

The Daily Tar Heel

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2023

130 YEARS OF SERVING UNC STUDENTS AND THE UNIVERSITY

20

23

Year in Review

What fuels the fire.

By Abby Pender

University Editor

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From the University cafeteria workers' 1969 strike to the student-sparked Franklin Street march against Apartheid, University members have consistently used their voices and campus to address injustices. 2023 was no different.

UNC's chapter of March for our Lives rallied against gun violence following the campus shooting on Aug. 28, students demonstrated for improved accessibility and UNC's Students for Justice in Palestine held protests and sit-ins advocating for Palestinian freedom amid the war in Gaza.

The first controversy of the year was the acceleration of the School of Civic Life and Leadership, announced at a January UNC Board of Trustees meeting. The school's introduction sparked debate concerning what the Wall Street Journal called a "self-reinforcing culture of conformity" plaguing higher education.

Many faculty members were outraged by the decision for their lack of input in its development. The school has continued to be a hot topic amid community concerns of legislative and conservative power grabs toward the University.

Following the initial discovery of lead contamination in some campus buildings in 2022, the campus continued to have detectable levels of lead in 125 drinking fixtures as of January and remediation still continues.

The UNC Student Government campaign season was a tumultuous one and was interrupted when candidate Sam Robinson suspended his campaign and stepped down as undergraduate vice president.

Then-Graduate and Professional Student Government President Theodore Nollert ran as a write-in for the race, but students ultimately voted for Christopher Everett to be the student body president in February.

This year, Everett has prioritized improving campus accessibility, an issue students advocated for with a 32-hour sit-in on the steps of South Building in March. They demonstrated in support of 'No body or mind left behind'.

In the spring, faculty elected Beth Moracco as their new chair and UNC women's tennis celebrated their first national title.

Outside the University, North Carolina politics shifted in April after then-Democrat N.C. Rep. Tricia Cotham (R-Mecklenburg) switched her party affiliation to Republican, giving the party a supermajority in both houses of the N.C. General Assembly and the power to override any of Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper's vetoes.

The supermajority's power proved itself in April when the assembly enacted Senate Bill 20 — a 12-week abortion ban bill vetoed by Gov. Roy Cooper but overridden by the legislature.

When the Supreme Court ruled affirmative action unconstitutional on June 29, denying UNC and other public universities from considering race in admissions, the University responded with admissions changes.

In August, a week after the semester's first day of class, Alert Carolina messages and emergency sirens announced an active shooter on campus. Students huddled in classrooms and libraries sending anxious messages to their loved ones for more than three hours.

Following the shooting that resulted in the death of Professor Zijie Yan, hundreds of students took to campus to honor and memorialize him. Days after the Aug. 28 lockdown, students organized anti-gun violence rallies, demanding action from the state legislature.

Less than three weeks after Yan's death, emergency sirens sounded a second lockdown and students frantically searched for shelter after an individual brandished a gun at Alpine Bagel Cafe.

Though the two lockdowns marked this year with an unforgettable attack on the University's safety, community members still found joy, celebration and unity on campus.

They commended the UNC field hockey team and student-turned-coach Erin Matson for achieving their fifth national title in six years.

Austin O'Connor won an individual wrestling title for 157 pounds and diver Aranza Vasquez achieved two NCAA titles.

In Orange County, residents voted in the 2023 municipal elections for mayor, town council and board of education. Jess Anderson defeated Adam Searing in a mayoral election that may shape Chapel Hill housing for decades to come.

The Friends of Bolin Creek, a Carrboro-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit, prompted campaign concerns after only inviting a select group of candidates to a "meet-and-greet" at Umstead Park.

On Oct. 12, days after militant group Hamas attacked Israel, nearly 100 protestors stood on the steps of Wilson Library to advocate in solidarity with Palestinians. The event was the first of many demonstrations led by UNC's Students for

Justice in Palestine this semester.

Members of the group also occupied South Building in November, demanding that the University divest from companies monetarily supporting Israel.

Throughout all the social, political and emotional strife that has struck campus and the Chapel Hill-Carrboro area in 2023, students and residents have used their voices, their presence and their deep attention to the world to advocate for their communities.

These reactions aren't unprecedented.

They are evidence of the UNC community's strength, which has persisted for generations and fuels its fire.

DTH/HEATHER DIEHL, GRACE RICHARDS,
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“ Life can only be understood backwards; but it must be lived forwards. ”

SØREN KIERKEGAARD

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Q&A

Chancellor Kevin Guskiewicz reflects on 2023

As 2023 winds down, Editor-in-Chief Emmy Martin sat down with Chancellor Kevin Guskiewicz to talk about victories UNC has experienced and unprecedented challenges it has navigated over the past twelve months. This interview has been edited for brevity and clarity.

The Daily Tar Heel: We’re coming to the end of a semester and a year that has seen a lot of highs and lows. Could you offer some overall reflection on 2023?

Kevin Guskiewicz: It’s been a year that brought challenges but also so many opportunities — and certainly some highlights. Just a week into the start of the semester, the tragedy of the shooting of Dr. Yan created a lot of concern on campus. You prepare for days like that but hope you never have to activate a plan. The war in Israel and Gaza, which began on Oct. 7, has certainly affected us here locally. We’ve been working to spend a lot of time with our community members. But there are a lot of highlights. The women’s field hockey team winning the national championship here in Chapel Hill with our first-year coach, Erin Matson, was a real highlight. The U.S. News & World Report rankings had Carolina moving up from No. 5 among all public universities to No. 4, maintaining our status as No. 1 in the best value ranking. We moved up from No. 29 to No. 22 in the overall ranking. So, that was a highlight.

DTH: One of the biggest topics on the UNC community’s mind this year has been campus safety, especially after the August shooting and September gun-related incident. There have been some initiatives from UNC, including installing license plate readers on campus and improving

Alert Carolina messaging. Are there any other upcoming plans to address concerns about campus safety?

KG: One of the things that we started over a year ago was putting better lighting around campus in high-traffic areas. The lighting is much better today than it was even just a year ago. We’ve installed over 1,000 cameras on campus, including outside of every residential hall over the summer.

We’ve taken feedback from those incidents earlier in the semester through a feedback portal and just announced some of the aggregated results from that. Our maintenance team is working hard to be sure that we have the best systems in place to be able to lock the facilities down. I just met with my student advisory committee today and we talked about potentially requiring active shooter training on our campus and how we would implement that. I’m supportive of doing that and putting that requirement in place.

DTH: College campuses have seen rising tensions over the war in the Middle East since October 7, with reports of racism, antisemitism and Islamophobia across the country. What are you doing to support UNC students amid this tension? Are there any specific student groups you’re supporting or working with?

KG: I have spent a lot of time with student groups over the past few months around this issue, as have members of my leadership team. There are a lot of differing opinions on this and I think it’s important that we are listening to all of those groups, respecting people’s First Amendment rights but also reminding the community of the importance of respectful dialogue. If there’s one thing that I’ve learned about this, it



DTH/VIYADA SOUKTHAVONE
Chancellor Kevin Guskiewicz reflects on the year during an interview in his South Building office on Monday.

is that there’s a lot of misinformation around this conflict. There is a lot that is out there on social media that’s often painful to read and to hear.

We have the Carolina Center for Jewish Studies and the Center for Middle East and Islamic Studies that have been holding roundtables. I think we need to do that and we have to be thoughtful about the approach we’re taking, trying to educate people so we can be part of the solution rather than the problem.

DTH: To address the elephant in the room, I’d like to ask about your consideration of the Michigan State University presidency. Can you provide any clarity on your decision?

KG: When you’re in these roles that I’m in, you’re going to have calls from other institutions and search firms and knocks on the door occasionally. These are family decisions. I started my academic career here and will love Carolina regardless of where I end up, which could be here — it

could be any number of places. No decisions have been made.

DTH: What plans does the University have to further address diversity, equity and inclusion moving forward following the U.S. Supreme Court ruling against affirmative action?

KG: On June 29 of this past year, the Supreme Court ruled against us in the Students for Fair Admissions case in which we had been using race as one of many factors in our admissions process. We were disappointed by that outcome, but as I’ve said over and over, “We’re built for this.” We will do everything possible to ensure that we can build a class each year that brings diversity of all types into that incoming class. Our curriculum, and I’ve taught here for 28 years, is an incredible curriculum, but I think it comes to life when discussions are had in the classroom with students with different lived backgrounds.

X: @emmymrtin

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SAFETY

Community calls for improved campus security

Recent violence, threats bring campus welfare into question

By Madeleine Ahmadi
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This year, students and faculty experienced a series of events on campus that many considered to threaten the safety of the University community. “I think this year has really changed the way safety has looked on campus,” Jaleah Taylor, the undergraduate student body secretary said.

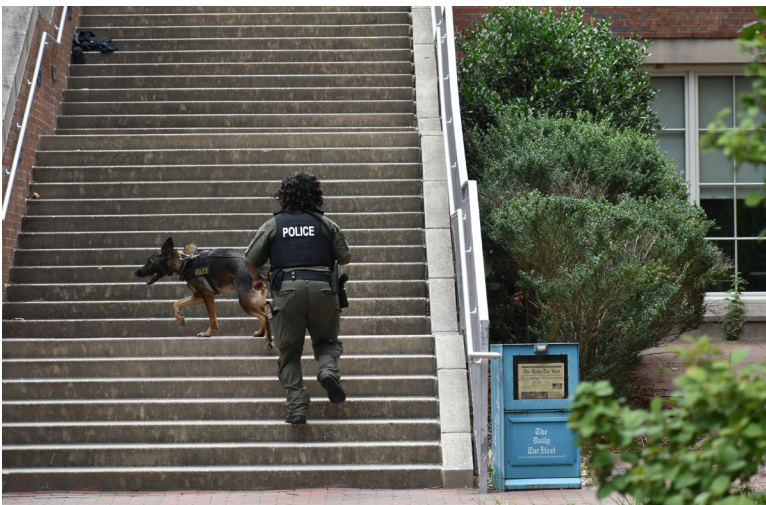
Gun violence on campus

On Aug. 28, associate professor Zijie Yan was shot and killed in Caudill Laboratories. Less than three weeks later, another lockdown occurred when an individual brandished a firearm at Alpine Bagel in the Student Union. Nikhil Kothegal, treasurer of the graduate workers co-chapter of The Workers Union at UNC, said many graduate student workers felt the University response after the shooting was one of policing and not prevention. Immediately following the shooting, first-year Violet Johnston created a campus safety petition which has now garnered more than 2,400 signatures. Johnston said if students wanted their voices to be heard, the petition needed

to focus on feasible change. The document contains four main points: ensuring all doors lock, updating the Alert Carolina system to include Spanish translations of messages, having routine lockdown drills and providing threat response training to faculty and students. “Since the 28th of August, we’ve done over 50 active shooter trainings with various organizations and departments on campus,” Brian James, chief of UNC Police, told The Daily Tar Heel. In another stride to increase campus safety after the shooting, the University is installing license plate readers across campus. “It has proven success — not only in creating investigative leads for crimes that have already occurred, but also as a deterrent,” James said.

Crime on campus

Instances of assault, like the altercation at the intersection of Raleigh Road and South Road in April and the sexual assault at McClinton Residence Hall in October, have propelled UNC into action. In an effort to improve safety, hundreds of security cameras were installed in various residence halls over the summer. Taylor emphasized the student government’s work to promote safety programs across campus. She noted the student-run She’s Not Here



A police officer walks up the stairs toward Caudill Labs following the shooting on UNC’s campus on Aug. 28.

program, which students can use to book safe rides home after nights out. She also said UNC’s Violence Prevention and Advocacy Servicesworks to keep the campus community safe by providing training and information regarding relationship safety. “During the 2022-2023 academic year, VPAS trained over 1,000 students, staff, faculty, and community members on topics related to bystander intervention, consent, healthy relationships, and supporting survivors of gender-based violence,” Shelley Gist Kennedy, UNC violence prevention coordinator, said

in an email statement.

New director of threat assessment

In October, UNC Director of Threat Assessment of Management Angel Gray joined University staff. Shewill focus some of her work on designing an approach for potential threat identification, according to UNC Media Relations. Gray, who received her master of public health from UNC, previously worked as general counsel for the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation. In her role, Gray will report

to Derek Kemp, associate vice chancellor for campus safety. UNC Media Relations said the University has units that work together to support emergency preparedness and evaluate safety concerns. It will be Gray’s responsibility to engage with those efforts.

Community reflection

Throughout this year, many students have reflected on their experiences surrounding campus violence. “The idea of safety is one that, as I’ve gotten older, I realize I’m not really sure I believe that there’s such thing as safety,” Kothegal said. Emma Lewis, a community outreach organizer with Students Demand Action, a gun violence prevention organization on campus, said her group met with Chancellor Kevin Guskiewicz on Oct. 31 to reflect on campus gun violence. While she said there were concerns about how the shooting was handled, Lewis said there are changes being made. “We are getting more locks on the doors, they’re working on Alert Carolina and mental health resources, so that’s good,” she said. But when asked if she feels safe on campus, Lewis said, “The simple answer is no.”

X: @maddieahmadi

Tar Heel Verses

Sponsored monthly by Bob Young ‘57 in honor of his wife, Pat, and the 1957 UNC National Championship basketball team.

The Cradle

By Lasya Kandukuri

Aunt Lisa is like a niece to me.
I pat her back as she falls asleep, gently
to the rhythm of her exhales
just as my mother did for me. I brush the hair out of her eyes
before saying goodnight. I ask her if she wants to blow her nose
when she gets sniffly, I press the soft tissue to her nostril.
In the bathroom, we giggle over her tinkling,
we wash our hands in ritual,
hips bouncing, heads nodding,
I direct her soapy palms under the water.
And honestly, we can’t remember her birthday or her zodiac,
even when we go through all twelve months and all four seasons,
We guess at the ends of her sentences, question-marked
after the third or fourth word, but
but to Luna, Lisa sings her mother’s lullaby two verses in full,
plants a kiss behind her fluffy ear before she begins, and again
and again and again
as she ends. Waking from a deep sleep, Lisa tells me
that her mom isn’t doing
isn’t doing too well.
I wipe the tears from the petal-thin skin beneath her eyes,
and rock her back into sweet dreams.

Lasya Kandukuri is a neuroscience student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill endlessly devoted to the documentation of love and lived experiences through poetry. She finds that poetry’s deconstruction of language and linguistic freedom allows poems to breathe, making it an apt medium for the recordkeeping of humanity. As an in-home overnight caregiver, Lasya is often inspired by the families she tends to, and is driven to capture and immortalize their complex and intense intersections of love, death, and desire.

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

A look at some of 2023’s campus events

UNC student groups brought the community together this year

By Natalie Bradin
Staff Writer
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From the annual Sunset Serenade in Polk Place to the Pro-Choice Pit Party, students came together in 2023 to celebrate lasting traditions and rally behind new causes. In August, the Student Alumni Association hosted the Sunset Serenade, drawing hundreds of students to watch campus a cappella groups perform at Polk Place. While students of all grades take part in the tradition, SAA co-chair David Kelly said the event is a great opportunity to welcome new students to UNC. “It allows the new students to get a sense of some of the different clubs or experiences campus has to offer,” Kelly said. “They can meet people, and they can listen to different a cappella groups.” SAA also hosted its annual Holiday Concert in the Student Union Great Hall on Nov. 28, which garnered around 300 attendees to watch five of UNC’s a cappella groups perform holiday tunes. SAA’s Homecoming Committee held free events in the Pit during this year’s Homecoming Week in November. According to Homecoming Committee President Madison Buschek, during one event, the group gave out approximately 250 burgers from Al’s Burger Shack to students in the Pit. Buschek said she thinks approximately 500 people came to the event throughout the day. The committee also partnered with Carolina For The Kids to bring a dunk tank to the Pit for Homecoming Week. According to Buschek, attendees paid



The UNC Walk-Ons perform during Sunset Serenade on Aug. 22.

\$1 per throw to dunk members of the UNC men’s handball team. All proceeds went to UNC Children’s Hospital. In March, Carolina For The Kids celebrated its 25th annual Dance Marathon. CFTK executive director Meredith Braddy said in an email that 383 students registered to dance and fundraise at this year’s event, with the event raising a total of \$290,519.61 to support the patients and families at UNC Children’s Hospital. According to a statement from UNC Media Relations, UNC’s annual FallFest expanded its footprint this year to allow more space for attendees to enjoy the festival. Others drew online attention, like the Carolina Union Activities Board’s annual Jubilee concert. This year, the headliner was Atlanta rapper Young Nudy, who performed for hundreds of students and community members at Hooker Fields in April. According to Media Relations, the concert sold over 1,300 tickets. In April, former U.S. Vice President Mike Pence spoke in the Great Hall at

an event titled “Saving America from the Woke Left.” Before the start of his speech, UNC Young Democrats held an opposition rally in the Pit called “Saving America With the ‘Woke Left.’” The event was supported by over 15 campus and community organizations. UNC Young Democrats also held a Pro-Choice Pit Party in opposition to anti-abortion activist Kristan Hawkin’s “I’m Coming For Your Abortion Access” event in the Great Hall in October. UNC Young Democrats President Sloan Duvall said both events had hundreds in attendance. She said the thought process behind the rally and party centered around meeting speech with “more speech.” “They’re exercising their First Amendment rights, and we can do the same,” Duvall said. For next year’s campus events, students can visit UNC’s Heel Life page and the University Calendar.

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OVERVIEW

Where the School of Civic Life and Leadership stands now

Ten months after announcement, faculty still have concerns

By Samantha Nichols
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Nearly a year after the UNC Board of Trustees passed a resolution to accelerate the development of a new School of Civic Life and Leadership — a move that many faculty members said they were not consulted about — development of the SCiLL is being led by a group of 9 inaugural faculty members with legislative funding.

The school was first announced during a Jan. 26 BOT meeting. Since its conception, the SCiLL has been shrouded in debate about the role of political ideology in higher education.

Development of the SCiLL

UNC's Program for Public Discourse was created in 2017 by Provost Chris Clemens to establish a "conservative center" on campus, according to emails obtained by The Daily Tar Heel.

Members of the Faculty Council voted to delay the PPD in 2019, expressing concerns over its development, but their request was denied. The program was integrated into the IDEAS in Action curriculum in the fall of 2022.

Boliek described the SCiLL as a "natural extension" of the PPD.

Sarah Treul Roberts, the SCiLL's interim dean, said nine inaugural faculty members are currently working on developing a vision and curriculum for the school.

The PPD is being "folded into" the SCiLL and the school could potentially begin offering courses in the fall of 2024, Treul Roberts said.

