

# THE CAVALIER DAILY

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ANISHA HOSSAIN | THE CAVALIER DAILY



## FRAMEWORK FOR SUPPORT

Students call for the creation of  
an Asian/Asian American Center    Pages 4-5

## NEWS

## This week in-brief

CD News Staff



RIX PRAKASH | THE CAVALIER DAILY

The former city manager Chip Boyles resigned only eight months after his appointment — City leadership has seen unprecedented turnover over in the past few years.

## Marc Wooley appointed Charlottesville City Manager in special meeting of City Council

Charlottesville's City Council appointed Marc Wooley, former business administrator for the city of Harrisburg, as the interim city manager during a special meeting Friday. Wooley introduced himself to city residents and took questions from Councilors, reporters and members of the public.

Wooley will be filling the post after former city manager Chip Boyles resigned after eight months following tension and criticism over his firing of the former Charlottesville Police Department Chief RaShall Brackney.

Referencing recent tensions between City Council and executive City leadership over the unprecedented turnover and leadership changes while answering questions from the press, Wooley said one of his goals as a leader is to get a handle on some of the bitter dynamics.

"I'd like to be able to further understand the complexity of the relationship between the workers, employees and management and get to know why there may be some discord and causing people in my position to leave and I'd like to see if we could address that in some way," Wooley said.

Wooley said his main two tasks during the interim tenure are overseeing the budget and the City's Comprehensive Plan, which is a document containing zoning and development laws that is required by law to be updated every five years.

Wooley said he intends to apply for the full-time city manager job in April, when City Council plans to begin a public hiring search for the position. Wooley will begin work as interim city manager Dec. 1 with a salary of \$205,000.

In response to a question about how he plans to manage the City's relationship to the University, Wooley nodded to previous experience in cities that also host colleges.

"It's about getting involved and getting involved in communications with these large landowners and employers [and] making them aware that there is a duty that is owed, at some level, to the municipality that they are a part of," Wooley said. "They should be engaged in a conversation where they know that a city that is doing well and prosperous benefits them in many ways."

## Former Charlottesville Police Chief Brackney files complaint with EEOC for alleged wrongful termination

Former Charlottesville Police Chief RaShall Brackney stood in front of Charlottesville City Hall Tuesday morning and demanded \$3 million in compensation from the City for her claim of wrongful termination. Brackney has filed a complaint with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

Brackney — Charlottesville's first Black female police chief — was fired Sept. 1 by then-city manager Chip Boyles. Boyles did not provide a reason for Brackney's termination, but said the decision came after the results of a police department survey revealed that a majority of police officers thought the department lacked leadership.

Along with attorney Charles Tucker, Brackney said City leaders had damaged her reputation following her termination, accusing Boyles and many members of City Council of collusion in efforts to fire her.

"I continue to experience and I'm subjected to humiliating acts of discrimination, continued disparate treatment, harassment and retaliation all of which result in an undue stress and continue to create a hostile work environment for me," Brackney said. "I've had to sit in silence, as these baseless attacks and the public messaging have suggested that my contract was terminated for cause, and this has been demeaning."

Brackney has also filed complaints with the Charlottesville Office of Human Rights and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People for alleged workplace discrimination.

Prior to the news conference, the Charlottesville Human Rights Commission sent a letter to City Council expressing that the organization was "deeply concerned" about Brackney's firing and "the departure of many other individuals of color from the City." The letter cites that many employees of color have left positions recently, which continues a trend of City employees of color resigning or being fired. Since 2018, Charlottesville has had six different city managers.

The letter urges City Council to publicly provide the reasons for Brackney's termination, or the trust communities of color have for the city will be placed in jeopardy.

11.5

11.9

## U.Va. moves deadline for faculty and staff to receive final vaccination dose to Jan. 4

Academic division employees of the University will have until Jan. 4 to complete a full COVID-19 vaccination course — a change from the previous deadline of Dec. 8, according to a Tuesday email from Provost Liz Magill and Chief Operating Officer J.J. Davis. The new deadline aligns with guidance from President Joe Biden's administration released Nov. 4.

The University announced Oct. 21 that all full-time and part-time employees must be vaccinated against COVID-19 in accordance with Biden's Executive Order 14042, which requires employees of organizations with federal contracts such as the University to be fully vaccinated. The rule applies to companies with 100 or more employees and is expected to cover 31 million unvaccinated workers nationwide.

"As we previously have said, compliance with President Biden's executive order is vital to ensure that we do not risk losing millions in federal contract dollars that support important research and education work here at U.Va.," the email said.

Barring approved religious or medical exemptions, all University employees, including those working remotely, are required to be vaccinated against COVID-19. Before the vaccination requirement was implemented, employees could participate in weekly prevalence testing as an alternative to getting vaccinated.

More than 95 percent of University employees are already fully vaccinated. Following the Jan. 4 deadline, anyone who has not complied with the vaccination policy will face disciplinary action, which could include unpaid leave or termination.

# “Unite the Right” trial continues

Stratton Marsh | Senior Writer

The trial of the “Unite the Right” organizers is underway at the Charlottesville courthouse. Plaintiffs aim to prove that the organizers of the rally conspired to commit racial violence. Defendants include white national leader Richard Spencer, white nationalist podcaster Christopher Cantwell and Matthew Heimbach, the founder of the white nationalist organization the Traditionalist Worker Party. A timeline of the trial up until Wednesday follows.

## Oct. 25 through 27 — Jury Selection

Potential jurors filled out questionnaires which were distributed to the legal teams of the plaintiffs and the defense. They asked questions testing whether the individual could judge the evidence fairly and if they had already formed an opinion about whether a crime was committed. Jury selection concluded the afternoon of Oct. 27 — the jury is made up of four women and eight men. Out of the twelve, four jurors are Black. The demographic breakdown of the rest of the jurors is unknown.

## Oct. 28 — Opening Statements

Karen Dunn, an attorney for the plaintiffs, showed a video clip of protesters marching through Grounds Aug. 11 and shouting “Jews will not replace us.” Dunn argued that the case is about bringing justice and accountability to the organizers of the rally. In their opening statements, defendants argued that no conspiracy was committed by the organizers of the rally — defendant Richard Spencer claimed he had no part in planning the rally but was excited to speak during it. “I was excited to feel like a star,” Spencer said.



ARIANA GUERANMAYEH | THE CAVALIER DAILY

Plaintiffs, defendants and their legal teams arrived at the courthouse early Oct. 29 for the first day of witness statements.

## Oct. 29 through Nov. 10 — Witness Statements

- 10.29** Class of 2020 alumna Natalie Romero took the stand, testifying that she still suffers from the violence inflicted that weekend. Romero said she can no longer look at screens for long periods of time or exercise.
- 11.1** Devin Willis, class of 2020 alumna, testified that “it just felt like the world was falling in.” Samantha Froelich, former member of white nationalist group Identity Evropa, testified and explained the organization’s anti-semetic goals, noting that “plenty of people” were interested in “the death and extinction of Jewish people.”
- 11.2** Froelich continued her testimony, describing Kline’s relationship with Spencer. Froelich testified that she overheard Spencer and Kline discuss the legalities of hitting someone with a car at a party. Heimbach was called to the stand and the plaintiffs showed the jury messages from a Discord server in which Heimbach called for the “total destruction of Jewry.” During cross-examination, Spencer questioned Heimbach and established that the two were not friends.
- 11.3** Cross-examination of Heimbach continued and Cantwell questioned Heimbach about James Fields, who rammed his car into counter-protestors Aug. 12 — Heimbach claimed that Fields was acting in self-defense. Plaintiffs submitted video evidence from Robert “Azzmador” Ray — a defendant in the trial who has been sanctioned by the court for conspiring to engage in racially-motivated violence and has since disappeared. The plaintiffs provided messages from Ray showing that he planned to commit violence at the rally, as well as videos of Ray from Aug. 11 and 12.
- 11.4** During direct examination by plaintiffs’ lawyer Michael Bloch, Spencer denied previous racist statements made about the inferiority of Black and Hispanic people and said he does not have relationships with other defendants involved in the case. Plaintiffs submitted video evidence of an interview after the rally during which Spencer said that the event was “a huge moral victory in terms of the show of force.”
- 11.5** Plaintiffs submit video evidence from defendant Michael Hill, leader of the neo-Confederate movement League of the South. In the video Hill said he put Jason Kessler, one of the organizers of the rally, in touch with David Duke, longtime leader of the Ku Klux Klan. Plaintiff Thomas Baker gave a statement explaining how he was severely injured from Fields’ car attack and still suffers from injuries, as well as post-traumatic stress disorder.
- 11.8** Plaintiffs submitted evidence showing Dillon Hopper, former leader of white nationalist organization Vanguard America, and other Vanguard America members discussing the utility of car rammings in Feb. 2017, six months before the rally. Michael Tubbs, a member of the League of the South, testified that the rally was next “one of the proudest moments of my life” and that he has “no regrets.” The court took a brief recess during testimony, but proceedings were delayed for 20 minutes because listeners tuned into the court’s audio feed were able to unmute themselves. An individual said “make America great again,” and another repeatedly said racial slurs.
- 11.9** Plaintiff Chelsea Alvarado, a graduate student at the University who was also hit by Fields’ car, took the stand. Alvarado suffered a brain injury which caused speech issues and required her to attend concussion therapy for months. “I would talk way faster than I could think,” Alvarado said.
- 11.10** Plaintiff Marcus Martin was called to the stand — Martin broke his leg when Fields drove his car into the crowd Aug. 12, and testified that he has trouble standing on it. He suffers from PTSD and said he still has flashbacks to that day. Plaintiff Rev. Seth Wispelwey took the stand. Wispelwey was preaching Aug. 11 when protestors marched past St. Paul’s church, just across the street from the Jefferson statue. Defendant Nathan Damigo, a self-proclaimed white nationalist, was called to the stand. Plaintiffs submitted a Discord message into evidence in which Damigo wrote that “the line between politics and violence is blurring.”

# Students call for Asian and Asian American student center

Fifteen student organizations signed a letter in support of a new student center dedicated to the needs of Asian students

Julianne Saunders | News Writer

A letter written by third-year Commerce student Sanjeev Kumar, fourth-year College student Katie Zhang, fourth-year College student Lauren Xue and fourth-year College student Serena Wood addresses concerns about a lack of representation of Asian Americans in Univer-

Grounds include the Multicultural Student Center, the Interfaith Student Center, the Latinx Student Center and the LGBTQ Center, all located in Newcomb Hall. Most recently, Newcomb's basement became home to the Veteran Student Center which opened Sept. 22.

that it does [include] the identities of these individuals," Kumar said, "Being able to not be focused on one specific ethnicity, but ensure that there's a balance of the representation, a balance in terms of what issues are talked about, a balance of the types of care and support that

letter, the writers reached out to other universities that have established Asian and Asian American centers to gather inspiration and information about how to draft the proposal. One of these universities is Virginia Tech, whose Asian Cultural Engagement Center can accommodate up to 30 people, features an HDTV for presentations and hosts a library with resources relating to Asian American studies. The vision for the proposed center at the University includes many similar features, such as the communal student space and space for books and student resources.

Sophia Liao, president of Third Year Council and third-year Commerce student, explained the center is necessary for a sense of community and belonging among Asian and Asian American students, especially during times of fear or anger.

Liao experienced a keen sense of isolation following the Atlanta shooting in March, when eight people were killed, six of whom were women of Asian descent. Liao said she found a strong community at a vigil held by student organizers days after the tragic shooting.

"It had never felt so viscerally important to me that we need a space where I can see people like me or people who share my experience [who] I can connect with," Liao said.

