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MACKENZIE BULLOCK, MAC DOUCETTE, KAYLA MOORE & CAT WHITE | THE CAVALIER DAILY

After Hours



NEWS

This week in-brief

CD News Staff

'Run with Jim' returns to Grounds

Hundreds of students joined former University President Jim Ryan April 15 at the Rotunda to embark on a Run with Jim, from the Jefferson Statue in front of the Rotunda to Scott Stadium and back. The run was organized by the Fourth-Year Trustees — the Class of 2026 Council — and was the second Run with Jim since his resignation last June.

Though the run April 15 did not fall on the last day of classes for this semester, Ella Kreft, Trustees graduation chair and fourth-year College student, said it was still important to the Graduation Committee to give the Class of 2026 the opportunity to participate in the traditional run.

"We knew that we wanted to do this [Run with Jim], if not the last day of class ... at some point," Kreft said. "One of the concerns was [that] a lot of people were like, 'I didn't ever get to do a Run with Jim,' so this is kind of the final Run with Jim for our class."

Board of Visitors elects new student and faculty representatives

The University's full Board of Visitors convened Thursday for a meeting that brought together student leaders, faculty and administrators to reflect on the 2025-26 academic year. The Board also named Jackson Sleadd, Class of 2027 President and third-year College student, and Jeri Seidman, outgoing Faculty Senate chair and professor of Commerce, as the incoming student and faculty representatives to the University's Board for the 2026-27 academic year.

The meeting included a presentation from University President Scott Beardsley outlining the University's progress in fulfilling its current mission, an update on re-searching funding gaps and federal delays and remarks from both student and faculty leadership regarding institutional trust and shared governance over the past year.

The student representative communicates student perspectives and concerns to the Board, while the faculty representative conveys faculty priorities and academic issues. Both representative positions are non-voting and hold one-year terms. Sleadd and Seidman will begin their terms at the start of the 2026-27 academic year.

4.16

4.18

4.19

Finance Committee approves an average increase of University tuition

The Board of Visitors Finance Committee met Thursday and approved a 3.6 percent average increase in tuition, a 4.8 percent average increase in meal plan costs and a 5 percent increase in the cost of double-room housing for the 2026-27 school year. The approval was unanimous amongst Board members, though some expressed resistance to the increases before voting in favor of them.

Jennifer Wagner Davis, executive vice president and chief operating officer, cited increased costs as the primary reason for the approved increase in tuition. She said that the budget that could be passed by the General Assembly for June 30, 2027 through June 30, 2028 could increase professor salaries — University professors receive raises via this process. Davis said that the Senate and House of Delegates have separate proposals dealing with the pay increases that are currently unresolved, with House Bill 30 raising salaries by 2 percent and Senate Bill 30 raising salaries by 3 percent.

Virginia Guesthouse opens doors to guests and Charlottesville

The Virginia Guesthouse opened April 6 as the University's newest hotel and conference center located in the Emmet Ivy Corridor. The Guesthouse has 214 rooms, and it is the second completed project in the Corridor, following the completion of the School of Data Science in 2024.

The multi-floor hotel has rooms starting at under \$200 per night, a rate which varies seasonally. The Guesthouse has over 25,000 square feet of meeting space, which includes a large ballroom. Rich Keurajian, director of sales and marketing of the Virginia Guesthouse, said the meeting space can be used for University members to come together and share knowledge across disciplines.

The Guesthouse serves a direct purpose for the University — it is the new home of the UVa. Welcome Center. The Welcome Center, now located in the "Living Room" of the Guesthouse, offers maps, University programming information and local dining, lodging and shopping details to help visitors navigate the University, according to University Spokesperson Bethanie Glover. The Welcome Center was previously located at the UVa. Police Division station on Ivy Road.

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Redistricting passed — here's a play-by-play of Election Day

The new map gives a projected 10-1 advantage to Virginia Democrats

CD News Staff

Tuesday was Election Day in Virginia — voters across the Commonwealth had been voting for weeks on whether to approve a Democrat-led plan to redraw the state's congressional maps before the midterm elections in November. If enacted by a Virginia Supreme Court decision validating Tuesday's results, Democrats could expand their advantage in the state's congressional delegation from a six to five majority to a 10 to one majority.

The Associated Press called the race that "Yes" won at 8:49 p.m. with 82 percent of votes counted in the Commonwealth. The win means a 10-1 Democrat-favored map has been approved by voters. The new congressional lines will be in effect until after the 2030 census — the next round of redistricting — if Tuesday's election results are upheld by the Virginia Supreme Court.

The Tazewell County Circuit Court initially struck down the redistricting amendment due to violations of constitutional requirements and procedural rules after the amendment was first introduced in January. The decision was appealed to the Virginia Supreme Court, which deferred its final ruling until the maps were voted on by citizens of the Commonwealth. Now, the Virginia Supreme Court will either uphold or strike down the newly approved map.

Democrats argued they were simply responding to Republican efforts to redistrict first — starting in Texas last summer. Republicans have bashed the map as a partisan gerrymander intended to cement Democrats' advantage and win back the U.S. House of Representatives. A "Yes" vote indicated support for redrawing the maps, while a "No" vote opposed it.

In preparation for Tuesday, national politicians encouraged voters to head to the polls. President Donald Trump spoke with House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-La.) on a telerally call Monday evening, in which he urged Virginia voters to reject the redistricting amendment. Trump called the amendment a "blatant partisan power grab," criticizing Gov. Abigail Spanberger (D) and "far-left Democrats in Richmond."

Democrats brought out their own national figures for the election. Former President Barack Obama repeatedly campaigned for the "Yes" side, as Democrats hoped his popularity with Virginia Democrats would generate enthusiasm. Obama was used by both campaigns this cycle as a tactic, with the "No" side attempting to tie the former president to his past opposition to gerrymandering.

Here is a play-by-play of election day for the redistricting amendment, as reported by The Cavalier Daily throughout Tuesday on four Univer-

sity-area precincts — Slaughter Recreation Center, the Miller Center and Johnson and Trailblazer Elementary Schools.

7:30 a.m. — Early in-person voter turnout in four University-area precincts

While the constitutional amendment received a great deal of attention statewide, some University-area precincts underperformed the statewide average of early votes when compared with turnout in the November 2025 election.

At the conclusion of early in-person voting on the amendment, three of the four precincts — Slaughter Recreation Center and Johnson and Trailblazer Elementary — were below average for their respective precincts compared to November as of Saturday, according to State Navigator.

As of Saturday, the voting location at the Miller Center in Albemarle County saw 444 early votes, or 101.1 percent of early voter totals in November 2025. Slaughter saw 216 early votes, while Charlottesville's Johnson and Trailblazer Elementary Schools saw 499 and 230, respectively. That calculates to a respective 94.7 percent, 91.2 percent and 74.7 percent of the early vote totals from last November's election.

9:00 a.m. — University-area precincts see significantly lower turnout at 9 a.m. compared to last year

Voter turnout as of 9:00 a.m. significantly lagged behind voter turnout from last year's gubernatorial race at all four University-area precincts that The Cavalier Daily followed. In total, this year's turnout at 9:00 a.m. was just 57.4 percent of last year's in-person turnout around that time.

Notably, because Tuesday was not a state Election Day holiday, the University continued to hold classes. In a typical general election, students would have the day off of classes.

2:10 p.m. — Out-of-state student encourages peers to head to the polls

Third-year Architecture student Maren Meinhold, hailing from out of state, voted at Trailblazer Elementary Tuesday afternoon. In an interview with The Cavalier Daily, she expressed the importance of exercising her right to vote, regardless of where she is originally from.

"Especially as an out-of-state student living in Virginia, I think it's important to educate yourself on your host state and [learn] more about it, just as someone from outside of the state," Meinhold said. "Get out here and vote."

2:30 p.m. — Tablers speak to voters outside of Trailblazer Elementary

Charlie Burns, member of Charlottesville Democrats and first-year Masters of Public Policy student, tabled outside of Trailblazer Elementary School Tuesday morning. Burns said he supports the Democratic campaign because of his disagreement with Trump's mid-decade redistricting efforts in other states.

"The way I see it, is ... we can, as Democrats, roll over and let the other side play by new rules, or we can kind of get down in the mud," Burns said. "I'm choosing to do some extreme things to hopefully put a check on Trump's power for at least the next few years."

On the other hand, first-year College student Abby Brown tabled for the vote "No" side of the redistricting efforts Tuesday morning at Trailblazer, calling the proposed map "totally unfair."

"[I] want to help talk to voters [and] explain why they should vote," Brown said. "We get the argument, 'Oh, Texas did it. This other state did it.' But we also can't ignore the fact that other Democratic states have done it, and so it's not fair."

4:45 p.m. — Student casts a "No" vote, cites partisanship as sole reason for a "Yes" vote

First-year Engineering student Joseph Watkins told The Cavalier Daily that he cast a "No" vote against the redistricting referendum. Watkins' rationale aligns with that of many prominent Republican politicians who have called the effort a partisan attempt to muster more political control.

"Pretty much every politician is against gerrymandering, and there's really no reason to support it other than partisanship," Watkins said. "Out of fairness, I voted 'No.'"

4:55 p.m. — Del. Callsen visits Charlottesville polling site, urges students to vote

Del. Katrina Callsen, D-Charlottesville, made a stop Tuesday afternoon at the Herman Key Recreation Center, a polling location near the Downtown Mall, to campaign in support of the redistricting referendum. In an interview with The Cavalier Daily, Callsen encouraged all University students to participate in the election and emphasized the broader stakes of the vote.

"This is really the chance that people have to weigh in on what's happening nationally, and so they need to show up and they [need to] vote," Callsen said. "What we're doing in Virginia is in response to what Trump has asked Republican states to do, and if you are a Democrat, it's important to protect our voice at the national level, and that requires a 'Yes' vote today."

5:00 p.m. — Students urge others to vote as last votes cast before poll closure

With two hours left in the day to cast a vote, students at polling locations continued expressing the importance of showing up to the polls. First-year College student Amaris Reese, who voted at Slaughter Recreation Center, highlighted the significance of exercising voting rights.

"I ... think it's important if you have the right to vote, or the ability to vote, that you should vote," Reese said. "Especially me being Black — people fought for me to have this ability. I'm not [going to] take it for granted."

Second-year College student Sajad Alsafee echoed similar sentiments to other Democratic students interviewed by The Cavalier Daily throughout the day, saying it is important to make voices heard this election and that voting "Yes" responds to Republican gerrymanders in other states.

"Especially with this election, Republicans have been gerrymandering for years, and all of the sudden, now we have control in Virginia," Alsafee said. "I think ... Democrats should grow a backbone and actually fight back, and not just play purity politics."

At Trailblazer Elementary School, The Cavalier Daily interviewed two students side-by-side who voted opposite of one another. Third-year College student Beckett Smith, who was tabling for the "No" campaign at Trailblazer, had been speaking to students outside the polls encouraging them to vote "No." Smith said he opposes gerrymandering everywhere, including in Republican states.

"Virginia should take this stand against gerrymandering, because I do disagree with what happened in Texas," Smith said.

Fourth-year Engineering student Sam Chun said while he voted "Yes" as a response to redistricting efforts in Republican states, he too generally opposes gerrymandering.

"I'm not for gerrymandering in most circumstances, so I can see why someone would have a strong opinion about not wanting to do that," Chun said.

7:29 p.m. — "Yes" ahead in Charlottesville by near-identical margin to Spanberger

At 7 p.m. in the Commonwealth, polls closed for the referendum vote. If individuals were still in line to vote once polls closed, they were still allowed to cast their ballot by law.

Less than half an hour after polls closed, the "Yes" side was ahead in Charlottesville by nearly an identical margin to Gov. Abigail Spanberger's (D) performance in her 2025 victory, 88 percent to 12 percent.

8:00 p.m. — Same-day registrant numbers down compared to 2025

Compared to last year's 1286 provisional ballots by same-day registrants cast at the University-area's four precincts, just 494 same-day registrants cast provisional ballots in the redistricting referendum Tuesday. Notable, however, is the timing of Tuesday's election — just months after the gubernatorial election, which many students registered for at the time.

