

THE PENDULUM

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Alana Romans
Senior Reporter

LaTony Galloway still remembers how the cold, steel handcuffs felt on his wrists the first time he was arrested.

By the time Galloway was 22, he would be in and out of prison for the next 15 years, stuck in an endless cycle with no way to escape.

Welcome to the world of a past offender. Galloway, who is now 37, said he remembers sleeping on the floor at the Alamance County Jail for almost two months. In 15 years, he said he has seen more than his share of overcrowded jail cells and court-appointed lawyers.

Galloway is one of the many repeat offenders in North Carolina. After finding himself

homeless upon his most recent release from prison three years ago, Galloway decided it was time to make a change.

"I wanted to change my life," he said.

Galloway found job assistance through Sustainable Alamance, an organization that aims to help reintegrate past offenders into society. "I didn't want to go back to jail. I didn't want to do prison, because I wouldn't wish that on my worst enemy."

Recidivism in North Carolina and United States

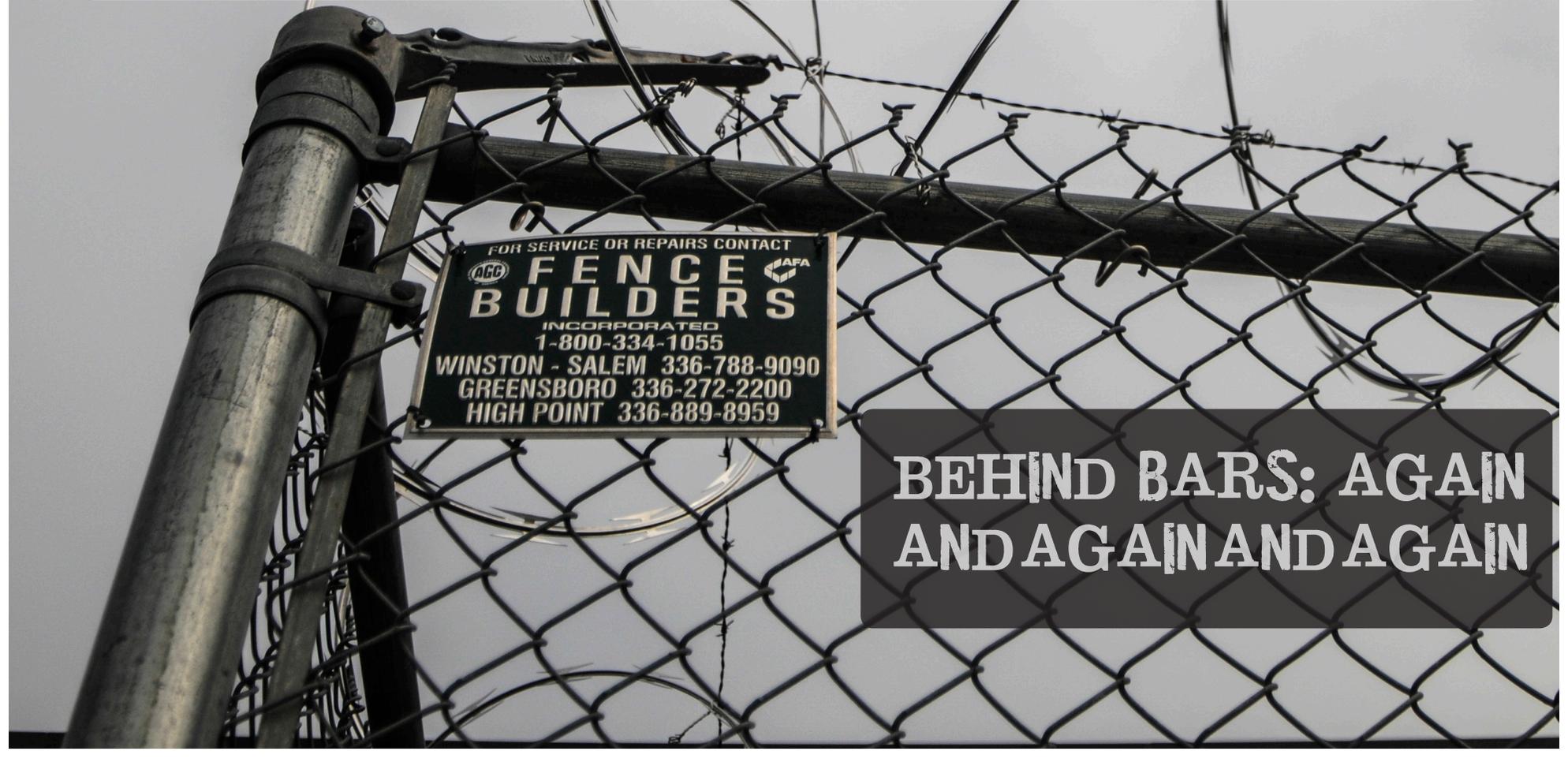
While his goals are admirable and certainly attainable, Galloway is fighting an uphill battle against local, statewide and national statistics. Each point to massive numbers of incarcerated

individuals and unwavering statistical evidence of recidivism across the United States.

In a biennial study conducted by the North Carolina Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, recidivism corresponds to any past offender's repeated criminal activity that results in a rearrest or reincarceration. The most recent survey, which evaluated recidivism following the 2008-09 fiscal year, noted that North Carolina rates have remained steady during the past 20 years.

From 1989 to 2009, rearrest rates stayed between 31 and 36 percent. The most noticeable jump occurred between the 2005-06 fiscal year and now, rising more than 3 percent.

See BEHIND BARS page 3



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**BEHIND BARS: AGAIN
AND AGAIN AND AGAIN**

Table of Contents

Wednesday, February 5, 2014 • page 2

in this EDITION...

8

As North Carolina universities expand, school officials propose gender inclusive housing

14

Winter term class to publish book on culture shock after returning from studying abroad

16

With the help of his friends, Gabriel Noble campaigns for funds to graduate

23

New starting lineup brings fresh start to men's basketball



8



14



16



22

Cover Photo by Caroline Olney

THE PENDULUM

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FEBRUARY

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			5 "Much Ado About Nothing" 7:30 p.m. Black Box Theatre	6 Men's Basketball vs. UNCG 7 p.m. Alumni Gym	7 SUBLive: Winter Olympics Opening Ceremony 8:30 p.m. Moseley 215	8 Men's Basketball vs. Georgia Southern 7 p.m. Alumni Gym
9 Miss Representation film screening 2 p.m. Yeager Recital Hall	10 Women's Basketball vs. Davidson 7 p.m. Alumni Gym	11 Croatian LGBT film 7 p.m. McEwen 001	12 "How to Read Catholic Folk Art" w/ Leonard Norman Primiano 7:30 p.m. Yeager Recital Hall	13 "1776: The Musical" 7:30 p.m. McCrary Theatre	14 Baseball vs. Cincinnati 4 p.m. Latham Park	15 SUBCinema presents "Delivery Man" 8 p.m. Irazu Coffee Shop
16 Men's Tennis vs. Greensboro 1 p.m. Jimmy Powell Tennis Center	17 Professional Discovery Week begins Student Professional Development Center	18 Baseball vs NC State 4 p.m. Latham Park				

For a complete list of our staff, please visit ElonPendulum.com/staff.

BEHIND BARS

from cover

Michael Abernethy has been the court reporter at the Burlington Times-News in North Carolina for the past three years. He believes Alamance County definitely faces issues with recidivism, and attributes it mainly to one thing.

“A lot of recidivism that I see is due to chronic substance abuse,” Abernethy said. “[Repeat offenders] commit crimes to support their habits.”

In a broader sense, issues with recidivism stem from fundamental problems within United States prisons on a national level. The U.S. Department of Justice estimated that almost 1.6 million individuals are currently incarcerated in the United States. Yet this was not always the case. The Pew Center on the States reported a 705 percent growth of the number of prison inmates between 1973 and 2009.

As U.S. prisons grow larger, the number of repeat offenders also rises. The Pew analysis observed that in 2009, 43 percent of past offenders were projected to face reincarceration within three years.

A trickle-down effect is apparent in North Carolina, as recidivism has clearly not spared the state. Keren Rivas is the Assistant Director of Alumni Communications at Elon University. After serving at the Burlington Times-News as the court reporter for five years, Rivas said she has seen a great deal into the silent world of recidivism. She recognizes the

lingering effects a stint in prison can have on a person’s life.

“When you have a felony record, your world is a completely different world,” Rivas said.

Rivas thinks society should look past the convictions because recidivism is only a part of what you see. She said beyond the sentence served, reincarceration affects the job hunt, often leads to mental health issues and hinders a prior inmate’s reintegration into society. Rivas believes one of the first steps towards decreased incarceration and recidivism rates starts within the community. She views government programs as unreliable and instead turns to programs like Sustainable Alamance.

It takes community effort

Phil Bowers is the founder and executive director of Sustainable Alamance, a program that founded in 2008 that helps former inmates reintegrate into their communities. In the past five years, Bowers and his team have helped more than 40 men find full time employment upon their release from prison. The program has assisted another 50 men in obtaining day labor and temporary work.

Bowers is adamant about one thing: Sustainable Alamance focuses on rehabilitation into society through job placement and a hard work ethic, not free handouts. He said that for every 10 people referred to the program, only one will show up because they expect food stamps or free meals.



ALANA ROMANS | Senior Reporter

Phil Bowers is the founder and executive director of Sustainable Alamance. He said repeat offenders have so much against them that finding gainful employment is difficult at best, impossible at worst.

“We’re talking about putting lives together. What we’re trying to do is much bigger than a job,” Bowers said.

Bowers understands that it is the program’s developmental model that confuses many inquirers. The model works off of a two-pronged approach of evangelism and economic development. Sustainable Alamance aims to aid in job employment, job training and job placement, all in correlation with the

following Bible passage from James 2:14-16.

“What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,’ but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it?”

For Phil Bowers, Sustainable Alamance’s goal is to help those in need through hard work and motivation. While Bowers said the program’s slogan is still in the works, he shared the unofficial mantra: “To use the underutilized human resource to build a stronger and more sustainable community.”

As Bowers sees it, rebuilding a sustainable community starts with each person’s will and determination. Bowers is there to jumpstart the process. This was the case with Barney Love Jr., who started attending Sustainable Alamance meetings in 2012 when his unemployment benefits ran out.

Love, who was first arrested at 14, is familiar with both the jail and prison systems. Spending multiple stints in



ALANA ROMANS | Senior Reporter

Thousands of repeat offenders cycle through the Alamance County Criminal Courts Building each year, one of many such places throughout the country.

juvenile detention as a teenager, Love was arrested for driving without a license and possession of cocaine and marijuana during his first year of adulthood. Since then, he has spent two years in prison for fleeing arrest and five years for robbery.

It was Love's most recent five-year sentence (he was released in 2008) that proved to be his last.

"One night I wanted some drugs and I didn't have the money," Love said. "So the store was right around the corner from me and I robbed the store. I didn't get but \$30. Five years and I got \$30."

New environment

It is past offenders like Galloway and Love who carry the burden of a repeat offender every day. As a past offender, it becomes increasingly difficult to escape their past environment, find a stable job and ultimately make a full reintegration into society. Bowers explained that finding a job is a past offender's biggest obstacle. The second is finding housing.

One of the keys to combatting recidivism rates is to understand the influences behind the numbers. In terms of repeat offenders, this means looking at

the penitentiary system as a whole — on local, state and national levels.

Aaron Peeks is an assistant professor of sociology at Elon. During his seven-year tenure, Peeks has taught several classes in the criminal justice realm, including Drugs and Society and an intro-level criminology class. Peeks believes a person's background and current environment play a huge role in the likelihood of repeat offenses.

"I think a lot of the reasons we have this recidivism rate is that we are not necessarily changing the conditions that these individuals are coming from that leads to their criminal offending in the first place," Peeks said.

