today moves from offline to online, universities and students become more aware of their media use and presence

Nayeon Kim | Features Writer



ANGELA CHEN | THE CAVALIER DAILY

Technology has continued to entrench itself in our everyday lives as it continues to provide easy communication and quick online transactions and give people nearly full access to the world in a single swipe. The growing importance of online interactions has melded into the physical world more than ever as people are forced to move to contactless deliveries and online classes due to the widespread COVID-19 pandemic.

As the social lives of students on platforms such as Twitter, Facebook or Instagram has become the majority of entertainment and interaction between friends and peers, the consequences from what is said in the online world has begun to grow, often materializing in the offline world. Specifically, consequences are resulting from cancel culture — the act of media users publicly shaming and socially cancelling other's views on social media that don't fit the audience's criteria of what is socially acceptable. No longer can students expect to be

safe from the repercussions of their words online as some universities have threatened student suspension, expulsion and scholarship revocations in response.

Media studies professor Bruce Williams expressed concerns of an educational institution invoking its authority on a student for expressing their personal thoughts on a digital platform.

"I have encountered these stories about someone who has been admitted to a university and then something they posted earlier online catches them up and then the university says we are rescinding admissions," Williams said. "I have a hard time with that because ... universities are about educating, about changing."

According to Williams, the more institutional authority becomes involved in the surveillance of a student's life online, the more that pernicious effects can arise as a result. These effects convince students that they are no longer able to change their minds and are pressured to constantly present a completely con-

ventional version of themselves in fear of university retaliation. However, that is not to say that there shouldn't be consequences for what a student may choose to post to the public.

"I think that what students are doing amongst themselves is ... to socialize and discipline what's acceptable and not — I have a hard time getting very upset at that," Williams said. "It's when institutions get involved ... If we're going to have models of holding people, especially students, accountable, there have to be good models of how you apologize."

Not only does cancel culture touch on the controversies between students in universities, but the actions of faculty members as well. For Ryan Russell, a doctoral candidate in the politics department, he believes that cancel culture allows for people to hold those in power to account that institutions otherwise would not.

"You have cancel culture where people are going to de-

mand that this person not be in a position of influence because these systems that they operate in, they can use them and have utilized them in a dangerous way," Russell said. "But I do think that there are certain limits ... because sometimes I think that you will see a divide, depending on the issue."

The steps to redemption from online social error become increasingly difficult to construct, where there can be a degree of debate or lack thereof in the variety of subjects that are susceptible to cancel culture. Where an action of one student could be forgiven by certain students, others may deem that an action is not simply one that can be forgivable or revocable.

Cancel culture focuses on cancellation as a consequence of how students portray their opinions and themselves on social media, but it's difficult to know how one can un-cancel themselves — if there even is such an option. Third-year College student Kim Dinh discusses the complexities

of attempting to return from one's cancellation.

"[Redemption] is not just a one step thing, it's a multiple step process in terms of growth," Dinh said. "It's not you changing overnight [but that] you consistently make that decision to not think a certain way or not or do certain things because you truly believe it, because your actual way of thinking has truly changed from that event."

It is equally difficult to ascertain the correct measures to take in order to ensure that victims of actions that caused individuals to be canceled are able to get the justice they deserve. As social media increases its influence on people's real lives, victims turn to social media masses to seek action where traditional university systems have failed to do so. Third-year College student Avery Shivers is concerned by the role victims of these incidents often have to play in educating the public over the wrongness of an action.

"It doesn't make sense for me to have a victim hold their perpetrator's hand and teach them why what they said was offensive because I don't think that's justice," Shivers said. "If you don't have a system that promotes and provides justice to victims, then those victims are going to take justice into their own hands."

With universities having no clear guidelines in regards to handling a new source of information about their current and incoming students, there is much uncertainty surrounding the circumstances of not only online learning, but increasing online social interactions.

"There isn't a real clear distinction between online and in the real world," Williams said. "When we spend as much time as we do every day staring at screens, that's part of our world. But it's also important to recognize that there still is a very real world."



# Students raise health concerns about returning to Grounds

Immunocompromised students have to comply with stricter social distancing guidelines in order to minimize risks

Maryann Xue | Features Writer

While the return to Grounds is, for many students, a long-awaited escape from home and a hopeful promise that things will soon return to normal, the reality is less exciting for those who are confronted with personal health challenges.

COVID-19 is known to generally have a greater impact on those who already have underlying health conditions or who have undergone treatments that weakened their immune system. These immunocompromised individuals are at greater risk of becoming severely ill from the disease. As a result, it becomes even more important for them to prevent infection by entirely avoiding exposure to the virus through social distancing.

For immunocompromised students, returning to Grounds means introducing themselves to a host of risks. However, many are still choosing to return.

Second-year Engineering student Caroline Davis wants to be able to continue her college experience on Grounds so she is choosing to return instead of living at home. In addition to University-mandated protective measures, she will be prioritizing a higher restriction of social distancing for herself to minimize the risks. While she had always needed to be vigilant about her health even before COVID-19, the current situation has opened up new perspectives for her.

“There have been periods of anxiety and panic in my household about how best to keep me safe,” Davis said. “There have been periods of anger towards people who remain ignorant and risk the lives of people who have weakened immune systems. Overall, I would not necessarily say my experience has been any different than other people’s experience, but I definitely think that COVID has highlighted new concerns that were previously hidden from me and I will carry these perspectives for the rest of my life.”

However, concerns still remain about whether the student population will be able to comply with the University’s regulations and avoid being sent home early.

“I desperately want to be hopeful,” Davis said. “But we are asking the UVA. population to commit to guidelines that our country struggles with, and whether or not we are able to exhibit model behaviors is definitely up in the air.”

Fourth-year College student Layne Berry has personally experienced what it’s like to live in a hospital for a long time, being woken up every four hours for vi-

tals checks and constantly traveling in the company of an IV pole. Now a year out of chemotherapy, Berry is not yet sure to what extent her immune system has been impacted due to the uncertainty surrounding her treatment plan, but experiencing heart and lung disease within the next decade is a common side effect.

“I see people really struggling to adjust to the socially distanced

the house, she wears a mask. She goes shopping once a month at most, only at Harris Teeter and occasionally CVS or Lowe’s for necessities.

According to Berry, Charlottesville residents were careful enough with social distancing practices throughout the summer to provide relative herd immunity, but she’s worried that things will change once students return.

lack of trauma is a privilege, but that privilege also imposes blind spots.

“The threat of complications from COVID is real, and it is awful, in a way most people lack the experience to fully realize,” Berry said. “When death is abstract, masks and six feet of distance feel like an imposition.”

This fall, second-year College student Olivia Shepard was sup-

above the age of 75 are between 8 to 13 times more likely to be hospitalized and have a 220 to 630 times higher risk of death due to the disease.

“For some other families who don’t have people living in their house that are at high risk for dying from the virus, bringing the virus may not be as stressful,” Shepard said. “For my family and myself, bringing the virus home could and probably would be a life or death situation.”

In addition to taking extra precautions, such as wiping down everything brought into the house from outside, wearing masks outside at all times and only going to places with few people, she is also choosing to stay home this semester to avoid bringing the virus back.

However, Shepard is planning to stay connected with the University community in many ways by keeping in touch with friends, attending virtual residential college events and planning virtual events with the Arts & Enrichment committee of UPC. She also plans to visit at least once this semester, with social distancing measures in place.

“Wearing a mask, putting on hand sanitizer and standing six feet away from your friends when talking to them are all minor inconveniences that are saving people’s lives,” Shepard said.

While Davis, Berry and Shepard all hope that things will progress well on Grounds this fall, they are all well aware that reality may have different plans. During Midsummers, many students continued partying in large numbers, disregarding federal, state and University guidelines. The University of Notre Dame and Michigan State University have already canceled in-person instruction after sudden COVID-19 outbreaks, among several other colleges — most recently including James Madison University in Virginia. Ultimately, a successful semester would have to involve students complying fully with all the social distancing guidelines in place.

“At the end of the day, you can get frustrated and hopeless when you see the lack of respect for the community, but all you can do is your best and communicate with others to ensure that they do their best,” Davis said. “I think those who are not following social distancing practices are ignorant to the severity of COVID, and to have that lack of understanding highlights their privilege.”



EMMA HITCHCOCK | THE CAVALIER DAILY

lifestyle, and while I can sympathize with the mental health toll of doing this for the first time, having been living a much worse version of the quarantined life less than two years ago, I really can’t relate at all,” Berry said. “We are still able to do most things, just with a mask on and a little extra distance. On a scale from hospital life to normal life, socially distanced life is barely an inconvenience.”

