

# THE CAVALIER DAILY

Vol. 132, Issue 8

Thursday, December 2, 2021



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# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

To our readers,

We're so grateful you chose to pick up this year's final print edition of The Cavalier Daily. Over the last 12 months, volunteer students on staff lived through a formative year for their educational and personal well-being — and they rose to the challenge of documenting the complexities of an ever-evolving institution.

It was a year of growth, bookended by the trials of isolation and online learning and renewed hope from a semester back on Grounds. Just as the spring semester got underway, the University saw its highest single-day COVID-19 caseload, tracking over 200 student cases in just one day in February. Gatherings ceased and students were held to strict masking standards

for their few in-person classes. Today, though still masked and uncertain of what the future may hold, students, faculty and staff flock to Grounds each day to learn, meet and go about our daily lives — together again. At this time last year, many of us were in our family homes, studying for finals alone between holiday breaks. Now, we look forward to ringing in the end

of the semester season with the return of an in-person Lighting of the Lawn celebration on Monday. It is hard to capture how far we've come as a community. We've managed to pull each other through the changes and challenges, while still finding moments for celebration.

It has been an honor to tell the history of our new normal together.

With warmest wishes,



Jenn Brice  
editor@cavalierdaily.com

## NEWS

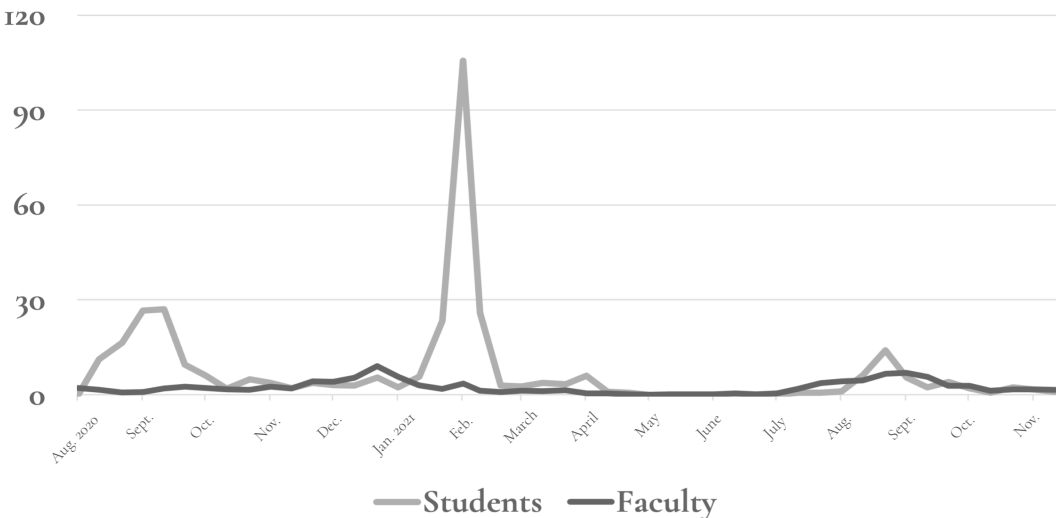
### COVID-19 by the Numbers

Lauren O'Neil | Senior Associate

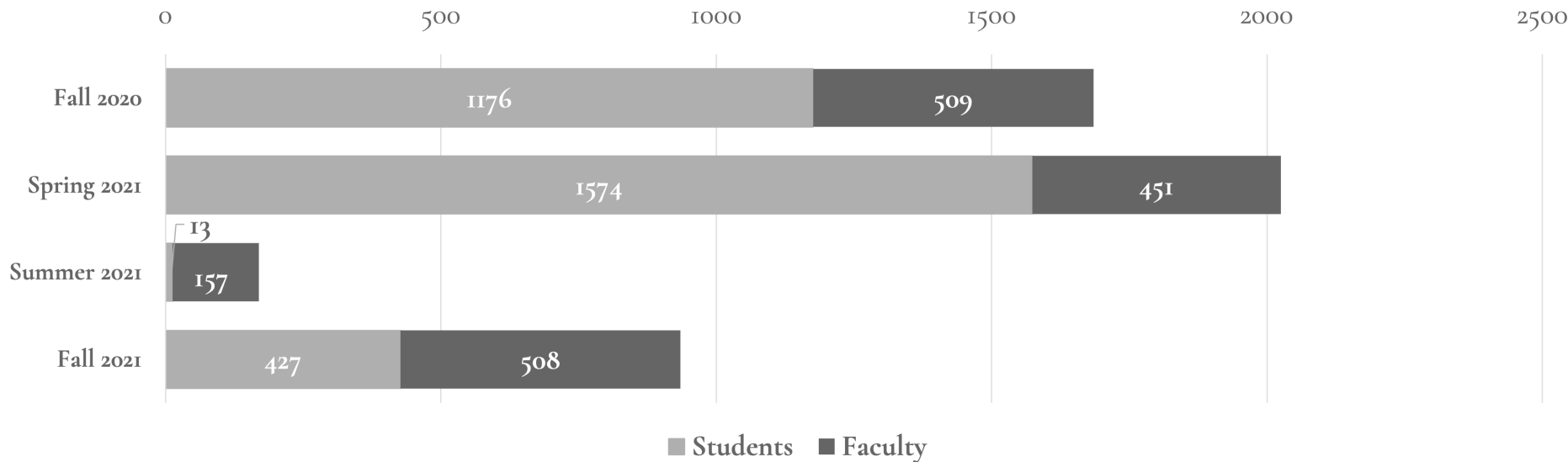
COVID-19 continued to impact those living on Grounds throughout the spring, with a single-day caseload high of 220 Feb. 16 and a U.Va. Health inpatient high of 16 Jan. 13 and Jan. 20. For the 2020-21 academic year, students residing in Charlottesville were required to undergo asymptomatic testing every week, while faculty and staff had the opportunity to schedule asymptomatic saliva tests. In April, an email sent to all students from former Dean of Students Allen Groves announced that U.Va. Health — in coordination with the Blue Ridge Health District — would start vaccinating students. In order to return to an in-person residential and academic experience

this fall, students were required to either submit proof of full COVID-19 vaccination or provide documentation of an approved medical or religious exemption. As of Aug. 20, 2.4 percent of students have documented vaccination exemptions, while 97 percent of students and 92 percent of faculty at the University are fully vaccinated. In comparison to the 220 cases experienced in a single day during the spring, the fall 2021 semester single-day caseload hit its peak at 36 cases on Sept. 9 and 10 — a mere 16 percent of its spring counterpart.

#### New Cases — 7-Day Average



#### Total Cases by Semester



# Physical changes transform Grounds and Charlottesville

Construction initiatives, monument removals and Corner business conversions are shaping a new University and Charlottesville landscape

Eileen Powell & Elise Johnston | Staff Writers

The physical landscapes of the University and Charlottesville have undergone a number of physical changes over the past year, ranging from relatively small construction and design changes to broad initiatives that represent the University's strategic goals and values. These changes — including major construction and capital renovations, new buildings, the removal of monuments and changes to businesses on the Corner — hold implications for the student body and the University and Charlottesville communities as a whole.

## Capital Projects, Construction and Renovation

The University's Major Capital Plan outlines 10 ongoing construction projects in academic divisions of the University, as well as nine approved for construction and four approved for schematic design. The cost of construction projects ranges from \$3 million to \$200 million.

### Alderman Library Renewal

Construction on Alderman Library began in early 2020 and is scheduled to finish in fall 2023. Considered to be the University's main library, Alderman Library was first constructed in 1983. The project, which is allocated \$152.5 million dollars in the Major Capital Plan, will renovate the library's existing 100,000 square feet and add an additional 130,000 square feet.

The decision was motivated in part by safety considerations and renovations will improve HVAC, electricity and fire suppression infrastructure. However, the renovations also aim to make the area more conducive to student use by expanding the spaciousness of the library stacks and adding mixed-use areas and study courts.

First-year Engineering student Christopher Joseph is president of First Year Council and representative for Student Council. Joseph said while many first year students are frustrated with the amount of construction taking place, others are looking forward to the outcomes of the projects.

"A lot of the responses I've seen [are] that they do look forward to what the construction is about, but they do notice that a lot of construction is going on at the same time," said Joseph. "It is kind of noisy, and specifically the traffic in front of the chemistry building [...] does make it a bit slower for people to get around because it's such a narrow walkway."

According to Joseph, students have commented specifically about Alderman Library but ultimately understand the goals of the construction taking place.

With Alderman Library under renovation, students have one less library that they are able to go to, leading to complaints about the availability of study spaces. Walkways in front of the library have also been impacted, with pedestrians being required to take a detour around Clemons Library in order to reach nearby locations.

### Emmett and Ivy Intersection

The University is also undertaking a multi-year project to transform the Ivy Corridor, a 14.5-acre parcel of land at the intersection of Emmet Street and Ivy Road. The first phase of the project focuses on landscape improvements, including storm water and utility improvements, widening sidewalks, planting tree lawns and adding bike lanes and bus stops along Ivy Road. In the Major Capital Plan, the University allocated \$60 million to Phase I, which is projected to be completed in fall 2023.

The newly-improved corridor will eventually become home to the School of Data Science and a hotel and conference center.

The School of Data Science was approved in 2019 and its new academic building will be four stories and 61,000 square-feet, containing four "adaptive classrooms" in addition to office and research space and a green roof. The facility is expected to be completed by winter of 2023.

The final construction phase of the corridor, a new University Hotel and Conference Center, will begin in the winter of 2022 with an expected completion date of summer 2024. The proposed Center is almost 220,000 square feet, consisting of 25,000 square feet of Conference Center space as well as 217 guest rooms, a restaurant, cafe and a rooftop bar.

In June, President Ryan announced that thanks to a \$50 million from the Karsh family that was matched by the University for a total



ISABEL WEIR | THE CAVALIER DAILY

Construction on Alderman Library began in early 2020 and is scheduled to finish in fall 2023.

of \$100 million, the University plans to construct a building to house the Karsh Institute of Democracy. The building will be located on the Ivy corridor and will contain classroom space, an auditorium and research areas.

Third-year Architecture student Lily Roberts is president of the National Organization of Minority Architecture Students at UVA. and treasurer of the Student Planners Association. Speaking of ongoing construction around Grounds, Roberts said that mobility and accessibility have been the key points of contention among the student body.

Roberts also highlighted student concerns about the University cutting stops at what has historically been known as the Black Bus Stop. The stop, which is located at Garrett Hall on McCormick Road, became a harbor for Black students at the University and has since been recognized as a landmark of historical and cultural significance. In September, Student Council's representative body denounced the planned cut as an "erasure of Black history at UVA." The stop was added back to the UTS bus route on Monday.

Construction along Emmett Street has led to lots of traffic, with vehicles needing to take detours around the area. Students have also complained about accessibility, specifically needing to walk up the long staircase from Emmett Street to UVA. Bookstore in order to get to Central Grounds, according to Roberts.

When parts of Emmett Street were closed for two weeks in early

November, cars and buses had to take a detour through Massie and Copeley roads, leading to increased transportation times.

### Brandon Avenue Projects

The Board of Visitors approved the Brandon Avenue master plan in 2016, which outlines the construction of residential, academic and mixed-use University buildings. The plan also called for a "Green Street" streetscape redesign.

Brandon Avenue construction includes an upper-class housing project as part of a larger effort to create more on-Grounds housing for undergraduate students. The University has a working group dedicated to examining a proposal that would require students to live on Grounds for their first two years. The proposal intends to highlight the potential benefits of a longer residential learning experience and address concerns about the housing shortage in Charlottesville.

