

THE CAVALIER DAILY

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LEON ARCEO, ADAIRE BURNS, LEXIE GAGNON & HONOR WOOD | THE CAVALIER DAILY

ALL ROADS LEAD H♥ME

Exploring safer routes to Charlottesville's classics



NEWS

This week in-brief

CD News Staff

Center for Politics interns campaign for a more engaged tomorrow

Amidst a unique election year, the Center for Politics' spring interns have been keeping busy. Ranging from first- to fourth-years, the 20-student intern group has been an active part of the Center's internal operations, studying politics in an effort to increase civic engagement among students.

According to Celia Calhoun, programming intern and second-year Batten student, one of the biggest focuses of the Center's programming is to fight low political engagement on Grounds.

"Thinking about the 2024 election, a lot of students feel that they aren't represented," Calhoun said. "One thing that the Center for Politics is trying to combat is the general apathy about the importance of voting and the importance of democracy, [we're trying to tell] students that their voice matters."

To achieve this goal, the Center has led initiatives urging students to vote, such as the Hoos Vote initiative on Feb. 24. Interns tabled outside of Observatory Hill Dining Hall, Shannon Library and outside of Madison Hall, encouraging students to vote in the primary elections and handing out pizza and t-shirts to garner enthusiasm. During his experiences working on youth voter initiatives coordinated by the Center, Wyatt Dayhoff, intern and second-year College student, said he saw voter apathy in primary elections as an important issue.

"Voting in primaries consistently is really ... an important part of our civic duty," Dayhoff said. "How we get the candidates to the general election is through primaries, and a lot of times the turnout rates are really low for primaries. If college students would actually turn out, I think they can make a pretty significant change."

4.5

4.8

4.9

President Ryan commits to another meeting with graduate students

Although no solutions to recurring payment problems were reached at an April 4 meeting between University President Jim Ryan and graduate student leaders, Ryan and other University administrators committed to holding another meeting, with the intent to find a permanent solution to their concerns. Graduate students at the meeting said they were updated on current initiatives to resolve the late and incorrect stipend payment issues and that they hope the next meeting will be where they can discuss staffing levels, which many graduate students see as the root of these ongoing payment problems.

Ryan agreed to meet with graduate students after they sat in on the March 1 Board of Visitors meeting carrying signs that protested late and incomplete stipend payments. After Thursday's meeting, leaders of the Cut the Checks campaign — an initiative organized by the University's chapter of the United Campus Workers of Virginia to raise awareness of the payment issues and demand a resolution — held a press conference on the stairs of Madison Hall, where Ryan's office is located. Supporters of the campaign were heard chanting "cut the checks, we deserve respect."

At the press conference, graduate students who were at the meeting with Ryan said that he committed to another meeting, though a date has not yet been determined. Graduate Arts & Sciences student Lucas Martinez, who was present at the meeting, said that he and the other graduate students involved in the campaign hope to schedule the next meeting to take place before the end of the semester.

Faculty Senate struggles with issues of faculty representation, visibility

Members of the Faculty Senate, an administrative body designed to represent faculty, have expressed concerns that the Senate does not adequately represent all of the University's faculty members. Another concern amongst representatives to the Faculty Senate is a lack of awareness about the Senate's purpose and procedures. Senators are considering ways to increase the visibility of the Senate within the University community at large.

Michael Kennedy, Faculty Senate chair and the next Board of Visitors faculty representative, said the Senate falls short of representing the whole faculty, which is one of the organization's tenets as outlined in the Faculty Senate constitution. In an email statement to The Cavalier Daily, Kennedy attributed this shortcoming to faculty being busy with other responsibilities that make it difficult for them to commit the time needed to serve as a Senator.

"We strive to represent the whole faculty, but fall short," Kennedy said. "The key issue for me is faculty as a group are extremely busy doing their research, teaching, service, and living their lives."

One suggestion for how to make the Faculty Senate more representative of the whole faculty came from Computer Science Prof. Aaron Bloomfield, who presented on the possibility of changing the Senate's bylaws to expand membership eligibility at their last meeting. While senators are currently required to be full-time faculty at the University, these changes would make part-time faculty eligible to serve in the Senate as well. The main dissent against this expansion of eligibility at the Senate's March meeting was the concern that part-time faculty may not have the time needed to dedicate to the Senate.



ADAIRE BURNSED | THE CAVALIER DAILY

Kennedy said that one of his long-term goals has been to elevate awareness of the Senate and its purpose within the University community so that the work the Senate does can receive more recognition.

University DEI office faces scrutiny after OpenTheBooks report

The University contests the findings of the report, saying the alleged numbers are highly inflated.

Jackie Bond | Staff Writer

The University's Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, a subdivision of the School of Education and Human Development, is facing scrutiny from two online news publications after OpenTheBooks — a nonprofit organization dedicated to government transparency — reported that the University currently has 235 DEI-related employees, totalling \$20 million in University spending. The University contests this report, claiming that these numbers are highly inflated.

The University's DEI office provides several resources and programs, including the Equity Center, which works to redress racial and economic inequalities, the Diversity Council, where elected representatives discuss strategies for making the University a more welcoming environment, and resource groups for Black, LatinX and veteran employees to help recruit, mentor and support staff members in each of these identity categories.

The office also says they organize learning programs on defining equity, navigating implicit bias and finding a sense of belonging at the University.

After OpenTheBooks published a report of DEI spending and a list of DEI employees at the University, both the Jefferson Council — a conservative alumni group dedicated to the preservation of Thomas Jefferson's legacy — and the New York Post, a conservative-leaning daily tabloid, criticized the University for spending too much taxpayer money on DEI initiatives.

The Jefferson Council republished an article by OpenTheBooks CEO Adam Andrzejewski which refers to the University's DEI Department as an "extravagance on the taxpayer's tab" and alleges that University spokesperson Brian Coy "misled" national media in multiple statements by underestimating the true number of DEI staffers.

However, according to Coy, one point of discrepancy between the OpenTheBooks report and the University's statistics is that the report labels all DEI-related employees, whether they are part-time employees, summer interns or tenured professors in addition to DEI staffers, as full-time DEI employees. Coy described the calculations of DEI employees as "a tricky analysis," stating that there are many DEI staffers that have dual roles at the University which was not ad-

equately factored into the OpenTheBooks report.

"They just straight up misclassify more than 100 positions [at the University] ... [such as] University ombuds, sexual violence investigators, bias investigators [and] trauma counselors at the Women's Center," Coy said. "These are all incredibly important positions. They're just not DEI positions, and I don't think anybody who's approaching this in an intellectually honest way would think that they are."

It is not just the amount of DEI positions that is being contested. The New York Post also criticizes the salary of top-level DEI employees, comparing Chief Global Diversity Officer Martin Davidson's salary of \$451,800 plus benefits to Gov. Glenn Youngkin's salary of \$175,000. Citing Andrzejewski, the article alleges that it takes the tuition of 1,000 undergraduate students to pay the base salary of DEI employees.

According to Coy, the University DEI Department consists of 55 full time employees with an annual spending of \$5.8 million, numbers that were shared with the Board of Visitors as the official total in June 2023. Further, Coy said that OpenTheBooks did not speak to the University before publishing the results of their findings.

"[OpenTheBooks] was a group who published this report without asking [the University] any questions at all about how we classify employees," Coy said. "They picked a number, and they published it in the media and they were wrong."

James Bacon, executive director of the Jefferson Council and founder of political blog Bacon's Rebellion, published an article which applauds the OpenTheBooks report and asserts that an excessive fixation on "equity" across categories such as race and gender permeates across all areas of the University.

"While Open the Books has been fully transparent, going so far as to publish a list of the employees, titles and salaries it is counting, U.Va. has not reciprocated with a list of its own," Bacon said. "The size and cost of the DEI bureaucracy only scrapes the surface ... the fixation on race, sex and gender intrudes into every school and college, every department and every administrative office."

According to Bacon, the Jef-



ALBERT TANG | THE CAVALIER DAILY

The University's DEI office provides several resources and programs pertaining to economic inequality, diversity and support for marginalized groups.

erson Council does not take issue with the goals of diversity or inclusion, but considers equity at the University to be too focused on specific categories of identity, such as race and gender. Bacon said that the concept of equity at the University serves to divide students into different categories based on their minority status.

"We say that U.Va. should be welcoming everybody, but we have huge problems with dividing people into identity buckets, and we feel that it doesn't," Bacon said. "The emphasis on DEI is more to push people apart and alienate people than to bring them together and create a common identity."

Another contested claim made in the Jefferson Council article was that the University supports a \$1 billion long term plan for rectifying structural racism with the Racial Equity Task Force, which is designed to provide recommendations for addressing systemic racism at the University. Bacon could not confirm the accuracy of this number or how it was calculated.

Despite these assertions, Bacon states that the Jefferson Council has taken no position on what should happen to DEI, and that the future of DEI should be left to the Board of Visitors. He said, however, that the DEI Department lacks any tangible end goal for its services.

"There is a huge bureaucracy that has no clear aims, no clear goals [and] no clear point in which they can say that our job here is done ... and no metrics for progress," Bacon said. "It's just this big blob and [it has] become just a mechanism within the University for just propagating the intersectional oppression ideology."

Conversely, Oliver Lesh, fourth-year College student and LGBTQ Center volunteer, said he does not think that the University is spending too much on DEI resources. Instead, Lesh said he is in favor of the University DEI Department's mission and services, claiming that DEI provides resources for all students regardless of race, gender or sexuality.

"When we view DEI as something that's for a small group of students, we are drastically under estimating the capacity that DEI and DEI centers have had on the entire student body of the University," Lesh said. "This University is slowly but surely becoming a better place for all students, and that change is something that many organizations, including the Jefferson Council, need to reckon with."

Despite the recent controversies, McDonald said that neither the OpenTheBooks report nor the scrutiny of the Jefferson Council and New York Post have caused any noticeable changes to DEI programming at the University.

"As a team, I think we just remain steadfast in our commitment to doing this work and serving the communities and constituents that we serve," McDonald said. "And I think we're going to stay on that path until we're told otherwise."

The City's sidewalk expansion aims to increase pedestrian safety

The first phase of the project is set to be completed by 2030

Brandon Kile | Staff Writer

The City of Charlottesville has plans for the expansion of its sidewalk system over the coming years, prioritizing numerous new sidewalks in different locations around the city, including near Grounds on Emmet Street and Jefferson Park Avenue. With concerns over pedestrian safety and the quality of existing sidewalks, some members of the University community have discussed challenges and possible solutions that would make Charlottesville a more walkable, safe and equitable city.

