

Students relieved over 70% decrease in Eli Lilly insulin cost

One top global insulin producer announced reduction in out-of-pocket insulin prices, making the life-saving drug more affordable, accessible

Alicia Clanton and Ryan Kupperman
Elon News Network

Eli Lilly, one of the world's top three producers of insulin, announced last Wednesday that it would cut the prices of some of its most commonly prescribed insulin products by 70%.

Eli Lilly, Novo Nordisk and Sanofi own roughly 90% of the global insulin market. Though insulin still costs less than \$10 per dose to manufacture, the amount people with health coverage have to pay out of pocket has more than doubled in the past two decades, according to Health System Tracker.

The expense can lead to dire situations for people who need insulin to survive, particularly those who do not have insurance to help cover the cost. Some have gone as far as to ration their insulin, which can be harmful and, in some cases, fatal.

Sophomore Owen Miller, who has had Type 1 diabetes since he was 11 years old, was hospitalized his freshman year because of a problem with the infusion set for his insulin. Having gone a couple days without insulin, Miller said he was throwing up constantly and his blood was acidic.

"I felt horrible. And if it went on any longer, worse things would have happened," Miller said.

After a night in the emergency



ELLIS CHANDLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Sophomore Owen Miller carries a touchscreen insulin pump that links to his phone. Miller was diagnosed with diabetes in third grade.

room and some insulin, he said he was in better shape.

Miller's hospitalization was an accident, but it gave him perspective on the experiences of people who have to take the risk of making their insulin stretch because they struggle to afford it.

"If we just had affordable insulin, it wouldn't have to be a problem," Miller said.

Lilly's recent decision may prevent more people from needing to make this choice. The price of Humalog, Lilly's most

commonly prescribed insulin product, will be reduced by 70% by October. Insulin Lispro, Eli Lilly's non-branded insulin product, will cost \$25 starting May 1, making it the most affordable mealtime insulin on the market. The company already had a policy in place capping the out-of-pocket price of insulin at \$35 a month, whether or not the patient has insurance.

Many who rely on insulin, including Miller, get much of the cost covered by their insurance. But even with insurance, insulin

can still be expensive.

Compared to other drugs, insulin has a longer period of protection before generic competitors are able to sell affordable substitutes. Companies such as Eli Lilly are known to make frequent adjustments to their products, extending that protection period even further. The freedom U.S. pharmaceutical companies have to set their own prices combined with the lack of competition from cheaper generic products is what makes the price of insulin

so exorbitant.

"It's like a monopoly, there's no other options," Miller said. "You either take it and you're healthy, or you don't take it and you're not healthy. You can't afford to not take it because your health will just deteriorate so fast."

Lily Ribero, a sophomore, also has Type 1 diabetes and takes issue with the high cost.

See **INSULIN** | pg. 5

Burlington Animal Services reaches capacity for dogs, limits intake

Increase in surrendered, stray dogs overwhelms local animal shelter

Sophie Rosenthal and Jenna Manderioli
Elon News Network

Burlington Animal Services sees a number of cats and dogs enter and leave the shelter everyday. But recently, dogs have been entering faster than they're leaving, and last week, the shelter announced it reached capacity.

Now, BAS is limiting dog intakes to emergencies only — cases where dogs are sick, injured or pose an immediate danger and cannot safely be kept in a home any longer. Until enough space opens up at the shelter, nonemergency requests will be scheduled through a new appointment system.

Director of Animal Services Jessica Arias said the shelter has been experiencing an increase in stray and surrendered dogs for the last seven months. BAS



JENNA MANDERIOLI | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

A dog jumps up in a kennel at Burlington Animal Services on March 2.

typically records lower levels of dog intakes in January and February, but Arias said this year, the shelter never saw that decline.

"We knew we needed to do something because we're absolutely not going to go back

to the days where we consider euthanizing dogs just for space," Arias said.

BAS has been considered a no-kill shelter since 2018, which means it has a "live release" rate of 90% or higher. According to

former program coordinator Laura Michel, the shelter is working to make sure it remains that way, despite the increase in intakes.

"It took a lot of work and effort to reach that, and we certainly

don't want to — we are not going to — put a healthy, adoptable animal down because we don't have the space," Michel said. "But when you get to the point where you're so full and you're at capacity and you really cannot take more animals, that's what happens in many shelters, now you start having to put perfectly healthy animals down."

Arias said the shelter only considers euthanasia for animals when they have severe medical conditions that cannot be treated, such as severe trauma, end-stage cancer or repeated violent behavior. But when all of BAS' 75 dog kennels filled up in February, Arias said it couldn't accommodate any more dogs without violating Department of Agriculture regulations. Limiting the animal intake to emergencies only allows the shelter to continue to help animals without compromising its no-kill standard.

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THE PENDULUM

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In the last edition of The Pendulum, a caption for the main photo in the "Eric Mulford: paramedic, student, husband, father" story incorrectly labeled what was being pictured with a factually inaccurate statment. Elon News Network regrets this error.

