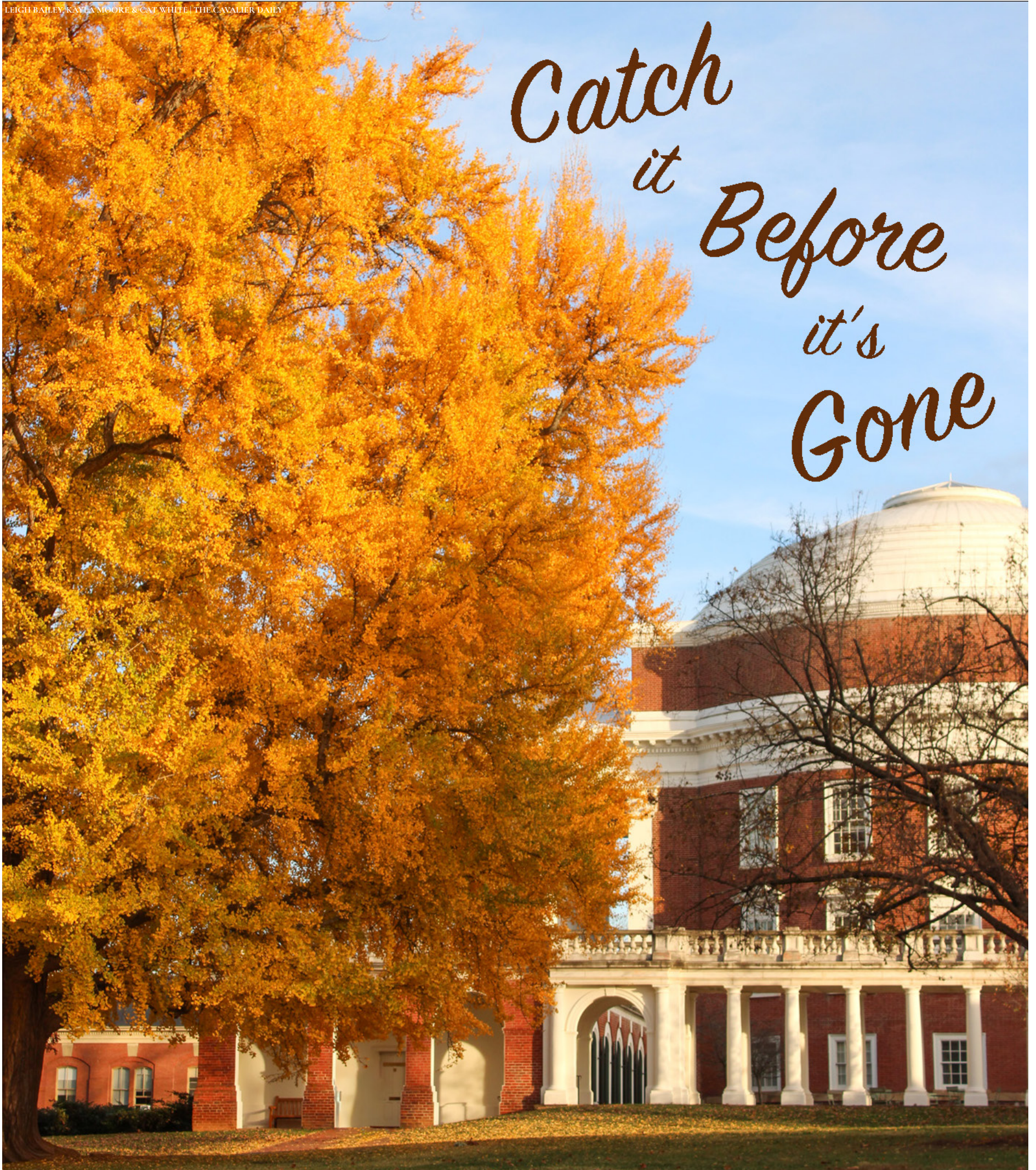


THE CAVALIER DAILY

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LEIGH BAILEY, KAYLA MOORE & CAT WHITE | THE CAVALIER DAILY



NEWS

This week in-brief

CD News Staff

Three years after the Nov. 13 shooting, U.Va. has reshaped safety systems

As the University reaches the three-year anniversary of the Nov. 13, 2022 shooting, institutional reforms to campus safety remain a central concern for students, faculty and families. In the years since the attack and following external reviews of the incident, the University has reshaped its threat assessment infrastructure, expanded emergency alert systems, reorganized student accountability operations and significantly built out mental health services.

The tragedy of Nov. 13, 2022 unfolded when Christopher Darnell Jones Jr. shot five students on a bus headed back from Washington, killing Lavel Davis Jr., D'Sean Perry and Devin Chandler, and injuring Mike Hollins and Marlee Morgan. The University remained under lockdown for 12 hours while law enforcement worked to locate Jones.

Parents of the victims have questioned whether the tragedy could have been prevented.

Two external reviews conducted by external firms at the request of the University determined that the University likely could not have prevented the shooting with the information available. But the reports still made several recommendations on how to improve threat assessment infrastructure and alert systems.

In a statement to The Cavalier Daily, University Spokesperson Bethanie Glover detailed dozens of policy updates, internal restructurings and service expansions since 2022.

The University has made changes to many sectors since the tragedy Nov. 13, 2022. But as students who were first-years in 2022 continue to mourn and reflect on the shooting, the measure of success will be the absence of another incident.

Ryan and Sheridan provide full accounts of Ryan's resignation. They differ significantly

Former University President Jim Ryan and Board of Visitors Rector Rachel Sheridan have each provided, for the first time since Ryan's resignation, full accounts of the circumstances which led to Ryan's decision to step down.

Sheridan sent a letter to the Faculty Senate Nov. 13 providing a detailed timeline of discussions with the Justice Department before Ryan's resignation. Ryan, in response, sent a letter to the Faculty Senate Nov. 14 which shared an account he wrote this summer of the circumstances leading to his resignation.

"In light of Rector Sheridan's letter, as well as the governor's, which I do not think present an accurate accounting of my resignation, I am sending my document to all of you now," Ryan wrote. "I am sorry for the slight delay. I did not send this to you yesterday because I thought it would be inappropriate to do so on the third anniversary of the tragic deaths of three of our students."

The Cavalier Daily corresponded with former Rector Robert Hardie, whose term ended June 30, regarding the two accounts. He confirmed that he agreed with Ryan's account.

"I concur fully with President Ryan's recollection of events," Hardie said.

Virginia Supreme Court refuses appeal in university appointments case

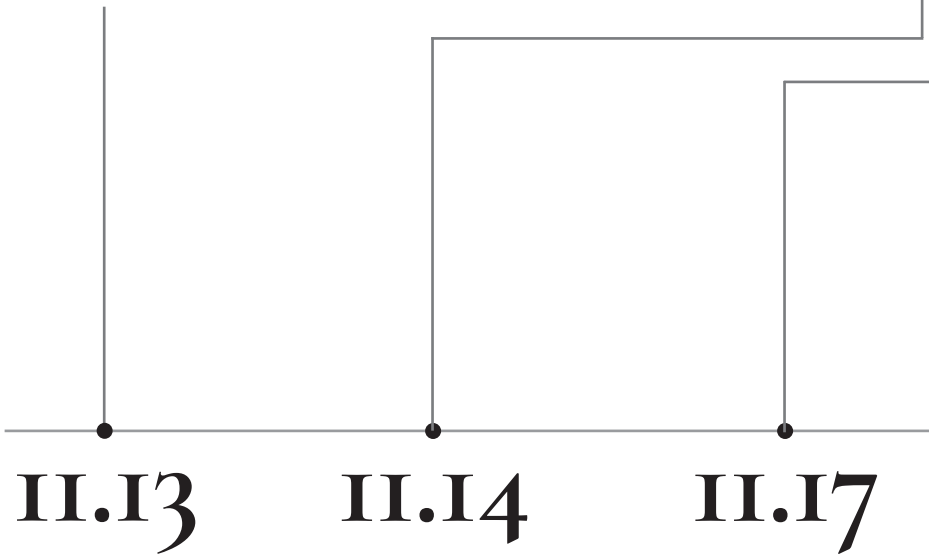
After a months-long legal battle, the Supreme Court of Virginia upheld a lower court decision in favor of Senate Democrats in a case regarding gubernatorial appointments to university governing boards across the state. This affirms the authority of Virginia Senate Democrats, who have blocked over 20 of Gov. Glenn Youngkin's appointments to university governing boards since June.

A Fairfax County judge ruled temporarily in late July that Senate Democrats did have the authority to block Youngkin's appointments to the governing boards at three schools — U.Va., George Mason University and the Virginia Military Institute. Attorney General Jason Miyares' office filed an appeal on behalf of the Commonwealth in August, and the Supreme Court refused the appeal of the injunction Monday.

"Having reviewed the record along with the parties' written and oral arguments, the Court refuses the petition for review filed in this case," the decision reads.

A spokesperson for the attorney general's office did not respond to a request for comment on the decision. University Spokesperson Bethanie Glover said the University did not have a comment at this time.

Because the decision in Fairfax County was only a temporary injunction, the refusal Monday does not end the case entirely, but rather allows the case to resume playing out in the trial court.



Faculty question FOIA requests into their records

The Virginia Freedom of Information Act allows state residents to request records from public bodies, including the University and its faculty

Nina Broderick | Senior Associate

Some University faculty have expressed skepticism about the intentions behind Freedom of Information Act requests they have received in recent years from Virginia residents and organizations. While acknowledging the right of individuals and organizations to file FOIA requests to obtain public records — such as course syllabi or emails — some faculty also claim that the law has been weaponized and created a sense of curriculum policing at the University.

According to the Code of Virginia, the Virginia FOIA law ensures access to “public records in the custody of a public body or its officers and employees.” FOIA says that “all public records shall be available for inspection and copying upon request,” unless there is an exemption invoked.

Exemptions include certain personnel records, scholastic records, health records or other information which is shared with a public institution under the condition of confidentiality. Any Virginia citizen can file a FOIA request to receive records from a state public body.

As a public body, the University and its employees are subject to records requests with a few exceptions. The Office of the University Counsel receives FOIA requests and forwards them to the individual whose records are being requested.

As of Nov. 5, the University has received 849 FOIA requests in 2025 according to University spokesperson Bethanie Glover. The number of annual FOIA requests has more than doubled since 2021 — the University received 786 requests in 2024, 633 in 2023, 472 in 2022 and only 404 in 2021.

According to Assoc. Sociology Prof. Ian Mullins, recently some FOIA requests have targeted faculty within the College of Arts and Sciences Engagements program. The Engagements program is a yearlong sequence of small, seminar style courses for first-year College students that aims to introduce them to the liberal arts and sciences.

Janet Spittler, Engagements program co-director and associate religious studies professor, confirmed via an email statement to The Cavalier Daily that every course in the Engaging Aesthetics Pillar — one of four pillars in the program which focuses on exploring the world through “the lens of human creativity” — has received a FOIA request for its syllabi. Spittler was not able to confirm when these requests were filed, nor whether the requests were limited to the Fall 2025 semester or not.

Mullins himself has received several FOIA requests over the past few years, the first being in July 2021 when the University sociology department as a whole received a request from a reporter at Campus Reform — a news publi-

cation self-described as a “conservative watchdog” focused on higher education in the U.S. — for all spring 2021 course syllabi in the department.

Campus Reform editor-in-chief Zachary Marschall did not clarify the specific reason behind this request, but elaborated on the general purpose of FOIA in an email statement to The Cavalier Daily.

“The higher education system lacks transparency and accountability, and FOIA and public records requests are essential tools to help average Americans understand how academia operates,” Marschall said.

Mullins said, however, that his concern for faculty peaked when Walter Smith, chair of The Jefferson Council Research Committee, submitted a request in March 2023 for all of Mullins’ text messages, both sent and received, concerning the University from Aug. 15, 2022 to March 5, 2023.

“When I got FOIA’d for my text messages, that’s when it felt different,” Mullins said. “Getting FOIA’d is never a good experience, because it’s intended to be a form of harassment.”

Jefferson Council President Joel Gardner said that as long as the FOIA requests relate to the University, it should not be interpreted as a harassment tactic. He emphasized that the main purpose of these requests is to understand what faculty are doing regarding the University.

“They put [FOIA] rules in place for a reason — that is, the sunlight should be shining on what public employees are doing,” Gardner said. “They’re not trying to FOIA texts going back and forth between friends or relatives ... but if it has to do with the University, I don’t see what the issue is.”

Smith’s submission did not give a specific reason for the request, as reasoning is not required under Virginia FOIA law. Mullins said that oftentimes, he did not know what the requesters were looking for or hoping to find in the records. Despite being unaware of Smith’s motives, Mullins fulfilled the request.

Smith, however, said that he never actually received Mullins’ text messages from the Office of the University Counsel. According to Smith, once the Office of the University Counsel gave him a cost estimate of around \$500 to \$600 for fulfilling the request, he decided not to pay the price.

As for his reasoning behind the request, Smith said he was curious about Mullins’ behavior over text regarding the University. Smith emphasized that business involving the University conducted over text should be considered public record, and should be saved in case of requests for these records.

