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THE PENDULUM

SHATTERING STANDARDS

Women at Elon University make their mark in various roles around campus

WHILE MARCH MARKS THE halfway point through the semester, leaving many students with bittersweet feelings as end of the year becomes not so far away, the month also marks Women's History Month.

Here at Elon University, numerous women are leading departments, starting their own businesses and pursuing careers in fields dominated by men. Women are leading student organizations and making their voices heard around Elon's campus daily.

This issue features the stories of some of these women as The Pendulum celebrates women breaking through and stepping up.

See **WOMEN** | pg. 9

Campus grieves loss of professor

L.M. Wood spent almost two decades teaching and inspiring students to fall in love with art

Alexandra Schonfeld
Managing Editor | @aschonfeld096

You could feel it as you walked through the doors of Arts West Monday morning. Sadness. Weight. It's a palpable loss.

The art community at Elon University lost a "ray of light" Saturday night when L.M. Wood, 56, associate professor of art, died in her sleep. Her husband, David Schaeffer, who also taught courses at Elon in the art department, shared the news.

Wood was from Northern Minnesota where she also earned her undergraduate degree in Photography and Handmade Paper at Moorhead State University. She then received a Master's in Fine Art in Photography from

The University of Cincinnati where she met her husband in 1991. The two had been together ever since. When Schaeffer described his wife, many thoughts came to mind.

"Fun, happy, what would it be? What's that saying?" Schaeffer said. "Something like tree-loving hippie, dirt-loving, tree-hugging hippie chick. That was her."

She loved fancy beer, violent video games and underwater monster films and hated plastic straws. While neither of them ever owned a cell phone, they did own a computer — Wood was self-taught in HTML.

One of her prouder moments though was when she figured out how to make a vegan dessert that was really good, Schaeffer described. She baked, and her husband cooked.

Social media posts from students and alumni flooded news feeds Sunday afternoon as the community learned of the unexpected loss. Junior Hailey Burkett, who is currently enrolled in Wood's Introduction to Intermedia and Photography course, said the news was unbelievable.

"I really didn't know what to think because it was so unexpected," Burkett said. "I didn't want to believe it because she was so fun in class — she was so lively. I was confused at how it could happen."

Wood joined Elon's faculty in

See **L.M.** | pg. 6

ILLUSTRATION BY MEGHAN KIMBERLING | DESIGN CHIEF



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A look at Elon's candidates for SGA positions



LIFESTYLE • PAGE 8

Elon seniors spend final semester teaching in local classrooms



SPORTS • PAGE 12

A preview of women's basketball CAA Tournament

THE PENDULUM

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ENN seeks to inspire, entertain and inform the Elon community by providing a voice for students and faculty, as well as serve as a forum for the meaningful exchange of ideas.

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COMIC

FELLOWS WEEKEND



SAM POROZOK

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY – BUSHES CATCH FIRE OUTSIDE SMITH HALL

MARCH 8, 2006. The bushes outside Smith residence hall caught fire on March 8, 2006, after a student dropped a firecracker out the window. The two resident assistants, Annie Dawson and Asami Sudani, were working that night. “We were just talking about being at the right place at the

right time,” Dawson said. “We have a couple of names that will go through the judicial process.” At the time, Dawson said she was afraid a tree nearby would catch fire. She ran toward an entrance to Smith and informed residents that the fire department was needed. “I wasn’t really scared because

we’ve had so many false alarms this year,” said then-freshman Vic McGlaughlin. “It wasn’t big enough to really worry me.” Smith residents waited outside until 12:30 a.m. after the bushes set ablaze. Today, Smith Hall is still the only all-male residence hall on campus.

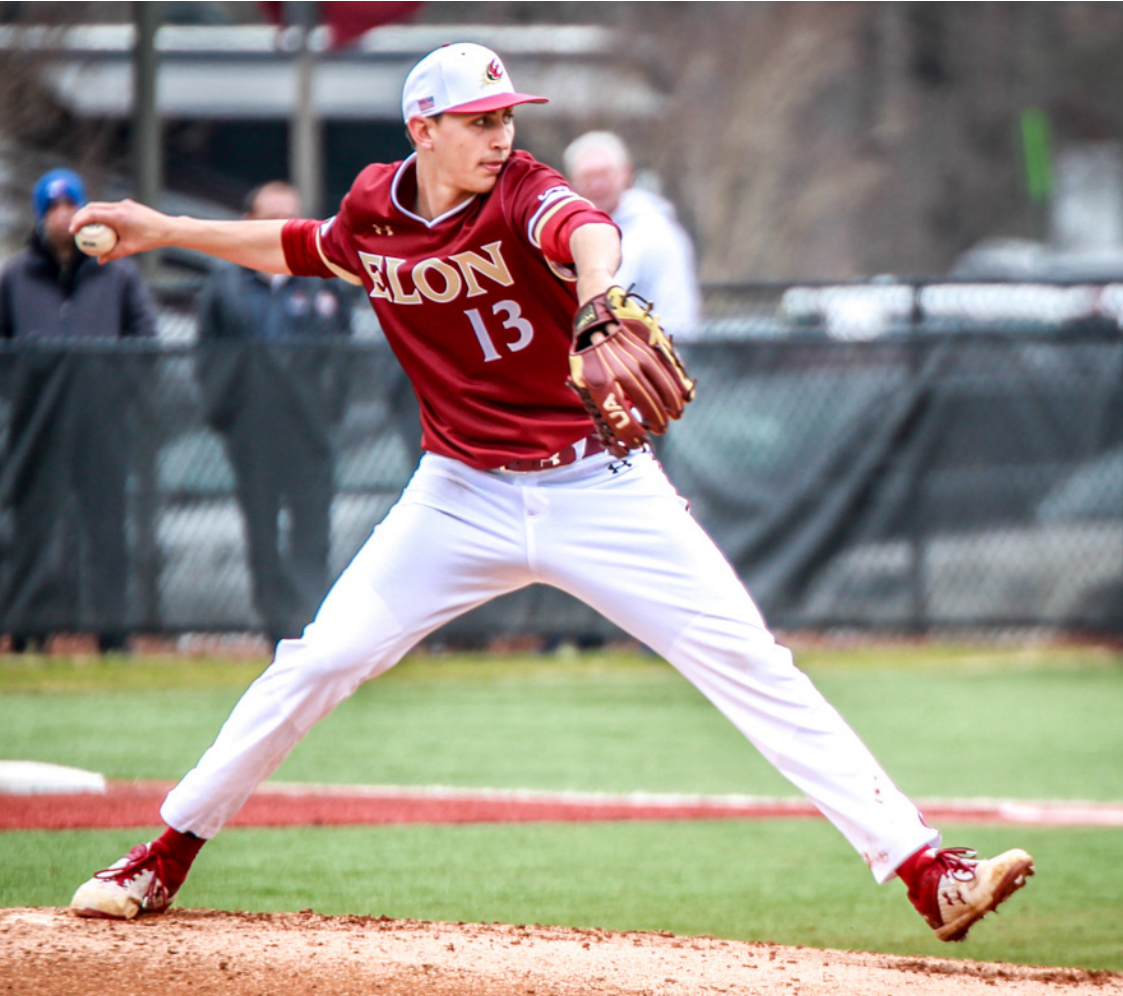
CALENDAR: MARCH 13 – MARCH 19

SALES ANALYTICS WITH BILL NAHMIA 12:30 P.M. Sankey Hall 308 13	KAREN BABINE NONFICTION READING 7:30 P.M. Johnston Hall 13	DIVERSITY IN REALITY TV PANEL 6 P.M. McEwen 013 14	AMERNET STRING QUARTET 7:30 P.M. Whitley Auditorium 14	WOMXN'S HISTORY TRIVIA NIGHT 7:30 P.M. Oak House 14
PUNCH & PAINT 10:30 P.M. Winter Garden 14	STUDENT MADE STORE POP-UP SHOP 3 P.M. Speaker's Corner 15	CASINO NIGHT 10 P.M. Taphouse 15	CIRCAPPALLOOZA 7 P.M. Whitley Auditorium 16	NANCY CREAMER AND FOSTERING LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS 7 P.M. McCrory Theatre 18

Dancers for the Chroma spring dance concert rehearse on Sunday, March 10, for their opening night performance on March 14.