Simply changing a repeat offender's environment — and subsequently their behavior — is easier said than done. Love, of all people, knows it's true. After circulating through the system for almost 15 years, it might be difficult to blame his past on his inability to get up and change his surroundings.

"If I'd had a different path to go through, but like I said you are born into the environment you're meant to be born into," Love said. "Sometimes you're just an example to other people. It's never too



ALANA ROMANS | Senior Reporter

The average cost of a yearly incarcerated inmate is more than the equivalent of many new cars.

late."

During his final stint in prison, Love realized he was done. After transferring from eight different prisons during his five-year sentence, he was ready to break free of the system that held him down for so many years.

"Some people don't want to get out and do right. Some people aint looking for that, to get out and do right," Love said. "You can tell people where a job is and where it's going to hire them, and they don't want to work because from my experience, work is time."

Taking leap, making change

With a 2010 inmate population of 56,656, New York is no stranger to the penitentiary system. After receiving convictions of assault in the first degree, weapon possession and use of a weapon, Marlon Peterson was welcomed into prison with a 12-year sentence.

Peterson explained spending that amount of time in prison takes a serious psychological and emotional toll. He said people who are able to rise above the system are constantly fighting an

upstream battle.

"You have to fight for your own sanity in there," Peterson said. "You have to convince yourself that you are a human being."

And fight he did. During his sentence, Peterson was contacted by a seventh grade teacher whose students were having difficulty with decision-making. It was here that Peterson decided to create the Young Scholars Program. Every other week Peterson created a lesson plan that was then presented to the class on Friday afternoons.

For over a year, the class wrote letters to Peterson every two weeks and he would respond with personalized letters to each student.

"In prison I realized early on what got me to prison," Peterson said. "Even though I came from the same inner city hood — the ghetto — I was blessed to have a half decent education. I was able to use this education that I had to empower other folks who are going through similar things that I went through."

The program ended when the teacher changed schools, so Peterson moved on and formed HOLLA: How Our Lives



ALANA ROMANS | Senior Reporter

In a ranking of the states with the highest numbers of prisoners, North Carolina doesn't crack the top 10.

Link Altogether, with some of his fellow inmates.

In 2009, Peterson was released from prison two years early. He took with him HOLLA's ideals, and the program was implemented in Brownsville Middle School.

The program resembled the Young Scholars and met each Friday to encourage positive decision-making skills. Eventually Peterson left the program to pursue work at SOS: Save Our Streets, which is an anti-violence program. After working as a violence interrupter, Peterson became a founding coordinator at YO SOS: Youth Organizing to Save Our Streets.

Peterson exemplifies a past offender's ability to reintegrate into society post-prison. Today he serves as the director of community relations at the Fortune Society. The organization, which is in its 46th year, aims to help individuals make smooth transitions back into society.

Peterson has chosen to give back to the community that helped make his transition so successful. He said he owes the majority of this to his family, who provided financial support to help Peterson run his programs after his release.

Ultimately, Peterson reflects on his prison experience as an extremely difficult challenge, one that he does not want to revisit.

"It was hell," he said.

Breaking free

While Bowers said obtaining a job is the primary step, Peek disagrees. He said he doesn't think job placement is necessarily a good indication of decreased criminal activity.

"Just because somebody gets a job doesn't mean they stop committing crime," Peeks said. "In fact, what I would argue is, we focus on street crime right? And we say 'oh well look at these criminals, they're not committing crimes anymore because they haven't been rearrested.' Well, you engage in a lot of criminal activity before you're arrested in the first place, right? So you didn't just commit one crime and that's why you're arrested; you're actually engaged in a whole bunch of crime and then you got unlucky one time."

Peeks said he believes education is



Pictured is a temporary location where Sustainable Alamance meets, as Bowers hopes to secure the Rainy Street Hospital as the organization's future meeting location.

ALANA ROMANS | Senior Reporter

key, yet realizes it is a controversial topic. The dilemma quickly becomes going to prison and receiving free education versus not committing a crime and paying for education.

Looking at it as a long-term investment, Peeks said to compare the cost of housing an inmate versus providing them with schooling.

According to the N.C. Department of Public Safety, as of 2012 the average annual cost of prison incarceration per inmate was \$27,572. According to the College Board, the average annual cost of a public four-year college per instate student is \$8,655.

"The thing about the system is that it is not set up to be necessarily fair to individuals," Peeks said. "But if you didn't spend all that money on the criminal justice system, maybe you could provide free college for everybody."

Bowers said he believes Sustainable Alamance has the power to not only rebuild the community but simultaneously combat repeat offender rates in the county. He has the numbers to prove it, too.

Of the 40 men who found full-time employment through the help

of Sustainable Alamance, less than 10 percent have gone back into the jail or prison system.

The 10 percent returning to the system are a fraction of the majority who would otherwise find themselves behind bars, without the benefit of the program.

Galloway said he has Bowers to thank for his success after prison. He has been employed now for almost eight months at TS Design, working in the dye factory. While he was hesitant to join Sustainable Alamance at first, Galloway is thankful for the group.

"I'd rather do it myself, really," Galloway said. "But if I can get someone to help me along the way, that's great."

While reports indicate prison statistics are slowly declining on both national and state levels, local community members like Bowers and Rivas believe more can be done. Today, North Carolina currently houses almost 38,000 prison inmates. And according to Galloway, Love and Peterson, that is not a place where you want to go.

"Prison is not a good place to be," Peterson said. "It in no way encourages productivity, self-development or empowerment." §



Seniors



Info sessions:

January 22nd Moseley 140 @ 5:30 p.m.

February 11th Moseley 140 @ 5:30 p.m.

February 25th Moseley 140 @ 5:30 p.m.



Supreme Court abortion case could impact North Carolina

Michael Papich
Assistant News Editor

Forty years after the Supreme Court heard arguments in the case of *Roe v. Wade*, questions surrounding abortion were heard by the high court once again.

The case in question, *McCullen v. Coakley*, deals with a law in Massachusetts that prohibits anyone except faculty and patients from standing within 35 feet of a clinic that provides abortions. Essentially, the law is meant to prevent protesters from getting too close to an abortion clinic and those who provide or use its services.

While the Supreme Court is looking at a law in Massachusetts, Elon University law professor Steve Friedland said the high court's ruling could potentially impact all states.

"They could be very narrow and just say, 'This buffer zone in Massachusetts is no good, but we're still going to uphold the idea of buffer zones, which doesn't interfere with the freedom of speech,'" Friedland said. "But they could also go further and say, 'These buffer zones do interfere with the freedom of speech, and you have to come up with an alternative, like prosecuting individuals,' which is what Justice Scalia in the oral arguments proposed."

Steven Aden, an attorney with Alliance Defending Freedom on the side of the plaintiff in *McCullen v. Coakley*, argued that this case should guide the court in the future to not allow any similar buffer zone laws.

"Any law that creates a no-speech-zone on a public sidewalk is constitutionally suspect," he said.

Aden said Massachusetts has created zones where free speech is not allowed because they do not like what anti-abortion activists have to say and calls the law a "gross violation."

"From the beginning of the country, the Supreme Court has said that sidewalks, parks and public areas like that are places for public debate and public discourse and that they receive the highest amount of protection under free speech in the First Amendment," he said.

North Carolina does not have a buffer zone law like the one in Massachusetts, but



During last July's Moral Monday protests, large crowds gathered in Raleigh to oppose actions taken by the North Carolina State Legislature regarding abortion laws.

there are city ordinances around the state that enact similar boundaries. Paige Johnson, vice president of external affairs for Planned Parenthood Action Fund of Central North Carolina, said these ordinances have kept protests peaceful at the clinics where they operate.

"We have, on some occasions, had to call the police due to protestors getting too loud or pointed in their remarks toward patients or carrying signs that were too big to meet the requirements by the city, but for the most part, protestor activity is peaceful and we are fortunate to have the ordinances that keep them a safe distance away," Johnson said.

Both sides of the buffer

Johnson said the local law enforcement officials she works with are supportive of the buffer zones because they ensure the safety of all involved, including the protesters themselves.

"There have been issues in the past, though not something I can speak to seeing personally, where patients or their companions entering the building took issue with the protestors and an issue comes up. That's something law enforcement wants to avoid," Johnson said.

Part of the Supreme Court's deliberations in *McCullen v. Coakley* was whether the tone of those who want to speak to clinic workers or individuals seeking an abortion inside the buffer zone is relevant. Eleanor McCullen, the plaintiff in the case, is an elderly woman who told the court she wishes to talk calmly with those entering the clinic and does not want to protest.

"So it's not simply protestors, but it's also people who want to talk to, council, pray and do many other things with the individuals," Friedland said. "That might be relevant, it might not, but it's something that came up during oral arguments as a factor."

Melissa Reed, vice president of public

policy for Planned Parenthood Health Systems of Central North Carolina, described the type of activity she sees around her clinic as more disruptive.

"In Winston-Salem and at other sites, we frequently have protestors who yell at patients and staff and take pictures," Reed said.

Aden said McCullen and those like her should not be prevented from talking to those entering an abortion clinic, and any disruptive behavior that the buffer zone law says it attempts to bar is already against the law.

"Our clients – Eleanor McCullen and others – never engage in those kinds of things: blocking doors, obstruction, pulling on people," Aden said. "There are laws to take care of that, so there's no reason for these no-free-speech zones. It's just expediency for law enforcement and for officials in Massachusetts."

In 2000, the Supreme Court heard a similar case in *Hill v. Colorado* and upheld that state's buffer zone law. However, Colorado's law implemented an eight-foot "floating zone" around patients and staff, whereas Massachusetts' "floating zone" was struck down in 2000 for unfairly distinguishing between clinic staff and protestors.

One of North Carolina's own abortion laws was recently overturned when U.S. District Court Judge Catherine Eagles ruled that a North Carolina law requiring an ultrasound and a description of the fetus by the doctor before getting an abortion is unconstitutional.

In July, the North Carolina General Assembly also put into law a series of new regulations on abortion clinics, hailed as protecting patients' health and criticized as an attempt to restrict abortion providers by anti-abortion and pro-choice activists respectively.

Friedland, who has written books on constitutional law, said the case is not as simple as saying that the law cannot restrict someone's right to speech. In fact, there are many laws to prevent certain types of speech and expression, like obscenity or defamation.

"The First Amendment doesn't protect all speech, it protects the freedom of speech," Friedland said.

GE food fight sparks labeling debate between farm, lab

Katy Canada
Managing Editor

In 2013, 90 percent of all corn, beets and soybeans planted in the United States were genetically engineered (GE) according to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). This is a 65 percent increase since 2006.

According to Renee Maas from Food & Water Watch, a grassroots organization leading the campaign to get GE food labeled in North Carolina, the impacts of genetic engineering on American health are easily seen, but not so easily confirmed.

“It’s hard for doctors and scientists to link [health effects] to genetically engineered foods because they aren’t labeled,” she said, “so a lot of people don’t know if they’ve eaten them.”

Genetically engineered plants, also known as genetically modified organisms (GMOs), have been altered in order to display certain desirable characteristics and withstand heavy doses of herbicide or pesticides. GE commodity crops like corn, soy beans and beets appear in 70 percent of processed foods found on grocery store shelves.

But Americans are mostly unaware of this fact because ingredients that have been genetically engineered are not listed on the packaging. The United States is one of the only developed countries that doesn’t require GE labeling. In total, 64 different countries have labeling laws, including Japan, South Korea, China, Brazil and the entire European Union.

The United States saw its first federal legislation dealing with GE labeling in over a decade in August 2013. But more success has been achieved on the state level. In 2013, a total of 52 GE labeling bills from 26 different states were introduced.

Maine and Connecticut became the first U.S. states to require labeling on foods that contain GE ingredients in the summer of 2013. The most recent states to consider labeling laws are Rhode Island and Hawaii.

Shortly after Maine and Connecticut began requiring labeling, the Scientific



PHOTO COURTESY OF MCT CAMPUS
Geneticists at the International Fruit Genetics lab in California work with grape seeds to capture select traits from thousands of trial grapes and manufacture the perfect seed that will attract consumer tastes.