The Brandon Avenue master plan included the construction of the already-completed Bond House. The six-story building opened in fall 2019 and offers furnished four-bedroom apartments. Roberts affirmed that the construction of Bond House aims to address the housing crisis and the lack of on-Grounds options after first-year that are "expansive enough for the student body."

"I think that the University is trying to reckon with [the housing crisis], in creating more upperclassman housing and piloting second-year housing programs," Roberts said.



TESS GINSBERG | THE CAVALIER DAILY

Major construction and capital renovations have changed the physical landscape of Grounds and Charlottesville, impacting student mobility.





OLIVIA TIBONI | THE CAVALIER DAILY

The University officially opened a new 165,000-square-foot Student Health building Oct. 15.

The first phase of the master plan, which encompassed the construction of Bond House as upper-class housing, began in July 2017 and was completed in Aug. 2019. The Board of Visitors approved the second phase of construction for the Brandon Avenue upper-class residence hall project in March 2020.

The second phase, which cost approximately \$114 million, will construct two additional five-story and six-story residence halls. The halls will include 350 student bedrooms, eight-bedroom apartments, a dining facility, communal spaces and 100 additional student parking spaces.

### *The Inn at Darden*

Construction on the University Inn at Darden and Conference Center for Lifelong Learning at the University Darden School of Business Grounds began in Jan. 2021 as part of the Darden Grounds Master Plan. The inn, which is expected to be complete in 2023, received an initial gift of \$20 million from Darden alumnus Frank M. Sands Sr. Gifts comprise \$30 million of the \$135 million dollars allocated to the project.

The inn will contain 12,000 square feet of meeting, innovation, and learning space as well as nearly 200 hotel rooms. The plan also calls for greenspaces to surround the inn and connect Darden with North Grounds.

The Darden School reached carbon neutrality in 2018 through a partnership between the University, the Darden School of Business and Dominion Energy and has committed to meeting or exceeding the University's green building standards for the Inn.

Roberts noted that for future planning processes and construction, it is important to engage a variety of perspectives and ensure that younger students, who may not yet hold leadership positions, have an

opportunity to give feedback as well.

"Whenever we have opportunities for student engagement, we often look at the same elected student body members to give their feedback and information. But ... those are oftentimes third and fourth-years who are about to graduate," said Roberts. "It often-times feels like there are certain voices there in every room, and there are a lot of perspectives discounted when we're making decisions."

### *New Buildings*

After seven years of planning and more than two years of construction, the University officially opened a new 165,000-square-foot Student Health building on Oct. 15.

The new building is located at 550 Brandon Avenue and will provide all services previously located in the Elson Student Health Center — Counseling and Psychological Services, Medical Services, the Student Disability Access Center and Health Promotion and Well-being.

The project cost the University \$100 million, with \$40 million in funding coming from an anonymous gift and \$1 million from the family of Robert Hardie, vice rector of the Board of Visitors.

The building was designed to create a space for promoting the well-being of students, President Jim Ryan explained at the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

There are multiple student lounges available that are designed for more introverted students seeking a quiet space to relax or study.

"I think that the rooms are a good way to get away from the center of grounds and take some time to catch up on work and study," third-year College student Zoë Cobb said.

Kitchens for classes in cooking and nutrition, a kinesiology center, all-gender restrooms, the Gordie Center for substance abuse recovery

and private telehealth offices add to the list of new resources available to students.

The first floor of the building includes the Office of Health Promotion and the Student Disability Access center, along with a pharmacy and reflection rooms. The second floor is home to the Medical Services Administration, Medical Services Clinic, Medical Records and Insurance and Billing. On the third floor, a large living area is reserved for the use of students, along with an area for administration, information technology and kinesiology. Counseling and Psychological Services are on the fourth floor.

The new building is designed to serve as both a medical center with top-notch resources and a student center, where students can come to seek advice, receive help on mental health needs, and have a safe space to relax and study.

Chloe Marsh, third-year Education student and intern for the Office of Health promotion, said staff is appreciative of the new building and the benefits of more student-centered resources and spaces.

"I think a big difference is the old student health building was very functional, but I think that this one has a lot more areas for student well-being," Marsh said.

### **Confederate Monuments**

Over the summer, the City of Charlottesville removed statues of Robert E. Lee and Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson, as well as a monument of Meriwether Lewis, William Clark and Sacagawea. The University also removed the George Rogers Clark statue.

The successful removal followed years of advocacy efforts. Third-year College Zyahna Bryant first wrote a petition calling for the removal of the Lee statue in 2016, and City Council voted to do so later that

year. This vote prompted white supremacists to flock to Charlottesville in August 2017 for the violent "Unite the Right" rally. A jury recently ruled that organizers of the rally must pay more than \$25 million in damages.

The removal of the George Rogers Clark statue, however, was proposed by the University's racial equity task force and approved by the Board of Visitors in September 2020. Advocacy for the statue's removal had been similarly long standing — activists have emphasized the white supremacy and colonial violence encompassed by the monument, which depicts Clark on a horse, flanked by three soldiers, advancing on a group of Native Americans. In 2019, a local activist released a petition for its removal, and nearly 100 community members held a demonstration to outline demands beyond just the removal of the statue prior to the Board's vote in September.

### **Business Changes on the Corner**

The Corner has seen a string of closures over the past year, including the 68-year-old College Inn. The restaurant served late-night pizzas and burgers to University students starting in 1953. As of this past summer, however, College Inn permanently closed in part due to the restaurant proprietor's decision to retire, along with their lease ending.

Staff reports reveal that corporate chain Chipotle Mexican Grill is buying the former College Inn location. Students, however, are critical of opening large businesses on the Corner.

"The Corner doesn't need more large businesses," third-year College student Eleanore Maxwell said. "What makes the corner so special is how unique the businesses are to Charlottesville."

The Corner already boasts popular chains Insomnia Cookies, Chase Bank, CVS and Starbucks.

College Inn is not the only restaurant students' had to say goodbye to — Littlejohn's New York Delicatessen and Michael's Bistro & Taphouse closed in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic.

"These restaurants have been a part of the University community for years," third-year College student Sabrina Turbidy said. "It's sad to see them go."

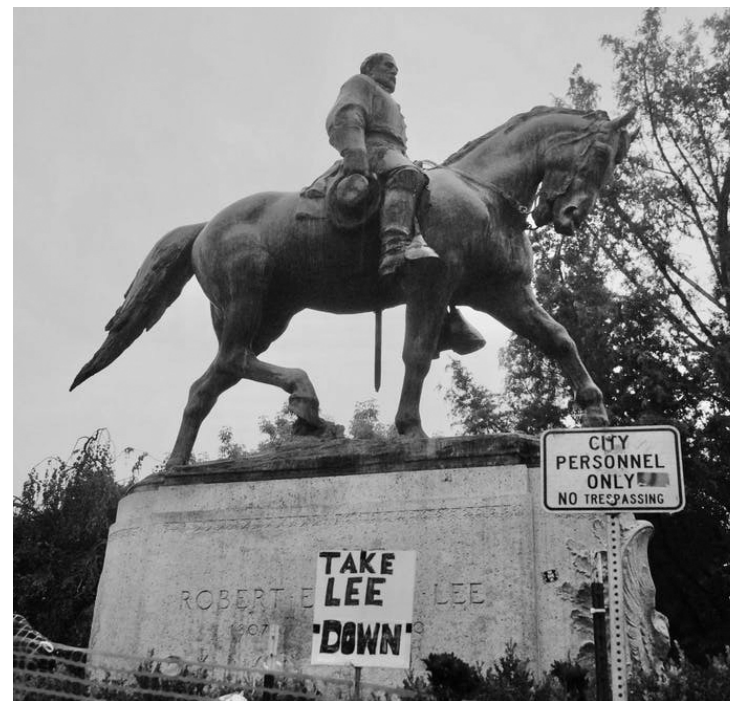
The recent removal of Sheetz, however, may provide an opportunity for a local business to return to the Corner.

Roberts, who is a fellow with the University Meriwether Lewis Institute for Citizen Leadership, said the group's discussions have examined the culture of the Corner and its extension beyond the student body into the Charlottesville community.

"With the pandemic, and especially with students not being here for so long and giving their dollars to these different restaurants and shops that have closed, it is really unfortunate to see that they've closed and to see them not necessarily being repopulated with more small local businesses," Roberts said.

Emma Xu, fourth-year Commerce student and president of Enactus, an organization which provides pro-bono consulting to social enterprise businesses in Charlottesville, said students need to play a larger role in determining the businesses that go on the Corner.

"I think I'd honestly like to see more UVa. student action without petitioning — more student voices going into what businesses are on the Corner," Xu said. "It makes a lot of sense because the businesses on the Corner, they directly serve UVa students."



SOPHIE ROEHSE | THE CAVALIER DAILY

The monuments were successfully removed followed years of advocacy efforts.



LIFE

Getting over my fear of U.Va. tours

Tour groups serve as a reminder of all the expectations I had before coming here, but do I have to live up to all of them?

Cecy Juárez | Life Editor

No matter what I do, I always seem to inevitably bump into them — U.Va. tour groups. Hordes of prospective students and parents shuffling around in pursuit of a peppy University Guide bouncing around the sidewalk telling them all about the wonders of the University. If I'm close enough to overhear, I become absorbed into the demonstration. Sometimes, I even find myself becoming convinced by the guide to come attend the University before I realize, "Oh wait, I already am a student."

But sometimes, it's not such an amusing experience. As I gaze upon the curious faces of dozens of young students looking back at me, a strange sense of dread envelops me.

I suddenly see myself, four years ago, in the same place where they are. I think back to when I toured the University as a young, prospective student. Memories of myself, with my parents in tow, eagerly following the UGuide around Grounds, come flooding back. I remember being mesmerized by the sheer enormity and beauty of Grounds. It was completely wild to even consider the idea of living away from home and celebrating complete independence. I romanticized the idea of going to huge lectures for class and constantly hanging out with friends to attend parties every weekend. In my eyes, these big college students could do whatever they want!

You might think that this should be a nostalgic, pleasant memory. Maybe even a little humorous. But I see it differently. I'm haunted by the pervasive thought — "Did I live up to my expectations about college?"

I've been at the University for a grand total of a year and a half. I'm not sure if I should even count my first year here because I was mostly restricted to the confines of my dorm room and could only experience the thrill of classes over Zoom. My second year here, though, has been remarkably better. I've been attending all of my classes in person and throwing myself into as many extracurricular and social activities as possible. My Fitbit has been very proud of me as I routinely receive the satisfying buzz notifying me that I've completed the daily goal of achieving at least 10,000 steps.

My college experience, thus far, has certainly been unique to say the least. I'd like to think I've

done my best to make the most of my time on Grounds, but I'm still unsure if I am truly living the life of the ideal college student. I thought that I would be going to parties every day of every weekend and have a complete plan of what I want to do when I graduate. I know that some of my perceptions of college culture were pretty naive and shaped by untrue media representations, but there are some other ambitions that I had that I'm worried I haven't achieved. Grades, friend groups and career plans are only a few of the matters that I feel I fall short of. I aimed to keep up the grades I earned in high school and have a large friend group. I wanted to have a more concrete idea of what I'm going to do when I grow up.

As I look around myself and truly take in what it's like in my day-to-day life on Grounds, I reflect on how fulfilled I feel. My sense of fulfillment should matter more than some silly checklist I've made up in my head. I think about how far I've come and how much time I still have. There's still so many things that I have left to do and experience. All of the good, the bad and the late-night studying.