ABBY GIBBS | PHOTO EDITOR



ABBY GIBBS | PHOTO EDITOR

Pitcher George Kirby prepares to throw the ball against Bryant University on Sunday, March 10.



ZACH OHMANN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Senior guard Steven Santa Ana drives to the basket against the University of North Carolina Wilmington Seahawks on Saturday, March 9.



Members of the Alpha Xi Delta sorority perform a stroll during the Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity's annual Stroll Off on Saturday, March 9, in Alumni Gym.

EMMANUEL MORGAN | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

SGA CANDIDATES

COMPILED BY MAGGIE BROWN | Politics Editor | @maggieabrown_

JUNIOR STEVEN KLAUSNER Figueroa, who is running for Class of 2021 Secretary; sophomore Yamai IS not featured in this edition of The Pendulum because he Pedraza, who is running for Class of 2021 Senator; freshman Alexander is abroad. He is running for Class of 2020 Senator. The following Begley, who is running for Class of candidates did not respond to Elon 2022 Vice President; freshman Alexis News Network in time for this edition “Austin” Moore, who is running for of The Pendulum: sophomore Robert Class of 2022 Secretary; and freshman Miley, who is running for Class of 2021 Anna Sheinberg, who is also running Vice President; sophomore Jubitza for Class of 2022 Secretary.

PHOTOS BY LIAM O'CONNOR | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER AND MAGGIE BROWN | POLITICS EDITOR

CLASS OF 2020

NOOR IRSHaidat

President



“

I WANT TO WORK WITH OTHER CLASS MEMBERS TOWARDS EVOLVING CLASS COHESION THAT WILL BOTH HELP US OVERCOME THE PRESSURE OF BEING SENIORS AND WILL ENSURE THAT OUR LAST YEAR WILL BE THE BEST ONE YET.

SAMANTHA O'CONNOR

President



“

I WANT TO ENSURE THAT EVERY VOICE IS REPRESENTED APPROPRIATELY IN THE FACE OF THE PROPOSED TITLE IX CHANGES, THE RESTRUCTURING OF [SGA] MORE BROADLY, AND AS ELON WORKS TOWARDS OUR INSTITUTIONAL GOAL OF INCREASED INCLUSIVITY IN ALL FACETS OF CAMPUS LIFE.

LIAM COLLINS

President



“

I AM PLEDGING TO POST WEEKLY UPDATES ON FACEBOOK AND INSTAGRAM OF WHAT SGA AND THE CLASS OF 2020 IS UP TO BECAUSE IF YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON ON THIS CAMPUS, YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE TO COME TO US. IT'S OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO GO WHERE YOU ARE.

LAURA ROSSI

Vice President



“

I WILL BE FOCUSING ON OPENING A GREATER DISCUSSION ON MENTAL HEALTH AT ELON'S CAMPUS. I WANT TO ESTABLISH A SUPPORTIVE ATMOSPHERE THAT MAINTAINS A CONTINUOUS OPEN DIALOGUE, NOT ONLY INFORMING STUDENTS OF THE AVAILABLE RESOURCES BUT ALSO ENCOURAGING STUDENTS TO UTILIZE THEM.

MEGHAN AINES

Vice President



“

WITH YOUR HELP, I WANT TO PROVIDE OUR CLASS FOR OPPORTUNITY FOR MEMORABLE EXPERIENCES, AND VALUABLE WAYS TO SPEND OUR LAST YEAR HERE TOGETHER.

LAUREN LUTHER

Secretary



“

AS A STUDENT LEADER ON ELON'S CAMPUS, I FEEL I AM WELL EQUIPPED TO SEEK OUT AND ACTIVELY LISTEN TO THE VOICES AND OPINIONS OF MY PEERS. I AM EAGER TO SERVE MY FELLOW STUDENTS AS WE MOVE INTO OUR FINAL YEAR AT ELON BEFORE JOURNEYING ON TO FIND OUR PLACE BEYOND THESE BEAUTIFUL OAKS. I HOPE TO HELP THE CLASS OF 2020 TO HAVE THEIR BEST YEAR YET SO THEY MAY FEEL SUPPORTED, KNOWING THAT THEY WILL ALWAYS HAVE A HOME AT ELON.

KYRA LETSINGER

Secretary



“

AS JUNIOR CLASS SECRETARY, I WANT FIRST AND FOREMOST TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN SGA AND THOSE IT REPRESENTS. OFTEN, STUDENTS AREN'T GIVEN TIME TO VOICE THEIR OPINIONS ON LEGISLATION OR EVENTS, AND I WANT TO ENSURE STUDENT VOICES ARE HEARD.

KATIE HARFORD

Secretary



“

I AM ORGANIZED, FOCUSED, DRIVEN, AND WANT TO HELP BETTER THE ELON COMMUNITY IN ANY WAY THAT I CAN.

KATIE WAKIYAMA

Senator



“

IT HAS BEEN SUCH AN HONOR SERVING AS A SENATOR FOR THE CLASS OF 2020 FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS. I WILL WORK TO MAKE SURE THAT SENIOR YEAR IS THE BEST ONE YET FOR OUR CLASS!

SGA ELECTIONS

VICTORIA FAVORITO



Communications

I'M DRIVEN, HARD WORKING, AND A GO-GETTER, AND I CARE ABOUT YOUR SUCCESS. THIS IS WHY I PLAN TO WORK WITH THE EVENTS COORDINATORS TO BROADEN THE AWARENESS OF SCHOOL EVENTS.

OLIVIA FIGUEROA



Communications

AS THE SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATIONS SENATOR, I WANT THE BEST FOR BOTH THE SCHOOL AND THE STUDENTS. I'M APPROACHABLE AND WILL BE OPEN TO STUDENTS' NEW IDEAS.

JOVANI MENDEZ-SANDOVAL



Business

MY GOAL IS TO SERVE ELON UNIVERSITY AND MAKE ITS ACADEMICS MEANINGFUL. OUR ACADEMICS ARE WORTH MORE THAN JUST A LETTER GRADE. IT'S ABOUT THE EXPERIENCE AND APPLICATIONS TO REAL-WORLD PROBLEMS.

SCHOOL SENATORS

LEXI WILL



Arts and Sciences

I WANT TO PUSH FOR MORE INTERACTIONS BETWEEN STUDENT GOVERNMENT AND THE SCIENCE PROGRAMS. WITH MY KNOWLEDGE OF THE CLUBS AND HONORS SOCIETIES WITHIN [THE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES], I WANT TO BRIDGE THE GAP BETWEEN THE LACK OF COMMUNICATION.

SYDNEY COKER



Arts and Sciences

AS A MEMBER OF THIS COMMUNITY, I ASK THAT YOU WOULD JOIN ME IN VOTING IN THE UPCOMING STUDENT GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS ON MARCH 13 AND 14 BECAUSE TOGETHER, WE CAN BUILD A BETTER ELON.

CLASS OF 2022

BJ HORTON JR.



President

I WANT TO CONTRIBUTE TO CREATING A COMMUNITY THAT EMPOWERS STUDENTS TO BECOME THE VERY BEST VERSIONS OF THEMSELVES.

LAURYN ADAMS



President

I'M RUNNING ON A PLATFORM OF THE THREE AS: ADVOCACY, ACTIVISM. "WE NEED TO WORK ACTIVELY TO CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT THAT AT ITS CORE, EMBODIES THESE CONCEPTS. WE CAN CREATE A SPACE WHERE WE CAN ALL ACHIEVE GREAT THINGS.

MORGAN KEARNS



Vice President

I WANT TO WORK TOWARDS A COMMUNITY THAT INCORPORATES THE VOICE OF THE STUDENTS TO CREATE AN EMPHASIS ON STUDENT WELLNESS OVER STUDENT OVER INVOLVMENT.