"I wish we could extend that sense of belonging to a physical space."

The letter proposes that the center be temporarily housed in the basement of Newcomb until a more permanent space is constructed.

In University administration, only one administrative department — the academic and administrative leadership of the Darden School of Business — has more than one Asian faculty member, while most have none. Across 13 departments in the College of Arts & Sciences, only 39 faculty are of Asian background — major offices of University administration and leadership like the Office of the President and the Office of the Dean of Students have no Asian American representation.

## Support for student programs

Considering this small number, the letter states that an Asian and Asian American student center would support the needs of Asian students by having a director who could represent their community and needs to University administration.

Katie Zhang, fourth-year College student and vice-president of the ASU, is looking forward to the installation of faculty who can provide support for the projects and programs that have long been student-run. According to Zhang,

"It had never felt so viscerally important to me that we need a space where I can see people like me or people who share my experience [who] I can connect with," Liao said. "I wish we could extend that sense of belonging to a physical space."

sity leadership as well as the need for a space for Asian students on Grounds.

## Fighting for creation of a space

The letter, entitled "A Case for the Creation of an Asian/Asian American Student Center," lists five primary goals that an Asian and Asian American center would fulfill — providing a space for Asian students to relax and study, contributing to the University's goal of supporting diverse communities by focusing on the Asian community, providing educational, social and emotional resources to Asian students, promoting community within the Asian population and raising awareness for problems facing the Asian community.

Fifteen organizations signed the letter, including Student Council, Asian Student Union, the Minority Rights Coalition, Asian Leaders Council and the University Guide Service. Kumar explained the group worked over the summer to complete the letter and finished it Sept. 3.

Asian Americans currently make up 16.16 percent of undergraduate students at the University and 7.78 percent of graduate students. Less than 10 percent of College of Arts and Sciences faculty are Asian or Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. A report published by the ALC in 2018 showed that while 14 percent of students in the College identified as Asian, Pacific Islander and/or Desi-American, only 8.46 percent of all faculty reflected this identity. Similarly, in the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences, 18.72 percent of students identified as APIDA compared to only 9.86 percent of faculty.

University students have long been fighting for the creation of a center for Asian students on Grounds — the ASU first began pushing for a center as well as an Asian Studies major or minor in 1995.

Other student centers on

## A broad vision for the center

Kumar said that his eventual dream for the space includes the construction of a separate building with a communal space for leisurely activities as well as another space within the new construction where students can access academic resources about Asian American Studies.

Kumar also envisions the center having office space for a number of faculty.

In an interview with The Cavalier Daily, Kumar emphasized that the "Asian" label encompasses a number of different ethnicities and he wants to ensure that the center makes room for this diversity.

"It's something to be very cognizant about when making a space —

are there."

In 2020, the ASU conducted and published a demographic report which surveyed 890 APIDA students in an attempt to correct model-minority myths by presenting a "data-rich portrait" of the diverse APIDA student population. Of the respondents, 458 identified as East Asian American. South Asian and South East Asian students also accounted for 276 and 176 respondents, respectively — a small number identified as Central Asian or Native Hawaiian. The ethnicity section of the report counted the 3.7 percent of students who identified with multiple ethnicities in each category that they indicated.

In the long process of crafting the



EMMA KLEIN | THE CAVALIER DAILY

Community members gathered at a candlelight vigil at the Amphitheater to mourn victims of the Atlanta-area shootings in March, six of whom were Asian women.

Asian student organizations such as ASU have been taking on tasks of supporting students and creating events for the community. Only one faculty member — Sylvia Chong, associate professor of English and associate chair of American Studies — is in charge of the Asian and Pacific American Studies minor. Chong was one of two professors hired to kick-start the minor after it was approved in 2004 — she is the only professor who remained, and has run the program for 14 years by herself.

Zhang said that the responsibility placed on students to support other students is a heavy burden to bear without institutional support.

“We see a lot of the Asian Student Union, historically, taking on tasks that should be done by admin, and we’re tired of that,” Zhang said. “That’s why we need this new space, because it shouldn’t be on students to support students.”

Zhang said that she put in significant effort to create a virtual community event focusing on the sexualization and fetishization of Asian women. Zhang said she felt as though the Women’s Center at the University should have hosted an event in response to the Atlanta shooting, which she said had an important link to the sexualization of Asian American women.

The total budget for the project — including the construction of the center, hiring of personnel and financing of the magazine — for five years as calculated in the letter comes to just under \$3 million. The money would cover the hiring of multiple new faculty members, including a director and assistant director who would be responsible for advocating on behalf of the Asian community and maintaining the center. The director and assistant director would also serve as associate professors teaching classes on Asian American Studies. In addition to new faculty, the budget includes support for new and existing Asian student organizations, guest speakers and construction and decorating costs for the space.

Three student interns would also be hired to work in the center and would assist center coordinators with any day-to-day responsibilities and maintaining publication and production of the magazine.

Liao spoke on the importance of having professionals to support the



AVA MACBLANE | THE CAVALIER DAILY

Before an independent center for Asian students can be built, students hope open space in the basement of Newcomb Hall can be used.

Current University resources for Asian students include the Asian Pacific American Leadership Training Institute, which is a student-facilitated 10-week program for students to learn about leadership skills in the context of their own cultural identity. The proposed center would open a paid position to maintain programs for Asian students including the APALTI and “ensure a sense of permanence,” according to the report.

In addition to APALTI, the center would maintain the Women’s Asian American Leadership Initiative, an eight week discussion-based leadership program for Asian American women student at the University, the annual celebration of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month and the Peer Advising Family Network, which provides transitional support to first year and transfer

Asian Leaders Council, said she envisions the center as a safe space where students can learn together. The ALC, Wood said, has always pushed to support cooperation and collaboration with member organizations, and she hopes to see the center continue this goal of collaboration.

“Being able to have that commonality of the experience we’ve had in America is really important,” Wood said. “And I think that’s something that unites our community in a sense.”

For Wood, this common experience stems from a deracialization of Asian Americans who are considered as a group to have achieved a proximity to whiteness, thereby erasing the specific struggles and demands of Asian Americans.

“[Asian Americans] were used somewhat as an example of success

adding that the Asian American community contains a large amount of diversity in income, English language proficiency and citizenship, but that many people assume that the Asian American community is a successful monolith equipped with generational wealth. Zhang said these assumptions cause the struggles faced by Asian Americans to become invisible.

Ilyas Saltani, vice-chair for community development and residential inclusion of Housing and Residence Life and fourth-year College student, expressed the importance of giving diverse communities a voice through having a center.

“I think appreciating and celebrating each respective identity’s uniqueness while also celebrating them as a collective, is what that space would serve,” Saltani said.

#### The future of a center

In an email statement to The Cavalier Daily, Interim Dean of Students Julie Caruccio said the University “appreciates the substantive work demonstrated by students” in drafting the report and advocating for the center. According to Caruccio, University leadership met with the students involved last spring. More recently, Caruccio said she and Vicki Gist, associate dean of students and director of Multicultural Student Services, met with the students.

“As we explained at that time, we are currently developing a process to consider student-generated space

use proposals,” Caruccio said. “We expect to have that process ready for implementation by the end of this academic year. The students in this group will be among those included in that process.”

The next steps outlined in the proposal call for the University to approve and begin the construction of a center for Asian Student Center as soon as possible and begin using open space in the Newcomb basement in the meantime. The letter also calls for hiring the necessary faculty as soon as possible and having them transition into the official space once it is created.

Wood said a more cohesive idea of the physical space of the Asian American student center will come when the University and the organizers have a better idea of where the center would be located.

Reflecting on the work he has done in drafting this proposal, Kumar expressed hope for future generations of Asian American students on Grounds.

“It doesn’t seem realistic for an Asian American student center to be formed during my time at the University,” Kumar said. “[But I know] if we get the University to sign off and then the constructions going we can get a center built [so] that future students at this University will feel like they have a home here or feel like the University sees them and acknowledges their presence.”

“Being able to have that commonality of the experience we’ve had in America is really important,” Wood said. “And I think that’s something that unites our community in a sense.”

Asian community in addition to a physical space.

“A space can be developed and found[ed], there are new buildings popping up every day, but making sure that there are people in the program that are paid to support our community — I would love to see that,” Liao said.

students in the Asian American community. All of these are currently run under the Multicultural Student Services with APAHM also run by the ASU. The center would also provide a biannual magazine for the University’s Asian community.

Serena Wood, fourth-year College student and co-chair of the

and, therefore, kind of deracialized and not viewed as a minority that’s necessarily discriminated against,” Wood said, “But that doesn’t mean that the Asian American experience has been fair in any case. A lot of times that can hurt and isolate Asian Americans.”

Zhang echoed this sentiment,

## LIFE

## Sammy's cheesesteak restaurant opens up on the Corner

New restaurant Sammy's on the Corner opens to serve Philadelphia-style cheesesteaks in Charlottesville

Tanner Kissler | Features Writer



LEILA TROXELL | THE CAVALIER DAILY

Sammy's On The Corner is now open from 10:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Saturday. They hope to bring a new flavor to the Corner's late night food scene soon.

Following the closure of Littlejohn's Delicatessen due to the pandemic, new restaurant Sammy's On The Corner took up its space on Oct. 5 to serve an array of Philadelphia-inspired dishes to locals.

Sam Rochester, co-owner of Sammy's on the Corner, has used his years of culinary expertise and Philadelphia upbringing to establish what he believes will be the next Corner staple.

The building was constructed 40 years ago, so moving Sammy's into the space required extensive renovations. Rochester explained that he and his co-owner, Kevin McConnell, encountered multiple challenges throughout the renovation process.

"A lot of times when we took down walls, there were five or 10 things we had to fix behind the wall," Rochester said. "There was a lot of extra work."

The restaurant draws heavily from Rochester's upbringing in Philadelphia — a focal point not only in the cheesesteaks themselves but also in the decorations lining the restaurant's walls, which flaunt Philadelphia sports memorabilia and paintings of the city's most famous landmarks.

Rochester stayed in Philadelphia until the age of 21 and lived

a few blocks down from famous cheesesteak shops like Jim's and Ishkabibble's, the tastes of which he tried to incorporate into the cheesesteaks served at Sammy's.

First-year Nursing student Caroline Miller explained why she visited Sammy's and offered a review of the shop's cheesesteaks. Coming from just outside Philadelphia, she argued they tasted pretty similar.

"I came because I noticed a bit ago [Sammy's] was open, so I thought it'd be cool to try the cheesesteak," Miller said. "It tastes like the ones in Philly."

After leaving Philadelphia, Rochester moved to Colorado before relocating to Charlottesville, where he worked at restaurants like Mono Loco — a popular Spanish restaurant on Water Street that has since closed down. Rochester then became the executive chef of The Downtown Grille for eight years before becoming the executive chef of the Darden School of Business. Additionally, Rochester served as food and beverage director of Darden and worked at Observatory Hill Dining Hall before beginning his venture to create Sammy's.

Now fully renovated, Sammy's is currently operating from 10:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through

Saturday but is hoping to begin late-night operation. Late-night hours for Sammy's would drastically change the late-night food scene on the Corner, which is currently dominated by Christian's Pizza and The White Spot.

"We are working towards going late-night Thursday, Friday and Saturday," Rochester said. "We need to get there — the students need it."

Class of 2021 Nursing alumna Morgan Simpson explained how incorporating another late-night food spot would alter the Corner's nightlife.

"That would really change things up if Sammy's did late-night," Simpson said. "The lines at the other food places are always insane ... and there's not many food options. It would really make things a lot easier for students who need food late at night."