Some press releases thank voters, others thank the Court

Throughout election day Tuesday, legislators and students urged others to make their voices heard by casting a ballot. In a press release Tuesday evening from Spanberger, she expressed gratitude for voters who did just that — specifically, for individuals who cast "Yes" votes. She also reassured the citizens of the Commonwealth that the map is temporary, and went on to say she will work to ensure Virginia's redistricting commission "gets back to work" following the 2030 census.

"Virginia voters have spoken, and tonight they approved a temporary measure to push back against a President who claims he is 'entitled' to more Republican seats in Congress," Spanberger wrote in the press release.

Terry Kilgore, Virginia House Grand Old Party leader, also released a statement Tuesday evening.

"Serious legal questions remain about both the wording of this referendum and the process used to put it before voters," Kilgore wrote in the statement. "These questions have not been resolved, and they now move where they belong — to the courts."

Going forward

Like Kilgore noted in his statement, it is now up to the Virginia Supreme Court to validate or strike down Tuesday's election results. When the Tazewell County Court ruling — which blocked the referendum — was appealed to the Virginia Supreme Court in February, the Court ruled the referendum could occur but only on the condition that it can nullify its results.

Still, the 10-1 Democrat-favored map became immediately effective following Tuesday's results, and will remain in effect until after the 2030 census — when redistricting occurs again — unless the Court strikes it down. Notably, if the Court validates Tuesday's referendum results, these new congressional lines will be in place for the 2026 midterm elections.

Students react to increase in tuition for the 2026-27 school year

Students noted they were unaware the Board of Visitors recently met to discuss the tuition increase, and several students shared ways they combat the cost

Melody Yuan | Staff Writer

The Board of Visitors Finance Committee unanimously approved an increase in tuition, dining rates and other mandatory fees for the 2026-27 school year April 16. The Finance Committee is responsible for the University's financial affairs and business operations, and the Committee manages the budget, tuition and student fees.

At the meeting, Jennifer Wagner Davis, executive vice president and chief operating officer, explained the reasons behind the raise in tuition and fees. Specifically, Davis cited salary increases for professors resulting from legislation passed by the General Assembly as a key factor in the tuition increase. She also cited the minimum wage increase, collective bargaining and inflation as contributing factors.

On average, the tuition rate for all undergraduate schools at the University is set to increase by 3.6 percent for both in-state and out-of-state students. Some additional changes include a \$152 increase in mandatory fees — \$4 to address increasing education and general needs and \$148 to address increasing non-E&G needs. Some non-E&G needs include the growing volume of students using counseling and psychological services and expanding access to mental health services. The Committee also approved a 4.8 percent average increase in meal plan costs and a 5 percent increase in the cost of double-room housing.

The Cavalier Daily spoke with six students about their reactions to the increase in the cost of attendance. Students shared that they are combatting the rising cost of attendance by seeking outside financial assistance, seeking employment opportunities at the University or graduating early. Many of the students said they did not know that the Board was planning to increase the cost of attendance, and, at the time of their interviews, five did not know that the change had been approved April 16.

Students noted that the cost of attendance has steadily risen over the past years, and fourth-year College student Coco Clement said since her first year, the tuition has increased every year. In December 2021, the Board approved a 4.7 percent increase in base undergraduate tuition and fees for the 2022-23 school year, and a 3.7 percent increase for the 2023-24 school year. In December 2023, the Board approved a 3 percent increase in base tuition for both the 2024-25 and 2025-26 school years.

"Coming from an out-of-state student, I pay around \$77,000 per year, which actually goes up every

single year because of inflation and [other factors]," Clement said. "I know that for in-state students, [the University] gives a lot of financial aid, but especially for out-of-state students, we find that it's a lot harder to both apply for aid and receive that aid."

Clement said that as an out-of-state student, she already finds paying for college to be a heavy financial burden, making the increased cost of attendance "very concerning."

According to an email statement from University spokesperson Bethanie Glover, the University is the only public university that practices need-blind admissions and meets 100 percent of demonstrated financial need for all undergraduate students. Additionally, Glover said there are "ample opportunities" for out-of-state students to reduce their cost of attendance, like through scholarships, grants and work-study programs.

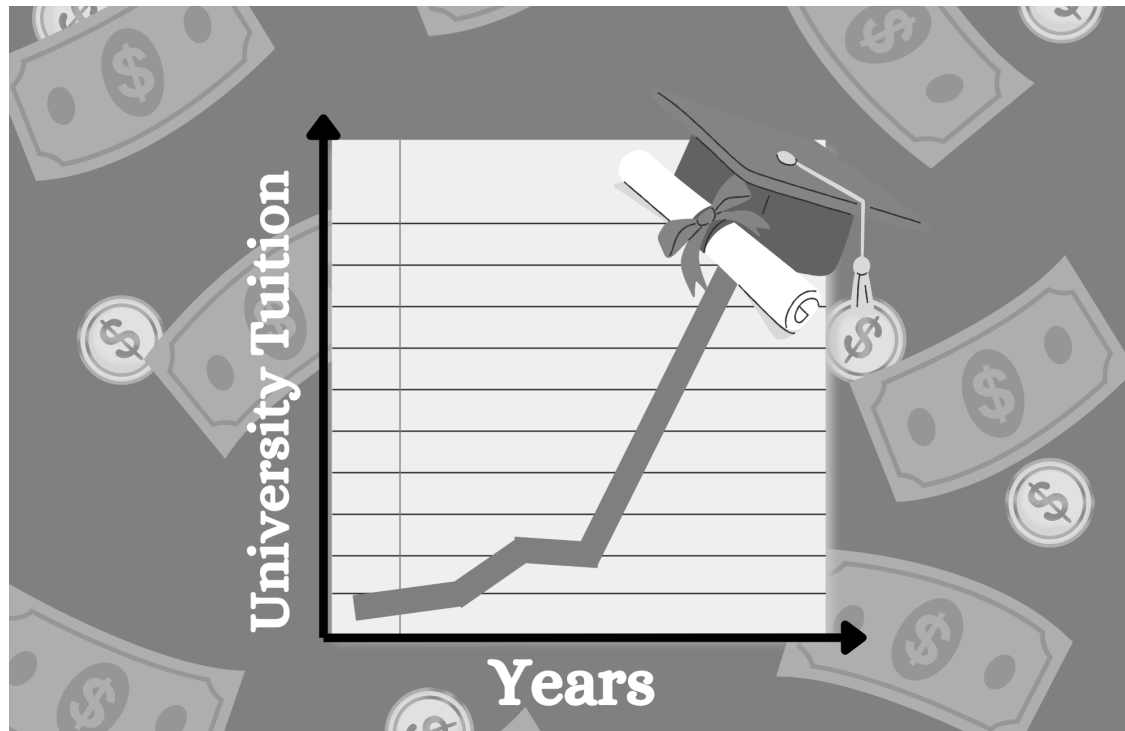
"As was shared in the Board of Visitors Finance Committee meeting last week, 72 percent of the Class of 2025 completed their U.Va. undergraduate degree with no debt, reflecting the University's strong commitment to protecting affordability and providing opportunities to reduce costs," Glover said.

First-year Engineering student Ryan Liu is an out-of-state student who receives financial aid from the University, which was a main reason for his decision to commit to the University. Liu noted that there are other students paying a significant amount to study at the University, so further increases in the cost of attendance impose an additional burden on those students.

"College ultimately is an opportunity that not many people have, and unfortunately, this may cause some people to not choose U.Va.," Liu said. "One of my reasons for choosing U.Va. was that it was one of my most affordable options, even as an out-of-state Engineering student, because [of] the very generous financial aid package that U.Va. gave me."

Liu said he is not sure how much of the new cost of attendance will be covered by his financial aid package.

Second-year Engineering student Rowan Mueller said he is aware that tuition is already about \$10,000 more expensive for students in the School of Engineering and Applied Science compared to those in the College of Arts and Sciences. He added that the growing tuition cost further supports his decision to graduate one year early.



TARA CHAREONSILP | THE CAVALIER DAILY

"I am graduating a little bit earlier, so I'm only paying for three years of college, and part of the reason I'm doing that is because the tuition is so high," Mueller said. "It makes more financial sense for me to graduate earlier, so I can get into the workforce a year earlier and start making money."

As for the \$152 increase in mandatory fees, Mueller said he does not see that increase as being problematic because the fees are only rising by a small amount and are being used to address student needs.

First-year College student Alice Zhang pays in-state tuition, but does not receive any aid from the University, and is planning to take out student loans and work to help pay for the tuition. Zhang said the tuition increase adds to the burden of her current efforts to pay for her tuition.

As for the increase in mandatory fees, Zhang said she understands these fees are being raised to address student needs, but wishes the University was more specific about where the fees are being allocated. For example, the agenda from Thursday's Finance Committee meeting listed "increases in student health volume for counseling and psychological services" as a reason for \$37 of the \$152 increase in mandatory fees. The agenda also listed "operational needs in student programming and Newcomb Hall" as a reason for \$10 of the increase in mandatory fees.

"I have had to utilize the CAPS resources, so I understand the influx of students [using those re-

sources] and why they may have had to increase prices ... but I wish U.Va. was a little bit more specific on the other purposes that [the fees] are allocated towards," Zhang said.

Other students are seeking opportunities within the University to alleviate the cost of attendance — for example, becoming a resident advisor. For RAs, housing and meal plans are covered by the University.

Second-year Engineering student Riley Meana said one of the reasons she wanted to become an RA is for these cost benefits. Meana noted that her peers similarly look outside of the University for financial assistance in order to cover the cost of attendance, specifically through scholarships or other forms of aid.

"A lot of my friends [are] first-generation students, and they're applying to a lot of scholarships and trying to seek a lot of aid [to help with tuition]," Meana said. "I'm the youngest of three siblings, so I'm trying to do the most to help my parents pay for tuition."

Students also said they were concerned about their lack of knowledge about the tuition increase. Third-year College student Annabelle Huang said that she believes students should have been notified about plans to increase the cost of attendance, so they can make informed decisions about living arrangements and meal plan options. Housing for double rooms is set to increase by 5 percent for the 2026-27 academic year, and Huang emphasized that students should have known about this change prior to the on Grounds housing se-

lection period, which occurs from November to February of each academic year.

"I already made plans to live off-Grounds for next semester, but knowing about this increase makes me feel like I have made the right decision," Huang said. "As a student here, having to pay for housing is already a financial burden ... it seems a little bit unfair to have this increase every year without the general [student body] knowing about all these changes happening."

Additionally, Huang said that learning about the 4.8 percent average increase in meal plan prices further reaffirms her consideration to not purchase a meal plan for the next school year. Huang said she did not anticipate that the price of meal plans would change.

"It would be common decency to let the student body know of the changes [the Board is] making, just because everyone deserves to know what is happening, and not after they see the tuition pages pulled up ... wondering why there are such slight differences," Huang said.

According to the agenda of the Finance Committee meeting April 16, the average increase of 3.6 percent to undergraduate and graduate tuition and the increases to fees for the 2026-27 year "are consistent with ... [financial] planning efforts and seek to balance access, affordability and educational quality."

Spanberger signs legislation raising Virginia's minimum wage

Almost 1,500 University student workers earn below the incoming \$15 per hour threshold

Vrinda Vashisht | Staff Writer

Virginia's minimum wage is slated to rise to \$15 per hour by January 2028 after Gov. Abigail Spanberger (D) signed House Bill 1 and Senate Bill 1 into law April 9. The legislation is set to incrementally raise Virginia's minimum wage from its current amount of \$12.77 per hour to \$13.75 per hour on Jan. 1, 2027 and to \$15 per hour on Jan. 1, 2028. Spanberger also signed House Bill 20 and Senate Bill 121, which extended the state's minimum wage to farmworkers by eliminating a previously held exemption.

HB 1 was sponsored by Del. Jeion Ward (D-87), and SB 1 was sponsored by Sen. L. Louise Lucas (D-18). HB 20 and SB 121 were sponsored by Del. Adele McClure (D-2) and Sen. Jennifer Carroll Foy (D-33), respectively.