IRELAND HORAN



Vice President

WHILE THERE IS AN UNDENIABLE SENSE OF COMMUNITY HERE AT ELON, THERE'S ALWAYS WORK TO BE DONE TO ENSURE THAT WE FOSTER A PLACE THAT VALUES THE IDENTITIES OF THOSE AROUND US. I WANT TO CREATE MORE OUTLETS FOR INDIVIDUALS TO FEEL ACCEPTED AND SUPPORTED TO SHARE THEIR IDENTITIES WITH THE STUDENT BODY AND LOCAL ELON COMMUNITY.

CLASS OF 2021

BRANDON VEAL



President

I WILL STRIVE TO ENSURE THAT THERE IS CLEAR COMMUNICATION BETWEEN SGA AND OUR CLASS. I WANT MY PRESIDENCY TO REPRESENT YOUR ISSUES. I WILL PUSH TO ENSURE THAT YOUR FEEDBACK IS HEARD AND RESOLVED.

EXECUTIVE BOARD

JACK JOHNSON



President

LAST YEAR, I PROMISED THAT WE WERE GOING TO TAKE A BIG STEP FORWARD ON BRINGING THE STUDENTS TOGETHER, AND I THINK WE CAN ALL AGREE THAT WE DID THAT. I WANT TO TAKE THAT TRACK RECORD AND BRING IT UNIVERSITY-WIDE.

NATE JONES



President

ONE OF THE MOST DIFFICULT QUESTIONS THAT A CANDIDATE CAN BE ASKED IS "WHY ME?" WHAT DO I BRING TO THE TABLE? PERHAPS IT'S THE RECOGNITION OF THE FACT THAT THIS TABLE WAS NOT BUILT FOR EVERYBODY, AND WE HAVE FOUND OURSELVES AT A JUNCTURE IN HISTORY WHERE WE CAN CREATE A NEW TABLE TOGETHER.

LOUISA SHOLAR



Vice President

IN TANGENT WITH CONTINUING TO MAINTAIN AND STRENGTHEN OUR EXISTING COMMITTEES AND COUNCILS, I WANT TO PRIORITIZE VOICES ON CAMPUS THAT SO OFTEN ARE NOT REPRESENTED.

JULIA FIELD



Secretary

I WILL WORK TO BE AN INDIVIDUAL WHO WILL SERVE AS A BRIDGE BETWEEN THE CHANGE THAT THE STUDENT BODY WANTS TO SEE AND THE PROGRESS THAT IS MADE.

AMANDA YAFFA



Treasurer

WHILE I KNOW THERE IS A LOT OF CONTROVERSY ON THIS, THE REVISED TREASURER MANUAL WILL HELP TO ENSURE THAT PEOPLE ARE USING THE ALLOCATED MONEY IN AN EFFECTIVE AND BENEFICIAL WAY. AS EXECUTIVE TREASURER, ONE OF MY GOALS IS TO CREATE A CLEAR AND EFFECTIVE SYSTEM OF APPLYING FOR MONEY LESS.

‘SHE WAS A GEM. SHE WAS TRULY A GEM.’

L.M. | from cover

2000, and in an email sent out Sunday afternoon, President Connie Book said, “In her teaching, Wood believed that students are central partners in learning where equal emphasis is placed on technical and formal development and concept building.”

Burkett said Wood always fostered creativity in her classroom and made students feel valued.

“She was always very encouraging,” Burkett said. “Sometimes I find that professors kind of expect something of you and she came into the class with no expectations and just wanted everybody to succeed no matter where you were at.”

Wood held many positions on campus, some that may have even gone unnoticed. She was an advisor to Creative Resolution, an unsponsored student group that allows students to design commissioned posters, fliers and other promotional materials for various groups on campus. She was also an “enthusiast,” or adviser, for The Edge Magazine, an off-campus student magazine. She helped organize events around Arts West, served as the lab manager, men-

tored senior capstone projects and ran a website with her husband showcasing their work. Many roles fell outside of her duties as teacher. The list goes on and on.

“She did so much that I don’t think we really think about until the day when all of a

sudden ... you know I regret that,” said Michael Fels, art professor and chair of the Department of Art and Art History. “I regret that deeply that we didn’t acknowledge that enough.”

“She was the glue of the art department,” said senior Kerry Sheehan-Delany, who took multiple courses with Wood and credits her with helping her rediscover her love of art.

Wood received her Master’s of Fine Arts in Fiber at Southern Illinois University Carbondale. Her work was presented nationally at the Museum of Design in Atlanta, the Center for Craft Creativity and Design in Asheville, N.C., and the North Dakota Museum of Art in Grand Forks. She was awarded a grant from the Kentucky Foundation for Women and a Visual Arts Fellowship from the North Carolina Arts Council.

On Tuesday afternoon friends, students, alumni and colleagues gathered in the Sacred Space in the Numen Lumen Pavilion for a Gathering of Friends to honor her memory. Students recalled moments of Wood’s outpouring of kindness and her faith in their identity as an artist.

Anne Simpkins, associate professor of art, shared sweet memories and anecdotes of her longtime friend. “She was a vegetarian and an anarchist,” Simpkins said. She believed in “animal rights and human rights.” She recalled how she would remove the mice traps around Arts West to save even the tiniest of lives.

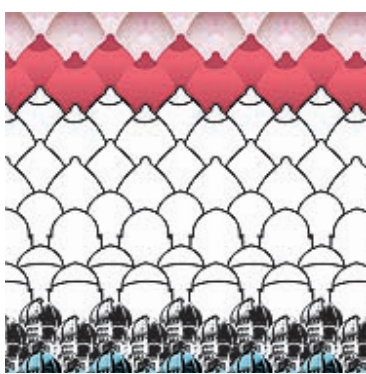
“She didn’t believe in afterlife,” Simpkins said. “But she firmly believed in this life.”

Wood could be seen riding around campus in her “Minion” themed yellow car. She and her husband were connected at the hip, Fels said, and lived out in the woods near Saxapahaw with their



ABBY GIBBS | PHOTO EDITOR

Barbara Rhoades, assistant professor of art, hugs a friend of L.M. Wood as they grieve together during the Gathering of Friends in Numen Lumen Pavilion on Tuesday, March 12.



four cats. Her focuses, though, were her students and teaching.

“She’s an incredible teacher, and Elon swallows us up with the requirements of teaching and scholarship and service and committees, and she seemed really focused on what mattered to her and that was teaching,” Fels said. “Our students flooded to her. She swelled the enrollments of her classes because students followed her, and it’s a testament to how much she cared for them and they cared for her.”

The impact she had on her students will last for decades to come, and her presence will never cease to be felt around the halls of Arts West and under the Oaks around Elon’s campus. Students noted the great care she took in getting to know each of her students.

Monday morning, just as the 8 a.m. classes were getting underway, a memorial appeared with a vase of flowers over a vinyl sticker Wood had created and placed in the halls of Arts West. A message appeared on a whiteboard nearby: “In memory of LM, you made Elon a kinder, more loving place.”

“She is the reason I became an art student, and if there is anything I will graduate with, it is the confidence knowing that I have nothing to regret,” said senior Kerry Sheehan-Delany. “Because of her, I chose to pursue the things that I love to do. That is something I can’t thank her enough for.”

ABBY GIBBS | PHOTO EDITOR

Top Left: Michael Fels, chair of the department of Art and Art History, reminisces on the first day he met L.M. Wood when he was applying for a job at Elon.

ALEXANDRA SCHONFELD | MANAGING EDITOR

Bottom: Memorial set up Monday morning in Arts West.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ECLECTICMOOSE.COM

Middle Right: Artwork by L.M. Wood titled “Tree of Life”

PHOTO COURTESY OF ECLECTICMOOSE.COM

Top Right: Artwork by L.M. Wood titled “Boobies! Boobies!”

CAMPUS VOICES

Social media is Broadway's ticket to relevance



Brooke Muller
Columnist

"The SQUIPs are coming" is a phrase I initially did not understand but saw everywhere on social media. What is a SQUIP? Who is a SQUIP? Why are they coming? Where are they coming from? Most importantly, why does everyone seem to care?

The SQUIPs (super quantum unit intel processors) are central to the storyline of the sci-fi musical "Be More Chill." The show follows high school geek Jeremy Heere, who takes a pill that implants a SQUIP into his brain and instructs him on how to ... be more chill.