American published an article claiming that labeling GE foods would “intensify the misconception that so-called ‘Frankenfoods’ endanger people’s health.”

A 2012 study by French scientist Gilles-Eric Seralini found serious problems associated with GE foods, specifically issues with kidney and liver function. Met with criticism from the GE food industry, he was forced to retract his findings. According to Food & Water Watch, the retraction of Seralini’s study follows a history of suppression and censorship by the biotechnology companies.

The usual protocol surrounding a controversial scientific study is for additional studies to be carried out. But the major players in the GE industry pay hundreds of millions of dollars to fund research at public universities. Such funding consistently produces results that are favorable for the sponsors. All previous studies done on GE foods were performed by Monsanto, the leading producer of GE seed.

In fact, the USDA, the FDA and the Environmental Protection Agency don’t perform their own independent research. Instead, they rely on companies like Monsanto, who own the patents for GE seed.

“The industry that created genetically engineered food, they don’t want to see it labeled,” Maas said. “If people know that their food is genetically engineered, consumers would demand better food.”

Proponents like Maas argue that people have a right to know what they’re eating.

In November 2013, Washington state voters rejected an initiative to require GE labeling, USA Today reported, because labeling laws were considered too expensive.

According to Maas, companies change their labels frequently, often for rebranding or on specific occasions, such as a sweepstakes or holiday. The request, she said, is not unreasonable.

“The grocery industry has spent millions and millions of dollars on, sometimes, telling people outright lies about how much labeling would entail and how much it would actually cost,” Maas said.

Other opponents of labeling laws claim GE labeling would increase costs for the average family as much as \$600 per year. But in an independent study in the United Kingdom, a country with a comparable food market, the Food Standards Agency established that GE labeling would increase yearly food expenditures by only five American dollars at most.

Food and Drug Administration (FDA) employee Theresa Eisenman has noted the attention GE labeling has recently received.

“We recognize and appreciate the interest that some consumers have expressed in knowing whether a food was produced using genetic engineering,” she said. “The

FDA’s role is to ensure that foods under its purview meet applicable safety labeling and other regulatory requirements. Food derived from genetically engineered plants must meet the same requirements, including safety requirements, as other foods, such as foods derived from traditionally-bred plants.”

Eisenman also said that food manufacturers have the right to label foods that have been developed through genetic engineering, provided that such labeling is truthful and not misleading.

Some supporters of labeling GE foods take issue with the large quantities of herbicides and pesticides that accompany these seeds. Rochelle Sparko of the North Carolina Farm Stewardship Association said that these seeds are designed to resist certain chemicals that kill pests.

“When you dump a bunch of herbicide on the land, it ends up in the land. It ends up in the streams and the ground water,” Sparko said.

A study undertaken by Washington State University in 2012 discovered that the overuse of these chemicals are creating herbicide-resistant “super weeds” that require about 25 percent more herbicide to eradicate each year.

The study also found that the amount of herbicides used each year had increased by about 1.5 million pounds. This problem is most pronounced for farmers who are forced to pay an increasingly high rate for herbicides to maintain their crops.

“Our major concern with GMOs is that we just don’t know enough yet about whether they are safe,” Sparko said. “We do know that there are concerns with the herbicide use that goes along with GMO growing. GMO labeling is a way to let consumers know that those kinds of herbicide have been used in the food.”

While the Farm Stewardship Association supports labeling laws for GE foods, Sparko said the agencies fighting such laws outspend supporters by about 10-1.

“When there’s a ballot initiative, the GMO companies will spend thousands of dollars to try and convince people that they actually don’t want to know what’s in their food,” she said.

Gender-inclusive housing expands

Simone Jasper
Senior Reporter

For many North Carolina students who don't conform to socially-constructed gender norms, gender-inclusive housing on college campuses is a big deal. An increasing number of universities, including Elon University, offer options that allow students identifying with any gender to live together.

Nearly 100 colleges and universities nationwide offer some form of gender-inclusive housing to students. Proponents of this type of housing argue that it offers comfortable living scenarios for LGBTQ students because the option does not force them to live with students of specific gender identities.

"It shows that schools make a commitment to make sure that students are safe," said Kevin Claybren, student coordinator of the Gender Non-Specific Housing Coalition at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH).

Elon initiated gender-inclusive housing in fall 2012, after requests from students forced residence life to collaborate with other campus administrators. The current gender-inclusive housing option is limited to the townhouse-style residences at Station at Mill Point and is only offered to juniors and seniors.

Freshman Becca Nipper, a student worker at Elon's Gender & LBGQTQIA Center, said these offerings show a lack of trust in underclassmen and that gender-inclusive housing will help first and second-year students avoid harassment. According to Nipper, many Elon students are frustrated that the university initiated gender-inclusive housing more than a year ago but still has not added other on-campus spaces and incorporated students from all class years.

"Most of the students I know [wonder] why it's taking so long," Nipper said. "Having to wait for permission is a little bizarre for us."

MarQuita Barker, Elon's associate

director of residence life for operations and management, said the university introduced gender-inclusive housing at the Station at Mill Point to see how it would function with upperclassmen. According to Barker, there have been discussions about extending it to students of all years.

"I always thought you have to start small when you have a new initiative," Barker said.

According to Barker, if Elon's gender-inclusive housing expands to students of all years, it would be offered in apartment

or suite-style residence halls where students can't share bedrooms.

That's the case for Elon's proposed Gender and Sexuality Living-Learning Community, a gender-inclusive housing option available next fall. The community will be in the suites of Colonnades A, and community members will be able to participate in group activities that connect to the university's Women & Gender Studies program.

"I'm glad that we're moving forward and that we can expand [gender-inclusive

housing] to other areas," Barker said.

Other North Carolina schools offering gender-inclusive housing are Duke University, Guilford College and Warren Wilson College.

But gender-inclusive housing is still controversial at many institutions, including UNC-CH. In August, the University of North Carolina Board of Governors banned gender-inclusive housing throughout the system.

Months after the decision, Claybren said he is still disheartened.



Mill Point is currently the only on-campus housing offered through the university that allows males and females to live together in the same space. Starting next year, however, the third floor of Colonnades A will be gender-neutral as well.

CAROLINE OLNEY | Photo Editor

across NC universities

"I think it was more about politics than students," Claybren said. "They didn't take into account students' lives."

The News and Observer reported that the Board of Governors was overhauled in 2013 to ensure an overwhelming Republican majority. Under the new policy, students of opposite sex can live together at UNC-CH only if they are legally married, siblings or have a parent-child relationship, according to The Daily Tar Heel.

The Board of Governors decision struck down UNC-CH's proposal to offer 32 gender-inclusive spaces, starting at the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year. Claybren helped introduce the pilot program after conducting research and gathering student signatures in support of the option.

Rick Bradley, associate director of the office of housing and residential education at UNC-CH, worked with Claybren and other students to educate members of the university's Board of Trustees on the components of the proposal, and it passed with a unanimous vote in 2012 before reaching the UNC Board of Governors.

In a study, the LGBTQ Center at UNC-CH found that almost 25 percent of survey respondents said they experienced on-campus harassment due to sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity or taking a class related to those topics. Nearly 12 percent of that group indicated they were harassed in residence halls.

Bradley said some of the incidents were not reported to his office, but he has heard complaints from LGBTQ students who were afraid to return to their residence halls after being threatened. According to Bradley, the ban on gender-inclusive housing affects how some prospective students perceive the institution.

"The message it sends is that [students are] not really welcome based on how [they] identify with their genders,"

Bradley said. "One student contacted me directly saying that he decided not to enroll."

Stuart Campbell, former executive director of Equality NC, a group dedicated to equal rights for the LGBT community in North Carolina, also expressed concerns about the ruling.

"This could literally make a life-or-death difference for kids who are struggling with their sexual orientation or gender identity and want to have a safe space they can call home while they are on campus," Campbell said in a statement. "This move has stripped away an important tool university administrators had to protect their LGBT students."

But other North Carolina citizens have positive views about the ban on gender-inclusive housing in the UNC system.

After the policy was implemented, Tami Fitzgerald, director of the NC Values Coalition, showed support.

"With this uniform policy, our public universities and colleges can get back to the business of educating our students and preparing them to be productive members of our society, instead of promoting co-habitation among students of the opposite sex," Fitzgerald said in a statement. "Most taxpayers in North Carolina, and certainly most parents, do not desire to send their children to colleges and universities where they can decide to live with students of the opposite sex without their input."

Some student groups at North Carolina institutions are working to educate people about gender-inclusive housing.

Claybren argued that the conservative atmosphere of North Carolina makes gender-inclusive housing discussions difficult. He said parents should realize college students make many decisions without consulting them and many gender-inclusive housing programs are opt-in, so students are not forced to join them.

Nipper agreed that it is sometimes difficult to find support from people in the

South but encouraged students to join the discussion about the issue.

"Students have a lot of input here at Elon, and that's one advantage," Nipper said. "I think it's important for students to speak their voices, whether for or against [gender-inclusive housing]. Students need to realize that it makes other people comfortable."

Student involvement was important in the initiation of gender-inclusive housing at Duke University, according to Joe Gonzalez, dean for residential life at the university. On Jan. 13, The Chronicle, Duke's student newspaper, reported that the university plans to expand its gender-inclusive housing, making it an option for students of all class years starting this fall.

"I hope it sends the message that we're firmly committed to including everyone in our residence community," Gonzalez said.

Using a phase-in method, Duke introduced gender-inclusive housing on the upperclassmen-dominated Central Campus and then later added West Campus, followed by its proposal for East Campus.

"I think it was a wise approach because integrating on a small scale allowed us to see any issues and correct them before moving forward," Gonzalez said.

Meanwhile, Bradley said that his office at UNC-CH will continue to promote a welcoming environment in the wake of the Board of Governors ruling. According to Bradley, the university could partner with other schools within the UNC system to influence the state's decision-makers, but student efforts will make the most difference.

"I think the success of this eventually—and it will come eventually—will be from the students," Bradley said.

Claybren expressed hopes that UNC-CH, like its peer institutions, will adopt gender-inclusive housing in the future.

"Nowadays, it's necessary," Claybren said. "I don't think a university can call itself inclusive or diverse without it." §

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Flu death toll rises to 44 in NC

Stephanie Lamm
Assistant News Editor

As of Monday Jan. 27, 44 North Carolinians have died from the flu. State health officials have declared North Carolina's flu outbreak an epidemic. The most common flu strain in the 2013-2014 season is H1N1, which tends to hit young people and middle-aged adults the hardest.

"This year's flu season is different than past seasons. It is unusual in that the groups of people who are being most affected are different than we've seen in the past," said Stacie Saunders, the health education supervisor for Alamance County. "In past years, we have typically seen the flu affect more elderly populations, but this year the flu is affecting young adults and middle-

aged adults disproportionately."

Since October 2013, two people from 4-17, 33 people from 25-50 and 23 people 50 and older have died from the flu in North Carolina.

The youngest victim, an Alamance County infant, was too young to receive the vaccine. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) expects the fatality rate to climb in the coming weeks, as flu season typically peaks during January and February.

In the 2012-2013 flu season, most flu-related deaths in N.C. occurred in the 65 and older range, with only seven deaths among people 18 to 49. The most common strain of the virus during the 2012-2013 season was H3N2, which tends to be more severe than H1N1 outbreaks.

The N.C. Department of Health and Human Services said only two people who

died from the flu this season were vaccinated. According to the CDC, people who get vaccinated are 60 percent less likely to contract the flu. Anyone above 6 months old is eligible for the vaccine. Young children, the elderly, pregnant women and those with compromised immune systems are highly encouraged to get vaccinated as soon as possible.

Elon University Health Services held vaccination days this past fall, and are currently offering vaccines as they are available. As of Jan. 19, 457 Elon students received vaccinations at the health clinic. Though many students have come to the clinic with flu-like symptoms, there has only been one confirmed case of H1N1.