The bills were part of a larger catalog of workforce legislation Spanberger signed April 9, which also included measures to expand high school apprenticeships and bring new workers to Virginia's offshore wind industry.

"Today, we are putting more money in the pockets of Virginia workers," Spanberger said in a press release April 9. "If you work full time in Virginia, you should be able to afford to live in Virginia. You should be able to keep up with your rent or mortgage, fill your medications and save for your kids' futures."

This legislation eliminates a longstanding exemption that had excluded farm laborers and farmworkers from Virginia's minimum wage law. This exemption traces back to the 1938 Fair Labor Standards Act, which excluded farmworkers from federal minimum wage protections. While Congress later extended the federal minimum wage to farmworkers, Virginia did not, and the state kept it in place when it raised its minimum wage in 2020. McClure introduced a similar bill in 2024 that passed the General Assembly but was vetoed by former Gov. Glenn Youngkin (R).

Spanberger also said in the press release that her administration worked with the Virginia Farm Bureau to "strike a balance to protect farmworkers and our vital farming industry."

The wage increases will directly affect the University, which employs approximately 33,000 people in total, according to University spokesperson Bethanie Glover. At the University, 1,478 student Academic Division employees and five student Medical Center employees currently earn



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The Capitol building in Richmond, photographed Feb. 17.

more than minimum wage, but less than \$15 per hour.

Glover further noted the minimum student wage at the University is \$13 per hour — higher than Virginia's current minimum wage. Other institutions of higher education pay higher starting wages to their students, but those states largely have higher minimum wages. The University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and Northwestern University both pay student workers a starting wage of \$15-16 per hour, which matches Illinois' state minimum wage of \$15 per hour for adult workers. At Princeton University, entry-level student jobs earn \$15.92 per hour, which also matches New Jersey's statewide minimum wage of \$15.92, effective since Jan. 1.

Jordan Scott, an undergraduate library assistant at Edgar Shannon Library and fourth-year College student, said that while a pay jump to \$15 per hour would be a small increase for her current wage of \$14.50 per hour, it would make a bigger difference for her peers in other low-wage jobs who are making less than \$14.50 per hour. She added that she doubts that the University would have raised wages to \$15 per hour on their own, without any legislation.

"It's not anything against UVA., but I just think [that] how the world works, no one [at the

University] was like, 'let me spend more money, give out more without a requirement,'" Scott said.

Areeb Khan, an undergraduate library assistant at Shannon Library and third-year College student, agreed with Scott, stating that while the University may have eventually given wage increases, it likely would not have happened beginning this year without the legislation. Khan also echoed the sentiment that the legislation will make a bigger impact for lower-paid workers than him.

"I think maybe eventually [the University] would have gotten around to [raising wages], but probably not by 2028," Khan said. "People would have to ask for it, and eventually UVA. would, but I don't think on their own there'd be any rush."

Andrew Simon, assistant professor at the Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy, said that the 2027 increase to \$13.75 per hour is less of a real raise than it appears. Virginia has only tied its minimum wage to inflation since 2025, Simon said in an email statement to The Cavalier Daily, meaning the 2027 bump is making up for ground lost during years when the wage stayed flat.

Simon said that the 2028 increase to \$15 per hour, by contrast, will show a substantial increase in wages.

"The second year increase in

2028 to [\$15] will more meaningfully increase the inflation-adjusted minimum wage," Simon said. "Many credible estimates of the effects of higher [inflation-adjusted] minimum wages on employment find small negative effects, although there is no consensus on the magnitude."

Asst. Economics Prof. Emma Harrington echoed similar sentiments to Simon's assessment. While raising minimum wage can pose risk for some job loss, Harrington said that research shows these effects are consistently modest.

"There's lots of studies finding absolutely no negative employment effects," Harrington said. "Something like a 10 percent increase in pay [reduces] employment on the order of about 1 percent so even relatively large increases in pay [are] not causing that many people to lose their job."

For University employees specifically, Harrington said they are especially unlikely to face layoffs as a result of the wage increases. Larger employers tend to absorb minimum wage hikes better than smaller "mom and pop type stores," Harrington said.

"My guess is for the University employees and contractors who are affected by this, it's almost entirely just going to be on the benefit side for them," Harrington

ton said.

Harrington pointed to two reasons economists believe minimum wage increases do not lead to the widespread layoffs that employers warn about. The first is that firms have a "wage-setting power," leading to them often paying workers less than what their productivity would warrant — raising the minimum wage threshold pushes pay closer to that true value. The second, she said, is that research — including her own — finds that paying workers more makes them more productive.

Harrington also noted that Virginia's minimum wage is low in relation to Washington, D.C. and other states. D.C. has a minimum wage of \$17.95 per hour, and she said it is "sort of surprising" that Virginia's current minimum wage is \$12.77 per hour. Beyond D.C., many states — especially Democrat-led states — far exceed the federal minimum wage of \$7.25. Washington, Connecticut and California have minimum wages of \$17.13, \$16.94 and \$16.90 for 2026, respectively.

"Any little bit does help," Khan said. "Especially [for] students who make less than [undergraduate library assistants], it would be a big difference."

SPORTS

Chris Pollard's message for Virginia? 'Be the buffalo'

A team mantra has been fully embraced by the 2026 Cavaliers

Xander Tilock | Senior Writer

A stuffed animal sits inside Virginia's baseball dugout. One may think it could be a runaway Build-A-Bear project, or perhaps a childhood keepsake. This figure, "Buffy," is beloved by a group of 41 college boys. It is a mascot of sorts — though it looks nothing like CavMan.

Buffy is a physical representation of Virginia's mantra — "be the buffalo" — spawning from a story introduced by Coach Chris Pollard. According to Pollard, there are three responses to a storm, which come in the form of different animals.

When a storm comes, he believes, the cow turns and runs away from the storm. The horse turns its back to the storm and waits for it to pass. The third option, Pollard stressed, is the buffalo. The buffalo turns and faces the storm head-on, and charges right into it. The buffalo emerges from the storm faster, more efficiently and largely victorious.

"The buffalo just goes straight into the storm, attacks it every day," graduate catcher Noah Juras said. "If you

welcome that adversity and just attack it, you can get through it much quicker and come out even stronger on the other end."

The mantra originated from Coach Adam Moseley, a high school coach in Alabama. Pollard and his staff hosted the Virginia Baseball Coaches Association convention back in December, and Moseley was one of the speakers present at the event.

Moseley, who has also spent time with Team USA, told the story of a loss in his program, and how they needed some mantra or mindset to move forward. Accordingly, they adopted "be the buffalo." At the convention, Moseley put it up on the board and explained the scenario of the three animals responding to a storm. Fast-forward a few months later, and the Cavaliers have embraced it.

"When you get into a college baseball season, whether you think it's going to go well or not, or whether it turns out to be a great season in the end or not, you inevitably face storms along the way," Pollard said.

So far this season, Virginia has been faced with plenty of adversity. A 14-0 mercy rule loss at Charlotte and a walkoff neutral site defeat at the hands of Stetson certainly stain the Cavaliers' resume. However, Virginia then responded by winning two of three games at No. 3 North Carolina days later.

"You face adversity even in the best of years, and just being able to face that adversity head-on is going to be really important for this group," Pollard said. "And it's something that we're going to continue to have to do."

Pollard's mantra has found its way into the game itself. When a Virginia hitter reaches first base, they put two hands up by their heads to refer to the buffalo's horns, according to freshman pitcher Noah Yoder. The simple celebration rallies teammates to fight to win, as many innings as that requires. The celebration has become a staple of one of the nation's most productive offenses.

The message is spread by Pollard's assistants, too. Director of Recruiting

Brian Sakowski echoed Pollard's claim that the team has bought into "be the buffalo."

"When [players] embrace struggle and force their way through the other side of it, and the positives that come with that, it allows them to just embrace it even easier the next time around, because they've seen that it works," Sakowski said.

Player-led ownership of being the buffalo is especially impressive given Virginia's newness. The only returning starters from last season are senior outfielder Harrison Didawick and junior shortstop Eric Becker — and 28 of the other 39 players are either new transfers or true freshmen. Amidst the turnover, the Cavaliers have rallied around Pollard and his leadership.

Several hundred feet away in the left field grass, one of the most vocal supporters of Pollard's mantra is Didawick, who has been with Virginia since the 2023 season. But in terms of on-field production, Didawick has flashed great potential — he tied the program's single-season home run

record in the 2024 season — but also slumped to hit just .225 in 2025.

Pollard's message to Didawick? To not just be the buffalo, and get through the storms, but to celebrate the storms just as much as the victories.

"Coach Pollard always says, 'celebrate your failures,'" Didawick said. "I think that is huge for me. I think it's huge for everyone on our team, like, when you fail, like, be happy about that, because then you can respond. You have a chance to become stronger with it, which kind of goes hand in hand with the Buffalo [mantra]."

Didawick and company know storms are inevitable — there could be more instances where inexperienced players are required to step into an unprecedented role. There could be more instances where the Cavaliers have to respond after a nasty defeat. The goal, then, is to make sure that Virginia's resilience is inevitable too.

"I love it," Pollard said. "They've rallied around [being the buffalo]."

'No one-man projects:' Aaron Roussell sells winning potential

A self-proclaimed lifelong learner, Roussell preaches a culture of adaptability, development and high expectations

Sofie Keppler | Senior Associate

Virginia's new women's basketball head coach offered an unexpected concession when asked about sustaining a program's success at his introductory press conference.

"I know that C-word is overused a lot, and it used to mean something different," Roussell said, leaning over the podium as fans donning orange and blue watched with anticipation.

In the modern coaching lexicon, "culture" is the ultimate catch-all phrase — a convenient, if hollow, explanation for everything about a team from locker room dynamics to winning games. But for the program's new figurehead, the word itself has lost its teeth. Rather than hiding behind a cliché, Roussell is stripping the term back to a more authentic version.

"You still need work ethic," Roussell said. "You know, the standards that we allow, the expectations that we have ... We're aligned on how quickly we want to [succeed], but I think you have to establish the expectations and standards right away."

For Roussell, sustaining those

standards starts with the people positioned around him.

"[There are] no one-man projects, I'm just [like], 'Hey, walk with me,'" Roussell said. "Write this stuff down, let's try to pursue this."

Roussell's vision hinges on collective investment. During his Division III tenure at Chicago, he already faced the reality of operating with limited resources, which often required him to absorb a vast range of responsibilities. His Division I experience later on allowed those responsibilities to be distributed across a support staff. Roussell wants voices, delegation and people he trusts to share the load in a way that makes growth both expected and sustainable.

The challenge is executing that vision in an ultra-competitive conference and an era where patience is rarely afforded.

"I think the delegation and just having the right people, I'm very comfortable we have the right people that are making things happen," Roussell said.

That same emphasis on collab-

oration extends to how Roussell builds his rosters. In a landscape where the transfer portal can alter a team's entire makeup and trajectory overnight, Roussell seeks a more lasting formula. Rather than chasing the annual portal overhaul, he anchors his programs around "development and retention."

On the court, Roussell characterizes his team's play as a motion-based system built on constant movement and fluidity. He said that although the system may appear incomplete early in the season, the style sharpens over time as the team plays with more synergy, with its best basketball arriving in the season's final stretch.

Roussell's formula is already beginning to take shape in the roster. Two-time All-ACC junior guard Kymora Johnson's decision to withdraw from the transfer portal and return to Virginia offers an early foundation — in both talent and continuity — alongside a growing group of returners, a transfer commit and an incoming freshman addition. Though a very early snapshot of

the 2026-27 season, the roster already signals a program being deliberately layered.

"I think the selling point is the power to win here," Roussell said. "The development that I think our staff feels comfortable doing to make people [professionals] ... that's something we really took to heart when [the NCAA] changed things the last three or four years. I want to develop [professionals]."

His philosophy arrives at a Virginia program searching for enduring success in a highly competitive conference capable of unraveling years of progress. The expectations are immediate, though his vision is built on a longer timeline for development, which makes Roussell's rebuild particularly difficult to execute. Even though relying heavily on the portal provides a quick fix to these expectations, Roussell is actively fighting the cycle of perpetual reinvention.