CHEAT SHEET

THE CHEAT SHEET IS AN INTERVIEW WITH A RELEVANT EXPERT TO EXPLAIN COMPLEX TOPICS

Proposed changes to Mexico's Electoral Law

Michael Matthews, professor of history, discusses electoral law changes in Mexico

Michael Leung

Elon News Network

The Federal Government of Mexico passed a proposal Feb. 23 that would weaken the Instituto Nacional Electoral, Mexico's election agency. The proposal was presented by Andrés Manuel López Obrador, president of Mexico and founder of the left-wing Morena Party. If passed, it would cut salaries and funds to election offices, training for citizens who operate and manage polling offices and reduce sanctions for candidates who fail to report their campaign spending.

In response, hundreds of thousands of citizens marched into Mexico City's main plaza Feb. 26 to protest López Obrador's electoral law changes. Protesters dressed in white and pink – the colors of the Instituto Nacional Electoral – and shouted slogans such as, "Don't touch my vote!"

Protesters fear that López Obrador's changes will bring them back to the 1990s, where miscounting, campaign overspending and electoral pressure tactics were common. However, the president denies that his reforms are a threat to democracy, claiming that the accusations are the words of the classist elite. He claims Mexico's public agency for organizing federal elections, Instituto Nacional Electoral, spends far too much money, and funds should be allocated toward efforts to help the poor instead.

Michael Matthews, a history professor at Elon University, discussed the effects and the concerns of citizens in Mexico after López Obrador's changes to electoral law.

NEWS BRIEFS

QUICK TAKES ON STORIES YOU MIGHT HAVE MISSED THIS WEEK

1. Fellows Weekend brings almost 2,000 people to Elon University

The weekend is the university's largest accepted student program

Sophie Rosenthal

Elon News Network | @sophrosenthal

Elon University's largest admitted students event, Fellows Weekend, occurred

March 3. Including 762 prospective students, 1,928 people total are registered to attend Fellows Weekend, according to Vice President for Enrollment Greg Zaiser.

During Fellows Weekend, finalists for the eight fellows programs — honors, business, communications, Elon College, engineering, leadership, nursing and teaching — visit campus for interviews with faculty and current students. Tours,

open houses, information sessions and more are also held throughout Friday and Saturday.

Zaiser said in addition to those on campus this weekend, 300 students opted for virtual interviews. Last year, 731 prospective students and 1,849 people total attended, and Zaiser said approximately half of the students who attended Fellows Weekend enrolled at Elon.

2. Elon University clarifies what 5.14% increased tuition is going toward

Janet Williams, Jana Lynn Patterson and Chris Fulkerson explain new tuition increase and student health care

Avery Sloan

Politics Editor | @averylsloan

Janet Williams, vice president for finance and administration, said Elon's goal is to increase financial aid to students by 1% each year, totaling close to \$5 million per year. Multiple senators also brought up concerns regarding their own scholarships they received when they arrived at Elon and if there is any aid available to current students.

Williams said there are new resources

in place to account for the tuition increase and making an appointment with financial aid should be helpful for students.

"There are additional funds that have been set aside but it has to be based on demonstrated need. They do have a calculation," Williams said. "There are additional funds that we have set aside, one-time funds, to help bridge the gap."

3. Former President of the American Civil Liberties Union Nadine Strossen discusses free speech at Elon University

Nadine Strossen, a leading expert and professor in constitutional law and human rights, speaks on her perception of free speech, intellectual freedom and civil discourse

Fiona McAllister

Elon News Network

Nadine Strossen, former president of the American Civil Liberties Union, spoke at Elon University on March 2 about the prominence of free speech and how it affects her personal life.

Strossen said that most of the Supreme Court verdicts are unanimous. This unanimity shows that the First Amendment protects the most controversial of speech, though most Americans should be censored based on the morality of their addressment.

Strossen said she finds the government lacks much of what the Constitution had promised to uphold.

"The Constitution is not self-executing. Government officials throughout our history have gotten away with it," Strossen said. "That's why organizations such as the ACLU and other organizations were founded to provide lawyers and other resources to help people actually know their rights."



Senior Kayla Spalding has a standout moment during the Spring Dance Concert. Spalding was in two pieces in the concert, including dance professor Lauren Kearns' "Catching Light."

ELLIS CHANDLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER



ERIN MARTIN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Elon cheerleaders Nina Devaney and Natalie Blalock pose with the Phoenix at the Elon Day 2023 photo booth.



JOSEPH NAVIN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Eastern Alamance High School player Cole McGinnis pitches the ball toward Southern Alamance High School player Chase Moore during the home baseball game at Southern Alamance in Graham on March 4. Southern Alamance beat Eastern Alamance 5-4, marking its second win of the season.



JACOB KISAMORE | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Elon University Director of Athletics Dave Blank presents head softball coach Kathy Bocock with the game ball from her 278th career win, which came against James Madison University on Feb. 19, and made Bocock the program's all-time leader in wins. The presentation was before Elon's game against East Carolina University on March 1 at Hunt Park. The Phoenix went on to lose to ECU 5-1.



JOSEPH NAVIN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

A stalled Norfolk Southern freight train, known as NS 350, blocks Williamson Avenue in Elon around 6:50 a.m. March 3. The train was traveling from Greensboro to Selma, North Carolina, when a defect detector in Gibsonville was set off due to a "separation event." The train was on the move by 7:30 a.m.

Elon in LA adds new business courses

The university's most popular Study USA program will include new business courses in fall 2023

Madison Powers
Elon News Network

The Elon in Los Angeles program added four new business courses and a business internship for fall 2023 to its mainly communications-focused catalog.