The expansion of the City's sidewalk network follows a recent increase in pedestrian fatalities in Virginia. In 2020, Charlottesville alone saw 15 pedestrian fatalities, according to the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles. More broadly, there were 172 pedestrian deaths in Virginia in 2022 — a 37 percent increase from the year before.

Students at the University have also expressed concerns over a lack of pedestrian safety on Grounds in areas with high pedestrian traffic. First-year Engineering student Will Kittrell said that he has seen unsafe conditions while crossing McCormick Road and on the Corner — two areas with high pedestrian concentrations. According to Kittrell, illegally parked cars prevent him from seeing oncoming traffic as he is crossing the road, causing near collisions.

"On McCormick Road, people park and leave their hazards on, and when I go to cross, I can't see other cars coming," Kittrell said. "I step out and almost get hit or see people almost get hit all the time."

The new sidewalk expansions that will be closest to Grounds include 485 feet of sidewalks along Emmet Street from Stadium Road to McCormick Road and 3,700 feet along JPA adjacent to Dawson's Row, from McCormick Road to West Main Street. There are additional committed sidewalk expansions, on Fontaine Avenue and Emmet Street, which have not yet been assigned a time-frame or funding plan.

To bolster accessibility and safety in areas with high pedestrian traffic, goals for the City's sidewalk project more broadly include meeting the increased demand for sidewalks along certain routes, as well as strategically placing them around Charlottesville in areas that will benefit the most from the additional infrastructure.

Charlottesville City Council member Michael Payne said he believes that this project is a huge step forward for pedestrian safety, especially considering the backlog of sidewalk projects that the City has faced in past years. He said that the backlog was exacerbated by the pandemic, when vacancies in select positions led



SHANE WAN | THE CAVALIER DAILY

The plan also targets historically underserved areas in an effort to increase the equitable distribution of sidewalks.

to fewer projects being completed.

"I'd expect that everybody's going to be very happy that we're starting to make some significant progress and putting plans and funding in place," Payne said. "It's always going to be much safer for pedestrians when you have a well built sidewalk and you're not needing to walk right by the road."

According to the City's plan, areas and neighborhoods where infrastructure investment is most needed also often have poorer, non-white or low english-proficiency populations. The City said they hope that by prioritizing equitable placement, the expanded sidewalks system will increase accessibility and connectivity in these underserved areas. According to the City government, 55 percent of proposed locations for expansions are in areas where a majority of households fall below the local median income. Additionally, 26 percent of proposed sidewalk priorities are in areas where the proportion of people living with disabilities is higher than the state average.

Andrew Mondschein, associate professor of Urban and Environmental Planning and associate dean of research at the School of Architecture, said that the current state of the City's sidewalk network is inadequate. He said that the inequitable distribution of sidewalks between neighborhoods is a major problem that the City faces, however, the City's sidewalk sys-

tem as a whole is subpar.

"Sidewalks are essential, and the truth is that in Charlottesville, that's not a resource that's consistently available to everyone in every neighborhood," Mondschein said. "Some neighborhoods have better sidewalk infrastructure than others, but I would say more broadly, Charlottesville in general doesn't have a very good sidewalk network."

The City's new project divides planned sidewalks into three tiers depending on the amount of time a sidewalk is expected to take to complete, the cost of the project and any external factors which may hinder its construction, such as planned paving or other scheduled maintenance. The construction of Tier 1 sidewalks, which are categorized as shorter segments with few construction conflicts, is projected for completion by 2030, while Tier 2 sidewalk locations will not begin construction until after 2030.

Tier 3 projects are more complicated and therefore have no distinct time frame as of yet. They are expected to have significant conflicts during implementation, will require coordination with external partners — such as the University or state government — and will require additional state, federal or private funding. All projects near Grounds are classified as Tier 3.

Beyond than insufficient number of sidewalks, University students

say that issues of pedestrian safety are also related to the poor quality of existing sidewalk networks. Second-year Architecture student Liz Handte said that the sidewalks in many areas, such as down West Main Street, are poorly maintained, narrow and may be difficult for some to navigate.

"I assume it's really difficult for people to get around if [they're] elderly, having to walk over these stumps and trees that are kind of in the middle of the pedestrian road," Handte said. "For me to cross the street, I have to get into the road because I can't see, so I'm in the road trying to see traffic, which is incredibly unsafe."

The U.S. Department of Transportation lists numerous ways beyond expanding sidewalk coverage that communities can improve their pedestrian safety and access. Examples include implementing physical barriers in roads, clear signage and lights at crosswalks. According to the Federal Highway Administration, physical barriers between the road and sidewalk, such as raised medians or trees, can reduce pedestrian crashes by up to 46 percent at marked crosswalks. Medians can also leave space for street lighting, which helps decrease nighttime pedestrian fatalities by 78 percent.

Payne also said that the City has additional plans beyond the sidewalk expansion project to increase the number of bike lanes and create

physical barriers between sidewalks and the road, which will further contribute to increased pedestrian safety.

"[The sidewalks are] a big step forward, but it's not the end of those efforts," Payne said. "I think there's a lot more that will still be happening, ... [including creating] protected bike lanes and, as much as we can, [creating] a physical barrier between pedestrians and cars."

In light of the current absence of these other improvements, Handte said these sidewalk expansions are not a complete fix to the pedestrian safety issues in the City, but that the project is still a great first initiative towards solving the problem.

"There's probably a lot more that can be done, but I think that it is best that they're focusing on pedestrian streets as an initial priority," Handte said.

The final sidewalk priority list, which will detail all committed locations and project lengths, as well as the tier of each project, is due to be published in June. According to the City, each sidewalk project will lead to some conflicts such as right-of-way changes or road narrowings, which the City will take into consideration when determining the time frame for each project.

University Police increase e-scooter traffic stop citations

According to police, officers began issuing errant e-scooter riders citations April 1

Pratha Patel and Caroline Hagood | Staff Writers

The University Police Department has increased the number of e-scooter traffic stops around Grounds, along with issuing more citations to stopped riders, as of April 1 in an effort to encourage legal ridership. In this new initiative to encourage safe and legal use of e-scooters, University Police are working to raise awareness of both state laws and local policies that classify e-scooters as vehicles subject to all traffic regulations through informational tabling and traffic stops that result in citations.

E-scooters are popular among students as a mode of transportation when commuting to classes. Students either personally own e-scooters or rent them through app services such as VeoRide, an e-scooter and e-bike vendor which partners with several cities and universities across the country to distribute e-scooters.

Since 2019, Veo has been the only e-scooter provider to receive permits to operate in Charlottesville and on Grounds, according to University spokesperson Bethanie Glover. The City's permit specifies that Veo is allowed up to 700 e-scooters within the Charlottesville area, and an average of 525 e-scooters were on Grounds during the 2023-24 academic year.

As for official regulations on Veo ridership, Virginia law 46.2-100 states that a motorized scooter is considered a vehicle when operated on a public roadway and therefore must follow all traffic laws. In addition, Charlottesville City Code Sec. 15-246 prohibits e-scooters from riding on sidewalks.

UPD Sergeant Beckett Thelen says that although state and local policies are not new, UPD has recently recognized a gap in knowledge around e-scooter regulations in the University community that he says needs to be addressed.

"[UPD] decided we needed to raise awareness," Thelen said. "We needed to educate any of our students, faculty, staff or visitors that utilize e-scooters so that they can have safe ridership whenever they elect to use this alternative means of transportation."

A warning phase started in mid-March when UPD members began tabling around Grounds, passing out flyers to students with details of the e-scooter state law. Thelen said that while official traffic stops and citations began April 1, these education efforts will continue through the end of this semester.

Similarly to Thelen, Glover said that the University's focus when considering the use of e-scooters is educating students about safe ridership, both on Grounds and in the surrounding Charlottesville area.

"We hope that the education and awareness we are bringing towards

electric scooter ridership will positively change how electric scooters are ridden, with an emphasis on safe and lawful operation," Glover said.

University policy SEC-043, published in Feb. 2019, also states that motorized scooters and electric power-assisted bicycles are required to obey applicable traffic regulations. Provisions included in the University's policy require e-scooter riders to wear a helmet, yield to pedestrians in crosswalks and avoid riding on sidewalks. However, Thelen said officers are only enforcing state and local laws, not University traffic policies.

Per Virginia law, an operator of an e-scooter, whether personally owned or rented, can be issued a traffic citation in the same manner as a car in a traffic stop, but Thelen said he hopes these citations can be avoided through their educational initiatives. He said UPD is not trying to deter or restrict ridership, but rather help raise awareness so that people understand how to stay safe and ride e-scooters lawfully.

A U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission report released in 2022 showed a near 21 percent increase nationally in injuries related to e-scooter use, which Thelen said is consistent with the increase in e-scooter accidents the UPD has seen at the University.

Second-year College student Yury Park said she previously rode Veo e-scooters until she was injured last spring while riding one. She said she ended up in the emergency room due to jumping off an e-scooter when she gained too much speed riding down a hill and could not brake properly.

Park said she has avoided riding e-scooters since her accident, and that it is important the e-scooter regulations be enforced due to the danger that can occur from riding e-scooters, especially on main roads with cars.

"Without these restrictions, I think it's really dangerous for students to be riding them, especially when it's raining or at night when it's dark," Park said. "I think if I really needed to ride [an e-scooter], I would if the restrictions were [enforced]."

Third-year College student Sally Bussian said she thinks it is important for students to be aware and follow traffic rules when riding on the road, such as stopping for stop signs and pedestrians. However, she said she does not support police enforcing traffic stops for e-scooter riders because it will deter people from using the e-scooters.

"I don't think that it's necessary for police to be lurking and waiting for students to make a mistake on the Veo," Bussian said.

Despite UPD's efforts over the last week to raise awareness around



ANNAGRACE PALMER | THE CAVALIER DAILY

Virginia law states that a motorized scooter is considered a vehicle when operated on a public roadway and therefore is subject to all traffic laws.

Grounds and among students, Bussian said she was unaware of the initiative and had never heard of rules regarding riding e-scooters. According to Bussian, first-year students make up a large portion of e-scooter users on Grounds, so informing them of traffic rules surrounding e-scooters via announcements from Residential Advi-

sors and schoolwide emails should be a priority.