"As an instructor of American politics courses, I see polarization everywhere in society," she said. "And, hopefully, this school provides our students, but also the broader community, with tools in which to communicate past differences, beyond differences and move us toward creating

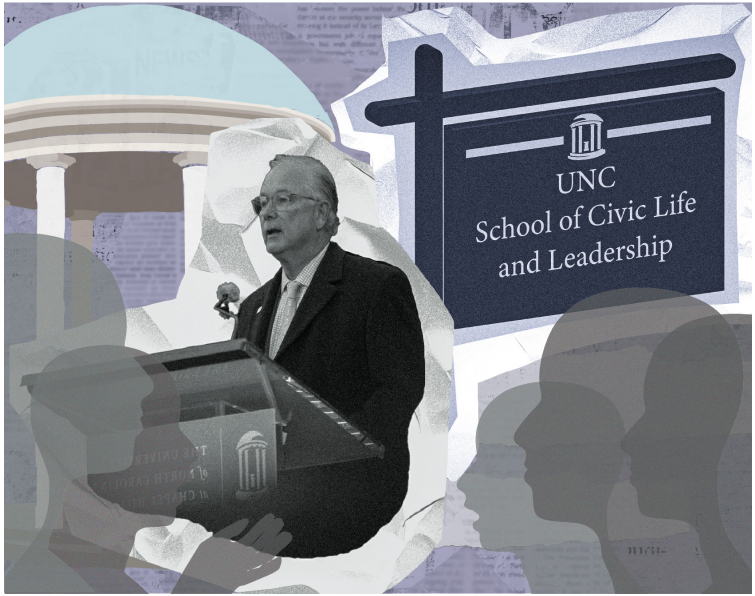
a better democracy, a stronger democracy and a better nation."

Jaleah Taylor is a member of the Agora Fellows, a discussion group within the PPD. She said she feels the events and discussions held by the PPD are effective in facilitating constructive dialogue on campus. She also said she feels there is a perception that UNC has a particular political ideology.

"I would think if they're creating another program that's similar to the Program for Public Discourse, it would be in efforts to change that narrative and to have more perspectives outside of the general

expressed concern that the development of the SCiLL did not follow the same processes as the School of Data Science and Society, the most recent school created before the SCiLL.

"There's nothing similar about it, in terms of the chronology and the collaboration across the campus," Estroff said. "The most important preliminary thing being the idea that academically, intellectually and in terms of what the world needs — these things are what drove [the School of Data Science], not a budget allocation that came from the legislature



PHOTOS COURTESY OF IRA WILDER, ADOBE STOCK

DTH DESIGN/SARAH FENWICK

consensus that UNC is a liberal school," Taylor said.

Concern from faculty members

Faculty Executive Committee member Sue Estroff said many of the faculty feel a sense of "resignation and defeat" toward the lack of communication and collaboration between the BOT and the faculty, regardless of the inaugural faculty's involvement.

"Yes, there is a process now that involves faculty, but the fact remains that it was a fait accompli," Estroff said.

Some faculty members also

before anybody knew about it."

The N.C. General Assembly allocated \$2 million for the development of the SCiLL for each of the next two fiscal years in their September budget. An additional \$1 million pledge from the Orville Gordon Browne Foundation has been received to establish an endowment for a professorship at the school.

The budget also mandated that the provost name a permanent dean for the school by Dec. 31 and hire 10-20 tenured or tenure-track faculty from outside the University.

X: @dailytarheel

TURNOVER

'We're here to serve a mission and we're going to do it'

Campus leaders find success, challenges in new roles

By Lucas Moore

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This year, several new leaders stepped into roles on campus. These changes come after eight deans stepped down in 2022, creating what new faculty chair Beth Morocco called "a huge amount of change."

Here's an overview of who has joined campus leadership in 2023:

Beth Morocco

Morocco began her term as chair of the UNC faculty on July 1, succeeding Mimi Chapman. She also serves as an associate professor in the Gillings School of Global Public Health and the associate director of the UNC Injury Prevention Research Center.

"This has not been a typical summer or semester in terms of all the events that have affected our campus," she said. "I have been mostly in reactive mode since July 1."

She said events such as the Supreme Court's affirmative action decision, the Aug. 28 shooting, reactions to the conflict in the Middle East and the potential departure of Chancellor Kevin Guskiewicz have been her main concerns during her first six months in the role.

Looking forward, Morocco said she wants to improve communication between faculty and the Faculty Council "to really make sure that we're hearing the full spectrum of faculty voices."

Aimee Wall

On Feb. 27, Wall succeeded Mike Smith as dean of the School of Government. She joined the School's faculty in 2001 and served as senior associate dean from 2020 to 2023.

"The organization was very welcoming to me in this role, and I felt a lot of enthusiasm and excitement about the next chapter for the school," Wall said.

She also said she spoke with many North Carolina public officials when

she began the role, and that it was "refreshing and exciting" to see how much importance they placed on the School of Government.

One of the greatest challenges in Wall's first year as dean, she said, was the \$2.5 million budget cut approved by the N.C. General Assembly in September.

"There have been some hard decisions about things to pause and positions not to fill, both faculty and staff," Wall said. "But in the long run, we're here to serve a mission and we're going to do it — but we just have to adapt how we go about doing that and how we staff it."

Sarah Treul Roberts

Sarah Treul Roberts was appointed interim director and dean of the new School of Civic Life and Leadership in early October. She also serves as the faculty director for the Program for Public Discourse and is a Bowman and Gordon Gray distinguished term professor in the political science department.

In an email statement, Treul Roberts said she is "incredibly excited" to take on the role.

"We have the opportunity to build something brand new, which is rare in academia," she said.

The SCiLL currently has nine tenured faculty members, including Treul Roberts, who have been tasked with developing the school's curriculum and building the operational infrastructure.

"Creating a new curriculum is a challenge, but it is also an amazing opportunity," she said. "For the school to succeed, the curriculum needs to be integrated into the fabric of the college."

Additional changes

Mary Margaret Frank became the dean of the Kenan-Flagler Business School on Aug. 15. Brad Briner, Vimal Kolappa and Jennifer Halsey Evans joined the Board of Trustees in the fall.

Evans said she believes every trustee is working in the best interest of the University and added that during her time on the Board, she's worked well with her fellow trustees.

X: @dailytarheel

REPRESENTATION

Students celebrate inclusive developments at UNC

New on-campus groups uplifted diverse identities this year

By Liza Smith

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During 2023, many students worked to highlight representation of their communities on campus. Here is a rundown of some of the most notable student projects that aim to bring more inclusivity to UNC:

Founding of the first Black Pre-Law Student Association

In September, UNC junior Jaleah Taylor — alongside Black Student Movement President Joann Obioma and UNC junior Taylah Smith — founded the first Black Pre-Law Student Association at UNC.

"I noticed that a lot of our white counterparts had a lot of networks and resources already when they came in, and a lot of Black students just didn't have that," Taylor said.

The organization aims to build community and networks for Black

pre-law students through a variety of professional development and social events.

Hiring of Asian Americanists after student petition

Joanna Yeh, a junior at UNC, said there is a serious lack of educational resources for Asian American studies.

In the fall of 2022, Yeh, alongside members from Students for Asian American Studies at UNC, petitioned for the expansion of opportunities in the department.

As a result of the petition and the desires of Asian American students, the University moved forward with the decision to implement a cluster hire of three faculty members focused on this area of study in spring 2024.

"But it doesn't end there — that's where it starts," Yeh said.

Founding of Crips in College Movement

UNC junior Laura Saavedra Forero, a wheelchair user, was trapped in Koury Residence Hall for 32 hours during her first year at UNC due to an elevator outage



PHOTO COURTESY OF BEA CALWITAN/BPLA

Jaleah Taylor (left), Taylah Smith (center) and Joann Obioma (right) are the founders of the first Black Pre-Law Student Association.

which rendered her unable to exit the building from her fourth floor room.

One year later, she sat on the steps of South Building, joined by various supporters and former Campus Y Co-president Megan Murphy, for 32 hours in a demonstration to ensure her demands for accessibility were heard.

This 32-hour action served

as the hard launch for Crips in College — a community-based movement advocating for accessibility in higher education.

"Because of so many different barriers, disabled people are kept out of higher education — and that's purposeful," she said.

Crips in College serves as a

way to harness the support from inside and outside of the disabled community into collective power and action.

Founding of AMEXCAN chapter at UNC

UNC senior Jonathan Cortez was interning with AMEXCAN, the Association of Mexicans in North Carolina, Inc., when he said he realized it would be amazing to implement something similar at UNC.

"It's very important to ensure that people coming in, and the people that are currently here, feel that UNC is still a place they can come to and feel welcome," Cortez said.

He founded UNC's chapter of AMEXCAN in September with help from other UNC seniors Aislin Sanchez and Christian Rendon. The organization hosts casual social events that celebrate Mexican culture, as well as informational panels focusing on topics such as immigration and first-generation students.

X: @dailytarheel

ISRAEL-GAZA

Student pro-Palestine efforts alarm N.C. officials

Emails reveal concerns about flyer imagery, Arabic speeches

By Aisha Baiocchi

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The day after UNC Students for Justice in Palestine held its “day of resistance” rally on the steps of Wilson Library, Marty Kotis, a member of the UNC Board of Trustees, sent an email to University leaders expressing concern about the student organization.

In his email to Provost Chris Clemens and Senior Advisor to the Office of the Chancellor Chris McClure, Kotis compared SJP’s Instagram post about the rally, which featured the silhouette of a paragon, to a “noose celebrating a lynching.”

Clemens responded the next day — “There is no doubt the flyer represents a celebration of violence and murder.”

Other emails obtained by The Daily Tar Heel include comments from BOT chair John Preyer and Kotis along with two elected officials, U.S. Rep. Kathy Manning, (D-NC 6th), and N.C. Rep. Jon Hadister, (R-Guilford), addressed to the University about SJP.

The aforementioned rally took place on Oct. 12, five days after militant group Hamas attacked Israel. The UNC chapter of SJP used the same imagery in its flyer as other pro-Palestine groups across the country. The organization has since removed the post from its Instagram page.

Chapters of SJP at universities across the country have recently come under fire for their advocacy. On Nov. 16, the American Civil Liberties Union helped the University of Florida chapter of SJP file a lawsuit challenging one of those actions — an all-out ban of the student group in Florida’s state universities.

Brian Hauss, senior staff attorney at ACLU’s Speech, Privacy and Technology Project and a lawyer on the UF SJP case, said public and private universities cannot fulfill their purpose if their leaders punish



DTH/JENNIFER TRAN

Students hold up signs in support of Palestine during an organized march outside of Wilson Library on Nov. 17.

their students for acting within their protected right to free speech.

“If we’ve learned anything from the experience of our country’s universities during the McCarthy era — and more recently in the years since 9/11 — it’s that viewpoint-based efforts to police speech on campus destroys the foundation on which academic communities are built,” Hauss said in an email.

The emails

On the morning of Oct. 12, Haley Barringer, deputy chief of staff for Manning, reached out to the staff of the UNC Office of Federal Affairs asking to set up a call with Chancellor Kevin Guskiewicz about the imagery and slogan SJP used in its Instagram post for the demonstration. A spokesperson from Manning’s office confirmed that she talked with Guskiewicz about the rally and poster.

Later that day, Kotis communicated with Jones, Preyer and Clemens in addition to members of the University administration and security officials. In his first email, he said he and Hardister were concerned about the Instagram post and reports of speeches in Arabic.

“We should also be prepared for

more protests and potential violence on Friday, October 13th given that Hamas is calling for an all out jihad and appealing to people around the world to act on that day,” Kotis wrote in the email.

Kotis told The DTH on Nov. 29 that he still has not been able to translate the chants from the rally.

“If they said, ‘Kill everybody in the room,’ that’s an immediate direct threat right?” he said. “But we don’t know what somebody is saying when they are speaking a different language.”

Hardister echoed Kotis’ concerns about the rally and comments made in Arabic in a subsequent email. Hardister did not respond to The DTH’s requests for comment.

Frederick E. Sellers, the vice president for safety & emergency operations for the UNC System, responded to Kotis on Oct. 12, saying both University and government security forces monitored the situation, including “conversations conducted in foreign languages.”

UNC SJP said it was disturbed but not surprised to learn that the University administration and BOT members have been surveilling the group, specifically condemning efforts to “retroactively punish students, staff, and faculty as we

exercise our free speech rights as guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution.”

On Oct. 13, Preyer, the BOT chair, asked if SJP received University funding. Kotis followed up with screenshots from the Undergraduate Student Government’s Fall 2023 Budget. In the last funding cycle, SJP received \$1,380.

Over the next few days, Kotis questioned the legality of wearing masks at protests in further emails. SJP has asked participants to wear masks at its rallies, which Kotis said violates N.C. Statute 14-12.8 as well as University policy.

The DTH did not obtain any further communication about the mask policy or enforcement. Statements from Sellers and UNC Police Chief Brian James via UNC Media Relations did not address the mask policy either.

University and SJP response

In a statement, Media Relations said Guskiewicz and Clemens were “disturbed to see the paragon imagery promoting the SJP protest and do not condone calls for violence or prejudice against any member of our community.”

Media Relations also noted Guskiewicz found the imagery

“troublesome” and made his “concerns clear” to some SJP student leaders in a meeting in October.

Kotis said he personally considers the image in the post to be harassment. He also said the group’s Nov. 17 sit-in, which occupied South Building for just over three hours, also violated free speech.

He cited University policy 1300.8, which prohibits action that disrupts University functions. Kotis said the University should identify individual students who participated in the sit-in and sanction them depending on their role and previous history, potentially “leading up to expulsion.”

“Public universities must remember that while it can be challenging to balance public safety with the need for vigorous public debate, the Constitution requires public officials to protect the free speech rights of everyone, not just those with whom they agree,” Hauss said.

His statement also said landmark cases have established a precedent that prohibits colleges from denying recognition or generally available funding to student groups on viewpoint discriminatory grounds.

No statement from the University, nor any of the comments from the BOT have addressed any efforts to remove funding from the student group.

UNC SJP said that videos from the sit-in affirm that the organization did not violate University policy as employees in South Building had space to move freely.

“A university that materially and discursively supports an ongoing genocide should not take for granted their privilege to conduct business as usual,” UNC SJP said in the statement. “We have a responsibility to exhaust multiple avenues of action when hundreds are being killed in Gaza every day and our demands for UNC to take accountability for its role in these deaths remain unaddressed.”

If the University administration or the BOT decides to sanction UNC SJP, the group said it plans on seeking legal counsel and responding appropriately.

X: @_aishabee_

MENTAL HEALTH

Gun violence exposes gaps in resources

UNC expands well-being programs in schools, residence halls

By Lucy Kraus

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Nina Fisher, a senior psychology major, said despite using mental health resources through a telehealth therapy app, for several weeks following the Aug. 28 campus shooting and the Sept. 13 gun threat at Alpine Bagel, her mental health took a dip and the sense of security she had on campus was gone.

“I remember telling my friends. I was like, ‘I’m really, really, really bothered by this,’” Fisher said. “I was not sleeping.”

Throughout 2023, the University expanded its well-being programs and parts of the campus community provided additional support. But the aftermath of gun violence on campus exposed some gaps in mental health support for impacted students and faculty.

During the spring semester, Hinton-James Residence Hall started offering WellBeing coaching to residents in a collaboration with Carolina Housing and the School of Social Work. The two coaches, both master’s students



DTH/LANDIS MANGUM

Avery Cook, the director of CAPS, smiles for a portrait in their office on March 10.

in the social work school, were added to bridge the gap between the support that resident advisors are able to provide and more formal counseling, such as UNC’s Counseling and Psychological Services.

At several points this year, CAPS implemented embedded counselors at various schools, including the Hussman School of Journalism and Media, the Eshelman School of Pharmacy, the Gillings School of Global Public Health and the Adams School of Dentistry.

“Our embedded counselor [in the dental school] has just started in the past few weeks and is getting everything up and running there,” Avery Cook, director of CAPS, said. “So that program continues to expand.”

CAPS also re-introduced the Well Ride program at the beginning of the fall semester, which provides free Lyft rides for students living on campus who are attending off-campus therapy. The program, which first started in the spring of 2020, was put on pause by COVID-19.

“We’d love as many students as needed to take us up on that, so that’s a huge thing that we’ll still be running in the spring,” Cook said.

Fisher said she contacted CAPS through email in the spring of 2023 and never heard back. She said she didn’t go to CAPS walk-in hours when she was experiencing mental health setbacks in the spring semester because she heard “very few positive stories of CAPS through friends.”

Fisher also added that she thinks a lot of students became “self-resilient” in trying to find their own means of support.

Aiden Spelbring, a senior psychology major and president of the UNC chapter of Helping Give Away Psychological Science, said he thinks some campus mental health resources such as CAPS have an unfairly “bad” reputation.

Spelbring said he thinks a lot of students come into CAPS with the expectation that they’ll be able to meet with a therapist weekly, but that the expectation isn’t realistic due to funding and staff limitations.

The University could do a better job helping students understand what a CAPS visit will look like, he said.

Parents and other community members brought dogs, hugs and snacks to campus to support students after the shooting. CAPS

stationed their services at two additional locations on campus — Student and Academic Services Building North and the Student Union — for several days following the first lockdown.

They also set up similar stations one day following the second lockdown. Cook said this effort was made to “meet students where they were.”

The Aug. 28 shooting additionally prompted faculty members to reflect on the mental health of graduate students specifically.

Over 200 faculty members signed a letter sent to the Chancellor Kevin Guskiewicz on Sept 5, calling for the University to “immediately convene a task force to work to address the health and well-being of graduate students at Carolina.” The petition is still taking signatures.

This spring, Cook said CAPS is looking forward to implementing new focus groups, including a multiracial support group, groups focusing on anxiety and ones for returning students.

“There are a lot of places to lean on that people don’t always consider,” Spelbring said. “And if things arise, it’s never good to keep it inside, but always to go talk to someone.”

X: @dailytarheel

ADVOCACY

UNC students rallied, protested across campus in 2023

Activists pushed for better pay, accessibility, gun control and more this year

By Akash Bhowmik

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Discourse over national issues ranging from gun control to labor wages found a major home among UNC students in 2023. Hot topics included raising University housekeeper wages, improving campus safety and accessibility, and political activism regarding both domestic and international events.

Here's a breakdown of some of the most memorable moments of activism and advocacy on campus this year:

Housekeepers' rally

In February, UNC housekeepers gathered in front of South Building to rally against a University contract that did not satisfy their two main working demands: increased wages and free parking.

University housekeepers had been collaborating with The Workers Union to meet their list of demands since October 2022. Eric Elliott, a UNC housekeeper, said there are remaining issues to be addressed.

University housekeeping services, he said, are often understaffed and need more workers.

Elliott said continued advocacy for higher wages is a "good thing," especially as someone working from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on weekdays, including during breaks.

"That's going to always be a fight," Elliott said.

"No body or mind left behind" protest

Also in February, students sat in front of the South Building for 32

hours to protest issues regarding University accessibility.

The protest was led by Laura Saavedra Forero and Megan Murphy, then the co-presidents of the Campus Y. Saavedra Forero and Murphy were tied to each other on the steps of South Building using a chain, chicken wire, duct tape and a PVC pipe.

Saavedra Forero, a wheelchair user, was evacuated from Koury Residence Hall in 2022 after the dorm elevator malfunctioned. The duration of the protest was the same amount of time Saavedra Forero was stuck in her dorm.