“I had looked through the course catalogs and seen some of Professor Mullins’ descriptions, so I thought he is

probably among the more left wing of the professors,” Smith said. “I [wanted] to see if he [was] doing UVa. stuff on his texts. I don’t know the answer, because UVa. wanted something like \$500 or \$600.”

Smith’s inquiry came shortly after former Board of Visitors member Bert Ellis’ text messages regarding the University were obtained by a transparency advocate via a FOIA request. This prompted Smith to consider submitting FOIA requests for text messages concerning the University to learn more about professors’ behavior outside of their syllabi or emails.

A document obtained by Mullins from a local non-profit organization lists Smith’s FOIA requests between Jan. 18, 2022 and March 7, 2023. The document, which the University shared with the organization, shows Smith’s requests to University faculty as well as whole departments. These inquiries range from the astronomy department’s Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee meeting minutes to the University’s agreements with certain software companies.

According to the document, Smith filed over 100 FOIA requests for University and faculty records within this time frame.

A little more than a year after the FOIA request for his text messages concerning the University, Mullins received a request in June 2024 for “records (including but not limited to emails)” in his possession that included certain keywords dated between Oct. 7, 2023 and June 6, 2024. The keyword list included words such as Israel, Palestine, Jewish and all of its iterations, genocide, Gaza, Zionism and murder. The Office of the University Counsel notified him of the request which came from a Virginia resident.

Assoc. Art History Prof. Christa Noel Robbins said that she received an identical request with the same keyword list from the same requester in June 2024. Robbins said that the request seemed too “capacious” to have a clear motive.

“I spoke directly to the FOIA Office at UVa. when I got this request, because that just seemed impossible,” Robbins said. “I am an art historian of the Modernist Period, and the Jewish Museum is named in multiple records ... But the fact that ‘Jew’ or ‘Jewish’ in any iteration needed to be FOIA’d was crazy.”

Mullins acknowledged that FOIA can be a powerful tool for researchers and journalists, but claimed that some organizations and individuals use it as an intimidation strategy.

“While FOIA is a really useful law — researchers depend on it and journalists depend on it in order to create a sense of transparency and accountability — political actors use it as an easy form of harassment,” Mullins said. “[The

request] takes two minutes to file, and then it takes up potentially the next four months or so of someone else’s life.”

Gardner said that he finds no fault in the effort to understand what is going on inside of classrooms at public universities, emphasizing the importance of these institutions to be transparent with the public.

“If [the request] is anything to do with how the curricular is formed, or what’s contained in the curricular, I can’t even begin to imagine why that’s an issue at a public university,” Gardner said. “What’s being taught to the students should be open [and] available to the public ... Why is it harassment to ask for the truth?”

Smith agreed, stating that his FOIA requests have never had the goal of harassment but rather are solely attempts to learn the truth about what professors are doing and teaching.

“This is nothing more than an inquiry to find out what’s going on. How can I know the truth if I don’t know what’s going on?” Smith said.

Similar to Mullins, Media Studies Prof. Robin Means Coleman acknowledged the positive aspects of FOIA law and how records requests can be a valuable resource in research. Specifically, Coleman gave the example of an individual who is studying certain trends in higher education filing a FOIA request to a university with the hopes of the records helping their research.

Although Coleman emphasized that individuals and organizations have the right to access these records, and that these rights are crucial for holding public institutions accountable, she also stressed that this right has been abused to target certain offices and faculty at universities across the country.

“I’m not opposed in any way to the spirit [or] the principles of what’s behind [open records requests],” Coleman said. “The challenge that folks are facing is navigating the weaponization of that really useful tool ... It becomes sort of de facto censorship that faculty have to worry about.”

Coleman has yet to receive a FOIA request relating to her faculty role at the University, but received several while in her previous role as vice president and associate provost for Institutional Diversity and Inclusion at Northwestern University. Still today, she receives requests relating to this previous role.

Gardner, on the other hand, does not see these requests as an attempt to tamper with University operations. For him, red flags have been raised about why faculty have expressed concern with receiving these requests.

“A faculty member is, in fact, a state employee and they should be as susceptible to FOIA as any other state employee,” Gardner said. “My question is, what do they have to hide?”

Walt Heinecke, immediate past

president of the UVa. chapter of the American Association of University Professors and associate professor of Education and Human Development, expressed a similar sentiment to Coleman, describing FOIA as a “double-edged sword” that, if misused, has the potential to interfere with professors’ work.

In 2017, Heinecke received his first FOIA request which requested records of some of his emails. He said that he recalls the request to be “vague” and not clear what the requester was looking for. Since then, he has not received many requests in comparison to some of his colleagues.

“I’m not one of those targeted professors who does research on issues that are related to what the right wing is interested in shutting down,” Heinecke said. “A lot of my research has been on science and technology. I have done some work on race, but I haven’t received any targeted FOIAs about any of my classes.”

Heinecke said that it seems that the professors targeted with FOIA requests tend to be those who teach on the topics of race, political extremism and Palestine.

Coleman noted that an abundance of requests not only disrupts the individual receiving them, but the institution itself.

“It is often someone who is under the employ of an organization, who is doing this fact-finding or information-seeking with a particular agenda or to stall or halt the progress of an institution of higher education by burying that institution with these requests,” Coleman said.

Specifically, Coleman noted the need for a team of people to respond to these requests, taking away their attention from the institution’s educational mission.

“We don’t want administrators spending time responding to particularly frivolous requests. We do want our staff and administrators to be focused on the teaching and learning mission [and] the values of the institution.”

Both Heinecke and Robbins similarly stated that professors responding to large numbers of FOIA requests takes time away from teaching and researching.

“We no longer operate in safe spaces. Our work is open to public scrutiny as it always was, and we’re accepting of that, but the fact that people are scrutinizing it in bad faith has made our jobs just that much more difficult,” Robbins said. “It robs time, not only from our research, but from our students.”

U.Va. representation in Richmond declines following elections

A few alumni of the University lost their seats on election night, bringing a low share of alumni even lower

Luca Bailey | Staff Writer

As the state's flagship school, the University has historically been the alma mater of a significant number of Richmond's politicians, including statewide officeholders and large fractions of members of the General Assembly.

But following the Nov. 4 elections, several alumni serving in the House lost re-election, bringing the University's representation in the chamber to more than a 100 year low. In Virginia's statewide elections, alumni fared much better, with the decisive victories of Gov.-elect Abigail Spanberger and Attorney General-elect Jay Jones.

Four University alumni — Del. Carrie Coyner, R-Chesterfield, Del. Mark Earley, R-Chesterfield, Del. David Owen, R-Goochland and Del. Chris Obenshain, R-Montgomery — were defeated in their bids for re-election. Just one incoming member is representing the University — Class of 1988 alumnus Del.-elect Mark Downey, D-York. This will bring the University's representation in the House down to six, the lowest since the 1916 legislative session, when just three delegates were recorded by the House History website as having attended the University.

This downward trend has proven to be consistent in recent decades. In 1975, the former University attendees and alumni in the House numbered over 30. By 1995, it numbered just over 20. In 2015, the House was composed of 15 alumni, and by 2022, the number in the chamber reached single digits. Roughly one-fourth of state senators elected in 1975 had attended the University, a number which has since declined to one — Sen. Scott Surovell, D-Fairfax.

Surovell said he believes that the Nov. 4 elections were a positive step forward for the University and its students, especially on the issues of college affordability and University autonomy. Despite this, however, he said that the long-term declines in the University's representation in government are important for legislating.

"I feel like the [University] is sort of disconnected from the state [government] in...ways that it [didn't] used to be," Surovell said. "I've been kind of scratching my head as to why so few U.Va. graduates have chosen to go into serving their community in elected office... when there's fewer alumni there to advocate with you it definitely makes it harder to get things done."

Of the six alumni serving as delegates who will remain, three

attended the University for undergraduate education, and three attended for graduate programs — one at the Darden School of Business and two at the School of Law. This is an overrepresentation for both schools, which have a significantly smaller enrollment than the University's undergraduate population.

Several factors could have accounted for the decline in the University's legislative representation, including increasingly low acceptance rates and its requirement to maintain a two-thirds majority of in-state students at a time where legislators were increasingly born and raised outside of the Commonwealth.

2020 marked the first time that a majority of both delegates and senators were born outside of Virginia, a number that also steadily increased in years prior. This is representative of the Commonwealth's changing population, which the 2018 U.S. Census Bureau estimates was composed of 50.5 percent of non-Virginia born Virginians.

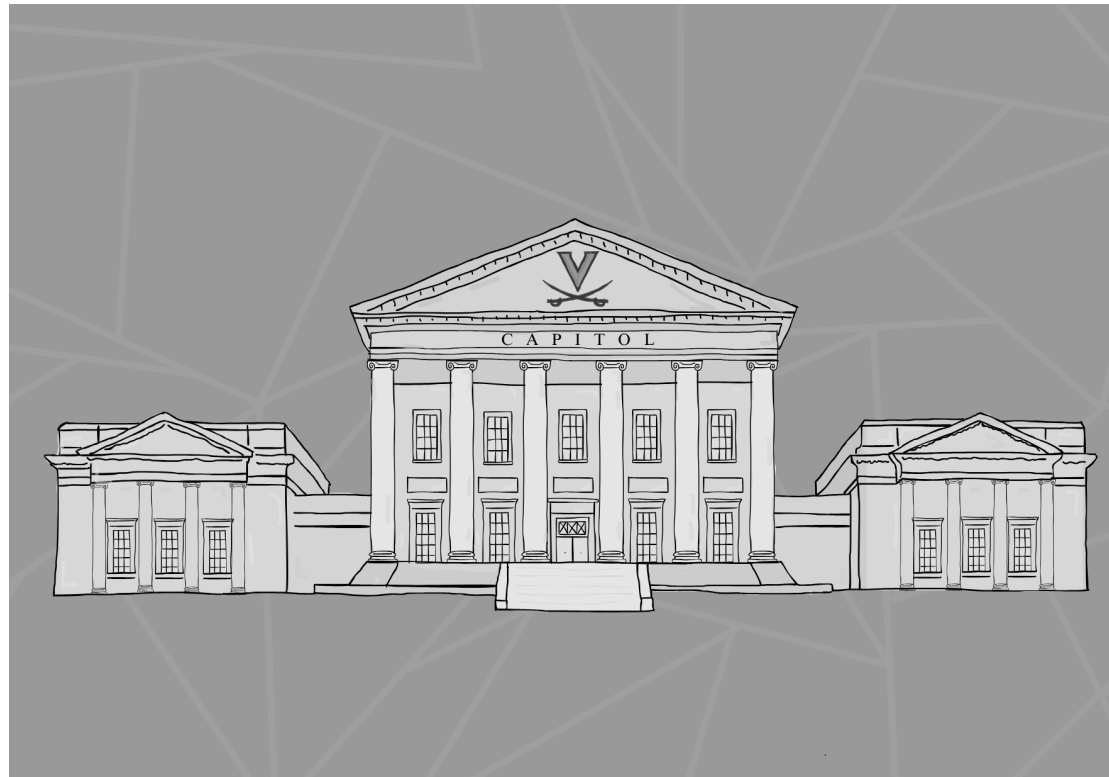
Surovell said that the School of Law — as a privatized institution — having an exemption from the policy requiring two-thirds of students to be in-state, could explain its relatively high proportion of representation in Richmond.

Del. Katrina Callsen, D-Charlottesville and one of the alumni re-elected Nov. 4, pointed out that a growing number of students at the University could also be pursuing opportunities out of state post-graduation. Either way, Callsen said she hopes these low numbers will encourage more Cavaliers to run for office in the future.

"I'm going to frame this as an opportunity and say, whoever's reading this article needs to run ... there's a ton of local seats that need talented folks," Callsen said. "So I leave it as an invitation for more people to come get involved and bring their voices."

Downey said that, while he feels the number of alumni represented in the General Assembly is generally "an ebb and flow," he ran for the House of Delegates because there were no doctors in the chamber, and felt this needed to change. He, like Callsen and Surovell, encouraged fellow alumni who were disappointed by the school's legislative representation in Richmond to run.

"We can't complain about what's coming out of Richmond if we're not in there setting policy...I would say the same to all the U.Va. alumni out there," Downey said. "If



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you're really wanting to make sure that U.Va. is protected...[running] is one way to do it...don't be reactive, be proactive."

When asked what being an alumna has enabled her to bring to the role, Callsen indicated that she has drawn on her experiences and connections at the University in order to more effectively represent her constituents in the House.

"U.Va. has been such a fabulous ongoing source of support for me," Callsen said. "My former professors help me with legislation now in Richmond ... I've worked with Professor Andy Block and his legislative clinic ... I have called professors around criminal defense law, so it's just an ongoing source of support [and] a community that I get to bring with me."

Despite the University's waning representation in the House and Senate, however, it was overrepresented in the number of alumni elected to statewide executive office Nov. 4.

Spanberger's resounding victory marked the first time in over two decades that a Cavalier was elected to lead the state as governor. Spanberger, a class of 2001 alumna, was the first alum to be elected since former Gov. Jim Gilmore, who served from 1998 to 2002. Spanberger will also be the first Democratic governor to have attended the University since former Gov. Gerald Baliles, in office from 1986 to 1990.