The story of the show's journey to Broadway is a perfect illustration of why social media matters for Broadway. In 2015, the musical premiered at the Two River Theater in New Jersey. After a four-week run and a cast album recording, the crew patted themselves on the back for a job well done. But in the three years that followed, the internet discovered the cast album and grew to love the story. Animated music videos were posted on YouTube, Instagram fan accounts were created and messages of support were tweeted. The outpouring of love for the show was so strong that it launched a sold-out off-Broadway run during summer 2018. Then, on Feb. 13, "Be More Chill" opened

for previews in the Lyceum Theatre on Broadway.

This is not the only production that has a strong digital following. Current shows such as "Dear Evan Hansen," "Mean Girls" and "The Prom" are geared towards younger audiences. But Broadway theaters continue to be filled with older audiences. The Broadway League reported that the average age of Broadway attendees in the 2017-2018 season was 40.6 years old. The reasons why are not hard to determine. Broadway has long been fighting the misconception that it's for the elite and stuffy. And — put simply — it's expensive.

Social media provides opportunities to connect with these shows despite not being physically able to see them.

"Dear Evan Hansen" tells the story of an outcast high schooler trying to fit in. It has 439,000 Instagram followers and 151,000 Twitter followers.

"Mean Girls" is an adaptation of the popular movie based on high school cliques and popularity. It has 182,000 Instagram followers and 30,300 Twitter followers.

"The Prom" shares the story of a high schooler who refuses to take no for an answer when she is told she cannot bring her girlfriend to the dance. It has 33,800

Instagram followers and 4,600 Twitter followers.

Broadway newcomer "Be More Chill" brings 132,000 Instagram followers and 21,800 Twitter followers with it already. These stories are resonating with younger audiences, and the online communities are proof of it.

These social accounts post behind-the-scenes footage, backstage antics, informal cast interviews and more. I had little intention of seeing "Mean Girls" when it first began, but now, after watching its Broadway.com backstage video blog series on YouTube and engaging with its online content, I am frequently scouring the internet for available tickets. When the "Mean Girls" Twitter account liked my tweet and the "Be More Chill" Twitter responded to my posts about its opening, I felt like I was a part of something. These interactions made me feel like my voice meant something and was considered important.

Some argue that live theater has always been a fleeting experience and

should stay that way.

Part of what makes it so special are the human interactions between casts and audiences that differentiate live performances from other forms of entertainment. Social media diminishes these special, in-person moments by allowing constant access to the stories and performers.

Even so, while social media is changing the way theater is consumed, it is doing so in a positive way. The social followers of today are the paying attendees of the future. By connecting with shows, composers, performers and others online, Broadway fan bases are younger and stronger than

ever. Broadway is currently in an uncharted era of mainstream popularity with both financial success and a quickly growing reputation.

For an entertainment institution that has spanned centuries, change may seem daunting, but change is necessary for future success. Social media is that change for Broadway shows as it allows for new and growing connections to form. For this fan in particular, I will continue tweeting my support for "Be More Chill" and its neighbors until I can walk through the bright lights of Broadway and sit in its historic theaters.



The climate crisis: Republicans deny as Dems debate



Michael Asch
Columnist

It's simple science: weather and climate are not the same thing. But the distinction is something President Donald Trump and the Republican Party have had a hard time figuring out.

In November 2018, the president tweeted, "Brutal and Extended Cold Blast could shatter ALL RECORDS – Whatever happened to Global Warming?"

In January 2019, he tweeted, "In the beautiful Midwest, windchill temperatures are reaching minus 60 degrees, the coldest ever recorded ... What the hell is going on with Global Warming? Please come back fast, we need you!" And yes, he did misspell "warming."

Weather is short-term changes in the atmosphere. Climate is the average weather

for a place over time. Global warming is real.

According to NASA, the past five years have been the hottest in recorded history, with 2016 being the warmest and last year coming in fourth. Earth's average surface temperature has risen 1.62 degrees Fahrenheit since the turn of the 20th century, not to mention that most of this change has happened over the past 35 years. Oceans have absorbed much of the heat, warming more than 0.4 degrees since 1969. Greenland and Antarctica have lost a combined 413 billion tons of ice since 1993.

There are very drastic and quick changes happening to the Earth's climate. Our use of greenhouse gases and nonrenewable energies are the primary reasons for these

changes.

The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change says that if we do not act in the next 12 years, there will be irreversible costs to climate change. According to the Fourth National Climate Assessment, climate change will cost the economy billions, deteriorate our infrastructure, alter ecosystems, spread disease, decrease agricultural productivity, raise ocean levels, decrease the amount of clean water and cause more frequent and extreme weather.

We're already beginning to feel the effects of climate change. Glaciers the size of Manhattan have fallen off Antarctica. Massive hurricanes, wildfires and droughts have become much more common. A small rodent, the Bramble Cay melomys,

was recently recognized as the first mammal to go extinct because of climate change.

The good news is that there are policies we can implement right now that will help curb global warming. Investing in renewable energies, electric cars and high-speed rail systems, transitioning to smart and clean energy, increasing fuel economy standards for automobiles, implementing efficiency standards, creating a carbon tax, eliminating subsidies for producing fossil fuels and reversing the Citizens United v. FEC Supreme Court decision would all steer our country in the right direction.

The Democratic Party can't seem to agree on how to address climate change. Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cor-

tez and Sen. Ed Markey are pushing for a Green New Deal, which looks to address climate change and economic inequality. Sen. Dianne Feinstein, however, has said it's impossible to stop a problem this big in such a short amount of time, and that there are more reasonable solutions.

Climate change is one of the most pressing issues facing our generation, and the United States has contributed more than any other country. It's one thing to debate how to solve the problem — in fact, I highly encourage these debates. But the Republican Party continues to deny basic scientific facts and offer no solution. We cannot let this continue. We are the generation that has to fix this. Our fate is in our own hands.



ILLUSTRATIONS BY GRACE TERRY | ASSISTANT DESIGN CHIEF

LEARNING THE ROPES



Elon's senior education students spend their last semester as student teachers

Hannah Massen
Elon News Network | @massenhannah

ELON UNIVERSITY SENIOR AMANDA McMahan's school day begins at 6 a.m. when she wakes up, drinks her coffee and carpools to class. She arrives by 7:30 and uses the spare time to organize her materials for the day. But when the students file in for first period, she doesn't join them at their desks. McMahan is teaching the class, not taking it.

Nearly 50 education majors are spending their senior year spring semester as student teachers in local, public or charter schools, according to Ann Bullock, dean of the School of Education and professor of education. Once placed in classrooms that correspond to their majors, the student teachers move through a program where they become full-time teachers of the classroom, and the previous full-time teachers become their observers.

Bullock said this program is meant to prepare student teachers for success in a variety of settings.

"We provide opportunities to teach at schools that are very diverse racially," Bullock said. "We provide opportunities to teach in schools that have low-income children that are in homes with more need. We provide them the opportunity to be in schools that might look more like the schools they went to or not."

Senior Courtney Kobos, an English major with a concentration in teaching licensure, said she felt ready to take the next step toward her career.

"We've observed in so many classes that now we're excited to have students of our own to get to trust and have some control of the class," Kobos said. "It's very exciting to be at that stage where you do have that control and you get to see things come into action."

But for some of these seniors, the transition from being a full-time student to teaching students themselves has been a learning curve.

Senior Colleen Cody, a special and elementary education major, said nothing had fully prepared her to teach a multiple exceptionalities class.

Cody's kindergarten through second grade classroom hosts five children with varying disabilities, such as Down syndrome, cerebral palsy and short-term memory loss. Although the class sticks to a schedule, Cody differentiates her lessons based on each student's

individual needs.