Third-year College student Meghana Annamaneni agreed that publicity of these efforts by police will be instrumental in changing students' behaviors. Annamaneni said that whether or not the police enforcement will lead to better road safety

depends mainly on students spreading the word about the increasing traffic stops.

"If people start hearing that other people have been ticketed, I think that will definitely help enforce these regulations," Annamaneni said.

More information about e-scooter safety is available on UPD's website.

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OPINION

LEAD EDITORIAL

Pedestrian safety is an instituional imperative

Charlottesville and the University's plans to improve pedestrian safety are largely admirable and reflect a commitment to prevenative measures

In the past few weeks, first-year students may have noticed a table set up by Observatory Hill Dining Hall. It wasn't Chi Alpha or the Hullahahoos but the University Police Department. At this table, UPD was giving a simple notice to students — we are going to start pulling over your electric scooters. These notices are not the first action taken against electric scooters, and they may not be the last. Rather, these notices represent one among many actions taken by Charlottesville and the University to recenter pedestrian safety in their urban planning. Although it is perhaps the bare minimum, it is nonetheless laudable that the University and Charlottesville are beginning to prioritize the safety of pedestrians.

Amid a national crisis of pedestrian safety, Charlottesville and the University are also struggling to properly maintain pedestrian safety. In the past year, there have been instances of collisions between pedestrians, scooter riders and cars in addition to smaller, anecdotal expe-

riences of imperfect pedestrian safety standards. The notices provided by UPD stand as but one example of increasing efforts to respond to this reality. To combat the danger of unsafe crosswalks, the Charlottesville City Council released designs last month for renovating the Barracks Road and Emmet Street intersection and approved the appropriation of funding towards a pedestrian-bike lane on Rugby Avenue. In its own policies, the University has taken a slightly different path towards protecting pedestrians — they are working to ensure safe and responsible usage of electric scooters by emphasizing that riders must obey traffic laws.

The measures taken by the Council and University to fortify pedestrian safety are doubly necessary given the lethargy displayed at the state level. A bipartisan bill focused on strengthening safety measures at Virginia universities died in the Virginia House of Delegates. This bill would have improved university crossing zones by designating them as school

zones and thus decreasing the speed limit permitted in that area. The state-level neglect of this national issue has ensured the need for local authorities and institutions like the Council and University to take action — which they have commendably done.

Notably, this is not the first time that action has been taken on the local level to address ongoing pedestrian safety concerns. In 2019, electric scooters were a topic of such concern across the City of Charlottesville and Grounds that the Council ultimately voted to tighten restrictions so much that the scooter company Lime was forced to leave. This freed up the market and allowed Veo to gain massive popularity. Since then, Veos have proven useful to University students — 65 percent of users in Charlottesville are students. It is clear that Veos play an important role in student transportation networks. At the same time, however, they have been shown to be dangerous both to their “drivers” and passersby, especially if riders

do not follow regulations. Ultimately, appreciating the important role Veos play in this community should not stop us from achieving a safe medium — maintaining travel options for students and safety for pedestrians. The University policies endeavor to achieve this balance.

In prioritizing pedestrian safety, UPD has endeavored to raise awareness for previously under-advertised policies and mechanisms for scooter safety. We applaud UPD for not immediately issuing traffic citations of up to \$2,500 to scooter riders who violate traffic laws. While fines may seem like a relatively tame option, they end up punishing each person to a different degree that reinforces hierarchies of privilege. Instead of relying exclusively on fines, the University has worked to prioritize educational initiatives in a way that recognizes the importance of placing preventative policies over punitive practices.

The actions taken by the Council and by the University represent a

laudable focus on their residents and students and an insistence on proactive, educational measures. Moreover, considered in their totality, these actions address the issue of pedestrian safety on many levels — intersections, sidewalks and non-vehicular forms of transportation — instead of adopting a monochromatic approach. Pedestrian safety is not something which Charlottesville residents or University students should compromise on. As University students, pedestrian safety is at the heart of every part of our lives, and we — as a community — must continue to advance innovative and proactive solutions to ensure student safety.

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U.Va. administration, protect your Jewish students

With Jewish students feeling unsafe on Grounds, the University must work more diligently to respond to and quash antisemitism

A slap, a push and a spat. This is not the start to some rhythmic nursery rhyme. Rather, it is the experience of one Jewish first-year student who no longer feels comfortable on Grounds because of antisemitism that has been exacerbated since the Oct. 7 attack on Israel. Though the casualties in Gaza are heart-breaking, they are no justification for antisemitism at the University. The reaction to antisemitism on the part of University leadership has been woefully inadequate — it has failed to protect its Jewish community and has neglected to discuss the issue in an open manner. The University must better protect and support Jewish students.

The experience of the Jewish first-year who was slapped, pushed and spat on is extreme, but not exceptional. It is extreme in the severity of the action but unexceptional in that it was one of many instances of antisemitism that have occurred. Since the start of this school year, 19 reports of antisemitism have been filed with the University. This is an appalling number of potential instances of antisemitism. That a group who makes up almost six percent of the undergraduate student

body feels so collectively and individually unsafe is an indicator both of student intolerance and administrative inattention to discrimination.

This is not the first time Jewish students on Grounds have felt unwelcome because of their beliefs. In 1927, the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences declared that “some limit” must be placed

the Jews kidnapped as “occupation soldiers” and celebrated the “unprecedented feat” of the assault. Here, SJP crossed the line, sliding from anti-Zionism into antisemitism. They have also, in their marches, broken state laws relating to mask-wearing — laws initially designed to prevent the discriminatory power of the Ku Klux Klan. In this way, the words

keep antisemitism out of the public discourse — discussions with Jewish parents and the Board of Visitors’ dialogues on the matter are reserved for private sessions. The issue is not that the University has had private conversations regarding antisemitism — it is that this is all they have had.

Suggestions of a public forum have fallen on deaf ears. By keep-

sponse has been. Denouncing antisemitism is a basic expectation, not an applaudable action. Other universities have recognized similar problems on their campuses and responded through a mix of protection and support. By following suit and being proactive in preventing antisemitism from occurring and punishing it when it does occur, our university can produce a safer environment for Jewish students on Grounds.

When antisemitism is increasingly prevalent on Grounds and when Jewish students feel unsafe and unprotected, it is clear that the University must take active action to safeguard its Jewish students. Stricter reviews of antisemitism allegations, public forums, genuine punishment of antisemitism — these are just a few actions that the University can take to protect its Jewish population. The one thing that is entirely unacceptable, however, is continued inaction.

“Though the University has condemned antisemitism, the continued perpetration of hate shows how insufficient this response has been.”

on Jewish student acceptance. These so-called limits were quotas, aimed at reducing the presence and prominence of Jewish students at the University. More recently, events in Charlottesville and at the University, like the “Unite the Right” rally, have only added fuel to a fire of antisemitism still felt on Grounds by Jewish students.

This fire has been increasingly prevalent since Oct. 7. For example, in a since-deleted statement, the University’s Students for Justice in Palestine chapter labeled

of SJP not only create a hostile space for Jewish students but also normalize antisemitism. Stricter focus on antisemitism from student organizations and punishment of infractions are needed to discourage antisemitism.

Beyond a failure to curb antisemitic sentiments and actions, the University’s transparency in responding to this crisis has also been deficient. When asked about their tangible responses to antisemitism, the University has frequently cited confidentiality as a justification. They have tried to

ing discussions of antisemitism from the public most affected by it, the University neither fulfills its responsibilities to current students nor provides guarantees for future prospective applicants that they will be safe at the University. This is concerningly reminiscent of an antisemitic history, and it takes concerted and continual action to move away from this problematic past.

Though the University has condemned antisemitism, the continued perpetration of hate shows how insufficient this re-

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The danger of dehumanizing language

Overt Islamophobia and administrative silence in the face of this Islamophobia have profoundly affected students on Grounds

The University aims to graduate diverse students who have been included and valued in this community and who go on to become leaders who are able to face the multicultural complexities of our world. This language theoretically demands supporting Palestinian students, yet the University’s actions are at odds with its stated commitment, particularly amidst rising Islamophobia. The administration’s failure to condemn blatant discrimination only leads to more discrimination, fostering an atmosphere that misinterprets pro-Palestinian sentiments as support of terrorism — leading to a rise in harassment that targets Muslim and Arab students.

In early October, the international community mourned the loss of over 1,100 Israelis. While this loss was tragic, the evil acts committed in response have led numerous students and organizations to show solidarity with Palestine. Much of the support has helped make students more aware of the situation in Gaza. While progress has been made, the language of these student organizations has been subtly manipulated to portray legitimate Palestinian resistance as something nefarious, dehumanizing the students

behind this activism and othering a legitimate cause.

The framing of Palestinians as less than human and activism on their behalf as dangerous is not unique to the University. This perspective has been traced back to the creation of the state of Israel in 1948 when Palestinians

Chabad, for example, published a statement in the wake of Oct. 7. While this message sent support to Israel, it also encouraged readers not to engage with “trolls [who] are being sent to distract us.” Although Chabad may have intended to provide comfort to a grieving community, this language

it failed to say the word “Palestine” within its main body. To its credit, this letter did condemn the tragic loss of Israeli life on Oct. 7. But in the same way Ryan condemned the loss of Israeli life, it is past time that he condemns the murder of Palestinians. There are currently roughly 30,000 murdered

circled Cambridge and New Haven over several days. Other students have found their photos and personal information displayed on websites and social media accounts labeling them as “terrorist sympathizers.” As a result, Palestinian, Arab and Muslim students on campuses self-censor for fear of being doxxed, defamed, harassed and assaulted.

The dehumanization of Palestinians across the world has disproportionately burdened pro-Palestinian students. It has not only synonymized their identity with terrorism but also discredited their voices and stories. This is part of a larger phenomenon in which individuals within the United States are conditioned to use dangerous language for and attach the word “terrorism” to Black and Brown people. At a minimum, the University must equally recognize Islamophobic and xenophobic language on Grounds. Call it what it is. It is a refusal to see Palestinians as equal humans. And it must stop.

“Administrative reluctance to deal equally with the lived experiences of Israelis and Palestinians continues to perpetrate a culture of discriminatory language.”

were painted as antisemitic terrorists who could not be reasoned with. Such prejudices are kept alive through the language used by the Israeli government that contributes to the degradation of Palestinians — particularly the Israeli Defense Minister, Yoav Gallant, who referred to Palestinians as animals. Even members of Congress have made similar remarks, such as Florida Rep. Brian Mast, who said there were few “innocent Palestinians” in Gaza.