"We have not seen a disproportional number of flu-like symptoms compared to other years so we would not report an el-

evated number of cases at this time," said Jana Lynn Patterson, dean of Elon's Student Health and Wellness program.

Justin Brown, an Elon freshman, was diagnosed with the flu on Sunday. Brown did not get a flu shot, a decision he said he now regrets.

"I was aware the health center was giving them, but I usually don't get the vaccine," Brown said.

Though Elon Health Services only has a few vaccines left, it is not too late to get a flu shot at local pharmacies.

"If you have not already gotten a flu shot, we encourage people to do so," Sanders said. "We also recommend taking additional precautions against illness, including washing your hands often with soap and water and staying away from others who may have the flu."

Colonnades residents expand global palates at residence life event

Simone Jasper
Senior Reporter

Colonnades residents sampled food and experienced traditions from more than a dozen countries at Wednesday, Jan. 22 night's "Walk around the World." At the event, residents braved the cold to visit themed common rooms on the floors of each Colonnades building.

At the event, students ate Belgian waffles, drank Turkish coffee, received Brazilian samba dance lessons and learned about the Philippines.

Attendees received Phoenix Passports, which were stamped at each floor. The resident assistants (RAs) on some floors required students to sample food or learn facts about their countries before administering stamps. Residents who turned in completed passports were eligible to win a Target gift card.

Rike Habel, assistant director of residence life in the Colonnades neighborhood, said the area decided to host the inaugural event to increase global awareness among residents.

"With the Winter Term theme being di-

versity, each [residential] neighborhood had the idea of doing something," she said. "Our goal [for this event] is to give guests the opportunity to learn about other countries."

In preparation for "Walk around the World," Colonnades RAs worked with residents on their floors to choose countries and implement their themes.

Sophomore Evan Miceli, an RA in Moffitt, said he helped his floor choose Italy.

"I'm Italian, and it's exciting because everybody gets to know more about Italy - share the food and facts," he said.

Junior Bethany Lester, an RA in Harper, said her travels inspired her to choose Morocco as the theme for the night.

"I went to Morocco this summer," she said. "It feels awesome [to share the culture] because Morocco isn't one of those places that people talk about or go to."

Freshman Michael Garvis, who lives on Lester's floor, said that residents were eager to prepare the food and decorate the common room.

"Everyone on our hall was really willing to participate," he said.

In recent years, the Colonnades neighborhood has hosted other activities, includ-

ing a cookout, a carnival and a haunted hallway. For Wednesday's event, the Colonnades neighborhood worked with Campus Security to temporarily enable its 430 residents access to all of the Colonnades buildings.

Garvis said the offerings inspired him to come to the event, and he wants the Colonnades area to host similar events in the future. According to Garvis, "Walk around the World" allowed him to interact more with

the neighborhood's residents than he did during other neighborhood activities.

"This event is way better because it's getting me out to other Colonnades buildings," Garvis said.

Lester also said "Walk around the World" held more significance than past events in the Colonnades neighborhood.

"They were just for fun," she said. "This has more meaning, a global meaning."



Morocco was one of many countries represented by a mix of traditional and modern native foods.

SIMONE JASPER | Senior Reporter

Actor Philip Seymour Hoffman dies at 46



Photo courtesy of MCT Campus

Philip Seymour Hoffman was found dead in his home of an apparent drug overdose.

Hoffman had a history of heroin and prescription drug abuse and had sought treatment in May 2013. Initial reports suggested his death was drug-related, but New York police said the investigation is ongoing.

In 2005, Hoffman won an Academy Award and Golden Globe for his role in “Capote,” a biographical film about the writer Truman Capote. He was nominated for three other Academy Awards for best supporting actor in “The Master,” “Doubt” and “Charlie Wilson’s War.”

Hoffman received Tony nominations for his roles in the Broadway plays “Death of a Salesman,” “Long Day’s Journey into Night” and “True West.”

In a statement, Hoffman’s family said, “We are devastated by the loss of our beloved Phil and appreciate the outpouring of love and support we have received from everyone.”

Award-winning actor Philip Seymour Hoffman was found dead in his apartment Feb. 2 in New York City. Police responding to a 911 call found Hoffman unresponsive on his bathroom floor, and EMS declared him dead on arrival.

Green World replaces 1889 with vegan, vegetarian options

In response to demands for alternative dining options on campus, Elon plans to re-open the 1889 Grill Room as “Green World.” Starting Feb. 12, Green World at 1889 will open in place of the 1889 Grill Room. Green World will include vegetarian, vegan and kosher options.

Now students and faculty will swipe their cards at the top of the stairs to gain access to the second floor of Colonnades Dining Hall. Though 1889 Grill Room

is closing, Elon Dining Services said they will work top-selling menu items into other retail locations on campus.

For those without meal plans, Green World will cost \$6.00, or \$4.00 with the “House” coupon. Green World will include a vegetarian soup and salad bar complete with vegan dining options. Students may visit other stations for non-vegan items to bring back to the 1889 room.

Construction begins on Keystone XL Pipeline

Operation on the southern section of the Keystone XL Pipeline begins Feb. 5. The section will transport crude oil from storage tanks in Cushing, Okla. to refineries along the Gulf Coast. Once complete, the pipeline will span 1,179 miles and transport 830,000 barrels of crude oil a day.

Environmental activists are concerned the pipeline will increase reliance on oil and gas and pose a danger to the communities it runs through to claim land for the project.

The pipeline will bring over 1900 new construction jobs in Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, and South Dakota where the northern half of the pipeline will run. The pipeline’s construction is expected to con-

tribute over 3.4 billion dollars to the U.S. economy.

Construction on the northern half of the pipeline, which will transport oil from Canada’s tar sands, is not set to start any time soon. A report released by the U.S. State Department concluded the pipeline was safer than transporting crude oil by rail. Though this report encouraged supporters of the project, President Obama said he will not approve the northern pipeline if it will increase carbon pollution.

Around 56 percent of Americans support building the pipeline, while 41 percent are opposed, according to a Sanford University poll in December.

Elon University hires new assistant to senior staff

Randolph Williams, Jr. was hired to assist President Lambert and other senior staff members in advancing alumni ethnic and racial affinity groups and raising money for diversity initiatives across campus.

In June, Williams will take over for Melissa Jordan as Dean of Multicultural Affairs. Williams will also serve on the University Senior Staff and the Student Life Vice President’s Council.

In this important leadership role, Dr. Williams will assist the Division of Stu-

dent Life and the university in meeting Elon’s strategic goal of an unprecedented commitment to diversity and global engagement,” said Smith Jackson, vice president for Student Life.

Williams has a master’s in education from Longwood University and a Ph.D. in Educational Policy, Planning, and Leadership from the University of William and Mary. He also served as vice president for student affairs and dean of students at North Carolina Wesleyan College.

Obama calls for ‘year of action’ in SOTU

President Barack Obama pledged in his Jan. 28 State of the Union Address to move forward without Congress’ approval in passing his administration’s agenda. In the past year Congress has been largely gridlocked by partisan politics. Touching on the environment, education, Afghanistan, the minimum wage and, briefly, immigration, Obama framed many of his remarks in a middle-class context.

“Let’s make this a year of action,” Obama said. “That’s what most Americans want, for all of us in this chamber to focus on their lives, their hopes, their aspirations.”

The most immediate, and one of the most controversial, of the actions the president called for is the removal of American

troops from Afghanistan, which could happen early this year if the Afghan government signs a security agreement with the United States.

Obama also said the time is now to fix the country’s “broken” immigration system, but he devoted a matter of seconds to the topic. Speculation has arisen that Obama’s soft demands on immigration are buying House Speaker John Boehner time to warm hard-line Republicans up the idea.

Boehner and other key Republican leaders outlined their plans in a letter to Obama saying, “Naturally, we don’t agree with all of the proposals you outlined in your speech, but where there is the potential for agreement we believe it is critical that we come together.”



Photo courtesy of MCT Campus

Protesters are pictured above voicing their opposition to the Keystone pipeline on April 3, 2013 in San Francisco.

Embrace the grind: Elon athletics poised for national success

Elon University football head coach Rich Skrosky's Twitter page often uses the phrase "embrace the grind." This is a truly fitting mantra, not only for Elon football, but for the entire university. Success will not come overnight, just like national recognition did not happen in a day. Each of us that makes up the Elon community must be ready to "embrace the grind" if we want to see our university attain the status of a top-tier, nationally recognized school.

Athletics holds the key to attaining national recognition for many universities. Gonzaga University, George Mason University and Butler University have all seen dramatic increases in applications, alumni donations, school spirit and overall revenue because of athletic success. As Elon's athletic teams move into the Colonial Athletic Association, the university is poised to become a well-rounded institution that could benefit greatly from athletic success.

Prior to the 1999 basketball season, Gonzaga was a relatively unknown school. During the 1997-98 fiscal year, Gonzaga received \$9.7 million in gift donations. In 1999, the Gonzaga men's basketball team reached the regional finals of the NCAA tournament. Not only were they winning games, they were also receiving hours of televised exposure for their school. Since that season, Gonzaga basketball has made several appearances in the NCAA tournament. Two years later, in the 2000-01 fiscal year, the school received \$16.5 million in gift donations.

The "Southern Economic Journal" recently investigated the legitimacy of athletic success and the repercussions it has on the amount of applications a university receives. The study found when it comes to basketball, any school that makes the 65-team bracket could expect to see a 1-3 percent boost in applications the following year. If a school makes it to the Sweet 16, they will see a 3-5 percent boost in applications and, if a school reaches the championship game, they will see a 7-8 percent boost in applications.

During the 2010 and 2011 seasons,



Each year, more and more excitement surrounds Elon's athletic teams. Tickets to the men's basketball game against UMass were completely sold out.

CAROLINE OLNEY | Photo Editor

when Butler's men's basketball team made back-to-back appearances in the NCAA tournament championship game, the school was estimated to have received \$1.2 billion dollars worth of exposure from print, TV, radio and merchandise sales. Additionally, applications rose by 41 percent after the 2010 appearance.

These sudden and drastic amounts of exposure seen by schools like Butler and Gonzaga are unique to athletic success. A school would have to spend millions of dollars to attain the same amount of publicity generated from a deep playoff run in any major sport such as football or basketball. The swelling of pride and uptick in alumni donations after national sports exposure is a benefit that would be difficult to duplicate by any other means.

A common complaint about Elon is there is a lack of school spirit. That may be true, but for those of who attended the men's soccer game against Clemson University or the men's basketball game against the University of Massachusetts, it is hard to say that the student body

does not enjoy watching our athletic teams compete against the nation's best.

It does not take a lot to spark school spirit and some of the results are surprising. When George Mason University defeated the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the University of Connecticut on its way to the Final Four of the NCAA basketball tournament, the bookstore sold \$876,000 worth of merchandise over a 10-day span. Normally, the bookstore posted \$45,000 worth of sales a month.

Behind every successful university is a strong athletic department. To become a top-tier school, a university must have success across the board. Elon now finds itself in prime position to grow substantially over the next few years.

Over the course of its 125-year history, Elon's communication and business schools have achieved national recognition. Our campus is continuously ranked as one of the most beautiful college campuses in the country. Elon's study abroad and theater programs are repeatedly

ranked among the nation's best. The only true missing piece of the puzzle is continued athletic success.

It is often mistakenly believed that athletic and academic success are not able to coexist. Many feel as though athletic success somehow diminishes the value of an institution or that academic success means a school's athletics are not taken seriously. This is simply not true. The reality is that the two disciplines often compliment each other.

Princeton University has a long history of national success in basketball. Stanford has fielded top-ranked teams, and so have many top-ranked universities. Duke University, right down the road from from Elon, is a powerhouse in basketball and academics. Duke's soaring climb in the national rankings illustrates the importance of the academic and athletic balance.

When a university's athletic teams are enjoying success, the exposure that the school receives from that success attracts students and faculty from across the country.