The Elon in LA program, the most popular Study USA program in 2021, attracts primarily communications and performing arts majors. This fall, business students can take new classes in Hollywood: MKT 3110 Principles of Marketing, MKT 4701 Luxury Brand Marketing, MGT 3230 Principles of Management, ECO 3702 Economics of Art, Entertainment and Culture and BUS 3985 Internship Credit.

J McMerty, director of the program, is based in Los Angeles and said he thinks these courses would be a good addition to those already offered because of the business opportunities there.

"A lot of people think that everybody's an actor, writer or director out here," McMerty said. "But actually, there's many more jobs in all sorts of businesses, here and even in the entertainment industry."

McMerty said a few marketing students have participated in the program in the past, but most students are cinema and television arts or performing arts majors. He said he has received requests over the past 15 years from students from many majors, especially those majoring in arts or business administration.

"All the marketing students have always kind of commented, 'Oh, I wish we could do this for a semester,'" McMerty said.

Like the communications track of the Elon in LA program, the business side will have two days of classes and three days of interning at a local business.

Monica Scovell, director of global experiential learning at the Isabella Cannon Global Education Center, said the Love School of Business partnered with the program to create the business track in Los Angeles.

She said the GEC chose to add business courses to the Elon in LA program because all majors in the business school, except for economics, require an internship.

"97% of business students do an internship. Many of them do more than one," Scovell said. "Study USA is really built on that model of internship and some kind of academic credit,



PHOTO COURTESY OF LILY HAUPTMANN

Senior Daniela Lopez walks through the Academy of Motion Pictures in Los Angeles on Elon's 2023 Innovation in Los Angeles Winter Term abroad trip.

so the internship really should be driving students to want to participate."

Scovell said the business track seemed to fit well into the program, especially in finding internships.

"Some of it is looking at the connections we have and seeing what we already have in place that could work for a business student versus a communications student," Scovell said. "It might be the same exact place but just a really different focus for the student."

Scovell said that while the Elon in LA program is usually seen as being just for communications students, there are many opportunities for business students.

"The comms are the public facing that we see, and the business is everybody on the back end, doing all of the hidden work," Scovell said.

"We call it the business of Hollywood."

Lily Hauptmann, a sophomore studying business and data analytics, went on the Innovation in Los Angeles Winter Term course last January, which visited 34 companies in Los Angeles.

Hauptmann said she was drawn to

the program because of its focus on entrepreneurship. She said she enjoyed exploring the businesses and technology industries in Los Angeles.

"The amount of opportunities that are in LA in general is insane, especially from the business perspective," Hauptmann said. "There were so many entrepreneurs who started their business in LA and then grew and expanded outward. So LA is really a home base for some of those companies."

The Port of Los Angeles is the biggest in the U.S., and Hauptmann said she was amazed to see the scale of the port.

"It was massive and just insane to see how much commerce is coming into this country in this one spot," she said.

While Hauptmann is not planning to attend the Elon in LA program this fall because of other study abroad plans, she said Los Angeles offers countless opportunities for business students that are unavailable in North Carolina.

"There's so many businesses. It's a massive city and there's so much out there, and even going to places we went to, like Santa Monica and Santa Barbara, it's all within an hour," Hauptmann said. "There's just so much offered there that you really can't find in North Carolina."

Hauptmann said she thinks this is a good option for business students who want to study away from Elon's campus and get experience in

a city.

"You're not just sitting in a classroom, listening to a lecture for three hours," Hauptmann said. "It's a new perspective. Seeing the different parts of the city, you can definitely see the things that you're learning in class and how they apply to where you are."

McMerty said he is excited about this new addition.

"Diversity in every aspect is good for every program. And so this kind of diversity, which is really academic diversity in different departments, always makes it a better program," McMerty said. "The kind of majors and the different kinds of students that we have in here will add to the culture of the program."

ELON IN LA NEW BUSINESS COURSES

- MKT 3110 Principles of Marketing
- MKT 4701 Luxury Brand Marketing
- MGT 3230 Principles of Management
- ECO 3702 Economics of Art, Entertainment and Culture (may be taken for Advanced Studies Credit by non-Business students)
- BUS 3985 Internship Credit

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Students tutor immigrant, refugee children

Partnership between Elon’s Kernodle Center, Greensboro community center allows students to volunteer with kids new to the state

Madison Powers
Elon News Network

Elon University’s Kernodle Center for Civic Life partners with the University of North Carolina, Greensboro’s Center for New North Carolinians in an after-school tutoring program for K-12 children of immigrant and refugee families. The Kernodle Center for Civic Life mainly focuses on local volunteer work, but Assistant Director Andrew Moffa said the center wanted to get involved with immigrant communities — of which Alamance County has few, with a foreign-born population of 8.4%, according to the 2021 census report data. Greensboro, where the center is located, has a foreign-born population of 11.7%.