Within the University’s community, there is also language which attempts to conceal the ongoing genocide in Gaza. The Hasidic group

conflates pro-Palestinian activists with internet trolls. This implies that pro-Palestinian activism is intrinsically dangerous and makes it that much easier to propagate dehumanizing rhetoric.

This villainization of pro-Palestine action is deemed acceptable when there is consistent administrative inaction which largely manifests in an unwillingness to actively condemn the loss of Palestinian lives. For example, President Ryan’s initial letter to students after Oct. 7 did not just fail to acknowledge Israel’s consistent attacks on Palestinians for the last 75 years,

Palestinians, with over 7,000 still missing and thousands more injured. In short, administrative reluctance to deal equally with the lived experiences of Israelis and Palestinians continues to perpetrate a culture of discriminatory language.

This language has consequences, particularly when the present language perpetuates stereotypes. The reluctance to engage with Palestinian voices has led to an increase in violence. For example, in mid-October, a billboard truck displaying the names and faces of students under the heading “Harvard’s Leading Antisemites”

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SPORTS

Where will Malik Washington get drafted?

With the NFL Draft approaching, the Virginia star looks to continue his electric play in the professional ranks

Caroline Connor | Senior Writer

One word stood out when analysts Daniel Jeremiah and Peter Schrager discussed former Virginia wide receiver Malik Washington at the NFL Combine in early March — “fun.” Both NFL Network analysts described him as “fun to watch” during the wide receiver workouts of the NFL Draft. Although a short evaluation of the player, it is altogether accurate. Washington is a player that is always open, even when he is covered by multiple players. Washington beats the defender with his route-running ability, or Washington beats perfect coverage. Hoping for ample opportunities on a talented professional squad, there are a few likely landing spots.

Washington entered the Combine with a lot of quiet anticipation after shining at the East-West Shrine Bowl scouting week — so much so that the former Cavalier opted not to participate in the actual game because of how strong his showings in practice were. Based on reports, Washington was by far the best player in Frisco, Texas that week.

The first-team All-ACC star jumped a ridiculous 42.5 inches in the vertical, rewarding him with the co-highest vertical of the Combine this year. This jumping ability combined with his compact and muscular build can help explain why Washington finished third in the nation for contested catch percentage out of all receivers eligible for the 2024 NFL Draft.

Washington also showed off his strength on the bench press. Washington tied for second place out of the receivers at the Combine with an impressive 19 reps of 225 pounds. While the number is obviously positive, it was already expected for him to finish in the higher percentile on the exercise based on the strength he showed on game days. Overall, it can be said that Washington helped his draft stock at the NFL Combine, which had already risen after the East-West Shrine Bowl.

To answer this question of where Washington's draft stock stands post-Combine, it is important to consider what Washington's role will be in the NFL. As mentioned before, he is a bona fide slot receiver because of his height, run-after-catch ability and route running.

Washington's height and weight combination gives him more of a running back build instead of the traditional wide receiver archetype, something that shows up on tape. Two of his best abilities are fighting through contact and running after the catch,



ALBERT TANG | THE CAVALIER DAILY

Washington celebrates a crucial touchdown against William and Mary.

which are usually attributed to running backs. As a prospect, Washington can be described as a shorter version of Deebo Samuel, star wide receiver of the San Francisco 49ers.

Washington is widely considered to be the one of best slot receiver prospects in the draft, a reflection of being one of the most productive receivers in college football last season. Based on his production and skillset, Washington would be a token second-round pick most years. However, this draft is not like many others.

The 2024 NFL Draft is arguably one of the most loaded and deepest wide receiver draft classes of all time. This makes Washington's draft stock extremely unpredictable, especially because NFL teams tend to value outside receivers higher in the draft than slot receivers. Looking at current team needs, there are a handful of squads who will most likely have an interest in Washington.

Arizona Cardinals

The Cardinals have multiple needs entering the draft, notably

their lack of wide receiver depth. The only receiver on the roster with over 500 yards the season prior is Michael Wilson, who ended his rookie season with only three touchdowns. While the Cardinals are widely predicted to take megastars Marvin Harrison Jr. of Ohio State or Malik Nabers of Louisiana State with their first round pick, they still would need help at the slot position after trading Rondale Moore this offseason.

Buffalo Bills

The Bills' needs are simple — Josh Allen needs someone to throw to. After the blockbuster trade of Stefon Diggs to the Houston Texans, Allen has no bona fide top receiver. If the Bills opt to draft multiple receivers this year, Washington could be in the mix.

Cincinnati Bengals

This one is pretty clear cut — the Bengals lost Tyler Boyd, a premier slot receiver, and need to replace quality production. Washington would be a clear improvement over Andrei Iosivas, the likely starter, who registered

just 116 receiving yards in 2023.

Detroit Lions

With Kalif Raymond turning 30 before the season begins, it is reasonable to assume that the Lions might be looking for an alternative at the slot position. At the very least, the Lions are looking for more depth at the receiver position to complement Amon-Ra St. Brown as Jameson Williams continues to struggle with staying healthy.

Green Bay Packers

Yes, it may be lazy to suggest that the Packers might draft Washington because they found tremendous value in drafting former Cavalier Dontayvion Wicks in the 5th round. However, they were reported to have talked to Washington after his Pro Day workout. The Packers currently have depth, but the quality often comes into question. The Packers' main goal is to help their young quarterback Jordan Love, and the Virginia product could yield strong value for a 3rd or 4th round pick.

Los Angeles Chargers

After trading Keenan Allen, the Chargers are arguably one of the most receiver-needy teams in the league. The first-round pick in 2023, Quentin Johnston, did not meet expectations, and the fourth-round pick, Derius Davis, only had 66 yards receiving during his rookie year. Washington could be a much-needed slot receiver for the team to compliment Joshua Palmer.

Before the pre-draft process, projections had Washington going between the third and fourth round. However, his performance during the East-West Shrine Bowl week combined with the Combine will most likely solidify Washington as a third-round pick. A slot-needy team may find it difficult to pass up his talent if he is still available in the third round, but wherever he lands, Washington will certainly make his Virginia program proud through continuous success in the professional ranks.

Virginia Athletics emcee Jamar Hicks is all about the students

Hicks keeps the energy high at Virginia sporting events with a blend of engaging promotions and impeccable style

Jacob Tisdale | Senior Writer

Virginia Athletics emcee Jamar Hicks has become a staple at sporting events in Charlottesville over the past few years. Hicks is easily recognized at Scott Stadium and John Paul Jones Arena by his enthusiastic announcer's voice and bright orange pants, and thanks to him, students and fans alike can expect to be thoroughly entertained throughout their gameday experience. While every Virginia men's basketball and football game is played alongside Hicks' booming voice, sometimes the most difficult moments on the court or the field are when Hicks shines brightest.

One such moment happened Feb. 24, when the situation was dire in the student section of JPJ. After dedicated students had camped out in the rain for most of a dreary Saturday just to get a spot in the student section, Virginia men's basketball was falling behind a North Carolina squad that simply outmatched them. The frustration among die-hard Cavalier fans — built up over the course of a lackluster season — was palpable. With energy and enthusiasm waning, it was hard not to think about making an early break for the exits and attempting to salvage the weekend.

"It felt like the students had a hard time convincing themselves that we ever had a chance in the game," fourth-year College student Quentin Benz said. "I can't really blame them after what the previous few games had held."

Then, something remarkable happened to lift the morale of every Cavaliers fan in attendance. Virginia's dance team, performing the "Cupid Shuffle" during a break in the game, split down the middle to pave the way for a special guest — Jamar Hicks, emcee for Virginia Athletics. In a departure from his patented orange gameday outfits, Hicks was adorned with a cowboy hat, large belt buckle, cowboy boots and the trademark smile of a showman at work.

"The atmosphere completely shifted, at least with me and my friends," Benz said. "We were ecstatic to see a familiar face."

Hicks proceeded to tear up the court to the surprise and delight of the student section and fans at large. After a rousing routine choreographed by members of the Virginia Dance Team, Hicks pumped up the crowd before dropping into a full split to cap off the electric moment. Though the routine failed to inspire a comeback effort on the court,

Virginia students and fans' spirits were undoubtedly renewed.

"When he jumped and did a full split, I vividly remember jumping and screaming louder than any other point during the game," Benz said. "Which is partially sad but also shows the energy that Jamar has the ability to inject into the crowd."

Win or lose, Hicks makes sure fans get their money's worth by providing the best gameday presentation he can offer — even if it comes at the cost of a sore hamstring.

"I actually received a lot of text messages and feedback from people that they really enjoyed that because it was different," Hicks said. "But I commend the dance team. They are some talented people ... that split was not easy."

While a full split is not something Hicks can promise to Virginia fans on a regular basis, he brings the same smile and enthusiasm to address the crowd at all men's basketball and football games. Hicks also appears with a microphone in hand to host major matchups for women's basketball, baseball and volleyball.

Fans know Hicks best for his ability to rally the crowd and oversee riveting interactive promotions during breaks in play. Those promotions include the Harris Teeter Shooting Challenge, when two students compete to make layups on the court at JPJ and subsequently sprint back to half court to place Harris Teeter items in grocery carts, and the Papa John's Delivery of the Game, when cheerleaders hand out free pizza to a random section of fans.

"When it comes to promotions, they're all different," Hicks said. "But I like to do ... promotions where the crowd can always help you out. Because I always want all the students to be a winner."

Hicks — a Chesterfield, Va. native — got his start working sporting events at his alma mater, Liberty University, to fulfill a service requirement while studying communications. Though he currently holds a full-time position auditing hotels and resorts, he has extensive sports broadcasting and public address experience. Hicks' resume includes stints hosting games at American University, University of Maryland, University of Denver and University of Washington. However, his talent on the microphone extends beyond the



COURTESY UVA RECREATION

Hicks interviews a contestant during a halftime event at John Paul Jones Arena.

world of sports.

"I've been ... public address announcing, emceeing, hosting games [and] stuff like that since college," Hicks said. "It opened up a lot of doors, really, because I also emcee weddings, corporate parties ... and it all just started from an internship — or really community service — in college."