In the months following the protest, the University added accessibility improvements across campus, including a renovation to the Old Well that finalized an integrated wheelchair ramp.

Mike Pence's speech

UNC Young Democrats organized a rally with over 15 campus and community organizations in the Pit as a response to Mike Pence's visit to UNC in April. Conversations during the rally included gun safety advocacy and LGBTQ+ rights.

Pence's visit, sponsored by Young America's Foundation and UNC College Republicans, was part of an event titled "Saving America from the Woke Left."

Sloan Duvall, the president of UNC Young Democrats, said UNC has an administration which stresses the importance of free speech on campus.

"We think anyone can come to our campus and speak," Duvall said. "However, when we have this divisive right-wing speech on our campus, we're gonna meet that with

more speech and we're gonna have productive conversations about the issues that matter to us."

Gun control protest

In August, a coalition of student and local organizations held a protest in Polk Place to voice frustrations over gun violence two days after the campus shooting of UNC professor Zijie Yan in Caudill Laboratories.

With approximately 600 participants attending the rally, the coalition included groups such as March For Our Lives, Students Demand Action and UNC Young Democrats.

T.J. White, the president of UNC Young Democrats at the time of the event, said there were major problems made apparent during the shooting, including a lack of appropriate locks on doors and inconsistent communication through Alert Carolina. He said he thinks the protest brought heightened attention to gun control issues on campus.

"No one's immune to gun violence, and because it hits so close to home, I think people are aware of how serious the issue is now," White said.

Stop Cop City

Community members and UNC students congregated in September to rally against the construction of the Atlanta Public Safety Training Center, a proposed police and fire services instruction center in Georgia that has raised concerns over militarizing police forces.

Sophomore Jess Foday said they think there has been more



DTH/KENNEDY COX

Laura Saavedra Forero and Megan Murphy, then co-presidents of the Campus Y, wrap their arms in chains at the front door of South Building at the start of their 32-hour protest on Feb. 23.

awareness regarding the "Stop Cop City" movement on campus.

Foday said while the movement has been escalating in Georgia, advocacy regarding the movement's history and development has helped students get involved.

"All of our liberation is intertwined with one another," they said. "Any liberatory action that you take is helping the emancipation of people everywhere."

Israel-Palestine protests

On Oct. 12, UNC's Students for Justice in Palestine rallied in front of Wilson Library amid the ongoing conflict between Israel and the militant organization Hamas.

Tensions later escalated as the demonstration was met with a counter-protest from pro-Israeli supporters. An associate professor from the Department of Religious Studies was escorted from the event for verbally harassing students.

SJP organized a second protest during November on the steps of South Building, where students and community members called for UNC to divest its resources and contracts away from Israel.

The November protest was part of an international movement called "Shut It Down for Palestine" — a demonstration with its members standing in solidarity with the Palestinian people.

X: @dailytarheel

LOOKING AHEAD

Campus accessibility a work in progress

Affected students reflect on accomodation efforts

By Isabella Hopkins

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Though 2023 brought accessibility improvements on campus, UNC students continue to advocate for more inclusive spaces for community members with disabilities at UNC.

In February, students sat on the steps of South Building in protest of a student wheelchair user who was stuck in their residence hall when the elevator broke. They protested for 32 hours straight, the same amount of time the student was trapped in Koury Residence Hall. Although, UNC senior Sarah Ferguson said no change directly resulted from this event, it was the catalyst for students with disabilities to be able to voice their concerns to University administration.

"We had a strong foot in the door to finally get meetings," Ferguson said.

In July, the UNC Board of Trustees approved the modernization of elevators in Carroll Hall, Dey Hall, Morrison Residence Hall, Brinkhous-Bullitt Building and Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center, UNC Media Relations said.

Senior Mary Frances Lutz said a notable step toward accessibility was the University's summer renovation of a ramp connected to the Old Well.

She said the renovations were also important for students with "invisible disabilities" too.

"It helps a lot of students," she said. "[Students] that aren't wheelchair users that can't do those three stairs up to the Old Well."

Ferguson said she sees the Old Well renovations as a "wonderful" addition, but she doesn't feel that it was the best accessibility improvement for the University to prioritize. To her, it seems to be more for

"publicity" than functionality.

"People can see ramps, but they can't see accessible restrooms," she said. "The University put higher priority on something that's visible, versus something that is actually functional."

Ferguson also said she had to change her studio art major to a minor because there is no accessible restroom in Hanes Art Center. She said this caused her to miss 40 minutes of instructional time each week to go to the bathroom in a different building.

Prior to the fall move-in date, UNC Media Relations said that Carolina Housing conducted a walk-through of several residential buildings to pinpoint areas in need of accessibility improvement.

Also this fall, Ferguson was informed of accessibility renovations in Morehead Chemistry Labs — an experience she described as "bittersweet." Though renovations were completed in 2021, she was not informed until she received an email from her professor at the start of this semester.

As a neuroscience and biology major, Ferguson said she had classes in Morehead Labs over the last three years that did not include accessible safety features and limited her participation. She said she has been using one of the accessible labs this semester and that it has been working well for her.

"So, that was really a tough pill to swallow," she said. "This is working so well for me to get through this lab. I could have been getting through my other labs this easily."

Lutz said another important stride toward a more accessible campus this year included a new elevator outage notification system through the Carolina Ready Safety app developed in September.

As a wheelchair user, she said she was unable to attend a third-floor class in Peabody Hall last semester due to a broken elevator. She said it would have been helpful to have the elevator outage notification system because it could have prevented her from making the unnecessary trip to a class



DTH/NATE SKVORETZ

she couldn't attend.

Sophomore wheelchair user Naman Saboo said the notification system could "definitely use some improvement."

He said there are only a couple elevators he uses on campus, and it would be nice for the system to be more customizable for students based on the specific outages that could impact them.

With regard to current initiatives, Media Relations said an elevator modernization project is underway at the Carolina Union. Carolina Housing is also in the planning phase to renovate Avery Residence Hall to implement an elevator, make kitchen and lounge spaces more accessible and create several accessible bedrooms and suites.

While Lutz said she experienced frustration as a wheelchair user over the past three years, she is seeing positive change from UNC.

"I feel like the University is definitely on the right track to making campus and the University more accessible to wheelchair users," Lutz said.

Students with concerns related to physical access or barriers can report them through a form now available through UNC's Equal Opportunity and Compliance office, Media Relations said.

X: @IsabellaHopkinz

BRIEFS

Hebrew classes move online

Last month, all sections of Hebrew language classes at UNC were temporarily moved online due to campus safety concerns.

Beginning Oct. 29, the classes went online and resumed in-person teaching on Nov. 12, according to a statement from UNC Media Relations.

The classes were moved online at the students' request, which was approved by Morgan Pitelka, the chair of the Department of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies.

According to Media Relations, on Nov. 17, one Hebrew class was held online because it occurred during a pro-Palestine protest held at South Building, where some pro-Israel protestors also convened.

The department of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies has not received any additional requests to move classes online, Media Relations said.

— Olivia Metelo

Congressional maps challenged as illegal racial gerrymander

A lawsuit filed Monday in federal court challenges several districts in North Carolina's new congressional maps and alleges they are an illegal racial gerrymander under the 14th and 15th amendments.

The lawsuit — which was filed by several individual voters from across the state — specifically said congressional districts 1, 6 and 14 were drawn to dilute the power of voters of color and that District 12 was drawn to pack voters of color into a single district.

The challenged districts were drawn by legislators after the Republican majority on the N.C. Supreme Court overturned a previous decision that yielded an even 7-7 partisan split in North Carolina's congressional delegation. The new districts are likely to produce either a 10-4 or 11-3 advantage for Republicans.

— Ethan E. Horton

REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS



DTH/SAMANTHA LEWIS

Planned Parenthood in Chapel Hill provides reproductive health services to the Triangle.

Abortion advocates say gerrymandered districts could influence state policies

By Kathryn DeHart
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On Nov. 7, Ohio voters approved a constitutional amendment that enshrines abortion rights in the state constitution.

Early this year, the N.C. General Assembly — led by a Republican supermajority — passed Senate Bill 20, a 12-week abortion ban that was temporarily blocked by a federal judge, but is now law.

The Ohio amendment was a citizen-led ballot referendum. In North Carolina, constitutional amendments must be initiated by a supermajority of the General Assembly and then voted on by the state’s voters. Citizen-led ballot initiatives are not allowed in North Carolina.

Tara Romano, the executive director of Pro-Choice North Carolina, said Ohio’s recent vote continues the trend of voters being in favor of abortion access, regardless of party affiliation. She said North Carolina is not uniquely more anti-abortion than Ohio and some Ohio voters that likely identify as Republican or independent voted to protect abortion access.

Both North Carolina and Ohio have state legislatures with Republican supermajorities, and both states have recently dealt with gerrymandered maps that favor Republicans.

Marques Thompson, the organizing director at Democracy North Carolina, said the N.C. General Assembly does not fully represent the voting base and is a result of gerrymandered maps.

In the 2022 U.S. Senate elections, Sen. Ted Budd (R-NC) won with

50.5 percent of the vote, while his Democratic opponent Cheri Beasley lost with 47.27 percent.

“Our General Assembly districts are heavily gerrymandered, and, as a result, one party has a supermajority in the General Assembly and can enact pretty much any policies that they want,” Becky Harper, a member of Common Cause North Carolina and the named plaintiff in Harper v. Hall, said.

Harper v. Hall was a series of cases in the N.C. Supreme Court that was ultimately overturned and allowed the state legislature to have full power over redistricting. The latest decision in Harper v. Hall said state courts could not overrule the legislature on map-drawing.

Harper said the fundamental problem with gerrymandering is that voters do not have the choice to vote for candidates who reflect their views. She also said there is a disconnect between the general public opinion about issues like abortion and the policy that is enacted.

Romano said it is important for voters’ voices to be reflected in the General Assembly when it comes to abortion.

She said, regardless of personal opinions about abortion, a majority of voters in North Carolina believe people should have access to the health care they need without government interference.

Romano said, S.B. 20 put medically unnecessary restrictions on abortion, including a 12-week ban and new requirements for abortion consultations. She said S.B. 20 mandates a patient’s first consultation

must to be done in person and requires 72 hours between the consultation and the actual procedure.

She said this rule can be a barrier for people who live far away from an abortion clinic, forcing them to either spend a few days in the area or make two trips to get the procedure.

Romano said the protests following the passage of S.B. 20 show how strongly people in North Carolina opposed these new measures.

Since the U.S. Supreme Court’s Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization decision that overturned Roe v. Wade, there have been seven statewide referendums across the country where voters have been able to directly vote on abortion access.

“What’s happened when abortion was actually put on the ballot as a single issue, in traditionally conservative states, like Ohio and Kansas, is that the voters did not, in fact, behave as they were expected to by the leaders of the Republican Party,” Harper said.

Kansas Republicans also hold a supermajority in the state legislature.

Thompson said what happened in Ohio should teach a lesson to N.C. General Assembly — he said Ohio voters were not in favor of abortion bans and that lawmakers should understand North Carolina citizens aren’t in favor of them, either.

“We would not want abortion restricted here, either, and people will vote on that issue, so I hope that serves as a bit of a warning to our leaders,” he said.

X: @dthcitystate

STATE GOVERNMENT

How environmental policy has changed this year

By Lola Oliverio
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This year brought many environmental policy changes for North Carolina, from sewage waste to farming to renewable energy. Here are some of the most important environmental laws introduced by the N.C. General Assembly — passed, overridden and stalled — this year.

Regulatory Reform Act

House Bill 600, or the Regulatory Reform Act of 2023, was filed in April and passed easily in both the House and Senate.

The bill would prohibit the hog industry from requiring updated sewage waste practices, which in turn would contaminate drinking water. Additionally, the bill would only give the N.C. Department of Environmental Quality 90 days to examine the expansion of the Mountain Valley Pipeline Southgate natural gas pipeline into Alamance and Rockingham counties.

Gov. Roy Cooper vetoed the bill in October, but his veto was overturned eight days later.

Farm Act

Senate Bill 582, the North Carolina Farm Act of 2023, includes a provision that changes protections for wetlands.

According to N.C. Sen. Graig Meyer (D-Caswell, Orange, Person), the bill could lead to the loss of millions of acres of wetlands, which cover 17 percent of the state.

Though the bill was vetoed by Cooper in June, this decision was overturned by the General Assembly four days later. Cooper’s veto message stated that the weakened wetlands protections would worsen flooding, especially in the eastern part of the state.

“This bill reverses our progress and leaves the state vulnerable without vital flood mitigation and water purification tools,” he wrote.

H.B. 720 and H.B. 801

On April 18, representatives filed a bill establishing a state goal to rely completely on renewable energy by 2050. The bill stalled and never reached the floor. Another bill filed the same day, House Bill 801, which would have reinstated a solar energy tax credit, was not debated.

N.C. Rep. Allen Buansi (D-Orange) said that House Democrats are trying their best to serve everybody while protecting the environment.

“We have a number of measures that unfortunately were never heard, but certainly not for lack of trying,” he said.

State budget

The new state budget, passed in September, contains provisions prohibiting local governments from banning the use of — or enacting fees on — plastic bags and also preventing North Carolina from joining the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, which aims to “reduce power sector CO2 emissions.”

Mary Maclean Asbill, the director of the Southern Environmental Law Center’s North Carolina Offices, said that many environmentally damaging provisions were quietly added to the budget, which ultimately has to pass eventually.

Local environmental changes

In 2023, the federal government faced pressure from organizations like the Center for Biological Diversity to add Chapel Hill’s coal ash dump to the list of Superfund programs, which was established in 1980 and aims to clean up hazardous and contaminated sites.

A study conducted in 2022 determined that, along a portion of Bolin Creek in Chapel Hill, concentrations of toxic metals are up 10-30 times higher than the baseline concentrations of state soil.

“Most of the coal ash that is stored in places that could be dangerous is being moved into blind landfills, but that’s a multi-year process,” Meyer said. “There is of course, still coal ash being generated by every coal-burning power plant in the state, including UNC’s own coal-burning power plant.”

OWASA continues to test for harmful — and possibly carcinogenic — PFAS in local water. They will also be upgrading their water treatment plant over the next five years.

“Don’t give up hope,” Asbill said. “Know that the environmental community, both lawyers and non-lawyers, are not giving up and we are getting creative, and we’re gonna think about other ways to protect the environment.”

X: @LolaOliverio

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Politicians, advocates reflect on state politics of 2023

Republicans gained a supermajority this year

By Grace Whittemore
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In early April, N.C. Rep. Tricia Cotham (R-Mecklenburg) announced she was changing her party affiliation from Democrat to Republican, just a few months after she was sworn in.

After the 2022 midterm elections, Republicans in the N.C. House fell one seat short of a supermajority. But, Cotham’s partisan switch secured a supermajority for the GOP and allowed them to override any of Gov. Roy Cooper’s vetoes.

Cotham’s new alignment, though not the first partisan switch in North

Carolina’s history, garnered national attention and shifted state politics.

The Democratic leader of the House, N.C. Rep. Robert Reives (D-Chatham, Randolph) said, while he still has a good working relationship with Cotham, he felt like her constituency had a right to know how she felt before she switched.

“Unfortunately, I think a lot of people who are in leadership, especially here in North Carolina, want people not to trust government,” Reives said. “And so when you already have a distrust of government, when something like that happens, it does feel like to people who vote, that they’ve not had a chance to have their voices get heard.”

Cotham did not respond to a request for comment from The Daily Tar Heel.

In May, after Cotham’s switch, the

General Assembly passed Senate Bill 20 over Cooper’s veto, creating a new state-wide 12-week abortion ban.

Jane Pinsky, the director of the NC Coalition for Lobbying and Government Reform with Common Cause North Carolina, said Republicans’ new ability to override the gubernatorial veto essentially takes minority party representatives and the executive branch out of the governing process.

Reives said the veto-proof majority held by Republicans made the North Carolina legislature the most powerful state legislature in the country and eliminated any separation of powers at the state level.

This new governing power in the the legislature props up the speaker of the House and president pro tem

of the Senate to be two of the most influential people in the state, rather than statewide elected officials, he said.

Neither N.C. House Speaker Tim Moore (R-Cleveland, Rutherford) nor N.C. Senate President Pro Tem Phil Berger (R-Guilford, Rockingham) responded to a request for comment by The Daily Tar Heel.

In addition to the more visible actions taken by the General Assembly in 2023, UNC law professor Rick Su said many of the things pushed through under the supermajority in the past year could have major implications, even though they haven’t garnered much media attention yet.

Su said the increased appointment power held by the legislature after changes made this year could change gearing up for the 2024 election.

N.C. Sen. Graig Meyer (D-Caswell, Orange, Person) said his most significant achievement of the year was the inclusion of Medicaid expansion in the state budget, which he said had been in the works for about 10 years.

Meyer said, though he believes Medicaid expansion was a big win for the state, it was often difficult to find even small wins.

“Really one of the more difficult parts of this year for me, as someone who’s been there for 10 years and a lot of different sizes of Republican majorities, always a Republican majority, but just different configurations of it, they were particularly brutal this year in what they proposed and passed,” Meyer said.

X: @dthcitystate

PARKING

Carrboro mall installs new signs after towing violations

Barnes Towing removed 268 cars from October to Nov. 20

By Sarah Smiley
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On Nov. 21, the Carrboro Police Department provided Nathan Milian, the property manager of Carr Mill Mall, with a notice of violation regarding the towing signs located on the mall's property.

According to the notice, the police department conducted a review of towing signs on Carr Mill Mall's property on Nov. 20 after receiving a complaint the previous week. The police department found the signs were not in compliance with Town code.

Milian said he was informed some of the lettering on the property's towing signs were a quarter of an inch short. He said, after receiving the notice of violation, he contacted the Town to ask for a detailed explanation of what appropriate signage looks like.

"We didn't agree with the interpretation, but we don't want there to be any noncompliance," Milian said.

The Town gave Milian a 14-day grace period to have all signs on the property in compliance with Town codes and ordinances in question, which Carrboro Mayor Damon Seils said is standard practice.

Milian said he has a signage company on standby to create the new signs as soon as they are approved by the Town. He said new signs were installed on Tuesday and that the Carrboro Police Department would check their compliance on Wednesday.