“We believe in supporting immigrant and refugee families,” Moffa said. “It’s an important topic, and there aren’t as many opportunities for that here locally, because of how small our community is.” Every Thursday, student volunteers go to CNNC’s Community Enrichment Center — which mainly serves Sudanese and other Arabic or Swahili-speaking families — to help with reading, English and math homework. The Center for New North Carolinians offers many other programs to provide access to legal and health services and employment development for immigrant and refugee families new to North Carolina. Freshman Hallie Beeker, student coordinator of Elon’s CNNC volunteers, had never volunteered with refugees before, but said she was inspired to participate in the program because of her Global Experience course focused on the Arab world. Beeker said her professor for this class, Shereen Elgamal, shared her experience volunteering with immigrant families in North Carolina, which encouraged Beeker to do the same. Beeker said she saw an opportunity to volunteer with a center that serves a population mainly from the Middle East.



PHOTO COURTESY OF NATACHA NIKOKEZA

Students work inside the Center for New North Carolinians during after-school care.

“I was drawn to it from hearing about her experience, her volunteer work and just the class in general,” Beeker said. “I fell in love with it and went every week.” Beeker said she has enjoyed engaging with the kids she tutors. “The kids are just the sweetest, most motivated children, and when you go there, they want to learn, they want to improve,” Beeker said. “The parents are so grateful and they want their kids to succeed and move ahead in their academics.” Each of the three community centers CNNC offers is based in an apartment complex that houses different immigrant and refugee populations, including families from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Afghanistan, Sudan and Spanish-speaking countries. While the Community Enrichment Center serves many families from Sudan, Beeker said there is no language barrier with the students. Yet, some children are used to reading in Arabic, which is read from right to left. Natacha Nikokeza, senior program coordinator for CNNC community centers, said the centers began because of a need in the community. “The kids who were being resettled in that apartment complex

needed someone who could help them understand their homework and it started with just one staff member from the Center for New North Carolinians offering services on the bus, and the need grew,” Nikokeza said. “More kids wanted to be helped, more parents were advocating for their kids to get the service, and it started with one apartment complex and then two, and it grew from there.” Nikokeza was a refugee from Burundi, East Africa, and began volunteering with resettlement agencies when she moved to the U.S. When a permanent position opened at CNNC, she took it and has been working there for over five years. Nikokeza said she loves her work and this partnership for two reasons: seeing relationships grow between university student volunteers and immigrant children and providing community aid. “The students are exposed to

learning from people who might be different than what they are used to seeing. The feeling of providing a service that is needed — we see always that it’s very rewarding for the students,” Nikokeza said. “It’s also helpful for us to have the hands that we need to be able to provide the service to the community.” Beeker said the student volunteer training process focuses more on how to interact with the students, rather than what topics to teach. “It’s more about how to act as a tutor, so have patience, be understanding,” Beeker said. “Just how to present yourself and how to make the children feel more comfortable around you.” Because of COVID-19, the university stopped sending students for a few years but restarted the partnership last semester. There

were three Elon student volunteers in the fall and two this semester, according to Moffa. Nikokeza said that the community centers depend on university volunteers from the area. She said that she has seen many students return after one semester of volunteering with the program as semester-long interns or yearlong AmeriCorps volunteers. “The program speaks for itself and via students who are coming and providing the service,” Nikokeza said. Moffa said the Kernodle Center for Civic Life is proud of its partnership with CNNC. “It’s one that I would love to be able to expand more,” Moffa said. “The students who go now were incredibly dedicated and they will continue to go which makes me really happy.” Beeker said the experience has been eye-opening and encourages fellow students to volunteer with the Kernodle Center or with CNNC, which she and other students go to every Thursday from 2:30 to 5 p.m. “College is a time where everyone focuses on themselves,” Beeker said. “It’s nice to take a chunk out of my week to just not think about myself and to think about somebody other than me.”

“THE FEELING OF PROVIDING A SERVICE THAT IS NEEDED — WE SEE ALWAYS THAT IT’S VERY REWARDING FOR THE STUDENTS.

NATACHA NIKOKEZA
SENIOR PROGRAM
COORDINATOR, CNNC

Insulin producer announces reduction in out-of-pocket cost

INSULIN | from cover

“Because it is a basic resource that people need to live, I feel like it shouldn’t be something that is price gouged that much,” Ribero said. Insulin helps blood sugar enter the cells in the body for use as energy. Without it, blood sugar can build up in the bloodstream. People with Type 1 diabetes cannot produce enough insulin themselves. People with Type 2 diabetes produce an excess amount of insulin. With either type, rises in blood sugar can result in heart or kidney disease and symptoms can take the form of headaches, dizziness, nausea and more, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Mayo Clinic. Both former President Donald Trump and President Joe Biden campaigned for lower insulin prices, and Congress imposed a maximum of \$35 insulin copayments per month for Medicare patients in its Inflation Reduction Act last year. Despite this, both Lilly’s cut in prices and Congress’ regulations will likely have little

effect on privately-insured individuals, as their insurance plans already pay the bulk of the cost. “It’s a step forward that we needed,” Miller said. “Especially around here, there’s a lot of people who can’t afford insurance, and are doing basically anything they can just to get the medicine that they need. It’s life changing medicine, and they can’t afford it.” Ribero hopes the announcement will push other insulin manufacturers to cut their prices. “There’s three major companies and Eli Lilly is just one of them. So the two other ones, they still have super, super high prices,” Ribero said. “Not everyone has access to Eli Lilly, so they’ll get whichever one they have access to. It’s not very fair.” While Miller believes Lilly’s cut in prices is a good start, he also said insulin producers across the board need to make their products accessible and affordable to a larger amount of the population. “When insulin is affordable for everyone, and not just by one company, that will do the job,” Miller said.