Perhaps more importantly, despite over two decades of head coaching, Roussell is not arriving at Virginia with a fixed blueprint. He

is far more interested in evaluating what works right now than replicating what has worked for him before.

"I used the analogy last week ... you're a restaurant owner, you're taking over a new business," Roussell said. "You're not changing the whole menu, right? There's probably some things that worked a little bit ... It was an assessment of what was working, what was great. It was very obvious from the student-athletes what was great."

Roussell is selling the collective pursuit of winning potential, led by a coach who is willing to learn how to get there. That culture may not sound substantive, but its substance lies in enforced standards, shared responsibility and player development over time — all of which will be tested as the team takes shape in Charlottesville.

"Twenty-two years into this, there's nothing I'm married to," Roussell said. "There's nothing in order of business, of how I do this. You're supposed to be a lifelong learner in every business. That's in college basketball to a T."

A preseason talk with Tiffany unlocked Hudson Hausmann

The short-stick defensive midfielder is leaving his imprint on every game he plays

Michael Liebermann | Senior Writer

The words started coming and they started sounding new.

Coach Lars Tiffany likes to check in individually with his players every few months. This spring, after offseason scrimmages and before the season opener against Colgate, Tiffany checked in again with sophomore midfielder Hudson Hausmann.

It morphed from a check-in to a call to action.

“Hey,” Tiffany said, in so many words, Hausmann remembers. “I know you can do more.”

Tiffany saw the higher gear hovering right in front of the player. He just wanted to figure out how to unlock it. How to crack open the bag of winds and unleash Hausmann. He thought out loud with Hausmann, asking what the player needed to make the leap — harder coaching? Coaching that angered him into reaching a new level?

Hausmann decided he needed none of that. He could figure it out. Tiffany had told him so.

“That [conversation] was a gentle push,” Hausmann said. “And I think that’s what allowed me to find what I’m doing now.”

What he is doing now, as a blistering short-stick defensive midfielder, is fueling No. 12 Virginia — playing stubborn defense, shepherding the clear and scoring five goals this season. And laying down punishing hits.

There was the one against Towson. The poor attacker looked like he’d charged into a steel clothesline, or rather the clothesline had hunted him down. His stick lolled at his side and the ball fluttered into no man’s land.

“He’s an absolute dawg,” senior defender John Schroter said after Virginia’s game against Notre Dame. “Crazy, huge hit running up the field. Love playing with him. He’s so fun to play with.”

Before Virginia turned its season around — before the four-game winning streak with the wins over then-No. 1 Notre Dame and then-No. 7 Duke — the Cavaliers struggled mightily. Especially Hausmann and the defense.

Virginia surrendered 18 goals against Richmond, and this was before Richmond became known as potentially the best team in the country. It prompted a minor inquest.

The defense sat down to talk. Were they going to be, they asked themselves, reactive or confrontational? Let the game come to them, or initiate the contact and the intensity, take it to the offense?

“We were kind of on our heels, waiting for them to make the



DANIEL FISHER | THE CAVALIER DAILY

Hudson Hausmann has quickly become integral to the Virginia defense.

move,” Hausmann said. “And that’s not how we want to be moving forward, whether it’s our guys being confrontational, getting gloves, making the first move.”

Confrontational? “I love that,” the former football defensive back says, after a childhood in football, hockey and lacrosse. There is no choice in those sports — only physicality.

“We need bruisers,” Hausmann said. “When I see an opportunity to make a play, I guess my eyes do light up.”

His eyes light up talking about anything to do with lacrosse. They go full C-3PO when the conversation swivels to the clearing game. He loves it so much he gets a little sheepish about all the screaming he does. At whoever has the ball. Give it to him.

It gets to him, and then he serves as a one-man clearing machine. Hausmann returned kicks in football, loving how he would get the ball, scan the field, then explode through the hole and shed tacklers. This is the same role.

When he got to Virginia, the coaches were not quite sure what to do with him. Offense or defense? So they split him in his first season of fall ball — two months with the defense, two with the offense.

They settled on offense come the spring, and he played the first three games there. But then-junior

midfielder Joey Terenzi went down injured against Ohio State, and Hausmann, sitting in film Tuesday morning with the offense, got summoned to the defensive meeting instead.

He has stayed there since, building confidence in the role as his offensive confidence returns, too. Virginia under Tiffany loves transition, fawns over it, and that gives defensive midfielders opportunities to come down.

Hausmann, of course, wants to score goals. So he figured he would talk to graduate goalie Jake Marek. There is no one more attuned to the miniscule specificities of shooting than a goalie. Marek had some advice.

“When d-middies come down, goalies automatically think they’re shooting low,” Hausmann said.

That was the gist. He took the advice to heart, scoring a high rifle against Notre Dame. He did it the next week against Duke, and freshman attacker Brendan Millon, stationed toward the corner during the play, threw his hands on his head in amazement.

“I know I still have a lot more to do, and I think I know I can still have a lot greater impact,” Hausmann said. “Help this team in any way — that’s always been my biggest piece.”

He is doing it at the program he grew up loving. Why? No one

has any idea why. Suddenly the kid from Greenwich, Conn., was wearing Virginia lacrosse shirts and hats. His parents do not even remember where the clothing came from, as if it just washed up on the front porch one day, on the tide of another national title celebration.

But they do know the two things that solidified their son’s love for the program.

The Brunswick School, his school from before middle school and through high school, once hosted a camp with Steele Stanwick and Virginia. Hausmann, clad in a Virginia lacrosse flat brim, was enthralled. There is still a picture from that visit, Hausmann and his little brother and a hero.

Then John Fox, another Brunswick School kid who used to hang out with Hausmann and his brother — give them lessons, drive them around, even pass down gear — went to Virginia and became a captain. That furthered his love for Virginia.

By high school, though, Hausmann had grown out of it, wanting a clear mind around the recruiting process. He committed as a junior to Brown. For a month, maybe two, he felt great about the decision.

Then something started gnawing at the back of his mind, growing louder and more insistent. He told no one for a few months even as they drummed at his brain, these

thoughts of Virginia.

One day he wrote a paper for class — from what prompt, he does not remember. But the lacrosse dilemma spilled out. He started thinking more openly about his recruitment, and then began talking every couple weeks to associate head coach Kevin Cassese, not about lacrosse or the program. Hausmann already knew everything there was to know about the program. They talked about life.

A year after committing to Brown, Hausmann flipped his commitment to Virginia. It has led him here, to one final regular-season game Friday against Drexel and then to the ACC Tournament.

“I’m beyond excited,” Hausmann said. “The chance at a postseason is really exciting. And I also think, as a group, we know we have so much good lacrosse to be played, and I think we haven’t even shown our best stuff.”

After Virginia’s win against Utah, the one that launched the four-game winning streak, the last two left in the locker room were named Hudson Hausmann and Lars Tiffany. They were alone, just like in the office six weeks before.

Together they walked down the hill, to the postgame tailgate, talking about the game. Tiffany put an arm around Hausmann’s shoulders.

The second first year

Transfer students reflect on the hidden hurdles of starting over at the University

Summer Hoffman | Staff Writer

Whether hailing from the Virginia's Community Colleges' Guaranteed Admission program, a two-year institution on the Pacific or anywhere in between, each of the University's transfer students have a unique story as to how they found their way to Grounds. In the fall of 2025, 807 new transfer students arrived on Grounds to begin their journey at the University.

For many transfer students, their trajectory at the University is far from linear. Many students noted difficulties pertaining to building new social networks, navigating communication from the University and figuring out academic requirements.

For third-year College student Rushil Umaretiya, building new social networks was especially difficult due to his arrival onto Grounds as a second-year. Having originally attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Umaretiya came to the University in the fall of 2024 to reap the benefits of in-state tuition and proximity to his hometown in Northern Virginia.

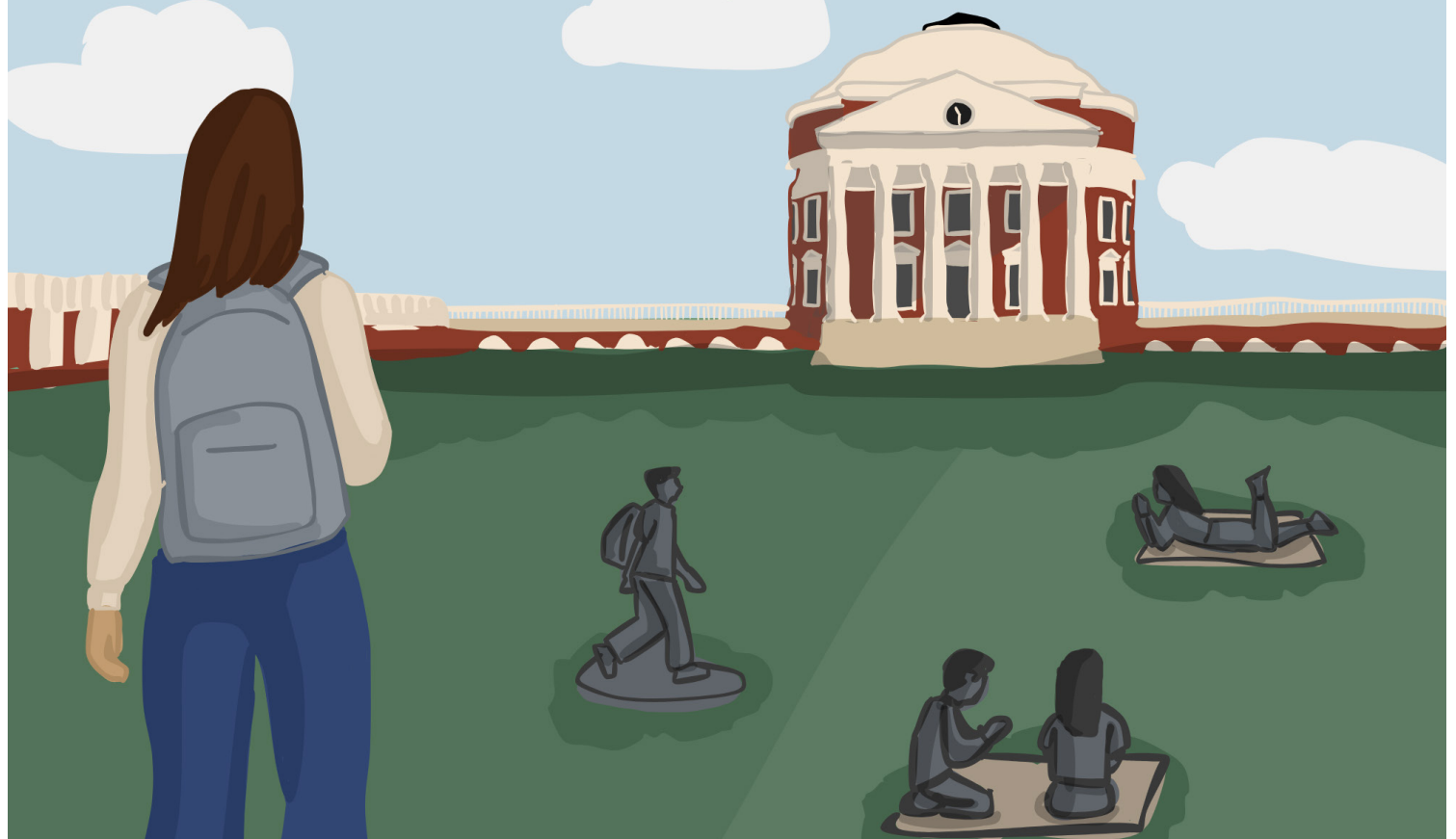
In order to facilitate the creation of a social network, Umaretiya decided to dive headfirst into extracurricular activities. In addition to involvement with the Jefferson Literary and Debating Society, Umaretiya decided to become a volunteer firefighter after reading an article detailing student involvement with fire stations in Charlottesville. Umaretiya explained how these involvements helped him quickly find a sense of community — something he had initially feared would not happen. For Umaretiya, these extracurriculars provided him with the community networks many students find in Greek life and comparable social organizations.