Berry has been living in Charlottesville since the University shifted to online learning in the spring because her hometown was in the middle of a major outbreak. She is planning to continue staying in Charlottesville for the school year. Every time she leaves

“My last grocery trip, the store was two to three times as crowded as it has been with students returning,” Berry said. “I fear that, as Midsummers showed us, the precautions full-time Charlottesville residents have been taking are not being mirrored by incoming students.”

As someone who has been through a life-threatening experience, Berry particularly emphasized the importance of personal decisions regarding safety. Those who have not been on the verge of death are not able to fully understand the severity of the situation and appropriately weigh the risks, she says. According to Berry, this

posed to be living in a residential college, but she didn’t like the idea of having to stay in her dorm the majority of the time without being able to invite her friends over or visit their dorms. While she wanted to return to work, the library she worked at isn’t open this semester. The unpredictability of the situation and concerns about the health of her older family members contributed to her decision to stay at home.

Shepard is living with two people over the age of 75 who are more vulnerable to the virus, making it much more dangerous if the virus is brought home. According to the Centers for Disease Control, compared to 18 to 29 year olds, those



# Littlejohn's — a Charlottesville Corner staple in crisis

Charlottesville community members rally to save Littlejohn's Delicatessen, one of many businesses financially hit due to COVID-19

Charlie Teague | Features Writer

Often described as a staple of the University's Corner, Littlejohn's Delicatessen on University Avenue has a base of dedicated, long-time patrons. Founded by University alumnus John Crafaik Jr. in 1976, the sandwich shop has long been beloved by students, Charlottesville residents and visitors alike for its New York-style sandwiches and welcoming environment.

Thus, it came as a personal tragedy for many when Littlejohn's temporarily closed its doors this spring because of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, Littlejohn's has a widespread community pushing to keep the sandwich shop alive.

Charlottesville restaurateur Bo Stockton — a native of Charlottesville and the owner of several restaurants in the area — has been a leading figure in the effort to save Littlejohn's.

"I've been running restaurants on the Corner for almost two decades," Stockton said. "I ran The Virginian for 15 years. I ran The Biltmore for 10 years while I was running The Virginian, and I bought Michael's Bistro in June of last year, and Littlejohn's was our downstairs neighbor."

As someone whose early life and occupation has brought him close

to Littlejohn's, Stockton believes the small business holds a unique value for Charlottesville residents.

"When COVID hit, [the Littlejohn's location] became prime for another potential corporate place to move into, and that's what we won't allow," Stockton said. "This is a Charlottesville staple, and it's been around for over 40 years. We all love it, we know how to do it — let's raise some money."

Stockton and his partners launched a virtual fundraising campaign via GoFundMe, which will be put toward the assets the restaurant would need to resume operations. The GoFundMe's target amount is \$85,000.

"It just takes so much operation capital to get a restaurant up and running," Stockton said. "You have to look at things like initial purchases. You have to fill your store with fresh ingredients. You have to fill your cold delis ... You have to have a cash runway in order to pay employees that you hire ... Every penny that goes into the GoFundMe is going to go into the operation of Littlejohn's."

According to Stockton, the fundraising effort has already received

considerable attention and support from the community.

"We had a University of Virginia soccer player, who, I think, played on the women's World Cup team donate and comment," Stockton said. "There's been so many super responses — the lacrosse team, Kip Turner, so many people ... that have made us, as a group, feel like we're doing the right thing."

Another among the business's fanbase is Lara Morris, Charlottesville native and University alumna, who began eating at Littlejohn's in her early childhood.

"The first time I went to Littlejohn's I was tiny," Morris said. "But I do remember it because I was a really picky eater at the time. I liked really plain sandwiches, so they whipped up something special for me, and they gave it a name so I didn't feel like I was just ordering a boring sandwich. It was a special moment."

The memory is the first of many dear ones for Morris, who continued to eat at Littlejohn's throughout her childhood and eventually during her time as a University student. Morris's sentiments for Littlejohn's and University life have stood the test of time.

"[Littlejohn's] was one of the first places that I took all of my suitemates when I was showing them around," Morris said. "One of my favorite things to do my last year would be, after a night out, to grab a Chipotle Chicken and ... blueberry muffins, and then I would [have] a blueberry muffin the next morning in my bag ... it was the best present ever."

Second-year Engineering student Julia Joachim also recalls her first of many times to the delicatessen.

"Littlejohn's will always hold a special place in my heart because it was one of the first places I ate at when I toured UVA. as a junior in high school," Joachim said. "After coming to UVA., it was always a spot where people went to get good sandwiches and just hang out."

Beyond all of the fond memories that make Littlejohn's a special place for so many people, the business's commitment to ethical practices cannot be ignored. Stockton emphasized the financial importance of the business for its employees.

"One of the things that is foremost in our minds is paying [employees] a living wage," Stockton said. "[Littlejohn's] offers more money than you're

going to make anywhere else on the Corner ... If you're a part time dishwasher that works for us and you need some help, we're going to help you."

Morris also underscored the money-related benefits of Littlejohn's, as the restaurant sells its food at generally affordable prices.

"[With Littlejohn's], the price point's right," Morris said. "You can go into Littlejohn's and see a complete cross-section of Charlottesville and UVA., and I think in times like this it's important to hold onto those places that make us all feel really welcome and really happy."

As one of many Charlottesville residents who love Littlejohn's and consider it part of the city's identity, Stockton urges community members to continue growing the GoFundMe to save the business.

"Charlottesville has been surrounded in recent times by turmoil," Stockton said. "It has been represented in the national media with negativity ... It is a representation of the people that live here and who we are, and I am not going to stand idly by and watch it fail."

## ADVERTISEMENT

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# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

## Kluge-Ruhe reopens with two new exhibitions

After months of virtual operations, the Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection reopens for tours

Kalista Diamantopoulous | Senior Writer

On Aug. 26, the Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection of the University re-opened its doors to visitors after closing March 14 to help stop the spread of COVID-19. The Kluge-Ruhe is displaying two exhibitions which are available to visit by reservation only.

"We encourage U.Va. students to visit," said Education and Program Manager Lauren Maupin. "Our two new exhibitions are stunning and address themes of social justice, land rights, cultural continuity, memorialization and innovation."

The first exhibit is "From Little Things Big Things Grow," which opened Aug. 26 and will remain open until May 23, 2021. Named after the song by Kev Camody and Paul Kelly, this exhibit explores the relationship between identity, art and Indigenous People's political desires to reclaim ownership of their land. It also shines a light on individual artists' relationship to their lands amidst the modern land-rights movement. "From Little Things Big Things Grow" showcases a number of brightly painted canvases including one large collaborative painting made by thirteen female artists in residence from Tjala Arts in Amata.

The second exhibit is "Bäpurrü ga Bäpurrü: New Yolngu Prints from the Kluge-Ruhe Collection," which opened Aug. 26 and will remain open through Jan. 10, 2021. This exhibit features a significant collection of new prints by Yolngu artists that come from the communities of Milngimbi in central Arnhem Land and Yirrkala in northeast Arnhem Land, a historical region in Northern Australia. These prints feature a unique etching technique on copper plates. Bäpurrü ga Bäpurrü is a Yolngu expression that has a dual meaning. On one hand it is used to say "all the clans too numerous to mention," referring to the concept of shared ancestry or family. On the other hand, the phrase refers to death and mourning. In their prints, the artists illustrate the cycle of life and death as both celebratory and somber.

In order to visit these two exhibitions while still adhering to social-distancing guidelines, visitors must make a reservation on the museum's website. Reservations are divided in 30-minute increments for groups with up to

eight people. For those 30 minutes, the visiting party will have the museum space completely to themselves.

"If 30 minutes doesn't feel long enough, parties can choose to reserve two 30 minute time slots back to back, so they have an hour to explore the new exhibitions," Maupin added.

During the visit, guests must maintain a six-foot distance between themselves and employees at all times. Employees are required to wear a mask as well as visitors. Visitors who do not bring a mask will be provided with a disposable one. Moreover, the museum has a number of gloves and hand-sanitizing stations scattered throughout the space. Additionally, to accommodate these intervals and provide ample time to sanitize the space between groups, the museum hours have changed and are listed on their website. The museum has increased the frequency of their sanitization, especially for high-touch areas such as restrooms, and the gift shop is closed to minimize surface-contact.

The process of preparing for the Aug. 26 opening was "a bit complex" according to Maupin.

"Our galleries are small and we wanted to ensure that everyone felt comfortable, but it was a process we started in May, so we had extensive time to consider the best approach to keep everyone safe and continue providing a high-quality and engaging museum experience," she said.

Despite the unprecedented changes, the Kluge-Ruhe's reopening was a success and actually provided a more pleasant museum experience.

"Many visitors in the past week have already commented on how unique and special it was to have exclusive access to the exhibitions and how safe they felt, as well as how nice it was to have a staff person nearby for questions," Maupin said. "Visiting Kluge-Ruhe was a relaxed, awe-inspiring, reflective and educational experience for many visitors in the past, and those elements have only been enhanced in our new normal."