ELLIS CHANDLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Sophomore Owen Miller checks his insulin pump throughout the day to monitor his blood sugar levels. The pump has a digital screen where he can view specifics about his insulin dosages.

LIFESTYLE

Shelter sees impact of overcrowding

BAS | from cover

Arias and Michel both said they believe the increase in stray and surrendered dogs is due to rising inflation and cost of living. “There’s going to be a continuing need because people are pressured with just being able to afford basic day-to-day living expenses and housing expenses, and sometimes the extra expense of a pet is just more than they can manage,” Arias said.

“

WE WOULD NEVER WANT SOMEONE TO GIVE UP THEIR PET THAT THEY LOVE AND DON’T WANT TO PART WITH BECAUSE IT’S A MATTER OF THEY JUST CAN’T AFFORD TO BUY A BAG OF DOG FOOD OR CAT FOOD OR LITTER.

LAURA MICHEL
FORMER BAS PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Because the shelter has become so full, BAS recommends that pet owners surrendering their animals try to rehome on their own before coming to BAS. With BAS’ new limited-intake system, Arias said intake appointments are booked

out for months. To help prevent families having trouble affording their pets from needing to give them up, BAS is hosting a pet food assistance program. The shelter will provide pet food once a month to families in Alamance County with up to five animals. The pet food assistance program is donation driven, and Arias said any donation will make a difference. “We would never want someone to give up their pet that they love, and don’t want to part with, because it’s a matter of they just can’t afford to buy a bag of dog food or cat food or litter,” Michel said. “They just need a little help.”

Inside the shelter

Caring for the stray and surrendered dogs, junior Emily Andreuzzi has been volunteering at the shelter for the past year. As the shelter’s 75 dog kennels filled up over the past month, Andreuzzi said she’s seen the lack of space have a negative effect on the dogs. “I see it in a dog’s eyes. I know that they’re stressed as well and it’s not the most ideal situation,” Andreuzzi said. “Many dogs get overwhelmed by the other dogs barking and ... there’s more poop laying around in the kennel, and it’s just hard because they’re dirtier.” Senior Corinne Orgettas also volunteers at BAS with Andreuzzi and has been working there multiple times a week for the past two years. Orgettas said because there are so many animals, the shelter has had to double up on kennels for some dogs. “Seeing multiple dogs kind of crammed in a kennel because we have no other choice is hard,” Orgettas said. “And it’s obviously a lot more work for the staff and volunteers here. It’s more dogs to



JENNA MANDERIOLO | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Senior Corinne Orgettas plays with a dog named Marigold while volunteering at Burlington Animal Services on March 3.

get out every day, more dogs to feed, more dogs to clean up after.” In addition to its 75 kennels, BAS has enclosures for 65 cats at its facility and Arias said there could be anywhere from 70 to 100 more animals offsite in foster care at any given time. Orgettas has fostered more than 10 dogs and three kittens during her time volunteering, and every animal she fostered was adopted. Having seen both the foster care and kennel sides of BAS, Orgettas said foster care is not only better for the animals, but it also helps them get adopted. “It really resonates more with

adopters when they see a dog in a home setting,” Orgettas said. “You just learn a lot more about dogs when they’re in foster, and then you can give that description. And again, that tells potential adopters a lot about the dog, and it makes them more likely to get adopted.” BAS has waived all dog and puppy adoption fees and reduced cat and kitten adoption fees from \$50 to \$20 to incentivize adoption. Arias said while the shelter is seeing some improvement and community assistance since announcing limited intake, this is an issue that isn’t confined to Alamance County.

“I’m seeing this from my peers in animal welfare across the nation and across the state,” Arias said. “Folks everywhere, in every county, are overwhelmed with the number of animals coming in their shelters.”

IF YOU GO
Burlington Animal Shelter

Where:
221 Stone Quarry Rd.
When:
Monday to Friday: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Saturday: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Jewish Learning Fellowship welcomes largest cohort yet

Elon Hillel’s eight week seminar explores Jewish identity, community

Sarah T. Moore
Elon News Network | @SarahTM27

Sophomore Julia Finkle first joined the Jewish Learning Fellowship in the fall and returned this semester as the program’s intern. Her cohort had around 13 students who met every week. “It’s just opened a lot more doors for me, and definitely gotten me more excited about being involved in the Jewish community,” Finkle said. “And made me more proud to be Jewish.” This semester’s Jewish Learning Fellowship cohort is made up of 15 students and is the biggest group the Elon Hillel program has seen. The fellowship is an eight-week seminar led by Jewish educator Boaz Avraham-Katz.

“

THE FACT THAT IT’S REALLY GOTTEN BIGGER REALLY MAKES ME EXCITED FOR THE FUTURE OF HILLEL.