I've grown and matured in ways I haven't expected. I've done things I never thought I would do. Before coming to the University, I never imagined I could become a co-editor of a collegiate newspaper and write columns to be published for complete strangers to read.

I haven't done everything I thought I would do before I came to the University, it's true. I realize now that lots of those ambitions were unrealistic and a romanticized version of reality. But I've also done so much more that had never even occurred to me.

Now, as I look at the prospective students touring Grounds and conjuring up scenarios about the things we actually do here, I won't be scared of seeing them anymore. Instead I'll laugh at all of the silly ideas I had in my head. Maybe they have some of the same expectations, and I can only do so much to mitigate that. But I can live with the fact that I didn't live up to everything I thought I would live up to. If younger students create the misconceptions, hopefully they'll come to the same realizations that I've come to.



RIX PRAKASH | THE CAVALIER DAILY

For prospective students, a tour of Grounds can be exciting and informative. But for me, it's something totally different.

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# A guide to ethical giving this holiday season

This holiday season, let's consider the best ways to give back

Nicole Ryeom | Food Writer



HEERAN KARIM | THE CAVALIER DAILY

As soon as the holiday season rolls around, there is an increase in the number of food banks, food drives and donation-based fundraising that pop up, making this the perfect time to think about ways that you can give back to your community. Elementary and high schools alike hold yearly food drives that encourage students to donate in any way they can — regardless of what the actual item is.

However, it's important to keep in mind the items that may be the most helpful to donate versus those items that may not serve as much of a purpose. To guide you in the right direction, here are a few helpful reminders — as relayed from feedback given to long-time homeless shelter volunteers in Leesburg, Va. — as we give back this holiday season from the people who are receiving the items.

## Items to avoid

### 1. Kraft Macaroni & Cheese

Mac'n'cheese is one of those foods that people view as quick and easy to make, but it requires milk and butter, which are both commodities that are hard to come by at regular food banks.

### 2. Hamburger Helper

Hamburger Helper cannot be used without ground beef, and meat is rarely donated to food banks. If you're considering donating an item like Hamburger Helper, make sure you include the other necessary ingredients to make it into a meal.

## Items to donate

### 1. Boxed milk

Milk is a basic essential for people's diets and is especially valuable for young children as it helps kids' growth and bone health. It is full of calcium and protein and is a good source of nutrition. Milk also pairs well with cereal, a heavily donated item.

### 2. Canola and olive oil

Oil is a luxury because of its price tag and for its functionality. It can be used in conjunction with many other donations, including Rice-a-Roni, which is another meal that food banks often receive. It is also crucial for cooking and provides some important nutrients—like vitamin E—and healthy fats.

### 3. Spices

Spices, including salt and pepper, can be hard to come by but can completely transform a meal from a bland dinner to something flavorful. Seasoned food tastes much better than unseasoned, and salt and pepper are simple additions to any dish — so consider donating seasonings and spices when you're deciding what to give back this year.

### 4. Sugar

Sugar is considered to be an indispensable delicacy because it can be used to make treats — like a kid's birthday cake — and sweeten someone's day. Generally, sugar is also a staple in baking and can be used to make foods more palatable and enjoyable.

### 5. Eggs

Eggs are considered to be a commodity and are an excellent donation because they are so versatile.

They can be enjoyed on their own or they can be used to make a more elaborate but still simple dish — for example, eggs can be a nutritious and easy addition of protein in a simple rice and vegetable bowl.

### 6. Dishwashing and laundry detergent

Both dishwashing and laundry detergent are necessities to keep our clothes and dishes clean, but they can be pricey and oftentimes, people have to prioritize food over clean clothing or dishes. Having access to items like clean clothes and dishes can make a huge difference in someone's life, so donating these more common household items is an excellent way to give back.

### 7. Feminine hygiene products

Feminine hygiene products are a luxury item yet can provide an immense amount of relief. Many families struggle to afford personal care and household items, especially since they aren't covered by other food assistance programs, like SNAP. Donating feminine hygiene products can change someone's life.

## Items to think about before you donate

### 1. Canned vegetables and soup

While these items are both delicious and nutritious, they are unable to be enjoyed unless the items are donated with a can opener or the cans are pop tops.

### 2. Expired food

When considering what items to donate, it is generally a good rule of thumb to only donate items that you would consume yourself or would serve to your

family. It's unlikely that you consume items that are expired, so make sure you check the expiration date on the items that you are donating.

### 3. Food with packaging concerns

Foods with damaged packaging or packaging that has been opened often cannot be donated to food banks. Again, if you wouldn't choose that can or box from the grocery store for yourself, you shouldn't donate it.

### 4. Home-baked goods

Although baked goods taste delicious and are lovely to receive because of the love and care you've put into the pastries, food banks can't confirm how your goods were made and what ingredients were put in them — so they cannot be donated. However, food banks do sometimes have relationships with bakeries or local restaurants that can donate extra food that is properly labeled and handled.

The holiday season is a great time to spend with friends and family, but it's also important to consider how you might be able to give back to your community and those who may be less fortunate than you. The Charlottesville VA Food Pantries website provides a comprehensive list of the food banks in Charlottesville that would love to receive some donations. Many of these food banks need both food donations, as well as volunteers to help out in these food banks.

Loaves & Fishes is one such food bank located on 2050 Lambs Road, next to Albemarle High School. They use volunteers to

pre-bag dried and canned goods and frozen meat items, as well as to pack grocery cars and deliver to clients' cars in the parking lot. They accept both food and monetary donations — food donations can be made by checking the list on their website of needed items and can be dropped off at their front door. For more information, check out their website to see what items are on their wish list this season and how else you can help out.

Students can also consider donating monetarily or contributing food and hygiene donations to the U.Va. Community Food Pantry. Located in the Student Activities Center at Newcomb Hall 144, this initiative seeks to help alleviate food insecurity on Grounds and has reopened to students and staff alike for the 2021-2022 school year.

There are so many ways that you can give back to your community — both through physical donations and through giving your time — but this holiday season, consider how you can give back in the most ethical and helpful way possible. All forms of giving are equally important and necessary, so consider how you can best serve your community.



# Top 10 ways to show appreciation to your instructors

The jump from virtual instruction has been a challenge for educators and students alike — take a moment to give thanks

Zachary Anderson | Top 10 Writer

## I. Say thank you

Although it seems obvious, it can go without saying that a “thank you” can really brighten your instructor’s day. Instructors are truly some of the most dedicated to their fields, and they can pour their passion into their lectures. Our faculty keeps the University in tip-top shape and ensures our success. Showing gratitude to instructors for their hard work can make a difference, and all it takes is a simple “thanks.”

## 2. Go to office hours

Office hours is a useful tool for instructors and students alike, and office hours can be used for guidance, to build professional relationships and more. Many instructors have open office hours on Zoom — which can be useful but also increase the effects of Zoom fatigue that we all inevitably experienced with online classes in previous semesters. Popping into office hours for a class — even if you don’t need any help — can really brighten your instructor’s day. In my understanding, many instructors just sit in front of their computers with Zoom open waiting for a student to pop in with questions, so join a call and talk about your favorite topic in the class or ask how their day is going.



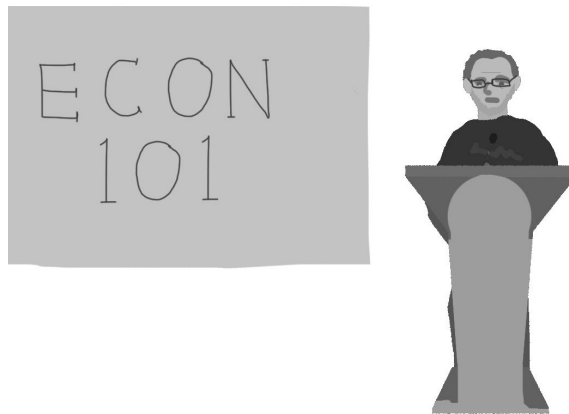
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## 3. Participate in classes when given the opportunity

Class participation used to be easy, but — with the previous experience of virtual classes — many students are still used to being a little black tile with their name on a screen. With in-person classes, your instructor can actually see who is in the room. When people don’t participate in the lecture, it can be awkward for the instructor to wait for a brave volunteer. So it’s likely refreshing to instructors when students participate — it makes the class run more smoothly and can reinforce the instructor’s plan to deliver a crafted lecture to their students.

## 4. Ask your instructor how their day is

Do you ever arrive early to a class and you and your instructor are sitting silently in opposite corners of the room? Instead of basking in the awkwardness of silence, ask your instructor how their day is going. Although students may find it hard to believe, instructors have very interesting lives outside of academia. They have research to complete and families to take care of, and showing interest in these things can strengthen relationships between students and instructors and make a more conducive learning environment. We are social creatures, and it only takes a single question to bring out the best in people.



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## 5. Be open and honest with your instructors

This can be hard for many students to do, and I know that we sometimes believe that a little white lie could land us an extension on a paper that we haven’t started as a result of a recent Netflix binge. Although lying is something that could be helpful in a pinch, is it really worth creating a false situation to confer to your instructors? In truth, being more open and honest with instructors can help them gauge how you operate as a student, and this could afford them the opportunity to build trust with their students and understand how they are approaching the class. What I am saying is that we could be a great resource to our instructors, and there is no shame in using honesty to make a class more suitable for everyone.

## 6. Take your instructor for coffee or lunch

Taking your instructor to lunch allows for more casual conversation, and can actually help build professional relationships between you and your instructors. It also serves as a new experience for both you and your instructor to break up your schedules! Did you know that the UVA College Council has a Take Your Professor to Lunch program? Unfortunately, the program is not operating due to COVID-19 concerns, but the College Council is looking for ways to resume the program in the near future.

## 7. Visit instructors that you had in previous semesters

One thing that I love to do as a student is to check in with some of my previous instructors. I feel like it is a great way to maintain professional relationships and also be a familiar face to instructors who are engulfed in a sea of new names to learn and faces to remember — faces would be quite tough as it is. Ask your instructors how their classes are going, for it gives instructors an opportunity to reflect on their new experiences and speak to someone who has had a similar experience to their current students. I like to think that my previous instructors enjoy seeing me periodically, and I’m sure that there are other students who feel the same!

## 8. Do your work on time or ahead of schedule

If your instructor utilizes UVACollab for most of their assignments, try to complete assignments early. This can give instructors more time to grade their students’ work and also help them reduce the stress of grading many assignments at once. I am not suggesting that we rush our work, but — if instructors make it available to turn in work early — it is certainly helpful to be ahead of schedule. Of course, this depends on the instructor. If your instructor specifies that something should be submitted on a specific day, make sure that it is ready for submission!

## 9. Fill out the course feedback forms

Many instructors offer extra credit or participation points for completing this survey, and with good reason. These surveys can help instructors better understand how to meet students’ needs in the future and how to lecture in a way that can be more enjoyable for them and for us students. Honesty is super important on these forms, and I have had many instructors who have mentioned how useful the surveys are if students elaborate on their comments, concerns and complaints for a particular class offering. Show your instructors that you care and answer honestly on these surveys!

## 10. Write a thank you letter for your instructor

Although handwritten thank you letters have become a piece of history thanks to emails and Zoom calls, they still show extra appreciation than a quickly typed-up message sent through the airwaves. Providing a tangible thank-you letter could really make your instructor’s day, and it also serves as an immortalized piece of gratitude for your instructor to reflect on. I believe that hand-written letters are severely underutilized, and they are a great way to show appreciation in a way that invokes sentimentality and gratitude.