To find more information or make a reservation, visit the Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Collection website at <https://kluge-ruhe.org/>.



COURTESY KLUGE-RUHE ABORIGINAL ART COLLECTION

The Kluge-Ruhe's socially-distanced reopening allows museum visitors to experience work from two new exhibits firsthand.

## ADVERTISEMENT



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# OPINION

## LEAD EDITORIAL

# This feels like the start of a horror movie

*We know better, we know what's coming and we know whom to blame*

Despite several universities closing their doors to students following public health concerns, the University still plans to welcome back thousands of students and faculty to Charlottesville this week. The University has already reported 115 positive COVID-19 cases within the community since Aug. 17 — all before the majority of students living on-Grounds have returned. Even as the number of positive cases in the community increases by the day, the University remains committed to reopening with partial in-person instruction Sept. 8 — a plan that will bring an additional 4,000 undergraduate students to on-Grounds residence halls. In these next few weeks, as students continue to receive warnings from the University administration about how they are to blame for the inevitable spike in COVID-19 cases, it is important to remember who ignored the signs and made the final call.

We've already seen the outcomes of other schools' reopening

plans. For example, look no further than the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, which saw a dozen clusters surface and 32.2 percent of students who were tested having positive results by the second week of its school year. It is difficult to imagine that the University's plan will fare any differently when classes begin. Here, we must wonder — is the risk of finding out worth it?

The University should not be betting on lives.

Obviously, this pandemic is an unprecedented situation for any university administration. Nevertheless, our administration owes it to the University and Charlottesville communities to play it safe in the middle of a global pandemic. Still, the University is continuing with a plan several community groups have publicly and staunchly opposed. Charlottesville Mayor Nikuyah Walker called the plan a "recipe for disaster," and the Charlottesville Human Rights Commission plans to send a letter to University President Jim Ryan voicing

their concerns about UVA's reopening. The bridges President Ryan claims to have built with the Charlottesville community are already crumbling.

In a recent email, the University plainly stated that "A successful return to Grounds does not mean totally eliminating the risk of COVID-19 infections." So, what is a successful return? Clearly, University leadership knows students will spread the virus — it has already forced hundreds of students to relocate in order to create additional quarantine housing. The University would be naïve to claim that they are doing everything in their power to keep students safe while simultaneously admitting that these risks exist.

For many, being in an environment in which the risk for infections exists is life or death. Charlottesville is not populated solely by healthy young adults who may be at lower risk for COVID-19. Pretending that the virus will remain isolated ignores the health risks that immunocompromised students, older professors, es-

sential workers and community members will be forced to navigate. Students and faculty have the option to stay home — for residents of Charlottesville, this is their home.

Even without irresponsible student behavior, the University's plan to reopen already poses far too many threats to Charlottesville and the UVA community. Bringing students back to Grounds in any capacity places the University at an elevated risk for being the center of a new outbreak. Charlottesville City Public Schools will not hold in-person classes for the first quarter of the school year — leaving the University's decision to reopen with more students, faculty and staff as counterproductive to these efforts.

We are worried for the health and safety of the University's employees who will be forced to work in an environment with students who continue to go to parties and bars. We are worried for the community members that will be forced to take extra safety

precautions due to the inevitable spike in cases that Charlottesville will soon see. We are worried for the students who will find themselves sick just because they showed up to class. Now, we are forced to ask ourselves a series of crucial questions — how many community members must become infected before the University decides to shut down? Whose lives will be collateral damage in the University's ill-fated reopening experiment?

We know that these infections and deaths are coming — when they do, you know whom to blame. We must always hold the University administration accountable.

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The Cavalier Daily is published Thursdays in print and daily online at [cavalierdaily.com](http://cavalierdaily.com). It is printed on at least 40 percent recycled paper. 2020 The Cavalier Daily Inc.

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# Take down Jefferson statues

*Racist statues can only perpetuate racism*

At the unveiling of the statue of the Rotunda, former University President Edwin Alderman praised sculptor Moses Jacob Ezekiel for being a “soldier of Lee” and heralded Jefferson for his “self-sacrifice.” Left unmentioned by President Alderman was slavery. Indeed, of the four men to speak at the statue’s 1910 unveiling, only one — Board of Visitors member Daniel Harmon — made even a passing reference to slavery, calling it “the thralldom of those ancient laws.”

More than a century later, protesters shrouded the bronze Jefferson in black fabric — a response to the Unite the Right rally of Aug. 11-12, 2017. At the time, the Editorial Board of *The Cavalier Daily*’s 128th term reflexively defended Jefferson as “deserving of commemoration,” distinguishing him from Confederate General Robert E. Lee. Yet the most prominent Jefferson statues on Grounds belong to the same historical project as the Lee statue on Market Street — glorifying slaveholders in the Jim Crow South.

The unveiling of Ezekiel’s Jefferson statue in front of the Rotunda provides the most salient document of the statues’ historical project, but other evidence abounds. Although Ezekiel eventually characterized slavery as “evil,” he grew up in a slaveholding household that dressed enslaved people for auctions. During the war, he

served as a Confederate private, later feeling “humiliation” as he witnessed “set-free Negroes.” Long after the war, Ezekiel called the Confederacy a “lost but righteous cause,” kept a Confederate flag over his bed and considered a Lee monument “the one work [he] would love to do above anything else in the world.”

As a sculptor, Ezekiel repeatedly memorialized the Confederacy, making Confederate memorials in

“

“Jefferson’s association with this University is a cause for shame, not statues.”

Ohio, Kentucky and Virginia, as well as statues of Confederate General Stonewall Jackson, “Virginia Mourning Her Dead” and Senator John Warwick Daniel, a Confederate major and proponent of the Lost Cause. Ezekiel’s Jefferson is not an exception to his devotion to the Lost Cause, but part of it. Ezekiel lamented that during Reconstruction, “an ignorant Negro” sat in a legislature “where Thomas Jefferson had once sat.” To Ezekiel, Jefferson embodied the past the Lost Cause idealized.

The University’s other Jefferson statue from the Jim Crow era is by Austrian-American sculptor Karl Bitter. At the 1915 unveiling of that statue, President Alderman described it as

“the face and form of Thomas Jefferson as in his old age” — again presenting an unadulterated portrait of the University’s founder. Whereas Ezekiel’s statue shows Jefferson at the age of writing the Declaration of Independence, Bitter’s statue shows Jefferson at the age of founding the University. The inscription at the base of Bitter’s statue is a quote from Jefferson about “fostering an establishment for the instruction of those who come after us.”

Yet Jefferson’s vision for the University excluded most of its current students. By eliding a racist past, Bitter’s statue rewrites history of the University — ignoring the ancestral land claims of the Monacan Nation, the labor of enslaved people, the University’s violence toward Black bodies and Jefferson’s architecture of segregation.

The oldest Jefferson statue on Grounds is by Alexander Galt, who later served as a Confederate army officer and made a bust of Confederate President Jefferson Davis. Installed in 1860, the Jefferson statue exemplifies the burgeoning sectionalism of the antebellum South. When it commissioned the statue in 1854, the Virginia General Assembly struck out the name

of a northern sculptor and replaced it with Galt, a native Virginian. To understand Jefferson, Galt consulted with Thomas Jefferson Randolph, the source of the false claim that Jefferson’s nephew fathered Sally Hemings’s children. By prioritizing white perspectives, Galt’s statue makes a judgment about which histories matter.

Although the most recent Jefferson statues on Grounds are from 1978 and 2007, there is still reason to re-

move them. Last year, in the book “Educated in Tyranny: Slavery at Thomas Jefferson’s University,” co-editor Maurie McInnis criticized the 2007 statue — by Eugene Daub and Robert Fermin — for depicting a solitary Jefferson surveying land for the University. In reality, Jefferson was accompanied by 10 enslaved “hands,” along with his overseer and an Irish joiner. Like Bitter’s statue, Daub and Fermin’s statue — located at the Darden School of Business — glorifies a slaveholder while ignoring the enslaved. Not even the plaque below the statue mentions slavery.

The other recent statue is by Lloyd Lillie, who died in February. The second of three castings, Lillie’s statue

— located in Purcell Garden at the School of Law — depicts Jefferson alone in contraposto. For the 1978 dedication of that statue, ceremony overseer Dean B. F. D. Runk consulted President Alderman’s 1910 remarks on Ezekiel’s Jefferson, and the plaque formerly below the statue quoted Jefferson on education without mentioning the prejudice of his educational vision. Even after integration and coeducation, the University still clung to the negationist history of its founder.