Since joining Virginia Athletics in 2019 to co-emcee football games, Hicks has become the voice and face of marquee athletic events for the Cavaliers in an ever-expanding role. In addition to regular gameday responsibilities, Hicks hosts the annual football awards banquet and plays an active role in "Paint The Town Orange" Pep Rally Friday nights before football games.

"The one I probably enjoy the most is when all of the first-years get to come in for their orientation week," Hicks said. "We teach them the fight song, they get to meet the coaches ... so that's really good."

Hicks' passionate care for Virginia students from the moment

they step on Grounds is felt and reciprocated by many.

"I love his enthusiasm, he always has the best energy and the biggest smile no matter the occasion," fourth-year Engineering student Rebecca Dollahite said. "He genuinely just seems to love what he does and it's infectious."

Hicks has seen the community embrace him as a result of his growing stature at Virginia athletic events. Adults, students and especially children take time to ask for pictures — or request prizes — in restaurants, grocery stores and even in airports across the country.

"It's really humbling because I'm just Jamar," Hicks said.

While off-Grounds fan interactions are a welcomed part of the job for Hicks, ultimately, connecting with Virginia students is what keeps him coming back year after year.

"The reason I do this and enjoy this the most are the students I've connected with," Hicks said. "I really do this for them. Like I remember being a student in col-

lege, the energy, the fun, all that stuff that happened at all our games. To see ... how I can impact them during a game experience or get them on the field or let all their friends see them on the big screen is really why I do it."

While the basketball season has ended, Hicks will still be around at Disharoon Park for baseball games this spring, and he shared a few ideas on how he would like to further improve Cavalier fans' experiences by getting students even more engaged — from battling in hamster balls to joining Virginia cheerleaders and dancers in a soul train line. He also shared his desire to host games for more sports going forward, including men's and women's lacrosse. There's little doubt these ideas would be big hits among fans of Virginia's spring sports, but no matter what Hicks comes up with in the future, he would be a welcome addition wherever he brings his microphone next.

What should men's basketball do with Tony Bennett?

The Cavaliers have disappointed in four consecutive postseasons, inciting unprecedented dialogue about Bennett's job status

Connor Lothrop | Senior Writer



TESS GINSBERG | THE CAVALIER DAILY

Bennett looks on as the Cavaliers battle Pittsburgh in an ACC clash.

Virginia men's basketball lost by 25 points March 19 against Colorado State in the First Four of the NCAA Tournament. The Cavaliers bowed out to No. 13 seed Furman in the opening round a season prior, missed the tournament entirely in 2022 and fell to No. 13 seed Ohio in the first round in 2021. The program hasn't won a game in the "Big Dance" since its national title run in 2019, leaving questions surrounding Coach Tony Bennett's future in Charlottesville.

Bennett is the greatest coach in Virginia men's basketball history and will be lauded in Charlottesville lore long after he and the Cavaliers part ways. However, puzzling game management, peculiar personnel decisions, acute struggles to recruit and underwhelming results in the team's biggest games for the last half-decade will have clouded a few of his past accomplishments in the eyes of some Cavalier fans. Virginia men's basketball has an important decision to make, and for the first time in his tenure, it is

about Bennett.

The case for keeping Bennett

Virginia basketball is at a distinct recruiting disadvantage compared to other power conference schools. Throughout the program's history, Virginia has had elevated academic standards for student-athletes. The athletics department requires higher rates of degree progress per year than NCAA minimums, focuses more on Olympic sports than other schools — with women's swim and dive being the primary beneficiary — and significantly lacks NIL funding in the power conference marketplace. This reality would be a death sentence to another program.

Despite these disadvantages, Bennett has consistently recruited above the program's historic average — Virginia has an average recruiting ranking of 40th since his first class in 2010, much better than his predecessors. The

fifteenth-year coach has shown a remarkable ability to teach basketball, elevating consistently middle-tier recruiting classes and sending lesser-known recruits like Joe Harris, Malcolm Brogdon, Justin Anderson and others onto successful NBA careers.

Bennett's system also allows unheralded recruits to shine. By rarely running fast breaks and sticking to blocker-mover offensive sets — a scheme developed by Bennett's father, Dick Bennett — the team has deprioritized speed, athleticism and isolation scoring in favor of more analytical passing.

This allows Virginia to chase two types of prep players. The first are cerebral players that are undervalued due to limiting physical traits — guard Kihei Clark is a great example of an undersized but intelligent player who thrived in Bennett's ecosystem. The other type of player are physical specimens with little previous basketball experience, like sophomore guard Ryan Dunn. Dunn was not highly

recruited out of high school and nearly had to walk on to the team as a freshman, but elite physical tools, a high motor and Bennett's teaching turned him into a probable first-round draft pick this season.

Recruiting rankings and tactics aside, there are two facts that make keeping Bennett essential. The first is his track record with the Cavaliers, which is a 364-136 record — 72.8 percent — and a National Championship over 15 years. In the 15 years prior, Virginia went 247-209 and advanced to the NCAA Tournament's second weekend just once. Bennett has presided over the greatest run in the history of Cavalier basketball, rivaled only by Ralph Sampson's time on Grounds.

Secondly, no person gets a louder cheer when entering John Paul Jones Arena than Bennett. Not Reece Beekman, not Clark, not Kyle Guy and not even Tristan How on senior night. His popularity drives donations and fan engagement. It has been Bennett's program, and we've all been living in it.

With just two seasons left on his contract, it is worth it to consider shelling out for a medium-term extension — perhaps through 2030 — to keep the decorated coach in Charlottesville until he turns 60. You don't find coaches like Bennett just anywhere.

The case for moving on from Bennett

Bennett was the perfect college basketball coach for the 2010s, but he may not be ideal as we enter the mid-2020s. Virginia is now a well-established program, but Bennett is holding the program back in some ways. For the first couple of seasons after the National Championship win, it appeared the Cavaliers were simply enduring a less-successful period amid the most achieved one in program history. But with each season that passes, the concern grows.

The offense is in desperate need of a software update — the blocker-mover system has stagnated over the last few years, with the team dropping to 200th in offensive efficiency in KenPom. Too often, the ball moves aimlessly around the perimeter before the team's lead guard is forced to throw up a runner or pass for a contested jump shot. The most efficient shots in basketball are shots at the rim or behind the three-point line. Virginia took fewer than a third of their shots from each of those zones, instead settling for those

low-percentage, low reward mid-range jump shots.

Bennett's team has also failed to generate or make an acceptable amount of free throws, ranking nearly last in the country in both free throws attempted and free throw percentage. This is an unsustainable approach that Bennett acknowledged needs to change after the First Four loss. Perhaps another coach with a more modern system could elevate Virginia's current level of talent.

The blocker-mover offense isn't the only part of the program that seems to be dry-rotting. Bennett has reportedly been unwilling to lead with NIL in recruiting meetings. While this is a moral high road, it is also certainly a turnoff for highly-rated prospects who are having lesser-accomplished basketball programs wave significantly better NIL packages in their faces.

Bennett has also kept his younger players on shorter leashes recently, as most freshmen in the program have been required to redshirt their first year and only slowly build minutes. This lack of immediate playing time is another recruiting turnoff that has the added penalty of pushing players towards the transfer portal. Just this week, freshman guard Leon Bond III, who was efficient but underplayed in the 2023-24 season, announced on his Instagram story that he was leaving the program — more will surely follow.

Finally, Bennett has been hit-or-miss at the increasingly important transfer portal. Virginia's two least impressive rotation players this season — guards Andrew Rodde and Dante Harris — were both highly anticipated transfers who did not live up to expectations. Each saw their playing minutes slashed as the season progressed.

There's a wealth of great coaches in the lower levels of high school and college basketball. Many would jump at the chance to take over a talented team with great support and access to the wealth of prep talent in Washington, D.C. Three Final Four coaches — Connecticut's Dan Hurley, NC State's Kevin Keatts and Alabama's Nate Oats — only recently gave up teaching high school and coaching part-time to coach at the Division I level. While the thought may be uncomfortable to some, it could be time to let a younger, hungrier coach take the reins from Bennett and steer the program in a new direction.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

“Virginia is for Artists” brings a colorful perspective to McIntire

The Connaughton Gallery, located on the third floor of Robertson Hall, features the work of U.Va. alumna Uzo Njoku from March 19 to June 14

Grace Traxler | Staff Writer

Art might be the last thing on the minds of busy students rushing through the McIntire School of Commerce’s hallways. Yet if anyone is in search of a world-class respite from their studies, they need to look no further than the John P. and Stephanie F. Connaughton Gallery on the third floor of Robertson Hall. The gallery currently features the paintings and prints of contemporary visual artist Uzo Njoku in “Virginia is for Artists,” an exhibit on display until June 14.

Njoku, who refers to this exhibit as a “homecoming” on her Instagram, graduated from the University in 2019 with a degree in Studio Art. The works displayed in Robertson center a variety of Black figures in different states of community, from the neighborhood to the dinner table. While she uses a range of artistic mediums in the exhibit, such as acrylics, oil and print, the exhibit remains cohesive through the utilization of bold colors in each work. Viewers will immediately be struck by the wide swaths of blue, green, orange and more upon entering — a rainbow of bright hues that compel even the most casual on-looker to linger and look further.

The McIntire Art and Commerce Committee, a group composed of Commerce faculty and staff, is responsible for the selection of exhibits on display in the Connaughton Gallery. Njoku’s exhibit is one of a few examples of alumni-created work highlighted by the MAC Committee. According to Dorothy C. Kelly, MAC committee member and lecturer of personal finance, Njoku’s distinct style was one of the reasons her work was chosen to be displayed.

“Her art is large, it’s big, it’s bold, it’s colorful,” Kelly said. “Having art that is different encourages different conversations, and that is part of creative problem solving.”

Furthermore, Njoku’s artistic trajectory combines both creative and business expertise. Njoku was born in Lagos, Nigeria and moved to the United States at age 7. Now, almost five years after graduating from the University, she is a prolific artist with exhibits in Washington D.C., brand projects with Walmart and 53,000 Instagram followers. In addition to canvas paintings, Njoku’s website features links to her art in other forms, like puzzles, prints, shirts and more. Her ability to translate her creative visions to commercially appealing products is a perfect example of how art and commerce can intersect.

Because of Njoku’s successes as an artist and as a business woman, Kel-



CAT WHITE | THE CAVALIER DAILY

According to Dorothy Kelly, Lecturer of Personal Finance and member of the McIntire Art Committee — the group responsible for the selection of exhibits for this gallery — Njoku’s distinct, eye-catching style was one of the reasons her work was chosen to be displayed.

ly said that showcasing her work is important for both McIntire and the University community at large, serving to inspire those who interact with the exhibit everyday.