Sammy's is planning to have its first late-night hours for Saturday's football game against Notre Dame. The restaurant will also receive its liquor license soon, which will allow it to turn the upstairs patio into a bar targeted towards fourth-year students. Rochester explained he also hopes to start selling alcohol in the bottom floor area with special deals like Tequila

Tuesdays.

After gaining years of culinary experience in Charlottesville, Rochester is finally creating a place of his own, bringing an authentic Philadelphia eating experience to his new hometown.

"We're creating a different environment than anything that's on the Corner," Rochester said. "We've got a little bit of Philly attitude but a lot more of Charlottesville hospitality kind of blended in — the whole idea is to bring Philadelphia to Charlottesville."

The local delicatessen Littlejohn's closed down due to losses during the pandemic, then attempted to prevent shutting down by starting a fundraising page in July 2020. The GoFundMe raised \$27,710, promising to provide its future employees a living wage and health insurance should it reopen.

Jaeson Burke, former co-owner of Littlejohn's, explained in September 2020 that the group failed to raise enough funds to support reopening in the same location on the Corner. In addition, he described other difficulties the ownership team was facing.

"We have come to the conclusion that we are not going to be able to raise enough funds to continue with our plans to reopen

Littlejohn's. Instead the team is changing focus to another space. After the tragic passing of a key member we just don't have the ability, funds or manpower to operate that scale operation," Burke's post reads in a GoFundMe update.

All donors were offered a full refund and any donations that were not refunded were put towards creating a new, smaller, and more manageable space for Littlejohn's.

Class of 2021 Nursing alumna Morgan Simpson remembered the effect Littlejohn's had on the Corner. Having been on the corner for more than 40 years, the loss of Littlejohn's is a big change for Charlottesville.

"It was a nice little shop," Simpson said. "It's sad they closed down because of COVID. I know some people really liked it."

Having lived in Charlottesville for the past 15 years, Rochester understands the legacy of Littlejohn's, affirming the roots of the old restaurant are still present in Sammy's.

"We tried hard to capture [Littlejohn's] essence," Rochester said. "We kept the floors, we kept the pattern, we kept all the wood, we kept the signs, we kept the 'Order Here' sign."

# Professors remark challenges of in-person learning this fall

Though necessary for health and safety, masks often present unique challenges in the classroom

Acacia McCabe & Alston Rachels | Features Writers

When the University announced its official plans for a return to an in-person learning environment for the Fall semester, there was an evident rush of excitement on Grounds in response to the idea of resumed normalcy. Still, one of the few preventative measures against COVID-19 remains in practice since this announcement — the University-wide mask mandate.

Originally slated to be revisited in the early months of the semester, the University ruled in mid-October to prolong the guideline through the end of the semester.

The mandate applies relevant within all University-owned buildings including classrooms, libraries and dining halls. The CDC and UVA Health assure masks help prevent the spread of infectious diseases, including COVID-19 and its more dangerous Delta variant.

Although in unanimous agreement on the necessity of masks in the classroom, professors at the University express some of the challenges of navigating a masked learning environment this fall.

In a tweet, Assoc. Commerce Prof. Steven Johnson expressed that initial enthusiasm for in-classroom learning has faded throughout the semester.

“Whatever it is, I’m just not feeling it this morning...” Johnson wrote. “The excitement of returning to in-person instruction has long since worn off and now it’s just the long slog of a ‘normal’ semester while still navigating an ongoing global pandemic.”

Johnson furthered the thoughts behind his 180 character-bound tweet in an interview with The Cavalier Daily. He emphasized his mixed emotions about returning to teach in person after having been entirely virtual in the 2020-2021 school year — in addition to his elation, he still had some particular worries.

“I felt quite a bit concerned about knowing that the Delta variant was becoming the most prevalent variant,” Johnson said. “I feel particularly for colleagues that I work with, who have young children at home ... they’re in a household that has a mix of people that are fully vaccinated and those who aren’t. I’m highly in favor of wearing masks indoors, and also I’m extremely thankful for the collective efforts — of students, of faculty, of staff — to keep each other safe.”

One such professor with young children at home is Assoc. Clas-

sics Prof. Gregory Hays. Hays mentioned the difficulty of connecting with masked students this fall, even though he is relieved that the mask mandate is in place.

“Masks are irritating for everybody, I think,” he wrote in an email. “They definitely make it harder to hear and be heard, and I had a lot more trouble learning students’ names and faces this fall than I usually do. But as the parent of an under-12 I’m very glad the mask requirement is there, and I’m grateful to my students for being conscientious about it.”

Children between the ages of 5 and 11 years old were not eligible to be vaccinated until Tuesday, posing a real risk to Hays who is evidently concerned about bringing any illness from the classroom back home.

Students have mirrored similar sentiments as professors regarding the difficulties presented by masked learning. Moreover, from a student perspective, masked learning proves more difficult to form social connections with classmates and instructors alike.

“It’s definitely harder to make connections with other people because you can’t see anybody’s face,” first-year College student Sasha Porter said. “It’s harder to just get to know people if you can’t see their expressions and emotions ... I think people are just trying to learn how to socialize and interact with others again.”

The transition between online learning and in-person classes has its tradeoffs. As Johnson mentions, there are benefits to a supposedly more relaxed online environment. However, Johnson feels that when he is in a classroom, his students are on a much “more level playing field” — a benefit of in-person learning.

“I worried about equity issues that not all students have a great place — distraction free — to do a Zoom call,” Johnson said about the online 2020 school year. “If you don’t have a high-speed internet connection, if you don’t have reliable internet, if you don’t have good computing devices, a good camera, or good speaker [or] a good microphone then it’s really hard.”

Due to the mixed advantages and disadvantages that have arisen throughout the return to in-person learning, Johnson opted to implement a bit of both worlds into his lesson plans this fall. Outside of in-person classes, he offers alternative options for office hours, including Zoom and outdoor meetings.



RIX PRAKASH | THE CAVALIER DAILY

With this masked, in-person year being just as new of a transition as the switch to online learning last year, unexpected challenges are inevitable.

Like his colleagues, Assoc. History Prof. John Mason senses the pros and cons of both learning environments. For his seminars, which rely heavily on discussion, Mason notes he is able to successfully mimic in-person classes while teaching online last year through a heavy emphasis on not turning cameras off during class.

“A seminar is not supposed to be everybody listening to the professor, a seminar is supposed to be everybody contributing to the conversation,” Mason said. “[In Zoom], I had 100 percent cooperation with people keeping their cameras turned on and ... I really thought we were able to build a rapport and an ease of conversa-

tion that was as good as anything I’ve experienced in the classroom.”

By comparison, even after over half of a semester of in-person learning with masks, many professors are still finding it difficult to place names and faces.

“It’s embarrassing,” Mason said. “You want to be able to call your students by their name.”

So for smaller classes, Zoom may offer enough in terms of face-to-face interaction to compensate for their lack of in-person contact. However, for lectures, Mason leans towards in-person teaching as the more beneficial choice.

“In lecture, I suppose it’s an easy call,” Mason said. “I’d rather

be in the classroom with everybody wearing a mask, but for seminars, everybody in the seminar could fit on [the] screen.”

With this masked, in-person year being just as much a transition as the switch to online learning last year, unexpected challenges are inevitable. Professors and students alike long for the day when learning is able to return safely to pre-pandemic protocols.

“[The goal] is to be in the classroom without a mask,” Mason said. “I hope we can get there someday.”

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# Top 10 reasons the semester plummets after ‘fall back’ time

The worst is yet to come...

Ben Rosenthal | Top 10 Writer

## 1. Daylight ceases to exist

I am not a psychologist but I firmly believe that the sun is good for our mental health. Fall back time essentially robs us of an hour of sunlight by moving sunrise from approximately 7:30 a.m. to 6:30 a.m. — when nobody in their right mind is awake anyways — while stripping away the light from afternoon hours people actually want to experience. While I will get more into the specific effects of this later, I wanted to call attention to just how bad of a trade deal this is. It shows a real lack of negotiation skills on our part.

## 2. The air temperature turns Antarctic...

While this is not necessarily the fault of fall back time, it certainly doesn't help us keep warm when the sun goes down by five. This semester, we have had abnormally warm temperatures — something which I am against in principle as a believer in global warming, but am in favor of as a human being who likes wearing short sleeves. Now, however, our luck is finally running out. The highs are drifting towards the fifties, the sun is drifting towards the horizon, and soon, we'll be slipping on ice on the way to class.

## 3. ...But the classroom temperatures stay the same

Even worse, as we start putting on jackets to make our commutes bearable, we run into the ultimate dilemma. You see, classroom temperatures at UVA. do not adjust as much to the outside world as I'd like. They tend to stay about five degrees too hot for every occasion — which is fine enough in early fall when we are rocking shorts, but once we start layering on long-sleeves and jackets, every building in New Cabell becomes an unfortunate sauna.

## 4. Starbucks line times rise as seasonal drinks take over

This is more of a side-effect of Christmas starting in November — a problem which I will refrain from ranting about, because I don't want to sound like a 60 year-old. But while I do love the occasional white peppermint mocha, I must call attention to just how much these new seasonal drinks bump up the line times. As the temperature plummets into the 30s and our willingness to live drops as well, caffeine — especially when flavored like gingerbread cookies and peppermint patties instead of actual coffee — hits the spot. If only the line was ever short enough to justify the purchase.



RUOXUAN YUAN | THE CAVALIER DAILY

## 5. Finishing class when it is pitch black outside

An extension of the lack of daylight hours is this horrible, horrible phenomenon. Imagine waking up at 8 a.m. to a nice, bright morning, starting class at 9 a.m., and then finishing at 5 p.m. ready to enjoy a nice relaxing walk or a game of catch — only to see that you have worked the entire day away. Yes, I know this is called working, every adult reader who has no sympathy for this point. But if you're reading a college paper top 10 listicle, you have to accept that 80 percent of it is going to be complaining. It comes with the territory.



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## 6. We have less time to exercise outdoors

This is by far the most devastating item on this list. Everybody in my life knows just how much I like to exercise outdoors. Jogging, tossing the good ol' disc, throwing the pigskin — everything of that sort. It's just the fact of the matter, and everybody knows that it's true. But unfortunately, when it gets dark and cold by 5 p.m., I simply don't have time to do that three-mile jog anymore. Which is a shame, because if I had my way, I would exercise frequently every day, but now there is really no choice but to sit inside and eat Cheez-Its from the box. Oh well. Darn.

## 7. The stress of Sabre points returns

Basketball games returning is a fall semester miracle. I do not want to take away from that — even if I forgot to apply for tickets for the first three games and am currently experiencing severe, pre-emptive FOMO. But I do want to call attention to the fact that basketball brings back the competitive yet unpredictable dynamics of Sabre points. The stress, the fear, the anger, the bargaining — the whole shebang. Get ready to cheer, but also get ready to hate life.

## 8. Work is forced deep underground into the libraries

I genuinely enjoy doing my work outside in between classes. It's peaceful, tranquil, and gives me a little chance to desperately cling on to whatever remnants of a tan I still have. But once the temperature shoots into the forties, we will all be forced into the tunnels of Clark — or the madhouse of Clem, God forbid. Comfy booths will become less available as crowds increase, condemning us to ... chairs. It is truly a dystopia we live in.

## 9. Winter hats mess up my hair

Look, this is a 10-item list, not all of them are going to be winners. This is a purely personal item. I have been growing my hair out a bit — not a style statement, but to avoid having to go out and do something about it. The only way it looks good is with 30 minutes of careful, yet aggressive, styling — which removing a winter hat immediately undoes. This is without a doubt the worst, most tragic item on this list so far, and I am sure everybody is really sympathetic to this one.