AAYUSHA KHANAL | THE CAVALIER DAILY



# SPORTS

## How sports have helped me get through this year

Detailing the positive effects of being a sports fan during life's most arduous moments

Sarah Pettycord | Sports Editor



ANISHA HOSSAIN | THE CAVALIER DAILY

I had an epiphany as the clock ran down to zero while I was sitting in the press box for the Virginia women's soccer team's third-round clash against BYU. The air was freezing cold, the team had just dropped the match — despite being favored to win — and I was watching multiple players break down on the pitch. I had only watched a total of four matches throughout the season, including that one, and I was distraught over the loss. I shed a few tears that I quickly wiped away, but I eventually realized that my tears were caused by more than just an empathetic sadness for the team.

Watching sports has always been one of my favorite pastimes. I started following the NFL towards the beginning of high school and expanded my horizons as the years went on — getting invested in hockey, baseball and even professional cornhole at times. When I came to Virginia all the way from San Diego in 2018, I was exposed to college sports for the first time and

rested some of my identity in being a Cavalier fan and, more broadly, a sports fan.

I've sat with this identity for a while now, and it's not exclusive to me. Millions of people across the globe consider themselves sports fans. According to research by Dr. Daniel L. Wann, a psychology professor at Murray State University, there are at least 24 different mental health benefits to being a sports fan. Some of these include fewer depressive episodes, lower levels of loneliness and experiencing positive emotions more often. The psychological effects of identifying as a fan are remarkably evident.

Another thing is true about sports fans — sports wouldn't be the same without them. In his book "Fans," acclaimed journalist and author Larry Olmsted writes that "without fandom, sports has no platform." This is repeatedly emphasized by Virginia's own coaches, who have stressed the importance of fans.

"I think we all missed [the fans]," Women's Soccer Coach Steve Swanson said. "There's some places we go where we have to generate our own atmosphere ... but I think here at Klöckner it's a special atmosphere ... and it makes a big difference for us."

Football Coach Bronco Mendenhall has also spoken on how incredible Cavalier fans can be.

"It's just great to play football and have our fans here," Mendenhall said. "[At the William & Mary game] I saw something that I hadn't seen maybe in my whole time here, where as soon as they opened the gates our student section were racing to get their seats up at the front. Yeah, that was a moment that I'm not going to forget, that was just gratifying."

Throughout 2021, we saw the sports world adapt to changes induced by the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite not having many in-person sporting events until the fall, sports fans were still sports fans.

Even with fluctuating COVID-19 numbers, polarizing politics and whatever other stressors presented themselves, they could always identify as a fan and find a game to watch.

Sports became my escape from the unpredictable reality of this year — they gave me the opportunity to take a step back when life became taxing. I could retreat to my bedroom or living room, turn on a game and silence my worries — even if it was just for a short amount of time.

The same can be said even as in-person sports returned. I spent a lot of time attending games at Virginia's respective athletics facilities, and every time I did, I could drown out life outside of the facility. All I could focus on was the game, and that brought me immense amounts of mental clarity.

So as I sat watching BYU defeat our highly acclaimed women's soccer team, listening to Cougars fans chanting, tears ran down my face.

I was sad that we had lost because I genuinely believed that our team deserved to win that match. But beyond that, the clock hitting zero snapped me back to reality.

That was the first time I understood why I always feel a tinge of sadness at the end of every game because, to me, the end of a game means the resumption of real life. No matter the fact that I know there will always be a game on somewhere, it's still a little agonizing to walk out of a stadium or turn off the television, even if my team has won — though that does make it a little easier.

As we enter 2022, I encourage everyone to watch more sports. You will find a welcoming community amongst other fans, feel more connected to others and perhaps even fill a void that you didn't know existed. Being a sports fan is one of the best things that has ever happened to me, and I wish that everyone is able to say the same about themselves one day.



# Virginia Athletics finds success via advanced analytics

Football and women's soccer lead the way in the use of sports analytics at the University

Alex Maniatis | Associate Writer

Since the novel and film “Moneyball” entered national discourse and advancements in technology enabled big data processing, sports franchises and fan bases have all taken an interest in data analytics and its potential role in improving player and team performance. The majority of research efforts and dollars spent come from professional sports teams who have more resources at their disposal. In fact, today, all major sports leagues have teams with in-house sports analytics teams dedicated to gaining an edge over the competition. With the majority of gains being made in professional sports, how have collegiate athletics responded?

Here at Virginia, the football and women's soccer teams are pioneers in the collegiate landscape. Director of Football Analytics Matt Edwards and Eilidh Thomson, director of analytics and operations for women's soccer, both saw an opportunity to leverage data on their respective teams and forged their own paths by creating analytics positions. Both directors witnessed the positive impacts that could come from data from their previous coaching positions and decided to develop a technical expertise for data analytics. With different experiences and backgrounds, the two directors are changing the way Virginia Athletics approaches decision-making and game preparation.

## Matt Edwards, Virginia football

Edwards serves as the current director of football analytics after serving his first three seasons at Virginia as a football analyst. He was formerly a tight end for BYU and a mathematics major. After graduating, he completed a masters in public administration and served as a graduate assistant for Coach Bronco Mendenhall at BYU. This connection eventually brought Edwards to Virginia football in 2017.

Since joining the Virginia football staff, Edwards has enrolled himself in sports analytics classes and is currently pursuing a masters in data science at the University. Edwards describes Mendenhall as “a data-driven guy” who ultimately gave him a chance to introduce analytics to the Cavaliers' football operations.

Edwards' current role has him generating weekly reports on two things — team performance and the opponent of the week. These reports are used for game preparation and in-game decision-making. The reports are built off models Edwards builds to analyze play-

er and team performance and to predict certain outcomes from in-game scenarios. Player tracking data collected during practice and pro football focus data that houses game data on the Cavaliers and other opponents are the data sources used by Edwards.

Edwards uses every practice as a chance to collect traditional statistics on player performance such as completion percentage, total yards generated by each player and other similar metrics. However, the most useful information comes from the 40-plus wearables the team uses during practice. The data produced gives details about player location, exertion, explosiveness and more, which are all used to estimate expected points and evaluate player decision-making. Wearable data has also expanded analytics beyond improving performance. Edwards works with sports scientists on injury prevention using the data on player exertion and load.

After collecting this data, Edwards primarily meets with different team staff members to run through each report. This information is then shared with the players at the coaches discretion. On game day, Edwards sits in the booth with a binder full of reports and hard output to provide coaches with data at a moment's notice.

Virginia football is one of a small number of college football teams with a full-time analytics position, according to Edwards. Most other Division I football teams use data processed by a third party, which only includes standard, rudimentary game data. In this regard, the Cavaliers are ahead of the curve.

## Eilidh Thomson, Virginia women's soccer

In an even more unlikely role, Thomson is the only director of analytics in NCAA women's soccer. Similarly to Edwards, Thomson joined a very forward-thinking staff with Coach Steve Swanson at the helm. Swanson, associate coach Ron Raab and assistant coach Jaime Frias previously used video analysis to assess team and player performance and were immediately receptive to the addition of data analytic tools. After serving three years as volunteer assistant coach, Thomson created and filled the first-ever director of analytics position for Virginia women's soccer.

“Data has become more influential in the game at higher levels,” Thomson said.

However, unlike Edwards, Thomson has no real formal edu-

cation or degree in sports analytics, mathematics or data science — rather, she is entirely self-taught in a multitude of different programming languages. In a sport like soccer with fewer sports analysts and researchers, Thomson uses her own experience and intuition to base her analysis on questions and insights she is interested in.

Thomson, similarly to Edwards, implements in-house data collection via GPS tracking data. During games and practices, players wear heart-rate monitors and a small GPS tracking device on the top of their spine that provides location and movement on the field. This data is then embedded into clips via SportsClips, a video analytics tool — Thomson finds that matching the data with film makes it more captivating and useful for both the coaches and players. The film can then be used to provide tactical and technical data on player performance and physical data to monitor player loads used for injury prevention. Finally, Thomson puts together match and season reports based on the film and physical data to provide the coaches and players with additional information.

## Future of sports analytics at Virginia

In both football and women's soccer, data analytics can help achieve that extra “one percent” — the difference between winning and losing a national or conference championship. Edwards' and Thomson's work has already led to overall better team performance, as evidenced by the fact that both teams have had favorable records since they joined.

“Analytics can critically shape the thought process and direction with which teams go,” Edwards said.

With Mendenhall at the helm and Edwards in the box, the Cavaliers have progressed from two wins in 2016 to nine wins in 2019. This past season Virginia fell to 6-6 overall but has remained very competitive in ACC play. Despite the underwhelming season, Edwards will use the offseason to take a deeper look at the previous season's data and identify team weaknesses that can be addressed by the coaching staff ahead of next season. Data collected the past few seasons enables Edwards to make models of comparison and make better analyses and predictions to optimize team growth.

Under Swanson's and Thomson's guidance, the women's soccer



COURTESY VIRGINIA ATHLETICS

Thomson (left) and Edwards (right) have both made major contributions to their respective sports, and they hope for similar data analytics roles to be created for other varsity teams.

team has strung together multiple double-digit win seasons and NCAA Tournament appearances, including three Round-of-16 exits. On the surface, there is tangible evidence of improvement and success for both teams at the highest level of collegiate athletics.

In addition to football and women's soccer, Virginia basketball also analyzes player performance via the Noah Shooting System, which uses sensors above the basket to perform shot analysis. Only a handful of other NCAA basketball programs use similar tools. Along with these three Virginia programs, a number of other varsity teams at Virginia have expressed interest in working with data. Edwards and Thomson have collaborated with other teams and assisted in expanding the use of data analytics to other teams.

While data analysis can be highly effective, the opportunity cost for pursuing data analytics can be quite high, and the suspension of competition in the spring of 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the fragility of many athletic departments' budgets. However, given the positions carved out by Edwards and Thomson and the interest across Virginia Athletics, it is up to the athletic department to expand resources.

“It would be great to one day have a department within the athletic department dedicated to data,” Thomson said.

Team-specific analytics is a step in the right direction, but both Edwards and Thomson have a vision of leveraging data analytics across the board via athletic department resources and support.

The University academic community has stepped up and initiated a number of initiatives to assist

with and promote sports analytics. In the past few years, the University established the School of Data Science, where Edwards is currently pursuing his masters degree. The department of statistics has also created the Sports Analytics and Statistical Library, which is dedicated to sports analysis education and research. Additionally, the School of Engineering and Applied Science worked with the football team to build valuable models via yearly student capstone projects. These initiatives have resulted in student internships for a number of Virginia undergraduate and graduate students, and even led to two former interns landing jobs in the National Football League.

With so much support from the University along with the resumption of collegiate athletics, there is hope for more full-time analytics staff and resources in the near future. Based on my own participation with SASL and conversation with Edwards, collaboration is taking place between the academic community and the department of sports medicine, which deals with the healthcare of all Virginia student athletes. Given the positive trends in analytics across the University, Edwards and Thomson suggested the possible creation of a department of sports analytics dedicated to improving performance across Virginia Athletics. Furthermore, there could be a role for data in the recruiting process — however, it is hard to verify data from random, amateur sources and to find good data without collecting it yourself.

In the future, look for sports analytics to continue to play a more significant role in Virginia Athletics as more teams use data to find that extra “one percent.”



# 2021 YEAR IN REVIEW

Look back on memorable moments captured by Cavalier Daily staffers throughout the year, from Olympic medalists in Tokyo to students crowding into Scott Stadium once again.

## Memorial to Enslaved Laborers:

The University dedicates the Memorial to Enslaved Laborers in a culmination of over a decade's worth of community and student activism surrounding the memorial's design and construction.