Similarly, when a school boasts successful academics, athletes want to be a part of that environment and strive to mirror that academic excellence in their athletic endeavors. Whether it is fair or right, money and recognition follow athletic success for a university.

As we enter a more academically and athletically prestigious conference, Elon has a perfect opportunity to attain national recognition. After years of growing its academic programs, Elon is poised to enter the next chapter: national athletic recognition.

While Elon's academic strength continues to push us closer to being a top-tier school, the university's athletic teams should strive to match that success. With those two disciplines complementing each other, Elon will leap ahead of our CAA counterparts and enter the lexicon of national universities excelling in both academics and athletics. It is a worthy goal for the university to achieve.

State of the Union: new year, same promises

Clap. Clap. Clap. Once again, President Barack Obama, with the help of trusty speech writers, lies and half-truths, and an unyielding determination to grow already intrusive government involvement in our lives has managed to deliver another State of the Union address rich in rhetoric and sound bites, but hollow in real substance.



Alex Francis
Columnist

The 2014 SOTU reshaped many ideas from the president's

former speeches, which have overwhelmingly faltered. According to the Wall Street Journal, since 2011, Obama has made 31 proposals and promises in his SOTU addresses. Of those 31 proposals, only five have found any success. And of those five, what revolutionary changes were made to benefit the American people? He created a website that directs people looking for job training information to CareerOneStop.org, extended a pre-existing tuition tax credit, raised taxes on the wealthiest Americans and banned insider trading for members of Congress, something that was already illegal. Well done, the future

looks bright.

Obama has not passed a climate change bill, has not passed jobs proposals, has not strengthened social security and has not made sizable infrastructure investments, as he said he would in previous years. He did, in fact, pass a health care reform bill, which has grown increasingly unpopular, even with members of the Democratic Party, each day.

If Obama could not drive the rest of his bills through Congress in prior years when he had their support, what makes him think he can do it this year? Oh, that's right, it's because he has no interest in working with Congress anymore. During the SOTU, Obama lauded his plans to use executive orders to act unilaterally without any real discussion in Congress or any representation of what the American people want.

Yes, Congress is an absolute mess. Politics across party lines are running rampant, all politicians seem to be more concerned with their ideological war than with the betterment of the country they call home, and our representatives are no longer interested in even pretending to have our interest at heart. But as president, Obama cannot continue to shove his ideological agenda down the throat of an American public skeptical of his policies, especially without congressional support.

In keeping with the general tone of self-importance in the SOTU, Obama spun facts in a way that made it sound like America has rebounded under his time as president. "And for the first time in over a decade, business leaders around the world have declared that China is no longer the world's number one place to invest; America is." Well that depends on which business leaders are talked to. In his speech, Obama cited a 2013 A.T. Kearney Survey. But according to Forbes' annual report, the best country to do business with is Ireland. The United States landed at number 14 due to its excessive tax burden, the highest statutory corporate tax rates and the complexity of tax codes. Thanks Obama.

Furthermore, as a president with an unwavering ideology to grow an already intrusive government, Obama continues to emphasize that "Inequality has deepened. Upward mobility has stalled." But according to a group of economists led by Harvard's Raj Chetty, the U.S. isn't any less socially mobile than it was in the 1970's. Obama's method of shrinking this supposed inequality is by growing regulation, not the economy. He cannot keep speaking in generalities while never actually offering up any realistic specifics about his solutions to a slew of problems.

I understand the approach Obama took with this year's SOTU. With an incredibly low approval rating hovering around 43 percent, a waning party support, and growing pessimism among the American people, Obama faced a tough task of delivering a SOTU address that would quell worries among the American people. But Obama has shown once again that he is more interested in self-preservation and that he is more concerned with his personal legacy and ideological agenda than he is with the state of our nation.

It's about time he takes some responsibility for the mess he has helped create.



CAROLINE OLNEY | Photo Editor

Two weeks before his State of the Union address, President Obama travelled to Raleigh to speak about North Carolina's economy.

Weighing the cost of college: aesthetics vs. academics

In terms of aesthetic beauty, it is hard to deny that Elon University is a truly magnificent campus. Tall oak trees, grass that is green year-round, beautiful fountains and an extensive brick walkway all captivate potential Elon students as they visit the well-manicured grounds of the university.



Joshua O'Neill
Columnist

You see it every day: dozens of families, guided by our very own Elon students, wandering around campus in awe. Parents' heads swivel as they walk, only half-listening to what the tour guides are saying as they take in all Elon has to offer.

For many of us currently attending Elon, the scenery alone was enough to induce love at first sight, but the question arises: are the fancy amenities that many colleges, like Elon and High Point University, have provided for their students worth the increases in tuition?

The duty of any university is to bestow knowledge upon those who enroll in the school. That being said, it seems unnecessary to have the most beautiful campus in the state, region, or country if the overall goal is to teach and spread knowledge. It should not matter if you have the prettiest school around if hardworking students are unable to attend.

If a university's administration is spending millions of dollars in student tuition a year to make its campus more appealing, are they really paying attention to academics? If a university is spending this money on trying to

look prettier than the next college, then they are robbing the less-privileged of a chance at enrollment.

According to CollegeBoard.org, an estimated two-thirds of undergraduate students receive financial aid in some form. Now consider the amount of money colleges spend on the scenery that attracts so many students. Perhaps if colleges decided to reserve this money for funding or even creating new scholarship programs, they'd be more willing, if not more able, to accommodate those of us who may not be able to attend college for financial reasons.

For those of you who have chosen to attend Elon because it is beautiful, I will not fault you. In choosing a university, the scenery should play no small part to your decision of whether or not you should enroll. The scenery

should not, however, obstruct a potential student from being able to attend because cutting and watering the grass costs more than room and board.

When I first visited Elon, the impressive campus transfixed me, but I paid more attention to the academic programs offered by the university rather than the scenery. I saw the value in the journalism department and the programs surrounding it.

College is about experience on top of education. A university should take pride in its appearance. Being able to walk around a beautiful campus for four years is heartening, and you should be honored to attend a stunning campus. However, there should be a balance between the two, rather than a disproportion.

'Desks to Destinations:' Elon Winter Term

Kaitlin Dunn
International Editor

When the 72 percent of Elon University students who study abroad come home, many of them experience a phenomenon known as "culture shock." The students in Thomas Arcaro's class "GST 433- Coming Home: The Impact of Study Abroad," have written a book to ease students through this transition. Proceeds from the book will be used to fund a scholarship for Elon students who want to study abroad but cannot afford it. ABC news reporter and former "60 Minutes" correspondent Byron Pitts is writing a forward for the book.

Idea behind the book

"Our purpose is to provide students with an experience that is highly academic but

also action and service based," Arcaro said.

Students in the class have the opportunity to tell their stories about studying abroad and coming home through posts on a class blog and class discussions.

Alexis Spearman, a senior who studied abroad in Australia, said she "really loves" being able to reflect on her experiences with students who have similar stories.

"Studying abroad was the best experience of my life," Spearman said. "It's really hard coming back home though, because nobody can relate to what you went through."

While most of the class returned from studying abroad within the past two years, Alex Goeldner, a junior from Germany, is still on her study abroad adventure. Goeldner also studied abroad in high school five years ago, and draws on her experience from that trip as well.

"When you go abroad and come back,

it's all you want to talk about," Goeldner said. "But nobody wants to hear every detail. That's why this class is so great, because everyone wants to hear your stories."

Goeldner said this class helped her to "pay attention more to cultural differences" while she is in America.

"I notice more things now," she said. "And now I understand the concepts behind them. I can actually analyze the differences, and that's really cool."

Arcaro said the "lion's share of the credit" for the success of the class and the book goes to Emily Delaplaine, the teacher's assistant for the class. Delaplaine was in the class last winter term and said she wanted to be involved again this year.

"Emily really orchestrated so much," Arcaro said. "She's very professional and has worked very hard on this book. She does what she does extremely well."

Putting it all together

The book is called "Desks to Destinations" and was written on a nightly updated class blog. The blog posts are then compiled into chapters based upon the subject.

"We get prompts for each chapter, and we have to write at least 1,500 words for each prompt," Goeldner said. "Almost everyone goes over the word limit, though. There's always so much more to tell."

The students in the class were broken up into teams based on their specific skills and interests. Teams included an editing group, both internal and external marketing groups and a creative group.

The editing group consisted of several students and Delaplaine. They read every post and decided which ones to include in the final publication.

The marketing teams worked on getting information out to the general public about the book, both at Elon and beyond.

"The external group worked with Elon's partners at FIE [Foundation for International Education], Semester at Sea, CIEE [Council on International Educational Exchange] and so forth," Delaplaine said.

Meanwhile, the internal marketing group focused on selling the book to Elon students. They plan to have a table in Moseley Center and also at College Coffee to promote the book.

On one of the last days of class, Arcaro said he walked around class supervising, and "every group was 100 percent on track." Arcaro said he was very proud of them.

"They were all zeroed in on what they had to do," Arcaro said. "It really was amazing as a teacher to see them working so hard and see them step up to the plate like this. They really get it."

The book is being published by Create Space, a company that publishes books by the individual order instead of en masse.

The first proof of the book was sent at the end of Winter Term. Create Space then sends back the proof, edited for formatting purposes only. Copy editing is solely the responsibility of the class. Then, when the proper changes are made, the proof is



PHOTO COURTESY OF ALEX GOELDNER

Students in "GST 433- Coming Home: The Impact of Study Abroad" celebrate the end of Winter Term and the completion of their book.

class writes, publishes study abroad book

sent back and will be ready for publication shortly afterward.

Last year's class

This is the second year Arcaro has taught this class. Last year during winter term, the class wrote a book entitled “#Cultured - A Guide to Study Abroad for Students by Students.” It is currently available for purchase through Amazon.

“Last year was like our beta test,” Arcaro said. “This year, we know what we’re doing and have most of the kinks ironed out.”

Delaplane said the atmosphere is “very different than last year.” She also said her personal experience was very different as a TA as opposed to a student.

“Last year, it was a very homogenous group,” said Delaplane. “It was almost all girls who had studied abroad the year before, and this year, there are so many people from all different years and backgrounds who have studied abroad at different times.”

Delaplane also compared last year’s class to being like “group therapy,” while she said this year is more lecture based, and “there are higher expectations.”

Byron Pitts

The students in the class came up with the idea to try and get someone who is considered “high profile” to write the forward for the book. Pitts, who visited Elon last year to give a speech, was one of the first people who came to their minds.

“He’s someone influential who has gone abroad and would have something important to say,” Spearman said.

Pitts is an award winning journalist who has covered 9/11, the fall of Saddam Hussein’s statue, the war in Afghanistan, and the refugee crisis in Kosovo.

“We thought that if we had someone who was recognizable to write the forward, we could sell more copies,” Arcaro said.