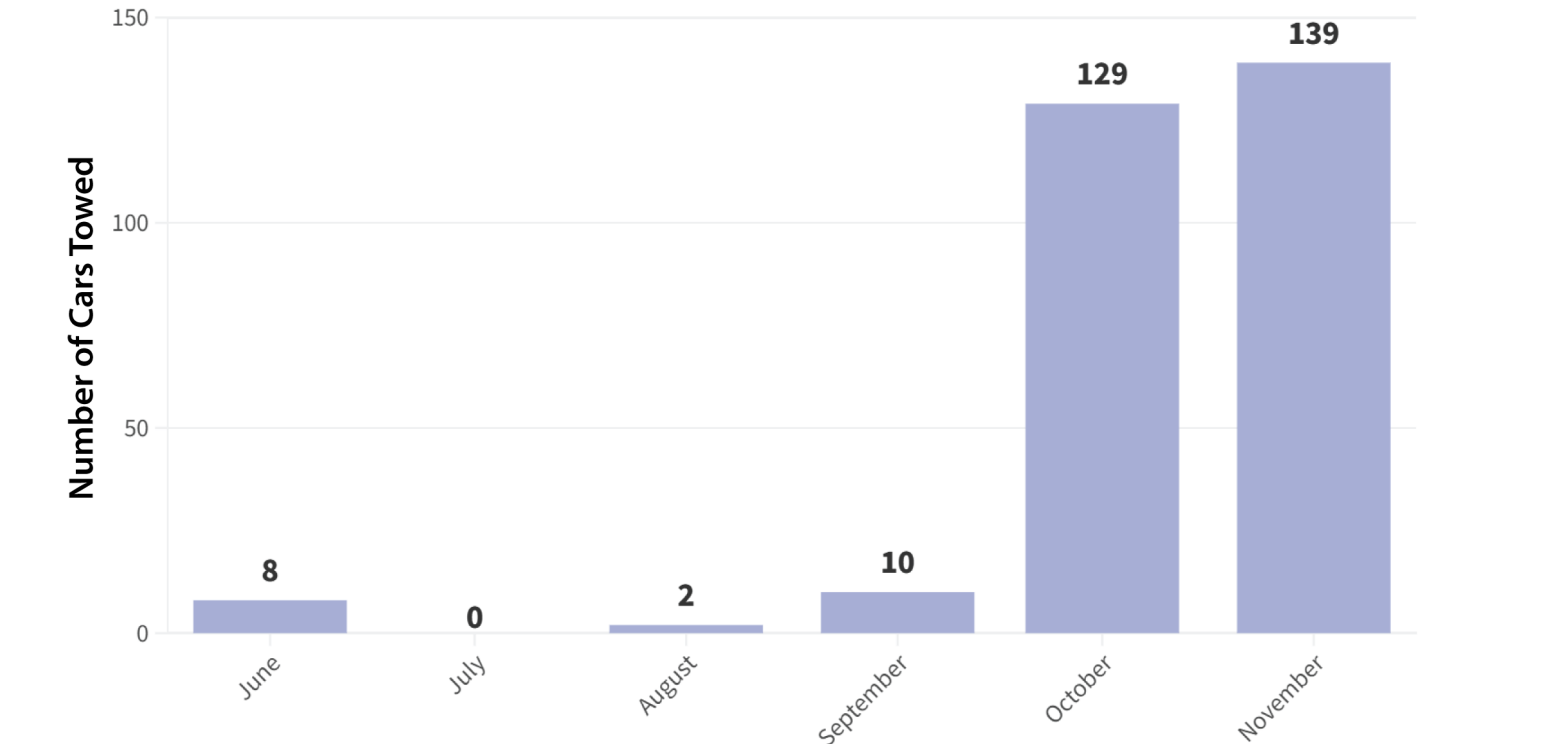
If the signage still contains violations after the grace period has expired, the Town can subject Milian to penalties like fines.

Sammy Slade, a member of the Carrboro Town Council, said he does not think the Town has taken enough action against the towing practices at Carr Mill Mall.

"I feel like this is so egregious, what's happening — the number of towing and the way it's being done — that we need to be a little more forceful in enforcing our ordinance," he said.

Carr Mill Mall sees a drastic increase in towing this year

The towing of illegally parked cars in this lot dramatically increased in 2023 — with a 1,190 percent increase from September to October.



Source: Carrboro Police Department | Data was last collected on Nov. 20. DTH DATA/SURABHI DAMLE

Carr Mill Mall announced on Nov. 8 that it would be implementing a new camera system to monitor its parking lots, encouraging patrons in the lots to stay on site.

Between March and September of this year, 24 cars were towed from the mall's property, according to records from the Carrboro Police Department. From the start of October through Nov. 20, 268 cars were towed.

The Town became aware of complaints about towing practices at Carr Mill Mall about two months ago when residents began raising concerns on social media and contacting the Town, Slade said.

"It seems like every few years, this particular property owner goes through an episode of aggressive towing behavior," Seils said.

In a message to some Carr Mill business owners, Milian wrote that this increase in towing was due to a lack of public parking in downtown

Carrboro, which has put strain on Carr Mill's private lots.

"We have studied that issue many times, and we know that there is good parking supply," Seils said. "What we need to be doing better as a Town is making sure that our residents and visitors know how to find that parking."

Seils said the Town used to have much stronger regulations on towing, such as fee caps. But, in 2014, the N.C. Supreme Court ruled municipalities cannot set limitations on towing and storage fees.

"This is the only example that I've seen in my many, many years of watching this issue in Carrboro, it's a particular issue for this property owner, and unfortunately we don't have a lot of authority to do much about it," Seils said.

According to Milian, Jon Hartman-Brown, the economic development director for

Carrboro, asked Milian for permission to place small signs on the mall's property containing QR codes with information regarding nearby public parking before the notice of violation.

Milian said that he agreed to this request, but that he received no other recent contact from the Town regarding towing concerns at Carr Mill Mall.

He said that since the notice of violation was issued, fewer cars have been towed.

"The word is getting out that you can't just park here and go somewhere else," he said. "Hopefully, that's going to last."

Milian said no one at the mall has any sort of financial relationship with Barnes Towing, which conducts towing at Carr Mill. Barnes Towing did not respond to The Daily Tar Heel's requests for comment.

He said he has no plans to adjust his towing practices, and that his goal is to get his property in compliance with Town code.

Seils said he is worried about how the business owners at Carr Mill Mall are being affected by the towing violations.

"This is purely the behavior by the mall's property manager and local towing company, and I don't want our local businesses to be punished because of their behaviors," Seils said.

Milian said he values the customers of Carr Mill Mall, but that the mall cannot accommodate downtown Carrboro's parking needs.

"We don't want to tow anybody," Milian said. "It's not our preference to tow people — it's our preference for people to just respect that they can't park here and go somewhere else."

X: @dthcitystate

tfed

Translational Forum for Empirical Research

PWAD/CMPL 489

Imperial Ambition & the Classical Tradition

Empire & Diplomacy

Professor Leinbaugh OBE PHD

--with guest diplomats--

Tu & Th 2 – 3: 15 PM

This course examines the concept of Empire, with readings drawn from foundational texts of Western literature, coupled with readings in contemporary diplomacy.

Counts toward PWAD, CMPL, GLBL, ENGL, EURO, and other majors. Also satisfies GL & LA requirements.

SCAN ME

ENGL 620: An Introduction to Old English Language and Literature

Professor Leinbaugh OBE PHD

In this course we will learn to read Old English, the vernacular Germanic language spoken in Britain from about the middle of the fifth century until the time of the Norman Conquest. Our primary texts will include Beowulf, Caedmon's Hymn, The Wanderer, The Seafarer, Biblical writings, and works by Aelfric and King Alfred the Great.

We will explore the influence these texts exerted on writers such as Milton, Ezra Pound, J.R.R. Tolkien, and Seamus Heaney. And, in order to situate these literary works within a broader cultural and historical context, we will briefly examine the history and material culture of the Anglo-Saxon era, including treasures discovered at the Sutton Hoo ship-burial site and the richly illuminated Lindisfarne Gospels.

We conclude the semester with collaborative work on a Digital Humanities project.

Tu/Th 3:30 PM – 4:45 PM

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

A look at North Carolina's relationship with Israel

Politicians, companies have symbiotic ties with country

By Sophia Fanning
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It has been nearly two months since the war in Israel and Gaza escalated and questions have arisen about the role of individual U.S. states in foreign affairs. Many states, including North Carolina, have connections with Israel and domestic pro-Israel groups independently from the federal government — and some politicians do, too.

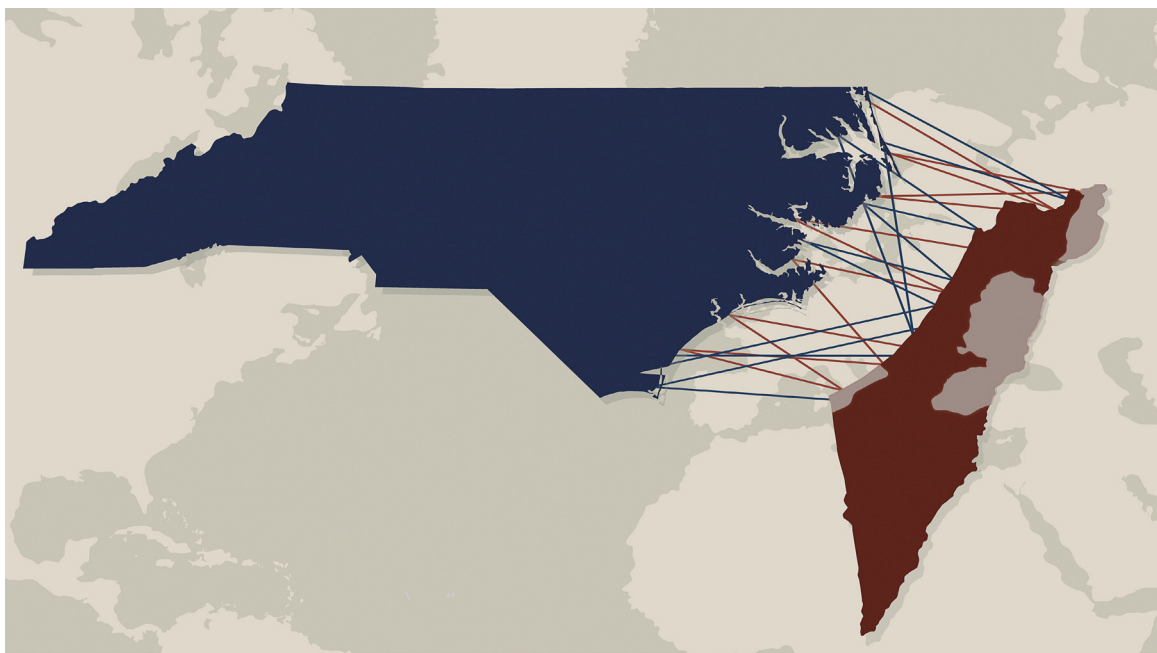
In 2021, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee — a bipartisan group that aims to get pro-Israel policies passed by U.S. Congress — announced its plans to form a PAC called AIPAC PAC. The group also formed a super PAC called United Democracy Project (UDP), ahead of the 2022 election cycle.

All 14 of North Carolina's current congressional representatives received money from AIPAC PAC during the 2022 election cycle.

Rep. Valerie Foushee (D-NC 4th), who represents Chapel Hill, also received more than \$2 million from the United Democracy Project, making her the third-highest recipient of UDP money in the country.

Foushee was singled out by AIPAC and UDP because one of her opponents in the Democratic primary for the 4th District was Nida Allam, a Durham County commissioner who had expressed criticism for Israel.

The House passed H.R. 6126, a \$14.3 billion aid package for Israel, passed in the U.S. House in early November with support from all seven North Carolina Republican representatives and Democrat Rep. Don Davis (D-NC 1st), who was also supported by UDP in his primary in 2021 against an opponent critical of Israel.



DTH DESIGN/JESSICA BAUGH

The proposal rescinded \$14.3 billion from the IRS and did not include aid to Ukraine or Gaza.

Rep. Alma Adams (D-NC 12th) is the only member of Congress in North Carolina who signed onto House Resolution 786 on Oct. 19, which called for a cease-fire in Israel and occupied Palestine. On Dec. 2 — a month and a half after the initial cease-fire resolution — Foushee signed a letter to President Joe Biden along with 11 other members of Congress calling for a bilateral cease-fire.

Kylie Broderick, a Ph.D. candidate at UNC, is on the executive board for UNC Students for Justice in Palestine. She said N.C. politicians who have not called for a cease-fire are not responding to the will of the people.

"I would warn them that their apathy and cruelty has not gone

unnoticed, that activists have long memories," she said.

North Carolina is one of 36 states that have enacted anti-boycott or anti-BDS legislation, which intends to dissuade or prohibit boycotts against Israel in response to the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions movement that began in 2005.

BDS aims to put economic pressure on Israel and challenge international support for the Israeli government,

investing in or contracting with companies that boycott Israel.

In 2022 alone, North Carolina imported \$303 million worth of Israeli goods, with the largest import being electric machinery. The state exported \$146.8 million worth of goods to Israel — mainly pharmaceuticals, organic chemicals and nuclear reactors.

Barry Swartz is the retired chief operating officer of Conexx, an intermediary organization that helps connect Israeli businesses to seven southeastern states — including North Carolina — and businesses from those states to Israel.

He said the company has facilitated over \$4 billion in economic activity between the Southeast and Israel. He said at least 25 Israeli companies have offices or manufacturing plants in the state.

Phil Brodsky is the CEO of the Jewish Federation of Greater Raleigh,

which he said focuses on connecting the Jewish community and providing social services for people in need.

Brodsky said he views North Carolina's relationships with Israel as a positive force.

He said bringing people together and cultural exchanges helps bring new ideas and perspectives on conflicts.

"That's how you overcome things like polarization, bigotry, racism, hatred and stereotyping," he said.

Some N.C. municipalities have participated in U.S.-Israel police exchanges where members of law enforcement travel to Israel to partake in training with the Israel Defense Forces or Israeli police.

Jose Lopez was police chief in Durham from 2007 to 2015 and visited Israel in 2008 to participate in a leadership training program sponsored by the Anti-Defamation League.

In 2018, Durham became the first city in the United States to ban police from engaging in international exchanges with Israel police or defense forces.

While local governments do not dictate foreign policy, other municipalities have clarified their positions on the conflict. The Town of Carrboro passed a resolution on Nov. 14 calling for a cease-fire. It passed 4-3, with council members Susan Romaine and Randee Haven-O'Donnell and mayor-elect Barbara Foushee voting against it.

Danya Holtzman, who is on the leadership team of the Triangle chapter of Jewish Voices for Peace, said although she understands municipalities can't make unilateral decisions on foreign affairs, she would like to see more representatives take a stronger stance for human rights and use the power they're given to call for a cease-fire.

"Each elected official has an element of power to change the narrative that individual citizens don't necessarily have," she said.

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VOTING RIGHTS

N.C. Supreme Court legalizes partisan gerrymandering

Legislature given control over congressional maps in 2023

By Tori Newby
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This year, partisan gerrymandering became effectively legal in North Carolina with the Harper III decision in the N.C. Supreme Court. Now, the N.C. General Assembly can draw maps without review of the state supreme court.

The Harper v. Hall series took the main stage in N.C. politics with the third case in the series, Harper III, being decided this year.

In Feb. 2022, the N.C. Supreme Court found in Harper I that the maps for congressional districts, drawn by Republican legislators, had an extreme GOP advantage. The court then ordered the redrawing of the maps.

Later, in Dec. 2022, court ruled in Harper II that the N.C. Senate maps were also gerrymandered to favor Republicans.

The new Republican majority court overturned the previous two Harper cases in April with Harper III, which ruled partisan gerrymandering as not justiciable — meaning the General Assembly's decisions to redraw maps that favor one political party over others cannot be overridden by state courts.

In June, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in Moore v. Harper — a case appealed from the state supreme court Harper cases —

that the elections clause in the U.S. Constitution does not give state legislatures full control of federal elections.

This ruling rejected independent state legislature theory, which asserts that state legislatures should have exclusive authority in establishing rules for federal elections unless Congress has intervened.

But, the appeal that turned into Moore v. Harper was accepted by the U.S. Supreme Court before Harper III was decided, and the case was finalized after Harper III. Moore v. Harper ultimately had no impact on North Carolina because Harper III ruled that partisan gerrymandering is not justiciable under the state constitution — Moore v. Harper had concluded that state courts could still interpret their state constitutions in partisan gerrymandering claims.

Paul Newby, the N.C. Supreme Court chief justice, wrote in his Harper III opinion that partisan gerrymandering does not violate the state constitution's free elections clause, which states that "all elections shall be free."

In his opinion, Newby interpreted the clause to mean that voters have the right to cast a ballot without interference or intimidation.

"This case is not about partisan politics but rather about realigning the proper roles of the judicial and legislative branches," Newby wrote. "Today we begin to correct course, returning the judiciary to its designated lane."

Jim Stirling, research fellow with the conservative John Locke Foundation's Civitas Center for

Public Integrity, said he thinks partisan gerrymandering is an "inherently political question" — a phrase similar to what Newby wrote in his Harper III opinion — and should not be overseen by courts.

"We do have free elections, but the language for fair is actually not present in our constitution," Stirling said. "It was implied within our constitution."

Former N.C. Supreme Court Justice Robert Orr said the court was correct in its ruling that proportionality is not a constitutional requirement.

Orr said drawing maps for a partisan advantage can violate the constitution to a certain extent, but that partisan gerrymandering is difficult to measure.

"We don't know how much is too much political gerrymandering," he said.

Bob Phillips, the executive director of Common Cause North Carolina — a group that has challenged N.C. maps as gerrymanders in the past — said he believes the state supreme court was correct in ruling on the unfairness of maps before Harper III.

"I believe in the interpretation that the North Carolina constitution does prescribe that partisan gerrymandering is a violation of the state constitution," he said.

After Harper III, the General Assembly could create new maps with no constraints on partisan gerrymandering. The new congressional maps split the state into 10 safely Republican districts, three safely Democratic



DTH FILE/ANNA CONNORS

The N.C. Supreme Court is pictured in Raleigh on Aug. 26, 2022.

districts and one tossup.

However, Democrats in the General Assembly argued that N.C. Senate maps were racially gerrymandered by "cracking" Black voters across multiple districts in the northeastern part of the state.

On Nov. 20, two individual voters filed suit under Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act — which prohibits voting procedures that discriminate on the basis of race — challenging the new state senate maps as a racial gerrymander. The plaintiffs filed a motion for an expedited decision, which was

rejected on Nov. 27. The case will continue on a regular schedule.

On Monday, a lawsuit on the newly drawn congressional maps was filed by 18 N.C. residents. The lawsuit said four of the districts in the new maps unconstitutionally weaken the power of voters of color to elect representatives of their choice. The plaintiffs requested the congressional maps be thrown out and new remedial maps be drawn for the 2024 elections.

X: @torinewbyy

CHAPEL HILL

Organizations, officials expand affordable housing in 2023, look to next year

The Town adopted its first comprehensive plan on the topic

By Lucy Marques
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In past years, local nonprofit EMPOWERment, Inc. has sought out money to purchase homes for their affordable housing inventory. This year, the organization worked chiefly to fund the construction of new affordable housing in downtown Chapel Hill.

Delores Bailey, the executive director of EMPOWERment, said the organization's primary focus this year was to create housing for community members who make at or below 30 percent of the area's median income.

The PEACH Apartments, an affordable housing project sponsored by EMPOWERment, broke ground in October. The apartments will house individuals who make at or below 30 percent of the area's median income.