In a Sept. 16 visit to the University, Spanberger talked about

making changes to higher education governance given the University's importance to the Commonwealth.

"I find it really egregious on multiple levels because it isn't just U.Va. — the University — that's impacted," Spanberger said in the event. "It's U.Va. — the driver of so much of Virginia's economy."

Another University alumnus, Attorney General-elect Jay Jones, defeated Republican incumbent Jason Miyares in a surprisingly strong victory. Jones graduated from the School of Law in 2015 and spoke of his time there during the race, recounting at a debate in October that he attended when former University President Jim Ryan was a professor and tying that to the issue of the University's autonomy.

"The attorney general's office is supposed to advise and support and protect our public institutions here," Jones said in the debate. "We have not gotten that from [Miyares] because [President] Donald Trump and his cronies in Washington want to make an example of us."

Unlike the governor, a number of University graduates were elected to the post of attorney general in recent years. Former Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli, in office from 2010 to 2014 was a class of 1991 alumnus. Former Attorney General Mark Herring, in office from 2014 to 2022, received a Bachelor's Degree from the University in 1986 and a Master's Degree in

1989.

With Herring's loss to Miyares in 2021, it marked the first time since 2005 that none of the three elected statewide officeholders were alumni of the University. Not only was this reversed on Election Day, but the election marked the first since 1993 that two of the winning candidates, the governor-elect and attorney general-elect, were both University alumni.

Callsen and Downey both shared how their experiences at the school shaped their views on the issue of protecting public institutions. Callsen indicated that her experience of attending is a strong motivating factor in her efforts to defend it at a time where its autonomy is a point of contention.

"I think I bring a passion, because [University autonomy] is more than just an issue on paper," Callsen said. "[U.Va.] is where I went to school, it's where I spent time learning and growing."

Similarly, Downey indicated that his connection to the University is one of the motivating factors in his support for public education more broadly, from K-12 to institutions like the University, Virginia Tech, and JMU.

"[U.Va.] provided great opportunity for me, initially as a chemical engineer, and opened up lots of doors," Downey said. "And you know, I think that's what we need to protect in Virginia...all of our public institutions."

Sloane Lab explores how AI is used in the hiring process

A new database launched by the Sloane Lab provides greater transparency into the use of AI in talent acquisition and recruiting

Lidia Zur Muhlen | Senior Writer

As the search for post-graduation jobs and summer internships heats up, Mona Sloane, assistant professor of data science and media studies, has created a new tool to explore how artificial intelligence is used in the hiring process.

Her lab — the Sloane Lab — launched the Talent Acquisition and Recruiting AI Index, a new database designed to bring greater transparency to how AI is used throughout the hiring process. Released Nov. 6, the index is the result of nearly five years of research, including an analysis of 100 widely used recruitment AI tools and insights from 100 interviews with recruiters.

Today's job-seekers, University students included, are part of an evolving recruitment system, as companies test new tools and lawmakers consider new regulations. Sloane said the team conducted the research in order to help companies and recruiters have a better understanding of how AI can be used in the hiring process.

"There's just a general need to know more about AI and recruiting, so that recruiters can make informed decisions about their technology choice," Sloane said.

She emphasized that this knowledge gap reflects a broader challenge across industries — many people assume that AI systems are too complex to understand because even developers do not know what the internal decision-making process looks like. She explained that this perception often leads to despondence and resignation rather than curiosity.

One tool recruiters may use is HireVue — a digital interview model where candidates for jobs interact with the computer instead of a human interviewer. Hirevue used AI video facial analysis tools which are now discontinued. Laws such as the Illinois AI Interview Act now prohibit the use of AI in certain interview contexts, and HireVue currently only uses AI to analyze spoken language rather than video analysis of facial gestures.

Fourth-year Commerce student Mason Carter said he used HireVue for a variety of interviews during his second-year banking recruitment process. He acknowledged that while he was less aware of how AI was being used during his interview process, today he is left with a lot of questions. He thinks it makes the approach for an interview completely different, knowing if AI is reviewing the video versus an HR professional.

"I question how much [AI] can pick up on things that I'm intentionally trying to do in my interviews," Carter said. "My understanding of it is that the AI can pick up on, like the words you say, and maybe like the quality of your diction, but I don't know how

much it picks up on, like, making eye contact with the camera and smiling while I'm speaking."

Sloane began the project during her time at New York University, where she noticed that many recruiters had limited understanding of how AI tools operate. Once Sloane arrived at the University, the project was funded through the Data Science and Darden Research Collaboratory Fellowship and led by Sloane.

According to Sloane, the main aim of this research was to develop a way for recruiters to learn about the tools on the market. She said that they also explored the assumptions and biases that are embedded within those tools, as well as the data that is being used and how it is being processed.

She collaborated with a number of professors and students on the project, including Ellen Simpson, assistant professor of communication at the University of Alaska Southeast.

Through the research, the team found that companies frequently market themselves as "AI-powered" without explaining how the systems actually work. Sloane said she found it surprising how much analytical work and research had to be done to actually find out the purpose of a tool, and what assumptions the tool already has.

Simpson said that her research revealed an interesting tension between the technology developers and the HR professionals. Developers often aim to reduce bias in hiring, yet many of the tools embed bias from the data these tools are trained on. As a result, the tools may streamline workloads rather than meaningfully reduce discrimination. Simpson believes that AI is not going to solve the problem of bias in the workforce.

"A lot of tech is trying to solve a problem that doesn't necessarily exist," Simpson said. "A lot of what the professionals, the on the ground personnel, who are doing these jobs need help with is kind of contending with ... the overwhelming amount of paperwork."

Sloane expanded on this by addressing that AI is never going to solve the problem of a process being biased due to biases baked into each algorithm.

"Any model is biased — statistical bias is, you know, neither good nor bad in its original sense, it is just a feature of how things are," Sloane said. "What we talk about in this sort of critical AI space is the effects of that and the effects of digital systems in AI and the harms that this can create, so the actual exclusion from an opportunity."

Sloane explained how the research distinguished between two components of recruiting — low-volume recruiting and high-volume recruiting. Low-volume recruiting focuses



KEN FABIA | THE CAVALIER DAILY

Modern and technology-focused architecture seen in the School of Data Science May 8, 2025.

on small, specialized applicant pools, while high-volume recruiting is used for roles that require filling many similar positions at once.

An example of a low-volume recruitment could fall anywhere between a management consultant to a specialized engineer. High-volume recruitment would seek out delivery drivers or call center staff, according to Sloane. AI tools are present in both processes, whether ranking candidates through LinkedIn Recruiter or filtering large applicant batches. This distinction is important as the index shows how AI's role differs depending on the type of hiring, revealing which kinds of platforms are more reliant on AI than others.

Despite this, Sloane notes that human judgment remains crucial — especially in low-volume recruiting, where understanding individual applicants remains a personal process. According to Sloane, while these tools do some of the tedious work, recruiters will still want to truly put effort into getting to know the person.

Simpson encourages the University community to make the most of this new database. With so much uncertainty about the recruiting process she hopes students can use this information to tailor their applications so that they are not misunderstood through the back end of one of these tools.

"So part of the trick that the UVA community should probably take away from something like this is that

the AI that is creating your resumes is not as smart as it is advertised to be," Simpson said. "I don't think the tools are the Boogeyman — I think it is the

way the tools have facilitated just inundation of applications."

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LIFE

A quarter-life crisis, or a new way of life?

Following the Richmond Marathon, students discuss what it takes to train for 26.2 miles

Adair Reid | Staff Writer

Across semesters, seasons and times of day, University students of all backgrounds can be spotted jogging around Grounds. Distance running has become a prevalent subculture, with hundreds of students united by tight calves and lived-in Hokas.

But some student runners have goals beyond being able to scale the Corner without losing their breath. Some take the leap to train for a marathon — most recently for the Richmond Marathon Nov. 15 — and transform running from a hobby into a way of life, and maybe even ameliorate a so-called “quarter-life crisis.”

While the process can be highly rewarding, these students say the shift to marathon training comes with an array of unique challenges, from navigating busy schedules to qualifying for races.

For fourth-year Education student Gulnar Bankwalla, deciding to move from casual running to marathon training was not a personal decision, but an unexpected consequence of connecting with others through fitness. For her, the 2024 Richmond Half, her first half-marathon, was the result of habitually running with a friend, who proposed giving their runs a new sense of purpose.

“The day I started running, I started with my friend, and she was like, ‘We gotta run a half [marathon],’” Bankwalla said. “So then last year, we did the half.”

Like Bankwalla, graduate Batten student London Tuma started distance running to consistently see a hometown friend over the past two summers. A lifelong runner, Tuma’s friend helped her see running as a social activity, and their conversations made the miles fly by in a way they had not before.

“That’s why I started ... because [my friend and I] didn’t have time to hang out,” Tuma said. “We would just [run] slow and talk.”

Even family can play a role. Third-year College student Sam Darer was inspired by his father, a longtime marathoner, to run the Richmond Half Marathon. Like his father before him, Darer said that committing to a race has helped him introduce longer-term goals into his life and establish a structured routine to achieve them.

“In college, I’ve been big on setting goals for myself and whether I noticed it or not, [running a marathon] was a good way of embodying that,” Darer said.

In their marathon-running pursuits, Bankwalla, Tuma and Darer join a widespread marathon craze sweeping Gen Z. Some online dis-

course has characterized the spike as a new “quarter-life crisis.” Though she understands the term, Bankwalla said that her decision to take on marathon training was not the result of a negative spiral — she simply wanted to push herself.

“I would never tell someone I’m a runner. So, I suddenly [wanted] to run a marathon, and I need to prove to myself that I can,” Bankwalla said. “That could be part of the ‘quarter-life crisis’ of it all.”

On the other hand, Tuma said that she experienced a crisis — but only after she had finished her training for the 2024 Richmond Marathon when she found herself missing the structure she had grown accustomed to as she prepared for the race.

“If anything, [running a marathon] caused a quarter life crisis after being done with it,” Tuma said. “After my first marathon training program, I didn’t know what to do with myself, because I had lived such a structured program for four months.”

Whatever students’ motivations, slotting these training plans into overloaded academic schedules and social calendars can introduce new challenges. For Darer, the sizable amounts of time needed to fit in more mileage compelled him to put more thought into each day of his training plan.

“It’s definitely a big time commitment,” Darer said. “Running 20 miles is one thing, but I think for me, running for three hours was the harder thing ... You definitely need to structure out your days.”

All of that mileage, however, is no use if physical ailments put a runner out of commission. According to Bankwalla, even with routine strength training, overuse injuries can make it difficult to stay on track.

To offset the risk of injury, as well as sustain her long runs, Bankwalla said that she had to learn to eat well. She said that while energy gels, gummies and other quick-to-absorb carbohydrates may be promoted in online communities like Running-Tok, they are not a one-size-fits-all nutrition solution.

“[My friend and I] had to learn how to fuel ... because we didn’t really do that for our half at all,” Bankwalla said. “You cannot run 26 miles without getting the carbs in.”

Regardless of their training methods, schedules and diets, all three of these students agree that once you prepare for and run a marathon, the next race seems to come in succession. For Bankwalla and Tuma, the Richmond Marathon in 2024 was

their first marathon experience, and they said that “America’s Friendliest Marathon” inspired them to do another.

“It was supposed to just be a silly one-off thing. And then that’s never how it works,” Tuma said.

This past weekend, Bankwalla ran the full 26.2 miles in Richmond, a year after running the half marathon in 2024. While she had difficulty pushing through miles midway through the race, she said camaraderie from friends, family and even strangers helped her overcome the challenge.

Darer also raced in Richmond Saturday, running the Richmond Half Marathon while his father and roommate ran the full marathon. Darer said that while he felt accomplished when he crossed the finish line, it was supporting his loved ones that made his weekend in Richmond special.

“I literally ran ... two extra miles running around the course, trying to make sure I didn’t miss [my dad and roommate],” Darer said.

As for Tuma, running the Boston Marathon in April 2026 quickly became the next goal after last year’s race in Richmond. Although qualifying is a complicated process, the marathon has a flagship charity program that allows runners to run and fundraise for a cause.

After submitting an application and doing an interview, Tuma landed a spot to fundraise on behalf of Mass Eye and Ear, a specialty hospital in Boston. She aims to raise \$26,200 for research on Usher syndrome, a rare genetic disease that has affected her father.

“I’m going to raise as much as I can,” Tuma said. “I’m really excited for this, to run this for him — the most emotional ... performance of my life.”

Whether running for a cause or just for kicks, these students say that marathoning is in reach for anyone. Bankwalla said that for her, the hardest part about marathon training was starting from scratch and working up the endurance to run a 5K. After that, she said, adding miles came easily. Tuma shared a similar sentiment, saying that the human body is capable of a lot more than the brain lets on, and marathoners simply have to tap into that potential.

“I think if people really want to [run a marathon], they absolutely can,” Tuma said. “It’s more mental than anything. It’s consistency.”