Maybe the University can acknowledge Jefferson on Grounds without glorifying him, but statues made to glorify Jefferson perpetuate a false history. Jefferson’s association with this University is a cause for shame, not statues. Being born in the South does not excuse Jefferson. Inheriting enslaved people does not excuse Jefferson. The founder of this University chose a life of opulence over a life of morality — bluntly acknowledging that enslaved people “labor” for his “happiness” and fathering at least six children with a woman he enslaved. To follow the truth, the University must remove Jefferson from his pedestal.

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## We need to re-examine historical legacies

*As we reckon with controversial and racist figures, we cannot ignore either the good or the bad parts of their history*

All across the country, racist monuments are being toppled and institutions are having conversations on how to treat memorials to controversial historical figures. Particularly at the University — a school marred by the legacies of slavery and white supremacy — the challenge of addressing these racist memorials is all the more pertinent, and many are calling for their removal. However, removal is often an easy way of escaping the complications that we need to carefully weigh as we rethink historical perspectives.

Before continuing, I want to distinguish Confederate memorials from problematic non-Confederate ones. While the latter group — which often includes slave owners and white supremacists — might depict individuals with a more complex history, the Confederate monuments do not. Confederate soldiers and leaders betrayed the United States to fight for slavery — that is not that something worth honoring.

By contrast, memorials to someone like President Thomas Jefferson, the father of the University, present a greater challenge. Jefferson was a

slave-owner, believed that Black people were inferior to whites and raped Sally Hemings from the time she was only 14 years old. Jefferson also authored the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedoms, which extended full civil rights to non-Christians in Virginia — a monumental accomplishment. Uriah Levy, a Jewish naval officer who faced anti-Semitism, would call Jefferson an “inspiration to millions of Americans,” and would go on to purchase and preserve Mon-

“

“It is paradoxical that Jefferson is connected with both liberty and illiberty — but that is the unfortunate reality of so many American historical figures.”

ticello out of admiration for Jefferson. For better or worse, this juxtaposition shows the challenge of Jefferson’s legacy whereby he is rightfully perceived as a hero to some and an oppressor to others.

It is paradoxical that Jefferson is connected with both liberty and illiberty — but that is the unfortunate reality of so many American historical figures. The bad parts of their legacies

are not justifiable. However, while the good parts of their legacies do not forgive the bad, this does not make it right to minimize their positive contributions either. Yet when we act to take down a monument to such figures we ultimately act to do just that. Taking down such monuments is an explicit message of condemnation without caveat — a statement which invalidates any who would celebrate some aspect of the depicted. Thus, to take down the statue of Jefferson is to say that his

bad actions override his good — warping his depiction to simply be that of an evil man and stigmatizing people like Uriah Levy who would still admire his positive impacts.

For those who argue that the accomplishments can simply be divorced from the controversial figure who achieved them — such thinking is disingenuous. Though plenty of monuments exist to celebrate the work of

controversial figures but not the figures themselves, many more choose to honor the individuals to which those positive achievements are closely tied. While both approaches have their own merits, to only have monuments which separate the achievements from the achiever will obscure the historical connection between them. When coupled with taking down monuments to those individuals, the ultimate effect will still be to transform their legacy wholly into the negative.

Such transformations may satisfy a desire to right the wrongs the bad parts of these figures’ legacies represent. But to paint history only in dark and light denies the nuance these figures deserve. Just as we still afford the most heinous criminals a fair trial, so too must we offer the dead a fair platform to justify their redeeming contributions to history — if there are any. As a University and a country,

we then must look at our memorials and our history with an open mind and grapple with how we collectively ought to perceive historical figures in light of the ways they have affected different people. We must challenge the narratives that simply vilify or deify these figures and recognize some as indisputably flawed humans that still might merit some appreciation.

I say all this not to defend or minimize the oppression perpetrated by these controversial figures. Rather, I believe that as we rightfully reassess our history, we cannot permit their negative legacies to cancel out positive impacts — just as we also cannot let the positive justify ignoring the negative. To do so would only increase the divisiveness among our diverse perspectives at a time where we need to discuss historical legacies that treat all perspectives equally. History is meant to be objective, and as we all contemplate its good, bad and ugly, we must not simplify its nuances.

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# Give Charlottesville a voice on the BOV

*The University has imposed on and harmed the Charlottesville community for centuries — its residents deserve a voice in its highest governing body*

The Board of Visitors is the University's highest governing body, responsible for — among other things — approving capital projects, setting tuition and fees, and overseeing the University's broad operations. It has 17 voting members who are appointed by the Governor of Virginia, and two non-voting members — a student representative and a faculty representative.

The Board's current composition is hardly representative of the University community. Only 17 percent of the Board is female, and 76 percent of the Board is white — compared to the wider University, which is over fifty percent female and just 56 percent white. Its political leanings, perhaps unsurprisingly, are solidly liberal. Data from the Federal Election Commission's individual donor database shows that 16 of the 17 voting members have donated to left-leaning political action groups and Democratic campaigns at every level of government.

Notably absent from the Board, however, is a voice dedicated to representing the interests of the Charlottesville community. Only one current member of the Board actually lives in Charlottesville, and his role is not explicitly to serve as a liaison between

the University and the wider community. For a University which has — for over two centuries — imposed on the surrounding community, it is unconscionable that they still have not been given a say in its governance.

Generally speaking, there are dozens of areas of the University's operations which Charlottesville residents ought to have a say in. The University

Corridor, and in some cases is required to do so, having a dedicated seat on the Board for a community representative is imperative.

The ongoing coronavirus pandemic perfectly illustrates the need for Charlottesville residents to have a voice on the Board. A few weeks ago, hundreds of students — who either didn't get the memo that Midsummers

ty is any indication of how they will behave come fall, then Charlottesville is at a dire risk for a major outbreak. While the University has been continuously working with local officials, there is a distinction between professional collaboration with local officials and actual representation and voice within the University's governing body. It is essential that Charlottesville

position with a vote. The student and faculty members must be able to firmly record their assent or dissent to the actions the Board's majority is taking on any given issue. Moreover, the student member ought to be elected by the student body, not undemocratically handpicked by the Board after an application and intensive interview process. A student appointed by the Board themselves, rather than elected by the students they are supposed to represent, cannot truly act as a check on the power of the Board.

President Jim Ryan's "Great and Good" plan calls for a strengthening of the bridge between the University and its host community and for the righting of dozens of historical wrongs against it. As the University has, at times in its history, acted as an imposing and violent force against its surrounding community, giving the Charlottesville community a voice in its governance should be a top priority.

**“It is essential that Charlottesville has a representative on the Board to voice the community's opinions — especially when it concerns as high-risk an issue as a public health crisis.”**

Transit Service — while intended for University community member use — is heavily relied on to supplement the Charlottesville bus network by hundreds of local workers. The University's capital projects also have major implications for the surrounding community. The Ivy Street Corridor construction, for example, has already resulted in disruption to local businesses and job loss among residents. While the Board can easily solicit community input on projects like the Ivy

was not going to happen this year, or simply couldn't place the health of the community above their need to get drunk at fraternity houses — gathered in large numbers in off-Grounds residences and bars. The weekend's events prompted Dean of Students Allen Groves to lambast their actions in an email letter to students and caused the Mayor of Charlottesville to declare the University's reopening plans a “recipe for disaster.” If students' absolute disregard for the surrounding communi-

has a representative on the Board to voice the community's opinions — especially when it concerns as high-risk an issue as a public health crisis.