## COVID-19 Outbreak:

The University bans all in-person gatherings and urges students living on and off Grounds to restrict movement outside residences to essential activities. The announcement comes following a "troubling" increase in COVID-19 cases — which many attributed to in-person Greek recruitment — and the spread of the more contagious B.1.1.7 variant of the virus. The University confirms they have brought cases against a number of individual students and five fraternities for COVID-19 violations in late February.



AVA PROEHL | THE CAVALIER DAILY

## Juneteenth:

The Charlottesville community celebrates Juneteenth with in-person outdoor events and virtual talks and music performances — this is the first year Juneteenth is recognized officially as a federal holiday, though the Charlottesville community has celebrated in years past. Members of Student Council and Black Student Alliance discuss the history of Juneteenth and efforts to support Black students at the University.

2.16

3.19

4.10

5.16 & 23

6.19

7.10 & 11

## Student Elections:

Third-year College student Abel Liu is elected Student Council president with 81.2 percent of the presidential election vote. Liu is the University's first Chinese American Student Council president as well as the first openly transgender student government president who was "out" at the time of his election at a major American university.

## ADVERTISEMENT

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ARIANA GUARENMAIEH | THE CAVALIER DAILY

## Final Exercises:

Class of 2020 and 2021 graduates from across the University's 12 schools take part in Final Exercises.

## Statue Removal:

The statues of Robert E. Lee in Market Street Park and Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson in Court Street Park are removed, followed by the George Rogers Clark statue on Grounds. Community and student activists have been calling for the removal of these statues for years — their efforts are finally realized as the statues are carried off.



Fans Return to Football:

Fans return to Scott Stadium for the first time in over 20 months, and Virginia football gives them something to cheer about in a 43-0 victory over in-state rival William & Mary.



KHUYEN DINH | THE CAVALIER DAILY

“Unite the Right” Trial:

The trial of the “Unite the Right” rally organizers and other white supremacists comes to a close, with the jury awarding over \$25 million to nine plaintiffs. Claims which included conspiracy to commit racial violence were brought against 17 defendants, including Class of 2009 alumnus Jason Kessler and white nationalists Christopher Cantwell and Richard Spencer, a Class of 2001 alumnus. White supremacist organizations League of the South and Identity Evropa were also defendants.

Tokyo Olympics:

Multiple Cavalier swimmers bring home Olympic medals at the Summer Olympics in Tokyo. Freshman Emma Weyant wins the silver medal in the women’s 400-meter individual medley. In the 200-meter individual medley, sophomore Alex Walsh takes silver and junior Kate Douglass takes bronze. Alumni take home medals in women’s rowing and women’s soccer.

7.27 & 28

8.22

9.6

10.23

11.23



TAYLOR WEIGAND | THE CAVALIER DAILY

Convocation:

Members of the Class of 2024 and 2025 gather for individual convocation ceremonies to commemorate the start of their time at the University.



KEN FONTELERIA | THE CAVALIER DAILY

Culture Fest:

University Programs Council hosts Culture Fest in the Amphitheater, where attendees enjoy fashion shows, performances from cultural groups and catered food.



# OPINION

## LEAD EDITORIAL

# Moments that counted toward 2021

*The Editorial Board looks at a variety of different facts and figures to highlight some of the most important issues throughout the year*

The past year at the University has been an unusual one to say the least. At the beginning of the year, we were still living in a mainly virtual world — classes were online, gathering limits were imposed and we watched as new COVID-19 cases reached peak highs. As we returned to Grounds for this past fall semester, we jumped immediately back to a more in-person life. After completely adjusting our academic lives, we were required to largely forget about Zoom and revert back to the life we had before the onset of the pandemic.

Over the past year we've watched the administration's inaction force students to fight for a more equitable University. Students now have access to a tour, created by History of Enslaved African American Laborers with Bringing Race Into Dialogue with Group Engagement and University Guides, entirely focused on the history of enslaved

laborers. The Minority Rights Coalition continued to push for the removal of racist imagery. These are just a few examples of the countless other instances of students fighting for change. This has been a year dominated by student voices calling for the University to support marginalized communities — a duty it continues to ignore.

As an Editorial Board, we have put together some key facts and figures that highlight the past year at the University.

### In COVID-19:

**229:** highest number of COVID-19 cases in one single day within the University community

**681:** days since the first COVID-19 case was confirmed in the United States

**97:** the percentage of University students vaccinated against COVID-19

**3,130:** number of COVID-19 cases in the University communi-

ty this year

**6:** maximum number of people allowed to gather inside earlier this year when we saw a spike in COVID-19 cases

**5:** mL of spit per saliva screening for COVID-19 prevalence testing

### In Pushes for Progress:

**130:** historical tours focused on enslaved laborers given to first-year students

**17:** white supremacists charged in the Unite the Right trial

**\$25 million:** awarded to the defendants in the Unite the Right trial

**4:** racist statues removed from the community — George Rogers Clark, Lewis and Clark and Sacagewea, Robert E. Lee, “Stonewall” Jackson, along with the many others taken down throughout the Commonwealth this year

**\$57,765:** dollars raised by U.Va. Mutual Aid this year

**62:** percent of eligible voters who participated in the statewide elections in Albemarle County

**12,890:** Charlottesville City residents who voted in the November statewide elections

**5,438:** people who signed a petition to call on the University to keep using Google Drive

**8,473:** people who signed a petition to allow the University's marching band to play at games

**9,454:** students who voted in the spring's Student Council election for Student Council president

### In Athletics:

**18:** U.Va. affiliated people at the Tokyo Olympics

**9:** number of medals won by Hoos at the Tokyo Olympics

**734:** days passed since last beating Virginia Tech in football

**2:** national championships won by U.Va. this year — Swimming and Dive and Lacrosse

**0:** number of national championships ever won by Virginia Tech

### Miscellaneous:

**\$14.5 billion:** current size of the University's endowment

**2:** businesses on The Corner closed this year — College Inn and Sheetz

**20:** community alerts sent out to students this year regarding crime around Grounds

**3:** number of people who were supposed to serve as city manager in Charlottesville this year.

**8.5" by 11":** dimension of inches representing the most common type of copy paper — this was bigger than the space given to many Lawn residents following new policies on Lawn room signs

## THE CAVALIER DAILY

### THE CAVALIER DAILY

The Cavalier Daily is a financially and editorially independent news organization staffed and managed entirely by students of the University of Virginia.

The opinions expressed in The Cavalier Daily are not necessarily those of the students, faculty, staff or administration of the University of Virginia. Unsigned editorials represent the majority opinion of the editorial board. Cartoons and columns represent the views of the authors. The managing board of The Cavalier Daily has sole authority over and responsibility for all content.

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### QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

To better serve readers, The Cavalier Daily has a public editor to respond to questions and concerns regarding its practices. The public editor writes a column published every week on the opinion pages based on reader feedback and his independent observations. He also welcomes queries pertaining to journalism and the newspaper industry in general. The public editor is available at [publiceditor@cavalierdaily.com](mailto:publiceditor@cavalierdaily.com).



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# U.Va. needs to become a smoke-free campus

*The University has acted ambiguously towards its smoking policy and has not committed to becoming a smoke-free campus*

The COVID-19 pandemic has taught us — and continues to teach us — many valuable lessons about public health. Such lessons range from a wider understanding of how viruses spread, how to protect yourself and others from respiratory illness and even learning to value health over profit. The University has committed itself to halting the spread on Grounds through a number of policies, including quarantine and isolation, prevalence testing and the implementation of safety measures such as hand sanitizer stations. Despite this mostly positive response to helping stop the spread of this public health crisis, the University has not done nearly enough when it comes to the decades old public health crisis of smoking. According to the American Nonsmokers' Rights Foundation, six Virginia universities have smoke-free campuses. However, the University remains ambiguous and has not committed to becoming a smoke-free campus.

The University, in recent years, has dedicated itself to reducing smoking on Grounds. Its current policies prohibit the use of tobacco products in the Medical Center's buildings, parking lots and garages. Addition-

ally, smoking is not permitted within 25 feet of entryways or areas where smoking can enter into any University buildings. These current policies appear strict, but enforcements are lacking, as are the incentives to help workers quit smoking. Further, the University has not updated or addressed its tobacco usage and smoking policies since 2019. In that same year, the University committed to develop-

fuel the smoking epidemic, from its historical status as a tobacco cash crop state to its partnerships with tobacco companies. Richmond specifically is home to the largest Marlboro cigarette manufacturing plant, which manufactures half of the cigarettes sold in the United States. Philip Morris, owner of Marlboro, has been operating in Virginia since 1929. More recently, Altria, owner of Philip Morris, moved its

universities to create smoke-free facilities and policies, but it is ultimately on the University to put in the work of prevention and intervention.

Virginia has a responsibility to the citizens it has made reliant on the substance, and the University must commit to curb smoking. Despite great inequities in smoke-free laws, the number of smoke-free locations are increasing nationwide. However,

programs for students and faculty and eliminating existing exemptions to the current tobacco policies. Virginia also needs to commit to stricter tobacco legislation. This includes raising the current cigarette tax of 60 cents to at least \$1 higher per pack and increasing funding for cessation services under Virginia Medicaid.

Six million people across the globe die every year from preventable tobacco-related illnesses. The COVID-19 pandemic is teaching us to protect our respiratory health — a lesson that years of smoking research should have taught us. In reducing future health complications — including the risk of severe COVID-19 infection — prevention of factors that could increase the severity of infection are key. There is no safe amount of smoke inhalation, and it is hard to walk around Grounds without seeing at least one person smoking. The University should do its part by working to reduce first and second hand smoke exposure and establishing a smoke-free Grounds.

**YSSIS CANO-SANTIAGO** is an Opinion Columnist for *The Cavalier Daily*. She can be reached at [opinion@cavalierdaily.com](mailto:opinion@cavalierdaily.com).

“There is no safe amount of smoke inhalation, and it is hard to walk around Grounds without seeing at least one person smoking.”

ing a “new comprehensive policy” on smoking that essentially diverted responsibility of mitigating smoking on Grounds to students, faculty and staff. Those students and faculty would “establish a tobacco free workgroup to review existing policies.” While personal initiative is a noble task, it dismisses sufferers of nicotine addiction and places the collective good in danger.

The University is not completely at fault for dragging its feet. Virginia has its own sordid past that helped

headquarters from New York City to Richmond in 2003. Further, Virginia has made little progress in tobacco control. The American Lung Association gives Virginia a grade of F in many important areas of tobacco control, including tobacco prevention, smoke-free air and tobacco taxes.

While the University acknowledges “Virginia lags behind other states in adopting tobacco policies,” it is just as complicit in the epidemic. The Commonwealth is able to work with uni-

colleges and universities continue to lag behind, with less than 17 percent confirmed to be smoke-free. The American Cancer Society states that 99 percent of adults who start smoking do so before the age of 26. This means that the University has the ability to curb this dangerous trend while many students remain in their most critical and susceptible years. The University can begin by enforcing existing smoking policies, expanding and incentivizing smoking cessation

# Reinstitute mandatory COVID-19 prevalence testing

*U.Va. should reinstitute mandatory prevalence testing and increase academic flexibility for the safety of students, faculty and the greater Charlottesville community*

We are all excited to move forward to a time without extreme COVID-19 precautions. However, we must be careful to balance our eagerness with caution. This year the University lessened many of its previous restrictions, including mandatory prevalence testing. This decision, in particular, is unsafe. For our safety, the University should reinstitute mandatory COVID-19 testing for all students, faculty members and staff.

