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ELON, NORTH CAROLINA

THE PENDULUM

Elon aims to administer COVID-19 IMMUNIZATIONS

How the university hopes to aid in vaccine efforts for students, faculty, staff and town

Kyra O'Connor

Enterprise Story Coordinator | @KO_reports

STUDENTS HAVE TO WAIT to receive their doses of the COVID-19 vaccine while faculty and staff could receive the vaccine in the coming weeks as part of phases two and three of the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services vaccination plan: "You Have a Spot. Take Your Shot."

While Jeff Stein, chair of the Ready & Resilient committee, said the university hopes to be able to administer the vaccine on campus but is not currently approved to do so. In Alamance County, Cone Health and the Alamance County Health Department are two vaccine providers.

The state of North Carolina allocates vaccines to providers based on their capacity to store and handle the vaccine and their ability to reach prioritized populations. Due to the limited quantity of vaccines, very few providers have access to doses, but as vaccines become more widely available, they will be at clinics, pharmacies and vaccination events in communities, according to the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services.



CLARE GRANT | PHOTO EDITOR

An Alamance County Health Department worker fills a syringe with the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine on Monday, Jan. 18. The Career and Technical Education Center in Burlington, North Carolina administers both Moderna and Pfizer vaccine on different days depending on supplies.

See **VACCINE** | pg. 8

Elon names Gozik as new dean of global education

Gozik speaks about his plans for expanding global learning and international programs at Elon

Graysen Shirley

Elon News Network | @GraysenShirley

Nick Gozik will start his new role as dean of global education at Elon University on Jan. 25 after a two year search following former dean Woody Pelton's retirement.

Gozik comes to Elon after eight years as director of international programs at Boston College. He said he hopes to continue expanding and improving global engagement and international programs in his new role at the university.

"I will bring a strong commitment to undergraduate education with a focus on reflection and experiential learning," Gozik

wrote in an email to Elon News Network. "I will also be bringing a desire to foster dialogue and cross-unit collaboration to ensure that internationalization is well integrated into all aspects of Elon life."

Rhonda Waller, executive director of global engagement, served on the 13-member search committee which brought Gozik to campus. Over the course of two years, the search committee conducted a series of phone and online interviews with potential candidates and held in-person presentations, where candidates were invited on-campus to discuss their mission to improve Elon's global education. After the on-campus interviews concluded, the search committee met and recommended Gozik to serve as the next dean.

See **DEAN** | pg. 6



PHOTO FROM TODAY AT ELON

Elon named Nick Gozik the new dean of global education. Gozik previously served as the director of the Office of International Programs at the McGillicuddy-Logue Center for Undergraduate Global Studies at Boston College.



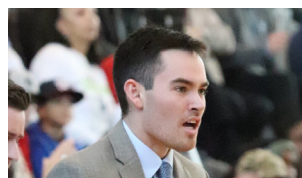
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Commencement plans in the air for class of 2021



LIFESTYLE • PAGE 12

Performing arts alumni looks for work



SPORTS • PAGE 15

Elon alum coaches local high school basketball

THE PENDULUM

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EDITORIAL POLICY:

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

CORRECTIONS POLICY:

ENN is committed to accurate coverage. When factual errors are made, we correct them promptly and in full, both online and in print. Online corrections state the error and the change at the top of the article. Corrections from the previous week’s print edition appear on this page.

Contact
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CORRECTIONS

There are no corrections from the last issue of The Pendulum.

SUDOKU

By Thomas Denome | @tddenome

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SCAN FOR AN ANSWER KEY TO THE
NOV. 18, 2020 CROSSWORD PUZZLE



1. Open your phone camera
2. Focus on the QR code
3. Click the pop-up link

CROSSWORD

That is the Question

By Thomas Denome | @tddenome

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ACROSS

- 1 Some African snakes
5 Have a disappointing blind date, say
12 Rover alternative
13 Utopian
15 Blue and white, but not red?
16 Stench creator
19 Word following mountain or battle
21 Ashland sch.
22 Judges on cooking shows
23 Curry or Bird, say
27 The G8, for one
28 '90s series that switched from Hulu to Netflix in 2021
29 Sharp edges
31 Core principle
32 At any time, in Old English
33 Present with
35 Muscle alternative
38 Takeout restaurant offering
40 Pulitzer winner for fiction John ____