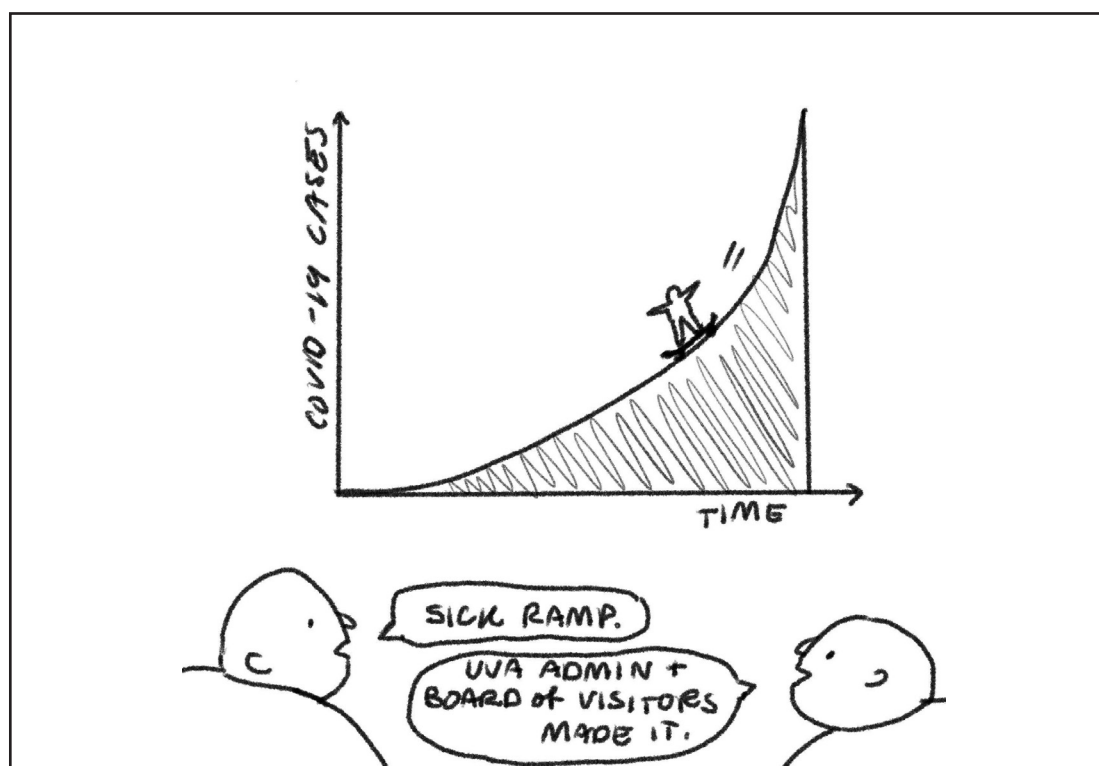
In addition to adding a representative of the Charlottesville community to the Board, the existing student and faculty members ought to be given full voting rights. Having representation on the Board — while incredibly important — is significantly hindered in its effectiveness if our representatives cannot formally voice support or op-

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## CARTOON

### Good and great though, right?

Audrey Lewis | Cartoon Editor





PUZZLES

WEEKLY CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Aaron Rose | Puzzle Master

\* THE SOLUTION TO THIS PUZZLE CAN BE FOUND IN THE NEXT ISSUE

Across

- 1 Another name for Jamaica pepper.
- 5 ‘Doppelganger’ and ‘wunderkind’ are words derived from this language.
- 10 Academic building home to the University’s English department.
- 11 State of being alive and present in reality.
- 12 In the metric system, mass weighed to the thousandth of a gram.
- 13 The cruellest month, according to T.S. Eliot.
- 14 Home to the U.Va. Religious Studies department; Nau’s twin.
- 15 Russian currency.
- 18 Absence of hope.
- 20 As opposed to unusual or inconsistent behavior.
- 22 To bite and chew on something loudly.
- 24 Person who is responsible for preserving public records in a local municipality (two words).
- 25 Director best known for his films “Pulp Fiction” and “Once Upon a Time in Hollywood” (last name).
- 26 Crazy or foolish; associated with cartoon figures like Bugs Bunny and Daffy Duck (minus the ‘e’).
- 27 Gobi, for example.
- 28 Butted in, snooped around.

Down

- 1 “Future Nostalgia” and “folklore,” for example.
- 2 If you begin helping the other team, your teammates will start to question where your --- lie.
- 3 After using this object, you may have to clean up wood shavings off your desk (two words).
- 4 Oil and gas company with historical ties to Rockefeller’s Standard Oil monopoly.
- 6 Activities or clubs outside of typical academic work.
- 7 U.Va. academic building that houses the International Studies Office.
- 8 Unnecessary; also, the title of a Japanese manga and anime TV series.
- 9 U.Va. academic building home to the biology and psychology departments; currently under a lengthy renovation.
- 16 A type of estate in which a tenant holds right of real property from a landlord; not free hold.
- 17 Title of the best-selling novel by Tara Westover; also, to be informed on a topic.
- 19 To keep something you already have.
- 20 On-Grounds building that houses an eclectic mix of dining options, student centers and meeting rooms. Also, home to The Cavalier Daily, MSC and the LGBTQ Center.
- 21 Approved, green-lighted.
- 23 Green vegetables that, when fried, are a staple of Southern cuisine. (plural)

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## SPORTS

## 2020 Virginia football: The big preview

The defending ACC Coastal Champions look to build off a decade-best 9-5 season in 2019

Akhil Rekulapelli | Sports Editor

Following an off-season dominated by the COVID-19 pandemic, Virginia football looks to improve on a 2019 season that saw the Cavaliers defeat rival Virginia Tech, win the ACC Coastal division and secure an Orange Bowl appearance. However, this year's Cavalier squad will look noticeably different from the 2019 team, as Virginia loses stalwarts in quarterback Bryce Perkins, wide receivers Joe Reed and Hasise Dubois, linebacker Jordan Mack and cornerback Bryce Hall to graduation. Along with the changes in the personnel, the Cavaliers' schedule will also look different. Due to the pandemic, Virginia will play a conference-only 10-game slate that includes challenging road games against Virginia Tech, Florida State, Clemson and Miami.

## The breakdown

## Offense

With the loss of All-ACC quarterback Bryce Perkins, Virginia was already in a tough position under center. However, with the pandemic cancelling spring workouts, sophomore quarterback Brennan Armstrong and junior quarterback Keytaon Thompson only had an abbreviated summer session to develop rapport with the offense. While Armstrong had the edge on Thompson during fall camp due to his familiarity with the team, Thompson clearly beats Armstrong out talent-wise. The New Orleans native was the fifth-ranked dual-threat quarterback out of high school and showed flashes of excellence at Mississippi State. Watch for Mendenhall to bring Thompson in if Armstrong struggles with the offense early.

At the skill positions, Virginia returns 2019 starting running back junior Wayne Taulapapa, but loses two All-ACC honorees in wide receivers Reed and Hasise Dubois. Taulapapa will be joined in the backfield by Towson graduate transfer Shane Simpson, who was an FCS All-American in 2018 before injuries marred his 2019 campaign. While Taulapapa posted 12 touchdowns in 2019, he often struggled to get involved in the option and to create big plays on the ground or off screens. Simpson should fill this role nicely, providing the Cavaliers' run game with a new dimension due to his speed and pass-catching abilities. Junior Indiana transfer Ronnie Walker Jr. should also see action in the backfield if his waiver appeal is approved by the NCAA.

Out wide, Reed provided the Cavaliers with exceptional speed on screen and slant plays, while Dubois had the

one of the surest pairs of hands in the nation — dropping zero passes in 2019. Stepping up in their place will be senior wide receivers Terrell Jana and Ra'Shaun Henry. Jana served as Virginia's third option behind Reed and Dubois, posting 73 receptions and 878 yards receiving in the 2019 season. The Vancouver native has shown a strong ability to find seams in the opposing defense, and should make Thompson and Armstrong's jobs a little easier. Henry, on the other hand, is a graduate transfer from FCS school St. Francis, where he earned first-team All-NEC honors in the 2019 season. Like Dubois, Henry can sky over defenders and absorb hits while holding onto the ball. Yet despite the addition of Henry, Virginia is still thin at the wide receiver position due to the loss of sophomore wide receiver Dontayvion Wicks to a season ending injury. For Jana, Henry and a supporting cast that includes junior wide receiver Tavares Kelly Jr. and freshman wide receiver Lavel Davis Jr. to fill the shoes of Reed and Dubois, the Cavaliers will certainly have to be creative in the passing game.

At tight end, the Cavaliers lose Tanner Cowley, but return sophomore Grant Misch, who played in all 14 games for Virginia last season. Yet the presumptive starter for Virginia is graduate transfer Tony Poljan, who appeared in 37 games over three seasons for Central Michigan. Poljan brings a quarterback's intuition to the tight end position for Virginia, as he played quarterback for the Chipewas in his first two seasons in Mount Pleasant. Finally, Virginia returns all five starters from last year's offensive line, including All-ACC junior center Olusegun Oluwatimi. The Cavaliers had trouble protecting Perkins at times last year, but the increased chemistry in the offensive line should pay dividends this coming season.

## Defense

Virginia loses three starters from last year's Virginia Tech tilt coming into the 2020 season, namely seniors in inside linebacker Jordan Mack and right end Eli Hanback, as well as junior safety Chris Moore, who transferred to Georgia State as a graduate transfer. Perhaps the biggest loss for the Cavaliers, however, is All-American cornerback Bryce Hall, who suffered a season ending ankle injury against Miami.

In the front seven, while the loss of Mack and Hanback is a substantial one, they are replaced by two seasoned players in senior inside line-

backer Rob Snyder and senior right end Mandy Alonso. Following a 2018 season that saw him start seven times for the bowl-eligible Cavaliers, Snyder suffered a season ending injury four games into the 2019 season. If he can stay healthy, Snyder's hard-nosed mentality should improve an already solid Virginia run defense that was 40th in the nation in rushing yards allowed per game in 2019. Like Snyder, Alonso provides a bevy of experience, having already played in 34 games for the Cavaliers. The Florida product showed up big in key moments throughout the 2019 season for Virginia, including the Commonwealth Cup-clinching sack and forced fumble this past November.