The current COVID-19 testing policy requires that unvaccinated members of the University community undergo weekly prevalence testing. Vaccinated students are not required to follow weekly prevalence testing but still may get tested through the University if they wish. Many in the University community have criticized this policy. Students have expressed concerns about appointment availability, long lines at testing centers and confusion about whether testing is available for asymptomatic students. Additionally, Young Democratic Socialists of America at U.Va. demanded mandatory prevalence testing for all students every two weeks. Professors too questioned the effectiveness of removing mandatory testing.

University administration explained that the current policy aims to focus on at-risk populations —

unvaccinated people and those with symptoms or who have been in close contact with an infected person. Despite these populations being the most at risk, the University should still be testing a larger group of the student population.

For one, there are concerns about the spread of the Delta variant. In August, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported an “alarming

“We must all learn from the last year and recognize the importance of our health and keeping the community safe.”

rise in the COVID-19 case and hospitalization rates around the country.” They attributed this shift to the Delta variant of COVID-19, which is more infectious than other strains and can be contracted and transmitted by fully vaccinated people. Thus, despite the vast majority of people on Grounds being fully vaccinated, there are still some valid lingering concerns. These apprehensions are even more important to note when one considers the active cases on Grounds — the University currently reports 30 active COVID-19 cases and 935 cases this semester.

The current testing system puts

an unfair burden on students, asking them to choose between their health and their academic standing. Symptomatic students are expected to stay home until they can be tested, then quarantine if they test positive. However, this semester is simply not organized to care for students who have to quarantine. The University has embraced an in-person semester over a hybrid one, and attendance

is still listed on the syllabus of many classes. The University should not be putting students in a situation where they're forced to prioritize either their academic standing or their physical health — especially since sick students can put others at risk.

Furthermore, the lack of routine prevalence testing prevents the University from having a full picture of the true situation on Grounds. Compared to the complete student body, the unvaccinated student and faculty population is too small to provide an accurate representation of COVID-19 cases within the community

as a whole. Despite the University encouraging symptomatic students to get tested, it is very unlikely that this is occurring — when looking at the University's COVID tracker, we can see the relatively small number of tests given each day. Even professors expressed concern that students, without being tested, are self-diagnosing themselves as not having COVID-19. One professor noted that although

they remind students to not come to class if they are symptomatic, they still hear students “coughing and sniffing during class.” The University's current policy prevents us from having the full picture of COVID-19 cases on Grounds.

The University has a responsibility to know the status of COVID-19 cases on Grounds. Students, faculty and the Charlottesville community must all be kept updated so that they can make the most informed decisions possible. The University's failure to maintain complete data on COVID-19 cases on Grounds puts all of these groups at

risk. In particular, keeping the number of COVID-19 cases low and remaining up-to-date on the latest COVID-19 data is critical for the safety of immunocompromised students, who have an increased vulnerability to infection and thus must take additional precautions. In addition, vaccinated immunocompromised people are still at risk of contracting COVID-19 due to concerns of vaccine efficacy in this population.

The pandemic has changed the way we see the world. Though many are eager to move on, we cannot ignore the realities of breakthrough cases and the threat COVID-19 still poses to our community. The University must reinstitute prevalence testing for all students. Moreover, the pandemic has shown us the importance of flexibility and of valuing our health. The University should embrace new hybrid ways of teaching to encourage students to prioritize their own health, whether they're sick due to COVID-19 or not. We must all learn from the last year and recognize the importance of our health and keeping the community safe.

**JESSICA MOORE** is the Senior Associate Opinion Editor for *The Cavalier Daily*. She can be reached at [jmoore@cavalierdaily.com](mailto:jmoore@cavalierdaily.com).



# HUMOR

## Going off the grid

The biggest social media network in the world is rebranding itself. That's right — Piazza has officially changed its name to Kalzone.

Piazza, the student discussion forum preferred by most professors, is desperate to claw out from its plummeting reputation after the data deals, whistleblower scandals, and political meddling that I'm sick of hearing about. Piazza — now Kalzone — has invaded the minds, the culture, and even the love lives of students. Everyone walks around Grounds with their eyes glued to their phone screens, addicted to the rush of seeing one more classmate click “good question” on their post about how to calculate compound interest.

The CEO of Kalzone claims that the new name aims to bet-

ter capture the essence of the company. However, that directly translates to “quick, guys, we’ve gotta pretend we’re not evil anymore.”

Nothing can be trusted, regardless of its name. The internet is a scary place that’s usually trying to trick you. That innocuous app you use to order salad could be selling your address. Or, even worse, they could be tracking your favorite cheese. Here’s a guide to the super simple changes you can make to protect yourself — and your cheese preferences — online.

**Buy a camouflage sticky note to write passwords and sensitive information on.** I’ve been warned against putting all my eggs in one basket. However, there’s nothing wrong with putting all my

eggs in a basket nobody can see. The camo sticky note blends in so well that nobody — not even the owner — can find it. Owners should take a lesson from my mistake and mark it with something only they can recognize. A friend of mine, inspired by a walk with her dog, has marked her camo sticky note with a distinct scent.

**Find a job that doesn’t require the internet.** Thanks to my very normal activity on Google, I recently stumbled upon a promising maple syruping internship. It only requires two short years of previous experience with maple syrup. In other words, those oatmeal breakfasts have adequately prepared me for the job market.

**Make your location impossible to pin down.** The best way

to confuse big corporations is to ditch Charlottesville and become a moving target. If you love to travel and classes still sound oddly appealing, try studying abroad in NOVA. I studied abroad in NOVA last summer. It was a transformative experience, to say the least. In fact, my host family almost felt real. It’s a unique opportunity to immerse yourself in a special form of the English language in which people use words like “froyo” and “bandwidth” in everyday conversation.

**Change your name.** Piazza isn’t the only thing that needs rebranding. To protect your identity, go to court and apply to legally be called “Anonymous Beaker.”

**Throw your phone out of the window.** It will fix everything.

The internet is too much to handle. We cannot let Silicon Valley control our lives. I’d much rather go off the grid and cheat my way up the corporate ladder towards maple syruping CEO.

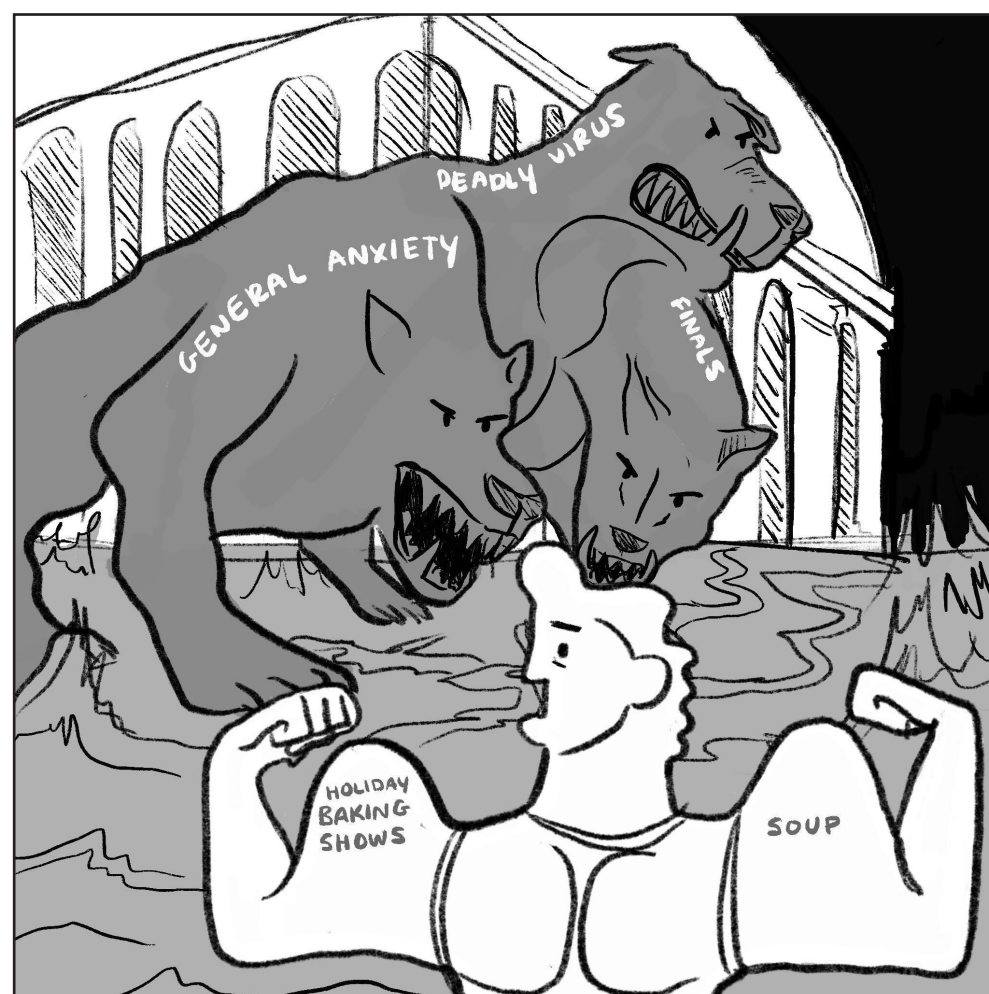
If you aren’t willing to quit the internet cold turkey like me, at least gain some insight from this guide. The next time you feel deeply wounded that your classmate’s answer received more “thanks” than yours, know in your heart that if I hadn’t just thrown my phone out of the window, I would click thanks. And that’s what matters most.

**KATE MCCARTHY** is a Humor columnist for *The Cavalier Daily*. She can be reached at [humor@cavalierdaily.com](mailto:humor@cavalierdaily.com)