43 A lot of bits?

- 46 Ghastly
47 Mic users
48 Goes to the ICU, say
50 Former U.N. Secretary General Ki-moon
51 Putting the ball in play
52 Idiocy
57 Martin Luther King Jr. compatriot
59 Company affected by the closure of movie theatres
60 Fix
61 Filling foods
62 A pitch may have two or four of them

DOWN

- 1 U.S. society for studying kidney disease
2 Insect respiratory opening
3 Swedish sports car
4 Allowed to stand
5 Mr. Krabs or Scrooge McDuck, for example
6 Concepts
7 Cinq follower

8

- Of the welcome or wrestling variety, perhaps
9 ____ Express, retail arm of a Chinese multinational
10 ____-tac
11 Five hrs behind London
14 "You obviously have great ____"
17 Latin exclamation of joy during the holidays
18 Resident of eastern Syria
20 Blood cell network
22 Half of Hamlet's question
23 One with supernatural perception
24 1.1 billion Indians
25 Square root of itself
26 Archaic "frequently"
28 Gaze deeply
30 Mythical Greek figure with exaggerated horse features
34 Dampens
35 Perhaps what prevents a gym from filling to capacity

- 36 Disability similar to Parkinson's Disease
37 Starts of golf games
38 Obsession of "crazy" old women
39 Letters of the blood group system
41 Slang for someone who might violate boundaries
42 Buddhist's ire
43 Mongolian desert
44 Only nation touching both the Persian Gulf and Caspian Sea
45 Disreputable person (variant spelling)
48 Of the golf club or salad variety
49 Nabisco cookies
51 Put in tune
53 Faux ____
54 "Inside the NBA" channel
55 Wedding words
56 A wee bit
58 J. Cole song about money accumulation

Elon University sophomore and forward Maya Johnson takes a jump shot against a James Madison Dukes defender on Saturday, Jan. 16 in Schar Center. The Phoenix lost to the Dukes 63-75.



CLARE GRANT | PHOTO EDITOR



CLARE GRANT | PHOTO EDITOR

An Alamance County Health Department worker fills a syringe with the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine on Monday, Jan. 18 at The Career and Technical Education Center in Burlington, N.C. The Alamance County Health Department administers both Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines on different days depending on supplies.



JOSEPH NAVIN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Freshman Rylee McKinney plays minigolf inside Moseley Center on Monday, Jan 11.



On Saturday Jan. 16, a fire truck drives through downtown Elon.

CLARE GRANT | PHOTO EDITOR

Elon University student-teachers to receive vaccine

In a new decision, seniors in the student-teaching program will be allowed to receive the immunization

Cailey Cetani
Elon News Network

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services announced on Jan. 7 that student-teachers will be eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, alongside teachers and other school employees. According to the latest NCDHHS vaccination plan, frontline essential workers such as educators are included in the third group, as of the Jan. 14 schedule. The decision has major ramifications for Elon University seniors who are working as full-time student-teachers.

The student-teaching experience allows for education majors to train in a classroom environment by allowing them to take on the responsibilities of a teacher. Even though there is a licensed teacher in the room at all times to observe, the student-teacher will be given full responsibilities for around three weeks and will slowly hand back responsibilities to the teacher. There are around 33 to 36 seniors in the required program.

Despite the fact that the NCDHHS announced that vaccinations will be available for them, student-teachers will not be required to get the vaccination. Elon requires students to get weekly antigen tests, but they are recommending student-teachers to get the vaccine.

Dean of the School of Education Ann Bullock said permitting all educators to receive the COVID-19 vaccine early will allow for the school environment to be safer and more efficient.

“Schools have a lot of people in places that run very quickly and do things very quickly. There are a lot of children in schools and lots of adults in schools every day,” Bullock said. “By having preventative measures, such as a vaccine, you are providing schools an opportunity to feel like they can run a safer environment.”

Even though there is no information



Alamance County Health Department worker cleans the area prior to administering the COVID-19 vaccine on Monday, Jan. 18. According to the NCDHHS, student-teachers are eligible to get the vaccine in group 3.

“

BY HAVING PREVENTATIVE MEASURES, SUCH AS A VACCINE, YOU ARE PROVIDING SCHOOLS AN OPPORTUNITY TO FEEL LIKE THEY CAN RUN A SAFER ENVIRONMENT.

ANN BULLOCK
DEAN OF THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

on how the vaccine will be administered, this new announcement by the board of education will allow school systems to slowly work back to a normal teaching environment benefiting students, teachers and student-teachers.

Kristin Amrine, a senior and student-teacher, said that she hopes other people who are not in her position are able to access the same information and privileges.