KAYLA MOORE | THE CAVALIER DAILY

Third-year College student Sam Darer was inspired by his father, a longtime marathoner, to run the Richmond Half Marathon.



TABITHA SHIN | THE CAVALIER DAILY

Graduate Batten student London Tuma started distance running to consistently see a hometown friend over the past two summers.



NITYA MIRAJKAR | THE CAVALIER DAILY

For fourth-year Education student Gulnar Bankwalla, deciding to move from casual running to marathon training was not a personal decision, but an unexpected consequence of connecting with others through fitness.

Dishes sing at Lampo Neapolitan Pizzeria

This small-scale, big-flavor hot spot hits all of the right notes

Sam Saks | Staff Writer

Last spring, my friend and I unintentionally went to Lampo2GO, Lampo Neapolitan Pizzeria's takeout-only location near IX Art Park, when we had meant to have a sit-down meal at the main location. Since then, I have been planning to find a time to do it right and dine in. After spending the day bouncing between far too many group projects and cooped up in my apartment chopping away at finals prep, I decided it was the perfect evening to get out and re-energize myself with dinner.

Lampo was founded in 2014 by chefs Loren Mendosa, Mitchell Beerens, Andrew Cole and Ian Redshaw, all of whom became friends while working at Charlottesville restaurant Tavola. The pizza parlor, aiming to achieve certification by the Associazione Verace Pizza Napoletana, goes all out. Lampo uses the proper “00” flour, serves pizza unsliced and even imported a wood-burning pizza oven that had to be lowered into the restaurant from above. There are only 94 certified restaurants in the United States, and

Lampo is determined to get on that list.

Lampo is located in Charlottesville's Belmont neighborhood, just a six-minute walk from Ting Pavilion and about a 10-minute drive from Central Grounds. The restaurant is open for dinner Wednesday through Saturday from 5 p.m. to midnight. Lampo operates on a first come, first serve basis rather than offering reservations, and given that the small space has only 21 seats, you'll want to arrive close to opening to clinch a table.

The restaurant, a narrow, pale yellow building with backlit letters, was much smaller than I'd initially perceived from driving by so many times. I arrived at just the right time — at quarter to 6 p.m. on a Saturday, I was able to snag the last bar seat. The restaurant's small size, combined with its dim lighting, gave it a classy feel, and the staff was laid back and made me feel relaxed.

I spent a few minutes pouring over the menu, which offered a mouthwatering array of salads, panuozzi — a

type of Italian sandwich made with stuffed pizza bread — and pizzas. I asked the bartender whether he'd recommend the Margherita Pizza or the Margherita DOC Pizza. Per his suggestion, I ordered the Insalata Verde to start and the Margherita Pizza as my entrée.

As I waited for my starter, I got to see the massive pizza oven in action and staff creating dishes with fresh ingredients just by the bar. I also took in the space, which had a simple yet sophisticated character to it, serving dishes in an environment so small and stripped down that it felt both cozy and elegant. I was also able to see the art of drink making right in front of me, with the bartender masterfully rimming a glass with salt and using jiggers to carefully craft each beverage.

Just 10 minutes after ordering, I dug into the Insalata Verde, which was presented in a hearty portion completely covered in shaved parmesan cheese. The little gem lettuce was very fresh, each piece perfectly coated in anchovy dressing. The large pieces of

parmigiano frico atop the dish could easily be broken apart into smaller bits and were light, crunchy and added a bitter element to the dish that contrasted the sweetness of the shaved parmesan.

Less than 10 minutes after I got my salad, the main attraction was before me. My 12-inch pizza, uncut and adorned with dollops of fior di latte cheese spread across a sea of vibrant red and basil leaves, came equipped with pizza scissors — dining made fun. The crust was chewy and had a slight char that gave the dish a smoky effect without tasting burnt. The sauce, made with San Marzano tomatoes, had a lightly sweet taste that blended beautifully with the rich flavor of the cheese. The pizza itself was thin, making it all too easy to keep returning to the scissors for another slice.

I decided to round out the night with dessert by ordering the Zeppole dish, which consisted of five massive fried ricotta donuts generously doused in cinnamon sugar with a lemon on the side. The donuts came out hot and,

given their size, rather dense. The exterior of the donuts was soft and thin, and the cinnamon sugar supplemented a nice flavor to the donut interior. This sweet treat was the perfect add-on to an already satisfying meal.

All in all, I felt that I had gotten a steal for such generous portion sizes — the Insalata Verde was \$8, the Margherita was \$17 and the Zeppole was \$9. It is worth noting that Lampo uses an automatic 18 percent service charge.

Lampo cooks up a fantastic night out, from the subdued yet sophisticated atmosphere to carefully curated dishes that evoke snapshots of Italy here in Virginia. When pizza is the main entree a restaurant offers, it's got to be good — and at Lampo, the Neapolitan-style pizzas are phenomenal. Whether you're looking for a nicer night out with friends, searching for a date night location or want to celebrate the end of a successful fall semester with family, Lampo's got you covered.

Yes, having a boyfriend is embarrassing

How the label itself became heavier than the relationship, and why we still want it anyway

Anna Stamey | Staff Writer

If you're anywhere online, you may have stumbled across a certain British Vogue article posing the million-dollar question — has having a boyfriend become embarrassing? Naturally, my first insights of the article itself originated on TikTok. However, my in-app searches failed to quench my curiosity, and the question lingered in my head long after my nightly doom-scroll. Ultimately, I decided that, yes, I do find the idea of being in a relationship a bit cringe these days.

The Vogue piece by columnist Chanté Joseph made me think deeply about the shifting cultural significance of the capital-R Relationship. Since the beginning of time, women especially have been taught that having a beau, suitor or boyfriend is the ultimate accomplishment — something to be socially celebrated and validated. So why is it now that flaunting a newfound coupledom asserts a reaction less of, “You made it” and more, “Girl, are you sure about him?”

I'll admit, I've never had a boyfriend. Not because I hate love or affection — but because no one has convinced me to sacrifice my peace or free time. Joseph's article made me realize that maybe my hesitation is

more than just personal preference. Instead, it might just overlap with this newfound social phenomenon that having a boyfriend can feel embarrassing.

This broad shift in discourse around heterosexual relationships is largely reflected online. Where young people used to jump at the chance to post annual photo dumps celebrating their anniversary, many now hesitate — not because they're suddenly anti-romance, but because the act of posting feels loaded. Even the bravest of the bunch only risk a fleeting reference to a man — a flower bouquet or a blurry shoulder dispatched to their Snapchat story.

And that hesitation makes perfect sense. Even in today's largely feminist media climate, discourse on social media closely associates a woman's value with how much of a “catch” her man appears to be. Often in heterosexual relationships, a boyfriend isn't just a partner — he becomes a short-hand for a woman's taste, status or supposed “discernment.” If the man is deemed to be more attractive or impressive than the woman, they accuse her of “dating up.” If vice versa, they label the partnership as “charity work.”

When every grand reveal risks be-

coming a scorecard on your relationship, sharing less starts to feel like the safest move. Because if you fail? Yep, embarrassing.

And if I'm honest, my own apprehensions about these imbalances come from watching them play out, as friends downplay arguments, crop photos or refrain from posting altogether to avoid judgement. But there's also a deep protective instinct at play. I enjoy my autonomy, and since watching friends fade into relationships that slowly erode their edges — at the very least, change their playlists and priorities — a boyfriend feels somewhat like a threat to my freedom.

So when people are astonished to hear that I've never been soft-launched myself, my reasoning doesn't purely stem from Joseph's argument that relationships can feel embarrassing. The simplest answer I can provide is that I refrain from dating because I can — and because boyfriends, in all their public-facing expectations, can indeed feel far more embarrassing than empowering.

And honestly, the “boyfriend” issues Joseph depicts go beyond just embarrassment. Joseph refers to a frightening concept called “Boyfriendland” — a magical place where

a woman's identity revolves around her boyfriend, with the opposite usually never being the case. I also harbor the worry that if I were to get a boyfriend, I'd stop being interesting, relevant or worse — that I'd become that guy's “girl” before everything else.

Now, these worries aside, I have to acknowledge the unavoidable truth that sometimes, boyfriends themselves are embarrassing in the most literal sense. Not in an Earth-shattering way — just in a “Why is he wearing flip flops in November” or “Why does he call my friends ‘bro’” kind of way. Alas, love is delusional. Icks start becoming quirks, and standards start to slide into the abyss.

Still, despite these sometimes cringe-worthy attributes that I may or may not have noticed in my friends' boyfriends, embarrassment isn't really about boyfriends themselves. Instead, maybe the real cringe is simply caring. Nonchalance is synonymous with emotional detachment. Commitment feels risky, monogamy feels slightly outdated and expressing outward affection feels like handing someone a loaded weapon.

However, since we are, in fact, human, many of us do want something real. Something soft and familiar. Someone to walk home with, rant

about our days to or keep a TikTok streak with. Joseph's article hints at the truth — it isn't embarrassing to fall in love. It just feels embarrassing to say it out loud or be hurt by it.

Despite all of this discourse, I find that there's a quiet revolution brewing beneath the cynicism. Maybe this “embarrassment” isn't an outright dismissal of love, but a refusal for the external scrutiny or need for approval to dictate how it looks. It's a quiet insistence that intimacy shouldn't require an audience, and choosing that privacy over performance can feel empowering.

Because beneath the awkward soft launches and hidden situationships, unfortunate haircuts and flip-flops in winter, I realized what Joseph was getting at — wanting to be known or loved isn't embarrassing at all. It's deeply and incredibly human.

Maybe the new flex isn't just having a boyfriend — it's choosing someone whose presence you don't feel the need to hide, someone you're willing to let witness that humanity right beside you.

And someday, if I do post a blurry shoulder on my main, trust that I wholeheartedly mean it.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Día de los Muertos exhibit celebrated art and commemoration

The values of Latin American tradition, culture and connection shone through in the 14th annual remembrances

Delaney Coppola | Staff Writer

The doors of downtown's McGuffey Art Center opened to a sea of color this November, with paper flag garlands strung from the ceiling, painted skeletal masks adorning the walls and marigolds galore decorating surfaces. Walking through the first floor halls, a web of displays interspersed with saved messages of memory from past years transformed the gallery with the festive spirit of the 13-day Día de los Muertos exhibition, carefully crafted in remembrance of loved ones now passed on.

Día de los Muertos is a Mexican celebration to honor the deceased and celebrate their lives with offerings, decorations, music, dancing and time spent with family. From Nov. 4 through 16, the exhibition — which celebrated its 14th anniversary this year — offered the public a glimpse into some aspects of this rich and vibrant tradition.

Organized by the Lua Project — a local Mexilachian y Appalachian music group seeking to bridge cultures through music — the display was made possible by the contributions of Charlottesville's Mexican and Latine community members, who reserve spaces to honor their loved ones and spend time adorning the halls with offerings.

From humble beginnings over a decade ago, the Día de los Muertos event has grown into a beloved community staple. While originally a two-day endeavor, the McGuffey Art Center now hosts a 13-day observance to accommodate growing interest and appreciation. Estela Knott, musician and co-founder of the Lua Project as well as an organizer of the exhibition, said that the community enthusiastically embraces this cultural connection and admiration of the ofrendas, handmade altars filled with personal touches to honor loved ones.

"It first started out as just a small group of women ... [who] decided we wanted to build an ofrenda as Día De Muertos was a celebration that they missed most from their home country of Mexico," Knott said. "We decided to invite the public out and over 200 people showed up that first year. It's just grown more and more each year."

Alongside the established altars embellished with personal remembrances, attendees are invited to participate in their own efforts as well when visiting the

exhibit. Supplied with paper bags and markers to craft their own luminaria bag, the public's own messages of memory and notes to late loved ones line the walls between the ofrendas and create a memorial spanning the entire perimeter.

These additions to the celebration create a communal collage of commemoration, integrating the community's personal touches with traditional decorations. This patchwork of messages are saved and spread out again each year, revealing a sense of history of the event in Charlottesville and highlighting the continuous nature of remembrance. For Knott, this interactive element of the celebration holds an especially meaningful importance.

"I love this because it puts us in touch with each of the people who share a memory with this celebration," Knott said. "I've heard a number of times from people who come each year that they've seen bags that their loved ones who have passed have made in previous years. It's really special."

As the event itself has evolved over the years, so has the community network it has been able to reach. In addition to remaining open and free to the public for the duration of its residence, the exhibition features a focus on collaboration and engagement by inviting local individuals and groups to help bring the celebration to life. These involvements range from musical performers on the opening evening, such as singer Elizabeth Lainez and Xavier Vidal of the Foreign Playerz group, to representation in the memorial altars themselves.

Knott reflected on the cooperation and contribution of many supporters who left a lasting impact on this year's decorations and altar assembly, including Fuerza Latina, Sin Barreras, Woven Roots Collective and Panorama Natural Burial among others.

"We always create a community together, so if community members would prefer to help with that, they are invited each year to do so," Knott said.

Asst. Spanish Prof. María Esparza Rodríguez shared this opportunity with University students via email to encourage community engagement. She similarly echoed a sentiment of togetherness, saying the Día de los Muertos exhibition has added value to both her life and the local Charlottesville envi-

ronment.