Jackie Jenks, the president and CEO of the Inter-Faith Council for Social Service, said she thinks this year, there was an increased consciousness around the need for affordable housing for community members who earn low incomes, no income or a fixed income.

"That has been a bigger focus for local government and the community in general, which is really heartening to see," she said.

In 2023, the Town of Chapel Hill approved 380 units of affordable housing — which Sarah Viñas, the director of affordable housing and community connections for the Town, said was a major highlight of the year.

She also said the Town's first ever comprehensive affordable housing plan, which was approved in September, will serve as a roadmap for projects in the next five years.

In June, Chapel Hill received a \$5 million contribution from UNC Health to establish an affordable housing revolving loan fund, which will be used to create between 500 and 1,000 units of affordable housing.

"That's going to be huge to that we can be more nimble and jump on naturally occurring affordable housing and keep it affordable," Chapel Hill Mayor Pam Hemminger said. "We didn't have a way to do that before."



EMPOWERment broke ground at 107 Johnson St. on Oct. 23 to start construction on the PEACH apartments.

Also in June, the Town passed a text amendment to its land use management ordinance, allowing more multi-family housing to be built on lots that were previously zoned for single-family residences. The text amendment was intended to create "missing middle housing."

Since the text amendment was passed, there has not been an increase in applications for duplex housing projects. But Bailey said she was proud the Town decided to make changes to try to create additional affordable middle income housing.

Viñas said said the market conditions have made working to create affordable housing "exceedingly challenging" this year. Construction and development costs, as well as inflation, have been high this year, she said.

Hemminger said she hears from developers all the time that projects that were financially feasible five years ago are not now.

The cost to build a unit of housing has increased \$100,000 over the last five years, she said, which upsets the balance of the amount of units created at a certain budget.

"It's one of the most challenging times to create affordable housing, yet the need is really greater than we've at least seen in a very long time," Viñas said.

Bailey said she thinks some people have not realized the lingering effects the COVID-19 pandemic has had on housing.

She said services to help community members get caught up with their rent during the pandemic, such as emergency housing assistance from Orange County, are decreasing while people are still struggling. Jenks said additional support for non-profit services provided at the height of the pandemic has also decreased.

The community is still seeing a significant need for housing for community members who are exiting homelessness, she said.

Bailey said that EMPOWERment plans to develop at least two properties in 2024 and create a minimum of 18 new units of affordable housing.

"This area in general is seeing a lot of success in drawing folks here, but that means that the housing costs are also going up," Jenks said. "It's becoming harder and harder for people who have lived here their whole lives, who have really been part of this community for decades, to be able to stay here and to live sustainably."

X: @dthcitystate

EDUCATION

CHCCS faced shortages, safety concerns this year



An Estes Elementary School parent walks their child home from school on Aug. 29.

Students missed an estimated 650 hours of instructional time

By Maddie Policastro
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From the school board elections to bus driver shortages, Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools faced many major changes and challenges in 2023.

Hiring and retention

At the beginning of the school year, there were an estimated 2,840 instructional vacancies statewide, according to the North Carolina School Superintendents' Association.

Thomas Soth, an AP Spanish teacher at Chapel Hill High School, said he and two other teachers have had to take on additional classes, while another Spanish teacher has larger class sizes to make up for the loss of a teacher in their department.

He said he thinks a historically desirable district like CHCCS struggling to hire new staff shows that the teacher shortage is an issue everywhere.

Soth also said work needs to be done at the legislative level to reinstall teaching programs that incentivize people to pursue teaching in public schools.

"When you go into teaching, you know that you're not going in to get the money. But if you could at least see some more of the benefits that sometimes media or teachers themselves or students don't always see, the joys that you can get being a teacher, because they're there — it would be great if everybody could see that more often," he said.

Starting in November 2022, a lack of available bus drivers began impacting school instructional hours. According to André Stewart, chief operations officer for CHCCS, the district had a shortage of 10 drivers each morning.

During the shortage, drivers had to double up on routes, and this contributed to a number of students being late for classes.

Stewart said the district estimated it had around 650 hours of missed instructional time among students in March due to late buses, which led them to go to the CHCCS Board of Education to implement an incentive program.

The board's incentive program came in four phases, Stewart said, and included looking at the salary scale of the drivers and consolidating stops.

The plan also allows 18-year-olds to apply for and receive a commercial driver's license to

drive for the district. Dual roles for staff were offered, meaning individuals such as custodians and cafeteria workers could also work as bus drivers.

Since implementing this incentive program, Stewart said the district has seen an increase in drivers.

He said this has allowed the district to implement its new later bus routes — intended for students who were previously unable to participate in extracurricular activities and receive after-school help from teachers due to lack of transportation. He said the district has already seen an increase in students participating in after-school activities.

Campus safety

On Monday, Aug. 28, the fall semester began with CHCCS going into "secure mode." While classes ran as usual, students were not allowed outside of the school building.

The secure mode came after UNC professor Zijie Yan was shot on UNC's campus.

On Nov. 29, Carrboro High School was evacuated after a bomb threat was made in an email sent to the district office. A Carrboro High School student was later charged on Nov. 30 for making a false report concerning a destructive device.

Elections

On Nov. 7, municipal elections took place in Chapel Hill and Carrboro which saw the election of three new members on the CHCCS Board of Education — Barbara Fedders, Meredith Ballew and Vickie Feaster Fornville.

Rani Dasi, who has served on the board since 2015, also won her seat again. Dasi said she ran for re-election to maintain continuity on the board.

"I was really interested in making sure that the board is able to continue the work we've been doing and also to continue to advocate for education and continue to work with the North Carolina legislature to try to get more resources for students," she said.

This year, the board implemented a new program that allocates four weeks of paid family leave to teachers. Dasi said CHCCS was the first district to do this, and the state subsequently followed with funding for the program.

In the coming year, Dasi said she hopes the board will focus more funding for facility renovations, as the state has historically funded school capital every 10 years, yet they have not done it for close to 30.

"We've got a lot of room to make up for in terms of educational adequacy and safe and best practices for facilities," Dasi said.

X: @mkpolicastro

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PERFORMANCE

UNC theater troupes encourage the unconventional

A diverse range of shows provides students with community, laughter

By Delphine Liu
Staff Writer
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The UNC student theater community collectively produced over a dozen successful shows in 2023, embracing diverse stories and funky performances. Company Carolina, LAB! Theatre and Pauper Players are all well-known student-led theater groups. While actors often participate in multiple companies through the season, each company has their own style, structure and repertoire. “People go back and forth,” Kylie Robinson, the treasurer for Pauper Players, said. “It’s all just really one big community and you just go to whatever company is doing the show that you are most interested in.” In this year’s spring season, Company Carolina and Pauper Players collaborated to perform the musical “Next to Normal.” They hope to continue this connection with “Heathers: The Musical” next spring. Brigitte Bagley, a producer at Company Carolina, said the groups overlap often and she loves seeing the dynamics and connectedness between them.

First-year dramatic art major Ellie O’Connell acted and helped choreograph Company Carolina’s recent musical “Alice in Wonderland” adaptation, “Alice by Heart.” She said when she started at UNC this year, she was scared to be a “small fish in this really big sea,” but her cast members helped smooth the transition. After being cast as the Queen of Hearts, O’Connell said the community she found was welcoming and judgment-free. In the past, many of the productions on campus showcased serious topics such as abortion, abuse and mental health disorders. As a result, Kenan Theatre Company, run by UNC’s Department of Dramatic Art, wanted to lighten the mood this fall. “This year, we made a conscious effort to be like, ‘Let’s be a little bit more of a kinder, gentler Kenan Theatre Company,’” David Navalinsky, the director for undergraduate production in the dramatic art department, said. With the gender-bent Manifest Destiny adventure comedy, “Men on Boats,” and a ridiculous, yet hopeful revenge comedy in “Exit, Pursued by a Bear,” the company has achieved just that. “The neat thing about having the students involved is that what we like to do changes because the students change,” Navalinsky said.



DTH DESIGN/VIRGINIA VAN DE RIET

At the Kenan Theatre Company, students are very involved in the productions, serving as producers, technicians and play-selection committee members. According to Navalinsky, the company prioritizes student growth in an educational environment. Student-led groups like LAB! have full authority over their productions, and intentionally leaned into the unconventional this year. “[This year’s shows] all had this spark of absurdity that I think is less common in some more traditional

theater spaces,” Erica Bass, a UNC senior and one of the executive directors of LAB!, said. “You get these weird products that wouldn’t normally be produced, but you have people that are so passionate about it, and are just reveling in the absurdity of it. I think it’s a space that creates a lot of joy.” Despite the fact that LAB! operates on a tight budget, their free tickets are one way they demonstrate their commitment to accessibility. Bass said that in recent years, many of the shows have become increasingly reflective of the people that produce them.

Bagley, who has also been involved in Kenan Theatre Company, LAB! and Pauper Players, shared that many shows this year touched her by being both honest and representative of her queer identity. “I think that especially as an audience member, watching something on a stage that you can relate to is really impactful,” Bagley said. Past shows by LAB! such as “The Most Massive Woman Wins” and “Dry Land” have ignited conversations about self-acceptance and the female experience. “Being willing to come up with something that’s totally new — and probably not going to succeed at first — is actually another way we can work in tandem with representation to make social change,” Bass said. Excitement for next season’s productions is in the air. The Kenan Theatre Company has announced it will put on “The Seagull” and the musical “Something Rotten.” Company Carolina will perform “A Midsummer Night’s Dream, A Sloshed Shakespeare Event,” a tradition in which cast members over 21 years of age perform Shakespeare tipsy, in addition to “Heathers: The Musical” in collaboration with Pauper Players. LAB! will be producing the musical “Firebringer” and a commissioned project written by a UNC senior.

X: @dthlifestyle

COLLABORATION

Student-run publications see year of creativity, growth

New and familiar groups elevate artists’ voices on campus

By Mila Mascenik
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Editors and writers of student publications, old and new, spent the year writing, revising and publishing content. Across disciplines and styles, from poetry to visual art to essays, these organizations publish on varying schedules, often once a semester or yearly. Cellar Door, UNC’s oldest undergraduate literary journal, publishes each spring. This year, the organization celebrated its 50th anniversary. It accepts submissions of art, poetry, creative nonfiction and fiction from undergraduate students of any major. The 2022-23 print edition theme focused on the corporeal, the idea of lived experiences captured through bodies and physical imagery, Editor-in-Chief Abigail Welch said. “It takes you through almost a meditative thought process of how you conceive your body and space, how you feel breath entering your lungs and exhaling,” she said. “Almost a very meditative, grounding sort of experience, in a way.” The journal receives approximately 30 to 50 prose and 80 to 120 poetry submissions each year. They also accept online pieces, including reviews and interviews with writers and artists, which are also published in the spring. Each of the journal’s genres has an editor with a team of readers who help choose pieces based on



PHOTO COURTESY OF PIXEDEN

DTH DESIGN/CARSON ELM-PICARD

criteria like artistic quality, length and content. Once the pieces are narrowed down, the editors discuss how the works relate to each other and create the theme. Judges — typically writers, professors and artists — read them and determine first, second and third place winners from the selected pieces. In May, Cellar Door celebrated the magazine’s release and hung its featured artwork in the Student Union Art Gallery, as well as displaying many of the magazine’s covers throughout the years, which are kept in the Wilson Library archives.

“It was really cool to see the longevity of the magazine and see the people who came out to see the artwork that was published in the magazine and see all the previous covers for it,” Welch said. The Health Humanities Journal of UNC-Chapel Hill publishes various genres of writing, including poetry, personal narratives and opinion pieces related to human experiences within healthcare and the medical sciences, twice a year. Undergraduate and graduate students or faculty members from any institution can submit their work.

Editor-in-Chief Ryan Phillips said the journal is a reminder of the importance and presence of health, especially through a literary lens. “I’m reminded that every person in this world is associated with the health humanities in some way and that it’s not just something for STEM students or pre-health students to know about or pay attention to,” he said. The journal receives approximately 40 submissions each semester. When selecting pieces for publication, the staff considers factors such as writing quality and how related the piece is to

the health humanities. Like Cellar Door, they determine the theme for each edition after they choose the accepted pieces. The fall edition of the journal came out in November and centered on “protection, care and support above all,” Phillips said. It features works on various topics, including experiences as patients and race and gender in the medical world. Naomi Ovrutsky, a senior majoring in astrophysics with a minor in creative writing, is the editor-in-chief of “ORLANDO,” a single-issue print zine featuring the work of queer poets. “ORLANDO” started as a final project for Ovrutsky’s English 490: Creative Writing Special Topics class. The title is inspired by Virginia Woolf’s novel of the same name, in which the main character, Orlando, transitions from male to female. Ovrutsky said the novel is a meditation on gender and sexuality — the overarching theme of her zine. She called for submissions on social media in November and received 50 from poets of different ages, places, cultural backgrounds and education levels. Ovrutsky and the editorial staff accepted nine poems that captured the queer experience. “It’s such a variety of people, which I think really represents the queer community I was going for,” she said. “I’m excited for people to read it.” Print copies of “ORLANDO” will be available this week in Greenlaw Hall, Epilogue Books Chocolate Breads and around campus. The Health Humanities Journal can be found in boxes around campus and on the journal’s website.

X: @milaaamascenik

Students unwrap diverse Spotify statistics

Listeners explore underground genres, receive “Sound Town”

By Sophia Melin
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It’s that time of year again. 2023’s biggest artists, songs and albums — from SZA’s “SOS” to Zach Bryan’s self-titled project — are all over social media. Spotify Wrapped, which was released on Nov. 29 this year, provided users with concrete data about their music streaming habits.

First released in 2016, the annual analysis is a marketing campaign by Spotify, the most-used music streaming platform in the world. On the day of its release, users are given a colorful, funky slideshow with information about their top artists, songs and genres that can be easily shared on other digital platforms.

Chloe Johnson, a DJ at student-run radio station WXYC, said she expected to see a diverse range of music from N.C. listeners. Johnson said she envisioned bluegrass and folk music being particularly popular across North Carolina this year because of

the state’s mountain region.

However, among the students and social media posts she saw, the most frequent artists were Taylor Swift, Beyoncé and Drake.

Johnson said she has seen listeners gravitating toward more alternative and underground artists. She said she believes that people would rather find community within smaller fan

listeners this year, especially with the September release of Olivia Rodrigo’s newest album “GUTS.”

“It was definitely a big difference from her first album, which I thought was really cool because she’s expanding her horizons and trying something new,” Fernando said.

Rodrigo’s new album was a dive into 2000s “teen-angsty” rock, she said. Fernando said Rodrigo’s first album “SOUR” seems more pop-inspired, compared to the driving guitar and screamed lyrics in “GUTS.”

Nava Little, fundraising head of the Albums and Record Society, has also seen a dramatic increase in indie music interest.

“I feel like indie is very much turning into pop, or at least it’s trending in that direction,” they said.

Fernando said she feels that the gravitation toward indie rock this year could be attributed to trending songs on TikTok.

According to Little, indie artists are thriving because people are actively seeking out underground music. They said they have also noticed club music, such as drill — a subgenre of hip-hop music — and Afrobeats, trending on TikTok.

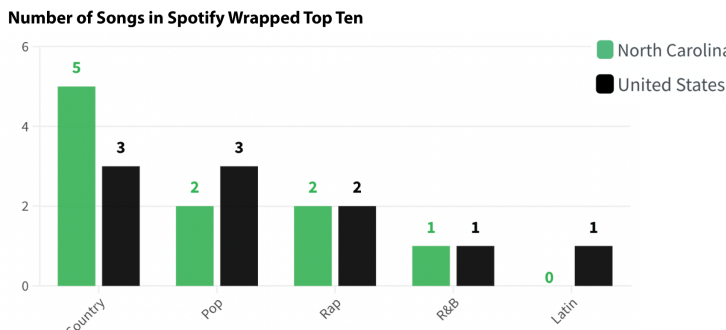
Little said they have enjoyed seeing artists be more experimental and expressive with their production over the years, such as the mixing of jazz sounds

bases than identify with more mainstream artists.

Junior Cassandra Fernando is a member of GuiTar Heels, a guitar jam group on campus. She said she expected an increase in alternative and indie rock

Country music dominates North Carolina’s top ten songs this year

Compared to the U.S. as a whole, North Carolina’s Spotify wrapped is more influenced by country music— with standouts “Something in Orange” by Zach Bryan and “Fast Car” by Luke Combs.



DTH DATA/RIYA SHARMA, SURABHI DAMLE AND KENAN BAUER

in rap music.

First-year Reid Weikel also noticed the expansion and intermixing of genres in the industry.

He said he sees the focus shifting from industry giants to individual artists. This allows creators to make their own sound, instead of following what executives tell them is marketable, he said.

“I think there’s a lot of genres now that wouldn’t have existed 25 years ago,” Weikel said.

There was a “wide, eclectic combination” of artists from various genres in the Top Five lists that Weikel said he saw this year.

“I’ve seen people have Travis Scott and Luke Combs in the same top five,” he said.

“I’ve seen people have K-pop and Taylor Swift and JPEGMafia in the same top five.”

Little, however, said they were expecting more variability among the

most played artists of listeners.

“A lot of people seem to stick to their genre,” they said.

This year’s Spotify Wrapped also featured some new statistics — including “Sound Town” based on listeners’ musical preferences.

Weikal was assigned to a small town in California, which he said made sense to him as an indie rock fan. His top artists included The Beths, Peach Pit and Briston Maroney — artists he

thought California residents would gravitate toward.

“It was a really cool thing I wasn’t expecting to see,” he said. “I think it was a fun little tidbit, a little bit of context.”

X: @dthlifestyle

FASHION

Sustainable, ‘timeless’ styles grace UNC’s campus

Some students use apps, websites to rent clothing items

By Sydney Brainard
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Campuses and runways have been chock-full of new trends and styles, whether it be real or faux leather, thin stripes or thick. Still, students are becoming increasingly tired of the rapidly changing trends.

“I feel like the fast cycle is still there,” Jessica Williamson, secretary of the UNC fashion club Xpressions, said. “But people are starting to wake up to the issue that that’s causing and are starting to be like, ‘Okay, let’s slow down.’”

Sustainability has also become an important factor for many students’ personal styles this year. Use of apps and websites to rent clothes for events like formals have become increasingly popular. Renting allows shoppers to pick out something more bold or out of their comfort zone to wear for a night or two, without having to commit to actually purchasing something they may not reach for all that often.

“At UNC it’s like a huge thing, like everyone uses Nuuly or Rent the Runway or FashionPass, and I personally love it,” UNC sophomore Annie Ascher said.

Not only does this save space in your closet and money in your wallet, but it’s more sustainable than buying



PHOTOS COURTESY OF ADOBE STOCK AND UNSTOCK

DTH DESIGN/MILA HORSLEY

brand new outfits for every nice dinner or football game. It also allows shoppers to try out trends without having to fully commit.

Ascher said her mom dressed her in timeless pieces as a kid, which has influenced how she dresses today. She said she has been more grounded in her style this year, using a mix of preppy staples and what she describes as “coastal grandmother”: earthy tones, beachy linens and casual cuts.