“When I think about the vaccine, I worry about access, and for populations of people who might not have the same access to health care benefits and receiving the vaccine in the same way I do,” Amrine said. “I have such a great privilege to be in this position, and to have various different systems that give me access to something like this vaccine.”

Even though there are multiple grades participating in the student-teaching experience, seniors are the only participants that are allowed to receive the vaccine alongside licensed teachers, since they are

the only ones in the program teaching full-time and report to their respective schools every day.

Bullock said with the announcement by the board, it will allow student-teachers to be more focused when teaching.

“[It will] help them feel like they can run a classroom without having to clean every time a child leaves from a desk,” Bullock said.

The process for how the vaccine will be distributed to student-teachers is still undisclosed. From the announcement made by the board, there will be a list provided that will allow for the state to have an accurate account of all educators being vaccinated.

Amrine said that with the changes made in the school system to adjust for the pandemic, it will help prepare student teachers in the long run in terms of facing tough obstacles in their field.

“As student-teachers and practicing teaching, I think it’s really valuable to have done it during this time and gotten used to a phase of education that feels very difficult,” Amrine said. “Hopefully [that] can carry over some of those lessons in what could be the future of education as a whole.”

With the pandemic affecting how schools run, most schools are mainly relying on remote learning. The Alamance-Burlington School System requires that teachers report to the school, while students learn remotely. The only exception to this are students with disabilities and preschools.

Amrine said teaching has allowed student-teachers the privilege of being able to watch their students grow and approach challenges head on.

“There are points where it breaks your heart and there are points where you come home, just out of exhaustion from a long day of working,” Amrine said. “But it’s so rewarding to be able to see the moments where it clicks in where they have this light bulb go off, and they feel like a brilliant human being. And they feel that they’re learning and they feel passionate and excited about the content that they’re absorbing. And so it makes it all worth it.”

Elon students react to election ahead of inauguration

Students await the incoming Biden administration with Trump on his way out

Kieran Ungemach
Elon News Network | @kieranungemach

As if a global pandemic wasn’t enough, Election Day in November hit Americans like an earthquake, with voters left in its wake to deal with seismic aftershocks.

Since the announcement on Nov. 8 that Democrat Joe Biden won the election over incumbent Republican Donald Trump, Americans have watched lawsuits from the Trump administration contest the results with unfounded claims of voter fraud, an adamant Trump refusing to concede and the U.S. Capitol building stormed by a pro-Trump mob, leading to another House impeachment of the president.

With the inauguration on Jan. 20, Elon University students like junior Deena Elrefai, a public health and international global studies major, are anxiously awaiting the new administration to be sworn in after a heated few months.

“I’m just kind of hesitantly optimistic, waiting to see what will happen,” said Elrefai, who’s first choice was not Biden, but she preferred him over Trump. “I was not surprised at all that President

Trump waited a long time to concede, I was actually surprised he did eventually.”

Elrefai — who hopes to see the Biden administration address issues about race with policing and healthcare, voter suppression and issues of generational wealth for minority communities — was disturbed by the growth in divisiveness post election, culminating with the insurrection at the Capitol.

“I’m less concerned about the Biden administration and more concerned about what this means for the future of democracy in general,” Elrefai said. “There are signs we’ve been seeing for years ... it’s really scary to see the things you learn about in class come true.”

On the other side, sophomore Ryan Lockwood, a political science major and a member of the Elon University College Republicans, is nervous about how moderate Republicans like himself are having a hard time finding their place in the party.

“One of the things that’s really worrying me right now is the future of the GOP,” Lockwood said. “It is very worrisome because [the party] is beginning to have this divide between Republicans and Trump Republicans.”

While Lockwood was hesitant at first with acknowledging the early results, wanting to make sure the recounts occurred, his



President Joe Biden speaks at an event in Durham during the 2020 Democratic presidential primaries.

mindset shifted to wanting a smooth transition for the Biden administration.

“As of right now, there’s no voter fraud, and the election was fair,” Lockwood said, adding that the U.S. should, however, look into election security with the increase in mail in ballots and absentee voting. “I think we do need to see some improvements in our election system, understanding this was a special case with the massive increase of mail and absentee voting.”

Lockwood — like Elrefai — would like to see Biden work with both police and minority communities to engage in police reform, and is wishing the best for both the president elect and vice president-elect with a busy agenda ahead on Capitol Hill.

“The Senate now has to deal with the COVID package, the impeachment trial and Biden’s nominees all within the first three months,” Lockwood said. “There is a lot of work to do.”