To get ahold of Pitts, the students in the class all tweeted at him multiple times within ten minutes. They all said the same thing, “@byronpitts Elon students seeking a favor. Writing a book on study abroad experience for class. Will you write the foreword? DM @edelzzz”

Arcaro also tweeted, “@byronpitts Dr. Arcaro here, professor of all the students

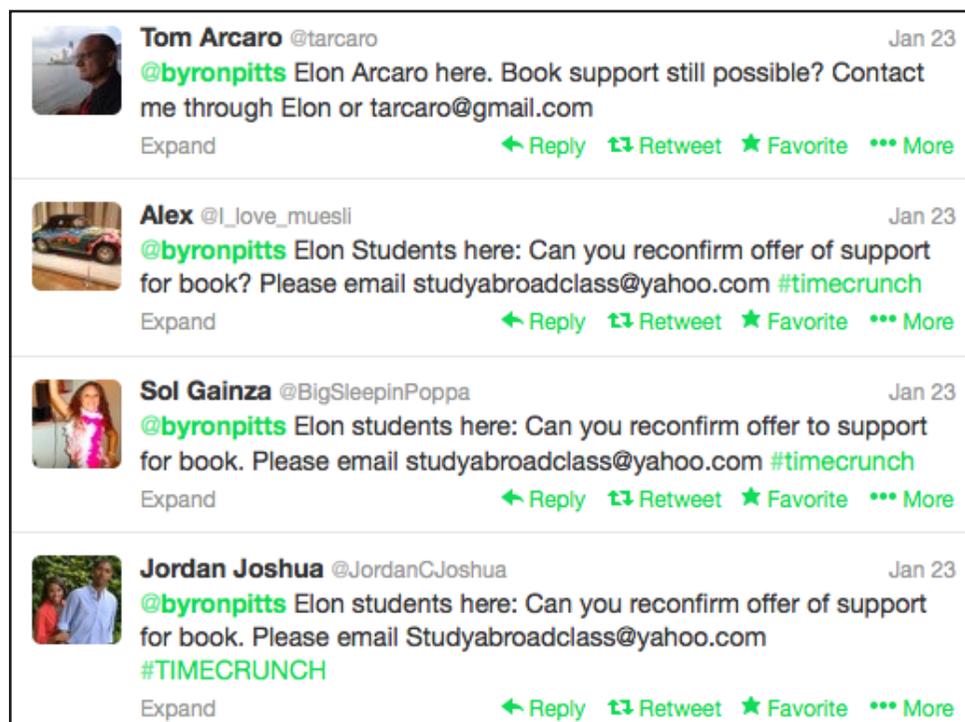


PHOTO COURTESY OF TWITTER.COM

To contact Byron Pitts, the class reached out to him by repeatedly tweeting at him.

messaging you. Let me know if you’d like to talk.” Within half an hour, Pitts tweeted back, “@tarcaro happy to help. Let’s get in touch next week.”

Delaplane said she was very surprised—Pitts responded so quickly, and it was “so cool” to have him contribute to the book.

After a few days, there was no further contact with Pitts. He had not direct messaged either Arcaro or Delaplane on Twitter, nor had he emailed Arcaro.

“We tweet-blasted him again a few days later,” Arcaro said. “It was really getting down to the wire, and we needed to talk to him.”

Arcaro then used his contacts and co-workers to find Pitts’ ABC email address. He sent him his phone number and a brief explanation of what they needed from him.

“Then after I emailed him, I got this phone call in the middle of class one day and it was Byron Pitts,” Arcaro said.

Arcaro said that the atmosphere in the class changed after Pitts was on board for the project.

“It was so neat to see how amped up the class was when Pitts called,” said Arcaro,

“They were excited before, but this just took it to a whole new level.”

Arcaro said it was that moment that changed things. “It wasn’t just a fantasy anymore,” Arcaro said. “We could actually do this.”

After checking with his supervisors, Pitts officially agreed to write the forward and have it finished by the end of Elon’s Winter Term so they could send it off.

Book publication

Arcaro said he is hopeful they will sell lots of copies and be able to create a sizable scholarship fund for Elon students. Delaplane said she thinks they will be able to outsell last year’s book.

“Just from our Twitter push and tweeting at Byron Pitts, I got people tweeting at me, wanting copies,” she said.

“Desks to Destinations - 25 Students, 49 countries, 217 pages of Reflections” will be available for purchase within the next month on Amazon. The price is not yet finalized. It will be available both in print and as an e-book for Kindle. §

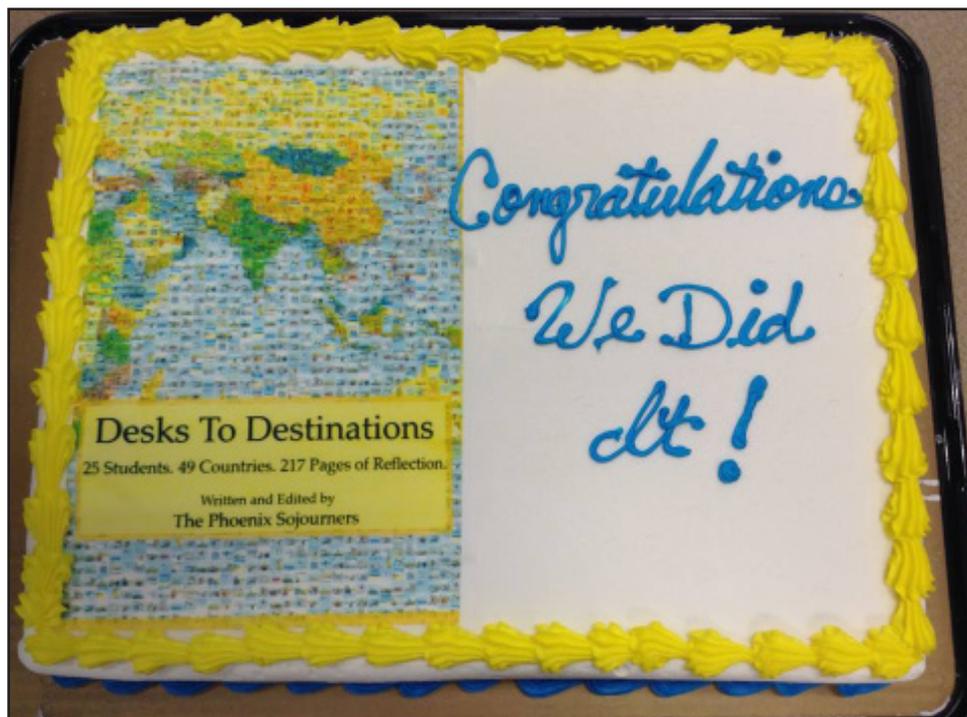


PHOTO COURTESY OF ALEX GOLDENER

At the end of Winter Term, students celebrated with a cake with a proof of the front cover of their book on it.

8 credits shy: Gabriel Noble's

Leena Dahal
Senior Reporter

Senior year is perhaps the most exciting time for many college students. With graduation just around the corner, seniors start to take the necessary steps to culminate the fruits of their four years of hard work into one final product. Gabriel Noble was among the many seniors who returned to Elon University this fall with the same goal in mind. Instead of preparing for his final classes, however, he was sitting in an office being notified that he would not be able to graduate because of outstanding financial dues and federal loans.

Noble's financial struggles began well before his senior year but culminated last spring when his family faced an unexpected hardship.

"After getting a foreclosure on our home, my family had to move from North Carolina to Virginia, so I was no longer eligible for in-state tuition," Noble said. "This also meant that I lost a lot of the financial support necessary to pay for my tuition."

Despite having to juggle several jobs, classes and an ongoing search for scholarship and education grants to pay off his outstanding dues at Elon, Noble successfully finished his spring term with only eight more credits required for graduation.

"I planned on simply coming back here in the fall of 2013, earning those eight credits and graduating in December," he said. "But when I came back, I was told that I couldn't take those two classes because I still owed a balance to the school."

With only eight credits standing between him and graduation, he was not willing to give up that easily. Noble worked closely with professors throughout November trying to come up with proposals for donor-based funding.



After being forced to leave Elon last semester because of financial reasons, Senior Gabe Noble successfully petitioned the school for more funding and now is set to graduate in the spring. CAROLINE OLNEY | PHOTO EDITOR

"I was really grateful for those professors because I felt like nobody really had my back at that time, and they really helped me see that I was not alone," he said.

But as weeks progressed and donors continued rejecting proposals, Noble began to lose hope.

"It was pretty frustrating because it took a while for donors to respond, and when they did, nothing was really resolved," he said. "At one point, I was essentially planning on taking a chance and moving to California to live as a college dropout because I just felt so hopeless

about the situation."

Despite the obstacles, he continued to fight for his education with the support of his close friends and professors.

Campaign begins

On Jan. 22, in the midst of a casual conversation over dinner, seniors Kristel Tedesco and Andrew Riley discussed how unfair it was that Noble would not be able to graduate because he fell short a mere eight credits. Rather than confining their beliefs to that conversation, they decided to take immediate action.

"Gabe is the kind of person that puts the needs of others above his own and is also a fun-loving, creative free-spirit. Two classes shouldn't stand between him and a degree because he has been working hard for it," Tedesco said. "We decided to get the student body involved, and we realized that the Internet would be the fastest way to do it."

Tedesco wrote the content of the petition, and Riley posted what she wrote on Change.org. The two then shared the petition with their friends on Facebook.

Within an hour of sharing the petition, more than 100 people had already

viral campaign for graduation

signed, and the numbers kept increasing.

“I remember Kristel calling me and asking about the things I’ve done and letting me know that they were starting a petition,” Noble said. “At the time, I was still feeling pretty skeptical because of all the things that I had gone through. I was scared it was going to receive a backlash and that people wouldn’t understand my story. I had no idea it was going to make such a huge impact.”

Friends and strangers alike were soon united under the cause. Inspired by his many acts of selflessness, students, alumni and professors bombarded the petition with heartwarming reasons as to why they were signing.

“I was completely overwhelmed and brought to tears,” Noble said. “Sometimes you do things that you consider are good, you try to act friendly to people and you keep a positive attitude, but you never think people

realize it or care. To my surprise, I somehow created an impression on these people. I’m so grateful that they cared.”

Noble immediately sent the link to his parents who began following the site.

Maria, Noble’s mother, says she knew her son had a lot of friends but didn’t realize they would be ready to defend him so fully.

“All those people made us realize that Gabriel had been right all along in wanting to fight for his education,” Maria Noble said. “At one point, we had suggested that he put it aside. We are so glad now that he did not listen to us.”

In addition to Noble’s affable nature and the impressions he left on people,

Tedesco also credits the infectious response to social media and the impact of student voices.

“Facebook and Twitter are vehicles for change, and I think that’s one of the most important things I am taking away from this experience,” Tedesco said. “Students need to know that they have a powerful voice and that they should use social media for more than posting cute animal pictures. If they know how to use it, change is always certain.”

3,544 supporters later, change was definitely certain for Noble. About a week after the petition was posted, Elon granted Noble permission to take his final two classes with the funding he needed to graduate.

“When Gabriel called to let us know about Elon’s decision, we simultaneously breathed a sigh of relief. More for Gabriel than for us because we knew that a burden had finally been lifted off his shoulders,” Maria said.

On reflecting on the campaign for his education, Noble said he believes universities across the United States should provide more funding for students facing financial hardship.

“There are a lot of people like me who have the skills to graduate and who are very hardworking but don’t receive it because of certain policies or financial reasons,” he said.

What now?

Noble said he is excited to work hard during his final few months at Elon. He

encourages his peers to make sure they don’t take their education for granted.

“All the small aspects of my Elon experiences matter so much more now. I’m excited for the simple act of going to class or getting long readings for homework and staying up all night to write papers. It’s weird, but I can’t wait to ride my bike to my two classes,” Noble said. “Don’t take those things for granted, because there are so many people who are losing it.”

Noble and Tedesco said they are grateful to the community members who raised their voices and signed the petition. The unified voice of the community helped permanently alter an individual’s future.

“Saying thank you really isn’t enough. It means so much more to me, and I will always be grateful,” Noble said.

With graduation just around the corner for Noble, he is excited to finally leave with a complete Elon education.

“When I walk across that stage on graduation day, I’ll be telling myself that it’s a long time coming,” he said. “I think I’ll run across the stage and give whoever hands me that diploma the biggest and most meaningful hug.”

After graduation, he said hopes to help educate underprivileged children around the world.

“It shouldn’t be a privilege to get an education; it should be a right that everyone deserves if they work hard enough.” §

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Rip Chord to be featured on 'The Best of A Cappella 2014' compilation album

Kelsey Higgins
Senior Reporter

Every year, Varsity Vocals produces "BOCA: Best of College A Cappella" and "BOHSA: Best of High School A Cappella." These two albums feature the best tracks from groups around the world.

Varsity Vocals receives hundreds of submissions every year and this year Elon's own Rip_Chord and its track "Beauty and a Beat" have been selected to appear on BOCA 2014.