This year’s biggest trend of all might have been the idea of “timelessness.”

Miu Miu, a brand that filled their

runways with “staple pieces,” was ranked the hottest brand this past quarter by The Lyst Index. Popular style influencers like Sofia Richie, Camille Charrière and Matilda Djerf have been heralded for their elegant and chic styles.

Brands that focus on staples and basics — such as Skims, J. Crew, and Abercrombie & Fitch — have seen higher than normal sales this past year.

Typical “timeless” wear is usually defined by classic silhouettes and limited patterns — items you can build many outfits with. Things

like a plain white T-shirt or simple straight leg jeans would ideally survive any trend cycle.

But for some, filling their wardrobes with staples is limiting.

“I feel like I’m definitely starting to pay more attention to getting pieces that I feel really speak to me and are statement pieces because I used to be like, ‘No, it’s important to have basics,’ but it’s also important to have a lot of pieces that stand out,” Williamson said.

Some of the notable moments in fashion this year were far from timeless, such as MSCHF’s

cartoon-like red boots, which baffled the fashion world when they dropped in February.

“Those definitely made their mark,” Williamson said.

The 2023 Met Gala theme revolved around the late Karl Lagerfeld, Chanel’s controversial former designer who shaped the brand’s timeless styles. The event, often referred to as “fashion’s biggest night out,” draws massive attention each year with its A-list guest list and promise of flamboyant dress, but this year’s gala had a mixed reception.

“I wasn’t a fan honestly, this year, of the Met Gala,” sophomore Shea McIntyre said. “It was based on Karl Lagerfeld, I want to say, and I don’t know why that wasn’t a big year for me.”

Chapel Hill may not have hosted the Met Gala, but there are still fashion clubs and events that take place on campus every semester that reflect the popular styles among students.

Clubs like Xpressions and Fashion Forward, publications like Coulture and Z Magazine and programs like FashionMash all help to form a diverse and dynamic fashion community at UNC and create a greater sense of belonging for students interested in fashion.

“I think becoming more comfortable on campus has allowed me to become more comfortable with dressing the way I want to dress and also seeing other people do that has furthered for me,” McIntyre said.

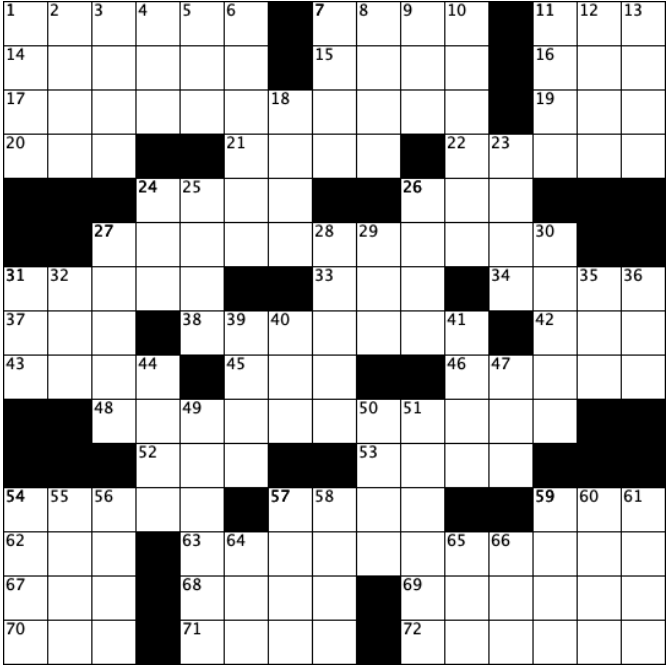
Editor’s Note: Shea McIntyre is a columnist at The Daily Tar Heel.

X: @sydneybrainard

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DTH office is open Mon-Fri 9:00am-5:00pm



This week’s crossword was created by Liam Furlong. Liam is a UNC junior majoring in comparative literature and education. He is from Wilmington, Delaware.

Title: “Nabokov’s Quartet”

Across

- 1 Fundamentals
- 7 Sword’s handle
- 11 Tampon alternative
- 14 A black belt in karate, for example
- 15 Unspecified place
- 16 “It ___ _” (“Me here,” quite pompously)
- 17 “Praise to the good Lord!”
- 19 Sarah Levy to her bro, Dan
- 20 Arrange the china and chess pieces?
- 21 Camera eye
- 22 Nearly-sacrificed Biblical son
- 24 Goodfellows brews
- 26 Prefix related to 29-down
- 27 “Unwrap your birthday present!”
- 31 Organizes into groups
- 33 “Crazy Game of Poker” band, to their crew?
- 34 E.g. final exam
- 37 Pixar’s “Monsters, ____.”
- 38 Blemished by injury
- 42 New pronoun?
- 43 Like some texts to your crush, sadly
- 45 Promotions, like those in this newspaper
- 46 Wood in black piano keys
- 48 Personal dread and pity
- 52 Look into the future
- 53 Work hard to attain, say
- 54 The spirit of college parties?
- 57 Insects able to lift 10x their weight
- 59 Hypothetical degree
- 62 “The Daily Tar Heel” photographer Wilder
- 63 Casts a mean look at
- 67 Articulate
- 68 Mile or gallon
- 69 “The Final Countdown” band
- 70 Franklin Street burger shack
- 71 Concludes the show
- 72 Posed with the tower in 11-down

Down

- 1 Pleads to have
- 2 Rod connecting train wheels
- 3 Find the leopard’s favorite bar?
- 4 ‘Might’ or ‘craft’ suffix
- 5 “Don’t ____ for Me, Argentina” (“Evita” song)
- 6 Pinched or pirated
- 7 “WandaVision” actress Kathryn
- 8 Purple flower
- 9 Part of a foot race
- 10 Largest French Polynesian island
- 11 Home of famous Italian tower
- 12 ‘80s band that didn’t sing “Africa” --that was Toto
- 13 The ‘D’ in CDs
- 18 Bird’s abode
- 23 Mild, gentle
- 24 Fitting
- 25 Sometimes, it’s more
- 26 Shrek, for one
- 27 Killer whales
- 28 Trojan hiding place
- 29 Unit of corn
- 30 Pavarotti or Plácido Domingo
- 31 Address for a knight from Desiree
- 32 “____ for the money...”
- 35 Bernie Sanders’ title, abbr.
- 36 Mr. Potato Head, for one
- 39 Stone & Leaf or Meantime
- 40 Combine
- 41 Letter opener?
- 44 Classroom furnishing
- 47 Wastepaper basket
- 49 The ‘L’ in the NFL
- 50 Fractions of tennis matches
- 51 Faded shade
- 54 International travel document
- 55 Mouth-related (no jokes, please)
- 56 There are twelve of these, in the Christmas variety
- 57 Eager, enthusiastic
- 58 Brooklyn basketball team
- 59 Colorful gas light
- 60 Work the keys?
- 61 Take, like advice
- 64 Days ____ (motel chain)
- 65 Shade
- 66 Time period



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Help Wanted

HAPPY BIRTHDAY OLIVIA! Happy Birthday to the best photographer at the DTH!!! I am so grateful to be your friend and roommate. Have an amazing day! <3

HOROSCOPES

If December 6th is your birthday...



Today’s Birthday (12/06/23): Physical performance blossoms this year. Steady practices build domestic harmony. Slow to adapt to winter physical challenges. Share support with spring team changes. Discover summer love, romance and creativity, before making autumn domestic adjustments for fun with family and friends. Your work gets energized.

ARIES (MARCH 21-APRIL 19)

Today is a 9 — As your fantasies clarify into specifics, they get more tangible and achievable. Dreams provide insight and motivation. With Neptune direct, you can see the way.

TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20)

Today is a 7 — A group project gains forward momentum, with Neptune stationing direct today in Pisces. Strange powers of attraction are at work in your life.

GEMINI (MAY 21 -JUNE 20)

Today is an 8 — It’s easier to increase your authority, now that Neptune’s direct. Career decisions gel and your professional dreams advance. Opportunities that seemed illusive come into focus.

CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22)

Today is a 7 — A barrier to travel is dissolving, now that Neptune is direct. Adventures beckon, and the road to take gets clear. Discover the missing puzzle pieces.

LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22)

Today is a 9 — Financial confusion or vagueness solidifies into a working budget, with Neptune direct. It’s easier to save money. Sign contracts and firm up the numbers.

VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEPT. 22)

Today is a 9 — Work together with another for common dreams. Partnerships strengthen and solidify, with Neptune direct. Collaborations that seemed illusive come together. Discover a mutual attraction.

LIBRA (SEPT. 23-OCT. 22)

Today is a 6 — Streamline practices, routines and chores. It’s easier to tell fact from fantasy, with Neptune direct. A barrier with work, health and well-being dissolves.

SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21)

Today is an 8 — Romantic fantasies are becoming more achievable, with dreamy Neptune stationing direct. Express what’s in your heart. Creativity comes naturally. Passion projects clarify and take shape.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

Today is a 7 — Friends provide domestic inspiration. Your visions for household beauty and comfort improvements clarify, with Neptune direct. Imagine the possibilities. Make your place dreamy.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19)

Today is an 8 — What you’re learning begins to make sense. With Neptune direct, abstract subjects come easier. Ideas solidify into workable plans. Communications gain clarity, impact and effectiveness.

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20 - FEB. 18)

Today is an 8 — A nebulous income source materializes. Now that Neptune is direct, it’s easier to collect on debts and promises, and to grow your savings..

PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20)

Today is a 9 — Gain clarity on personal goals, with Neptune direct in your sign. Things come together to realize them. What seemed impossible takes clear shape.

SUDOKU

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2	9	4	5	3	8	7	6	1
1	3	8	7	6	2	5	4	9
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		3			5	9		

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

New restaurants add flavor to area

Several eateries have come to Chapel Hill, Carrboro

By Grace Gao

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Chapel Hill and Carrboro have a diverse set of dining options, ranging from food trucks to restaurants with cuisines across cultures.

Since the start of this year, a number of new restaurants have opened in the area, adding interesting flavors to the area's well-known classics. Here are some of them.

La Montaña, 370 E. Main St. Suite 170, Carrboro

In every corner of La Montaña there is a unique story, and every piece of its decoration, especially the bamboo wall panels, is reminiscent of the childhood of Yung Nay, the owner and chef.

The restaurant opened on Oct. 9 and was inspired by Nay's life transitioning from the mountains of Pleiku, Vietnam, to his Latin-influenced upbringing in the United States. It is also a dedication to Nay's father.

La Montaña offers breakfast, lunch, dinner and special beverages.

One signature drink Nay recommends is the "Fallen Spirits of Pleiku," which is made with rice powder and green tea. It is created to honor Vietnamese veterans.

Nay said he wants the restaurant to be a source of support to the community, whether that be providing more opportunities for those involved in the food industry or providing a peaceful place for customers.

"Hopefully we can ease the difficulty that everybody's going through life with, with a meal and a drink and things like that," Nay said.

Raising Cane's, 101 E. Franklin St., Chapel Hill

Raising Cane's, a fried chicken chain restaurant, opened in Chapel Hill on Nov. 7.

The restaurant is most known for its signature fried chicken tenders, but they also offer sides, including fries, Texas toast and coleslaw and their signature Cane's sauce.

Raising Cane's has over 700 restaurants worldwide, but the Franklin Street establishment is their first standalone N.C. location.

The restaurant is a popular stop on game days and the weekends, and the line often snakes out the door. On Saturday, the restaurant was populated with customers who were in town for the UNC men's basketball game against Florida State University.

Garcia Apolinar Salgado and Ricardo Flores Morales, who drove over two hours for the game, ordered the 3 Finger Combo and the Caniac Combo. "I like the chicken," Salgado said.

They said their experience was pleasant and they would recommend others try it as well.

Ay Por Dios!, 431 W. Franklin St., Chapel Hill

Inside Ay Por Dios!, customers are greeted by an explosion of color and intricate decorations adorning the walls — ornate tiles, portraits and folk art. The air is filled with lively Mexican dance music.

The restaurant opened on Sept. 28 and serves upscale Mexican cuisine, including different types of mole, fresh seafood and steak.

According to the restaurant manager Lucas Linares, their customers are mostly older couples, but the restaurant also serves college students with more affordable options during the day.

"We try to bring a good atmosphere and good vibe," Linares said.

Snooze Eatery, 1800 E. Franklin St., Chapel Hill

On Nov. 8, Snooze Eatery, a new breakfast restaurant, opened in Chapel Hill's Eastgate Crossing

shopping center.

In 2006 they opened their first restaurant in Denver, Colorado and have since expanded to new locations across the United States.

Snooze serves unconventional takes on typical breakfast foods, such as blueberry danish pancakes and pork chile verde eggs benedict.

Many of the menu items are made with sustainably-sourced ingredients, according to their website.

Tonya's Cookies & Bake Shop, 400 S. Elliott Road, Chapel Hill

On South Elliott Road stands a new cookie shop, Tonya's Cookies & Bake Shop. The establishment was inspired by owner Tonya Council's personal memory and appreciation of her grandmother's culinary skills at her restaurant, Mama Dip's Kitchen.

Council grew up working at her grandmother's restaurant, which motivated her to sell cookies that resemble the taste of her grandmother's pecan pies.

Tonya's Cookies has a wide menu ranging from their signature pecan crisp cookies to cakes and pies.

There are also other newly opened restaurants near Chapel Hill such as Bombolo, which serves pasta and other dishes, and locally owned bar and art gallery Lapin Bleu.

Each new restaurant adds something new to the local community, allowing customers to get adventurous and taste the unknown.

X: @dthlifestyle



DTH/MCKENZIE BULRIS

Customers wait in line for the grand opening of Raising Cane's on Franklin Street on Nov. 7.

Businesses struggle with inflation, increase collaboration

Local owners reflect on the highs and lows from the past year

By Sophie Baglioni

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As business owners continued to struggle with inflation in 2023, businesses increased collaboration with each other and saw a return to pre-pandemic levels of foot traffic.

Stephanie Cobert, the director of marketing for the Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership, said Chapel Hill was able to bring in new audiences to local businesses through events like the Chelsea-Wrexham soccer game.

"Coming together as a community, whether it's to bring these fun experiences to downtown or whether it's to help support one another, has really been a bright spot in downtown this year," Cobert said.

Schoolkids Records owner Stephen Judge said his business has seen its best gross sales in two decades in the last few years, but that this success has decreased because inflation has caused people to focus their income on necessities like groceries and gas.

He also said his business is no longer facing the supply chain issues that many businesses struggled with coming out of the pandemic. However due to inflation, he said the problem now is not being able to get the records, but affording the cost of them.

"I think that it's just really starting to affect people, and people just don't have the money to spend and we know that — and it's not even just that people don't have extra money to spend, inflation's hit us as well," he said.

Chrystina Passanisi, the owner of Sofia's Boutique in Carrboro, said the biggest challenge her business faced this year was staffing, because of a shift in people's ideas about work during and after the pandemic.

Employees did not want to simply have a job anymore, but rather wanted to express themselves and connect to something meaningful, she said.

Passanisi said business is generally going well in the community because people



DTH/JENNIFER TRAN

Jamil Kadoura, owner of Med Deli, stands at the back of what remains of his Franklin Street restaurant on Oct. 7.

are back to life, traveling and celebrating special events.

"I think that's probably the biggest impact that I've noticed — is that people are happy," she said. "They are engaged in life and that results in business."

In July, a fire broke out at Mediterranean Deli on Franklin Street while a contractor was working on the building's roof. Many local businesses and organizations offered support to Med Deli, and a GoFundMe for restaurant staff raised over \$200,000 with help from the Chamber for a Greater Chapel Hill-Carrboro and the Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership.

CHDP tries to connect businesses with resources to alleviate financial burdens, Cobert said. She also said the partnership programs events including game day activities and live music to increase foot traffic.

"Seeing the way the community came together for Med Deli — coming out in a moment's notice to buy up the wine at the DB Sutton & Company wine shop after the fire, making appointments for catering and haircuts, buying gift cards — this shows what the community is all about, what Chapel Hill is all about," Cobert said. "We want to keep that going and we know the community does too."

X: @dthcitystate

VISUAL ARTS

Triangle welcomes artistic growth in 2023

This year, public art in community has featured underrepresented voices

By Kathryn Bragg

Senior Writer
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The Triangle's vibrant arts community has strengthened and grown in 2023, according to multidisciplinary artist and UNC first-year master's student John Felix Arnold — but he senses even bigger things on the horizon.

"You can sort of feel it," he said. "There's this bubbling in the undercurrent of things — there's people that want to create spaces and there's opportunity, too. As the area grows, the audience grows."

Arnold, a Durham native, has exhibited work in New York and California, as well as in the Triangle, over the course of his career. He said he has noticed an amazing upsurge of creative

community in the Triangle in the last 10 years.

"More artists have stayed, or artists from elsewhere have come here," he said.

Arnold said BASEMENT, a creative space in Chapel Hill that opened in 2019, is inspiring new activity and bolstering growth with residencies and support for experimental art practices. Established Raleigh galleries Lump and Anchorlight continue to do great things in the arts community, as well as Durham's Ella West Gallery, Carrboro's Peel Gallery, Chapel Hill's Attic 506 and local museums, he added.

Over the past year, Chapel Hill Community Arts & Culture has continued to contract local artists for public artwork projects.

They undertook a number of projects, including storm drain murals, bus shelter prints, murals on pipes along greenways and trails and interior ceiling vinyls on Chapel Hill Transit buses, according to public art coordinator Steve Wright.

This summer, the group also commissioned a wrap for a Chapel Hill Transit bus. The colorful design by Durham artist Gabriel Eng-Goetz reads "From Asia to Chapel Hill with Love" and celebrates the Triangle's Asian American community.

Wright said that for Women's History Month in March, they selected the design of Sri Lankan American artist Mayanthi Jayawardena for the mural "Lotus Rising — An Ode to Women" on the side of Lantern Restaurant off West Franklin Street.

Chapel Hill Community Arts & Culture aims to beautify the town and add interest to the everyday Chapel Hill experience by installing art in places people might encounter it unexpectedly, Wright said.

"Our mission is to inspire creativity and celebrate the community in Chapel Hill," he said. "And through public art, we often do that by representing voices that aren't often portrayed in the arts."

Arnold said he returned to the area this fall for his Master of Fine Arts rather than pursuing a program in New York because there are vital conversations that need to happen in the South to confront difficult histories and reimagine the future, which Southern artists can help facilitate.

"People want to continue to cultivate and grow the community here, create spaces that show solid work and have strong discourse," Arnold said.

Senior studio art major, photographer and printmaker Madison Speyer has exhibited work through UNC's art program and in the broader community.

Their upcoming solo exhibition, "Esmé's Home," will conclude the semester's exhibitions for the Studio Art Majors Alliance's SAMPLE gallery.

The Studio Art Majors Alliance aims to host three group shows per semester and end with a solo or joint duo exhibition, Speyer said. Speyer collaborated with their friend and fellow artist SamLevi Sizemore in the final show of the spring 2023 semester.