"I wouldn't be anywhere without [extracurriculars]," Umaretiya said. "If people ask me about my college experience, I'm usually talking about those first."

While extracurriculars can provide transfer students with opportunities to build social networks, many still find that it is difficult to integrate themselves into the greater University community. Liz Hernandez Ramirez, second-year College student who took the "Year at Wise" route to Grounds this past fall, said that the label "transfer student" made her feel separate from the rest of the student body.

"I was separate. I was not UVa. I was not a UVa student. I was a transfer UVa student," Hernandez Ramirez said. "That label was just there and it felt really harsh."

For Hernandez Ramirez, this feeling of being separate made her feel as though she was "less than" her peers — like someone who did not belong on Grounds. She explained that many



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Contracted Independent Organizations lack transfer representatives, making it more difficult for transfer students, such as herself, to feel included in the organization. She also noted how entering the University as a second-year student made it challenging to join friend groups, as many were already established, which contributed to her feelings of separation from other students.

Additionally, Hernandez Ramirez explained that her feelings of separation from other students were exacerbated by the fact that her time at the University is more limited than her peers who attended from the start. She noted that her late entry gave her less time to explore different majors and areas of interest, adding to her anxiety surrounding both her social and academic life.

"I could not release that identity of being a transfer student, and that made it really difficult for me to connect with people," Hernandez Ramirez said. "So it's like, 'I have no time and no one understands me,' and therefore I was almost self-isolating as a result of not being able to explore different majors [and] feeling like I wasn't welcome at organizations."

Echoing this sentiment, Cora Averweg, a third-year Commerce student who transferred into McIntire School of Commerce after two years of community college, said she feels as if being a transfer student causes her classmates — specifically those in different financial situations — to per-

ceive her as inferior.

"In [McIntire] it's a little bit of a prestige thing or money thing," Averweg said. "When I tell people I went to community college to save money, they're like, 'Why do you have to save money?'"

For Hernandez Ramirez, these feelings of otherness extended beyond academic pathways and into her sense of personal identity. She explained that she had originally anticipated her cultural background as a Latinx student being an added layer of difficulty in integrating into the University's social scene. However, according to Hernandez Ramirez, it is in her identity as a transfer student that she feels she has faced the most judgment.

"I felt very ashamed of being a transfer student," Hernandez Ramirez said. "I feel like my Latinx, low-income, first-generation background is accepted. My biggest issue [is] being a transfer student."

Amplifying pre-existing obstacles, leadership changes during the 2025–26 school year created feelings of uncertainty across Grounds, which also impacted transfer students. Umaretiya explained how arriving at a school in the midst of administrative upheaval made it especially difficult to settle in.

"It's just knowing that I'm brand new here, and the University [is] going through a lot of really significant changes," Umaretiya said. "And I'm already trying to navigate a new environment, and so it's suddenly stressful."

Similarly, for Averweg, the discussions surrounding changes in leadership made it difficult for her to focus on enjoying her already limited time at the University.

"It's kind of taking away from the experience of being [at the University]. There's so much going on, and it's like you can't focus on just being a University student," Averweg said. "You kind of get wrapped up in the bureaucracy."

Additionally, the several threats of violence over the 2025–26 school year invoked feelings of stress for Umaretiya, who experienced two shootings during his first semester at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He noted how this additional stress can compound the anxiety that accompanies transitioning into a new environment.

"I was like, okay, [the violence is] done now. And then I came here, and it just kept happening," Umaretiya said.

To help alleviate the difficulty of adjusting, in 2024, the University created the Transfer Transition team, led by Betty Chelli, the inaugural associate director for the second-year experience. The team is intended to provide resources that help ease the transition for transfer students, offering support networks from career and enrollment counselors to college life coaches.

Still, despite the implementation of these resources, many students still believe there is more that can be done to aid transfer students in their adjustment to University life. For instance,

Umaretiya said he believes better communication from academic advising detailing what students can expect during their time at the University would help assuage uncertainties.

"I think [the University has] to empower students more," Umaretiya said. "I think somebody should sit down with you and be like, 'Yeah, this is what you did at your last school, and [this is] how they do things here.'"

Despite their struggles, Hernandez Ramirez, Averweg and Umaretiya ultimately do not regret their decision to transfer. Averweg said that even though her time on Grounds is more limited than others, she knows that her journey to the University happened the way it was meant to.

"I wonder how much I could have done if I had been here for all four years or since first-year," Averweg said. "But I think everything happens for a reason. I'm on my own timeline."

Echoing this sentiment, Hernandez Ramirez acknowledged that even if her journey to the University was difficult, she would not be where she is — or who she is — today without it.

"Even though [transferring] was extremely difficult, I have gotten to the point where if all that didn't happen, I wouldn't be where I am now," Hernandez Ramirez said. "I wouldn't know the people that I know, I wouldn't have the resources that I do. And so I'm incredibly grateful for the chaos, because it taught me to be my own stability."

Turning ...tween-teen?

Confronting the fear of losing the “teen” at the end of my age

Minal Qazi | Staff Writer

I feel like I've been a teenager all my life. When I was a kid, I glamorized the beauty and thrill of being a teen — wearing makeup, staying out late, breaking rules. Being a teenager meant freedom, but within reason. Messing up, yet still having people to lean on. It felt like the perfect in-between. Looking back on it, it really was.

I remember being 15 and inviting all my friends over. We would lie on the floor for hours, exhausted from laughing, music blasting, doing our makeup slowly because we were getting ready to go absolutely nowhere. I even brought all my friends on my first date because I was too scared to go alone. It didn't feel embarrassing, I was a teenager.

As 18 approached, I felt like it was going to be a turning point — the moment I officially became an adult. But it didn't really feel like anything was changing. I still went home at the end of the day, and I still relied on my parents. I still felt like I had space to mess up without it meaning something about who I was. Ultimately, I still had “teen” at the end of my age, and even though I was technically an adult, I felt the comfort of that trusty suffix cushioning my fall. I wasn't all that different, really.

Twenty was different, though. Twenty was a whole new decade, a separate set of rules and expectations that I hadn't agreed to. Suddenly, I needed to be more independent, mature and know how to act professionally. There was no more “teen” at the end of my age to soften it, and I felt like I was being pushed into a new version of myself I wasn't ready to become.

In the months preceding my 20th birthday, I felt almost a sense of impending doom. I didn't feel excited when people asked me how I was celebrating “the big 2-0.” Instead, it felt like the number marking my age kept climbing higher, while I stayed just as small inside.

In trying to understand where this fear was coming from, I realized my feelings had a lot to do with the people around me. Everyone I knew seemed to be in completely different places — some getting engaged, some just now in their first relationship and others with internships stacked up and clear professional paths ahead.

Regardless of where they found themselves, all of these people seemed to know exactly what they were doing, and what they wanted out of adulthood. And I started to wonder if, in order to do the same,

I was going to have to become someone different.

I can recognize that this sentiment is not uniquely mine — I think a lot of people have a fear of growing up. For me, this fear came from my background in gymnastics, where it felt like my body had an expiration date.

Time was always something I was constantly aware of as a gymnast — something that determined what I could and couldn't do, how quickly I was improving compared to peers and when I would peak and eventually have to quit. That mindset stayed with me longer than I realized, turning aging into a constant countdown rather than a natural progression of life.

What made the countdown worse, however, was being constantly pitted against my teammates. And while I thought quitting gymnastics would free me from that mindset, I found that I, myself, had simply become my comparative coaches in their absence. Getting older just meant a bigger playing pool, more people to measure myself against and more reasons to be afraid of it.

So now, at 20, it feels like there's more to measure up to than ever. And consequently, I am turning to comparison more than ever. It feels

like everyone else seems to have everything figured out, perfectly balancing classes, volunteering, internships and a social life, while I'm just trying to keep my head above water.

In an effort to stop wallowing in this uncertainty and self-doubt, I have recently made a point to consider what the transition to adulthood has given me, rather than just what it's taken away.

I have a kind of freedom now that I once dreamed about. I can go on trips or meet friends for coffee whenever I want, with the independence to make my own schedule. I'm studying at a school I always wanted to attend, building a life that younger me would have been really excited about. Being at this point in my life is such a privilege, and such an incredible, invigorating experience.

Still, comparing myself to others is a terrible feeling, and it's something I am continuing to work on to this day. I have learned that constant comparison obscures reality, making other people seem perfectly put-together, when in reality, they're probably just as stressed and unsure as I am.

On the other hand, I'm starting to think the discomfort isn't entirely a bad thing — it means I care, that I want more for myself, that I'm still

growing. After all, comfort is the enemy of growth, and even if I'm not exactly where I want to be right now, I'm getting there little by little.

Coming back to gymnastics in college, after years of convincing myself I'd missed my moment, showed me that more than anything. It showed me that parts of myself don't just disappear with age. They'll always be a part of what makes me... me.

I don't think being in your 20s is about having everything figured out. If anything, it's about figuring it out as you go along. Each year brings new experiences, new knowledge, new versions of myself I get to unpack. I still have a lot to learn about adult life, and I do need to get more intentional about school and internships — but I don't have to lose the parts of myself that feel most natural just to prove I'm growing up. I'm starting to see that growing up doesn't have to feel like a countdown — it can just be what it is.

Even if I don't have “teen” at the end of my age anymore, I'm starting to feel excited for this new phase in my life — and every era that follows. So I've decided I am going to start glamorizing the era that comes next, whether that's my roaring 20s or being 30, flirty and thriving.

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Cou Cou Rachou brings a taste of France to Charlottesville

Butter meets community love in this adorable French-inspired bakery

Laura Gine-Vega | Staff Writer

The warm morning sun leaks through the front window at 5 a.m., illuminating the kitchen — and the heart — of Cou Cou Rachou. The kitchen stirs to life as the bakers greet each other, busying their hands with preparing the day's pastries as they catch each other up with what is new in their lives.

Just a quick five-minute drive from Grounds, Cou Cou Rachou, a delicious French bakery, is open 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday, and has wine afternoons Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.

The mastermind behind such a community staple is Charlottesville native Rachel De Jong, pastry chef and Cou Cou Rachou owner. De Jong said that she first discovered her love for cooking as a child, sitting on a stool in her grandma's kitchen as her grandma told her stories.

At 21, De Jong found herself attending culinary school at Le Cordon Bleu in Paris. This opportunity gave her the chance to fall in love with the cuisine and to grow as an individual. After Le Cordon Bleu, De Jong returned to the United States, where she worked in Gearhart's Fine Chocolates on Ridge McIntire Rd. before

accepting a job as a pastry chef for the Inn at Little Washington. De Jong worked there for four years before accepting a position as a pastry chef in Nashville, Tenn.

Her time at Nashville did not come without challenges. She said she felt that the food service industry during her time there was cliquish and toxic. This was where De Jong decided what type of business owner she wanted to be — someone who fosters a warm and welcoming work environment.

"I didn't understand. I was like, this job is really hard. We should probably just be friendly to each other," De Jong said. "I learned a lot of what not to do ... Nashville was a lot of learning, a lot of growing."

In 2018, De Jong left Nashville to work for a French restaurant in Los Angeles, where she had a much-improved experience. She loved her coworkers, so much so that the chef she worked for was the inspiration for her future cafe's name — Cou Cou Rachou, or, as he meant it, "Hello, Rachel."

In 2019, De Jong moved back to Charlottesville, and two years later, she opened her own bakery — Cou Cou Rachou. Today, the bakery is

cherished by employees and patrons alike.

One such employee is Cou Cou Rachou baker Grace Driver. Driver said she has loved working at the bakery ever since she began three years ago. She said she appreciates how much care De Jong puts into both running the business and maintaining relationships with her employees.

"Rachel cares about all of us," Driver said. "She gets to know all of us. She works really well with all of us. We have like-minded people here that all just want to work well, and we all want to do well, and we want everything to be the best it can possibly be."

Driver's experience is not an uncommon one. De Jong said she loves the camaraderie between her employers and community members.