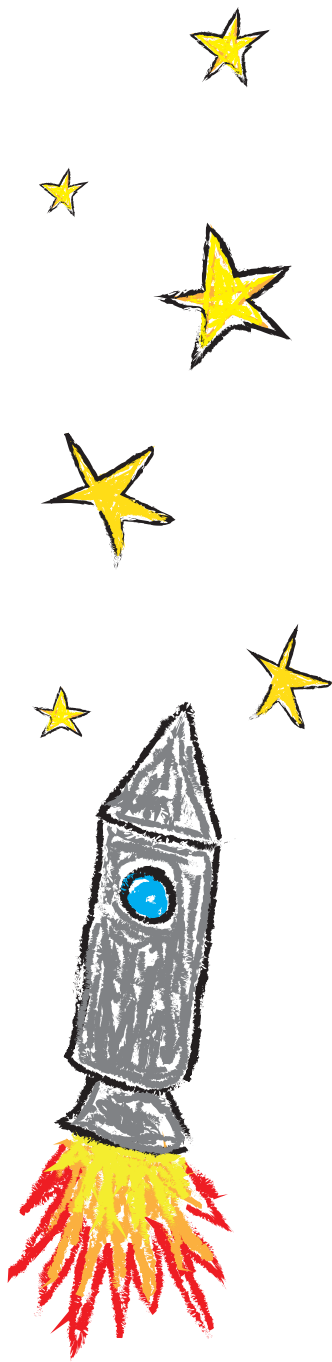
"For the students that are non-verbal, there needs to be an adaptive communication point," Cody said. "If I'm asking him a question, 'Can you show me a three?' instead of counting to three, he would point to three, click that and then it repeats back to him, 'three.'"

For Cody, it's the little triumphs that are the most rewarding, such as when she heard one of her nonverbal students speak for the first time.

"He's in kindergarten — he's five — and he has Down Syndrome," Cody said. "We get him to sit still at the whole group section of the classroom. We're doing writing, and I'm trying to teach him how to write his name, so we move a letter to a spot. Instead of him saying what letter it is, he's pointing to it. And he just started screaming in this voice that we've never really heard before. 'I want to get down! I want to get down!' And even though it had nothing to do with anything, he was able to express that he was frustrated. We heard his little voice, and it was the cutest thing ever."

Cody said Elon's special education majors are taught how to accommodate mild to moderate learning disabilities, not moderate to severe.

"What I'm dealing with is feeding students and teaching them daily essential tools," Cody said. "I'm telling them how to get up and really live their lives. It's not a lot of literacy and pushing math. Even though we are teaching that stuff, it's not the top priority."



But the real test is yet to come for these student teachers — literally.

Kobos has spent months preparing for Pearson's Educator Licensure and Performance Assessment (edTPA). She and her peers are tasked with compiling a three-part portfolio to submit for their accreditation.

The portfolio's first section is lesson planning, which includes detailed accounts of the material and the meaning behind several days' worth of classes. For the next section, student teachers film themselves delivering their lessons to a class. Finally, the assessment of the portfolio logs the student teachers' testing methods, including any accommodations they provide.

Kobos said the edTPA is similar to the SAT or ACT.

"I am more prepared than the people who graduated last year, but they really only started talking about it my junior year," Kobos said. "Any free time I have, I'm working on that."

McMahon, who is also an English major with concentration in teaching licensure, dedicates a similar amount of time to her edTPA portfolio. She said she

feels her free time is in short supply these days.

Although she enjoys the energy and humor her high school students bring to the table, McMahon said that kickstarting her career has pushed her to grow up.

"When I was still taking college classes, I napped a lot, and it was really easy to put off responsibilities," McMahon said. "But with student teaching, it's just not possible. Things are going to keep moving whether you're there or not, so you really have to be on it. I can't take a nap in the middle of the day. I have to get up and go to bed early, or things will fall apart."

For most seniors, their last semester of college is a time of relaxation and celebration. Kobos has struggled to strike a balance between her work and her social life.

"Your students really do come first," Kobos said. "It is your job to make sure that they have the best education that they can possibly receive. So even though you're really busy as a student, it's making sure that you're really going to bed at a regular time, and your meals and lunches are prepped and ready, and you really do get enough rest over the weekend so that you're ready to go on Monday morning."

Cody echoed Kobos' concerns and said if she had known how much work was ahead of her, she would have spent more time with her friends. She has gained a newfound appreciation for her own teachers.

For however jarring their adjustments have been, these seniors' experiences have not deterred their passion for education.

After graduation, Kobos hopes to teach English language learners abroad through a Fulbright Scholarship.

Cody has found her niche teaching students with varying learning disabilities, and she may remain in North Carolina for a year before heading back to the Long Island area. Next week, she will be transferred out of her multiple exceptionalities class and into a standard fourth grade class.

"I'm going to lose my mind because my kids are like my kids," Cody said. "It's going to be so different going from a classroom of five students to a classroom of 22 students, and they're in fourth grade. Why couldn't I get kindergarten or something?"

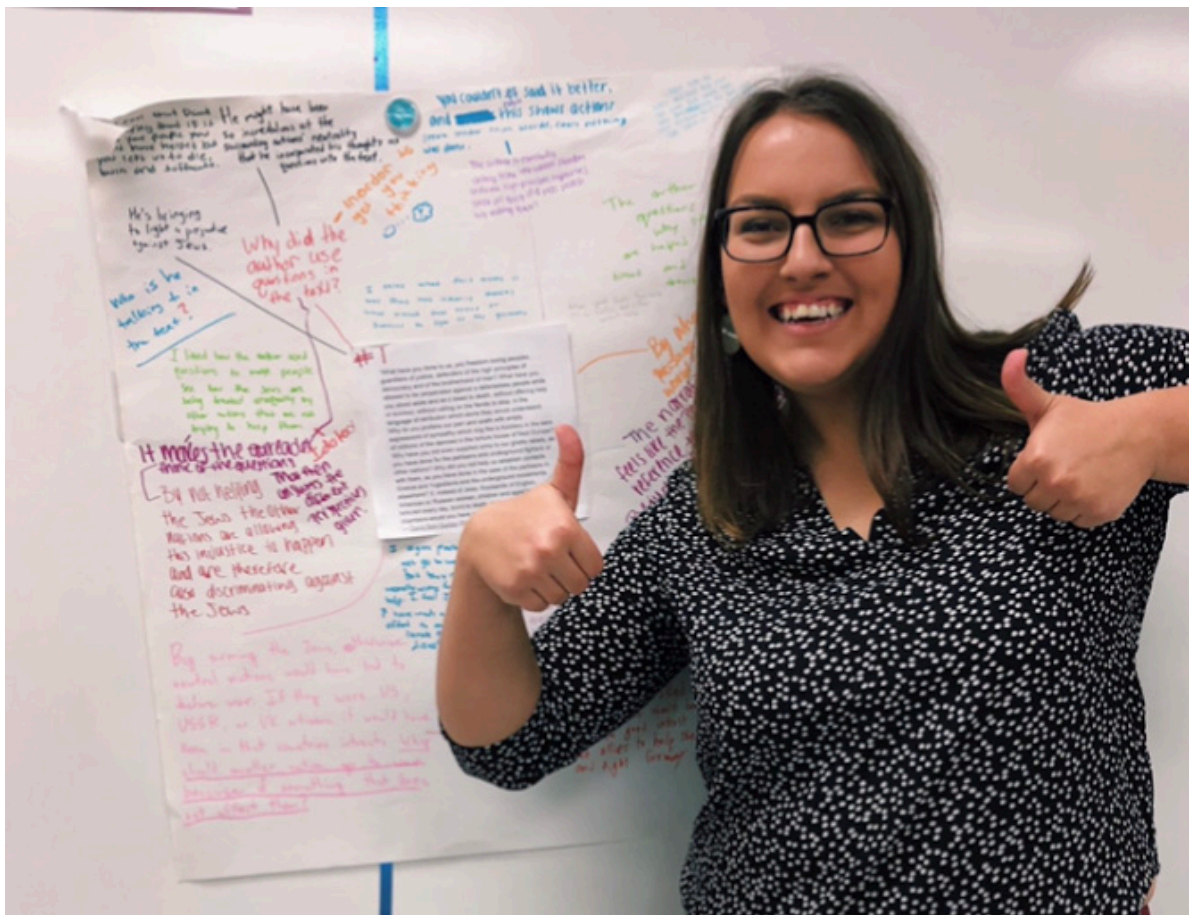


PHOTO COURTESY OF COURTNEY KOBOS

Senior Courtney Kobos hopes to teach English language learners abroad through a Fulbright Scholarship.