This year's themed group exhibitions were "Body (of) Work," "Anti-Portraits" and "Remember, You Will Die," she explained.

Speyer is also showing pieces in a benefit show at Lump and a group exhibition at Peel. They said the Triangle's arts community is supportive, communal and willing to help one another.

"It doesn't feel like people are fighting tooth and nail for every little thing like it can in New York or something," she said. "The Triangle is very unique, I think, in that it's a very community-oriented and uplifting arts environment."

Speyer also attends as many art events as they can, which they said is also a good way to find out about spaces to exhibit work.

Information about upcoming and past events can be found on individual gallery or museum websites and social media pages.

X: @dthlifestyle

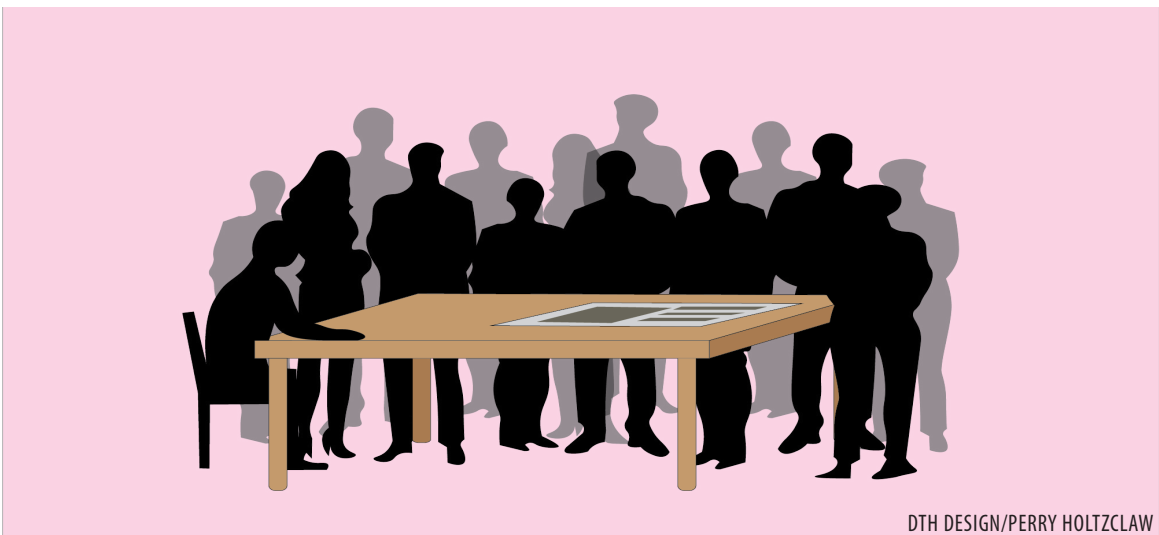
EDITORIAL

The Editorial Board reflects on the year’s coverage

2023 has been one hell of a year. A look back at the Editorial Board’s coverage over the past 12 months might give you some idea as to why. Our role, as the Editorial Board, has remained relatively constant throughout time: We act as a voice for the UNC and Chapel Hill area and reflect what our community cares about. We aim to be holistic in our commentary and consider multiple viewpoints when we meet each week before releasing an opinion or calling for change. We also acknowledge that we are not able to comment on everything and we have, at times, overlooked important issues. For this reason, we feel compelled to reflect on what we have covered in 2023 — and what we missed.

What we covered

We began this year talking about the dignity of labor and the important work of UNC housekeepers. We advocated for a living wage, and did it again more directly, urging the University to pay service workers what they deserve. This has yet to happen. We sought accountability of politicians when we said “Go to Hell, Tricia Cotham” after the representative’s disingenuous switch to the Republican party after running as a Democratic candidate. One of our most assertive editorials came after the announcement of the School of Civic Life and Leadership, which we argued was another “example of ideological combativeness.”



DTH DESIGN/PERRY HOLTZCLAW

This editorial provided a model for how we want to approach similarly relevant, contentious news. It laid out all of our reasonings for opposing the ideological reasons for introducing the school and made clear calls for action from the University. At the beginning of this semester, we were thrown into coverage about not one, but two gun-related threats on campus. We tried to handle this unprecedented coverage with care, while also calling for much-needed action from our University and politicians, echoing the sentiments of our campus and opinion columnists. In our 2023 municipal elections preview, we researched and interviewed candidates to form our endorsements. The Editorial Board came together to collectively

endorse those who we believed would strongly represent the Chapel Hill-Carborro community and commit to policy interests that we felt were of utmost importance. We closed out the year with further discussion of increasing benefits for essential workers at UNC, Morehead Cain’s inclusion of sophomores, municipal election endorsements and a denouncement of gerrymandering.

What we missed

Despite this variety of topics, we also failed to address news that was critical to our community. For example, when the U.S. Supreme Court struck down affirmative action with UNC as a defendant, we did not put out an editorial. We regret that we did not

weigh in, given that the affirmative action battle was on our very own campus and the decision would deeply affect the future of our community. More recently, the opinion desk published many op-eds about the war in Gaza, but we, the Editorial Board, did not publish an opinion about the situation. We debated writing an editorial but could not come to a consensus in a timely manner, in large part due to the sensitivity of the war. But, we shouldn’t shy away from sensitive topics. Our editorials should provide space to explore the nuances of these issues. Lack of coverage on important issues often came down to whether we as an Editorial Board felt that we could adequately do justice or provide nuance to the topic. However, if we

don’t write about the events close to the UNC student body, who will? As one of few student groups with a platform to express an opinion while also providing information, it is important for us to do our best to cover topics we know our community cares about.

Looking ahead

In the coming year, we will not shy away. It is our role to provide a perspective formed not just by one person, but by a group of students committed to accountability and fairness. 2024 is an election year, making it a critical time for us to strengthen an important aspect of our work: political endorsements. We want to use our platform to thoroughly inform our readers, scrutinize candidates’ policy plans and hold them to our community’s values and the causes they claim to champion. Furthermore, in reflecting on our recent election preview, we want to include more perspectives from community members in our endorsement process and directly engage in conversations about their priorities. Going into the new year, we hope to continue to provide important, timely and impactful commentary while embracing our core values of integrity, accountability, creativity and fairness. We don’t know what next year will bring, but we are excited to keep giving you our (unsolicited) opinions.

X: @dthopinion



QuickHits



Wrapping up

We’ve almost made it to the finish line. After a long and frankly chaotic semester, the end is finally in sight. Hang in there, the bliss of winter break and the fresh start of a new semester is just around the corner.



Franklin Street changes

It took the whole year and much anticipation for Raising Cane’s to finally debut on Franklin. It seems like we will always waiting for something, whether that is The Edition to be ready for move-in or the beloved Med Deli to return.



Finals season

Before we get to go home for the holidays, we have to endure finals week. A.K.A, hell week. Not to mention, the last day of finals is the 15th — a little late into December for our liking. Hang in there, Tar Heels.



The Daily Tar Heel

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COLUMN

Campus tragedy impacts students for more than a few days

By Rebecca Savidge

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This semester, the Chapel Hill community experienced a devastating tragedy: the death of a UNC faculty member due to an on-campus shooting on Aug. 28. This incident likely left many students fearful of being unsafe on their college campus. The University’s response to this event was to cancel classes for two days following the shooting, resuming operations that Thursday, and provide access to mental health resources for students and faculty. In addition to the University response, many professors opted to make classes optional the rest of the week, leading into the extended weekend already established for Labor Day, to support students’ mental well-being. Though the cancellation of classes was a necessary and important step for UNC administrators to take, the loss of up to four days of class

time set the tone for the rest of UNC students’ semesters — and not in a positive way. Following the shooting on campus, some professors rewrote their course syllabi to reflect the loss of class instruction. For some classes, this pushed back exam days or due dates for assignments, making some close to days allocated for breaks. The scheduling of exams or project and assignment due dates immediately after well-being days or holidays defeats the purpose of these breaks. Students feel they must work on assignments or study material during this time, stripping them of days meant to be taken for mental health or relaxation. The rewriting of course syllabi also left fewer days (or none at all) for the review of material before final exams. With a typical schedule, many classes at UNC often have time allotted for review at the end of the semester. Because of missed days of instruction, this schedule hasn’t been entirely possible. Some classes have even



DTH/LAUREN RHODES

Students hug during the March for Our Lives rally in front of South Building on Aug. 30.

continued to have exams — labeled as “midterms” — through the final days of class, with final exams less than two weeks away. Projects and exams being so close together and a constant flow of new information until the last day of class made some students feel crammed the whole semester and as though there was no time to rest or properly review.

College students are bound to feel stressed throughout a semester, and the loss of class days will inevitably cause schedules change. However, some professors overcompensated for the loss of days and decided to overload on content in short amounts of time. Rather than making necessary changes to syllabi, this only makes their classes harder and more stressful for students.

Even during a typical school year, one without campus shootings and other forms of gun violence, students are often stressed with the amount of work they are meant to complete. This traumatizing disruption at the beginning of the semester was an added stressor, and expecting students to continue on with a “normal” schedule after a couple of unexpected days off is unreasonable. The shooting on campus was a tragic incident that will impact Chapel Hill for the foreseeable future. Its occurrence at the beginning of the semester — on the first day of the second week of classes — set the tone for the rest of UNC students’ semesters and shaped their workload. Events like this are unpredictable, but if something similar were to occur in the future, UNC faculty should better construct their class schedules to alleviate the feeling of being crammed for the remainder of the semester.

X: @dthopinion

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COLUMN

This campus needs to call it what it is: a genocide



DTH DESIGN/GRACE DAVIDSON

By Harry Black

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On Oct. 13, Chancellor Kevin Guskiewicz released a statement following the Hamas attack on Israel condemning the act of violence and this “horrifying” act of terror. It came at a time of contentious debate over Israel and Palestine’s place in the Middle East and the two countries’ geopolitical relationship. Regardless, Guskiewicz understood then that the killing of innocent civilians was an act of terror.

It’s shocking then, that last month, Guskiewicz and Provost Christopher Clemens declined to take a stance in a subsequent statement regarding the continued violence and massacre of civilians in Gaza, because they were “committed to institutional neutrality on political matters.”

Institutional neutrality is a recently adopted resolution by the UNC Board of Trustees regarding the University’s role in political social action. It posits that universities should remain “neutral on issues of the day.” But why is it that this position of neutrality is only present when refusing to discuss the deaths of Palestinians? If University communications can clearly label the Hamas attack as an act of terror, why are they unable to do so when thousands of innocent citizens in Gaza are decimated by Israel?

When this second statement was released, more than 10,000 people in Gaza had been killed, of which more than 4,000 were children. Videos had been released of dead bodies being loaded into ice cream trucks on account of morgues overflowing.

Innocent children were obliterated and massacred by weapons funded by United States tax dollars.

Guskiewicz was seemingly unable to make a comment on this.

There is not a single mention of neutrality in Guskiewicz’s initial statement. If the chancellor can comprehend that innocent people dying is not a political matter when discussing Israel, why was the murder of thousands of Palestinians suddenly subject to talks of institutional neutrality? As parents in Gaza grieve for their dead children, the University is silent.

For the University to label what’s happening in Gaza as a “political matter” is reductive and hypocritical. It is appalling that this institution has not demonstrated an ounce of support for the same senseless acts of terror that are currently occurring in Gaza, yet was able to do so for Israel with ease. Perhaps Guskiewicz has developed a different opinion as more children have been killed, but has been too busy campaigning for Michigan State University president to update us — but the point stands. If this University can separate a terrorist attack from politics, then they are weak and cowardly for refusing to do the same thing for the ceaseless bombing of an occupied people.

Today, it’s easy to become desensitized to the issues of the world because of social media and the instantaneous nature of the news cycle. I’m sure you’ve seen constant videos about what’s going on in Gaza right now. You may have grown tired of them, scrolling past them so you can watch something lighthearted instead. It’s the natural news cycle on social media. But when you watch

these videos, try to process the reality of bodies piled in the streets.

If people are truly processing and understanding the depth of these videos and deaths, then why is it that everyone on this campus is so scared to say the word genocide?

The Daily Tar Heel itself labeled this mass murder as the “Israel-Gaza war” in its series of op-eds on the issue. A war. This newspaper’s motto is “Printing news. Raising hell.” Them refusing to call this a genocide for the sole purpose of avoiding upset is certainly not raising hell. I’m not sure how many more innocent people and children need to die before this news organization does the bare minimum by simply calling it what it really is: a genocide.

This University has been on the wrong side of history since its inception. UNC has a historical acknowledgment page on its website. It says that the land it is built on was stolen from indigenous people. It was constructed with the use of slave labor. And UNC did not admit a Black student into its undergraduate population until 1955, 166 years after its founding. That same acknowledgement page says, “UNC-Chapel Hill continues to reckon with its past.” What is the point of this University reckoning with its past if it refuses to reckon with its present and support the oppressed?

When will we take a real stance? History is made by those who show up, not those who cower in the corner and defend themselves with talks of “institutional neutrality.”

X: @dthopinion

COLUMN

An ode to morning classes



DTH/KENNEDY COX

UNC students study on Polk Place on Feb. 24.

By Brigit Pierce

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One of the most common pieces of advice that people gave me (often unsolicitedly) before starting my first semester of college was to not sign up for any morning classes. They told me that I wasn’t in high school anymore, so I had the freedom to choose my own schedule, and God forbid I would have to be out of bed before the clock said “p.m.”

Like any naive soon-to-be college first-year, I took other people’s advice to heart. I meticulously planned my schedule so that none of my classes would start before 11 a.m. Only the backups to my backup classes were morning classes, and I was confident that I wouldn’t need to use them. Because class registration was going to be a breeze for me, right? Right??

Wrong. My class registration window came and went, leaving me shattered on the kitchen table with 11 credits and a newfound distrust of ConnectCarolina. As I scurried to find classes to fill out my schedule, I came to the disheartening realization that my schedule for this semester would, in fact, include morning classes.

I was resigned to my bad fate. However, once classes started in August, I found that morning classes weren’t so bad after all. I kept waiting for the pin to drop; waiting for the day that waking up before 8 a.m. became unbearable. That day never came. Instead, I found that I disliked the rare days that I didn’t have morning classes.

Morning classes force me to start the day productively. If I didn’t have the external motivation of grades and attendance, I probably wouldn’t want to start to get things done until the afternoon. Then, my schoolwork

would inevitably get pushed back by lunchtime, followed by nap time, then socializing time and dinner. Suddenly it’s 7 p.m. and my cursor is blinking expectantly at me from an empty Google Doc that I swore I would fill with my essay draft. With morning classes, I feel more motivated to start working on my schoolwork earlier in the day.

I also enjoy the freedom that morning classes give me. That may sound counterintuitive because they take away the ability to laze around in the morning in favor of a more rigid schedule. However, I find that getting classes over with early gives me the freedom to structure the rest of my day in any way I please without upcoming classes looming over my head.

Morning classes also fit within my body’s natural rhythm. I tend to be a bit of an early bird, so I would probably be awake at 8 a.m. anyway. If I’m going to be awake, I figure I might as well go to class.

I understand that not everyone agrees with morning class supremacy. Some people’s circadian rhythms cause them to go to bed late and wake up later. Early classes are not the best option for these people. And that’s just fine.

The message that I’m really trying to get across is to not discount morning classes just because other people tell you they’re a bad idea. As I reflect on this past semester, I realize my morning classes are one of the best things that could’ve happened for me and my academics.

I encourage everyone to try out a morning class, even if it doesn’t end up working out for you. It’s important to try out different things to figure out what works for you, instead of focusing too much on others’ well-intentioned, but sometimes misguided, advice.

X: @brigitlpierce

SATIRE

Welcome to UNC Finals Survivor

By Shea McIntyre

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Finals are less than a week away and you’ve been chosen as one of our contestants for our biannual competition: “UNC Finals Survivor.”

Welcome to the fall 2023 season! Training is well underway. Note: students average around 22 hours of (brain) exercise, to prepare for the real thing. We hope you’ve been doing your flashcard push-ups.

When the clock starts, you are marooned away from friends, family and any support. It is your objective to survive and advance.

Want to know what you’re playing for? A passing grade.

First hint: find your hot spots and their hours of busy operation. Most people think the key to success is getting to places early, but all

you’re doing is entering yourself in a bloodbath. Let those rookies fight each other in the Undergraduate Library at the crack of dawn, and swoop in to get the comfy booths. You know what they say: the later bird gets the worm.

Secondly, block all of your friends online and in-person. Stop talking to your roommate. These people are your competition on the island and they are a distraction. Nothing productive comes from collaboration, so break off any and all alliances. And believe us, the enemy of your enemy is still just your enemy.

Third, forget bringing a pen or a pencil. Per the rules of UNC Finals Survivor, bringing writing supplies is cheating. They won’t help you anyway.

However, you should be prepared with your notes — a.k.a. pictures of the board that you took one time during lecture. But if you failed to do so beforehand, fear not. You won’t be

asked anything other than “A, B, C or D” anyway, so just rely on your wits.

There are rewards on the island. Be wise about what treats you want to indulge in when given the opportunity. You don’t want the generous helpings of the bottom of Lenoir or nutritious toppings like alfalfa sprouts and smoked salmon sponsored by Alpine Bagel. If you ever are lucky enough to come across it, fuel yourself with the prized Celsius vending machine instead.

When you feel like it, arrive at your examination challenges. You’re on this island until the end, so there’s no need to rush to get to a challenge site on the campus early. Your guide may say the examination challenge is at 8 a.m., but that really means whenever you’re ready. Plus, everyone on UNC Finals Survivor will wait for you to start the challenge. Take your sweet, sweet time! The experience really is what you make of it.



DTH DESIGN/GRACE DAVIDSON

Ultimately, spontaneity, luck and delusion are your real friends in this competition. You won’t be tested mentally or emotionally — only on your physical ability to sit in a chair and bubble in. Don’t stress about intellectual things.

Final reminder: you’re on this island not to do well, but to make

it memorable for UNC Finals Survivors viewers and past victors. Incite drama as much as you can, be insufferable and don’t actually prepare for any tasks because you’ll ace them regardless.

Good luck!

X: @dthopinion

A look back at UNC's national championships this year

Five North Carolina teams, individuals secured titles

By Sports Desk
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Nicknamed the “University of National Champions,” various UNC sports programs brought home the hardware this year. From individual titles to team championships, here’s a look at each national championship.

Field hockey

The No. 1 North Carolina field hockey team (18-3) earned its 11th national championship trophy and fifth title in six years on Nov. 19 after defeating No. 2 Northwestern in a penalty shootout, 2-1. 23-year-old head coach Erin Matson became the youngest Division I coach to win an NCAA title, doing so in her first year at the helm.

The championship match, hosted at Karen Shelton Stadium, went to a shootout after 60 minutes of regulation and two overtime periods and resulted in a tied 1-1 game. Graduate goalkeeper Maddie Kahn denied four Northwestern players during the shootout. Then, after missing her penalty stroke during the first overtime, sophomore forward

Ryleigh Heck earned her moment of redemption by securing the win for the Tar Heels with a final goal.