Rounding out the front seven is an extremely experienced cohort of players that has a cumulative 75 total defensive starts. Outside linebackers junior Noah Taylor and senior Charles Snowden puzzled opposing offensive lines last year with their exceptional length and speed and could find themselves receiving first-team All-ACC honors by season's end. Senior inside linebacker Zane Zandier led all Cavaliers with 108 tackles last season, and time and time again proved his ability to plug the gap and stop dynamic running backs. Senior left end Richard Burney has had a career plagued with injury, but after being awarded the first jersey number selection of the year, Burney is poised to have a breakout season. Finally, sophomore nose tackle Jowon Briggs — the highest ranked recruit of the Mendenhall Era — has the potential to be a defensive anchor for Virginia and could enter the All-American conversation by his senior season.

Looking at the secondary, Virginia fell victim to numerous injuries throughout the season, having lost cornerbacks Hall and Darius Bratton, as well as safety Brenton Nelson. This year, however, sees the return of Bratton and Nelson alongside an experienced trio of seniors in cornerback Nick Grant and safeties DeVante Cross and Joey Blount. With the three injuries last year, health is clearly a point of concern for the Cavalier secondary, but if they can stay healthy, their experience and disciplined play could guide Virginia back to the ACC Championship.

## Games to watch

## At Virginia Tech, Sept. 19

As is the case every year, Virginia's 102nd tilt with Virginia Tech has implications for both ACC ranking and state bragging rights. With Armstrong



KHUYEN DINH | THE CAVALIER DAILY

Senior linebacker Charles Snowden will play a key role in Virginia's defensive front this season and provide experience to a strong unit.

making his first career start, this game is more ideally positioned for the Hokies, who have an established quarterback in junior Hendon Hooker. On the defensive side, the Hokies had All-ACC junior cornerback Caleb Farley opt-out of the season, while the Cavaliers return an experienced defense that found answers for Hooker in 2019. Overall, look for this game to be a tough fight that goes down to the wire.

## Vs. No. 18 North Carolina, Oct. 31

As Coach Mack Brown's team has soared from sleeper to dark horse ACC contender, the Cavaliers' home match-up against North Carolina will prove if the Cavaliers are truly worthy of an ACC Championship berth. With loads of young four and five-star talent marshalled by 2019 ACC Rookie of the Year, sophomore quarterback Sam Howell, the Virginia defense should have their hands full with a Tar Heel offense that averaged just over 33 points per game last season and returns 10 of 11 starters.

## Vs. Louisville, Nov. 7

Coach Scott Satterfield surprised ACC experts last season by leading Louisville to an 8-5 record — including one against Virginia — and a Music City Bowl win. As more of his recruits come into the Cardinal program, Satterfield has all the makings of a coach who could restore Louisville to its glory days of Lamar Jackson and Teddy Bridgewater. Furthermore,

with its position at the tail end of the season, this game could make or break the Cavaliers' hopes of a second consecutive ACC Championship berth.

## Prediction

The ACC schedulers did Virginia no favors this season, as the Cavaliers face a brutal road slate that features consecutive road games against Virginia Tech and Clemson. With plenty of new faces on the offensive side of the ball and a new quarterback in Armstrong, it's easy to question the Cavaliers' ability to repeat their Orange Bowl appearance. On the flip side, Virginia returns numerous experienced players on defense that could stifle dynamic offenses in North Carolina and Wake Forest.

Finally, given that the divisions have been dissolved for this one-of-a-kind 2020 season, the Cavaliers face an even tougher path to the ACC Championship game with a 10-game conference-only schedule. I predict that the Cavaliers will go 7-3 this season, with away losses at Clemson and Miami and a home loss against North Carolina.

The Cavaliers kick off their 2020 campaign in a battle for the Commonwealth Cup against Virginia Tech Sept. 19 in Blacksburg at Lane Stadium.



# Spirit teams prepare for unconventional season

Both teams have been forced to shrink membership and adapt to preparing for the fall season remotely

Eva Surovell | Senior Associate



COURTESY VIRGINIA ATHLETICS AND RACHEL SOUTHALL

Virginia's spirit teams will experience a very different fall season amid unique circumstances due to COVID-19 concerns.

Due to Virginia Athletics' 10 percent budget cut announced just after the cancellation of March Madness this year, both Virginia Cheerleading and the Virginia Dance Team have been forced to conduct tryouts virtually and cut the size of their teams to 12 members each. Though neither group has started conducting in-person practices yet, both are preparing for what is sure to be an atypical football season.

Virginia Cheerleading is broken up into two teams — one all-girl squad and another co-ed group. In 2019, all-girl cheer had 21 members and co-ed cheer had 16 members, meaning that the squads have had to shrink by nine and four members, respectively.

Coach Kelley Haney said that tryouts this year were conducted entirely online and consisted of an interview, tumbling and performing the Fight Song, as well as various sideline routines.

Despite the tryouts taking place online, Haney said that the team has about the same number of athletes vying for a place on the squad.

Since Virginia Athletics recently changed its logo, the cheer squad will

need to update its uniforms. According to Haney, this will be a "costly adventure," so the team is waiting for more information on what the fall season is going to look like before they begin doing so.

Finally, Haney said that the team's practices are sure to change this year as the squad adapts to the fluid situation that the COVID-19 pandemic has put them in — because Virginia Athletics is still coordinating its plans with the NCAA regarding fall sports, Haney has no idea what the season will look like for either team.

"Our practices will look a lot different this year," Haney said. "We are still working on that practice plan."

The Virginia Dance Team has already selected its team for the upcoming year. In 2019, the squad had 17 members — thanks to this year's budget cuts, that number has shrunk to 12.

Typically the squad conducts tryouts prior to National Decision Day in May, but this year, tryouts took place virtually over the summer. Dancers submitted a video of them performing different skills, a jazz dance and one ditty — a short routine typically per-

formed on the sidelines of football and basketball games.

Sophomore dancer Bia Sajjad said that while not having in-person dance instruction made tryouts difficult, being able to practice a lot throughout quarantine made the overall process less intimidating. She also said that her teammates are trying their best to adapt to the situation and find ways to showcase their passion for dance and Virginia sports.

"It's nice to know that everyone is doing their best to support each other as a team," Sajjad said.

The dance team usually holds in-person practices throughout the summer — this year, they weren't able to do that, which means the team missed out on valuable training time. Instead, the squad has been doing online workouts together over Zoom since tryouts ended.

College spirit teams are not subject to NCAA rules and regulations, so both Virginia Cheerleading and the Virginia Dance Team follow rules determined by the ACC and Virginia Athletics. According to Haney, the ACC has mandated that cheerleaders and dance teams are not allowed on

the field at all before, during and after games. Visiting spirit teams are also not allowed at away games. Haney said that they may perform in a section of the stadium or on the lower hill of Scott Stadium, but Virginia Athletics is still working on the logistics of their performances though.

"We are evaluating the role of the cheer and dance teams at this time," said Jim Daves, assistant athletics director for media relations.

For now, both teams are preparing for the football season, which was slated to begin the week of Sept. 7 — along with all other fall Olympic sports — until Virginia's opponent, VMI, postponed all athletic activity. As a result, Virginia will open its season Sept. 19 against Virginia Tech. Both the cheer team and dance team, however, don't know when they will be allowed to begin in-person practices or perform at games, leaving their role in this season-opener up in the air.

Other than this budget cut, Virginia Athletics has implemented numerous other efforts to mitigate the financial losses imposed by the cancellation of winter and spring sports last March, as well as March Madness — a

major revenue source for schools nationwide. In May, Director of Athletics Carla Williams announced that all 20 head coaches, 51 assistant coaches and additional staff had taken a voluntary pay cut in anticipation of the difficulties these revenue losses would impose.

Even if the fall season does go well, however, Williams expressed concern that the department could still lose money.

"We're anticipating anywhere from a 15 to 30 percent shortfall and that's if we have an uninterrupted football and basketball season," Williams said.

Virginia Athletics declined to comment further on the nature of these budget cuts.

So far, four student-athletes have tested positive for COVID-19 after going through two rounds of mandatory testing since football players began returning to Grounds for voluntary training July 5. Three of the players who tested positive are members of the football team. There have been no new positive cases of COVID-19 among student athletes since July 24.

The University plans to resume in-person classes Sept. 8 — a two-week delay from its previous start date of Aug. 25 — with public health measures in place to maintain the safety of students, faculty and staff. Professor John MacKnight, a professor of internal medicine at the University and the medical director and primary care physician for Virginia Athletics, said that more students and teams returning to Grounds will create additional challenges for the athletic department to prevent the spread of the pandemic.