TWO ELON GIRL BOSSES

Two student entrepreneurs started and run their own businesses from campus

Amanda Gibson
Elon News Network | @agibson

Sophomore Annie Earnshaw and junior Livi Murray are two Elon University students who have taken full advantage of their spare time on campus — between classes, homework, clubs and social lives, they also run their own businesses.

Murray runs her own clothing line, Pretty Vibes Movement, completely out of her apartment. As a YouTuber, photographer and artist, she found her clothing line to be a perfect creative outlet. Her main T-shirt line is called Trust Your Art, a phrase she hopes inspires other creatives.

"I feel like Trust Your Art serves as a daily affirmation for a lot of people," Murray said. "When you read it, it almost sounds like trust your heart, and that was kind of just a lucky coincidence. To me, it just means trusting your journey and trusting the level you are at within your creative path. Just

trusting that you're good enough."

Murray is currently operating solo, but she hopes to get other women to permanently join her team to help with promotions and advertising. She uses self-proclaimed Instagram influencers to help promote her line, but making these deals is sometimes difficult.

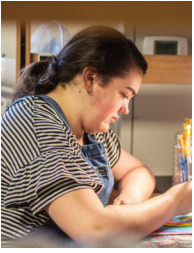
"People think they can push you over because you're a young female entrepreneur," Murray said. "They might not take me seriously. They might think I'm not mature enough to handle the deal, so that can be a little bit frustrating."

Earnshaw said she doesn't encounter many issues as a female entrepreneur, considering her clients are mostly college women. Her business, Paint By Annie, sells custom canvases.

Earnshaw said this entrepreneurial spirit was instilled in her from a young age and inspired her to start her own business. Earnshaw's mother recently decided to quit her corporate job to pursue her own passion of interior design.



Livi Murray



Annie Earnshaw

"I was raised by an entrepreneur, and even when she wasn't directly 'entrepreneurial,' she instilled those values in me of working hard, finding your niche and being creative," Earnshaw said. "I really like the idea of being my own boss and creating something that I think is worthwhile."

As Earnshaw prepares to go abroad during her junior year, she realized combining her passion for painting as a way to make money would help fund her travels. And her favorite part is the lasting impact her canvases have on her clients.

"The nature of canvases on college campuses, especially in sororities, is that they change hands so many times," Earnshaw said. "The idea that my canvases are going to stay in people's greek families, and they're something that they will value and cherish for several years to come, that's my favorite part — the fact that I'm creating something that is going to help them make memories."

Breaking norms in the field

While only 15 percent of deans in the medical field are women, Neiduski defies the odds

Alexandra Schonfeld & Caitlin Rundle
Elon News Network | @elonnewsnetwork

Four of the six academic deans at Elon University are women. Rebecca Neiduski, dean of the School of Health Sciences, is one of them.

Neiduski started her career as an occupational therapist in St. Louis, Missouri, after receiving her doctorate of philosophy in education and Master of Science in Occupational Therapy at Washington University.

"I think the hard work is what gets you there, and don't misunderstand that part," Neiduski said. "It's a lot of work, and you really have to be dedicated and passionate, and you have to be willing to pursue excellence, and you've got to be strong."



Rebecca Neiduski

A 2018 study from the National Institutes of Health showed only 15 percent of deans in a medical field were women. Growing up with two females in executive leadership positions in her family, Neiduski knew she had the ability to be a leader.

"I think having women in leadership roles affords young women at Elon and even outside in our community to really think about themselves in those positions, to think about the skill sets it takes, but to also really be able to think about or understand that those are things that they too can accomplish," Neiduski said.

Neiduski's reach extends beyond the classroom. Sophomore Samantha Briggs met Neiduski and her husband Mike during Move-In weekend last year. Briggs' father established a relationship with the pair that later led to Briggs joining the Neiduskis for weekly Sunday night dinners. "Becky," as Briggs calls her, has turned into a mother-like figure for Briggs while she's at Elon.

"She's one of the most caring people I have ever met," Briggs said. Briggs said she doesn't think she would have fostered the kind of relationship she has found with the Neiduskis at any other school, and she credits Elon for that. She said Rebecca is constantly doing things for others and has the best intentions in doing so.

"She's very, very involved," Briggs said. "I feel like she really empowers being a female leader. Getting her voice heard and making sure she's a part of everything."

"Everyone should get the chance to know her," Briggs said. Four of the six academic deans at Elon University are women. Rebecca Neiduski, dean of the School of Health Sciences, is one of them.

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Dean Ford approaches end of first year in position

Ford looks to continue to address issues she sees within the school

Maya Eaglin
News Director | @meaglin14

One of the many well-accomplished women making history at Elon University is Rochelle Ford. Ford, who will soon be celebrating her first year as dean of the School of Communications, is the first black female to hold the role.

"It's a big job," Ford said. "But what excited me is that there's



Rochelle Ford

so many people dedicated to Elon that faculty members stay after school and work one-on-one with students on the weekend."

Ford received degrees from Howard University, the University of Maryland, Southern Illinois University and Harvard University and has spent much of her career in teaching. After working at Howard and Syracuse University for several years, Ford finally made her way to Elon.

From being inducted into the National PRWeek Hall of Fame to bringing a PR Agency Careers Diversity and Inclusion Panel Discussion to campus, Ford has prided her accomplishments as moving in the era of excellence. But Ford's accomplishments are not without its obstacles.

"My biggest challenge was helping to come up with an administrative structure where all of the majors and disciplines within the School of Communications would have an administrator or faculty administrator or program director that they could go to and find support," Ford said.

And her hard work has not gone unnoticed by her colleagues.

"Certainly she is different from any other dean we've had here," said Don Grady, associate dean of the School of Communications. "She's really involved, and she's very ambitious and wants to do a lot of things very quickly."

Grady has been with Elon since 1985, starting as a department chair for the School of the Communications and working his way to an associate dean and professor.

"She's been very active in the projects in her short time here. She's jumped right in," Grady said. "I think she will succeed, and certainly as an associate dean, I'm committed to do all I can to help."

Ford said she is planning to launch the new structure in June with the support of her colleagues. Many of the changes have been made to combat concerns of the program growing too large.

"We [will] make sure our infrastructure is flexible enough that students can still find that one-on-one attentive person that's going to help them," Ford said.

But for Ford, the needs of students are not always acknowledged or sufficiently supported by the university.

"We have students who want to study abroad or do an internship in the city where they don't live," Ford said.

According to the University 2018-2019 Fact Book, there are 1,267 undergraduate students in the School of Communications, all of whom are required to complete at least one professional internship before graduation.

"We need help and doing what we do best so that all of our students, regardless of their socioeconomic level, regardless of if they're first or 20th generation college student, that all of them have an equal playing ground of opportunity," Ford said.

As her first work anniversary approaches, Ford said there's no better place to accomplish her goals.

"Elon is a place where it has energy about creating something new. How do we make something that's already good, even better?" Ford said. "I think that's what we've attempted to do together as a team."

ROCHELLE FORD
DEAN OF COMMUNICATIONS

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DEGREES

4

Ford has received four degrees from Howard University, the University of Maryland, Southern Illinois University and Harvard University.

Sounds of the future: Women in audio engineering

Conference celebrates women in music production and recording arts

Emery Eisner

Elon News Network | @eisneremery

For the first time at Elon University, women studying music production and recording arts will be able to come together to learn about their trade and discuss womanhood in the industry at the Leading Women in Audio Conference on March 15-16.

The conference “seeks to begin a conversation on campus and in the field” about women’s experiences in the music industry, according to its mission statement. It will focus on the contributions of women in the modern music industry, bringing in female music professionals to lead sessions and panel discussions, according to the conference’s website.

The sessions featured will include presentations on topics such as television sound production, mixing in pop and hip hop and being a female entrepreneur in the industry. The panel discussions will center around professionalism, managing the workplace and career development. In addition, the conference will feature networking opportunities with local businesses and studio owners as well as a banquet at which President Connie Book is scheduled to speak, according to co-chair of the conference Jessica Burchett.



ABBY GIBBS | PHOTO EDITOR

ence Jessica Burchett.

Fred Johnson, lecturer in music, initially approached Burchett and her co-chair, Natalie Sulzinger, about the project.