"[The event] is a beautiful celebration of life and an opportunity to bring the Charlottesville community together," Esparza Rodríguez said. "It honors our loved ones but, perhaps more importantly, gives us a chance to continue building kind and loving communities and to make new friends."

While engagement from neighbors and interested residents proves a key facet of the festivities, the deep-rooted tradition of Día de los Muertos resides with Charlottesville's Mexican and Latine community, whose leadership and communication continues to shape the exhibit. The balance of inclusivity, education and the preservation of traditional cultural roots results in a dynamic and integrated atmosphere dedicated to an authentic representation of Latine heritage.

"At the core of it are Latine people, this is very important as we want to keep it rooted in tradition, as we evolve how it roots itself in Virginia," Knott said. "When we make important Latine rituals and celebrations a rooted communal experience in our community ... it helps young people value them as well and encourages integrat[ion] rather than assimila[tion]."

Knott, whose Mexican heritage has played a major role in her artistic expression as a presenter and performer, said that her experience of Día de los Muertos has transformed her perspective on loss. She explained how the holiday has provided a sense of comfort and community during hard times.

"It has given us the understanding that life isn't an end, it's a doorway. That death is a part of life and with this celebration we live on in the memories and in all of the lives that we touched along the way," Knott said.

In inviting Charlottesville residents to share stories of love, grief and memory, this celebration has strengthened the connections of the city for over a decade. As this year's Día de los Muertos exhibition comes to a close, Knott emphasized the connections yet to come with future years of the event.

"We all have something beautiful to share," Knott said.



DELANEY COPPOLA | THE CAVALIER DAILY

Supplied with paper bags and markers to craft their own luminaria bag, the public's own messages of memory and notes to late loved ones line the walls between the ofrendas.



DELANEY COPPOLA | THE CAVALIER DAILY

In inviting Charlottesville residents to share stories of love, grief and memory, this celebration has strengthened the connections of the city for over a decade.

Exploring the body as a vessel in ‘Decadent Dissolution’

The New City Arts exhibit showcases sculptures and paintings to draw connections between the body, soul and environment

Calla Mischen | Staff Writer

Chloe Clayborne, Class of 2025 alumna, is an interdisciplinary artist who focuses on the transcendent, using her art to question what a human soul is and how it relates to the world. Her current exhibit “Decadent Dissolution” at New City Arts in the Downtown Mall explores these themes through sculpture, as well as oil and watercolor paintings.

This exhibit runs from Nov. 7 to Nov. 22, and is the culmination of Clayborne’s recent work which works to make sense of the unexplainable. When she was young, she and her family converted to Catholicism, causing her to question the truths that are told through faith.

“[I have] memories of asking those questions to [Catholic] priests and not having answers,” Clayborne said. “I sort of use [my] art as an approach to have some sort of exposure to these questions or these fears to digest them and be able to contend with them on a daily basis.”

“Decadent Dissolution” consists of eight oil paintings and nine smaller water colors, along with nine hand-sculpted pots and an anatomical figure. Through the use of mixed media, Claybourne shows her process of questioning the metaphysical and trying to find answers about the soul and the afterlife.

The use of anatomical images in both the foreground and background of many of her paintings, along with a sculpture of a heart, convey the focus that Clayborne has on the body. The body becomes one with natural elements, showing how similar and connected humans are to nature.

Every November, New City Arts hosts a Studio Art fourth-year student or an Aunspaugh Fellow — a fellowship which allows a Bachelor of Arts in Studio Art student to complete a fifth year at the University, with the goal being to develop an artistic portfolio. They invited Clayborne, a current Aunspaugh Fellow, to create the exhibit in August, and she had about two months to prepare for the November exhibit. She said that her involvement in creating art and setting up the space for her exhibit was an exciting and new experience.

“It’s been really fun trying to curate and make my own show,” Clayborne said. “Not many people get an opportunity to do that at 22 years old.”

Clayborne’s largest work spanning 60 by 84 inches and taking up an entire wall at New City Arts, is an oil on canvas titled “fallen unto an autumn breeze (which blows through tiring trees, tickling away yesteryear’s leaves).” A woman is the focal point of the piece whose hair and body look like a tree

with brown roots digging into the ground. Surrounding the woman are repetitions of flowers, acorns and birds, with the woman becoming part of the landscape.

The interconnectedness of the human body to the environment is shown through the utilization of anatomical body parts, with trees that look like veins in the background, parts of a skeleton within the woman’s torso and a realistic heart painted at the bottom. Through the use of bodies, Clayborne represents the body as a vessel, one that functions with or without our minds telling it to.

“I was thinking a lot about the body as this membrane or a vessel that is a lot more interconnected to other things than we think,” Clayborne said. “[I thought about] how the body can become an archive and how the body holds memory.”

Audiences of the exhibit enjoyed Clayborne’s work, commenting on the beauty and artistic style of the works. MaKshya Tolbert, class of 2024 alum and artist, said this work reminded them of mermaids or nymphs from mythology. The exhibit showcased a lot of pink and green hues throughout the works, which Tolbert said made them enjoy the seasonality of the collection. They thought Clayborne’s imagination and artistic talent shone through and created a sense of deep personal thought.

“It just makes me think about a personal mythology, a personal environment like this could be what someone’s inner life looks like,” Tolbert said.

Many of the smaller paintings are tied together through placement, with the smaller water colors all hanging on a fence and similar-looking oil paintings hanging on the same wall. Within a collection of three oil paintings are black painted beetles and other bugs inside what looks to be shaped as human organs. They create a connection to the human figures in the larger works and blend the environment with the body, removing the separation between foreground and background.

Tolbert said that they enjoyed the comparison between the woman’s body and the beetles that is created by the smaller and larger paintings.

“[I like] the beetle body and the woman’s body,” Tolbert said. “I’m drawn to the intimacy between the beings that are in the photos, and they’re all imbued with environment without any of the borders or the management or the boundaries.”

Painting and pottery were combined in this collection, with the pots interspersed throughout the

space — on chairs and the ground — while the paintings hung on the wall, allowing audiences to admire and draw connections between both artforms. The pots are used to contrast the bodies depicted in the paintings, as another form of vessel. Clayborne uses these pots, filled with plants, to show another way that vessels can contain life, with the plants growing and surviving relying on outside forces, similar to the way humans must do.

“I really like the idea of the tradition of using ceramic, like clay, to make vessels,” Clayborne said. “And comparing the vessel to a body. And using the vessel in particular ... as a way to compare and think through how the body is porous and how the body [contains] things that we don’t see in there.”

Her pots are made through repetition of movements of Clayborne’s thumb digging into the wet clay to make the dug-out pattern. She said the repetitive movements mirror the continuity of constantly thinking and questioning, which is what she hopes to communicate through her art.

“The process of making is also really important when I’m talking about my work, because that the process of continuously doing something over and over again ... mirrors the continuity of constantly thinking about and existentially questioning things on a daily basis,” Clayborne said.

Clayborne hopes that in the future, she can make her work express darker themes of questioning and attempting to search for the unknowable — stemming from her transition into Catholicism during her youth. She realizes her current art style is too conventionally beautiful and worries people may not initially understand her work, saying that often people only see the deeper meanings after she explains and discusses it.

“I don’t try to make pretty work, but I end up doing it,” Clayborne said. “[I want to figure out] how do I create more work that might initially elicit different reactions ... [such as] gross, uncomfortable, claustrophobic. I don’t know, a lot of these feelings that I’m feeling through doing the work myself — that doesn’t always get carried across.”

However, Tolbert said that this exhibition made them step a little outside of what is conventional.

“It does make me feel just ever so slightly like outside of what would be comfortable,” Tolbert said.

Clayborne’s paintings and sculptures are available for purchase at the exhibit, which runs from Nov. 7 to Nov. 22 at New City Arts.



KATE MERCER | THE CAVALIER DAILY

Clayborne’s largest work is an oil on canvas titled “fallen unto an autumn breeze (which blows through tiring trees, tickling away yesteryear’s leaves).”



KATE MERCER | THE CAVALIER DAILY

Clayborne uses these pots, filled with plants, to show another way that vessels can contain life.



KATE MERCER | THE CAVALIER DAILY

“Decadent Dissolution” consists of eight oil paintings and nine smaller water colors, along with nine hand-sculpted pots and an anatomical figure.

Out with the old, in with the Nuuly

From formal events to everyday clothing, Nuuly is combining sustainability and fashion at the University

Fiona Goo | Staff Writer

Life as a University student can mean dressing for many occasions, from football tailgates to sorority formals and from 30 degree mornings to 60 degree afternoons. This fall, many students have increasingly found that subscriptions to Nuuly — an online fashion rental company — are a sustainable way to both expand their closets and find fun pieces for special events and everyday wear.

Nuuly offers a monthly subscription through which users get to choose six items of clothing to wear for that month. Their choices can be shipped anywhere within the United States. While competing fashion rental brands such as Rent the Runway offer rentals of more upscale brands, Nuuly features well-known options like Free People, Altar'd State and Urban Outfitters, which can appeal more to college students.

On Grounds, Nuuly has found its place in Greek life in particular. Around 25 percent of the University's undergraduate population is involved in Greek life, according to Student Affairs, which often means a multitude of special events requiring formal wear. Catherine Zhou, Pi Phi sorority member and third-

year College student, said that she mainly uses her Nuuly subscription for formal events. Additionally, she said that the app has helped her cut down on her clothing consumption while keeping up with trends.

"I started it last semester when I had formals and date functions, and I was realizing that buying a dress or buying an outfit for every single scenario was just so impractical," Zhou said.

However, the app's high price point can also be a caveat for college students. At \$98 a month, a Nuuly subscription is a fair price for a bundle of six pieces, most of which retail for well over \$100, but is still a big commitment for most students. Zhou said that she strategizes her subscription to get the most use out of it given the price.

"I think you can maximize what you get. It's kind of like a game of what's worth it," Zhou said. "You could order pieces that are from Urban Outfitters that might cost like \$50 if you just bought it off the rack. But then if it's like, \$100 rental service for the month... last time I got like a \$500 formal dress."

With a monthly subscription, it

is easy to plan ahead and have outfits for upcoming events while keeping consumption low. Third-year College student Riley Wheelan noted that Nuuly is extremely timely.

"It's really fast," Wheelan said. "Every time I've gotten it's come within like, two days. So it's really convenient for last minute stuff."

While Wheelan said that she has mainly used Nuuly for specific events such as formals and vacations, the company also has options for everyday wear. Nuuly's selections include athleisure, sweaters, denim and jackets as well. Zhou, who is an out-of-state student from Mississippi, said that getting jackets from Nuuly for colder Virginia winters can be especially useful.

However, the implications of Nuuly usage extend beyond personal affordability and choice. In a world where fast fashion is increasingly pervasive, sustainable clothing choices such as renting and thrifting are becoming more popular with those who are concerned about environmental and ethical issues.

According to Marcy Linton, associate professor of costume technology in the drama department,

the fashion industry negatively impacts the environment in a myriad of ways. The average consumer is often unaware of these damages, she said.

"I don't think people realize the amount of waste that goes into the water systems because of dyes and tanning and finishing," Linton said. "All of those chemicals — they don't go anywhere."

She went on to say that Nuuly can be an appealing choice for those interested in sustainability because the cyclical nature of the subscription model makes space for a key part of the fashion industry — trends.

"There's always going to be trends," Linton said. "That's going to be the hardest part. So the thing that works about Nuuly is that people ... can change what they're doing to be trendy."

Despite carrying fast fashion brands such as Urban Outfitters and Anthropologie, Nuuly has a section of "responsibly made styles," which are made of at least 50 percent certified materials sources environmentally, as well as upcycled and vintage styles. Nuuly also specifies that 70

percent of their cleaning is done by energy and water efficient washing machines.

Fourth-year College student Catherine Gregoire mentioned that Nuuly's sustainability stood out to her and has helped her broaden her fashion sense.

"I really like it because it really elevates my wardrobe, while also being an environmentally viable option for wearing clothes," Gregoire said. "I feel I'm more likely to venture out of my comfort zone with getting pieces, because I know that I'm not committed to them, and I'm not going to buy them unless I'm obsessed."

Whether one is looking for formal wear, elevating an everyday wardrobe or bundling up for a Charlottesville winter, a quick browse through Nuuly's high quality options will yield many rental choices. And though there are fast fashion brands on the app, renting and re-using through Nuuly makes consumption more sustainable. So before filling up a Shein cart, consider trying Nuuly for a trendy — and environmentally friendly — month.

The story behind the Lawn's unofficial troubadour

Equipped with a low stool and acoustic guitar, Todd Bullard has been subtly soundtracking the Academical Village since the early 2010's

Ben Apostol | Senior Associate

Students who frequent the Lawn may have recurrently noticed an impromptu one-man show. For 15 years, Class of 1979 alumnus Todd Bullard, motivated by a love of music, serene weather and the Lawn, has made a habit of visiting to sing and strum his guitar.