"As much of a protective bubble as we have tried to put around them, the reality is that as the beginning of the school years approaches, those bubbles either become very small or they just flat-out disappear," MacKnight said. "That's where we're really going to have to depend even more heavily on the kids to make great choices and try to do the right things."

Coach Bronco Mendenhall said that fan attendance at games will probably be limited to 1,000 fans in accordance with Phase 3 of Virginia's reopening plan, and will be limited to mostly families of players and coaches.

As of Monday, Virginia has 120,594 confirmed cases of COVID-19 — 847 of which were reported in the last 24 hours. The Thomas Jefferson Health District has 2,475 confirmed cases — 1,034 in Albemarle and 681 in Charlottesville.

According to the University's COVID-19 tracker, by Wednesday there were 115 total positive cases among faculty, staff, students and contract employees — 83 of which are among students alone.

# HEALTH & SCIENCE

## Study finds barrier to HIV treatment in southern states

U.Va. researchers find geographic disparities in receiving HIV-prevention drug PrEP contribute to the spread of HIV in the South

Sydney Wayand | Staff Writer

Researchers at the University Health System have recently uncovered a systemic barrier in the South, impacting the access to critical HIV treatment and prevention drug pre-exposure prophylaxis. An insurance requirement known as “prior authorization” has been largely deemed the culprit, researchers reveal. The South is the U.S. region with the highest number of HIV infections each year. According to the Centers for Disease Control, 51 percent of the 37,968 new HIV diagnoses in 2018, throughout the U.S. and depending areas, occurred in the South.

PrEP is a medication for those at high risk of contracting HIV, such as the Black and Latinx populations, to prevent the virus from establishing a permanent infection in the body.

According to the CDC, “studies have shown that PrEP reduces the risk of getting HIV from sex by about 99% when taken daily. Among people who inject drugs, PrEP reduces the risk of getting HIV by at least 74% when taken daily.”

Despite the efficacy and importance of this viral preventative treatment, some insurance plans in the South require what is known as “prior authorization,” in which insurance companies have established an additional barrier to care by preventing the immediate approval of the drug. This delay is characterized by additional paperwork for both patients and physicians and a lengthy process of medication approval.

However, prior authorization poses some benefits to insurance companies and possibly consumers.

“From an insurance company’s perspective it helps maintain tighter control on what is financed and in many ways it helps balance budgets to some extent, as it is a healthcare market. From a consumer standpoint, if you look at an insurance company website they certainly market it as a benefit to consumers,” said Sam Powers, fourth-year College student conducting infectious disease research at the University.

Another potential benefit of prior authorization is that it poses as a checks and balances mechanism for consumers whose physicians disregard or have no knowledge of potential problematic interactions with other drugs. More expensive medications could also be denied if there is an existence of a cheap-

er medication. These cost savings could potentially be passed to the consumer.

Kathleen McManus, assistant medicine professor and infectious disease and international health researcher at the University, elaborated more on the concept.

“Insurance companies often say they use prior authorization to ensure that the medication is medically appropriate,” McManus said. “And then if there is more than one medication [for the ailment] sometimes insurance companies use prior authorization to require the patient to start with the less expensive medication.”

According to McManus, however, it is notable that at the time of their study, there was only one HIV-prevention medication. Therefore, insurance companies motives could not have been to try and shift patients to another medication.

Additionally, researchers have uncovered that the rate of prior authorization for insurance plans in the South is significantly higher than those of other regions in the country.

Of the 16,853 qualified health plans that were looked at, with results published in JAMA Network Open, the proportion of qualified health plans in the South which required prior authorization for HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis was 37

percent, compared with 13 percent in the Midwest, 6 percent in the West and 2 percent in the Northeast.

When asked why more national health care plans in the South call for prior authorization, McManus said researchers are still trying to figure that out.

“We aren’t sure,” McManus said. “We tried to see if we could explain the use of prior authorization by looking at other plan characteristics to see if a plan uses prior authorization in certain settings. But we could not explain why more health care plans in the South require it. We would think that where there is more HIV you would actually want to see more HIV prevention medication to try to stop and turn things around, that is why we are so concerned to find this.”

Interestingly enough, researchers found that the rate of prior authorization for national insurance companies compared to local plans only offered in the South were comparably much higher. This subtly suggests that local plans in the South are more effective in their care for HIV prevention.

As stated in the research journal, it was concluded that the South is in most dire need of access to PrEP, even though it has lower PrEP use than other regions of the country. Insurance companies’ use of prior

authorization not only reduces access to care, but according to Sebastian Tello-Trillo, assistant professor of public policy and economics, it plays significantly into the perpetuation of HIV in Black populations and worsens racial disparities that already exist.

“More than 50 percent of African American individuals live in the South, where our research shows they are more likely to face this prior authorization barrier,” Tello-Trillo said.

Tello-Trillo further explained that the lifetime risk of HIV for Black men is 1 in 20, compared to a lifetime risk of 1 in 132 for white men. Additionally, among Black women the lifetime risk is 1 in 48, where among white women it is 1 in 880.

“We can see that Black people in America have higher lifetime risks of contracting HIV because of various structural fractures,” Tello-Trillo said. “And now there is this additional barrier that adds to it.”

Powers further emphasizes the problems prior authorization could pose for those at increased risk of HIV.

“All it takes is one encounter to contract HIV,” Powers said. “So a delay of two weeks ... in getting PrEP could be the difference between people having HIV and not having HIV.”

As someone who works closely with McManus, Powers stated that patients frequently plan on starting PrEP, though contract HIV before they receive the drug.

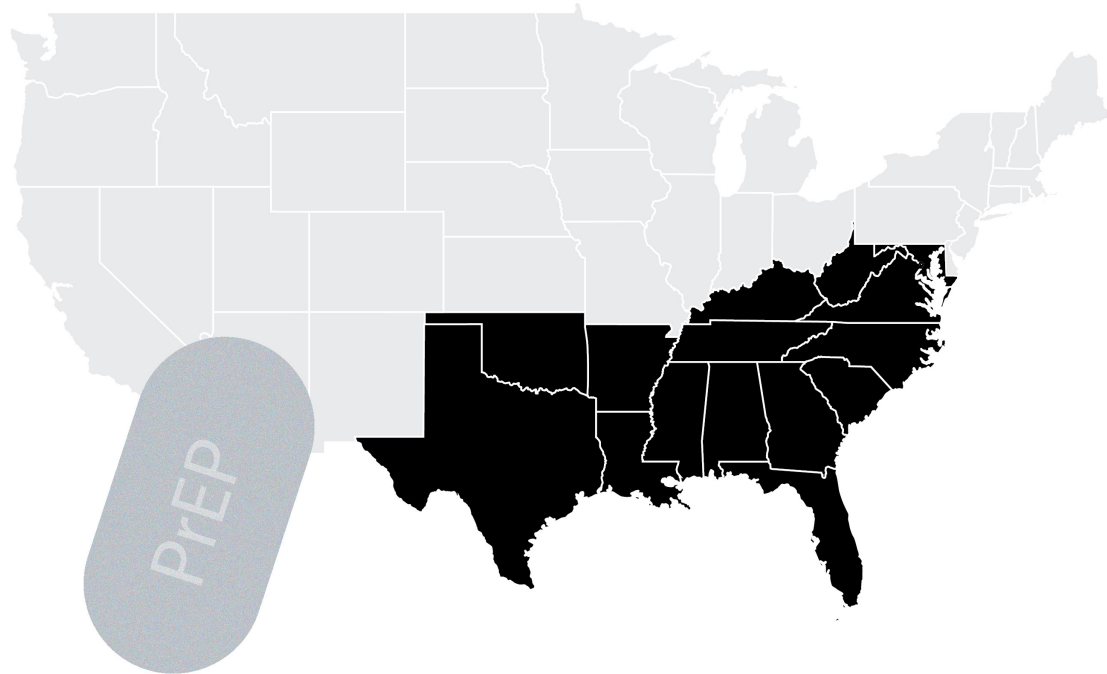
“It’s always a tragedy when that happens because PrEP could have permanently stopped that from occurring,” Powers said.

A good way to increase access to PrEP and get a tighter grip on the HIV epidemic is to minimize the amount of plans that call for prior authorization for the drug. When asked his opinion on how to achieve this, Tello-Trillo said he believes a couple steps need to be taken.

“I think we need to first ... understand the benefits [of prior authorization] and ... think about a standard procedure that either insurers need to follow or that the federal government [has] to follow to allow this insurance to have prior authorization,” Tello-Trillo said.

Finding ways to increase the use and uptake of PrEP in the South is still a problem researchers are attempting to solve.

“If we want more people to use this HIV prevention, we need to make it as easy as possible,” McManus said.