“[Johnson] had such a clear vision from the beginning of what he wanted this to look like, and it was a big task,” Burchett said. This idea, she said, came at the perfect time.

With 2018 dubbed “the year of the woman,” and with Elon’s first female president taking office last year, Burchett said

feminism in music was “definitely kind of a timely topic, so it had been on my mind a lot already. ... Natalie and I care about feminism in every domain, and obviously this is our school, and this is our program, so we wanted to bring it to that space.”

Sulzinger also feels strongly about bringing feminism into the audio industry.

“Being someone who wants to go into the audio industry after graduation this is cause that will directly affect me after

Elon,” Sulzinger said. She added that she “definitely noticed the lack of females in [her] music classes and lack of female professors, ... but sometimes as a student you don’t know what action can or is being taken.”

Elon students as well as high school students from Weaver Academy and schools in the Alamance-Burlington school system are registered to attend, which Burchett hopes will help the conference achieve its goals.

Junior Natalie Sulzinger works in the recording studio before the Leading Women in Audio Conference.

IF YOU GO...

To register for the two-day conference, visit elon.edu/u/leading-women-in-audio/registration/

FEMALE AUDIO ENGINEERS

5%

Women working in professional audio make up just 5 percent of all audio engineers.

“This is the Leading Women in Audio Conference, but we want everyone of any gender to be there,” Burchett said. “It’s just as important for young men in the field to see women leading the field as it is for young women because that’s how you learn to create a supportive environment so that we can work together and feel comfortable and make great music. That’s the whole point.”

Burchett said the conference, which is sponsored by The Fund for Excellence in the Arts and Sciences as well as Elon’s music department and music production and recording arts program, has seen rallying support from all over campus.

Burchett hopes to see this reflected in other feminist-themed conferences around campus. “Hopefully this kind of becomes a trend.”

ELON EATS

Local pizza spot offers fresh tastes and quick service

Reno’s Pizza and Italian Restaurant sits just a few minutes away from campus

Katie Cabral

Elon News Network | @reporterstwitter

A local Italian restaurant with a homey feel is only a seven-minute drive from Elon University’s campus. Reno’s Pizza and Italian Restaurant serves pizza, pasta and subs, has a salad bar and more. They also serve beer and wine.

Though Reno’s is not a fast-food restaurant, the wait is short. Behind the counter, customers can see the wood oven where the pizzas are cooked and the chef is hard at work.

Reno’s is not only a sit-down restaurant, but they also have carryout as well, and the menu can be found online. The steak and cheese sub and the macaroni and cheese with broccoli are owner Tiffany Lattero’s favorite meals to order.

“I like anything with an Alfredo sauce,” Lattero said. “So I like to do our macaroni and cheese with broccoli in it. Our macaroni and cheese is really just Alfredo sauce with three times more cheese in it. And then I throw a little broccoli in it to make me feel a little better.”

Reno’s Pizza opened up in 2007 and is part of the Gibsonville community.

“We do sort of cater to the families of the communities. And, you know, it’s laid back, it’s pretty chill,”

““

WE DO SORT OF CATER TO THE FAMILIES OF THE COMMUNITIES. AND, YOU KNOW, IT’S LAID BACK, IT’S PRETTY CHILL.

TIFFANY LATTERO
RESTAURANT OWNER

Lattero said.

Reno’s Pizza is family owned too. Almost 75 percent of the staff are family members, according to Lattero. Tiffany and her husband Lui own the restaurant and pride themselves on fresh ingredients and family values. There were many families dining in at Reno’s Pizza this past Sunday as it is family owned and family friendly. But what about students?

“It’s more local. But it seems some years we have more of a student population here. And then other years we don’t. And then the next year we’ll have a bigger group. It’s odd. It kind of goes in waves,” Lattero said.

Elon sophomore Emma Fritts tried Reno’s Pizza’s cheese pizza for herself. “The cheese is very creamy. It melts in your mouth. It’s delicious, and it’s perfectly salted. Oh, and the cheese is greasy. I’d say 9.8 out of 10. Cheesy, delicious, but a little greasy.



KATIE CABRAL | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

The classic cheese pizza is a popular choice at Reno’s Pizza and Italian Restaurant.

The tomato sauce is very fresh. The bread is also very fresh,” Fritts said.

Lattero wishes more Elon students like Fritts would come to their pizzeria.

“We would love to have more students come. I mean, we are not in Elon. I think that’s what’s always been the stopper sometimes — is if it’s not right directly there. It’s not on campus, it’s not on the Bio Bus route,” Lattero said.

FAMILY STAFF MEMBERS

~75%

Almost 75 percent of the staff at Reno’s Pizza and Italian Restaurant are family members.

IF YOU GO...

Location: 119 E. Main Street, Gibsonville, NC 27249
Hours: Monday–Thursday: 10:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.
Friday–Saturday: 10:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m.
Sunday: 11:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.



PAINTING A PERFORMANCE

Chroma, the dance department's spring concert, explores color in dance

Brian Rea

Event Coverage Co-Coordinator | @brianmrea

The sound of waves crashing against the sand, backdrops of deep blue and purple and dancers dressed in all black.

These are some of the sights and sounds of Chroma, the dance department's spring concert. The word "chroma" means the purity or intensity of color. While some pieces in the show have colorful costumes and lights, Renay Aumiller, assistant professor of dance and artistic director of Chroma, says others are colorful in a metaphorical way.

"I really wanted to bring a theme that was unifying for every piece and every choreographer, but I wanted a theme that could be abstract so that each choreographer didn't feel limited," Aumiller said. "I wanted them to feel that there is freedom in creating works that they wanted to create."

Aumiller said while each piece is different, there is a theme linked through all of them — color.

"We have work that is very serious, but we also have really fun and quirky work," Aumiller said. "There's ballet that's done to hip hop, there's a dance that takes place in a 16-foot box and none of the dancers ever leave that."

One piece called "Noir" features dancers in all black costumes and explores the absence of color. Sophomore dance major Jenna Kulacz said the movement in the piece gives it color.

"The intricacy of it is colorful because there are so many different shades of textures and sharp movement and soft movement," Kulacz said. "And I think that's

what makes it wide on the color spectrum."

Kulacz said color hues are an important part of the storytelling behind dance.

"In dance, colors can mean like bright purple explosive movement," Kulacz said. "And then like a deep green can mean more like subdued and soft."

Kulacz has been dancing since she was 8 years old. She said the two pieces she's performing in Chroma are her favorite pieces she's ever performed because they push her physically.

"One of them is extremely long, and the other one is also very physical with a lot of lifting," Kulacz said. "It's mostly about learning when to give it my all and go full out. I wanted to kind of find something else to make the performance special."

To give her body a break, she uses other techniques like facial expressions to tell the story.

While Kulacz enjoys the physical challenge of dance, she thinks most people don't understand the

work that goes into putting on a show like Chroma.

"It requires a lot to be a dance major for sure," Kulacz said. "You have to be full force in it, or it's not going to be for you. But for someone like me, I love to work hard, so that's never a problem for me."

The week leading up to the performance is often full of long rehearsals. Chroma is the final bow for senior dance major Rachel Linsky. Even as a senior preparing for graduation, Linsky still feels the pressure of putting on a show.

"It's definitely been a lot of work to be in rehearsal every day, 6 to 9 [p.m.]," Linsky said. "And to hold so much choreography in my brain, learning all these pieces, and now I think it's just really exciting to finally like have all the pieces finished to feel



Senior Victoria Bond mirrors junior Arianna Shahin during the rehearsal for the Chroma dance concert.

confident."

Lifting each other up

Despite directing other projects, this is Aumiller's first time artistically directing the spring dance concert. She said she's enjoyed having the teamwork of the dancers, choreographers and behind-the-scenes workers.

"There's this energy that has been created and cultivated by the faculty and students, and the wide array of experiences that the audience can have just by showing up is something that I think is really unique and exciting," Aumiller said.

For Kulacz, dancing with a group is her favorite experience.

"You know they have your back, they're there for you," Kulacz said. "You come off the stage and know that you nailed it with your group, and there's a feeling of family in that."

The community Kulacz has found in her program helps her advance as a dancer.