# CARTOON

## The Big Guns

Audrey Lewis | Cartoon Editor



# PUZZLES

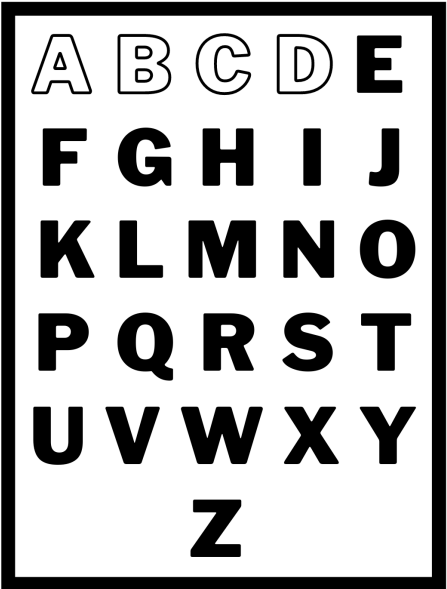
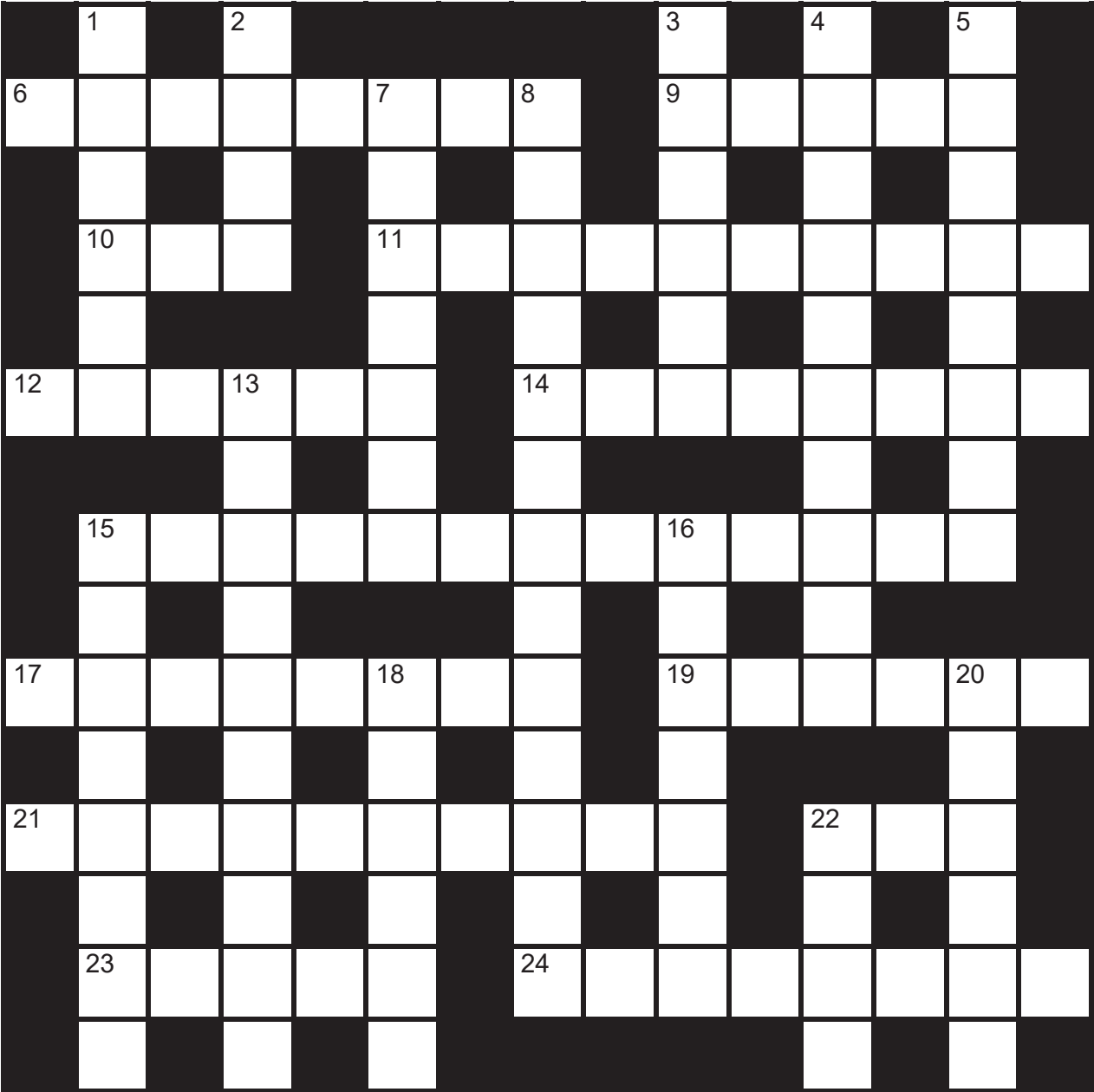
## WEEKLY CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Abby Sacks | **Puzzle Master**

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

- Across**
- 6. Bleeding hearts plant.
  - 9. Third color of Kwanzaa candles.
  - 10. Acronym for the new building the University opened on Brandon Ave.
  - 11. Amends or atonements.
  - 12. Descriptor of someone in a relationship, especially during colder months.
  - 14. Handel’s Messiah is a type of this musical performance.
  - 15. Laying hidden snares to catch someone trespassing.
  - 17. Plural for a collection of plant specimens for scientific study.
  - 19. In Greek mythology, female followers of Dionysus.
  - 21. Doing something in the spirit of Jesus.
  - 22. Moray and sawtooth are types.
  - 23. Number of days Hanukkah lasts.
  - 24. Mr. Rogers asks “won’t you be my ----?”

- Across**
- 1. Capital city of West African country Guinea-Bissau.
  - 2. Sound a cat makes.
  - 3. Genus of lizards native to Central and South America.
  - 4. Lilac-colored mineral in the mica group.
  - 5. Perpetual, eternal.
  - 7. Day of the week that classes end.
  - 8. Taking something for your own use without permission.
  - 13. Bridge specifically for pedestrians.
  - 15. Members of a society or religious order.
  - 16. Site of volcanic eruption in 79 CE.
  - 18. The Earth does this, causing the day and night cycle.
  - 20. Covered in flowers.
  - 22. In Marvel comics, she is the daughter of Kingpin.



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issue, coming soon!

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\* SOLUTION FROM THE NOV. 11 ISSUE





# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

## The lasting appeal of Hallmark's holiday movie formula

How did these cheesy flicks earn a permanent spot in Christmas culture?

Lauren Whitlock | Senior Writer

For better or worse, Hallmark holiday movies have undeniably ingrained themselves into American Christmas culture. Whether they're the subject of sarcastic, grinchy comments or the object of hot chocolate-filled binge-a-thons, these cheesy flicks make an appearance in just about everyone's holiday season. But their obvious shallowness and predictability leave many of us — even fans — questioning why they are so ubiquitous.

The Hallmark greeting card company began producing movies and shows back in 1951. But it wasn't until Bill Abbott took over as C.E.O. in 2009 and wanted to maximally embody the greeting card brand on television that the Hallmark Channel began focusing on Christmas. Since then, Hallmark has turned its Christmas programming into a well-oiled machine, regularly shooting movies in just two weeks and modeling them all after similar plots, sets, and characters designed to feel like movie versions of Hallmark Christmas cards.

This efficient design has created the key to the pervasiveness of Hallmark's Christmas movies at this time of year, the aspect for which they are also most frequently mocked — their formulaic nature. For many, the holiday season is accompanied by a variety of stressors ranging from finals to present shopping to marathon cooking to relatives visiting. All of this chaos leaves us looking for an easy, comforting escape, and Hallmark's extensive collection of holiday films are happy to oblige.

A major factor in Hallmark's Christmas appeal is its reliably predictable plots. All of its films start with a variation of the same strong, cute, cookie-cutter female protagonist who meets a variation of the same hunky love interest through some inciting incident. The rest of the film follows the protagonist and love interest spending more time together and falling gradually in love until they finally share a Christmas kiss near the film's end.

There is always a central conflict but never an emotionally demanding or complex problem. In combination with their dependably happy endings, this lack of true conflict makes Hallmark movies overwhelmingly cheerful, surface-level flicks with no real emotional investment required. By



MEG DUNKUM | THE CAVALIER DAILY

maintaining this straightforward, consistent formula, Hallmark gives stressed holiday viewers a guaranteed and much-needed boost of serotonin without ever asking them to pay much attention.

Not only can viewers relax with a surprise-free, serotonin-inducing plot structure, but the unrealisticness of this canned formula — usually accompanied by equally unrealistic festive settings and people — also enables holiday-themed escapism. Hallmark movies are there to ease those of us worn down by relatives and in desperate need of distraction back into the holiday spirit by giving us a break from the

stress of the season.

While the consistent lack of realism may prevent these movies from having any deep meaning, it also ensures their lasting popularity by allowing viewers to know and expect any given Hallmark movie to be uncomplicatedly unrealistic. Viewers continually tune in, sometimes even grudgingly, with perfect confidence that Hallmark will provide a safe space for festive escapism.

Even Christmas lovers who aren't stressed during the holiday season still rely on Hallmark movies. These viewers turn to the films for different reasons, such

as the sure-fire Christmas cheer in their amply decorated settings and sleigh bell-filled soundtracks. No matter the type of viewer, the appeal of Hallmark holiday movies lies in their consistency. By keeping every aspect of its films — down to the lead actors — comfortably and dependably familiar, the channel maintains popularity year after year in much the same way your favorite holiday film merits a yearly rewatch.

But it should be noted that while longstanding familiarity is mostly the point of these movies, that doesn't excuse them from needing a revamp. Even in 2021,

Hallmark movies still almost universally center on well-off, white, heterosexual couples. Hallmark has recently begun to make some moves toward inclusivity — like prominently featuring a same-sex couple for the first time ever in 2020's "Christmas House."

Even so, Hallmark still has a long way to go in expanding the diversity of the people, identities, experiences and even holidays that it represents. After all, if the continued appeal of Hallmark holiday movies rests on their comforting familiarity, their contents should be familiar to as many people as possible.



# Students reflect on favorite arts events of the year

With in-person events finally returning to Grounds, some stuck out as special

Randolph Brownell | Staff Writer



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One of the University's most popular events, The Virginia Film Festival, which took place Oct. 27-31, was also a favorite for a lot of students.

Though many arts events unfortunately had to migrate to Zoom during the height of the pandemic, many organizations were able to return to holding in-person events in Charlottesville this semester. Included here are multiple student perspectives on the most memorable arts events they attended or participated in over the past year.

Third-year Commerce student Jana Kral recalls the first week of the semester when she attended the UVA Arts Grounds Day Picnic on August 29 for Welcome Week. The free picnic — which aimed to connect students with arts resources on Grounds — featured performances and opportunities to learn about the Visual & Performing Arts & Architecture departments.

"I really enjoyed the art school's introductory picnic held earlier this year," Kral said. "The food was great, and it was so great to know about the different

majors and extracurriculars that are offered."

One of the University's most popular events, The Virginia Film Festival, which took place Oct. 27-31, was also a favorite for a lot of students. The annual festival brings films from across the world to the Charlottesville community and the University. Tickets to screenings were free for UVA students and allowed many to see highly anticipated films before their wide release. Third-year College student Zachary Abbot reflected on a particular film he enjoyed at the festival.

"This fall I attended the Virginia Film Festival and saw the new movie 'Belfast,'" Abbot said. "The festival was exhilarating and the late night screening was awesome to attend. They created an awesome space for people who love film to attend and geek out over a really enjoyable film."

Also sharing the sentiment of enjoying the return to in-person

events, third-year College student Matthew Shafer reflected fondly on Spectrum Theater's Believer: A Cult Musical show that took place Nov. 7 at Monroe Hill. The musical took place outside and was the culmination of the hard work of a group of student actors.

"The showing was great," Shafer said. "It was super cold because it was late fall and outside, but there's something super magical about getting to see plays in person again. After the show we even stuck around and got some of the autographs from our favorite characters and the people who played them. I think it was being able to connect with the people who put on the show afterwards that really made me love that event."

Third-year Engineering student Matthew Kim remembered Enoia Live, an event held at the Christian space Enoia where students shared their art over music

and coffee on Nov 12. The atmosphere was relaxed, allowing for students to share their art with their friends. Tucked into a small building across from Student Health, students relaxed and listened to music performed by their peers after a visual art reception.

"The most memorable event for me was a fall art display and music session at Eunoia Creative Community," Kim said. "I enjoyed both getting to see my friend's art and also experiencing some live music from artists I am aware of ... getting to see people you know receive applause for their deep personal work also is gratifying."

Another standout event for second-year Engineering student Mitchell Taylor was this semester's Rocky Horror Picture Show featured in Newcomb Theater by Voyeuristic Intention on Nov 19. Incorporating audience participation into the classic show,

student actors brought it to life for an enthusiastic in-person audience.

"One aspect I particularly enjoyed was the opportunity for audience participation," Taylor said. "The group has several games planned to get the audience involved. I actually won one of these games and was given a minor role in the production. It was a great experience and I cannot wait for next semester's show!"

It's clear that the return to in-person events on Grounds has allowed the arts to flourish and have a meaningful impact this past year. The ability to be present and participate in events with friends will hopefully bring more students out to next year's arts events that will continue to be an important part of the student experience at the University.