Women's tennis

The North Carolina women's tennis team (35-1) captured its first ever NCAA championship in May after defeating N.C. State, 4-1. The Tar Heels finished the regular season undefeated, led by Fiona Crawley and Reese Brantmeier. In the national championship game, North Carolina clinched the doubles point with wins from duos of Elizabeth Scotty and Carson Tanguilig and Brantmeier and Reilly Tran. N.C. State evened the match with a singles win, but singles wins from Crawley, Tanguilig and Scotty claimed the title for the Tar Heels.

Aranza Vazquez, diving

Aranza Vazquez's journey to two national titles is a testament to her resilience. Battling depression after the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and self-imposed pressure, she took a break from diving, seeking solace and support back home in Mexico. The encouragement from her teammates and UNC head swimming & diving coach Yaidel Gamboa played a crucial role in her recovery.

Returning to competition, Vazquez

not only excelled but surpassed her own expectations — winning the one-meter springboard title at the 2023 NCAA Championships in March. This marked a historic achievement as she became the first UNC diver to claim such an honor. Her success extended to the three-meter dive, where she secured another top-place finish the following day. Vasquez was named as the College Swimming Coaches Association of America Division I Women's Diver of the Year, earning recognition for her outstanding performance.

Austin O'Connor, wrestling

A year removed from earning All-American status on a torn ACL, sixth-year wrestler Austin O'Connor secured a second national title in March by besting Penn State's Levi Haines by decision, 6-2. After taking the 149-pound national championship in 2021, O'Connor won the 157-title at the 2023 NCAA Division I Wrestling Championships. O'Connor became the second wrestler in program history to win multiple national championships, joining T.J. Jaworsky, who won three straight titles from 1993 to 1995. O'Connor also became the program's first five-time All-America honoree.

Fiona Crawley and Carson Tanguilig, women's tennis doubles

The doubles pairing of Crawley and Tanguilig clinched the 2023 NCAA Doubles Championship in May, beating teammates Brantmeier and Scotty 6-1, 2-6, 11-9 in the championship match to win the title. The duo ended the regular season ranked No. 13 nationally in doubles, compiling a 12-4 record in the regular season. After earning an at-large bid to the NCAA Doubles Championship, Crawley and Tanguilig stormed through the field before ultimately matching up against their own teammates in the final round.



DTH/GRACE RICHARDS
The UNC field hockey team celebrates after their win in the NCAA Field Hockey Championship game against Northwestern on Nov. 19.

X: @dthsports

The Daily Tar Heel

WINDING ROAD

Football season begins, finishes in Charlotte

Old defensive woes resurface in sputtering end to regular season

By Grace Nugent
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All roads lead to Charlotte. The UNC football team started its season in the Queen City — walking away with a 31-17 win over South Carolina in the Duke's Mayo Classic — and hoped to return to Bank of America Stadium in early December for another shot at an ACC Championship.

And while the prospect of a repeat conference title appearance drained away during the rocky second half of the season, the Tar Heels will still be traveling to Charlotte — just a few weeks later. After a 6-0 start, UNC (8-4) will end its volatile season against West Virginia (8-4) in the Duke's Mayo Bowl on Dec. 27.

After sacking South Carolina quarterback Spencer Rattler nine times to kick off the year in a statement win, North Carolina's defense appeared poised to dominate after years of being the program's Achilles heel, a juxtaposition to the Tar Heels' traditionally high-powered offense. “We can definitely build off this,” UNC senior linebacker Cedric Gray said following the season opener. “We’re not going backwards.”

For the next few weeks, UNC football surged forward. After squeaking out a win against Appalachian State at home in double overtime, the Tar Heels continued to triumph against Minnesota, Pittsburgh and Syracuse. At 5-0, all eyes were on the ACC heavyweight bout between then-No. 12 UNC and then-No. 25 Miami on Oct. 14.

North Carolina, led by junior receiver Tez Walker's three-touchdown supernova performance, earned a decisive 41-31 win, putting up 21 unanswered points in the third quarter. “This is a game that sometimes in our past people would've thought we would've lost,” head coach Mack Brown said after the win. “Because

people were bragging on us and because we were walking around and Miami came in to upset us.” The Tar Heels became one of only a handful of undefeated teams in the country. They were 6-0 for the first time in 26 years, and were 23.5-point favorites against a 1-5 Virginia team. What could go wrong?

The Cavaliers came into Kenan Stadium over UNC's fall break and delivered a 31-27 upset, penning a new chapter in the South's Oldest Rivalry. At the time, Virginia was ranked last in the ACC's scoring offense and defense. “Virginia had a plan,” Kaimon Rucker, UNC senior jack, said postgame. “They stuck to the split outside zone plays and they were very successful off of them. Virginia came to play and we didn't.” From there, déjà vu quickly became a jarring reality as UNC's season continued to spiral. The Tar Heels gave up a combined 52 second half points in losses to Georgia Tech, Clemson and N.C. State.

However, unlike the tailspin of last year with four consecutive losses to end the season, the Tar Heels found bright spots in their thrashing of Campbell and a double-overtime victory over rival Duke. “I don't think there is a common thread,” Brown told the media after the Tar Heels' 39-20 loss to N.C. State. “We keep looking for ways to win more than eight games and we had a chance to win nine again.” Common thread or not, 2023 saw North Carolina start another season with high hopes and end once again in mediocrity, taking the less optimal road to Charlotte. Two years ago, UNC was tabbed as the preseason No. 10 team in the country, only to end at 6-7 with — as fate would have it — a loss to South Carolina in Charlotte at the Duke's Mayo Bowl. “We also haven't responded very well after positives,” Brown said after UNC's win over Minnesota. “We haven't handled success very well.” The Tar Heels will seek to break this pattern in their Dec. 27 matchup.

X: @gracegnugent

RECAP

Women's soccer struggles to rewrite narrative in the 2023 season

A 23rd national championship remains, still, just out of reach

By Harry Crowther
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Sixteen seconds. That's all that stood between the UNC women's soccer team and a 23rd national championship just over a year ago against UCLA. With a 2-0 lead in the 75th minute, the Tar Heels essentially had one hand on the trophy. Then, they saw it ripped away. “Just to be able to taste that national championship with 16 seconds left — it's going to be something that is hard to come back from,” now senior forward Avery Patterson said after the 3-2 extra-time loss to UCLA. Sixteen seconds to glory. So close, yet so far. Looking to turn the page, the team instituted the mantra 23 in '23 for this year's campaign.

“Obviously, a national championship is the goal,” redshirt senior defender Maycee Bell said prior to the season. But yet again, the Tar Heels' hearts were shattered. North Carolina's 2023 season was ended just short of a 32nd College Cup appearance by No. 1 seed BYU in the NCAA tournament quarterfinals. The Tar Heels finished with a 13-2-8 record and were fourth best in the ACC at 5-0-5. A periodic inability to convert chances accounted for a program-record eight draws. Head coach Anson Dorrance has 22 national titles in 45 seasons, but has now gone 11 years without one. The Tar Heels started the season strong, enduring a non-conference gauntlet with a 3-0-2 record against ranked teams. The biggest match of the regular season came on Sept. 24, when No. 3 Florida State came to Dorrance Field. In an eerily similar fashion to the 2022 national championship



DTH/JEROME IBRAHIM
The UNC women's soccer team huddles before the game against Duke at Koskinen Stadium on Oct. 8.

game, UNC couldn't hold on to a late lead, as the Seminoles scored a 90th-minute equalizer. The team bounced back with two consecutive wins including a 4-0 drubbing of N.C. State, but Oct. 8 was Groundhog Day. The Tar Heels

led 1-0 at Duke in the 88th minute. They did not win. “[The Florida State game,] the NCAA championship game last year — we can sort of add all those different things up,” Dorrance said after the Duke match. “This is becoming a theme that we don't want to keep repeating.” Despite playing three more 1-1 draws in the last four games of the regular season, the Tar Heels still hadn't lost. That loss finally came in the first round of the ACC tournament. Redshirt sophomore forward Ally Sentnor equalized for UNC in the 76th minute against Pittsburgh, but, despite having several good chances, North Carolina couldn't find a second goal and lost 2-1 in extra time. Dorrance and company regrouped and played their best soccer at the right time. Sentnor led the Tar Heels past its first three opponents in the NCAA tournament with four goal contributions. “She's just a rockstar,” Bell said of

Sentnor after a first round win over Towson. “Every time she gets the ball, there's an opportunity to score.” The defense Bell anchored was outstanding as well, not allowing a single shot in five of the six halves. But then came a snowy night in Provo, Utah. Bell scores. 1-0. Two minutes in. Sentnor. 2-0. And then Sentnor again. 3-0. 20th minute. One hour gone. Still 3-0. And then, 4-3 BYU. Full time. Cougars fans stormed the field and many Tar Heels fell to the frigid turf in tears. “There's nothing you can really say to assuage [the players'] pain,” Dorrance said after the 2022 championship game. “But, you know, this is what I guess the best parts of athletics are all about. I mean, you really get to feel life in moments like that.” Pain persists. And the quest for number 23 continues.

X: @dthsports

COLUMN

Sports editors' picks: Athletes of the year

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There's an abundance of talent across all of UNC's athletic programs, and every year, each team is highlighted by one, or even multiple, electrifying athletes in their respective sports.

After much consideration, The Daily Tar Heel sports editors have compiled their picks for the 2023 Athlete of the Year.

Aranza Vazquez

Aranza Vazquez has proven herself as a trailblazer at UNC, underscored by the accolades she's amassed this year, such as the 2023 ACC Women's Diver of the Year and the 2022-23 CSCAA Women's Diver of the Year.

Vazquez etched her name in UNC history as the first diver to clinch a national title after being crowned a champion in both the one-meter and three-meter springboard at the 2023 NCAA Championships. Vazquez also claimed victory in the ACC Championship one-meter, three-meter and platform events, earned a spot on the All-America first team for the second time and was a finalist for the prestigious Honda Award for Swimming & Diving.

Not only did Vazquez shine athletically, but she earned a place on the ACC All-Academic Team. Vazquez has also been open about her mental health journey, battling depression and self-imposed pressure following



PHOTOS COURTESY OF OLIVIA PAUL, ADRIAN TILLMAN AND JENNIFER TRAN

DTH DESIGN/HAILEY PATTERSON

the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. After taking a break from diving and receiving support from teammates and coach Yaidel Gamboa, she triumphed at the NCAA Championship.

Vazquez's extraordinary feats, coupled with her perseverance, make her a source of pride for UNC and a worthy candidate for DTH's 2023 Athlete of the Year.

- Shelby Swanson, sports editor

Omarion Hampton

Last year, the spotlight was on 2022 ACC Player of the Year Drake Maye and his star receiving

duo of future NFL wideouts Josh Downs and Antoine Green. The trio spearheaded UNC's electric air-raid offense. Meanwhile, North Carolina's running backs took the backseat — Maye led the team in rushing, while then-first-year Omarion Hampton had to split snaps with Elijah Green.

Hampton's rookie season wasn't bad, recording 401 yards and six touchdowns, but the Clayton, N.C., native took a massive leap this year. Through 12 games in 2023, Hampton ran for 1,442 yards, averaging 6.2 yards per carry while recording 15 rushing touchdowns

— both ACC bests — along with 215 receiving yards and one touchdown catch. Standing at 6-foot, 220 pounds, Hampton was one of the nation's most difficult players to tackle, leading the country with 1,023 yards after contact.

Sure, after UNC's red-hot 6-0 start, most fans are disappointed with the football season's 2-4 closing stretch. But without Hampton's consistency oftentimes keeping UNC's offense afloat — Maye's passing options simply weren't as formidable as they were last year, and almost every metric shows — it could've been much worse for the

ever-so-volatile Tar Heels.

- Daniel Wei, assistant sports editor

Fiona Crawley

When one thinks of UNC's top programs, others may come to mind before tennis. In 2023, Fiona Crawley brought tennis into the limelight, leading the UNC women's team to its first NCAA Team Championship in program history and winning the NCAA Doubles Championship alongside partner Carson Tanguilig.

The San Antonio native was coming off an unprecedented 2022 fall season, in which she won the women's All-American and ITA Fall Championship singles titles, and helped lead Team USA to a 10th title in the Master'U BNP Paribas Championship.

Crawley didn't slow down in the spring. She played with extreme consistency on the No. 1 court throughout the entirety of team play, ending the regular season as the top-ranked female tennis player in the nation. On top of that, in the 20 singles matches that she played, Crawley only dropped two, bringing her career singles record to 123-11.

For her efforts this season, she was awarded new hardware to add to her trophy cabinet — clinching 2023 ACC Player of the Year honors and earning the 2023 Honda Award for Tennis.

To cap off her dominant year, Crawley battled her way through the three qualifying rounds of the U.S. Open to earn a bid in the main draw — a testament to her skill and dedication.

- Gwen Peace, assistant sports editor

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WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

A look at upcoming game against UConn



UNC senior guard Deja Kelly (25) runs down the court during the women's basketball game in Carmichael Arena on Thursday.

Tar Heels seek to gain their first ranked win of the 2023-24 season

By Emma Moon
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Following a home matchup against UNC Greensboro on Wednesday, the No. 24 North Carolina women's basketball team will travel to Connecticut to take on No. 17 UConn in the Naismith Hall of Fame Women's Showcase in Uncasville.

As a team that has lost to every ranked program it has faced this season, the Tar Heels will need to capitalize against a UConn group that's sporting its lowest ranking in 30 years. While the Huskies have lost to elite teams like No. 2 UCLA, No. 3 N.C. State and No. 5 Texas, they will still likely be a challenge for a UNC team struggling to score — North Carolina is averaging the second-worst marks in the ACC in points per game.

Here are three keys for the Tar Heels to secure their first ranked win.

Stop Aaliyah Edwards and Nika Mühl

Paige Bueckers has scored in double figures in every game this season except one. She dropped 31 and 27 points in losses to top-3 teams UCLA and N.C. State, respectively. Simply put, even when the Huskies as a whole have been stopped, the junior guard hasn't slowed down.

While the Tar Heels can work to contain Bueckers' dynamic

scoring, they will likely find more success in stopping her supporting cast. Although Edwards and Mühl will pose many challenges, both players should be easier for North Carolina to control.

Behind Bueckers, Edwards is the second leading scorer on the team, averaging 15.4 points per game. She will likely battle with senior guard Alyssa Ustby and junior center Maria Gakdeng in the paint, who will have to work cohesively to combat her physicality at the rim.

Although Mühl only averages 7.3 points per game, she is UConn's floor general, averaging 4.3 assists per game. Last season, Mühl broke Sue Bird's program record for single-season assists with 284. Limiting Mühl's passing abilities should lower Bueckers and Edwards' scoring potential. To do this, the Tar Heels will have to control Mühl's tempo and not be caught ball-watching, which will prevent opportunities for Husky backdoor cuts.

Keep crashing the boards

Although North Carolina lost by seven points to No. 1 South Carolina, a silver lining emerged: behind the frontcourt tandem of Gakdeng and Ustby, the Tar Heels are a formidable rebounding team. UNC out-rebounded USC 45-39 and held a Kamilla Cardoso-led Gamecocks squad to six offensive boards.

While UNC struggled to score and only recorded six second-chance points, the Tar Heels were able to get off 11 more shots than

South Carolina, in part due to their rebounding.

In the Huskies' most recent loss to Texas, they struggled to control the glass, only pulling down five offensive rebounds while allowing the Longhorns to grab 16 and consequently record 24 more field goal attempts. Crashing the boards will help North Carolina in any scenario, but considering UConn's recent rebounding struggles, the Tar Heels should heavily focus on controlling the glass to retain as many possessions as possible.

Get the offense back on track

Of the eight shots UNC's bench players took against South Carolina, none of them connected, and North Carolina recorded zero bench points compared to South Carolina's 10.

During UNC's three consecutive losses, the lack of meaningful bench minutes has been the latest chapter in a storybook of offensive woes.

Whether it's dreadful 3-point shooting — at 24.5 percent for the season — missed free throws or repetitive shot selection, the Tar Heels have failed to find an offensive rhythm this season.

Considering that the Huskies average 75.9 points per game compared to North Carolina's 67.3, all Tar Heels will need to lock in offensively to outscore the Huskies and clinch that elusive ranked win.

X: @emmahmoon

LEGACY

'I'm going to America to study, not to fight segregation'

The story of Edwin Okoroma, UNC's first Black varsity athlete



PHOTOS COURTESY OF UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES, DTH ARCHIVE DTH DESIGN/CARSON ELM-PICARD

By Brendan Lunga
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By playing for UNC men's soccer from 1963-64, Edwin Okoroma became the first Black varsity athlete in the history of the University.

Despite being an undeniable trailblazer at UNC, few people are aware of Okoroma and his story. The Daily Tar Heel wanted to finally change that.

Our journey to uncover Okoroma's story began over two months ago. We managed to get in touch with two of his former teammates, and we tracked down Okoroma by calling the hospital that he still works at in Nigeria. After hours of phone calls with Okoroma on top of archival research from the Wilson Library, The DTH was able to help tell his story.

Okoroma began playing soccer at a mission school in his home country of Nigeria. At his post-secondary school in Lagos, he had to give up soccer for tennis — a less time-consuming sport — to focus on his studies.

In 1962, Okoroma left Nigeria for the United States by way of the African Scholarship Program of American Universities. Upon his enrollment at UNC, Okoroma became the first Black African at the school. Being a winner of the scholarship in just its second wave of admission, a lot of pressure was put on his shoulders to succeed. During the interview process, he made one thing clear about traveling down to the South.

"I said, well, I'm going to continue doing what I'm doing because I'm going to America to study, not to fight segregation," Okoroma said. "And that is a fact too big for me at the moment."

On the UNC soccer team, Okoroma said he had "no problem at all" with racial discrimination. Charlie Battle and Jim Talbot, two of his teammates, remembered Okoroma being kind, yet typically quiet, around them. Okoroma agreed.

"I was conscious of the fact that I was the only Black player there," Okoroma said. "And the standards meant that I had to prove myself to belong and qualify for the team."

Despite being the second-leading scorer on the '64 team, many believe Okoroma does not get the same level of recognition as other Black athletes in UNC's history because, as Talbot described it, soccer was a "second-class citizen."

When the University was not on holiday and he wasn't playing on the soccer team, he found community in two other aspects of his life — his studies and his religion. The only time Okoroma said he felt lonely was during shorter holidays like Thanksgiving.

After not being admitted to medical school at UNC, he traveled north to New York to attend the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry.

At the age of 83, he continues to work at the Memfys Hospital in Enugu, Nigeria to this day.

"That is a million-dollar question," Okoroma said when asked what motivates him to continue working. "Just the passion of helping children and also making a living for myself."

Almost six decades after he graduated UNC and made history by becoming the first Black varsity athlete at North Carolina, Okoroma said he still looks back on Chapel Hill with "a great deal of fondness."

"I wish I could visit North Carolina again just to remind me of what life was all like."

To learn more, read our full project online on The DTH website.

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