As for Elrefai, she remains

cautiously optimistic that the aftermath of the election cycle will subside, and that the divisiveness will lead to both sides of the aisle meeting at a compromise.

“It feels like everything has been moving really, really fast and no one’s really getting what they want on their side,” Elrefai said. “I’d be interested to see if we’re able to slow down and really listen to find solutions that work for people, or at least give them options to not feel like they’re completely out of control.”

Elon University commencement plans in flux

COVID-19 has commencement plans for the classes of 2020 and 2021 in the air

Jacob Kisamore
Elon News Network

Graduation is a special moment for students and families. It serves as a culmination of each student's hard work and dedication over their four years at college. Unfortunately, plans for an in-person commencement ceremony for the class of 2021 are currently in flux.

The COVID-19 pandemic has made hosting in-person gatherings a challenge, and Elon University will soon have to make a decision regarding a potential commencement ceremony.

Senior students will begin their final semester on Feb. 8 with the last day of the school year being May 21.

Owen Covington, university spokesmen, said there is currently no timeline for making a decision regarding commencement for the class of 2021.

"Given that many restrictions related to in-person gatherings are still necessary and required, few details for this year's commencement exercises have been finalized," Covington said.

Jeff Stein, chair of the Ready & Resilient committee said commencement plans are underway for both the class of 2021 and the class of 2020 are still underway with the senior class officers. Right now, they are planning for both the possibility of it happening or not. He said it would be "foolish" of them to make a decision now, but hopes to alert students and families of a decision by March.



Members from the class of 2019 share a moment together on commencement day.

ABBY GIBBS | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

According to Jeff Clark, the executive director of Cultural and Special Programs at Elon University, the school is following the protocols and mandates implemented by the state of North Carolina, which limit large gatherings and discourage unnecessary travel, while making this decision. This, among other factors, will guide the university in making a decision on having in-person ceremonies.

"We will be looking at the same things that the Ready and Resilient dashboard uses — infection rate in the county and state as

well as on campus," Clark said. "We will also be watching the vaccination progress closely."

While there is no timeline for making a final decision, Clark is confident that if the school does choose to have an in-person ceremony, families will have plenty of time to make their travel plans.

"A decision will be made with enough time for families to arrange travel if we are able to have an in-person ceremony," Clark said.

Grace Briskman '20 was disappointed last spring when she learned her class would

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GIVEN THAT MANY RESTRICTIONS RELATED TO IN-PERSON GATHERINGS ARE STILL NECESSARY AND REQUIRED, FEW DETAILS FOR THIS YEAR'S COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES HAVE BEEN FINALIZED.

OWEN COVINGTON
UNIVERSITY SPOKESMAN

not be having an in-person commencement ceremony, but she understood it was likely for the best.

"I was gutted when it was official that we wouldn't be walking to receive our diploma [in-person]," Briskman said. "It was pretty devastating that we wouldn't get the opportunity to properly celebrate the four years I spent there."

Briskman said she would consider coming back to Elon for an in-person ceremony honoring the class of 2020, but feels it is best to wait until such an event could be hosted with as little risk as possible.

"I would definitely consider coming back, but I think having it in the spring would be too premature with how bad the pandemic is," Briskman said. "I think it would be better to wait until most if not all of us can be vaccinated."

Alamance GOP to vote on vacant county commissioner

Alamance County GOP is expected to vote on a candidate to fill a vacant seat on the Board of Commissioners

Graysen Shirley
Elon News Network | @graysenshirley

The Alamance County GOP executive committee — made up of 44 party officers, elected officials and members — will vote on a candidate to fill ex-county commissioner Amy Galey's vacant seat on the Alamance County Board of Commissioners on Jan. 21.

Galey's win of the North Carolina State Senate District 24 race in the 2020 election means she will no longer serve on Alamance County's Board of Commissioners. Galey assumed office as a state senator on Jan. 1. Her term runs until December 31, 2022.

Ben York, the Chairman of the Alamance County GOP, said seven candidates have publicly announced their run to fill the vacant seat. Candidates include Craig Turner, first vice chair of the Alamance GOP; Robert Turner, co-owner of the Ace Speedway; Blake Williams, a member of Alamance Community College's Board of Trustees; Paul Williams, a retired Alamance County EMT; Michael Trollinger, a council member for Green Level; Henry Vines, a farmer from Snow Camp; and Chuck Marsh, owner of the Maverick Radio Station.