Bullard's folk-style sessions typically take place on sunny afternoons, where he sings both original songs and classic 1960's folk rock tunes from artists like Bob Dylan, Simon & Garfunkel, the Beatles and Cat Stevens. His original folk songs span many themes, sometimes relating to his marriage or reflecting on how he hopes to be remembered after passing, for example.

Bullard previously performed his own pieces weekly at The Local, a restaurant in Charlottesville's Belmont neighborhood, and has also featured at hotels in Shenandoah National Park. In Bullard's eyes, however, scheduled performances were not as personally fulfilling as his time playing at the University is. Financial gain has never

been the muse for his artistic hobby and the strings attached to pre-arranged gigs remove the flexibility and peace he finds on the Lawn.

"It's almost like work when you're arranged to do a gig. You have to be there at a certain time and set up your PA system and you play for a while ... But it's all scheduled," Bullard said. "That's one fun thing about going to the Lawn. If I just feel like sitting there, sometimes I don't play anything. I just sit there and enjoy the weather."

His undergraduate experience was interestingly not at all defined by anything musical. After graduating from the School of Architecture, Bullard went on to work at the Charlottesville-based architecture firm VMDO Architects in 1981, eventually becoming a co-owner for nearly two decades prior to his retirement.

The company has worked on a number of projects for the University, with Bullard himself involved with some designs on Grounds throughout his career,

like the construction of Hereford Residential College in the 1980s. It was during his professional and retired life in Charlottesville that Bullard began his musical pursuits and found his place on the Lawn, serenading the University he once attended and once helped shape.

"I didn't sing, I didn't play an instrument at that point in time, at all. In fact, I hardly ever went to the Lawn when I was a student," Bullard said. "It wasn't until much later, I kind of rediscovered it and found that it was kind of fun to be out there."

After a decade and a half of vocalizing on Grounds, however, Bullard said that even visiting alumni recognize him through the modest notoriety that his public performances have built.

"A few days ago, this young couple walked by and they said 'Well, we've graduated, but we remember you when we were students here,'" Bullard said. "I get that every once in a while."

His low-key displays have often accompanied meaningful events for many passersby

over that time period as well, as his gentle vocals blend with the Lawn's evergreen idyllic atmosphere to enhance these golden memories. According to Bullard, his tunes once backed a young man's proposal at the Rotunda after the man's parents approached Bullard and requested a song just before the event.

On another day, Bullard's expertise in the Beatles' discography set a reminiscent mood for a couple on the steps of the Rotunda when he played the song "In My Life" upon their request.

"She [said], 'Do you know this song?', and it happened to be a Beatles song ... She was with a guy, and they slow danced on the portico while I played," Bullard said. "There must have been something about that song that was special to them."

Bullard himself is no stranger to unforgettable romantic days near the Lawn, as he was married adjacent to it at the University Chapel in 1985. The Chapel remains a common wedding venue today and Bullard said he changes his tune to match the

occasion when wedding parties are present.

"It's also funny how many times wedding parties will come up on the Lawn," Bullard said. "I know a number of, I guess you'd call them 'love songs,' that I'll play when I see wedding parties and they seem to appreciate it."

With frigid wintertime temperatures creeping in, the soloist said his appearances will become more sparse until the spring promises more pleasant days outside — though he still visits the Lawn year-round. Bullard's showings of his passionate, long-lived hobby are as enduring as the iconic site they take place on, and plenty more encores are certain to come.

"One thing I look forward to every day is playing music. And if the weather's good, I love going by the Lawn ... I hope to keep it up as long as I'm able," Bullard said.

PUZZLE

Shreyas Agnihotri | Senior Associate Puzzlist

Max Goldberg | Puzzlist

1	2	3	4	
5				6
7				
8				
	9			

ACROSS

- 1 Common Thanksgiving foods
5 Bikini, for one
7 Rapp of Broadway's "Mean Girls"
8 Bros
9 Energizes, with "up"

DOWN

- 1 ____ work
2 Gobbled down
3 World, in French
4 It may be induced by a hearty Thanks-giving feast
6 Like the course load of a part-time student compared to a full-time student

1	2	3	4	5
6				
7				
8				
	9			

ACROSS

- 1 Saintly circles
6 Only appropriate for 18+
7 Persian water wheel
8 Passenger on a Thanksgiving boat?
9 Many animals have two of them

DOWN

- 1 Send to the gallows
2 Really fancy
3 Popular Virginia cavern locale
4 Drab hue
5 Sticks around

THE CAVALIER DAILY

THE CAVALIER DAILY

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SPORTS

Q&A: Tony Bennett is finding purpose beyond coaching

Virginia's former coach opened up to The Cavalier Daily about family, mentorship and his hopes for the program

Jordan Zimm | Staff Writer

Editor's Note: This interview has been edited for grammar, length and clarity.

Tony Bennett is enjoying retirement. As Virginia men's basketball kicks the 2025-26 campaign, the venerated coach, as has been his custom in the 13 months since his shock retirement, has stayed out of the spotlight.

But at the Dick's Sporting Goods House of Sport grand re-opening in Charlottesville Oct. 31, Bennett reflected on his new chapter in an interview with The Cavalier Daily, offering his thoughts on the landscape of college basketball and sharing what makes Virginia basketball special to him.

Jordan Zimm: What have you been up to since you stepped away from coaching?

Tony Bennett: Quite a bit of things. I still do some stuff for U.Va., a little bit of the fundraising and all that. I'm involved in doing a lot of speaking engagements and some mentoring. But really, it's been awesome to spend a lot more time with my parents, my children and just do things that I never had the chance to do while I was coaching.

JZ: Have you spent any time around this year's U.Va. team?

TB: I went in the spring. I saw them practice, and I was so impressed with the coaches and with the players and just how hard they were working. They looked very talented. Coach Odom and I have gotten together a couple of times — and some of the other coaches just randomly. I was visiting my daughter in New York, and I missed the exhibition game. But everybody seems to be very excited, and they got a lot of promise, so it should be some excitement.

JZ: How is the contrast of styles between the style that you had and what Odom plans to do during his time?

TB: Each coach, each program has to figure out with the team you have, what gives you the best chance to win and be successful. And Coach Odom, obviously, has been so successful where he's been, and he's recruited a team that fits how he wants to play. We were a little more half-court oriented. But you just hope that you get the guys playing to the best of their abilities and the way you



ALBERT TANG | THE CAVALIER DAILY

"Right now, I'm very happy," Bennett said.

want them to play as a coach, so I'm excited to watch them.

And like I said, I know Coach Odom is a heck of a coach, and he's got a really good staff, so I'm sure they're implementing it now. It's just different because in this new era of college coaching, it's probably one year at a time. You've got guys that you bring in, and maybe some stay longer. So you have to obviously implement your stuff quickly.

JZ: You were talking about college basketball as a whole just now. What are your thoughts about the current state of college basketball with NIL and the transfer portal?

TB: I'm not a fan of it. I'm a fan of the game. I'm a fan of young men receiving some compensation. But I think it's so unmonitored and not regulated. And I think until it becomes more regulated, a level playing field and there's more control — I'm a big fan of young men obviously developing and having a chance to play professionally, but also, with that, enjoying what it means to be a student-athlete. To be at a school like U.Va. and get a degree from

there, maybe that doesn't exist as much anymore. So I'm saddened by where the game has gone in terms of that. I think it'll never go back to what it was as an amateur sport with student-athletes.

I do feel like there is an absolute huge need for change and regulations, and maybe it has to follow more of a pro model with contracts and salary caps and all that. There's still a need for good people, good coaches, and all that. But it's taken a turn that I don't think many people are pleased with, and hopefully they'll fix it. And, you know, there will still be opportunities for student-athletes to make some money and do it. But also, can they get educations and things that matter to me?

JZ: What do you think was the most rewarding part of your time at U.Va., looking back now?

TB: When we got here, we were taking a program that had struggled for a while and just watching it turn and doing it with guys who really believed in what Virginia was about. They wanted to put it at the top of the map for basketball or become one of the

top-tier programs.

Obviously, it's exciting to see the fans when we win all the conference championships — then the national championship. But then, even going through some of the really hard losses, having guys that you could go through that with. They stayed together. There's a time where maybe we had some guys transfer here and there, but everybody, pretty much, said we're gonna figure this out. We're gonna go through some of these hard times, and we're gonna come out on top, and those are the beautiful lessons.

JZ: What do you think makes U.Va. basketball so unique, and how do you hope that identity continues with Odom?

TB: I just want him to put his own stamp on the program. He'll do it in his way that he deems best, and he's a man of character and, like I said, a very high-quality coach. I hope they can bring joy to the fans and do it in a way that all these changes in college basketball, they still can find the right guys that value what U.Va. is about. But each coach has to put

their own identity and what they want it to look like. And I hope he can do that, and I know he'll have all the support of the administration and the people that are pulling for him, and just develop good young men and try to coach to the best of his ability, and be successful.

JZ: Do you see yourself returning to coaching one day — maybe at the next level or at any level — or are you happy with what you're doing now in this new chapter?

TB: Right now, I'm very happy. I'm really thankful to be doing what I'm doing. I always go a year or two at a time, but right now, in the foreseeable future, I don't see a return. But I love watching, like I said, some of our guys that I coached that never got to play in the NBA, and reconnecting with a lot of the players and spending time. I'm really enjoying this phase and trying to impact in different ways, and maybe even help out the game with some changes, hopefully with some things that will help change it for the better.

In rollercoaster season, unity is integral for women's soccer

No matter what happens in the NCAA Tournament, No. 1 seed Virginia has something “pretty unique”

Anderson Kim | Staff Writer

On a cold night in October, the Virginia women's soccer team dragged blankets, snacks and portable speakers into Klöckner Stadium. Some players showed up early. Others rushed in late. They teased each other for arriving at such varying times.

Virginia, unbeaten through 10 games at the time and ranked No. 1 in the country, had a game coming up against Virginia Tech. It came after already having spent two weeks facing the pressure of the top ranking in the country heading into the tense rivalry game.

At Klöckner, the entire team sat on the grass, laughed, ate snacks, huddled together and eventually watched Twilight on the big screen. It was an activity geared toward unity for a team that has really needed it all season — first as it faced the pressure of a top ranking, then as it struggled through a four-game winless streak. As No. 1 seed Virginia goes deeper into the NCAA Tournament, that unity will continue to prove important.

“I think everyone on the team

feels close enough to get coffee with everyone,” fifth-year midfielder Laughlin Ryan said. “I don't think there's a single person on the team that I feel like I couldn't hang out with one-on-one, which I think is pretty unique.”

That sense of familiarity and comfort is no accident. The Cavaliers have deliberately crafted a culture of togetherness that has played a pivotal role in this season's performance. Coach Steve Swanson says that comes from training, the place where a coach has most control over a team's culture.

“As a staff, we try to cultivate an environment that is competitive, hard-working and fun, but where the players are free to be themselves,” Swanson said. “Part of the team chemistry comes from the time we spend together training and working together on the field to be the best team we can be.”

That carries over onto the pitch. Virginia's possession-based soccer demands constant communication, anticipation and

combination. On the pitch, the noise is constant and unique as players are constantly notifying incoming opponents' press, signaling movements and coordinating defensive rotations.

This kind of tactical familiarity allows them to recycle possession efficiently, maintain control of the midfield and create attacking opportunities with fluidity.

That was on display in Virginia's first-round NCAA Tournament game against High Point. Virginia's third goal started with senior forward Maggie Cagle glancing up and then finding freshman midfielder Pearl Cecil with a through ball. Cecil then quickly moved it to freshman midfielder Addison Halpern, who fed a perfectly timed through ball back to Cagle, sprinting up the right wing.

Cagle moved the ball into the opponent's half-space, drawing two defenders as she made a sharp cut back and passed to Cecil again in the box, who struck a one-time ball that deflected into the goal off of Halpern, who had already made a deep run into the

box.

“This team has an incredible bond. It's a sisterhood,” junior goalkeeper Victoria Safradin said. “We all play for each other on the field. Willing to put your body on the line and willing to do anything for your teammates, and our team really embodies that.”

The things that make the team's unity special come off the field, driven by the players. Before movie night, the players enjoyed dinner in the Klöckner bleachers. Players were scattered across the stands with takeout containers despite the chilly weather.

Ryan, in her fifth year in the program, thinks things are different this season.

“I feel like the locker room energy and vibes are really high before games,” Ryan said. “We're all pumping each other up and celebrating each other, and I think it's just a really unique and special energy and relationship this year.”

The players' styles, strengths and character coalesce.

Everything they do is about building chemistry rather than just individual skill development.

“I also just think our individual personalities just click with each other, so it just makes it 10 times easier,” Safradin said.

With a first-round win over High Point, the Cavaliers advanced with confidence into a match against No. 8 seed Penn State in the second round of the NCAA Tournament. If they continue to execute their identity under pressure, Virginia could make a historic run towards Swanson's first national championship in a 26-year career with the Cavaliers.

“Our culture is very strong,” Swanson said. “We believe in one another, believe in the team and most importantly feel we have gone through games that have prepared us to hopefully make a strong postseason run.”

Bookmark it — the Cavaliers will beat the Hokies

Virginia has handled NIL and the transfer portal correctly, while Virginia Tech has not

Xander Tillock | Sports Editor

Virginia has beaten Virginia Tech in football just twice this century. That is going to change.