“[Njoku] is what she calls an ‘art-preneur’ — she’s very entrepreneurial,” Kelly said. “She’s using the kinds of skills we teach McIntire students to promote her art.”

One student who has been struck by the presence of the exhibit is third-year Commerce student Jennifer Ferrufino-Morales. She said that the paintings have added a new sense of creativity to the atmosphere of McIntire.

“I think the paintings are very unique and attention grabbing, I honestly was mesmerized by the one with the person laughing and smiling,” Ferrufino-Morales said. “I think they’re really great paintings with lots of detail.”

One key piece observers should make sure to view is “New Rules,” which depicts a tennis player in pursuit of that perfect hit. The tennis court is eye-catching with its simple blue and white acrylics. The center-

piece, however, is the player herself — a young, Black woman, hair flying and arm outstretched. A pinpoint of green denotes the tennis ball just out of reach, about to make contact with her racket. The juxtaposition of the tension and fluidity of her body with the strong, rigid lines of the court makes for a visually memorable piece.

In this piece, Njoku has perfectly captured the physicality of what it means to be in the moment working towards the singular pursuit of a goal — a universal theme that surely resonates with hardworking Commerce students passing by on daily walks to class.

Third-year Commerce student Rachel Lin offered her perspective on why it is important for McIntire to exhibit such visually stimulating art, saying that studying how visuals can promote different messages has been a primary focus of her classes. Lin said she has enjoyed interacting with the exhibit because it exemplifies the connections between creative practices and her Commerce coursework.

“[In] communication and marketing, visuals play an important role in

conveying one’s objectives effectively,” Lin said. “I believe the exhibit is a fantastic initiative that aligns well with the values promoted by the [Commerce] school.”

Other paintings in the collection that offer grounds for interesting conversation are “There was a Country” and “Jamboree.” Both feature a variety of Black figures dressed in light orange against a backdrop of olive green. They joyously converse and dance in different pairings of all ages. Yet when examined closely, the small details of each work reveal a possible divide in place and time period between the two paintings.

By using past tense in the title and featuring sparse illustrations of grass, water and cows, “There was a Country” suggests that onlookers might be looking at a historical landscape. In contrast, “Jamboree” uses small details such as a stereo, a New York Yankees hat and a child playing hopscotch to allude to a more urban and modern setting.

The structure of the gallery itself smartly invites further comparison of “There was a Country” and “Jam-

boree” by placing them on opposing sides of the same archway. Viewers can hold both in their eye at the same time, highlighting how a spirit of connection persists across external changes in place.

Kelly said that this unique vigor has made the exhibit a must see for non-Commerce students and faculty as well. According to Kelly, many members of the University community routinely make the effort to pass through the Connaughton Gallery when on Grounds.

“They work in different parts of the University, but their route always carries them through the third floor of the McIntire School so they can check out the latest exhibit,” Kelly said.

From students to staff, “Virginia is for Artists” has already captured the attention of many University community members. With the exhibit set to remain in Robertson Hall through June 14, all those from across the University — not simply Commerce — should prioritize a trip to the Connaughton Gallery to engage with Njoku’s work.

Black Voices merges Christian fellowship and musicianship

The student choir fosters worship and community through the performance of gospel music

Kenneth Do | Senior Writer



COURTESY BLACK VOICES GOSPEL CHOIR

As suggested in its name, Black Voices also serves as an important hub for Black students, allowing them to recognize and celebrate their shared identity — a principle that dates back to the choir's founding.

“Whose side are you on?” A group of 10 University students playfully pass around this question before a buoyant piano accompaniment breaks the chatter. As a soloist leans into a microphone and sings “Who’s on The Lord’s Side” by Rev. Timothy Wright, the other vocalists encourage her with eager cheers and shouts.

This song opens the July 2023 installment of WXTJ Jamz, a Tiny Desk-style concert series hosted by the University’s student radio. Performing the song is Black Voices, the University’s only gospel choir dedicated to celebrating Christian fellowship through a rich musical tradition.

Founded in 1972, Black Voices is one of the oldest Black organizations on Grounds. Class of 1973 alumnus Nehemiah Brown created the choir to provide a space for students to share in both their Christianity and love for gospel music.

As suggested in its name, Black Voices also serves as an important hub for Black students, allowing them to recognize and celebrate their shared identity — a principle that dates back to the choir’s founding. According to Carlehr Swanson — the group’s music director, vice president and graduate College student — Black Voices was created by Brown after he was rejected from other vocal groups at

the University.

“They told him his pitch was not on, and he says, in fact, his pitch was on — there just weren’t any Black members in the group,” Swanson said. “So he developed Black Voices ... a place where Black students can gather and share their love and this music.”

The gospel music genre is distinguished musically by clapping and stomping, as well as several key instruments like the piano, organ, tambourine and drums. Beyond the diversity of sounds and instruments within the genre, gospel music also has a rich historical background and cultural significance. Swanson said that it emerged from slavery as an oral tradition used to encourage freedom and resilience in enslaved people and these sentiments are tied into the group’s take on the genre today.

“Thinking about ... freedom songs, songs of encouragement, thinking of the earlier context of spirituals — that’s really where it came from,” Swanson said. “Gospel music started in slavery, and it was music really about overcoming those conditions.”

This history underscores the group’s contemporary sound in their numerous performances throughout the year, including their semesterly concerts. Each concert is programmed around a theme — for instance, the fo-

cus of last semester’s concert was “Big God” and included songs that spoke to the largeness and importance of God for the choir’s members.

This semester, the group will deliver their concert April 19 during Black Alumni Weekend, which is set to take place April 19 to April 21. With past singers in Black Voices coming back to Charlottesville for that weekend, the club will be able to engage with its own alumni through this performance. That concert — to be hosted at Mt. Zion First African Baptist Church and titled “New Season” — is nearly sold out.

According to Chandler Nandkumar, the choir’s incoming president and second-year College student, the musical selection for these performances is especially important. Nandkumar said that performing gospel music means paying attention to your crowd — that is, choosing songs that appeal to a particular audience. Their performance for Black Alumni Weekend will do just that by featuring songs primarily from the early 2000s that alumni are certain to recognize and enjoy.

The performance will also include an arrangement familiar to Black Voices singers both past and present. This event is a particularly exciting one for Swanson because of how it will unify generations of

Black Voices singers.

“We have this thing called the ‘BV Medley,’ which past [executive] teams have put together. So it’s something that if you’ve been in Black Voices, you know it,” Swanson said. “At a point in the concert, all the past members are going to get on stage and sing the song, so I’m looking forward to that.”

Outside of their larger concerts, Black Voices also aims to engage with the Charlottesville community on a smaller, more intimate scale. The religious nature of the club and the music they sing means that the choir often collaborates with local churches. Last year, for example, the group sang at Pilgrim Baptist Church to celebrate their pastor’s eighth anniversary with the church. This performance was especially significant for Nandkumar because of the opportunity to sing with and perform for those outside of the University.

“That [performance] was just so memorable, just because we were getting to sing with the Charlottesville community,” Nandkumar said. “These people live in the community, they go to this church all the time. And being able to perform for them and ... just rejoice together, it was something that was really special.”

One of the distinctive qualities of Black Voices is its ability to

draw from the diverse perspectives — both personal and religious — of its members. According to Nandkumar, the performance of even a single song can vary based on Christian denomination, from tempo to instrumentation. The denominationally diverse nature of Black Voices means that creating a unified sound within the club involves reconciling the members’ distinct musical instincts that arise from their religious differences. Thus, Black Voices exists as both a religious and musical blend of these identities.

“Everyone knows Amazing Grace, but different denominations will sing it a different way,” Nandkumar said. “Trying to blend that, as well, is something ... that we get to bring to every song.”

Black Voices stands out on Grounds for its historical legacy, as well as its impact on the University and Charlottesville communities. But above all, Swanson says the true value of the ensemble lies in the opportunity it offers students to express themselves culturally, religiously and musically.

“It’s a place where students can come on a Thursday night and draw into their spirituality and also have this outlet to ... experience the healing benefits of music,” Swanson said.

LIFE

Top 10 U.Va. red flags

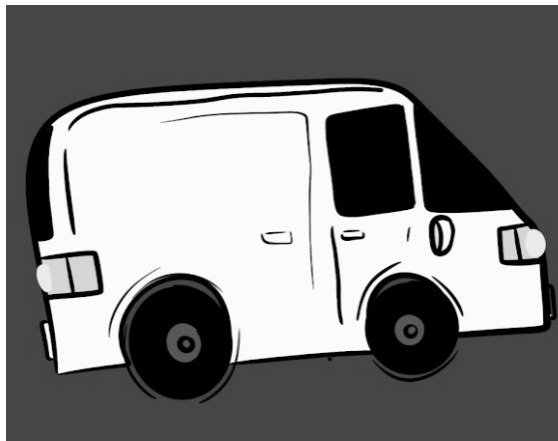
I love dear old U.Va — but there are some red flags too difficult to ignore

Elizabeth Parsons | Life Senior Associate

It's okay — the people and things we love often have a few red flags, and the University is no different. Some red flags crop up among the student body, while others are inextricably linked to the University itself. From hyperactive LinkedIn users to questionable statistics in the Stall Seat Journal, here are the most glaring red flags on Grounds.

1. The SafeRide white van

I remember arriving on Grounds in August of my first year and being inundated with a variety of safety resources to know about. One resource that stood out to me was the University's SafeRide — a free ride service for students to utilize when they don't feel safe walking home at night. Please note that the SafeRide is a white van. Yes, the exact type of vehicle you were always told to run away from — especially when the white van is offering you free candy. I find the SafeRide white van to be one of the funniest contradictions around Grounds.



LEXIE GAGNON | THE CAVALIER DAILY

2. Students studying Commerce who will make sure you know it

You either know this exact person or you were this person. Either way, you are certainly familiar with this Comm student rambling on about their economics class and how cool stocks are. In fact, they probably even have an internship lined up at Goldman Sachs. While this Comm student may think they are providing you with life-changing bits of wisdom, they surely can't talk with you forever when there are consulting club meetings to attend. The networking grind never stops.