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## 10. Finals, finals, finals

I could not finish this list without calling attention to the real threat looming over us all. Long Starbucks lines aren't the real danger. Rather, it is the fact that the two happiest holidays of the year — Thanksgiving and Winter Break — are merely slices of bread on a stressful finals' sandwich. While there is still plenty to look forward to about this time with family and friends, the reality is, our professors are going to make us earn it. My best advice? Work a little less hard and accept an 85. Mom, Dad, ignore this part.

# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

## ‘There’s no mistakes in dancing’ in Charlottesville Salsa

Charlottesville Salsa Club embraces the Colombian attitude of community, acceptance and exploration in social dancing

Tanner Rowe | Staff Writer



COURTESY EDWIN ROA

Founded in Dec. of 2001, The Charlottesville Salsa Club has hosted the longest-running consecutive salsa dance party in the state of Virginia, located at IX Art Park.

Founded in December of 2001, The Charlottesville Salsa Club has hosted the longest-running consecutive salsa dance party in the state of Virginia, located at IX Art Park. Sunday Salsa Night and Bachata Wednesday have recurred weekly, all year round, for 20 years — with the exception of a year-long halt due to COVID-19.

“At this moment, we feel fearful of sharing with other people,” said Edwin Roa, co-owner of the Salsa Club.

Roa, like many business owners, was unsure if his club would survive the pandemic. He lost many loyal dancers after requiring proof of vaccination to get into the club.

“You know, people can believe

whatever they want, but no matter whose side you’re on, you’re still depending on society,” Roa said. “You are a social being. It’s all about negotiating. That’s the beauty of dance — dance teaches us how to negotiate.”

Weekly parties commence with an hour-long lesson at 7 p.m., but attendees are welcome to stay as long as they want for an after-party full of dancing and socialization. If you don’t know what you’re doing, Roa is there to guide you through the lesson. As a professional dancer, performer, owner of Zabor Dance and native of Colombia, he is more than qualified. But to Roa, dancing is not always about skill — “sometimes you go to parties where it feels like a competition of who’s

the best dancer. Here, it’s more like a family-oriented thing.”

Roa shared his attitude towards social dancing, which places no emphasis on competition.

“Social dancing is not about movement. It’s about connection,” Roa said. “So, that’s what it’s all about. We come to a party to meet people, not to show you how great I am. Simply put, you’re the best dancer if, in the span of two hours, you get to meet everybody.”

After entering into IX Art Park’s indoor space and being provided with an \$8 wristband — discounted at \$6 for students — dancers enter into a vivid atmosphere of fluorescent black lights and unique artwork. Dancers are paired up and choose between

roles of lead or follow.

“If you’re a leader, it doesn’t mean you have to be the male,” Roa said. “Lead is creating motion. Following is actually reading that motion. Following doesn’t mean following blindly. Think of it as like a democracy.”

Leaders are taught to guide the follower through gentle pressure, or specific hand placement, to communicate the initiation of movement in a certain direction. Bachata and salsa are about connection and synchronization between partners. The follower is responsible for reading these movements, although they may choose not to.

Next, dancers are instructed on the footwork for a short, basic choreographed routine that

formulates essential elements of Latin dance. Dancers are given easy-to-follow verbalizations that accompany 8-step counts to remember the routine. Roa then instructs the followers to switch the leader to their left, repeating the routine with new partners and circling around the room until each original pair reunites. By the end of the lesson, most dancers have met each other.

Roa used dancing as a way to meet people when he moved to the United States.

“Being a foreigner, the first thing I actually noticed here, is that I felt lonely, I felt like I was not visible,” Roa said. “Latino culture is all about having these gatherings, but there was not a lot of places to go.”

Craving community, Roa would habitually drive to Latin dance clubs in DC to meet people. Not knowing any English, Roa expressed himself through body movement and learned to connect with others nonverbally.

“The body doesn’t lie, words may, but the body doesn’t,” Roa said.

Roa hopes to bring awareness to his understanding of Latin culture in regards to music and dance as a form of communication, as well as its high valuation of community and togetherness. “Dance is the perfect excuse to meet people,” Roa said. “The whole point is to share a moment, everyone’s the same.”

“I just want this to continue, to whatever capacity,” Roa said. “It doesn’t have to be something big. It’s just whatever we can do to attract people to not feel lonely.”

The Charlottesville Salsa Club serves as an inclusive and diverse community that welcomes people of all cultures to unite through movement. The club itself was named after the Spanish word for sauce, salsa, to denote the mixing of different cultures and Latin styles of music and dance.

Those who walk through the doors of Roa’s club are accepted as they are, and according to Roa, this is why the Salsa Club has lasted so long — dancing urges people to “take the veil off.”

# The perfect playlist for a fall walk across grounds

Because every main character needs a fall vibes playlist

Mahika Ghaisas | Staff Writer



KHUYEN DINH | THE CAVALIER DAILY

Fall is one of the most beautiful seasons at UVa. From the vibrant red and yellow leaves on the Lawn to the crisp autumn air across Grounds, autumn at the University is a beautiful sight.

Fall is one of the most beautiful seasons at the University. From the vibrant red and yellow leaves on the Lawn to the crisp autumn air across grounds, autumn at the University is a beautiful sight. If you love going on fall walks, try this playlist to set the vibe as you marvel at all of the fall beauty around you on Grounds — and feel like the main character while you're at it.

## “Finally//beautiful stranger” by Halsey

“Finally//beautiful stranger” is Halsey’s best song. Beautifully crafted and sung, it is perfect for a slow, contemplative walk around Grounds as you reflect on the semester. This song will make you smile on your walk, and it will help you to appreciate all of the fall beauty around you from the Lawn to the Corner.

## “Witches” by Alice Phoebe Lou

This song is the definition of

fall. Just one listen will remind you of red and yellow leaves, fall Starbucks drinks, pumpkins and everything else related to the season. It’s perfect for a peppy walk across the Lawn and looking at all of the colorful fall — you’ll totally feel like the main character after listening to this upbeat track.

## “the lakes” by Taylor Swift

Taylor Swift never fails to craft a stunning song. Off of the deluxe version of her album “folklore,” “the lakes” is ethereal as Swift sings poetically about love and beauty. It’s a great song to get lost in while on a calming walk across grounds. Take a moment to admire the crisp autumn air and colorful leaves as this serene song transports you to another world.

## “Kansas City” by The New Basement Tapes

Need to clear your mind

from the stress of school? “Kansas City” by The New Basement Tapes will help you with that. This folk-rock tune, complete with calm guitars and wistful lyrics, is guaranteed to help you relax while on a therapeutic walk across Grounds. The song offers an escape, and it’s easy to vibe to the frontman’s smooth vocals as you see the seasons changing across grounds.

## “XO” by John Mayer

John Mayer’s rendition of Beyoncé’s “XO” is a total slow burn. Mayer’s sweet vocals are full of tender emotion that is reminiscent of the beauty of fall. Allowing yourself to really tune into your surroundings by listening to this song while strolling around Grounds.

## “Jackie and Wilson” by Hozier

Off of his debut self-titled album, Hozier’s soulful vocals on this slow, indie-rock track make

this track relentlessly catchy. It is impossible to not fall in love with the buzzing guitars in the background, and it is a feel-good, mellow song that is perfect for a cold fall day.

## “10,000 Emerald Pools” by Børns

This is a very mellow track, but it’s one that grabs your attention and doesn’t let it go. The positive, idyllic vibes on this track are guaranteed to put a smile on your face. “10,000 Emerald Pools” is an inviting and comforting track that will make you feel warm on your walk.

## “Elsewhere” by Young the Giant

Young the Giant frontman Sameer Gadhia’s dazzling yet muted vocals set the vibe for an insightful walk around Grounds. Whether you’re on a walk between classes or an aimless stroll, “Elsewhere” will keep you motivated but will also make you stop and appreciate all of the beauty around you.

## “Notion” by The Rare Occasions

Another main character walking song, “Notion” is the perfect indie-rock anthem for a brisk, purposeful walk across Grounds in the fall. Featuring influences of older rock, it has a vintage style that is sure to lift your spirits and bring a wave of nostalgia to your walk. This song is sure to add some pep to your step but also make you remember all of the wonderful memories you’ve had around Grounds.

## “Cleopatra” by The Lumineers

“Cleopatra” is the epitome of fall vibes. The upbeat guitars and warm vocals in this song give it a cheerful sound, but there is still a tinge of nostalgia and melancholy present. It’s reminiscent of the seasons changing and reminds us to be grateful for the opportunity to see the fall beauty around Grounds.

# Local bookstores to spice up your holiday shopping

Charlottesville bookstores offer a wide variety of reads perfect for gifting to family and friends this holiday season

Audrey Cruicy | Staff Writer

The holiday season is around the corner, and there's no better gift for a family member or friend than a thoughtfully selected book or two. Before loading your Amazon cart though, browse a few bookstores in Charlottesville! Supporting a local bookstore is not only more economically and personally ethical, but it gives you the opportunity to invest in the community.

## Blue Whale Books

Located between Bizou and Miller's at the Downtown Mall, Blue Whale Books is a Charlottesville staple. The shop sells antiquarian books spanning in genre from biography to poetry. In addition, Blue Whale Books boasts an impressive inventory of maps — some over 500 years old — depicting an array of places across the globe. They also sell beautiful prints belonging to categories like art deco, botanical, butterflies and moths, medicine and ornithology.

"What makes us truly different is our selection of graphic arts," University alumnus and Blue Whale Books owner Scott Fennessey said in a Feb. 2021 interview with The Piedmont Virginian. "In Europe it's common for bookstores to also sell maps and prints, but you hardly ever see it in the United States."

Fennessey founded Blue Whale Books in 1994 after working for Rare Book School on Grounds during graduate school. Support an alumnus-founded shop and grab a few niche books, maps or prints for those on your holiday shopping list — and yourself!

## Daedalus Used Books

In close proximity to the Downtown Mall, Daedalus Used Books stands at 123 Heather Heyer Way. A gem of Charlottesville, the shop holds three floors crammed with out-of-print books — around 100,000 books in total. Although specializing in fiction, Daedalus carries practically every genre of literature except for textbooks.

Daedalus Used Books owner Sandy McAdams intended to name the shop after Stephen Dedalus — a character in James Joyce's novel "A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man." However, he spelled the name wrong — in keeping with the Greek Daedalus myth — when he painted the sign in 1974 and never fixed it.

Nonetheless, visit Daedalus Used Books to find rare used books to gift the nostalgic reader on your shopping list. McAdams

staffs the shop Monday through Thursday, happily assisting customers find books that fit their interests — whether they be broad or specific!

## Heartwood Books

A bit closer to Grounds, Heartwood Books is located on the Corner along Elliewood Avenue — before you reach Grit Coffee. The shop carries antiquarian books, balancing renowned classics and scholarly works about Virginia with cookbooks and mystery novels. As a member of the Antiquarian Booksellers' Association of America, Heartwood Books is home to rare and used collections of books belonging to a wide variety of categories that range from folklore to politics.

Bibliophile Paul Collinge founded Heartwood Books over 40 years ago. He takes pride in his shop's extensive offerings and is a fixture in the Charlottesville

community himself. Collinge co-founded the Virginia Festival of the Book — a popular literary tradition that draws writers and readers to Charlottesville annually.

Pop into Heartwood Books to stock up on tried and true reads for the book lover in your life. Browse the books on display between the window panes and adventure inside to find books that have been well loved and well cared for!