"Our baristas are now all friends with our regulars and friends of the bakers," De Jong said. "Just a minute ago, one of our bakers who used to work here was in with her six-month-old baby and visiting with everybody, and we were just passing a baby around the kitchen."

Even as a customer, Charlottesville resident Adriana Marchione said she can sense the companionship and

love shared between coworkers in the kitchen.

"The kitchen seems like they're enjoying themselves," Marchione said. "They're busy, but they also seem to be relaxed too and enjoying themselves."

Marchione first discovered Cou Cou Rachou two years ago through word of mouth, and she now makes it a point to come every couple of months to treat herself to a fresh pastry. Between the welcoming atmosphere and the local flowers on each table, she describes the bakery as having a European touch mixed with a farm-to-table feel.

"You know about that farm-to-table, like that was a big thing in San Francisco, in the Bay Area. And I think that's true here too, where it's like you get the local flowers, or you get local produce. And so it has a homespun feel," Marchione said. "Even though it's not super fancy, it has this kind of hip vibe or feeling [and] sense of comfort."

Community is prevalent not only between the staff and customers, but with the sourcing of Cou Cou Rachou's ingredients. Almost all the ingredients come from local sources.

"I have a bunch of really sweet

farmer friends now who will just sort of call me up on a random Tuesday and be like, 'I have 30 pounds of strawberries. Do you want them?'" De Jong said.

According to De Jong, this community is what has allowed the bakery to thrive. She explained how many moving parts there are to creating a business, and said she cherishes the business partnerships and friendships she has made throughout.

"I may have made the choices. [I] bought this table, but someone else brought the flowers," De Jong said. "It's so much richer and bigger and better than I could have ever dreamed up, because it's so much more than just me."

Amongst the crowd of customers ordering and sitting at tables to enjoy their pastries is the iconic yellow diamond-printed floor — one that De Jong has grown particularly fond of.

"I remember when we first put in the floors, the bakers came over to see it, and one of my bakers was like, 'Oh, my God. It's like the sunshine is in here,'" De Jong said. "He was being goofy. But it sort of is like that. I think people find a lot of joy here in the kitchen, which is wonderful."

THE CAVALIER DAILY

THE CAVALIER DAILY

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Liam Pedersen | Puzzlist

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ACROSS

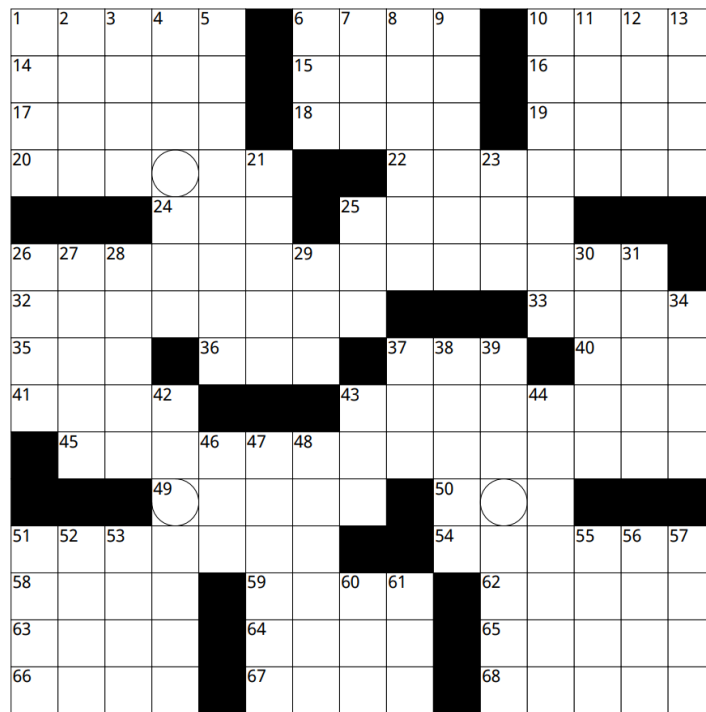
- 1 Oft-disparaged West Main student housing complex
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- 42 Y Combinator aspirer / More loving (of)

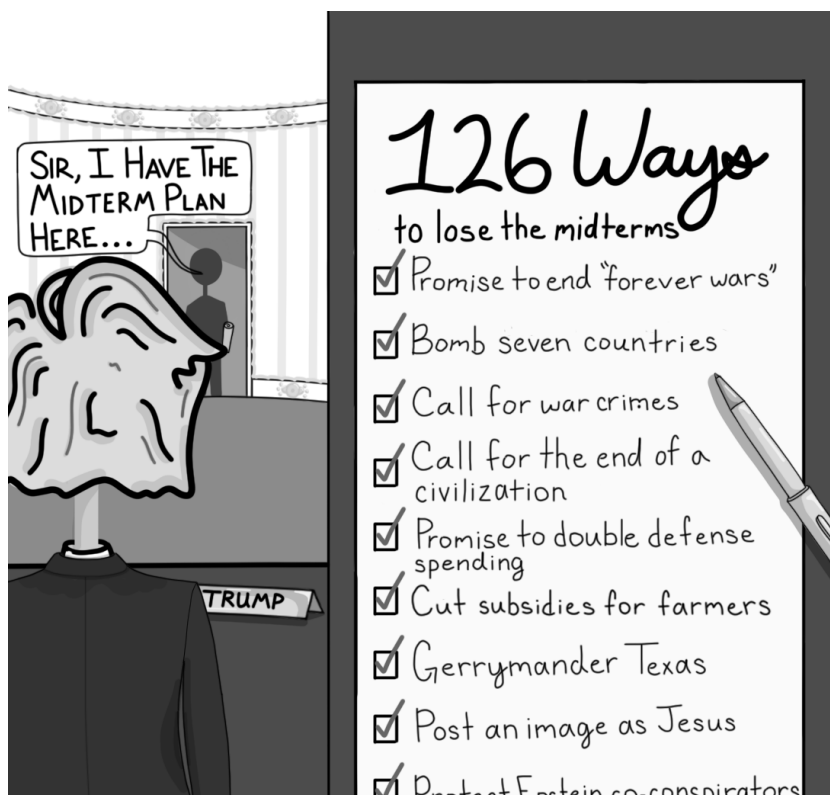


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CARTOON

126 ways to...

Conwell Morris | Cartoonist



Time leftover

Sophia Lee | Senior Associate



ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

University Museums Internship shapes new curators

“Printed Stories: Tales in Black & White” is a fully student-produced exhibit that highlights the culmination of a year-long collaborative process

Eloise Diffley | Staff Writer

Each fall, the University’s art history department — in collaboration with the Fralin Museum of Art — enrolls select students in a year-long, hands-on program called the University Museums Internship. Ranging from 10 to 13 students per year, the program provides pre-professional experience to undergraduate students deeply interested in the world of art.

The class operates like a seminar, meeting once every other week, and is supplemented by internships across various University departments. These internships include opportunities with the curatorial, education, development and marketing departments at the Fralin, the curatorial and education departments at the Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, the historic clothing and costume archives in the drama department and conservation in the special collections department.

The course began in 2011 to give students opportunities for hands-on museum work at the University’s two museums, the Fralin and the Kluge-Ruhe. Since the two are smaller collections with limited funding for paid internships, this program allows students to receive course credit for their work and provides museums extra sets of hands.

The yearly culmination and major focus of the class portion of the course is an exhibit fully curated by the students — independent of their individual internship work — on display each spring at the Fralin. This component of the class was introduced by M. Jordan Love, Carol R. Angle academic curator in the education department of the Fralin. She took over the class at the start of the 2014-15 academic year — when it was still a single-semester initiative — and changed it to be a year-long course.

“I realized that it takes an entire semester just to plan an exhibition, and then an entire semester to install it,” Love said. “I just felt like [curating an exhibition] was such a unique opportunity ... It was important to me to keep that available, because it’s not an opportunity most students get at other universities.”

This year’s exhibit, titled “Printed Stories: Tales in Black & White,” focuses on the stories of printmaking, displaying pieces from the University’s collection. In addition, this year’s exhibit features works gifted by Dr. Janet D. Greenwood, former president of Longwood University with a passion for the arts.

“[Greenwood] really wanted to have her works, if she was going to

donate them to us, to have students be able to work with them right away,” Love said. “She was very excited about that prospect.”

Greenwood bequeathed six works — one by Pablo Picasso, three by Rembrandt van Rijn and two by Albrecht Dürer — all of which are included in this exhibit. They are currently on loan but will join the Fralin’s permanent collection at some point in the future. Love said that these works offered students a unique opportunity to engage with artifacts of art history and to present them to a localized audience at the Fralin.

“[The students] were very excited about it, and I was glad to be able to offer up such significant artists, for them to be the first people writing about it here at the Fralin,” Love said.

Love said that this is only the second time students have worked with pieces outside of the museum’s permanent collections — the first of which was during the 2015-16 academic year when students chose from works gifted by collector Ray Graham. According to Sarah Dowling, fourth-year College student and curatorial intern at the Kluge-Ruhe Collection, using specific works was an unusual and exciting aspect of the program.

“That was also a really cool component, getting to work with crazy, famous artworks that as an undergraduate student, you certainly don’t expect to be working with at this point in your life, let alone perhaps ever,” Dowling said.

This year, Love presented the students with the Greenwood works and challenged them to make connections with pieces already in the museum’s collection. After noticing commonalities among the pieces donated by Greenwood, the next objective was to comb through the University’s collection and pull pieces that aligned with that visual and formal narrative the students noticed in the donated collection.

Each student made their own suggestions for additional works from the University’s collections to be included in the final show. Works were selected by voting until the list was complete, ensuring that every student got to voice their opinion and was excited about the final product.

“Because it was an exhibition that we were curating together, the work was necessarily collaborative, and I think the exhibition and all of our experience of the class is much better for it,” Dowling said.

The students then went through the final proposed list for the exhibi-



MAC DOUCETTE

The class operates like a seminar, meeting once every other week, and is supplemented by internships across various University departments.

it with a professional curator at the museum who provided insight into the logistics and feasibility of the proposed exhibition, Love said. Dowling said that the selection process was an enlightening experience by pulling back the curtain on how museums direct the story of an exhibit to a wider audience.

“Ultimately, how it all kind of came together was an exhibition focusing on storytelling and printmaking,” Dowling said. “I think we realized very quickly that the Fralin has a really large print collection that, at times, doesn’t get the light that it deserves.”

The student-curated show is divided into three sections — Biblical, Mythological and Quotidian — with each highlighting works that tell stories in their respective category. The stories range from biblical narratives — such as those of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse and Saint Jerome — to aspects of daily life — including card games and elements of human struggle — to images of classical Greek figures and myths.

Love explained how the show is mainly put on by the students themselves — as opposed to helping a professor with their show — a rarity for undergraduate students, Love said, and a unique aspect of the UMI program.

“We try not to limit them as much

as possible, because it’s their show,” Love said. “And, if they’re in love with an object, and the theme is almost really around that key object, we want to try to make that happen for them.”

In addition to the individual labels, the students were responsible for designing the physical layout of the space, thinking about lighting, and writing the wall text — a few brief paragraphs that serve as an introduction to the exhibit as a whole — which Dowling said was an intense collaborative process with the education team.

“We also worked as a group ... on our wall text, which is, of course, what shapes and guides everyone’s approach to an exhibition,” Dowling said. “We realized that it is a process. And luckily, the education team was immensely helpful in helping us prioritize the information that we wanted to get out and also find[ing] a way to actively engage the visitors.”

Beyond the curation of their exhibit, students attended workshops in other departments and heard from speakers and industry experts during class meetings, as well as work[ed] in their individual internships. Dowling said that her experience in the program enlightened her to the breadth of components that contribute to the function of a museum and the collaborative, interactive environment that work in museums can offer.

According to Dowling, her curatorial internship at the Kluge-Ruhe provided an opportunity for a deeper dive into historical art research. From information about the works to the exhibition’s themes and the artists involved, Dowling played an integral part in not just the UMI class exhibit but also in the exhibits at the Kluge-Ruhe. She said the same was true of her fellow students in their respective internships, including two of her classmates whose work in the historic clothing and costume department recently helped put on an exhibit at Culbreth Theatre.