York said it's important to find a candidate to fill Galey's vacant seat on the board of commissioners and finish the remaining two years of her term.

"It's a five-member board and you have a vacancy," York said. "You need to be able to fill that vacancy so the board can operate at their full capacity."

Under North Carolina state law, a vacant seat on a board of county commissioners is to be filled by the appointment of a person who belongs to the same political party as the member being replaced. Galey's membership of the Alamance County GOP means the executive committee of the Alamance County GOP will vote on a candidate to fill her seat.

When the Alamance County GOP executive committee meets on Jan. 21, they will open the floor for nominations of candidates to fill

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I'M LOOKING FOR SOMEONE THAT'S VERY APPROACHABLE AND SOMEONE WHO LISTENS TO EVERYBODY AND DOESN'T MAKE UP THEIR MIND UNTIL THEY'VE HEARD ALL SIDES OF THE STORY AND THEY'RE VERY LOYAL TO THE CITIZENS OF THIS COUNTY.

PAMELA THOMPSON
ALAMANCE COUNTY COMMISSIONER



FRANCES O'CONNOR | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Amy Galey winning the NC District 24 Senate leaves an open seat in the Alamance Board of Commissioners.

Galey's vacant seat. According to York, each candidate must be formally nominated by the Alamance County GOP executive committee at the virtual meeting. Candidates will then give a speech about why they are running and what they hope to accomplish if chosen to fill the vacant seat.

Following candidate speeches, the Alamance County GOP executive committee will vote on a candidate to fill the vacant county commissioner seat with one candidate to be formally appointed that night to fill Galey's vacant seat. A simple majority vote is needed among executive committee members to decide who fills the vacant seat, according to

York.

Pamela Thompson, a current Alamance County Commissioner, said she and other county commissioners are looking for a candidate who values honesty and integrity.

"I'm looking for someone that's very approachable and someone who listens to everybody," Thompson said. "[Someone who] doesn't make up their mind until they've heard all sides of the story and they're very loyal to the citizens of this county."

The Alamance County GOP executive committee meeting on Jan. 21 will be held virtually on Zoom at 7 p.m. and is open to both the public and the press.

Gozik to continue advancement of global engagement at Elon

DEAN | from cover

Gozik’s push to strengthen global education at Boston College through his work in the Office of International Programs interconnects with Elon’s strategic goal of deepening engaged learning for all students. Waller said Gozik brings a wealth of experience to Elon and has worked with several universities to push for the expansion of international and study abroad programs.

“He really gravitates towards our mission and vision,” Waller said. “I think Dr. Gozik is arriving at Elon at a wonderful time for him to get to know us but also to lead us toward this vision of deepening that we are all dreaming

about and we hope to reach by 2030.”

During his time at Boston College, Gozik developed an online course called Reflections on Being Abroad which interlaces students’ own study abroad experiences with their observations of world cultures through studying history and current lifestyle. He has hosted conferences and meetings about international studies, including Boston College’s International Education Week, a collegiate conference dedicated to increasing awareness of international education about the world’s cultures.

Gozik has also helped to broaden diversity and inclusion efforts in Boston College’s international travel and study abroad programs. He worked with benefactors of