3. A table to pay your enrollment deposit at Days on the Lawn

This simply screams desperate. As I was walking by Peabody Hall on my way to class earlier this week, I was excited to see all the new Wahos exploring Grounds. The ginormous sign denoting the table where admitted students can pay their enrollment deposit struck me as unusually aggressive — especially as the University is not exactly short on cash. As I am currently dragging myself through a mountain of papers, I couldn't help but want to tell the newly-admitted Wahos to run while they still can.

4. Course syllabi that include the CAPS contact information

While adding resources for student well-being in a syllabus certainly comes from a place of compassion, it is still an immediate red flag. Seeing the CAPS information at the bottom of a syllabus indicates that this class is going to crush your self-esteem so intensely that a CAPS appointment is the only way out. The cruel twist, however, is that the real red flag becomes the weeks-long wait times to schedule a CAPS appointment.

5. Signing leases for the following year in early September

A group of 18-year-old students signing a year-long lease with people they have known for a couple of weeks — what could possibly go wrong? So much changes over the course of an academic year, and binding yourself into a legal responsibility with virtual strangers is a tried-and-true red flag. If you are lucky, things work out and you don't end up hating your roommates. But if not, you might get stuck with a red-flag roommate who blares music at all hours of the day and night.



LEXIE GAGNON | THE CAVALIER DAILY

6. That one friend who's a little too into LinkedIn

I get it — a little self-promotion is necessary as students enter the real world. Nevertheless, being a chronic poster with over 500 connections on LinkedIn is a major red flag. I understand that you are "thrilled to announce" your latest resumé addition, but I don't know how many more of these posts I can read. At the very least, some variation to these LinkedIn posts would be much appreciated. There has to be a better way to describe your feelings other than "beyond excited."

7. Questionable Stall Seat Journal statistics

If there is one thing the University loves, it is a statistic — especially on its promotional materials. The Stall Seat Journal — a publication from Student Health and Wellness promoting healthy habits that hangs in the stalls of on Grounds bathrooms — is no exception. I cannot help but laugh at some of the statistics that are selected. A favorite of mine is from the substance safety issue, stating that "92 percent of U.Va. students watch out for their friends to make sure they stay safe." I find that these statistics have a different effect than intended — I instead think about the 8 percent of University students who do not look out for their friends.

8. "Hoo Needs a Hug"

Could there be any larger red flag than the conditions that make hug volunteers necessary? Although I think the individuals who volunteer to hug students are wonderful, am I the only one worried that free hugs seem to be the only solution to the struggles of University students? "Hoo Needs a Hug" seems to translate to "Hoo is Miserable." Frankly, the answer to that question is me in the midst of my midterms.



LEXIE GAGNON | THE CAVALIER DAILY

9. The sheer number of runners

As someone who has never loved running — I would rather put pins in my eyes than subject myself to such cardiovascular torture — the popularity of running around Grounds is shocking to me. If your first instinct when you wake up is to run several miles, I am scared of you, and I want to make sure everything is alright at home. I will stick to my morning ritual of coffee and playing Wordle — even if it means I will never achieve the honor of participating in a Run with Jim.

10. That distracting sorority girl in lecture

You know this person. You're just trying to listen to your professor's lecture, but behind you, that blonde girl with the raspy voice is whispering about Tri Delt's upcoming mixer with Elmo. When you finally direct your attention back to note-taking, the whispers distract you once more — this time, she's explaining that she can't work on the group project Sunday because she has chapter. I know these are pressing matters, but please plan your next spray tan appointment somewhere else.

Minding the gap year experience

These students may have stepped away from the classroom, but they never stopped learning

Lindsay Lian | Features Writer

While the period between finishing high school and starting college is typically a few months, some students embark on a longer journey by taking a gap year, which may entail traveling abroad, working locally or volunteering for a non-profit organization. Many gap-year students initially have doubts about taking a year off from school, but the experience was worthwhile for these four University students. A gap year solidified their career goals, prepared them for college and broadened their outlooks on the world.

The decision to take a gap year does not come easy for all students. Fourth-year College student Sarah Rice traveled to Germany for the Congress-Bundestag Vocational Youth Exchange Program during her gap year. For her, going to a foreign country was not a foreign concept — she was familiar with gap years, as her brother had taken one in China. Still, she said she felt nervous taking a gap year during a time when it was not as common.

“Pre-pandemic, not that many people [took] gap years at all, and I feel like the ambiguity of it [was] a little bit

frightening,” Rice said.

Many students also worry about the social and academic repercussions of taking a gap year. As they put their college degree on hold, they watch their high school peers progress through university life without them. Gap-year students also face the prospect of acclimating back into a traditional education after their break from the classroom. First-year College student Arianna La Motta said she initially doubted her decision to hold off on college.

“I felt unsure,” La Motta said. “[But] I was like, ‘I live in my own timeline ... It’s my own life.’”

Reassured that a gap year was a reset rather than a delay in her academic timeline, La Motta said taking a gap year helped her understand what lies in store for her outside of school. Nearing her high school graduation, she said she had been accepted into several colleges, but she felt that a gap year would help her solidify her academic goals.

“I had no idea what I wanted to do with my life, what I wanted to study or where I wanted to go,” La Motta said.

“My head was all over the place.”

La Motta’s gap year experiences included working for a non-profit in Ecuador, traveling through Spain and taking art classes in Italy. She said taking her gap year helped her develop a clearer picture of what she wanted to do with her future.

“If you take a year off, you can decide [things] knowing better what you want,” La Motta said. “[You can] explore yourself to really know what you love and what you want out of your life.”

First-year College student Silas Marx echoed La Motta’s sentiment. While he had been admitted to the University already, he decided to take a gap year working with AmeriCorps NCCC, a service-based program where students complete community service projects across the United States. Marx worked in food banks and helped maintain trails across the west coast, which he said inspired him to shift his academic focus from engineering to public service.

“I think it just really helped me to gain focus [and] realize what I actually like. When you’re in high school, you

kind of just follow what everybody else does,” Marx said. “You don’t really know what you want to do as much.”

Apart from undergoing a period of self-discovery, gap-year students develop unique life skills. First-year College Student Leela Trujillo participated in CBYX, the same gap year program that Rice did. Through this program, Trujillo interned at four places — a film studio, an alcohol rehabilitation facility, a marketing organization and the German parliament. She said the work challenged her to try new activities and meet new people.

“Not only does [a gap year] push you out of your own comfort zone ... but you [also] just meet the most random, cool people,” Trujillo said.

While their gap years took them on exciting journeys, all four students eventually returned to school. When she arrived on Grounds for her first year, La Motta said she felt both eager and nervous to return to a traditional learning environment.

“I was missing school,” La Motta said. “But I was still a little nervous because I was like, ‘Okay, I haven’t studied in more than a year. Do I still have

it in me?’ And absolutely, you don’t lose it in a year.”

While taking off a year may not set students back academically, Trujillo said her gap year made her feel disconnected from certain social circles. Upon arriving on Grounds, she said she had to familiarize herself with conventional activities of University life.

“You’re going to have all of these experiences and have all these really cool memories,” Trujillo said. “[But others are] never going to relate to you in the exact same way.”

Despite challenges and nerves, students say taking a break from formal education led to a newfound realization of their passions, preparing them for college and life beyond. La Motta said her gap year helped her mature and handle any challenges she faced at the University.

“I can feel the difference,” La Motta said. “Coming to college with all that knowledge really just made me more grounded. I was more confident in myself and what I wanted to do and why I was here in college.”

A love letter to Bodo’s

The bagel shop has been my steadfast companion through my years at the University

Grace Scott | Life Columnist

I have gone to Bodo’s Bagels almost every day of the academic calendar for the last two years. Being a “creature of habit” has always suited me, but my daily Bodo’s trip has taken this to a new level. I go every day at noon to order a plain bagel with plain cream cheese. I get it “to-go,” but I eat it there, and I use the bag as a placemat. No matter what changes in my life — with school, my friends or my love life — my daily stop at Bodo’s is one constant, always providing me comfort, joy and, of course, bagels.

The first time I gripped the bagel-shaped door handles of Bodo’s was the first Saturday of my first year on an outing with my hallmates. I don’t remember what I thought about the bagel, and I don’t remember where we sat. But I do remember that my soon-to-be best friends and I decided that the shop would become our Saturday breakfast spot.

This weekly excursion quickly became the highlight of my first year. At the time, I had yet to grasp the whole having-fun-in-life thing. I felt unjustified doing something if I was merely doing it to enjoy myself, so I spent most of my time doing — if not worrying about — schoolwork. Struggling to

shake off the academic stress and existential contemplation of adolescence, Bodo’s offered me relief during weekends otherwise spent in the library.

During my second year, my visits to Bodo’s transformed from these Saturday morning trips into a daily ritual, becoming an unmissable part of my routine. Living behind the Corner my second, and now third, year, the aroma of fresh bagels has lured me into Bodo’s every time I’ve left the house.

To me, Bodo’s is less about the food and more about the people. I love to use “getting lunch at Bodo’s” as an excuse to catch up with a rotating cast of characters. My friends have gotten in the habit of texting on Sunday nights, asking when they can get on the Bodo’s schedule during the week. Some joke that it’s my own version of office hours.

While they may seem silly, these little Bodo’s meet-ups have seen some of the most memorable moments of my closest friendships. I have consoled heartbroken friends through their sobs in the corner booths. I have laughed with hopeful friends about their situationships — maybe a little too loudly — on the outside patio. I have even attempted to help a friend

through her obsession with the Bodo’s 24-oz Diet Coke.

Bodo’s has also spectated the progression of my love life. Throughout second year, Bodo’s was my go-to spot for first dates. I got a first impression of my dates with some small talk in line, and I observed if they said “please” and “thank you” to the cashiers. If a boy failed these preliminary tests — well, it doesn’t take too long to eat a bagel.

When my love life took a turn for the better last spring, Bodo’s was again a prime witness. I was sitting on the patio, rambling to my friend about this boy I had a crush on. Moments later, my crush walked into Bodo’s behind us, and we squealed. Just the other day, I told that same boy, who is now my boyfriend, that I felt like we hadn’t been to Bodo’s in forever. He corrected me that we had, in fact, been to Bodo’s the last six days in a row.

One rainy afternoon in September, my Bodo’s routine took an unexpected turn. I was at Bodo’s alone — later than usual, so the noon-time rush had already died down. While I waited for my bagel, a man behind the counter smiled and asked me, “Hey, Plain on Plain, what’s your name?”