"It's easy to get comfortable and, you know, let them flip you around and let them like knock you upside down, which is literally my whole piece, I'm being lifted," Kulacz said. "I have fallen in rehearsal, but it's like I trust that they'll be there."

In between run-throughs, Kulacz and Aumiller sit outside McCrary Theatre to talk about the show's progress. Kulacz said the

ABBY GIBBS | PHOTO EDITOR

Above: Junior Olivia Haskell practices her solo dance for the Chroma dance concert.

IF YOU GO...

Location: McCrary Theatre

Dates: March 14-17

Cost: \$15 or free with Phoenix Card. Tickets can be purchased at the box office in the Center for the Arts.

mentorship found in faculty is encouraging.

"They seriously are the most supportive group of mentors for all of us," Kulacz said. "They want us to succeed. They want us to thrive. And you know, it's really, really special to be able to have these types of mentors in our life that really support us."

Reaching an audience

As a dancer herself, Linsky said modern dance can be abstract and hard to understand. But she appreciates when non-dancers come to see the show.

"It's always really exciting when my friends from outside of the department come and really enjoy a piece or really connect with something and take an interest in modern dance for that reason," Linsky said.

Even if someone doesn't have a background in dance, Kulacz thinks anyone can connect with the pieces in Chroma.

"It's a form of entertainment, just like a Netflix show or going to see a movie," Kulacz said. "If anything, it's better because it's in person, it's live. Like the motions are real, the feelings are real, it's raw."

Kulacz hopes the audience leaves feeling both entertained and inspired. But for Aumiller, she wants the audience to think.

"I hope that they get to challenge their own curiosity in terms of looking and exploring how each choreographer may have approached Chroma," Aumiller said.

ONLINE:
For more sports coverage, visit elonnewsnetwork.com

SPORTS

PHOENIX TRYING TO THREE-PEAT

The Elon women’s basketball team is headed to Delaware to defend its title for the second year in a row

Jack Haley
Sports Director | @jackhaley17

Elon University women’s basketball will trek north to Newark, Delaware to attempt a second defense of their Colonial Athletic Association title on Wednesday. The Phoenix enters the bracket as the No. 8 seed and is set to square off with the Hofstra University Pride in its first-round matchup.

How they got here

The Phoenix (9-20, 4-14) look very different than they did a year ago heading into the tournament. Elon lost 13 of its last 15 games before beginning postseason play, and it looks as though the youth of the team may have caught up to it. While the team’s story has been the same for the past few years, Elon has also been anchored by some really strong upperclassmen — the Shay Burnetts and the Meme Garners of the group. But they are lacking that this year. The oldest players on the team are junior guards Lexi Mercer and Jada Graves, who are the only players left on the team to have won two CAA titles already.

The team struggled through a grueling non-conference schedule that was highlighted by their opening game against the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The Phoenix lost more than just the game that night as Graves went down for the season with a leg injury, leaving Mercer to run the team by herself.

Elon looked as if it was sleepwalking through the conference portion of its schedule as well, putting up 10 double-digit losses in 18 games. Part of this was due to the absence of Graves, but what also showed was a young team still trying to mesh together to form a cohesive unit, all while competing.

Who to watch for

Lexi Mercer has been the heartbeat of this team all season, constantly hustling to make plays. Mercer consistently put up strong numbers for the Phoenix and was on pace to average 10 points and lead the core of guards. But she has fallen silent re-



Sophomore forward Emily Maupin fights for a rebound against Towson on Feb. 24 in a 59-50 loss.

cently. After scoring 22 points against the College of Charleston, Mercer scored just 12 points in the last seven games of the season to crawl across the finish line and get to the tournament. If she plays well, then the team plays well. But if she is struggling, then head coach Charlotte Smith is forced to look towards capable but inconsistent scorers like sophomore guards Ariel Colon or Saadia Munford.

Sophomore forward Emily Maupin has been a breakout star for Elon. Averaging six rebounds and almost 12 points a game, Maupin is able to impose her will in the paint for the Phoenix. More than 40 percent of her rebounds have been on offense, and many of those turn into second-chance points for the team, whether that is her putting away a miss on her own or finding an open teammate.

The opponent

Now the good news for Elon is they have already beaten Hofstra twice this year, including once this past weekend as its last win of the regular season. This win featured balanced scoring by the Phoenix, who were able to put four scorers over the 10-point mark, none of which was Mercer.

This was a win that showed the team is capable of winning even when Mercer is quiet, which is going to be crucial.

The first win of the season against Hofstra showcased Elon’s shooting ability, with the team connecting on over half of its field goals. This game once again was one without Mercer in double digits and one where Maupin had 18 points and five rebounds.

The most recent win for Elon was not a pretty one. Elon was just barely better than its opponent in a bad shooting game for both sides. The Phoenix were the better shooting side with 35 percent of field goals made. Woof. But this game once again showed the capability of Elon to succeed in spite of poor individual performances from key players. Maupin and Mercer combined for seven points in the game, but four Phoenix still eclipsed the 10-point mark. This team is seeming to hint that the key will not be which one player will show up, but rather if they can achieve as a team.

The winner of the opening round matchup gets the task of playing James Madison University on Thursday, March 14, who outscored Elon by a combined 80 points in the two meetings this year.

Rough year for men’s basketball finally over

The first 20-loss season in nine years ended at the hands of UNC Wilmington in the first round of the CAA Tournament

Jack Haley
Sports Director | @JackHaley17

For the fourth time in a row, Elon University men’s basketball saw its season end in the first round of the Colonial Athletic Association (CAA) Tournament in North Charleston, South Carolina. This season ended at the hands of the University of North Carolina Wilmington Seahawks, a team Elon had beaten twice earlier in the year.

This season was by and large one to forget for the Phoenix, except for the opening of the year. In what may now be a distant memory to some, the Phoenix welcomed in the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Tar Heels to a packed Schar Center. Though the outcome was expectedly lopsided, the game echoed the excitement generated about the new facility.

“This was an event that’s been talked about for a long, long time,” said head coach Matt Matheny after the occasion.

Following an unsuccessful trip to California over Thanksgiving, Elon was faced with a big decision regarding one of the main features of its senior class. Guard Dainan Swoope was still battling an ankle injury that was clearly bothering him last year, and hindered his start to the season.

HOME COURT DISADVANTAGE

Of the 16 home games in Schar Center, eight of them had stands under 30 percent full while only three games had more than half the seats filled.

After being sidelined by the injury, Matheny decided enough was enough and Swoope’s season would be over.

“We’ve made the decision that Dainan’s going to have surgery and end his year,” Matheny said. While it would have been a sad way to end his Elon career, Swoope has been granted a medical redshirt and will return next year for the Phoenix.

Elon got its first win of the conference season against James Madison University in the second game of CAA play. While that helped kickstart its year, Elon could never settle into a rhythm. It took until the last two games of the year for Elon to have back-to-back wins.

Headed into the CAA Tournament, Elon won four of five games, jumping from the last team in the conference to No. 7 going down to the tournament. Elon seemed to be rolling, and Elon drew UNCW in the first round. The only team Elon has beaten twice this year would have to play the mighty Phoenix again — this time for all the marbles. But as it turned out, Elon was unable to make three a magic number and lost to UNCW the only time it truly mattered.

This seven-point loss spelled the end for four seniors, who gave everything they could to the program throughout their college careers. With three seconds left in the North Charleston Coliseum, two seniors, guard Steven Santa Ana and forward Tyler Seibring, each shared an emotional embrace with Matheny one last time while wearing an Elon uniform.

These last tender seconds served as a reminder that while sports are in fact about results, it is easy to forget the human nature of competition. No one wants to see these players heartbroken, but it is the side effect of having a winner — also of having a loser.

So yes, it is fair to say that Elon men’s basketball was full of losing moments this year, but those times make the small yet powerful winning moments of the year even more enjoyable. Seibring’s shot to beat Delaware with seconds left, beating UNCW in Wilmington or trouncing Towson to end the season are all made sweeter by that perfect balance of knowing all too well how it feels to be on the other side of those outcomes.



Sophomore guard Ariel Colon shoots over a College of William and Mary defender on Feb. 17 in a 64-59 loss at Schar Center.