## New Dominion Bookshop

On the Downtown Mall as well, New Dominion Bookshop is the oldest independent bookstore in Virginia, and the sole all-new independent bookstore in Charlottesville. Housing about 20,000 books, the shop focuses on personalized service — customers are able to engage in conversations with booksellers who make individualized recommen-

dations based on their interests. New Dominion Bookshop even sells books written by University graduates and professors, offering University students local access to works authored by professors they might know or study under.

"We try to be both a retail institution and a cultural institution here," said Julia Kudravetz, general manager and owner of New Dominion Bookshop. In addition to selling books, the shop is active in the Charlottesville community by holding a storytime for school-age kids and hosting the UVA. MFA Reading Series, which features University students in the MFA Creative Writing Program.

In an effort to be a welcoming space where University students can browse and buy books, New Dominion Bookshop is also open on Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings.

"I really encourage that exploration of Charlottesville and supporting a business in the college town you're at," said Audrey Parks, University alumna and assistant manager of New Dominion Bookshop.

Stop by the shop to grab new books and recent releases for your family and friends — their holiday market begins on Nov. 15. University students even receive a 10 percent discount on purchases — just mention it at the register.



# OPINION

## LEAD EDITORIAL

# Build an Asian/Asian American Student Center

*The University should respond to demands by Asian organizations and students and construct an Asian/Asian American Student Center*

For decades, Asian and Asian American students at the University have been calling for an Asian/Asian American Student Center. To this day, the University has failed to fulfill their demands. Dismantling institutional racism requires a committed effort. One step the University can take towards the dissolution of all forms of racism is changing the physical environment around Grounds. Further, this call is particularly relevant in contemporary times with the dramatic increase in anti-Asian violence. The University should respond to these calls and construct an Asian/Asian American Student Center on Grounds.

A recent letter signed by 15 student organizations lists their demands for an Asian American student space on Grounds. This demand has been endorsed by Asian American fraternities and organizations, including the Asian Student Center, the Asian Leaders Council, the Indian Student Association, the Vietnamese Student Association, the Pakistani Student Association, the alpha Kappa Delta Phi

International Sorority and the Sigma Psi Zeta Sorority at the University. In addition, the letter has also received support from other student organizations on Grounds — Student Council, The Minority Rights Coalition and the University Guide Service to list a few. However, this is far from a new request. The Asian Students Union began requesting such a center all the way in 1995.

Indeed there are already centers for students of color on Grounds — the Multicultural Student Center and the Latinx Student Center for instance. All of these centers are valuable to the University community. However, their existence does not undermine the need to establish a student center specifically for Asian American students. The existence of Student Centers for other minority groups on Grounds does not erase but rather reinforces the University's responsibility to provide a safe space for Asian and Asian American students on Grounds.

Providing a safe space for Asian and Asian American students on

Grounds is especially necessary considering the recent increase in anti-Asian violence. In 2020, hate crimes against Asian Americans in 16 cities rose by 150 percent. Stop AAPI Hate — which tracks instances of Asian hate crimes — received reports of over 2,800 hate incidents across the United States. The University community is not isolated from the wave of anti-Asian violence. In an attack likely motivated by anti-Asian sentiments, two Asian students at the University were egged earlier this year.

The ultimate goal of this center would be to provide a space for Asian and Asian American students at the University to organize and gather safely. There are several resources for Asian students on Grounds — the Asian Pacific American Leadership Training Institute, the Women's Asian American Leadership Initiative and the Peer Advising Family Network for instance. However, these programs would all benefit from a physical space to conduct their meetings, various events and to socialize.

In addition, the new Student Center should serve as a space for Asian students at the University to gather in a safe social environment. In the aftermath of the Atlanta shooting in March — where six out of the eight killed were Asian women — Sophia Liao, president of Third Year Council and Commerce student, noted a “keen sense of isolation.” She expressed her desire for a physical space at the University where she could gather with other Asian and Asian American Students whom she could connect with. The letter demanding the need for an Asian American student center reflects this premise — it lists five primary goals for the center, largely focused on providing a safe social environment for the Asian community at the University.

All this being said, the University must not forget to involve students in designing this center. For one, the term Asian is a broad category. There are students of many different Asian ethnicities on Grounds — data that was itself investigated by students as

the University's demographic survey measures Asian identities as more of a monolith — and the letter's authors additionally emphasized a need for balanced representation. Furthermore, student demands are not limited to just construction of a physical building. The letter also calls for additional Asian faculty, particularly in leadership roles. All of this goes to say that student demands must be considered as the University constructs an Asian American Student Center.

An Asian American Student Center is a necessary addition to the current multicultural centers on Grounds. The University has a responsibility to provide a safe and accepting environment for its Asian and Asian American students. However, we cannot forget that an Asian/Asian American Student Center is but one step in creating an environment on Grounds that is truly welcoming to everyone — the University should listen to the demand of the Asian community on Grounds.

## THE CAVALIER DAILY

### THE CAVALIER DAILY

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# Increase in-person CAPS availability

*After such a tumultuous year, student concerns for better, more accessible mental health resources must be met*

Growing up is hard. Whether it be picking up a trade, attending college or working a full-time job, no one says quite how hard it really is. Transitioning into a college such as U.Va. with its rigor and oftentimes intense competition can be especially difficult. In high school, the adults handle almost everything — guidance counselors help pick classes, parents typically house and feed their children and teachers provide countless opportunities to perform well. There is room for error in high school — students are often coddled. But as soon as college classes begin, that support disappears. Suddenly students are told to grow up and fend for themselves. It can be stressful — scary even — to navigate the collegiate experience alone.

Thankfully most schools, including the University, offer programs to aid their students. Counseling and Psychological Services provides mental health support through individual or group therapy, psychiatric services, drop-in consults, emergency and crisis services and more. The mission of CAPS is “to make its services accessible to as many students

as possible.” As promising as this mission sounds, CAPS falls short of its endeavors. CAPS allows students to schedule therapy appointments either by phone or through the University HealthyHoos portal. And while CAPS still advertises itself digitally, its availability appears to be almost fully booked in the portal. Students have voiced their concerns about this prolonged wait

combat the influx of student need. Fast-forwarding to 2018, students voiced their frustrations with wait times so much so that CAPS responded by hiring additional staff. In Spring 2021, the National College Health Assessment concluded that 78 percent of undergraduate students and 87.4 percent of graduate students surveyed said they would consider seeking help from a men-

24 hours a day, 7 days a week number to call, its primary use is for crisis and emergency consultations and fails to relieve the need for general therapy sessions.

Trying to schedule an appointment with CAPS is like going to the grocery store at the end of the day. You’re exhausted as you wait in line to checkout, attempting to balance the tower of groceries you

ly meet the mental health needs of students. President Jim Ryan and CAPS Director Nicole Ruzek must not only meet these needs but celebrate them. Making students wait weeks on end just to access care is far from a celebration. In-person appointment availability at CAPS must be extended to match demand. Whether it be that CAPS hires more therapists, adds appointment spots to the weekends, or both, student demands must be met. This issue has gone on for decades, and the lack of organized initiative to make a swift recovery is disappointing.

For everyone who has taken the time to contact CAPS and seek medical help, please know that your initiative and proactive nature do not go unnoticed — that is something in and of itself for which to be proud. Now, it is up to the University administration to ensure that all students have accessible and quality mental health resources and care.

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**In-person appointment availability at CAPS must be extended to match demand.**

time, noting that it takes weeks to finally receive an appointment spot. Further, the fact that the University has continued to ignore this issue illustrates just how unseen student needs really are.

The need for expanded mental health services is not new. In fact, it has been an ongoing issue for over a decade. Russ Federman, the former director of CAPS, testified before the U.S. Senate in 2007 for increased health resources to

tal health professional. There are over 27,000 students at the University and only 25 CAPS staff members who are taking patients. This translates to one therapist for every 1,080 students. Even if half of those students decided to seek help — a much lower number than NCHA suggests — it would still be infeasible. Additionally, CAPS does not operate on the weekends, shortening their appointment availability. While their website does provide a

have picked out. Except, in this case, the groceries are your accumulated mental health concerns, and instead of waiting minutes, you are waiting weeks just to reach the front.

Taking the initiative to get mental health help is such a significant personal accomplishment that is often overlooked in the public eye. Between navigating schoolwork, the lingering impact of COVID-19 and trying to make sense of adulthood, it is vital for the University to ful-

# We did not ask for more COPS

*The creation of the Community Oriented Policing Squad is an insensitive and ineffective use of resources*

Recently, the University Police Department took action to create a more visible presence in the neighborhoods surrounding Grounds. For the most part, the catalyst for this response was rising concerns about violence on Grounds and in the surrounding Charlottesville community. The efforts seem to be genuine attempts for the police force to protect and connect with the community. Nevertheless, their intentions are misguided — the University should not increase police presence on Grounds nor in the surrounding community.

In order to become more involved with and knowledgeable of the community around Grounds, UPD has added a new unit to its force — the Community Oriented Policing Squad. This new unit will consist of four new police officers working with existing police officers in Charlottesville. The planned schedule is that COPS will work Wednesday through Saturday. Thursday through Saturday, COPS will patrol between the hours of 7 p.m. and 3 a.m. to gain a better understanding of the physical environment surrounding Grounds. Then, on Wednesdays, COPS will meet with “business owners, community stakeholders and student groups to

engineer effective problem solving strategies, promote health and safety awareness and advance crime prevention initiatives.” They also plan to “participate in other outreach activities.” The principal goal of these efforts is to “[build] relationships, create a safe environment and provide for a more sustained police presence in those neighborhoods where students live, gather and in-

to start listening to those who they serve.

There are a multitude of valid reasons why those in the Charlottesville community would be dismayed by an increased police presence. Since their inception, police officers across the country have displayed a tendency toward a violent suppression of citizens. The police force was created to keep “middle-class and

community should not be expected to manage the responsibility of meeting with and working to improve the police force. Foremost, police are violent, particularly towards minority populations. This point is underscored by the alarming statistic that Black people are three times more likely than their white counterparts to be killed by police. Further, most police killings “begin

program would depend on honest feedback, it has no reason to expect that residents will give candid responses. There is a clear power imbalance between officers and residents. Residents have explicit reason to fear police officers and incentives to hide their authentic discomfort with the program and the police force in general.

Before UPD places more officers into the community, they must first take action to display a commitment to anti-racism and support of the diverse residents that make up the University and Charlottesville communities. Many times over, police departments have been told of the public’s demands. For instance, the Human Rights Watch and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People both have made specific demands for police reform. Before expecting community involvement, the UPD must make an effort to dismantle its history of discrimination and to show its community that their voices have been heard.

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**The time has come for police departments to start listening to those who they serve.**

tegrate into the community.” The efforts seem to be wholeheartedly genuine. Regardless, they come across as tone-deaf in response to the cries to defund the police that have echoed across America for the past year. In Charlottesville particularly, citizen groups, rallies and students alike have all demanded that police departments be defunded and that the resources be allocated elsewhere. Yet the irony is astounding — in response to clamors to defund the police, UPD has increased their policing presence. The time has come for police departments

especially upper-class white people safe” and to “keep the social order safe from resistance or change.” They were willing to do so at the expense of abusing people of color and forcefully “silencing dissent.” The racist and classist history of police officers was designed as a part of the institution itself. The creation of COPS and its attempts to meet with local community members in Charlottesville is not a sufficient antidote to hundreds of years of systemic violence and oppression.