I laughed at the nickname. Naturally, the employees had caught onto my routine after two years of the same order at the same time every day.

Since that day, I’ve been on a first name basis with Major and Terrence, the guys at the counter who christened me “Plain on Plain.” These two have transformed mere pleasantries into a budding friendship. They ask me about my classes and friends, and I ask them about their families and hobbies. They have turned my daily “just plain on plain please” into cash-register chats that leave me smiling. Plus, my friends think it’s hilariously fitting that the Bodo’s workers know my name.

Bodo’s is not only central to my life — it is a Corner staple for everyone at the University. I like to joke that Saturday morning on the Bodo’s patio is like Florence during the Renaissance — it’s the hub of civilization. From fraternity brothers grabbing breakfast after stocking up at 7 Day to girls galavanting in their sundresses before darters, from alumni visiting Grounds with their toddlers to the resident “sign guy” and his antics, the entire University seems to revolve around the bagel shop. The seemingly unend-

ing line out the door contains all the energy and zest of the student body.

As I sit here writing in my favorite Bodo’s booth, I smile at all the things about this place that make me come back every day — the never-ending call of order numbers, the mural of Grounds covering the walls, the absurd amount of cream cheese they spread on every bagel ... the list goes on. The sounds, sights and tastes of Bodo’s have become as essential to my college experience as discussion posts and fraternity parties.

I may spend my Saturdays on Mad Bowl instead of in Clem now, and I may not have to ditch first dates due to bad manners anymore, but my daily Bodo’s bagel, the employees’ bright smiles and the vibrant chatter on the patio haven’t changed a bit. A plain bagel with plain cream cheese is pretty boring to most people. To me, it’s a daily excuse to go to one of my favorite places with my favorite people and soak up all that I love about this University.

GRACE SCOTT is a Life Columnist for The Cavalier Daily. She can be reached at life@cavalierdaily.com.

HUMOR

University squirrels unionize

Editor's Note: This is a humor column

This week, an unlikely group discovered their collective power as workers by unionizing — a community of University squirrels now known as the Squirrel Workers' Guild.

The University community first became aware of the Guild after their landmark strike Saturday morning. On the 30th anniversary of the start of squirrel labor at the University, the Guild representatives finally decided enough was enough and gathered outside of Bodo's to advertise their cause to passersby. Squirrels sported homemade tree branch signs including "Acorns aren't enough!"

Experts have explained that these feelings of being undervalued can be contextualized in relation to the history of squirrel labor at the University.

"It's only in recent years that people have been made aware of the important role squirrels play here. Everyone is used to them being relegated to the background, but as the

world started changing and the University became more technologically advanced, squirrels increasingly took on the jobs that humans didn't want," said Dr. Golden Oldie.

This was a feeling that was echoed by many of the Guild representatives themselves. Apparently, the only compensation the squirrel workers have received since the beginning of their tenure was a seasonal acorn bonus back in 1997.

In response to this continual economic mistreatment, the squirrel workers felt that they had no choice but to join a long American tradition of unionization, working to undermine the individualism of capitalism by emphasizing collective power.

"Unions stem from living under a nightmarish, capitalist regime. Unions are often viewed as the one saving grace looking after the interests of the modern American worker. Perhaps this is why the University squirrels have taken up the mantle of worker unity," said University History Prof. Freed Asquirls.

Chatter about the striking squir-

rels went absolutely nuts, reaching its peak Monday once the effects of the strike became visible in the extreme. Firstly, copious complaints were made about the unavailability of academic buildings, with many students and professors reporting that the buildings remained locked. This continued for the rest of the day, with all classes indefinitely canceled until the snafu was managed.

Shortly after the initial lock-out complaints, the Guild's Instagram posted a video statement featuring Active Guild Member, Squirrel Squirr-El.

"My name is Squirrel Squirr-El, and for the past twenty years, my team and I have single-handedly made sure that each of the University's buildings remained unlocked each morning and locked each night. I have not worked my fluffy tail off for people to assume the doors were taken care of automatically," said Squirr-El.

Following the lock-out Monday, the Guild made similar efforts to further their movement and demon-

strate the labor they perform for the University. The Guild initiated an email strike Tuesday, shocking many by revealing, via a Guild email, that emails from the University are sent out day after day by an entire team of unpaid squirrel employees. On Wednesday morning, the Guild mobilized during tours of the University and successfully prevented anyone from getting a feel for the University.

As members of the University community wait with bated breath to see what will become of the Guild, one prevailing opinion has emerged — students don't think the University should meet the Guild's demands at all.

Second-year College student Burlington Coatfactory said, "Look, if the squirrels on strike mean I don't have to go to class, I don't get spammed with emails and I don't have to pass a million tour groups, I say let them strike forever!"

By Wednesday evening, word of the Guild's antics had reached Carr's Hill, leading a nervous University President Jim Ryan to put out a state-

ment that vehemently defended his identity as a squirrel ally.

"Students, staff and valued members of the Squirrel Workers' Guild — I am appalled at the flagrant disregard for the truly great and good work our squirrel friends have been performing for the University. It is in everyone's best interest that we work with the Guild to right the injustice that's been done to them."

Following the public statement, the Guild released an update of their own, announcing via Instagram that their organization had begun negotiations with President Ryan.

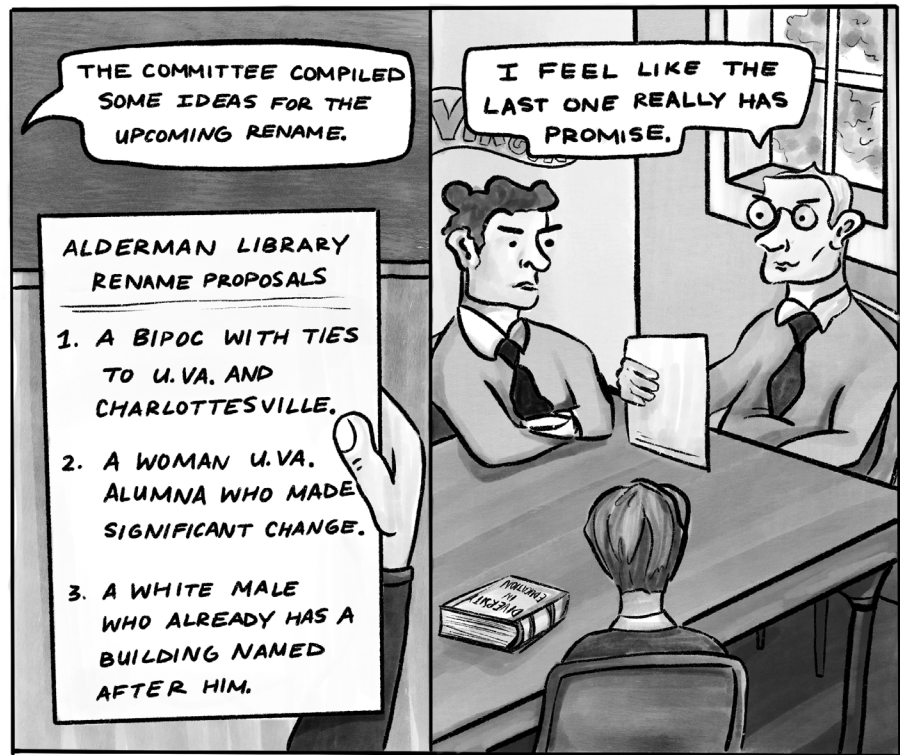
The Guild is expected to reach an agreement with the University by Monday, but with tensions on the rise, no one is quite sure how the acorn will fall.

CLAUDIA HUNN is a humor columnist for *The Cavalier Daily*. She can be reached at humor@cavalierdaily.com

CARTOON

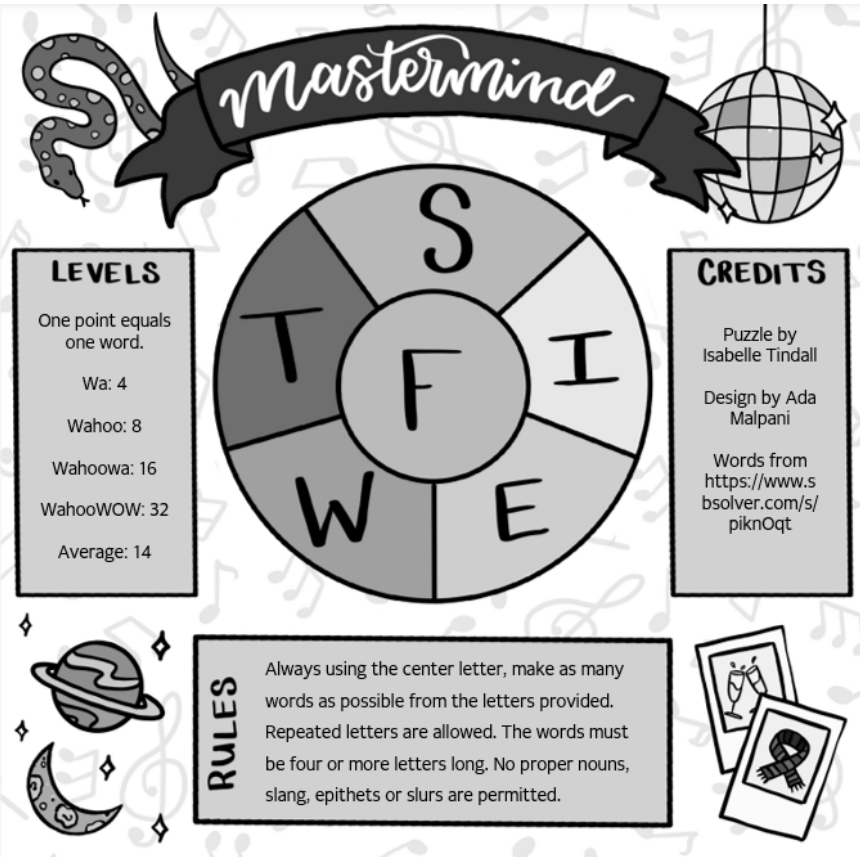
Naming Committee

Ada Malpani | Senior Associate Cartoon Editor



Hoo's Spelling

Isabelle Tindall | Puzzle Master



PUZZLES

Quinn Connor | Puzzle Master

THE SOLUTION TO THIS PUZZLE WILL BE PUBLISHED ON WWW.CAVALIERDAILY.COM

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- 49 Third noble?
- 50 Major 2011 hurricane
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