2025 is one of the ultra-rare seasons in which the Cavaliers are lightyears better than the Hokies. Virginia is ranked No. 19, firmly in the running for an ACC Championship game appearance. Meanwhile, Virginia Tech has a losing record in every category — overall, in ACC play, at home and on the road. This upcoming Commonwealth Cup is primed for a Cavalier victory.

After all, Virginia is already winning off the football field.

College football, simply put, has become an arms race — and when compared to the Hokies, Virginia is clearly winning. But how did we get to this point, with the Cavaliers outperforming their rival on and off the field?

While Virginia has risen to its best season since 2019, Virginia Tech cratered to historic lows. The day after a blowout home loss to Old Dominion Sept. 13, they fired Coach Brent Pry, who, like Elliott, was hired in late 2021. Now the once-respectable Hokies are 11th

in the ACC and will finish with a losing record — punctuated by a pending loss to the Cavaliers.

The upcoming Commonwealth Cup victory was all but sealed a year ago, when Virginia began the current chapter of its development. Dozens of talents from the transfer portal joined the Cavaliers, the front office developed into its current impressive form and this football program began the process of becoming a contender.

Elliott's stellar season could not have come at a better time. The current cycle of programs looking for a new head coach might be one of the most competitive of all time. Several historically great programs are fighting to secure the best candidates.

Virginia Tech made their choice Nov. 17 in former Penn State Coach James Franklin, which will surely help, but that is a future solution to a present problem. Meanwhile, it is an undeniable fact that the Cavaliers are on a sustainable upward trajectory.

The same cannot be said for Virginia Tech because their great big problem is a financial one. The

Hokies' Board of Visitors knew this and approved a proposal for a \$229 million dollar budget increase for athletics over the next four years. There's just one problem. Unlike Virginia, Virginia Tech has not generated successful mass funding efforts.

That hypothetical money from the enormous budget proposal is supposed to come from a \$100 increase to student fees — students already pay north of \$200 for season tickets — as well as “institutional support,” “bridge funding” and “philanthropy.” To date, the Hokies have not generated much of anything from those latter two categories and their proposal appears shaky at best.

Virginia Tech is not receiving multi-million dollar donations for non-revenue sports — a fact punctuated by their overemphasis on football funding. How is a program supposed to rebuild without a treasure chest of financial investment?

Money wins, and the Cavaliers have taken theirs and created an NFL-style operation. The Hokies clearly have less money, otherwise

they would have done the same.

Successful fundraising gives a program money for a great big haul of talented players in the transfer portal.

NIL has become an integral part of the NCAA landscape. Programs that understand this and use it well — like the Cavaliers — will have a higher likelihood of success than those that do not, like the Hokies.

The effect of such financial disparity shows on the playing field. As Virginia's bevy of transfer portal stars such as graduate quarterback Chandler Morris or graduate defensive lineman Mitchell Melton dominate on Saturdays, the Hokies sputter.

Look no further than the fact that senior cornerback Mansoor Delane left Virginia Tech for LSU this past offseason and is now on a fast track to being named First Team All-American. Delane has a top-100 NIL value evaluation, a bill that the Tigers were happy to foot.

The importance of finances extends beyond football. In the grand scheme of collegiate athletics, Vir-

ginia is eviscerating its rival to the southwest. In the overall Commonwealth Clash, the Cavaliers are undefeated so far this year. But some fans will not be satisfied until the football team does its part and finally defeats Virginia Tech.

This year's rivalry matchup may end on the field in Charlottesville Nov. 29, but it began at the start of last offseason, when Virginia beefed up on transfer talent and the Hokies failed to replace outgoing stars.

When the Cavaliers finally slay Virginia Tech, and move onto a shiny bowl game while the Hokies slump into a postseason-less abyss, remember that the result — a Virginia victory — was not made on one cold November afternoon. It was made months ago. That sweet result, though, will be sealed in a day to remember as the Commonwealth Cup will come home to Grounds for the first time since 2019.

OPINION

LEAD EDITORIAL

Spanberger, do not follow the pattern of our last governor

Gov.-elect Abigail Spanberger should prioritize moderation and autonomy for Virginia's institutions of higher education

Election Day Nov. 4 brought a blue wave that swept the Commonwealth, leaving the executive branch in the Democrats' hands and solidifying the party's majority in the General Assembly. Gov.-elect Abigail Spanberger's platform of affordability appears both popular and legislatively unobstructed. However, it is important to remember that Virginia is a purple state — a status which makes the success of a moderate Democrat both unsurprising and dependent on moderate governance. This is particularly important for Virginia's public universities, which have, in the past four years under Gov. Glenn Youngkin, been roiled with tumult and partisanship. Spanberger, in contrast, must recognize the importance of moderation, which uplifts, not denigrates, the institutional autonomy of universities like our own.

When Youngkin was elected, he entered into divided governance, which would persist throughout his four-year term. This division did not leave him with much legislative freedom. In the absence of a supportive legislature,

Youngkin found other ways to advance his policies. During his campaign, Youngkin foregrounded the parental concerns in education policy, such as critical race theory. While a divided legislature made parts of his agenda untenable, he was able to make unilateral changes to higher education in Virginia. As Spanberger begins to enter her own term, Youngkin leaves his term embroiled in controversy with the Virginia General Assembly over the institutional stability and autonomy of higher education.

When Spanberger enters office, one of the largest responsibilities she will undertake is appointing new members to university governance boards — an area where the institutional autonomy and stability of the University has increasingly been threatened. During his term, Youngkin appointed 17 Republican-donating Board of Visitors members to the University along strong partisan lines and often through dubious legal processes. It is worth noting that Youngkin is not the first governor to appoint members of his own party

to the University Board. However, his term did uniquely encapsulate the fragility of the appointment system. As such, it is incumbent on Spanberger to reform the appointment process to ensure that no future governor can make unanimous political decisions regarding Board membership.

Spanberger has previously said that the Board members should be chosen by an independent commission instead of a partisan Governor. Of course, implementing a system like this will take time, and Spanberger has numerous vacancies on universities' boards which must be remedied. However, until an independent commission can be instituted, Spanberger must be conscientious in not embracing a tit-for-tat approach to governing board appointments. Filling existing vacancies on university boards is a moment for Spanberger to transcend the retributive and partisan politics of Youngkin's term.

Beyond appointments, Youngkin's term destabilized our University's institutional autonomy in other ways.

Notably, he embraced both a domineering and apathetic style of leadership — a contradictory path which Spanberger must not replicate. When members of the University community stressed over what effect the abolition of the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at the University might have on their expression, Youngkin took to public media to celebrate. Even more shocking are accusations from former University President Jim Ryan that the Board's resolution to abolish DEI practices was prescribed by the governor's office, a gross invasion of institutional independence. As Spanberger enters the Governor's Mansion, she must avoid rhetorically using our University as a partisan tool.

In a display of her thoughtful calculations, Spanberger sent a letter to the Board asking them to delay the appointment of the new president. She discussed the community's lack of confidence in the Board and the Board's lack of statutory compliance — two phenomena that undermine the presidential search process. While

Youngkin has argued that her letter was a pre-emptive seizure of power, it actually represents a thoughtfulness that has been missing for four years. Although Spanberger has not yet been sworn into her position, this letter clarified her intention to prioritize stability-focused intervention in higher education conducted with moderation — an involvement necessary for our University.

In her speech on election night, Spanberger established that Virginians selected her in the spirit of "pragmatism over partisanship." Such pragmatism should continue to be the guiding principle behind her policymaking going forward. As she takes office next year, we urge her to embrace moderation and repair in order to leave the Commonwealth — and our University — in better circumstances than the past four years.

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HUMOR

Five ways to overcome Charlottesville seasonal depression

Editor's note: This article is a humor column.

It's official — trees all around Grounds are completely, utterly and totally barren. At this point in November, once it becomes too frigid to frequent outdoor study spots and McCormick Road becomes a sea of black puffer jackets, everyone knows what's coming — seasonal depression. At the University, seasonal depression is particularly nefarious. Because fall in Charlottesville is a kind, warm embrace, you are completely unaware of the kick in the nuts that winter brings with finals and nasty weather. With that in mind, here are five tips to stay joyous amid the oncoming Horrors.

1. Stay in your room all the time with the blinds closed

You may already be doing this, but here's a fun boost! Ideally, hide in your blankets, watch 40-plus-minute YouTube video essays about the detrimental effects of screen time and exclusively eat Twisted Tortilla cheese quesadillas — no MATTER how much

they make your stomach hurt. Attend a few Zoom lectures here and there, and protect your peace by pretending you can't hear when your professor calls on you. Occasionally jump up from your inanimate pile of blankets and scare your roommate half to death, and that'll be all the excitement you need for the rest of the school year.

Results are not guaranteed in the slightest, but, as an added bonus, your roommate might slowly develop their own seasonal depression just from living with you!

2. Get really into betting on the Virginia men's varsity squash team

Sometimes, a good hobby can help distract you from the fact that it's freezing cold outside, the sun goes down at about 3 p.m. every day, and your best friend just got carried away by a particularly evil wind gust, never to be seen again. A quality pastime is obviously sports betting, but a fun and fresh take on this beloved — and not at all harmful — hobby is betting on your own school's teams, and the squash team isn't one to miss. And yes,

the University does have a squash team — and if you didn't know that, it's safe to say many betters don't either.

Learn all the players' names and try really hard to befriend them to gain insider insight — creep on ALL of their matches. Bet purely on emotion and general vibes. Roll a dice and use that number to bet on the number of double bounces. Sob in devastation when your parlay doesn't hit. Soon, you'll be so entrenched in the team that you'll forget what you were sad about in the first place — and you may have to drop out of college to pay off your gambling debts.

3. Leave the University and study abroad in Rjukan, Norway

In attempts to diversify student experience, the University's Education Abroad Office has capitalized on the opportunity to offer programs in unique locations that are overly niche and difficult to locate on a map. Rjukan does not get any direct sunlight between September and March. This means it's the perfect winter getaway for someone struggling with seasonal

depression.

One of the most difficult aspects of the wintertime to grapple with is how little the sun is out during the day — a great solution is to be somewhere where there's none at all. You can't miss what's never there. The program boasts improvements in mental health and a single three-credit class in religious studies, for some reason. What solves seasonal depression more than religious studies and a complete lack of sun?

4. Attempt to hibernate until Foxfield

Bears have perhaps already cracked the code to seasonal depression. Have you ever seen that Ukrainian bear who woke up from hibernation looking disheveled and disgruntled? That will be you, after you crack the code to hibernation and miss the months of December through March. Then, you can wake up right on time to drink copious amounts of alcohol in a field in the middle of nowhere and celebrate your mental health recovery. You can also mourn your academic failures that are nothing but a result of your quesadil-

la-eating, hobbit lifestyle.

Does this actually solve seasonal depression? Many experts might say no, but that's because they lack the vision to understand the therapeutic value of being unconscious for four consecutive months. Some things never change — you'll somehow still be sleep-deprived.

5. Befriend the squirrels on Grounds, and become one of them

Another creature that has it right? SQUIRRELS. Their joy isn't season-dependent. They frolic no matter the weather or exams they may have coming up. Ignore your academic responsibilities, and DON'T let that stress you out further. Speak — I mean squeak — to them in Squirrellese. Learn their lessons. Attempt to get an internship in Squirrel. Fail. Settle for learning the lessons as an unpaid endeavor. Start scampering around and climbing trees. Be free...

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Radical transparency is the way forward for U.Va. Health

A recent federal lawsuit involving U.Va. Health highlights the University's need for greater transparency.

An occasional controversy is an inevitable occurrence in any large academic health system, but when concerns surface repeatedly, they signal something deeper. In Sept. 2024, a letter signed by 128 doctors addressed to the Board of Visitors raised concerns about compromised patient safety and a culture of fear and retribution at U.Va. Health, prompting the University to retain the Washington D.C. law firm Williams & Connolly LLP to conduct an internal investigation. Last month, U.Va. Health was accused in a 105-page federal lawsuit of similar concerns to the letter, including fostering a leadership-driven “culture of fear and retaliation” that includes extorting profits over patient care and safety.

Despite the seriousness and breadth of these allegations, there has been very little discourse or open communication led by the University to the public. While we should expect the defendants to dispute the validity and legitimacy of the claims, these serious allegations have ignited a pressing concern — does U.Va. Health have a transparency problem that needs to be addressed? All signs point to yes.

To understand why transparency matters so much here, it is important to recognize that U.Va. Health is not a private company operating under

independent discretion. It is a public institution owned by the University. It is also not just some urgent care or neighborhood clinic you go to when you fall down the stairs at Trin. Rather, U.Va. Health is a leading health system in the state of Virginia, one that is comprised of hospitals, trauma and cancer centers, and a statewide clinical network that performs life-saving surgeries and conducts groundbreaking

announcement from the system itself. And most recently, the Board of Visitors selected Mitch Rosner as the executive vice president for health affairs and chief executive officer of U.Va. Health — with no national or external search made. Even if U.Va. Health intends to keep internal struggles private, the instability at the most senior positions in the administration understandably undermines public trust.

summarized reports, public briefings or even community-wide messages showing respect for the community's right to information and awareness.