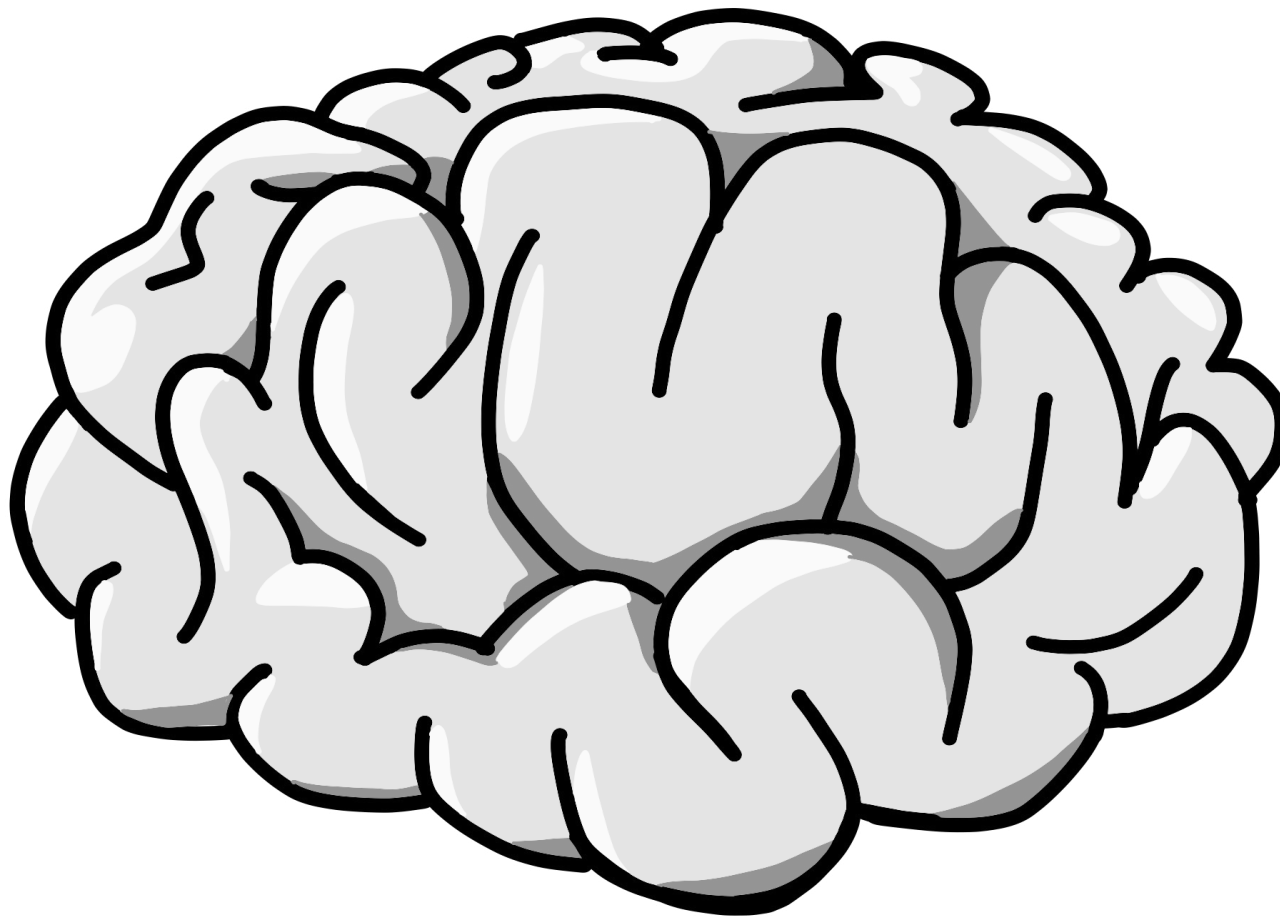
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# U.Va. researchers make progress in fight against glioblastoma

The team's identification of the importance of the AVIL gene to the growth of cancer offers hope for a potential treatment for glioblastoma

Parker Driscoll | Staff Writer



JOHN KANU | THE CAVALIER DAILY

A team of University researchers have successfully identified a gene that promotes cancer growth — advillin, also known as AVIL. This finding is a promising breakthrough in the fight against glioblastoma, one of the most malicious types of cancer. The publishing of the research study is the culmination of years of cancer research championed by University scientists and clinicians.

Glioblastoma is widely accepted as the deadliest form of brain cancer. In the U.S. alone, 12,000 new cases are recorded each year, and over the span of five years, the survivability rate of glioblastoma is less than three percent, according to the National Foundation of Cancer Research.

When the study began five years ago, researchers did not initially plan on studying glioblastoma as they began by researching pediatric cancer. But their discovery of the AVIL protein changed the direction of the study.

“This [was] really a serendipitous finding from the beginning,” said Dr. Hui Li, associate professor of pathology and lead researcher on the glioblastoma

study.

After realizing that AVIL, a protein that regulates cytoskeleton in cells which helps prevent cancerous overgrowth, is highly expressed in cells affected by glioblastoma, Li and his team were quick to continue their research.

“We’re a cancer lab ... whatever direction our genes point we will follow,” Li said.

AVIL has been studied previously in different contexts, such as its role in the development of neuronal cells that form ganglia, a structure containing a number of nerve cell bodies. This research team was the first to identify AVIL as an oncogene, or a gene involved in facilitating cancer growth.

Li and his team discovered that AVIL is expressed in all cells affected by glioblastoma. When AVIL is placed in healthy cells in a lab setting, cancerous cells begin to take hold, suggesting a link between AVIL and cancer growth. Additionally, the research team found that glioblastoma demonstrates oncogene addiction, meaning that when AVIL is removed from a cancerous cell, the cancer dies. However, because healthy cells do not

depend on the protein’s presence, the gene can be removed from the healthy cells without adverse side effects.

Although AVIL is not the first oncogene of glioblastoma to be identified, its unique profile of limited detrimental side effects to healthy cells after its removal makes it of great interest to those participating in cancer research. This unique situation offers a potential pathway to developing a drug to treat glioblastoma.

Although the team is certain that AVIL is involved in supporting the proliferation of glioblastoma cancer cells, the exact mechanism by which it interacts with cancer cells remains unclear. Identifying this mechanism is crucial to eventually developing drugs to treat glioblastoma, so the team’s research efforts have pivoted towards understanding the intricacies of the interaction between AVIL and glioblastoma.

As a biophysics major, Pawel Janczyk — a postdoctoral student participating in the research study — is currently working towards developing a better understanding of the molecular mechanisms at work between AVIL and cancer cells.

“[AVIL] might be an initial

driver or just affect the growth in the later stages,” Janczyk said. “We don’t fully know.”

Biophysics will also be central to the effort to eventually design a drug that can successfully bind to and target the AVIL gene.

As the study transitions towards identifying mechanisms that could lead to potential glioblastoma therapies, others involved in the study are looking to see if AVIL’s role in glioblastoma could possibly translate to other cancers.

“Our data really supports that it’s a bona fide oncogene, and it’s a powerful oncogene, so we think that even besides glioblastoma it may play an important role in the other cancer types,” Li said.

Preliminary research into gastric cancer suggests that targeting AVIL could be beneficial in treating gastric cancers and some pediatric cancers. University neuropathologist James Mandell was involved in finding the first evidence of AVIL in real glioblastoma cells in humans. As the study progresses, Mandell will examine the role of AVIL in medulloblastoma, a brain cancer typically found in children.

Despite the promising reports from the study, Li emphasizes

that there is a lot of work to be done before an effective treatment can be deployed.

The study has begun working with a chemistry lab to begin synthesizing compounds that can potentially target AVIL, but this demands significantly more time and resources. When research studies take this step towards beginning preliminary work on a drug, pharmaceutical companies typically finance the project, but for this study, the Charlottesville-based Ben and Catherine Ivy Foundation has provided crucial funding for this next stage of work. Li cited the translatability of this research as the reason the local foundation is motivated to further support it.

Shortly after the research was published, patients from around the world began contacting Li in hopes that a clinical trial would be available.

“I feel honored and am actually happy to see as a basic scientist that our discovery is touching so many lives, and we can offer them some hope,” Li said. “But, at the same time I feel the pressure and responsibility on my shoulders that we should have delivered something yesterday to these patients because they are desperate.”

Whereas traditionally published medical research requires viewers to pay to access, Li and his team made the decision to publish their research open-source, making it free for anyone in the world to access.

“We feel as if our discovery is a significant one,” Li said. “Glioblastoma is so devastating with really no effective therapy at this moment. We feel as if our basic discovery can potentially help, and maybe some other people are smart and working on similar things and can take our discovery and make it better.”





**It's an  
all-of-us  
thing.**



**Wear a mask.  
Wash your hands.  
Maintain distance.**



**FOR ALL OF US**