JULIA FINKLE
SOPHOMORE

The group meets one hour a week for dinner and discussion about Jewish identity, community, culture and texts. Finkle said this semester’s larger cohort means more opinions and perspectives get shared during their meetings. “The fact that it’s really gotten bigger really makes me excited for the future of Hillel,” Finkle said. “It just makes me excited that more people are excited to learn about Jewish things.” Freshman Dani Rudd joined the Jewish Learning Fellowship to be more involved with Hillel and Elon’s Jewish community. “Being Jewish is very important to me, so being able to express my identity with a group of like-minded individuals is really great,” Rudd said. Sophomore Eli Orkin also saw the fellowship as an opportunity to connect with other Jewish students and decided to join the program after Avraham-Katz



COURTESY OF JULIA FINKLE

Members of the spring 2023 Jewish Learning Fellowship cohort and Jewish Educator Boaz Avraham-Katz meet for one of their weekly sessions.

reached out to him. Orkin said analyzing Jewish texts and values through a modern lens helped him feel more connected with his religion and community. “It’s a really nice opportunity to sort of connect with my Judaism,” Orkin said.

Both Rudd and Finkle said Elon’s large and inviting Jewish community played a role in their decisions to attend the university. Over 12% of the student population is Jewish and school records show that this year’s freshman class has the largest Jewish population of any freshman class in

the university’s history. Rudd said both the fellowship and Hillel have helped her create a support system and make lasting connections with her peers. “It’s really great to just be able to go there and feel safe and feel understood,” Rudd said.

I won't be playing Hogwarts Legacy



Lucy Samuels
Elon News Network

It felt like the internet was constantly reminding me of the existence of Hogwarts Legacy for the length of 2022, trying to sweep me up into the hype for the game. On Feb. 10, Portkey Games released the long anticipated Hogwarts Legacy to gamers and Harry Potter fans all across the world. Despite being such an influential intellectual property, The Wizarding World is no world I want to be a part of, especially not for \$70.

As a child, I read the Harry Potter books, like many people in my generation did. I was engulfed into a world of magic and mystical creatures, kids getting up to no good and a deep and detailed lore that transported me into Hogwarts. In 2020, I had not thought about Harry Potter for years until J.K. Rowling tweeted transphobic comments.

I was then led through an eye-opening rabbit hole, and I soon realized how many harmful ideologies were also ingrained in the Harry Potter' series. From antisemitic depictions to proslavery rhetoric, the magic of Harry Potter was officially drained from Hogwarts for me. No longer was I a kid, hazed by magic, awaiting my letter from Hogwarts. Now, I am a young adult who can see through the fiction to the material and its author for what they truly are: the Harry Potter universe is filled with problems and goes deeper than just J.K. Rowling's tweets.

As I grew up with Harry Potter, I also grew up playing video games, and lots of them. I still am an avid gamer, with single role playing adventure games being my favorite. It happens that Hogwarts Legacy is just that, with strong marketing toward Harry Potter lovers who, like me, wanted more than anything to be a student of Hogwarts.



The game is already wildly successful, breaking all sorts of records, according to Forbes' findings. It sounds like a perfect game to pick up. Despite being a video game that's right up my alley, I will not be attending Hogwarts Academy anytime soon.

Although J.K. Rowling had no influence over the development of the game, there is no separating the artist from the art in this situation. The franchise itself is riddled with problems, and the game is no different. With the association between J.K. Rowling

and the continuation of a problematic fantasy world, I want absolutely nothing to do with the game.

One of my biggest qualms with the game is the main enemy — the bank-running goblins who have struck up a rebellion. Looking to uncover the powerful, ancient and hidden magic that sleeps beneath Hogwarts, the goblins are portrayed as greedy, money-loving bankers, — like how they are portrayed in the books.



DESPITE BEING A VIDEO GAME THAT'S RIGHT UP MY ALLEY, I WILL NOT BE ATTENDING HOGWARTS ACADEMY ANYTIME SOON.

It is painfully obvious that the goblins are distasteful depictions of Jewish people, and the game had a chance to leave that stereotype behind. The books distastefully portray the goblins as, what seems like, caricatures of Jewish people. But no. The developers — or J.K. Rowling's team who worked with developers — pulled right from Rowling's problematic books. It's hard to tell who's responsible for this decision, but I will always support the hardworking developers who were just doing their job.

With the rapid growth of the video game market, gaming news sites make money off reviewing and making walkthroughs for new games, especially successful ones such as Hogwarts Legacy. So what are news outlets doing about the game? Well, not much. But just like the developers, it's a tricky situation with reviewing new games because it's their job.