Furthermore, students and other residents of the Charlottesville com-

with traffic stops, mental health checks, domestic disturbances, or reported low level offenses.” University and Charlottesville residents have no reason to trust the police. Nevertheless, the ambitions of the COPS program rely on healthy communication with the University and Charlottesville communities. This program would require residents to step outside of their comfort zone to openly communicate with officers — placing the onus on average people to remedy the fractured policing institution.

Yet another irony — while this

# HUMOR

## Five ways to prepare for the winter season

Unfortunately, for some, you may now be learning that we are approximately less than two months away from the beginning of a very chilly season. It is official — winter is coming. But do not fret! If you are completely and entirely behind on your seasonal preparations, you're not alone. With Halloween out of the way and Thanksgiving mostly irrelevant when it comes to decor — because who decorates their dorm to be Thanksgiving-themed — there is now plenty of time to get into the cold spirit of the upcoming frost. Assuming enough people flush ice cubes down their toilets and tuck a few compostable dining hall spoons under their pillows, we may get some snow. Mother nature and global warming are at the wheel for that, however.

In the meantime, here are a

few tips and tricks so you can get started on being prepared for the winter season.

### 1. Make it freezing in your room

Do you want that winter wonderland feeling? Well, look no further. You can get the real experience by completely devoiding your dorm room of all sources of heat. Throw out your blankets and sheets. Put a fan in your room. Or, if you have the option, turn your air conditioner onto the cooling setting. You'll know you succeeded when your fingers go numb and your lip turns blue. Better yet, crush up some ice and cover your floor with homemade snow. Nothing says winter more than frostbite.

### 2. Smell solely of cinnamon and peppermint

Seeing that candles are techni-

cally not allowed in dorm rooms because they are a quote-unquote "fire hazard," there are a few ways you can conjure a perfect wintery scent. Plug diffusers into every outlet in your room — and I mean every. Or, if you have access to the correct materials, boil a pot full of your favorite wintery scents and keep it at a simmer in your room somehow. I am not sure how to do so without the use of some good old fire, but as a University student, I am sure you can come up with something.

### 3. Get a fir tree to keep in your dorm room

If you enjoy decorating a tree for the holidays and covering it with ornaments, do I have a plan for you! You don't just want to buy some artificial tree from some shop that smells like plastic. No — that natural evergreen

smell is what you need. Go into the wilderness and chop down your own tree. Make sure to dress like a lumberjack, flannel and all, and abstain from any use of technology. After, lug the tree back to your dorm and keep it alive as long as possible. Treat it like your child and make it thrive, shedding its needles all over your floor. The effort is totally worth it. Trust me.

### 4. Embody Jack Frost

Honestly, the only information I know about the legend of Jack Frost is from Wikipedia and the Rise of the Guardians movie. So what I know for sure is that this dude is the literal embodiment of winter. If you really want to get into the spirit, become the actual spirit of frost and the freezing cold. The chilly temperature of your room and a revamped Norse-themed closet should do the trick.

### 5. Listen to "All I Want For Christmas Is You" by Mariah Carey on repeat

Last but not least, no winter season is complete without some classic winter tunes. So sit back, relax and fill the void of space with Mariah Carey's five-octave vocal range. And if that is not your style, there are, of course, other songs, such as José Feliciano's Feliz "Navidad" or the entire soundtrack to the film "How The Grinch Stole Christmas."

I hope this advice fairs you all well. To be honest, I'm more of a fan of the spring.

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# CARTOON

## Preparing for Hibernation

Ruma Jadhav | Cartoonist



# PUZZLES

## WEEKLY CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Abby Sacks | **Puzzle Master**

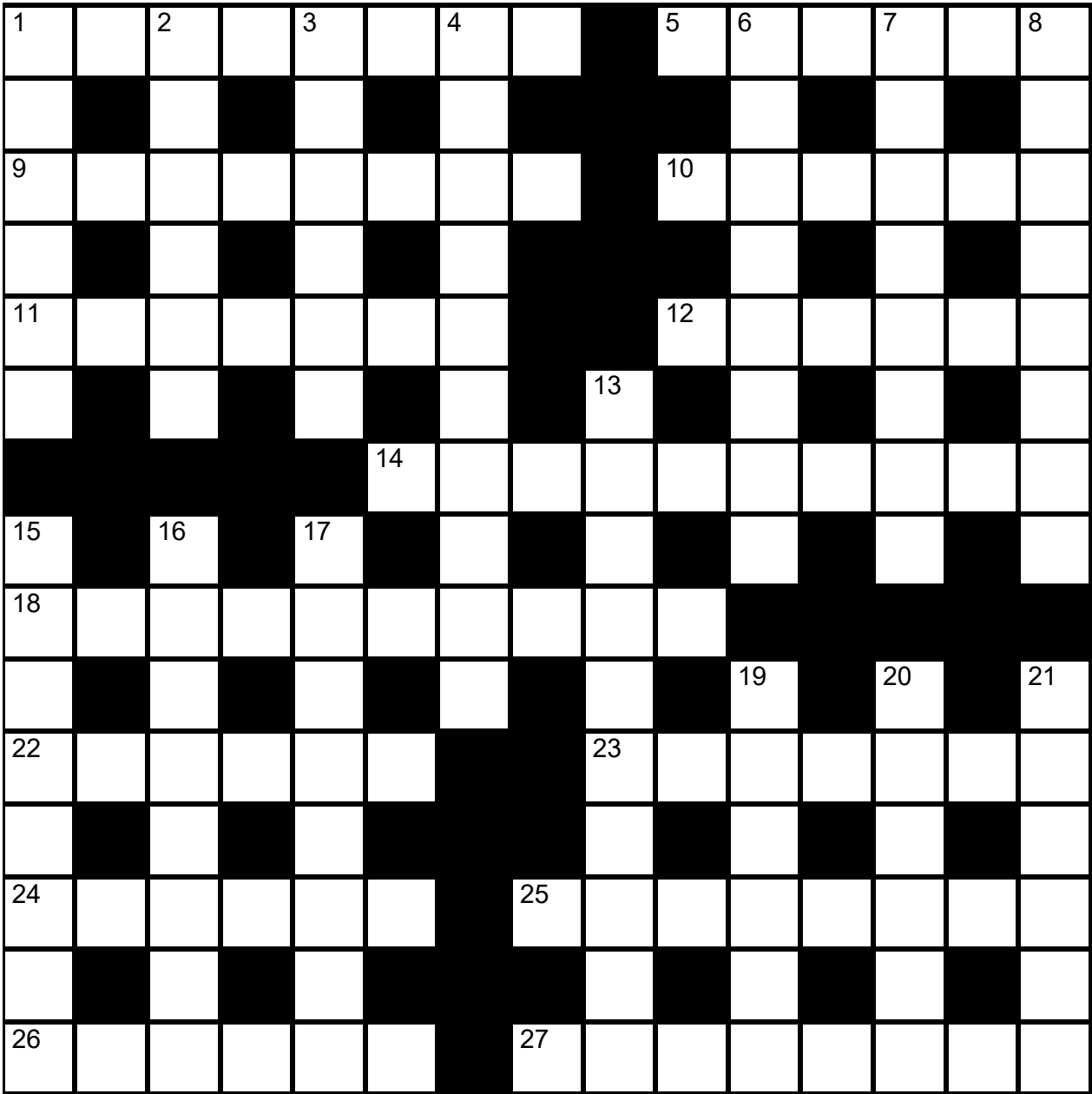
\* THE SOLUTION TO THIS PUZZLE CAN BE FOUND IN THE NEXT ISSUE

**Across**

- 1 An easy win or task.
- 5 Owning much land through inheritance; adjective.
- 9 Female ballet dancer.
- 10 Last name of the third-year student activist for racial equality whose work has been featured in The Washington Post and Teen Vogue.
- 11 Amount that the Living Wage Campaign successfully secured for all University workers, per hour.
- 12 This test assesses whether an animal has self-recognition.
- 14 Ferric protein in red blood cells.
- 18 Untidy appearance.
- 22 Make; produce.
- 23 Spectrum \_\_\_\_: organization on Grounds that is putting on the show Believer.
- 24 An accidental hit, not to the main target.
- 25 Ariel's best friend.
- 26 In the game Minecraft, a pair of wings that allow a player to fly.
- 27 Polish metal band that was scheduled to be a supporting act for Slipknot in 2020.

**Down**

- 1 To put things into code or law.
- 2 Martial arts discipline in the 2008 Jack Black animated movie. (Two words)
- 3 Nickname for dachshunds.
- 4 City of angels. (Two words)
- 6 Type of gun, including BB. (Two words)
- 7 Type of forceful speech featured in the 11th song on Hozier's album Wasteland, Baby!
- 8 Throughout Game of Thrones, Daenerys aims to \_\_\_\_ the Lannisters so she can assume the Iron Throne herself.
- 13 Statue that was removed from Charlottesville July 10 after years of activism. (Three words)
- 15 Teachable; capable of learning.
- 16 Fourth right protected under the First Amendment.
- 17 Popular app for neighborhood communication.
- 19 To puzzle or bewilder someone else.
- 20 Abbreviation for the student government group that has advocated for affordable student housing, no classes on election day and free STI testing.
- 21 Scarcity; lack.



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\* SOLUTION FROM OCT. 28 ISSUE



## SPORTS

## CONNOR: The case for gymnastics at U.Va.

Women's gymnastics has taken college athletics by storm, and the Cavaliers should get involved

Caroline Connor | Sports Columnist



ANISHA HOSSAIN | THE CAVALIER DAILY

The past four decades in NCAA women's gymnastics have been dominated by the SEC and the PAC-12. Until 2021, Oklahoma was the only college outside of these two conferences to win a national championship. In the 2021 NCAA Women's Gymnastics Championship, however, Michigan shocked the gymnastics world by becoming the first Big Ten team to win the title.

Now, out of all the Power-5 conferences, the ACC is the only league to never win a national championship in women's gymnastics. This isn't as surprising as it sounds, though, as only three ACC universities have an NCAA-level women's gymnastics team. However, this won't be true for long.

Back in June, Clemson announced plans to add a women's gymnastics team, which will make it the fourth gymnastics team in the ACC. Although there is growing interest in women's gymnastics, there has never been a real opening for Virginia to take advantage of the sport.

The ACC does not have a gymnastics league and the three ACC schools that support a varsity women's gymnastics team — North Carolina, NC State and Pittsburgh — all compete in the East Atlantic Gymnastics League. The Clemson announcement changed everything.

Shortly after Clemson's statement, the ACC announced it will sponsor women's gymnastics starting in the 2023-24 academic season — making it the conference's 28th sponsored sport. This means that Virginia finally has an opportunity to join one of the most rapidly growing collegiate sports.

If someone was asked what collegiate women's sports team had the highest average attendance the season before COVID-19 struck, he or she might say Oregon women's basketball, Florida State soccer, Connecticut basketball or any other Power-5 school that has a good women's basketball or soccer program. In reality, Utah's women's gymnastics team led the nation with an

average of 15,273 in attendance at meets. In fact, five of the top 11 leaders in average attendance were gymnastics programs.

Gymnastics is quickly becoming one of the most followed NCAA women's sports, and for good reason. Before the 2016 Rio Olympics, there was a consistent path to collegiate gymnastics for elite-level gymnasts. Those who made the Olympics went professional and skipped college while the dozens of other elites, who missed the selection, retired from the National Team and committed to play for a collegiate team in hopes of winning a National Championship. While elite-level gymnasts are basically guaranteed a scholarship from a top gymnastics school, around 1,500 level-10 gymnasts around the nation then fight for the remaining spots. This is the formula that has lasted since collegiate women's gymnastics was first introduced in 1982 by the NCAA.