"We apply for BOCA every year, but have never been chosen until now," said senior John Molloy, president of Rip_Chord. "BOCA is a highly competitive and selective compilation, and we have worked very

hard in the past few years to establish ourselves nationally in the a cappella community."

Since Varsity Vocals accepts hundreds of submissions from all across the globe, being selected is a huge accomplishment.

"There are tons of applications each year, and this is their first time on BOCA," said Lindsay Howerton-Hastings, south producer at Varsity Vocals. "This is an international compilation that's nearly 15 years old, so this will get their song in front of lots of folks."

A friend of the group arranged Rip_Chord's version of the Justin Bieber song, and Molloy said it quickly became one of the group's hits.

"We talked for a while about where in

our set the song would be, what kind of feel we wanted it to have and what we could add to make it different than the original," Molloy said. "I think this track was chosen because we worked hard to make it our own. Not to mention, we have a great time performing this song, and I think you can tell by listening to the track."

Junior CJ Moore, who recently transferred to the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, sings lead and sophomore Eli Kronovet beat boxes and rewrote the rap part.

"Beauty and a Beat" can be found on Rip_Chord's newest album, "Underscore," which is currently available at the campus bookstore and will be available on iTunes soon.

As of now, a release date for BOCA 2014 has not been announced, according to Amanda Newman, executive director at Varsity Vocals.

"The album is still in production at the moment," she said.

Other groups selected to appear on the compilation include: The Loreleis from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Naturally Sharp from Virginia Tech, The Statesmen from Pennsylvania State University and The Harmonics from Stanford University.

"It's always great to listen to the other tracks on the album and see what other groups around the country have been

"WE
WORKED
HARD TO
MAKE IT
OUR OWN."

JOHN MOLLOY
RIP_CHORD PRESIDENT

working on," Molloy said. "Sometimes when you're working on an album, it takes up so much time that you forget to keep up with what some of the other groups are working on."

Previously released BOCA CDs can be found on iTunes, and announcements about the 2014 album can be found at VarsityVocals.com.

"This is a huge honor for Rip_Chord, and we could not be happier. The work we have put into the group in the last few years has paid off tremendously, and I can't even imagine where we are headed in the future," Molloy said. "Finally getting recognized for our work is a great feeling. I really feel like this was our time."

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Rip_Chord's rendition of Justin Bieber's "Beauty and a Beat" will be featured on BOCA: Best of College A Cappella's 2014 compilation album along with tracks from groups around the world. File photo by Gloria So

Students show off rhythm and noise at Tapped Out!

Casey Brown
Senior Reporter

When it comes to an Elon University dance show, some people may think of pieces that are both beautiful and open to interpretation. Tapped Out! is not that show. Solely based around the genre of tap, Tapped Out! went out of the box to appeal to the audience through noise and rhythm.

Julie Crothers, a senior dance major and one of the show's assistant directors, spent Winter Term working with professor Gene Medler, who has taught the Tapped Out! course for at least eight years, and getting the show ready for the Jan. 24 premiere.

A mix of different tap styles and accompaniments, with pieces coming from Medler as well as students in the class, Crothers said this year's show strived to be fast-paced and offer a lot of variety. According to senior Susannah Brooks, it seemed Tapped Out! did just that.

"Since I had seen Tapped Out! in years past, it was what I expected," Brooks said. "However, a new twist this year that I hadn't seen before was the accompanist who played music in a couple of pieces. I also didn't remember the improv section of the show, but I thought it was a nice touch."

That improv section, called "Instant

Dance!," was led by Julie Crothers. An audience member chose the song and the dancers choreographed it, letting the audience watch as the dancers pulled the dance together before them. But "Instant Dance!" was not the only number that mixed up the format of the show.

"A Tap Dance", choreographed by senior Amy Wagoner, relied on the dancers to provide the beats and rhythm in the absence of music. This piece allowed the audience to

truly appreciate all the noises of tap. There was also "Taking A Chance on Love", where dancer Patrick Clanton sang a capella and all the dancers tapped in soft shoes. This dance challenged the audience to really hear the sounds the dancers made.

Freshman Gabriela Alvarez, who is a long-time dancer, said she thought Tapped Out! had more audience appeal, which made it a show that anyone can appreciate.

"It was much more audience based," Al-

varez said. "The goal was clearly to have fun and entertain the audience, rather than some other forms of dance where it appears the performers are in their own world and the audience is invited to interpret it."

Crothers agreed. For her, the point of Tapped Out! is to tap (both literally and figuratively) into the audience's sense of rhythm and fun, appealing to both sight and sound throughout the night.

"Tap is really entertaining and invites an audience that might not otherwise be drawn to attending a dance concert," Crothers said. "Many dance concerts you attend just to watch, but tap dance stimulates your sense of hearing, too. Audiences get to view the dance as well as hear the intricate rhythms we create."

After weeks of work, Crother's mind was on the audience. While she said she hopes that those who attended enjoyed their experience, she also wants Tapped Out! to be a gateway into other dance performances on campus.

"I hope the audience is entertained," Crothers said. "I hope that maybe people walk away having a more broad view of what tap dance is and can be. Also I hope that Tapped Out! can serve as a bridge to bring more of the general student and Elon population to art and dance performance events."



The 2014 Elon Tap Ensemble performs "It's Groovy, I guess," choreographed by senior dancer Julie Crothers.

ASHLEY KING | Staff Photographer

'SNL's' Kate McKinnon to perform at Elon

Jonathan Black
Editor-in-Chief

Kate McKinnon, a cast member for "Saturday Night Live," will perform at 8:30 p.m. Feb. 19 in Elon University's McCrary Theatre.

McKinnon debuted as a cast member on "Saturday Night Live" in April 2012, becoming the third openly gay cast member in the show's 38-year history. Previously, she was a cast member for Logo Network's "Big Gay Sketch Show" and the improv group Upright Citizens Brigade.

This is the second year in a row Elon's Student Union Board has brought a comedian from "SNL." Last year, Jay Pharoah was greeted by 500-600 students in an over-packed McKinnon Hall.

Junior Kyle Koach, president of SUB, was in charge of securing McKinnon.

"SUB is focused on bringing artists the student body will enjoy," Koach said. Having a comedian from "SNL" is always going to draw crowds, especially someone as popular as Kate McKinnon."

The process to bring McKinnon began in October, when Koach was the stage chair for SUB. Though it wasn't only Koach who had a hand in bringing McKinnon. Adam Bell, assistant director of Student Activities, said it is a cohesive process between the stage committee and chair.

"The stage chair contacts our middle agent from concert ideas to get a list of possible artists," said Bell. The stage chair then takes the list of names back to his committee and they decide

who they would like to bring to the campus.

Many critics have lauded McKinnon. The Los Angeles Times said she "has the fearless chops to carry on the legacy of the departed Kristen Wiig." Sophomore Ryan Gwaltney, who has been watching "SNL" since he was 13, said McKinnon was the first cast member to fill the hole left by Wiig.

"She's one of the more versatile cast members they've had since they had the cast clear-out a few years back," Gwaltney said. "People were super nervous when they brought on so many new people but Kate held her own. Not to mention her delivery and comedic timing is unreal."

McKinnon rose to fame when she played Penelope Cruz in a sketch with Sofia Vergara in which she had to name complicated ingredients

in a shampoo she was endorsing. McKinnon's other impressions include German Chancellor Angela Merkel, Ann Romney and Jane Lynch.

Arguably McKinnon's most famous moments occurred when she impersonated Ellen DeGeneres, even appearing on the "Ellen Show" as the host herself.

"I really can't think of a character that I haven't found hilarious," Gwaltney said. "It's hard to explain, but her presence in each sketch always gets me laughing without fail."

No matter what impressions McKinnon unleashes at Elon, she will undoubtedly bring the same enthusiasm.

Students can secure their free tickets now at the SUB office in Moseley 212. Doors will open for McKinnon's performance at 8 p.m. and seats will be first come, first served.

February begins stretch of 'do or

Matt Krause
Assistant Sports Editor

Fans roared as Luther Vandross' "One Shining Moment," the unofficial anthem of the NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament, blared over the speakers of Elon University's Alumni Gym.

Amidst the hubbub, Elon men's basketball head coach Matt Matheny and his staff emerged from the corner of the gym. Matheny spoke for five minutes about how Elon expected to win the Southern Conference and advance to March Madness for the first time in school history.

That was Oct. 18 at "Late Night with the Phoenix."

Now, in the first week of February, Elon sits just one game over .500 at 12-11 overall, 5-3 in Southern Conference

play. The Phoenix has not had a winning streak longer than three games all season. As the preseason favorite to win the So-Con, Elon is currently in a logjam – for third place.

Sure, Elon beat Davidson College on the road Jan. 16, but that required a near-miracle comeback and narrow overtime escape. At one point during the game, Elon had a 0.9 percent chance of winning, yet still triumphed.

"We have not consistently played well enough defensively to expect to win games," Matheny said following a win over Western Carolina University Jan. 30.

In the grand scheme of things, not much has changed since the beginning of the season, as Elon is still in their position of "win the SoCon tournament and get an automatic NCAA tournament

bid." Elon continues to insist this has always been its primary focus, and the recent losses are nothing more than learning opportunities.

"We always say we want to be the best we can be in March. That's been a striving point for us," senior forward Lucas Troutman said. "Even after a win or after a loss you still want to look at the little things that you didn't do, you want to look at what you need to improve and those aspects [where] you can better the team and better everything around them."

But time is running out for Elon to position itself for a run through the So-Con Tournament. Many "bracketologists" from ESPN and CBS Sports predict the winner of the conference will wind up as a No. 16 seed playing in a first-round game in Dayton, Ohio.

The league sits at 29th out of 32 leagues in terms of conference ratings percentage index, a crucial stat the NCAA uses to seed teams for the tournament. For the last few weeks, the projected So-Con champion has been the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, which defeated Elon Jan. 23. But the Mocs turned around and lost at Davidson Jan. 30 by 43 points, 94-51.

Case in point: the SoCon is not very good. There is no true favorite. The one thing Chattanooga had on its side during an 8-0 run though the month of January was scheduling. The Mocs played only one team (Elon) with a current conference record over .500, and they played them at home.

Why does this matter? Because Elon is entering a favorable period in its sched-



Elon will play three games in the raucous environment of Alumni Gym during the course of the next two weeks, as UNCG, Georgia Southern, and Samford all visit campus.

die' for men's basketball

ule. Beginning with the Feb. 1 game at Appalachian State University, the Phoenix plays seven straight teams with conference records of .500 or worse. Coming off of an extremely tough January, the Phoenix is given an opportunity to fix the problems that plagued it.

Troutman described the team's mood after back-to-back road losses at Chattanooga and Samford University from Jan. 23 and 25 as "angry" for not being able to "do the little things."

Knowing full well of the schedule ahead and his team's struggles, Matheny changed the starting lineup by putting senior guard Jack Isenbarger and junior guard Kevin Blake into the lineup against Western Carolina Jan. 30.

"We really were close after the Chattanooga game going into the Samford game, and we had talked about it a lot," Matheny said of the changes. "We know [Jack's] ability, and we were trying to figure out how to best get him more involved. We just felt like now was the time we needed a spark."

That spark helped push Elon to two straight wins, 74-60 over Western Carolina and 83-76 at Appalachian State. Now, Elon finds itself on a two-game win streak with the lighter schedule still

ahead. But according to Matheny, improvements still need to be made.

"You can't lapse against any team in the conference," Matheny said. "We need to really improve how tough we are defensively."

Elon still has to play the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (4-5) and Georgia Southern University (4-4) twice. The Phoenix will host both teams Feb. 6 and 8, respectively, and then travel to UNCG and Georgia Southern Feb. 19 and 22. The week in between sees Elon visit bottom-feeder Furman University (1-6) and host Samford in a chance for revenge. Elon does not have to face Chattanooga again and its lone matchup with Wofford College (5-3) is at of the always-raucous Alumni Gym Feb. 27.