“The primary reason I took the class was for the internship ... I’ve really appreciated getting to see the way that not just the [Kluge-Ruhe curatorial] department I’m in, but all of the teams of each museum work together to create these shows,” Dowling said. “I’ve loved curatorial work, but also that there’s so much more that goes into a museum and so much more that interests me that I might want to pursue in the future, which I found particularly valuable.”

The student’s exhibit is on display at the Fralin until May 31. Information on the UMI application is available on the program’s website.

Ruffin Gallery reimaged by Stephanie Germosen Salazar

Recently appointed Ruffin Gallery and Visiting Artist Program coordinator, Germosen Salazar plans to expand its offerings to the University

Darya Bartol | Senior Associate

Stepping into an integral role within the University's arts scene April 6, the artistic journey of Stephanie Germosen Salazar — the new Ruffin Gallery and Visiting Artist Program coordinator — has led her to Charlottesville. Her new position entails bringing entirely fresh art to the University — researching, inviting and coordinating exhibits with artists from across the country to house their works in the Ruffin Gallery for weeks at a time. Germosen Salazar has been immersed in artistic academia for over a decade, receiving her bachelor of fine arts from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2018 and her master's of fine arts from Virginia Commonwealth University in 2024.

The Ruffin Gallery has graced Grounds with contemporary art exhibitions open to the public and put together by students, faculty and visiting artists since 2008. Having similarly organized several of her own multimedia exhibits in both New York and Virginia, Germosen Salazar now has the opportunity to create moving experiences at the University

for students, gallery visitors and visiting artists using her creative expertise.

Germosen Salazar said she was exposed to art from a very young age, often visiting the vast array of museums in New York City, where she grew up. She explained that she was able to explore her interests in different modes of visual art, such as metalwork and ceramics, through these early encounters.

"Interdisciplinary sculpture has always been my medium, and I've never wanted to limit myself with what I work with," Germosen Salazar said. "I don't want to place my practice in a box because I'm always changing, even beyond my practice, what I think and what I believe."

Even as she begins to curate the work of others, her deep-rooted personal artistry remains at heart, proven by her most recent exhibit at New City Arts on the Downtown Mall, titled "holding ground." The exhibit ran from March 6 to April 15, using a mixture of sculpting, welding and printmaking to repurpose scrap materials and speak to the immigrant

experience. Germosen Salazar said the display was inspired by these found and repurposed materials as well as Caribbean and Latin American culture.

"I'm very much into collecting found objects ... and repurposing them into something new, something that encapsulates that moment in time for me," Germosen Salazar said. "I take a lot of inspiration from Caribbean and Latin American diaspora ... [There are] a lot of the heart symbols that you'll see specifically in Caribbean culture [and] Latin American culture."

The exhibit also featured metal structures inspired by material from her grandmother's house in the Dominican Republic and slabs of Dominican soap, which together frame pictures she took which depict moments of everyday life in Latin America. Germosen Salazar expressed that using perishable material highlights the impermanence that she displays in much of her art.

"You won't be able to see the images eventually ... That is something I really love or try to embed in my

work, that it has its own life and will eventually look different," Germosen Salazar said. "[The pieces are] kind of transient and can always be arranged in a different way."

Her own efforts in curating multimodal experiences may directly enrich what Ruffin Gallery offers, informing her approach to the four to six exhibits it aims to showcase annually. Beyond creating her own work and immersing herself in the arts scene at the University, Germosen Salazar said that the outreach to other artists inherent to her new role will strengthen her connection to the world of art.

"I've always been drawn to working with artists ... to see people make work and do what they're passionate about and conceive a show from a thought to something that's actually physical," Germosen Salazar said. "When I heard about this role, I was like, 'perfect.' The access to resources, the kinds of artists that I could invite, it just was really exciting to me."

Though Germosen Salazar said she is excited to work with other artists, collaborating with other depart-

ments at the University poses a new opportunity. Her cross-departmental plans are still in their early stages, but she said the opportunity to work with the Spanish or environmental studies departments, for example, would create equally academic and artistic showcases for visitors.

Alongside artistic and academic partnerships, listening to student voices when inviting artists and curating exhibits is an important part of Germosen Salazar's position. Germosen Salazar said that she plans to arrange contemporary art that appeals to students because of their centrality to the gallery.

"It's been really important for me to see what [students] want ... It's never great inviting an artist that maybe only the faculty is excited about," Germosen Salazar said. "The show is for the students."

Intertwining student perspectives, visiting artists, departmental collaborations and her own extensive art experience, Germosen Salazar has a bountiful term ahead of her at the Ruffin Gallery and within the University's arts scene.

Rocky Horror at U.Va. unites through raucous performance

With its glitzy musical numbers, extravagant costumes and provocative jokes, Rocky Horror is pleasure-fueled fun

Amelia Lucien | Senior Writer

Only one club at the University is brave enough to parade into the Newcomb Hall Theatre and the Paramount Theater in fishnets and corsets, and that would be Rocky Horror at U.Va. Performing a live shadowcast rendition of the 1975 cult classic film "The Rocky Horror Picture Show" each semester, Rocky Horror at U.Va. promises a night of sexy and bizarre fun. This liberating tradition also creates a sense of unwavering community and camaraderie, driven by the significance of audience participation and relevance of the film in queer spaces.

"The Rocky Horror Picture Show" is a campy, musical romp through time and space that begins when an innocent couple — Brad and Janet — unwittingly enter the mansion of cross-dressing mad scientist Dr. Frank-N-Furter, played by Tim Curry, during a massive storm. The show projects the film onto a large screen while shadowcast actors reenact the scenes onstage just in front, with the performance enjoyed by "Rocky" fans around the world and here at the University. The group is composed of main cast members and ensemble actors, referred to as the "Trixies."

The cast of Rocky Horror at U.Va. joked about the countless viewings of

the film they endure, both out of love for the story and due to the nature of rehearsals. To combat the inherent repetition of putting on the same show semester after semester, Addison Bell, Columbia in this semester's performance and second-year College student, discussed how changing roles every semester allows for new interpretations and portrayals of the same moments.

"I think what helps is that everybody's playing different characters each semester, so you can always riff off of what other people have done," Bell said.

Another aspect that changes from performance to performance is a tradition called "the Trixie Strip," in which the ensemble cast does a pre-show theatrical dance number during the opening credits of every show, during an extensive track called "Science Fiction - Double Feature." This number follows the same plot beats from year to year, where first the cast members set the scene, then act out a catalytic event, and as a result begin to strip. Jazzia Lecea-Almendra, Riff Raff in this semester's performance and fourth-year College student, described the routine.

"[People strip] only down to their

fishnets and corsets," Lecea-Almendra said. "Holes are covered at [Newcomb Hall Theatre], and in the Paramount [Theater] sometimes."

Lecea-Almendra also played Rocky in the fall, and described one castmate's penchant for creating balloon animals — a skill that was extended to other latex creations to liven up his portrayal of the titular character.

"For Rocky, she did the honor of making me a bunch of different inflatable penises that could get destroyed and remade over the course of the entire show," Lecea-Almendra said. "Like, I have a regular penis and it gets cut off and it comes back as a hydra."

In addition to the signature fishnets and corsets, prop bags are an essential part of Rocky Horror's interactive appeal. Alex Pachon, Eddie in this semester's performance and second-year Engineering student, is the club's prop master and spends his time putting together prop bags to be handed out to audience members.

Audience interaction is the hallmark of Rocky Horror, and part of what makes it such a tight-knit community both here in Charlottesville and across the globe. The most frequent interactions are "callbacks," where the audience shouts a joke or

phrase in response to what is being said or done, often in a very humorous manner.

Some of these jokes reference events that happen even later on in the film, due to the devoted nature of the show's fans who often go to see it at least once a year. However, those new to Rocky Horror — deemed "Virgins" — are especially welcome and even have the chance to participate in the "Virgin Games."

"There are so many callbacks that we're not expecting the audience to know all of them," Cassayre said. "Even if they don't know the callbacks, or they're new to Rocky, they can hear what we're saying and kind of enjoy the jokes."

On occasion, the audience even joins in on the big dances — such as "Time Warp" — with many fans coming in costumes or dressed like their favorite character. Cassayre observed that the show, particularly when performed at the Paramount, draws in a diverse crowd that includes lifelong fans who saw the movie when it came out over 50 years ago.

"Rocky's all about community, and to be able to kind of be a part of that across generations feels really special," Cassayre said.

The community is especially vibrant within the club, as the rehearsals and shared love of Rocky Horror bring the cast close together. Bell, who is also planning a send-off for the show's fourth-years, compared the bravery it takes to put oneself out there on stage to the courage needed to live one's life in the real world after graduation.

"Rocky is such a strange and vulnerable thing that not a lot of people even know about. And so to do it for four years, or even just a semester, takes an immense amount of bravery," Bell said. "It also takes an immense amount of bravery to go into the real world and leave college."

Each of the members had their own unique Rocky Horror origin story — from club fairs to mutual friends to high school fascinations. Cast members of Rocky Horror at U.Va. invite all looking for a delightfully fresh night in Charlottesville regardless of their familiarity with the film or understanding of the performance's quirky elements.

"You will be welcome with open arms," Lecea-Almendra said. "You might even win the Virgin Games."

OPINION

LEAD EDITORIAL

EDITORIAL: Student leaders must remain vigilant

In the wake of the Department of Justice's recent compliance report, student self-governed leadership must reaffirm its commitment to the institutions it represents

Recently, the Honor Committee and University Judiciary Committee underwent a transition of leadership. The day after this was announced, any hopes for a tranquil and undisturbed term were quickly put to rest with the release of the University's second quarterly compliance report to the Department of Justice — featuring the unprecedented mention of both organizations and the removal of implicit bias training for their respective members. This additional chapter to the never-ending saga of governmental conflict at the University is written as an intrusion into the operation of these organizations and student self-governance writ large.

Given this report and its implications, this Editorial Board considers it vital to reiterate the importance of the upcoming term and the actions undertaken within it. Student self-governance is again at risk, and it is of the utmost importance that those leading self-governed organizations are cognizant of this — willing to advocate for their organizations,

even in the face of exterior pressures.

This report should serve as a klaxon for Honor and UJC. Their presence on the report was due to the aforementioned bias training, a symptom of diversity, equity and inclusion on Grounds according to the Department of Justice. Yet, bias training is an integral aspect of these organizations' processes, ensuring that members are fair and free of prejudice when carrying out their duty. Indeed, Honor and UJC's responsibilities involve the power to level consequences ranging from probation to expulsion. The ire of the federal government is no longer directed only at administrators who refused to bend the knee, but instead appears to have trickled down to the students themselves.

By the very nature of the work done by Honor and UJC, it almost comes as a surprise that it took this long to be a target of the current federal government, given the tension between their crusade against DEI and these organizations' emphasis on ensuring awareness of bias and

conscientiousness. Now that the moment has finally arrived, though, its importance cannot be overstated. Their conduct will be held under a microscope, likely with little grace granted to them lest they deviate from the strictures set by the government. Thus, now more than ever, it is imperative that the new leadership teams understand the gravity of the positions that they are stepping into, and the ensuing responsibilities. Chiefly, these chairs must emphasize that their investigators continue to be sufficiently trained and aware of biases despite external pressure.

Furthermore, the removal of implicit bias training, a method empirically proven to increase awareness of individual biases, could have very real consequences on the outcomes of students going through Honor or UJC's processes. Due to this, it is not unreasonable to suggest that both organizations would benefit from addressing the student body in a transparent dialogue to ensure that student concerns about adequate training are

addressed and rectified. The inaugural meeting of the new term of the Honor Committee, however, was devoid of any mention of the above events — a concerning development amid internal affairs that are certainly tempestuous for students and the organization alike.

To their credit, the new chairs of both Honor and UJC have committed to facilitating a spirit of engagement with the University community. This is heartening, and the Editorial Board welcomes these visions for independent institutions representative of the student body. However, given their existing importance to the student body, and their newfound importance as a possibly subversive entity to the Department of Justice, they must do everything in their power to continue to gain the support and trust of the student body. Entering a term of institutional tumult and spotlight from the compliance report, these chairs should address how this change to training might impact their organizations, as

well as make clear what delineates their role between mediating administrative concerns and representing the student body.