However, collegiate gymnastics was changed forever when 2016 Olympic gold medalist

Madison Kocian and 2012 Olympic gold medalist Kyla Ross enrolled at UCLA and took spots on its gymnastics team in 2016. They were the first-ever Olympic gold medalists to compete for a collegiate gymnastics team.

Interest in gymnastics was at an all-time high after the 2016 Olympics — Kocian and Ross made collegiate gymnastics must-watch television. It's no surprise that their teammate Katelyn Ohashi became a national sensation when her floor routine went viral, amassing over 200 million views on YouTube alone.

Now entering the 2022 season, Olympians joining college gymnastics teams seems to be the new normal. Four of the six American gymnasts sent to Tokyo are now competing for a collegiate team, two of whom have an Olympic gold medal. Some of the top foreign gymnasts are also coming over to the United States to join collegiate gymnastics such as 2020 Canadian Olympian Brooklyn Moors and British 2020 Olympic bronze medalist Amelie

Morgan.

In the past, the NCAA forbade gymnasts who made money from the Olympics or sponsorships from joining collegiate teams — something that turned Olympic gymnasts away from the prospect of competing in college. This sudden increase in Olympic talent has everything to do with the increase in the popularity of collegiate gymnastics combined with the new NIL rules, allowing gymnasts to market themselves in college. The sport is more in the public eye than it has ever been and colleges like Clemson are taking note.

It won't be long until other ACC schools add gymnastics to their list of varsity sports. Virginia should act quickly if it wants to establish itself as a threat in the ACC. Although the Cavaliers will probably not challenge the likes of Oklahoma, Louisiana State or UCLA for many years to come, fan engagement in sport is at an all-time high, with viewership in college gymnastics again expected to increase after the 2021 Tokyo Olympics.

Additionally, recruiting big-name gymnastics recruits has never been easier — not all of the USA gymnasts from Tokyo are committed to top gymnastics programs. While Grace McCallum and Jordan Chiles are enrolled at the University of Utah and UCLA, respectively, Suni Lee is enrolled at Auburn, and Jade Carey is at Oregon State — two schools that do not have prestigious gymnastics programs as they have both never won a national championship.

This surplus of international and homegrown talent entering college gymnastics will make it easier for programs to compete in their leagues — something that is already underway as seen by Michigan overthrowing Oklahoma in 2021. It will only be a matter of time before other ACC schools follow Clemson's lead and add a women's gymnastics program. So, if Virginia wants to be competitive in the ACC, it should act quickly in order to capitalize on the advantages given to the college gymnastics world by the new NIL rules and the past Olympics.

# What it takes to fill up Scott Stadium

A primary emphasis of Coach Bronco Mendenhall's time in Charlottesville has been to create a true home-field advantage

Joe von Storch | Senior Associate

On Aug. 30, 2008, Scott Stadium was filled to the brim with 64,947 fans — well beyond the venue's official capacity of 61,500 — for a showdown against a highly ranked USC team. Virginia will not be remembered for its performance on the field, losing 52-7, but, to this day, the matchup sits atop the record books as the highest attended game in Scott Stadium history.

Since then, attendance has topped 60,000 only once — a 2011 contest against in-state rival Virginia Tech — and that 2008 season marked the last time the Cavaliers have drawn in a season average of over 50,000 fans. In fact, attendance was already trending downward by the time USC visited Charlottesville. Between 2003 and 2005, attendance remarkably averaged over 60,000 fans. However, that number gradually declined for more than a decade until bottoming out in 2017, Coach Bronco Mendenhall's second season at the helm, at 39,298 fans per contest. Although attendance this season is undoubtedly impacted by lingering hesitation about COVID-19, the average of 40,409 represents only a marginal improvement.

There are several factors that play into this sustained dropoff, the most obvious being success on the field. In the six seasons from 2002 to 2007, Virginia won at least seven games on five occasions, whereas the team would reach that level of success only once in the next 10 years. Importantly, consistent success is crucial to consistent attendance — high performance must be sustained over several years in order to see the benefits in the stands. A prime example of this is the Cavaliers' 2011 season in which they went 8-5 to go along with an appearance in the Chick-fil-A Bowl against traditional powerhouse Auburn. Attendance ticked up slightly that year to almost 48,000 from closer to 45,000 the previous year, but it was not enough to slow the overriding decline in turnout.

Virginia started to see the impact of winning in 2019 — the program's first nine-win season since 2007. Scott Stadium enjoyed a 21 percent increase in attendance from the previous year, as the Cavaliers went undefeated at home and picked up their first victory over Virginia Tech in 16 years. The 57,826 fans that showed up to Virginia's matchup against Florida State were by far the highest of Mendenhall's tenure in Charlottesville. However, the combination of COVID-19 and an underwhelming



COURTESY VIRGINIA ATHLETICS

Nearly 58,000 fans packed the stands of Scott Stadium for a primetime matchup against Florida State in 2019.

performance in 2020 put an abrupt halt to the recent progress and now forces Mendenhall and his staff to climb over yet another set of hurdles to fill up Scott Stadium.

"We're trying hard to have elite football at UVA. and have it be an invigorating factor in the community," Mendenhall said. "Winning really helps. But we have a saying here, that it's not only what we do, it's how we do it. I hope there is an acknowledgment [of that], and we're really trying to do it with really good students and really good people and trying to give back."

Another key ingredient in driving attendance is the opponent. This has a clear game-to-game impact on the number of fans that show up to Scott Stadium, as rivalry games and marquee matchups invariably bring in larger crowds. It is no coincidence that a game against then-No. 3 USC resulted in the stadium's highest recorded attendance. Every two years when the Hokies travel to Charlottesville, attendance spikes. While consistently high-caliber ACC opponents are few and far between, the ability of Virginia to schedule marquee non-conference home matchups are critical to future growth in attendance. When No. 7 Notre Dame comes to town Saturday for a primetime matchup, fully expect the number of fans to far exceed this season's previous high — 45,837 against Georgia Tech. While having compelling games on

the schedule will not directly impact attendance at games against lesser opponents, it undoubtedly aids in building a general buzz and excitement associated with football games at Scott Stadium, drawing in additional fans.

"Right now [attendance] is still conditional on opponent, maybe more than we would want it to be," Mendenhall said.

The game-to-game impact of opponent caliber goes hand in hand with kickoff times. Cavalier supporters have proven to be more willing to show out for late-afternoon or evening games than early-afternoon contests. For example, in 2019, attendance averaged 44,848 for games starting at 12:30 p.m. or earlier and 50,124 for matchups starting at 3:30 p.m. or later. This result may be due to fans, especially students, simply not wanting to start their days early or other midday obligations that could get in the way of attending a football game.

"Game time certainly matters," Mendenhall said. "What's really clear to us, and I've done all the studies, the later we play the more people come. The earlier we play the fewer people come. Everyone has lives with kids playing soccer and basketball and they're shuttling and yard work, whatever else. But there is incremental growth with each movement in the later a game is. What's clear to me is that UVA. prefers and supports evening

games more than early morning or afternoon games."

Perhaps the single most important factor that has influenced the decline in attendance over the last 15 years, though, is the increased availability of television.

"In some cases the only way to see some of the games 20 years ago was to show up at the stadium," former Virginia Athletic Director Craig Littlepage said in an email to The Cavalier Daily. "In the current environment every game is televised, and with mobile devices, fans don't have to be at home to watch games."

It has simply become much easier to follow the Cavaliers, and sports in general, without having to be physically present at games. Games have become increasingly available on the internet over time, and with the introduction of ACC Network in 2019, Virginia faithful can watch virtually any game they want. This gives the fans, especially the ones located outside of Charlottesville, more of an incentive to stay home.

"With fans having more access to games on television, streaming and other ways to consume games, we want to continue to be adaptable in our marketing efforts to meet fans where they are and create new opportunities to get new fans to Scott Stadium," said Torrey Ball, associate athletic director for external operations.

Television access and the abil-

ity to watch games on the go will only grow in the future, but that does not mean it is impossible for Virginia to overcome this obstacle in increasing attendance. At its foundation, it is a matter of establishing a culture in and around Charlottesville that is excited for football, which is something Mendenhall has emphasized during his time with the Cavaliers.

"Even with the increase in the number of televised games I think attendance can grow," Littlepage said. "Attractive games, an energetic game atmosphere, and fans making attendance their game-day priority all can help increase average attendance."

Mendenhall and his staff are certainly moving in the right direction, and with junior Brennan Armstrong being one of the most exciting quarterbacks in college football in 2021, fans in attendance are experiencing high-end entertainment. The Cavalier faithful are likely to show out in full force Saturday night for a showdown against Notre Dame in what will hopefully serve as an indication of the progress made by the Virginia football program in attracting fans.

"[With] the game day enhancements that our administration is working on, I just think there is this beginning," Mendenhall said. "We're not there yet. This beginning of, what could this be? I think we're all seeing maybe the next tier of what it could be."

# HEALTH & SCIENCE

## Cognitive reappraisal program counters anxiety

The PACT Lab teaches techniques to improve mental health virtually for easy access

Catherine Cossaboom | Staff Writer

As the COVID-19 pandemic has often been equated to a war — with doctors on the front lines fighting vigorously against the deadly coronavirus — this mindset has been critiqued as encouraging individuals to set aside their own well-being in favor of simply surviving. Focusing too heavily on triage, however, has perhaps guided us to avoid properly dealing with mental health. The University's Program for Anxiety, Cognition and Treatment Lab aims to challenge this way of thinking by examining cognitive processes in order to understand how to change thinking to regulate emotions and improve moods.

Dr. J. Kim Penberthy, a clinical psychologist in UVa. Health's Psychiatry and Neurobehavioral Sciences department, said the pandemic has drastically exacerbated existing pressures as workloads increase exponentially.

"The pandemic has been the perfect storm," Penberthy said. "We have seen a snowball effect where we have more stressors and fewer ways to cope, and the strategies we would have used were taken away."

In March, Bethany Teachman, psychology professor and director of the PACT Lab, received a grant to develop online personalized interventions for anxiety geared towards University students, faculty and staff.

"[Our goal is] to detect when somebody feels anxious in daily life, so that we can think about matching interventions to them that help them in the moment," Teachman said. "We collaborate closely with engineers and scientists to think about how we can detect when somebody feels anxious."

The PACT Lab takes advantage of the fact that people tend to think differently when they are anxious.

"In most of our situations, there's ambiguity about exactly what is happening, and we have to assign meanings," Teachman said. "What we know is that people who are vulnerable to anxiety disorders assign the most threatening, most negative meanings a lot of the time."

Teachman said anxiety is often based on implicit associations between concepts in memory. If someone has a phobia of snakes, they may automatically associate snakes with danger, while someone with a panic disorder might associate panic with themselves.

Teachman and her colleagues directly measure implicit associations at the Project Implicit Health website, where over a million tasks have been completed. The tasks ask participants to categorize items into groups as fast as they can, measuring ideas indirectly

and revealing connections that might differ from explicit attitudes about the world.

"Given that [implicit associations] arise really, really rapidly, and they happen outside of conscious awareness and sometimes they're difficult to consciously control, we want to understand them, so that then we can work to think about how we shift people's thinking," Teachman said.

Implicit associations have been shown to be effective predictors of mental health — as shown by a 2009 study Teachman conducted to measure implicit associations of people with panic disorder.

standard" for treating anxiety and depression.

"You have people identify their thoughts when they're feeling anxious," Bruschwein said. "There are lots of times where you might be having thoughts, and maybe they're true, but they're not helpful in this situation. We [often] make our moods worse or we increase our own stress because of the way we think."