Despite the potential to go on a winning streak, Troutman is well aware of the difficulty every single conference game poses.

"It's a long stretch, so you never know what's going to happen," Troutman said. "You look at the Southern Conference, every team in our conference is good and they have the ability to win. There's no way we can go out and expect to win or expect to take over these games. We just have to take each game one by one and

play the best we can play."

Even if Davidson, whose lone conference loss came at the hands of Elon, winds up winning the SoCon regular season title and earning the No. 1 seed in the conference tournament, Elon has an incentive to play hard. As long as the Phoenix, currently fifth in the conference, earns the No. 2 or 3 seed, they would not run into Davidson until the championship round of the conference tournament.

For Elon to be able to upset Davidson a second time, it would benefit the Phoenix to have the Wildcats playing their third straight game rather than their second.

As of now, the Southern Conference regular season championship could be wrapped up by the time Davidson invades Alumni Gym March 1.

If the next six games transpire as they should on paper, the Davidson game could be Elon's chance to grab all the momentum in the Southern Conference. With a tough loss or two for Elon heading into the Davidson game, the momentum could shift. A convincing Davidson win March 1 would make it extremely difficult for Elon to arrive in Asheville for the SoCon tournament playing their best basketball.

In order for Elon to accomplish their preseason expectations, February truly is "do or die."

Matheny said the rocky January made his team aware of what losing feels like and motivated for the road ahead. Despite the learning process and favorable schedule, he refuses to look too far ahead.

After the Western Carolina win, he remarked "I don't project anything other than that it was a good performance. We told the guys in the locker room, 'you get to smile for a little bit, but don't forget what we've just been through.'"

Where will Elon be March 1? February will tell whether the Phoenix is capable of advancing to March Madness or fading into the dust. §

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Feb. 12
at Furman (1-7)

Feb. 15
Samford (3-5)

Feb. 19
at UNCG (4-5)

Feb. 22
at Georgia Southern (4-4)

Feb. 27
Wofford (6-3)

March 1
Davidson (8-1)

Records reflect SoCon Play

Elon victory over UNCG turns tides for women's hoops

Matt Mallian
Senior Reporter

Luck has not been on the side of the Elon University women's basketball team in recent weeks.

Injuries, as well as other personal issues, have kept Phoenix players and coaches out of games. This recent stroke of bad luck has given the team no shortage of adversities to overcome.

Injuries have been the most damaging to the Phoenix, forcing key players to miss a number of games. Junior guard Zora Stephenson, junior forward Shannen Cochraham and freshman forward Jenifer Rhodes are just a few of the players that have been forced out of the lineup.

Elon won games against Appalachian State University and Western Carolina University in the middle of January without Stephenson and Cochraham but struggled when the pair returned, losing two road games by a total of four points.

The first loss came on the road against Furman University. A three-pointer by Furman's Sarah Durdaller with nine seconds remaining sealed a 66-65 Paladins win, in which Stephenson and Cochraham scored a combined six points. Two days later, Elon suffered another heartbreaking loss, this time at the hands

of Wofford College. Down three points on the final play of the game, Stephenson shot a three-pointer that fell short, giving the Terriers a 68-65 win.

Heading into Elon's Feb. 1 matchup against the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, the team found itself without its head coach, Charlotte Smith, who missed the game because of two recent deaths in her family. Assistant coach Cristy McKinney, acting as the team's head coach for the game, said her message to the team remained positive following the team's losses to Furman and Wofford.

"[Our message was] that we're better than we played last weekend," McKinney said. "That we need to be aggressive. We're a better team when we are aggressive."

Aggressiveness is what McKinney wanted out of her players, and that's exactly what she got. All that the Phoenix needed to cure its ailments was the home matchup against UNCG, who came into the game at the bottom of the Southern Conference with an record of 5-15.

Elon dominated play from the get-go, leading UNCG 30-15 midway through the first half after a three-pointer from freshman guard Lauren Brown. The Phoenix led 40-24 at half, finishing the frame shooting 57 percent from the field.

The second half was the Zora Stephenson show. She caught fire, scoring 11 straight

points in a span of just over four minutes. Entering the game, she led the SoCon in three-point field goals per game (2.35). Against the Spartans, Stephenson knocked down four of her eight attempts from behind the arc. Behind her three-point shooting and the team's up-tempo offense and suffocating defense, the Phoenix cruised to an 80-57 win.

Elon's 80 points against UNCG was the team's highest scoring output of conference play. Brown and senior guard Kelsey Harris, who each had seven assists in the game, led a Phoenix attack that has remained unselfish despite injury.

"I definitely feel like we play for each other," Brown said. "If you're not open, somebody else is going to be. It's always a good feeling when you find your teammate open and make them a nice pass. Teamwork makes the dream work."

Despite the adversity, Elon has maintained a positive attitude, knowing that no matter who is coaching or who is healthy enough to play in the game, they will get the job done.

Eight games remain on Elon's regular season schedule. At this point in the season, each game is important. The team is healthy and the offense is starting to click as they enter the homestretch. In the eyes of Stephenson, the ability of this team has always been there. It has just been about putting it all together.

"I see signs every day in practice of how

good this team can be, and that's why it's so discouraging when we don't play up to our potential," Stephenson said. "We have so much talent, and it's about putting it together. When it's put all together, it's scary. It's pretty awesome basketball out there."

Awesome basketball is exactly what the Phoenix played against UNCG. Down the stretch, the competition will be better, and the stakes will be higher. Elon will face all four of the teams currently ahead of them in the SoCon: University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, Davidson College, Furman and Georgia Southern University.

One trait that this team does not lack heading into these games is confidence.

"This team can be great," Stephenson said after her 18-point performance against UNCG.

Elon has shown brief signs of potential this season, but it will need to exceed those as the year continues. Those signs were present against UNCG, suggesting that luck may be turning on Elon's side at the right time.

Statistics

vs. Furman Jan. 25

Final: Furman 66, Elon 65

Field Goal Percentages: Furman 41.7%, Elon 36.4%

Leading scorers: Brown (Elon) 15, Wilkins (Furman) 17

vs. Wofford Jan. 27

Final: Wofford 68, Elon 65

FG Pct: Wofford 46.6%, Elon 40%

Leading Scorers: Farmer (Elon) 14, Morris (Wofford) 25

vs. UNCG Feb. 1

Final: Elon 80, UNCG 57

FG pct: Elon 53.8%, UNCG 34.8%

Leading scorers: Stephenson (Elon) 18, Stevenson (UNCG) 16.



CAROLINE OLNEY | Photo Editor

Victories in four of their last six games have excited the Elon women's basketball team as they begin to approach the season's homestretch in SoCon play.

GRAPHIC BY KRISTEN DEMARIA | Design Chief

Revamped lineup brings fresh start to Phoenix

Tommy Hamzik
Sports Editor

Consistency is always a key component to having a successful basketball team. Elon University men's basketball coach Matt Matheny had that for 21 games, using the same starting lineup in all of those contests.

But following three straight losses, including a blowout on the road to University of Tennessee at Chattanooga and a 62-59 setback at Samford University, Matheny knew it was time for some changes.

Changes for the better.

Matheny inserted senior guard Jack Isenbarger and junior guard Kevin Blake into the starting lineup, replacing junior Austin Hamilton and sophomore Tanner Samson. The move paid off immediately, as all four performed well against Western Carolina University Jan. 30, the first game of the switch.

"What I am excited about in the lineup change is not only did we get a little bit of a spark from Jack and Kevin, but I really like how Austin and Tanner responded," Matheny said. "I thought Austin came in and was playing on his toes and really attacked. I thought Tanner came in ready to go tonight, and he hit big shots."

Senior forward Lucas Troutman described the changes as "something new, something fresh, and something different." He said the team was "angry" coming into practice after the three consecutive losses.

"[It was] anger towards ourselves for not playing the way we know how to play, doing the things we know how to do," Troutman said. "Coach [Matheny] always talks about the little things. We haven't been doing the little things. We used that as motivation this week."

That motivation led to a 74-60 victory over Western Carolina and an 83-76 win on the road at Appalachian State University Feb. 1.

Isenbarger's situation was unique compared to others. He is a two-time All-Southern Conference selection and had started until this year. He entered the season with a nagging stress reaction in his foot, causing him to miss the first three games and see limited action in the next two.

Since his return, Isenbarger has steadily progressed, averaging 8.6 points per game while

averaging 22.7 minutes per game. He was a combined 7 of 9 from three-point range for 25 points in his two starts against Western Carolina and Appalachian State.

"It didn't feel that much different, although there is that added excitement to starting the game off," Isenbarger said. "Every player wants that."

Blake, on the other hand, was just making his fourth career start in 76 games when he took the floor against Western Carolina. He made a lasting impression, constantly attacking the rim through the lane and tallying 12 points on 5 of 5 shooting.

Overall, Blake has had an up-and-down season, playing 10 games in which he played less than 10 minutes and seven games where he played for 15 minutes or more. He's had games of 13 points and 12 points (twice) but is only averaging 3.7 points per game.

"Kevin's spark was very noticeable," Matheny said.

Samson started the season off hot, catching opponents' eyes with his sharp three-point

shooting stroke. He scored 17 points in the first two games of the year and had a career-high 23 against Virginia Military Institute Dec. 3, but he has only registered double figures twice since Dec. 19. In the 11-game span since, Samson is 21 of 70 (30 percent) from three point land.

He bounced back with a 15-point game against Western Carolina in which he made 4 of 6 from beyond the arc and an 11-point game against Appalachian State.

Hamilton was coming off a 2013 campaign that was shortened due to a knee injury and has recovered well. He tallied double-figure scoring totals in five of the first eight games while distributing 30 assists in those matchups. Since his hot start, he's gone scoreless in four games.

The changes benefit the Phoenix in a number of ways, most importantly giving the team a different vibe and look following their losing streak. While no player loses minutes,

the changes take advantage of each player's strengths.

Attacking was one big takeaway from the Western Carolina game, and Blake does that on a regular basis and can set the tone early by doing so. Samson, who normally starts the game hot, can now come off the bench and provide a spark as the opponent is wearing down.

Isenbarger gets to provide his leadership from the get-go, while Hamilton can give Isenbarger time to rest and facilitate the team's motion offense.

Matheny said he was pleased with the changes following the Western Carolina win, and made it clear the changes were here to stay — at least for a little bit.

When asked if the team would stick with the lineup for at least the near future, Matheny replied, "I cannot imagine us changing it."

Starting lineup bios

G: Jack Isenbarger

Senior, 6-2, 190 lb. Averaging 8.3 points per game

G: Kevin Blake

Junior, 6-3, 195 lb. Averaging 3.7 ppg

G: Sebastian Koch

Senior, 6-8, 205 lb. Averaging 12.8 ppg

F: Ryley Beaumont

Senior, 6-7, 220 lb. Averaging 9.9 ppg.

F: Lucas Troutman

Senior, 6-10, 228 lb. Averaging 15.5 ppg.



Jack Isenbarger, who has started in past seasons, returned to the starting lineup against Western Carolina.

Top Photos

Wednesday, February 5, 2014 • page 24



CAROLINE OLNEY | Photo Editor

Senior Lucas Troutman dunks the ball during the men's basketball game against Western Carolina on Jan. 30 in Alumni Gym. Elon beat Western Carolina 74-60.



CAROLINE OLNEY | Photo Editor

Sigma Kappa seniors lead their new sisters from Alumni Gym to the Greek Courts on Feb. 2. More than 500 women were invited into one of Elon's nine sororities on Bid Day this year.



ASHLEY KING | Staff Photographer

The 2014 Elon Tap Ensemble performs "It's Groovy, I Guess" during this January's production of Tapped Out! The piece was choreographed by senior Julie Crothers.



EMILY STONE | Staff Photographer

Freshman Emma Warman dances during Zumbathon, a Zumba marathon hosted by Campus Recreation, in Jordan Gym on January 17.