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# HEALTH & SCIENCE

## Students advocate for a disability cultural center

The Chronically Ill and Disabled Cavaliers will propose a space designed to build community for chronically ill and disabled students

Catherine Cossaboom | Staff Writer

The University may soon become the tenth school in the country to boast a cultural center for students with disabilities and chronic illnesses. As part of a growing nationwide movement to give college students opportunities to connect with disability culture, the Chronically Ill and Disabled Cavaliers are calling for a physical space in which students can congregate, study and share stories with others who empathize with their experiences.

The CIDC is a student group dedicated to creating a community that supports disabled and chronically ill students at the University.

The group's goal for the Disability Cultural Center is threefold — it would provide students with resources to support them in problem-solving, connect students to one another and in “destigmatizing disability” for the abled public, said Annie Zetkulić, third-year College student and CIDC Outreach Chair. The center would supplement — not replace — the Student Disability Access Center, which is the University's designated access agency for disabled students. CIDC already works closely with SDAC.

“Our space would ideally be very student-oriented and student-run,” Zetkulić said. “It would be a community space, whereas SDAC has the connections to the institution and the accommodations that can be provided officially.”

First-year College student Rix Prakash — inspired by his older sister who played a role in establishing Duke University's Disability Cultural Center — is leading the charge to bring the number of collegiate disability centers into the double digits.

“A lot of [students] don't feel like they have a safe environment where they can go and talk about the problems that they face today,” Prakash said. “We are trying to create the Disability Cultural Center to build a safer, more inclusive environment at UVa.”

The center would encompass both undergraduate and graduate students, and Prakash is currently hoping to create a mentorship program between the two groups.

Mausam Mehta, fourth-year Commerce student and president of CIDC, believes that the public needs to start recognizing disability as an identity, rather than an ailment, to properly support the community.

“Disability has always been categorized as something that needs to be fixed,” Mehta said. “It is generally synonymous with unhealthy ... We are really hoping to change the messaging around the identity, and we want peo-



RIX PRAKASH | THE CAVALIER DAILY

The disability cultural center would supplement — not replace — the Student Disability Access Center, the University's designated access agency for disabled students.

ple to understand that while disability and chronic illness do pose many challenges that create access barriers and are in need of solutions, disability is also an identity that we can be proud of and that we can own.”

According to Mehta, the Student Disability Access Center's current location in the new Student Health and Wellness building emphasizes the perception that disability is inherently connected with health and reinforces the need for a separate disability cultural center that could potentially be located alongside the cultural centers within Newcomb Hall. Currently, Newcomb hosts the Multicultural Student Center, the LGBTQ Center, the Latinx Center and the Interfaith Center — all of which opened in 2020 — and the Veteran Student Center, which opened in September.

“Students come into the University with this hope of building a community because a lot of times, disability and chronic illness do pose additional challenges or even just require things to be done in different and alternative ways,” Mehta said. “It is really easy to feel alienated when you can't see that experience in people around you.”

In this way, CIDC hopes to create a safe space for students to share experiences and to educate the broader University community.

“By having an actual physical location, it's going to allow students who are studying in the room — perhaps because they don't want to engage

with people who don't understand them or might judge them — to come to these areas and start to have some discussions with their fellow students who understand where they're coming from,” Prakash said.

Modeled after Duke's Disability Cultural Center, the students' vision for the center involves study spaces, meeting spaces for organizations and artwork to help students connect with their identities.

Zetkulić said having this kind of center would have been tremendously beneficial to her time on Grounds.

“There would have been a lot less shame associated with having illness on Grounds,” Zetkulić said. “It took me a long time to be honest with people I was meeting about what I needed. I think that it would have been a bit of a second home to me if I had had the opportunity to talk to people who I knew, if not had some real life experiences, could sympathize and empathize a lot with me.”

In addition, Mehta said the Disability Cultural Center would serve as a way to work toward better resources and accommodations for disabled students — including designing buildings and housing to be more accessible and adjusting how the buses run.

“There is a lot of work to be done with the overall accessibility of the University,” Mehta said. “All of those things cannot happen until we, as a center and as an identity, are able to pool our voices, bring forward statis-

tics and testimonials and have conversations with administration. That happens when we have an identity that is recognized by the University.”

For Prakash, who was born with hearing loss, it has been challenging to find seats at the front of classrooms and to effectively hear lectures — an issue that such a center could help him address.

“With the Disability Cultural Center, we could have some students who are able to take notes, for example, which could help out my community with hearing loss,” Prakash said. “And, for all students who have general types of chronic illnesses or physical or invisible disabilities, we can help them [to] talk about their problems and how we can address them.”

According to Mehta, the root of many problems associated with accommodations is that faculty are often unaware of how to properly implement them, which creates a discrepancy between the services students are supposed to receive and how those services are carried out.

This often dissuades students from requesting disability-related services in the first place — less than half of college students with disabilities are registered with their school's disability office nationwide, according to Educause. At the University, 2409 students are registered with the Student Disability Access Center, while it is projected that 5000 students from the total undergraduate and graduate

student body have disabilities, based on a normalized nationwide figure that 19 percent of college students are disabled.

“Awareness is still an ongoing journey because just because you have something written on paper does not mean that people understand its purpose,” Mehta said. “If they don't understand the purpose, they don't know how to fulfill that purpose. What we run into a lot is students who have requests that might seem a little unusual to professionals or professors, and it's harder for them to get what they need.”

This movement comes at the same time as the push for an Asian and Asian American Student Center, and Mehta is optimistic that the two campaigns will propel one another forward.

“I'm really excited about the work that they're doing,” Mehta said. “Collectively, we have a lot of power and a lot of voices ... I am very, very on board with working with as many groups for awareness as possible, and allyship is really important.”

CIDC is currently collecting data to back their proposal, surveying the student body to see whether students would use a Disability Cultural Center and what features would be most beneficial.

Though survey data is not yet finalized, CIDC has found that 97 percent of respondents — among students associated with SDAC — are in favor of the formation of the Disability Cultural Center. 55.3 percent responded that a center would be of use to them personally and 37.9 percent responded that it may be of use to them personally. Over half of students rated the University's current level of accessibility as either one or two out of five. These statistics were collected Nov. 28 from 164 participants.

Although the project is still in its initial stages, Prakash dreams of eventually taking the movement far beyond Charlottesville.

“The long-term goal is to have more universities in the United States or around the world start to create these disability cultural centers,” Prakash said. “[The current number of centers] is very misrepresentative of how many students actually need this in order to feel included.”

CIDC members met with SDAC executives Nov. 30 to discuss next steps for the center, which will ultimately be proposed to the Student Council. If passed, the plan will then travel to the Office of the President for further approval.



# Experts share how to manage seasonal affective disorder

U.Va. students are increasingly affected by seasonal affective disorder in the winter months

Katie Treene | Staff Writer

As people set clocks to “fall back” for daylight savings each year, they invite a shorter day-time into their lives. Experts from U.Va. Health and the School of Medicine explain the winter blues known as seasonal affective disorder that often come with a shortened daytime. Despite the high prevalence of seasonal affective disorder, leaders of student organizations offer ways to conquer the seasonal blues and to maintain a healthy lifestyle even during the cold winter months.

J. Kim Penberthy, a clinical psychologist in U.Va. Health’s Psychiatry and Neurobehavioral Sciences department, pointed out that seasonal affective disorder is a type of depression that is related to changes in seasons.

The symptoms of seasonal affective disorder are similar to those of depression, Penberthy said — feeling depressed for a majority of the day, decreased interest in daily activities, low energy or feeling increased agita-

tion, poor sleep, changes in appetite, difficulty concentrating and feeling hopeless or even suicidal.

According to the University Faculty Employee Assistance Program, factors contributing to seasonal affective disorder include seasonal changes in melatonin levels, drops in serotonin levels from reduced sunlight and disruptions in circadian rhythm in response to decreased sunlight.

What distinguishes seasonal affective disorder from other types of depression is that patients experience its onset in the fall and winter, but psychological effects do not persist through the rest of the year, according to Dr. Jennifer Payne, vice-chair of research for U.Va. Health Psychiatry and Neurobehavioral Sciences.

“True seasonal affective disorder means that people aren’t depressed the rest of the year,” Payne said.

According to the American Psychiatric Association, about

five percent of adults in the U.S. experience seasonal affective disorder each year. Vulnerability differs by city of residence, gender, age, genetics and psychiatric history. In general, people living in the Northern Hemisphere are more likely to develop seasonal affective disorder, which Penberthy said may be due to decreased sunlight during the winter.

“SAD is more common in women than men and occurs more frequently in younger adults than older adults,” Penberthy said. “People with a family history of blood relatives with SAD or another form of depression are at higher risk as well.”

People who are already experiencing depression, anxiety or bipolar disorder have an elevated risk for seasonal affective disorder, according to FEAP.

It is important to distinguish between seasons affective disorder and generally feeling down in the winter, Payne said.

“[SAD] is much more serious than just kind of being bummed out that it’s cold and dark, in that it’s impacting functioning,” Payne said.

There are ways to alleviate the impacts of seasonal affective disorder — Penberthy suggested getting sun exposure within one hour of waking, light therapy, medications and psychotherapy. Treatment, however, should be pursued in consultation with a physician.

“Having a healthy lifestyle, exercising regularly, getting time outside, spending time with friends and having a healthy balance of activities is one way to just maintain your mental health in general, including trying to prevent SAD,” Payne said.

There are many ways to spend time outside — even in the winter — in and around the University. The two largest of these organizations are the Outdoors Club and the Virginia Alpine Ski and Snowboard Team.

The Outdoors Club, funded through membership dues and support from the Student Council of the University, allows members to participate in almost all kinds of outdoor activities, such as hiking, caving and water sports. Eliza Stowe, third-year College student and president of Outdoors Club, explains the amazing proximity of the University to outdoor spaces.

“We are lucky that we live in an area and we have so much in-city accessibility, especially to natural areas that it makes



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it possible to get outside even within walking and running distance from our houses and stuff,” Stowe said.

Within walking distance of the University are Observatory Hill and Washington Park. Within ten miles are the Rivanna Trail, Ragged Mountain Natural Area, Ivy Creek Natural Area, Beaver Creek Reservoir and Walnut Creek Park.

Stowe explains that taking advantage of these outdoor spaces is key in the winter months.

“I think going outside all the time is ... a wonderful way to help with mental health and having a balanced life at U.Va.,” Stowe said.

Stowe lists some of the most accessible winter activities as running, hiking and going to the climbing gym at the University’s Slaughter Recreation Center.

Any University student can become a member of the Outdoors Club after paying \$25 for six months or \$50 for 12 months. Membership provides access to trips led by club members, social activities and the ability to check out outdoors gear from the club. Winter gear includes snowshoes, cross country skis, four season tents, hand warmers, wet suits and dry suits.

Another opportunity at the University to get involved in the outdoors is joining the Virginia

Alpine Ski and Snowboard Team. VASST Philanthropy Chair Carolyn Carbaug said the team practices a couple times a week, but it is very relaxed. There are opportunities for students to race, or just go out and ski for fun at Wintergreen. Members do not need experience skiing or snowboarding to join, though it can be helpful.

“Basically it’s just a community of people like me who want to ski [and snowboard],” Carolyn said.

Membership in VASST costs a few hundred dollars to cover the cost of lift tickets at Wintergreen. This membership fee allows members to ski and snowboard twice a week with the team, and participate in races if they so desire.

Whether students are just feeling bummed out due to the cold and lack of sunlight in fall and winter or they are experiencing symptoms of depression aligned with seasonal affective disorder, there are ways to alleviate these feelings. Contact Counseling and Psychological Services or U.Va. Health if symptoms are limiting daily functioning and manifesting in seasonal affective disorder.





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