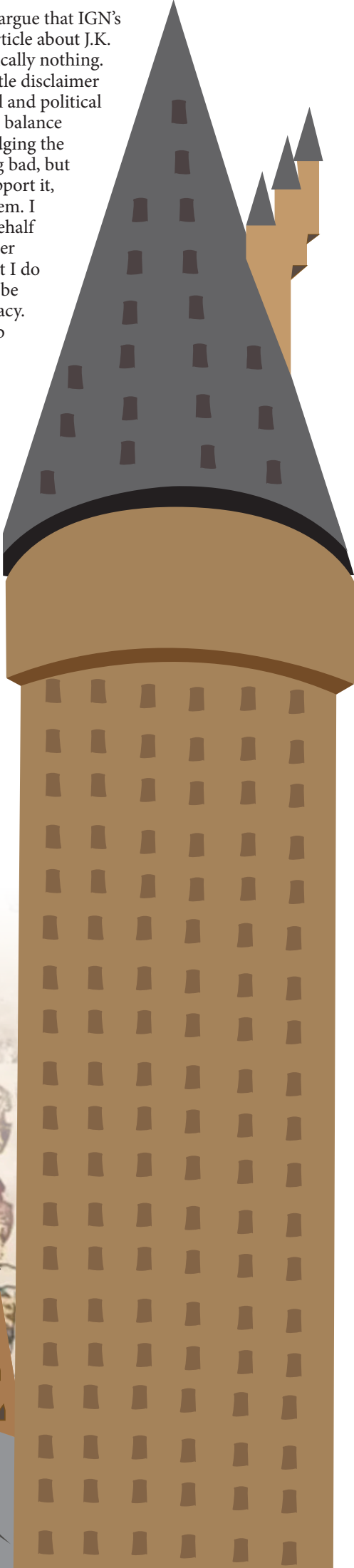
A lot of gaming sites have opted to run a review of the game with an accompanying disclaimer and statement about the controversy. Popular gaming site IGN stuck in a segment in their review concerning "the elephant in the room," with J.K. Rowling.

"IGN has always and will continue to champion human rights causes and support people speaking with their wallets in whatever manner they choose," wrote IGN reviewer Travis Northup.

The site addresses J.K. Rowling and her actions outside of Harry Potter on Twitter, but it never addresses the ingrained problems that lie within the books and therefore the games. There is absolutely no separating the art from the artist. Still, people continue to play and review the game.

Despite its effort, I argue that IGN's little addition to the article about J.K. Rowling has done basically nothing. You can't just give a little disclaimer about harmful cultural and political beliefs and expect it to balance out. Simply acknowledging the existence of something bad, but then continuing to support it, just furthers the problem. I cannot speak on the behalf of Jewish or transgender communities, but what I do know is that I will not be playing Hogwarts Legacy. I don't think it's my job to judge people for playing this game, but I won't lie when I say I was disappointed when I saw a lot of my favorite content creators playing or promoting it.

As an avid gamer and reader, there are plenty of other amazing games and books to look forward to. Ultimately it is anyone's choice to play or not to play this game, which honestly looks rather boring, but supporting a game that's not just associated with J.K. Rowling but uses her inappropriate story telling, as I see it, distasteful.



Hogwarts Legacy is an open-world game, allowing players to explore an expansive map of Hogwarts Castle itself and the surrounding area.

SPORTS

WOMEN’S BASKETBALL PURSUES CAA CHAMPIONSHIP

Two graduate students will step on court for final time in their college career

Sydney Spencer Sports Editor | @SydneyASpencer

After the final buzzer March 2, the Elon University women’s basketball team earned one more home victory and walked off the court at Schar Center for the last time in the 2022-23 season. Five players, including graduate student guard Lenaejha Evans and graduate student center Evonna McGill, walked off the court for their final time in maroon and gold.

This season was Evans’ first and only with the Phoenix after playing for two seasons at Rider University. She said exiting Schar Center was bittersweet.

“Like coach said, she wished she had me for all four years and I wish the same thing,” Evans said. “I learned a lot here. It’s a great atmosphere and I just love the people here.”

McGill transferred to Elon from University of North Carolina Asheville as a junior, and completed her third season as one of the Phoenix’s key contributors on the roster. In her career, she totaled 608 points and 272 rebounds. She exited in tears but said she is focused on the future.

“We’ve got more to do,” McGill said. “We’ve still got the tournament.

I can live in this moment but I’ve still got to focus on what’s next to come because we’re not done.”

Head coach Charlotte Smith said she was proud of the team’s performance in its 52-42 victory against University of North Carolina Wilmington — not only for the seniors, but to boost morale for the entire team.

“It really is an emotional night because this is the final game in Schar Center for a lot of wonderful seniors, but what a better way to go out than with a W,” Smith said. “Hopefully this gives us some momentum going into the tournament.”

With the 2022-23 regular season officially under wraps, it’s now time for the Phoenix to look toward one thing: the Colonial Athletic Association championship tournament.

The Phoenix, who finished the regular season with a 9-20 overall record and 5-13 conference record, will enter ranked No. 11 out of 13 seeds. The tournament will be held in Towson, Maryland, with Elon’s first round matchup March 9 at 7:30 p.m. against No. 6 seeded Stony Brook University. Smith said although the team has had its ups and downs, she believes that they can go far and make a strong push in the tournament.

“I see them going as far as I see every team that I’ve ever coached, all the way to the championship,” Smith said. “If you’re not playing for the championship, then what are you playing for?”

Since Elon joined the CAA in 2014, Smith has had great success in the postseason. In the 2016-17 season, she led the Phoenix to not only the regular season title, but also the championship title — defeating No. 2 ranked James Madison University in the final round of the tournament. The following year, it won the championship once again, defeating No. 1 Drexel University as the No. 3 seed. In both years, the Phoenix lost in the first round of the NCAA tournament.

A decorated athlete and coach, Smith said she will draw from her past experience to help the team this season.

“We always talk about how you’ve got to win in your mind before you win in real life,” Smith said. “I’m always winning in my mind.”

This will be McGill’s third CAA tournament in her career. In 2021, she lost in the quarterfinals to No. 3 seeded Drexel University, where she led the team with 18 points. Then, the Phoenix lost in 2022 to No. 5 ranked College of Charleston, where McGill led the team with a double-double, scoring 19 points and 10 rebounds. She said she hopes to continue her large contributions in the postseason this year after having success during the 2022-23 regular season.