We believe in the goals and work of the new chairs of Honor and UJC, and as they begin their term at a time of unprecedented oversight by the Department of Justice, they must recognize that their actions will have an impact on the way student self-governance will look at the University in the future. A commitment to the institutions they represent, will ensure Honor and UJC thrive and remain accountable to the community they serve, rather than a bureaucracy that scrutinizes them.

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DUTTENHOFER: U.Va. must address non-compete loopholes

The Virginia legislature has passed reforms that support physicians, but key loopholes leave the University in the center of consequences that must be amended

The Virginia General Assembly recently passed legislation reforming non-compete clauses for physicians statewide. Together, Senate Bill 128 and House Bill 627 will effectively ban non-compete agreements for Virginia health care professionals. Understandably, these changes mark pivotal, positive structural developments for a profession defined by years of precise and high-stakes training. Their passing is a welcome step that falls short in substance, leaving payment gaps for new physicians on Grounds. For current students and trainees, every policy enforced, contract signed and restriction placed in hospitals has an enormous impact on their futures. And when lawmakers overlook financial realities, they risk derailing both future careers and the entirety of the University's medical education.

Specifically, the bills restrict employers from creating, enforcing or threatening non-competes for health care workers. Any employer who violates these terms is subject to a \$10,000 fine per violation. Both bills were passed by the Senate and House and are awaiting Gov. Abigail Spanberger's signature into law. Although the bills together effectively close the front door on non-competes, they leave legal

loopholes regarding repayment fees that will continue to impact every resident and future medical professional at the University.

The bills technically confirm that employers cannot force a medical professional into a non-compete as a part of their contract. The caveat, though, is that employers can still require repayment of recruitment and training costs if a physician leaves. For most

is simultaneously the entity the bills are designed to protect physicians from, and the entity responsible for training these medical professionals. This contradiction remains the heart of why this legislation remains unfinished, despite awaiting final approval. The Commonwealth's own flagship university has the potential to become the very loophole the General Assembly failed to close, binding physicians

into restrictive non-competes without understanding the consequences of their contracts. Being terminated or leaving a position results in the loss of the ability to practice medicine where a physician built their career — exiling them from the patients and communities they spent years earning the trust of.

This logic is similar to the financial world, where bankers are restricted

quire starting over completely, but just finishing the job. HB 627 and SB 128 are incredible steps in the right direction. With Spanberger's signature, they will undoubtedly benefit the medical community in Virginia. However, it is imperative that the legislature recognize that closing the loophole while leaving repayment loopholes open is only a half-solution — a half-solution that needs to be rectified.

U.Va. Health now has a rare opportunity to set a new standard in the medical field, rather than passively waiting for the Virginia legislature to do so. As an institution, U.Va. Health can close its own loopholes by removing any potential for repayment costs. This demonstration would reflect not only that protecting medical professionals is the job of the Commonwealth, but also of the institutions themselves. Virginia has proved to the medical world that it understands who medicine is intended to serve. For their students, educators, residents, physicians and beyond, it is time for the University to prove it does, too.

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“A physician's values belong in their judgment, knowledge, relationships and presence in a community — nothing that ‘belongs’ to a hospital.”

physicians, that is merely a formality. For residents specifically, though, that caveat is their entire job — their work is simultaneously their training. Although an employer cannot explicitly limit a resident from leaving, they can still require that resident to pay tens of thousands of dollars in training costs — a reality that makes leaving so financially difficult that it almost mirrors a non-compete.

Given that the repayment loophole still exists, though, the problem manifests close to home. U.Va. Health

to Charlottesville at the exact time Virginia needs them spreading across underserved regions.

While this particularly threatens individuals newly entering the medical profession, these bills have consequential benefits for current U.Va. Health medical professionals, regarding their careers and the patients they aim to serve. Firstly, medical professionals searching for a new or first job are unequipped with negotiating power. As a result, more than 45 percent of primary care physicians are pushed

from joining competitors after leaving a firm to protect market intelligence and client relationships. The reality, though, is that medicine is not finance. A physician's values belong in their judgment, knowledge, relationships and presence in a community — nothing that “belongs” to a hospital. HB 627 and SB 128 are initiatives toward recognizing that a physician's loyalty belongs to their community, not to the health system that signed their last paycheck.

The fix to this issue does not re-

OPINION

SEGARNICK: Albemarle School Board's policy hinders speech

While the policy seeks to address concerns about harmful rhetoric, its distinction between "co-curricular" and "non-curricular" clubs risks limiting student expression

Recently, the Albemarle County School Board voted to pass a policy that instructs school administrators to classify clubs into "co-curricular" and "non-curricular." By their definition, "non-curricular" clubs are ones that the board determines are affiliated with a political, religious or special interest motive. This classification comes with stipulations for "non-curricular" clubs, consisting of guest speaker appearances only after school hours and potential restrictions on access to funding. At a surface level, this policy can be seen as a valid attempt to address concerns about student safety, but the problem lies in its execution. The new distinction between "co-curricular" and "non-curricular" clubs creates deleterious gray areas that risk undermining student expression.

As national politics become more focused around issues like race, gender and the role of public education, K-12 schools have become key battlegrounds for disputes over free expression — prompting outside groups to push for greater influence over what can be discussed in the classroom. Controversial speakers and political organizations remain present figures at universities, but more recently are starting to move into high schools to

expand their scope of outreach.

Albemarle County's school district experienced this firsthand, as Erika Kirk was recently scheduled to speak to the Turning Point USA chapter of Western Albemarle High School during school lunch. The news of Kirk attending Western Albemarle High School prompted the board to act on its policy proposal of club classi-

fications. A student may have finally found a topic they care deeply about, but with the new policy, their access to it may simply be denied if they do not have the luxury of attending after school hours. In this way, the blanket club policy risks limiting students' educational experience — the exact opposite of the effect that school policies

effect, this policy's arbitrary classifications of clubs may lead to long-standing consequences.

It is absurd that such a sweeping decision did not come with protections against favoritism which may appear in its own governing board. At the end of the day, the decisions on how to classify clubs will be made by middle school and high school admin-

istrators. Groups promoting harassment should absolutely be banned, but placing restrictions sets a dangerous precedent that these clubs are inherently deserving of administrative ostracization. Instead of limiting this form of dialogue, schools should encourage teaching students how to have healthy conversations about tense worldly topics.

Ironically, the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression proclaimed in their letter to the Albemarle County School Board that the broadness of their policy risks prohibiting far more speech than what is truly unconscionable. There is a way for the board to balance safety and protection while also remaining advocates for open discourse amongst their students — but this new policy is not the answer. Albemarle County high school administrators must remember that their schools pave the way for children to figure out who they are, what they believe in and what they care about.

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“At a surface level, this policy can be seen as a valid attempt to address concerns about student safety, but the problem lies in its execution.”

fication, voting to pass it and impact the TPUSA chapter before her appearance. The newly adopted policy meant Kirk, and any other speaker in the political sphere, would no longer be allowed to speak during school hours, as it violates the guidelines that a "non-curricular" club must follow. Grounded in facilitating safety for students, this policy goes beyond such a realm to limit student expression.

Unfortunately, the reality for many high school students is that lunch events are one of the few accessible

for students should have.

Perhaps TPUSA is an obvious example of a "non-curricular" club, as it is entirely politically motivated. However, there is plenty of gray area around where other organizations lie in this distinction. Cultural and LG-BTQ+ organizations, for example, are impactful clubs that help students find their community, but they could be at risk of falling under this "non-curricular" label if, say, the club writes a statement in support of legislation or protests in favor of their identity. In

administrators — who, inevitably, have their own ulterior political drivers just like anyone else. Further, by creating this policy, the board risks disincentivizing civic engagement on various issues — key formative experiences for high school students.

To get at the heart of the board's stated mission of removing clubs that "promote or endorse violence, harassment or hatred toward an identifiable person or group," they must first create a policy that clearly distinguishes between hateful conduct and contro-

HUMOR

Five disasters that befall U.Va. students on a daily basis

Run! Hide! Fight!

It is no secret that the boy has been crying wolf a lot recently in Charlottesville. We've had a fake "shooting," "bombing" and "tornado" in the past academic year. With those disasters being fraudulent, here are the top five true, actually occurring disasters that University students face.

1. Running into people you really don't want to see on the Corner

Picture this — or really just recall it because it's definitely happened to you — you're walking down the Corner after an exam in a class that's supposed to be an "easy A" just took your soul. You keep your head down and count the bricks as you pass the former Little John's — likely a future 7 Day storefront — only to reach the CVS where that friend of a friend who can't seem to shut up stops you. Having to talk about your plans for the night and the rest of the weekend when all you want to do is find your bed and hibernate is a night on impossible task. God forbid these people be so friendly and outgoing! Don't they know that failing that exam means you are going to have to drive a trash truck for the rest of your

life!

2. Being stuck behind slow-walking groups of three on the sidewalk

This is truly a fate that you do not wish on your worst enemy. You assuredly have very important places to be — the lecture that you are already 15 minutes early for — and being behind a lollygagging group of pedestrian-pathway-hoggers makes you wish that that tornado just came and took you away. Of course, you could always step in the street or grass to pass, but University groundskeepers work far too hard and Charlottesville drivers are far too atrocious for you to do anything of that nature. This problem is only compounded if the low-lives have an umbrella. The amount of times I've almost lost an eye to a scatterbrained lunatic wielding a death stick is innumerable. These people really ruin the efficiency of the average University student and are most definitely the reason for our not being number one in USA Today Top Public School rankings.

3. Duo Mobile

The introduction of Duo Mobile two-factor authentication is possibly the greatest tragedy in the realm of education since Michelle Obama ruined school lunch. The struggle of having to pull your phone out of your pocket and press two buttons is a legitimate burden that students face sometimes multiple times a day. Most students would much rather just allow someone to log into their Canvas — which would be extremely beneficial to the wrongdoer — than undertake such an arduous task. This diversion also breaks the sanctity of the study lock-in, inevitably leading to a two hour doom-scroll session or a never-ending Wikipedia rabbit hole. Is the security of your very valuable University accounts worth these terrible fates? That's up for you to decide, against an unavoidable daily disaster.

4. The mustiest person ever sitting next to you in class

The absolute worst thing to see at 9 in the morning on a Wednesday is a guy rolling into class with a terrible bedhead and a positively revolting odor heading over to sit next to you.

The moment you get a whiff of that stench, your day might as well be over. I'm fairly certain that odors like these were banned in the 1925 Geneva Protocol, but as NOVA was not a signatory, I suppose these bad actors do not have to adhere to it. It's baffling that students have more free time than ever in college, and an unsettling number of them choose to not use a small fraction of that to, say, shower and put on deodorant like a functioning human being. Do better — your mother would be disappointed.

5. Virginia's bipolar weather delaying permanent flip flop season

It really gets my blood boiling when the temperature drops from 77 to 47 degrees over the course of 24 hours. All I — and all other University students — want to do is just be able to throw on my favorite tie-dye Widespread shirt and some flip flops, and prowl grounds. The blame for this one falls entirely on that dang ground hog. Not the imposter Punxsutawney Phil, but the South's true groundhog, Beaugard Lee. Regardless of the fact that Beaugard is over twice as accu-

rate as Phil, he has clearly been taking bribes from Virginia Tech students because I've found it very hard to wear my spring uniform this year. The traditional saying, "Sun's out, gun's out" is more skewed towards a West Coast audience, so I propose the saying "Sun's high, let the flops fly" for a more distinguished place like Mr. Jefferson's University.

Bonus: When your roommate leaves a clean pot on the stove, but keeps the burner on, so when you go to grab the pot, you sear your fingers and are late to submit your Cavalier Daily draft

This one is so ubiquitous and relatable that I considered not even including it, but because of this problem I am a bit behind and needed some more content. I won't go into too much detail since we all know the feeling, but it is very hard to do any sort of work when your digits have been cooked to a nice Pittsburgh rare.

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