Evolutionary evidence backs reappraisal-based interventions, suggesting that we are hardwired for negativity bias.

"We [have adapted] a tendency to focus on the negative," Penberthy said.

any part of this that you might be able to reframe," Bruschwein said.

The PACT Lab's work effectively teaches cognitive reappraisal — along with other more nuanced techniques — online for easy access.

Teachman is working closely with Assoc. Engineering Prof. Laura Barnes and Asst. Engineering Prof. Mehdi Boukhchba to develop a second website designed to help people feel less anxious by shifting biased interpretations.

This project — called MindTrails — is a free app that directly serves to encourage positive and flexible thinking. The interpretation bias training

break down, progress can still be made by helping people come up with multiple meanings.

"We're hoping that with interpretation bias training, two things will happen," Teachman said. "The first is that people won't always jump to the worst possible association immediately. But, even when they do jump to that worst possible association, it's going to happen sometimes very quickly and involuntarily, so we hope to help them to override that association."

Adaptations of MindTrails have been produced specifically for kids in Big Brothers, Big Sisters, for Spanish-speaking populations and for individuals who are coping with Huntington's disease and movement disorders in addition to anxiety.

Most notably, a version for the University community called "Hoos Think Calmly" will be produced over the span of the next two years.

"What we're doing is taking our training materials and thinking about how we can adapt them to specifically meet the needs of undergraduates, and we have a version for graduate students, and we also have a version for faculty and staff," Teachman said.

In order for interventions to be as successful as possible, the PACT Lab is currently working on matching people to interventions based on experiences and needs.

"We are using machine-learning algorithms that take sixty pieces of information about a person about their baseline and how they responded in the first session of an intervention," Teachman said. "This is why we collaborate with engineers and with computer scientists to harness some of the great methods they have to learn from this broad array of responses."

The ultimate goal is to be able to deliver prompt adapted interventions — help that is delivered exactly when it is needed and is designed specifically for the person who is receiving it.

Despite the state of mental health today, Teachman is hopeful that the pandemic will ultimately lead to substantial long-term progress in the way we approach mental illness.

"Lots of research shows us that as stressors calm down, most people will be really resilient," Teachman said. "I have a lot of hope that many of us are going to be more open to the idea that we need to actively work on supporting our mental health and that it's not something that is a taboo or should be hidden or pushed aside. It needs to be front and center to the ways we care for ourselves."

offered through MindTrails involves getting participants to repeatedly imagine themselves in uncomfortable situations by telling them anxiety-inducing stories that conclude with unexpectedly positive endings.

"We break down assumptions and make it easier for [people] to generate alternative ideas about how situations might go, so they're not jumping to negative conclusions," Teachman said.

For example, if a person's friends laugh during a conversation, an anxious person might assign the meaning that their friends are laughing at them, while a more healthy way of thinking involves assigning the meaning that everyone is simply enjoying their joke. Teachman's goal is to create interventions to shift, in her words, "that habitual pattern of catastrophic thinking," by giving people practice in assigning more benign meanings.

Alternatively, even if a negative bias interpretation itself is hard to



SHELBY LAWTON | THE CAVALIER DAILY

"What we found was that the degree of change in those panic associations — the extent that a person became less quick to associate themselves with panic — [predicted exactly] how much their symptoms subsequently improved," Teachman said.

According to Teachman, this suggests that changing implicit associations has a direct impact on how people experience symptoms of mental illness, such as encouraging people to change avoidance behaviors and take on previously intimidating environments.

Interventions work much like the often-cited therapeutic technique of cognitive reappraisal, which involves recognizing one's distorted thoughts and reevaluating them realistically in light of the bigger picture. According to Dr. Heather Bruschwein, a cognitive behavioral therapist in UVa. Health's Behavioral Medicine Center, this technique is considered a "gold

"If a tiger tries to attack you, you really want to remember it, and you don't want to go near tigers anymore. [...] It's important for us as modern humans, though, to recognize that just because we noticed the negative, it doesn't necessarily mean that is reality."

Cognitive reappraisal is not solely about being positive — as there are many realistic negative thoughts and feelings, like grief, that should not be reframed — but is rather about structuring one's thought patterns to take on healthier beliefs rather than ultimately harmful ones, Penberthy said.

With substantial practice, reframing can eventually emerge into an automatic cognitive process, and it has been shown to significantly decrease negative emotions as people begin to consistently apply it in day-to-day life.

"The more and more you practice [cognitive reappraisal], the better you will get at catching yourself in the moment and [asking yourself] if there is

# Local vaccine and booster shot distribution ramps up

U.Va. Health and the Blue Ridge Health District are offering boosters for eligible adults and vaccines for children 5-11 years old

Katie Treene | Staff Writer

Following the announcement Oct. 15 that U.Va. Health will be providing booster doses to supplement COVID-19 vaccines and that children ages 5 to 11 are now able to receive Pfizer vaccinations, the health system has reported less difficulty with distribution than earlier in the pandemic.

## Boosters and third doses

Booster shots are administered at least six months after a patient completes the primary vaccine sequence. The goal is to boost the concentration of COVID-19 antibodies in the body. Receiving a booster shot is especially important in the context of the contagious Delta variant and increasing breakthrough infections.

Booster vaccines allow for people in these at risk groups to feel more relaxed in their work and living environments. History Prof. Caroline Janney, who received her booster, explained that it made her feel safer when seeing her family.

"I think it certainly made me feel more comfortable knowing that I had gotten a booster," Janney said. "My mother has an autoimmune disease, and ... I want to be around her so I'm trying to take every precaution."

Eligibility for booster shots does not include the entire population of those who are 18 years old and over.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, populations who should receive a booster currently include people 65 years and older, 50 to 64 years old with underlying medical conditions and those ages 18 years and older who live in long-term care facilities. People 18 years and older who have underlying medical conditions or live or work in high-risk settings are also eligible for the vaccine. Additionally, anyone 18 years or older who received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine should receive a booster shot at least two months after their single-dose vaccine.

Third doses fall under a separate vaccine sequence than boosters. According to Dr. Costi Sifri, director of epidemiology at U.Va. Health, third doses are intended to provide a third dose of the messenger RNA vaccine to immunocompromised people. They are therefore part of a patient's primary vaccine sequence, and are to be given to eligible patients 28 days after their second vaccine dose.

This is necessary because many immunocompromised people do not respond to the initial two dose vaccine series, Sifri said. They therefore need a third dose in order

to reach the level of antibodies that non-immunocompromised people receive after two doses.

This immunocompromised population recommended for third doses includes those undergoing cancer treatment, those who have received an organ transplant and are taking medications to suppress the immune system, people who have advanced or untreated HIV and individuals who have moderate or severe primary immunodeficiency.

Pfizer boosters and third doses are available by appointment only at the University Education Resource Center located at 1220 Lee St. and three University outpatient pharmacies — Pantops Pharmacy, Medical Park Zion Crossroads and Augusta Pharmacy.

Dr. Reid Adams, chief medical officer for U.Va. Health, explained that the vaccine booster rollout should run more smoothly than the first one. Issues from the first rollout included a lack of sufficient vaccine supply, limited vaccine clinics, equitable distribution and difficulty in collecting and sharing data.

"Now it's much more widely available," Adams said. "There are a lot of different resources through Blue Ridge Health District as well as local pharmacies, so I think folks have a lot of options to choose from to be able to get a booster."

Appointments are readily available through MyChart or by calling (434) 297-4829. Next day appointments can be made at the Education Resource Center and Augusta Pharmacy. Spots are more limited for Pantops Pharmacy and Medical Park Zion Crossroads.

Over the two-week period from Oct. 10 to 23, these four clinics administered a total of 402 COVID-19 vaccine doses, including boosters, third doses and primary series. Since vaccines first became available in Dec. 2020, U.Va. Health facilities have administered a total of more than 131,000 vaccines — boosters, third doses and primary series — and have 30,690 more doses in stock, according to Eric Swenson, public information officer for U.Va. Health.

U.Va. Health's recent announcement comes after the CDC approved the Moderna and Johnson & Johnson boosters last week. This came after the FDA's emergency approval of the boosters Oct. 20. The Pfizer booster was given emergency approval by the FDA Sept. 22 and was authorized by the CDC on Sept. 24.

The formulation for these booster shots is the same as the current



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vaccine. However, the Moderna booster is only half the dose of the primary vaccine series.

The main ingredient in the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines is a nucleoside-modified mRNA encoding the viral spike glycoprotein of SARS-CoV-2. For the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, the main ingredient is a recombinant, a replication-incompetent Ad26 vector, encoding a stabilized variant of the SARS-CoV-2 Spike protein.

Concerns surrounding the safety of these vaccines have been addressed.

"What the clinical trials have shown is that the vaccine side effects are largely, if not almost exactly, similar to what people saw after their primary series," Sifri said.

The CDC lists the most common side effects of the booster as fever, headache, fatigue and pain at the injection site. Effects are generally mild to moderate, though they can be severe in rare cases.

Mixing and matching vaccines has also been found to be safe. Sifri said no concerns have arisen with regards to receiving a different booster vaccine than that of one's primary sequence.

"It's not perhaps as important which booster you get, but just to get a booster," Sifri said.

In addition to U.Va. Health resources, the Blue Ridge Health District is offering booster doses of the Moderna, Pfizer and Johnson & Johnson vaccines.

Pfizer booster doses are available at local health departments, the J.Crew vaccination site, the Semi-

nole Square Community Vaccination Center and Mobi on the Mall. Moderna and Johnson & Johnson booster doses are available at the CVC. Appointments are available through the Virginia Department of Health.

Despite the expansion of booster shots, Sifri said the national focus is still getting as many people vaccinated with their primary series as possible. Following these priorities, Sifri believes that it is unlikely that this eligibility for boosters will expand to the entire population ages 18 and over in the near future.

"If things were to stay the way they are, I don't think the CDC would be compelled to recommend boosters broadly for everybody," Sifri said.

## Vaccines for children ages 5 to 11

A key group that has just received access to their full primary vaccine series is children ages 5 to 11. The dosage for this age group is one-third of the dose for adolescents and adults.

U.Va. Health announced Nov. 3 that Pfizer COVID-19 vaccination appointments could be scheduled for children ages 5 to 11 years old. Vaccines are being administered at the U.Va. Health Pediatric Community Vaccination Center.

The BRHD is also offering vaccinations by appointment only. Children ages 5 to 11 can receive their Pfizer dose at the CVC in Seminole Square. School-based vaccine clinics hosted by the BRHD, pediatric offices and pharmacies will also

host vaccination clinics.

This is a big relief to many parents such as Janney, who is the mother of an eight-year-old child. She has been limiting some of her engagements due to the concern that she could infect him.

"I have been less willing to do certain travel, in part because he wasn't vaccinated and I've been worried about bringing things home to him," Janney said. "As soon as we got the announcement from the doctor's office last week, I called but all the appointments were already taken. But we have an appointment for tomorrow."

U.Va. Health has reported a surge in vaccination appointments for children ages 5 to 11, which Janney viewed positively.

"It made me feel good that it was hard to get an appointment because it means that a lot of parents are doing it," Janney said.

In order to make this process as smooth as possible, Sifri reports that vaccine rollout will look slightly different than for adults and older children.

"There's [an] emphasis on trying to make sure that the vaccines that are offered [are] in places that are child-friendly," Sifri said.


This includes pediatric clinics, pop-up community events and school vaccination centers.

Guidelines and approvals on COVID-19 boosters, third doses and children's vaccines are changing every day. One can look at the U.Va. Health and BRHD media websites for updates on vaccinations.

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