“I’ve been seeing the trust that the coaches have put into me, I’ve been starting to see it flourish,” McGill said. “At first, I wasn’t really seeing it, but out there I trust them and I trust the process.”

After a strong defensive outing against UNCW, McGill said that defense will continue to be emphasized in preparation for such a large game.

“Defense is what wins games,” McGill said. “Defensive boards, defensive stops, so we all just talked about it as a team to come out with energy, and if we don’t do anything else, we need to get a stop.”

The experience that McGill and Evans bring to the table is going to be key among a roster of younger players. But Smith said she is confident that the freshmen will find success too.

“A lot of the younger players come from good stock,” Smith said. “They come from programs that have won, so they know how to win. We want to be clicking on all five cylinders. It’s just a matter of everybody bringing their best talent to the game because when we do that, we’re an unstoppable force.”

Freshman guard Raven Preston, CAA Rookie of the Year, has missed the past two games due to injury. The top average scorer, Smith said Preston has been a key contributor. Smith still has trust in the other members of the team to get the job done.

“I don’t care who’s on the roster, I’m always believing,” Smith said. “I told my players if you don’t have confidence in yourself then you don’t have anything. I have confidence in myself as a coach. I believe that I can win with anybody we have on the

roster so I’m trying to always find a way to win, trying to find a way to constantly get that edge, and trying to find a way to get another banner.”

Smith said recuperation will be important for the team’s success.

“The biggest thing for us in preparation for the tournament is to make sure that we’re well rested and then take care of business,” Smith said. “Resting, making sure we’re healthy both mind, body and soul.”

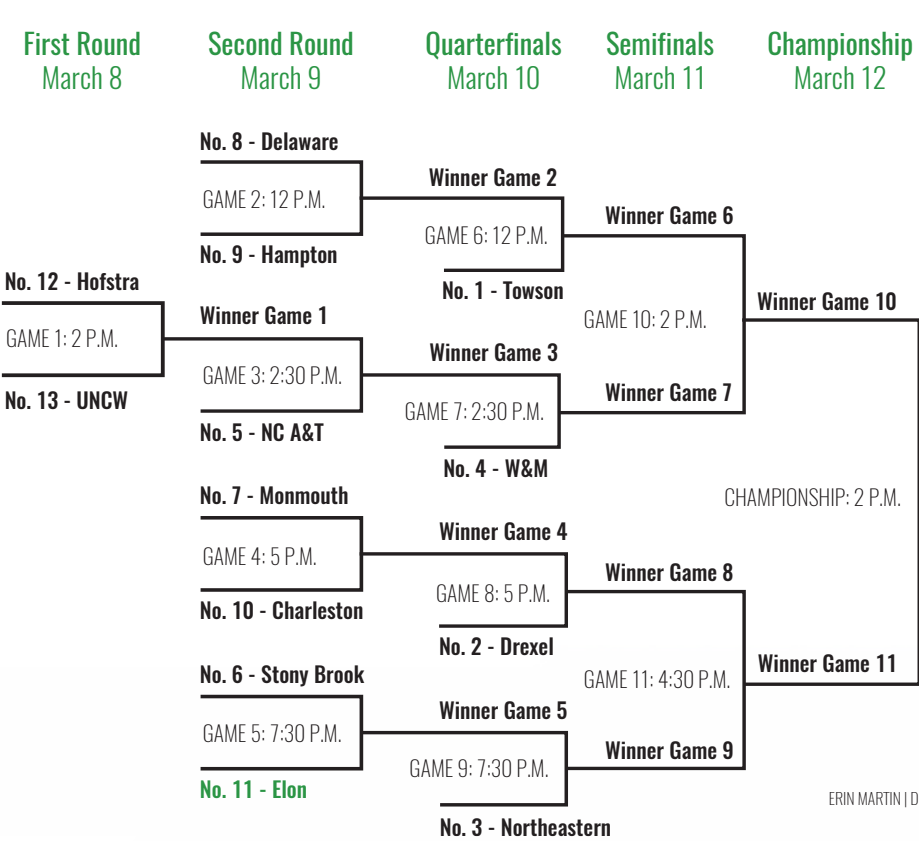
Smith is focused on this goal and believes in her team.

“We know we’re capable. It’s just a matter of us playing Elon basketball for 40 minutes,” Smith said. “Basketball is a game of mistakes, but we want to minimize those mistakes, and when we do that, we give ourselves a chance to be successful and we can play with the best of them. We’ve proven that.”

IF YOU WATCH CAA Women’s Championship

Where: FloHoops.com When: March 9, 7:30 p.m.

SEEDS	CAA RECORD
1. 	13-5
2. 	13-5
3. 	13-5
4. 	12-6
5. 	12-6
6. 	11-7
7. 	9-9
8. 	9-9
9. 	8-10
10. 	6-12
11. 	5-13
12. 	4-14
13. 	2-16



ERIN MARTIN | DESIGNER

BY THE NUMBERS

9.6 PTS

Average per game by graduate student Evonna McGill.

12.5 PTS

Average per game by graduate student Lenaejha Evans.