For example, a public statement made by the University president could have made a difference in effectively and transparently addressing the community's concerns about the claims in the recent lawsuit. Open community discussion could have

believe that silence better protects the reputation of the institution and prevents unnecessary conflicts. However, the concerns raised by the 128 doctors in their letter of no confidence to the Board highlights the depth of the matter. These feelings and concerns do not simply evaporate with the change of a couple of leaders. Without transparency and open dialogue, these feelings linger, and confidence in leadership remains fragile.

Genuine outreach shows the University's members and stakeholders that they matter and that their voices and input play a legitimate role in shaping the pathway forward for the University. It turns speculation into understanding and skepticism into trust. With the attention now focused on U.Va. Health, an opportunity has emerged for the institution to reaffirm to the population it serves, and whose health and well-being it protects. The bedrock principles of communication, dialogue and openness are especially vital in times where institutional leadership is fragile.

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Public trust is not just nice to have, but rather a core asset for a prestigious public health system.”

medical research. In an institution this large, public trust is not just nice to have, but rather a core asset for a prestigious public health system.

Maintaining this public trust has been difficult as of late, especially given the consistent cycle of administrative entropy and the lack of transparency which has accompanied it. Craig Kent, chief executive officer of U.Va. Health, resigned Feb. 25 following the conclusion of the Williams & Connolly investigation. Two senior U.Va. Health leaders, Melissa Kibbe and Wendy Horton, quietly left the health system this July with no public

This undermining of public trust is compounded by the lack of transparency which has surrounded the leadership and lawsuit developments. Indeed, if U.Va. Health seeks to preserve stakeholder confidence in the integrity of the institution, transparency is its answer. From news articles to Reddit threats, University stakeholders have been left questioning their school's true motives and Charlottesville residents remain skeptical of whether the health system that is funded by their taxes is being governed responsibly. University officials should be committed to sharing what they can through

been held, which would have allowed students, faculty and alumni to raise questions about the serious allegations. Taking these additional steps to ensure proactive hands-on engagement with all stakeholders of the University community protects the integrity of the University's leadership, especially in these times where they are under intense scrutiny.

Some people might argue that such radical transparency is not required with regard to the U.Va. Health lawsuit because its leadership has already changed, leaving the concerns and allegations in the past. They may

Virginia Democrats' redistricting plan is indefensible

The General Assembly's proposed constitutional amendment to bypass Virginia's independent redistricting commission is yet another political powergrab bound to backfire

Virginia is on the verge of a catastrophic political power grab. Democrats in the Virginia General Assembly are pushing a constitutional amendment to redraw the state's congressional map, engineering nine safe Democratic districts. This move is the latest in an unprecedented nationwide gerrymandering brawl. Texas ignited this firestorm in June, and states from Ohio to Maryland have since followed suit. California even took the step of amending its state constitution to oust its independent, bipartisan redistricting commission until at least 2031. Democrats in the Virginia General Assembly have proposed a nearly identical plan to that of California, capitulating to nationwide political winds. Democrats should think twice before moving forward with a reckless political stunt that shatters institutional norms.

Currently, Virginia's Redistricting Commission reflects prudent policy and has yielded reliably successful results. According to the Gerrymandering Project, Virginia's congressional map is among the fairest in the entire country. This is a result of a bipartisan structure — the 16-member Commission is composed of an equal number of Democratic and Republican legislators

from each chamber, along with citizen members selected by a panel of retired judges. This ensures both legislative and community representation.

In addition to yielding tangible results, the system enjoys broad bipartisan support. In 2020, over 65 percent of Virginia voters approved an amend-

tween. Then, Virginians must approve the amendment by referendum. The problem is that the intervening general election after the first passage is arguably 2027. Virginia House Democrats first presented the amendment to the floor on October 28, 39 days after early voting began. Many cast their vote with

rather than principled politics. By depriving the people of Virginia of their voice for the sole purpose of maximizing legislative control, Virginia Democrats will undermine public trust in elections and lead to the further degradation of institutions.

Unfortunately, Virginia Democrats

in the business of convincing voters that their policy positions will benefit the lives of everyday Virginians. This requires clear and defined policies from the state legislature, but it does not require attacking institutions and rigging the rules. In January, Democrats in the General Assembly will have a trifecta and a mandate from the voters to bring down the cost of living and return governance to a more civil atmosphere. With the chaotic state of federal politics, no one in Virginia should want to take a wrecking ball to any more state institutions.

If Virginia Democrats want mutually assured destruction, then they will get it. But they should hesitate before moving forward with such a careless plan. Virginia needs robust institutions and enduring rules to maintain a functioning political system that both sides can trust. Overthrowing the principles that safeguard the system undermines this trust and further polarizes the Commonwealth.

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The Democrats' maneuver to supplant the Commission with a gerrymandered plan is likely illegal and will disenfranchise thousands.”

ment to the Constitution establishing the Commission. It is easy to understand why this would be so popular — independent commissions produce fair maps that ensure competitive elections. Democrats' proposed amendment would dismantle this popular framework in favor of a far more partisan alternative.

The Democrats' maneuver to supplant the Commission with a gerrymandered plan is likely illegal and will disenfranchise thousands. To amend the Virginia Constitution, the General Assembly must pass the amendment twice with a general election in be-

no knowledge that this issue was on the ballot for the next legislature to decide. The so-called “party of democracy” is seeking to systematically short-circuit the electoral process.

Beyond the potential legal issues with the plan, the Democrats' proposed gerrymander is simply an atrocious idea that lacks foresight and respect for institutional stability. First and foremost, this is a complete reversal of party policy. In 2021, almost every congressional Democrat backed a bill that would have required states to adopt independent redistricting commissions. Retreating from this stance now reeks of hypocrisy

are pursuing a strategy of prioritizing short-term political power over long-term stability — a strategy that almost always backfires. By bending the rules and casting aside established practice, Democrats are ignoring a fundamental lesson of politics — ham-handed power grabs rarely go unpunished. Legislative majorities are never permanent. Just as national Democrats' past attempts to circumvent accepted protocols produced lasting damage, this latest partisan stratagem risks undermining trust, alienating voters and setting a dangerous precedent for future legislatures.

Ultimately, Democrats should be

PUZZLE

Ali Hunter | Puzzlist

Answers are available on the digital version of this puzzle which is published at www.cavalierdaily.com.

ACROSS

- 1 "Beauty School Dropout" musical
- 7 He flew on a carpet
- 14 21 Savage song inspired by "The Shining"
- 15 Classless group?
- 16 Pacific weather phenomenon
- 17 "Can we talk about the political and _____ state of the world right now?": Jaden Smith quote
- 18 Frog relative
- 19 Peanut butter brand
- 21 Where students might take a stand?
- 22 The "A" of U.S.D.A., for short
- 23 Material for an audiophile
- 25 Emerged
- 29 Exam for some UVa. fourth-years
- 31 Makes less bright
- 33 Place to cook a turkey
- 34 Like UVa. football's alternate jerseys

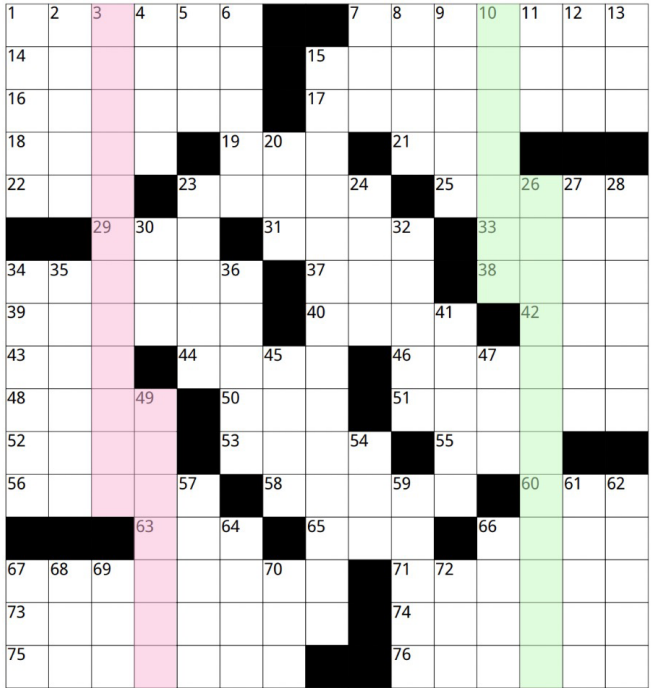
- 37 D.C. MLB player
- 38 W-2 inclusion
- 39 Fisher at the beach?
- 40 One-third of a hat trick
- 42 Dreamer's acronym
- 43 GPS stat
- 44 What the Virginia Gentlemen do
- 46 Many men's hairlines do this
- 48 Supervillain's hideout
- 50 The Raptors, on scoreboards
- 51 Tennis star Nadal
- 52 Other, in Oaxaca
- 53 Benefits threatened by the govt. shutdown
- 55 Fish in a Japanese garden
- 56 Some blueish greens
- 58 Inclusive word
- 60 Naval inits.
- 63 Grace VanderWaal's instrument, abbr.
- 65 Rocks, at Coupes
- 66 ____ Twitter (community for fanbases)
- 67 Nonphysical way to be

- present
 - 71 Seyfried of "Mean Girls"
 - 73 Girls rush to get in
 - 74 Miranda rights guarantee
 - 75 Coped with change
 - 76 "Hamnet" actor Paul
- DOWN**
- 1 "Lady Bird" director Gerwig
 - 2 Enter again, as data
 - 3 "Side to Side" singer
 - 4 Extremely dry
 - 5 Argentine flag feature
 - 6 Monkey covering eyes, for one
 - 7 Javelin's path
 - 8 Word spoken while pointing
 - 9 Sleep disorder
 - 10 Permanently
 - 11 When doubled, a classic lollipop
 - 12 "Take ____ insist" (generous person's urging)
 - 13 Foreign policy advisory gp.

- 15 "Wicked" ballad ... and a hint to the orientation of 3-, 10-, 26- and 49-Down
- 20 How Cuomo ran in the NYC election
- 23 Fourth-year trip locale
- 24 Alternative response to a laughing 6-Down
- 26 Grammy, Emmy and Tony Award-winning actress with many popular reaction GIFs
- 27 Withdraw from a country
- 28 Tooth covering
- 30 Time off, in military jargon
- 32 Ringo of the Beatles
- 34 Minecraft jungle creature
- 35 Volleyball players do it
- 36 Feedback given by The Cavalier Daily's copy staff
- 41 Like defective pipes
- 45 Not any
- 47 Dream job for many Darden grads
- 49 Hot or cool

- 54 Delt neighbor
- 57 Can be mini or midi
- 59 Sphere of influence
- 61 Titular character in a Tyler Perry film franchise
- 62 Sound from an angry dog
- 64 Shallowest of the Great Lakes
- 66 Makes the cut?
- 67 "A penny saved ____ penny earned"

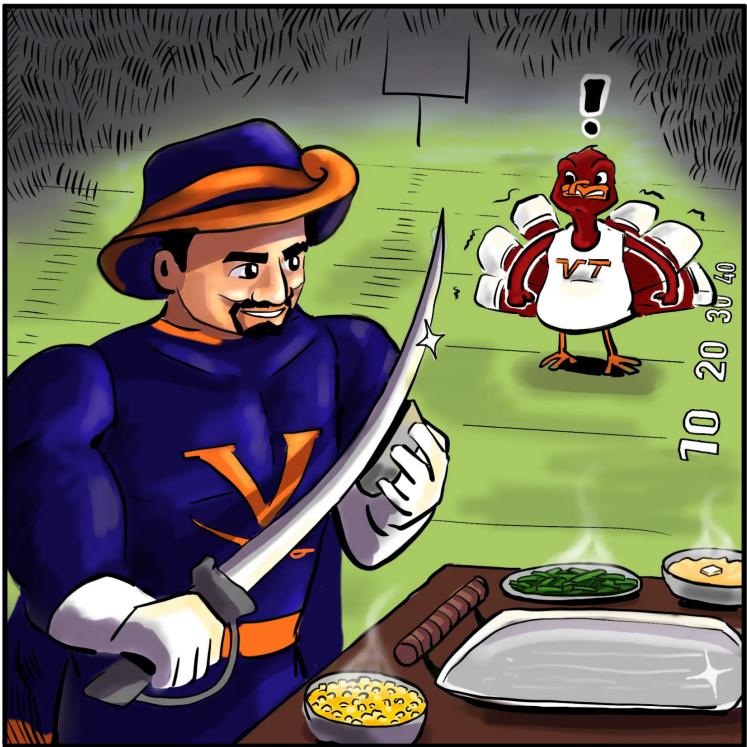
- 68 Nonchalant acknowledgement
- 69 Madrid Mrs.
- 70 "____ be my pleasure!"
- 72 Common female middle name



CARTOON

Thanksgiving Hokie

Melody Moore | Cartoonist



GETTING READY FOR THANKSGIVING

Frat Fall

Isabel Angulo | Cartoonist