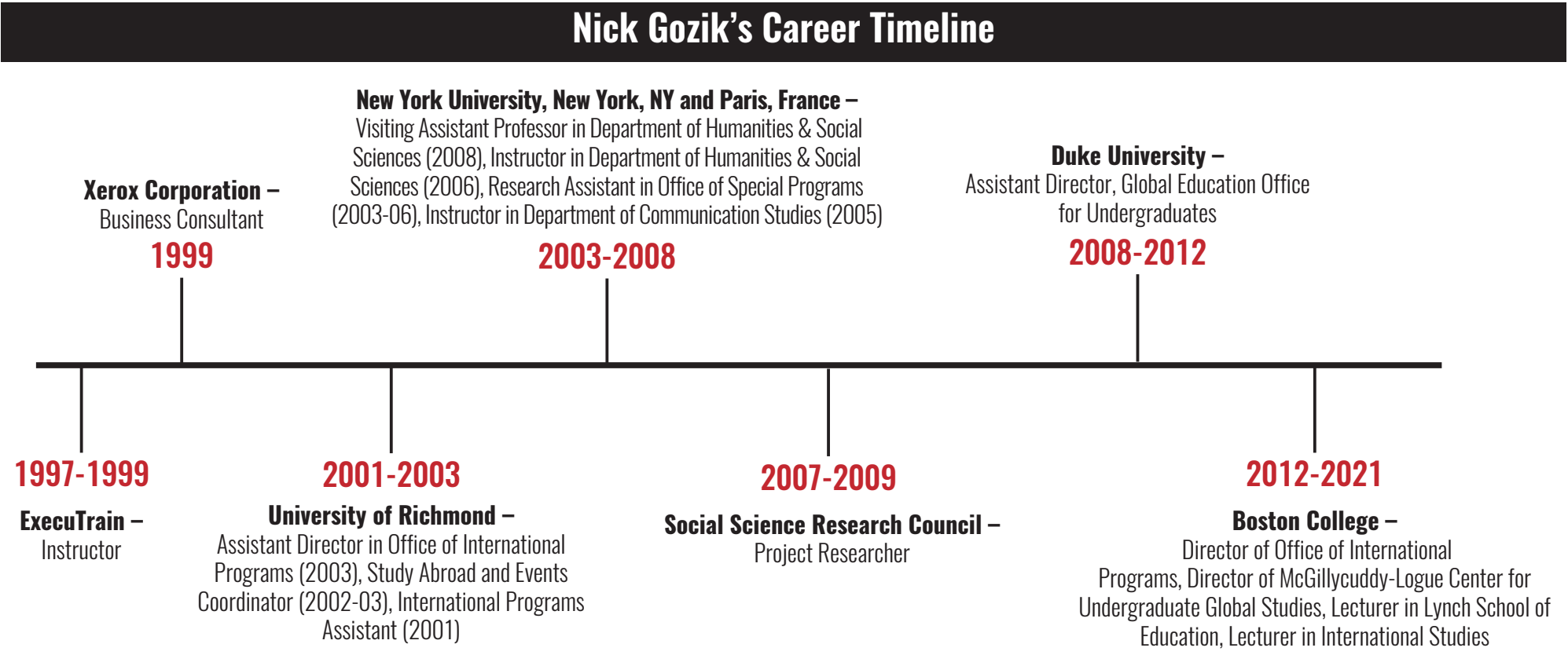
“I THINK DR. GOZIK IS ARRIVING AT ELON AT A WONDERFUL TIME FOR HIM TO GET TO KNOW US BUT ALSO TO LEAD US TOWARD THIS VISION OF DEEPENING THAT WE ARE ALL DREAMING ABOUT AND WE HOPE TO REACH BY 2030.

RHONDA WALLER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

the McGillicuddy-Logue Center, Boston College’s center for undergraduate global studies, to provide a \$10 million dollar donation used to award travel grants of more than \$100,000 each year to the college’s high-need students.

Gozik said he believes students should have equal access to study abroad opportunities and hopes to establish new programs to help with this in his new role at Elon.

“I strongly believe that all students on a campus should have the same ability to engage with all aspects of campus life, including global programming,” Gozik wrote. “It is equally important to build skills through high impact practices (HIPs), including education abroad, in order to be fully prepared for today’s global workforce.”



Application numbers increase from last year despite pandemic

With virtual information sessions and test-optional admissions, the university saw more applicants

Kyra O’Connor
Enterprise Story Coordinator | @ko_reports

Virtually touring colleges and attending Zoom information sessions did not stop the prospective class of 2025 from applying to Elon University. The number of admissions applications for the 2021-2022 academic year increased by 14% as of Jan 19, according to Vice President for Enrollment Greg Zaiser.

Early action applications increased by 14% from the 2020-2021 academic year. Regular decision applications increased by 24%. However, early decision — the university’s binding application — decreased by 33%, receiving 100 fewer applications than last year.

The admissions process has changed in many ways, including smaller campus visits, open house programs and off-campus information sessions, Zaiser wrote in an email to Elon News Network. Elon Admissions has hosted over 100 Facebook Live sessions across two channels: Life as a Phoenix for applicants and Elon Bound for admitted students.

Prospective students will also be able to take virtual tours of the university beginning next week, Zaiser said, in addition to videos admissions made available last spring.

College and high school counselors are reporting that students and families are very interested in schools that are holding in-person classes, Zaiser wrote.

“Students and families recognize the best academic environment is an in-person and/or synchronous learning environment

and there is demand for that,” Zaiser wrote.

The university is also piloting a test-optional admissions program for three years. Because many standardized tests can’t be administered safely during the pandemic, universities and colleges have begun to reevaluate requiring the tests for admissions. According to Zaiser, for the 2021-2022 academic year, only 44% of applicants reported a test score.

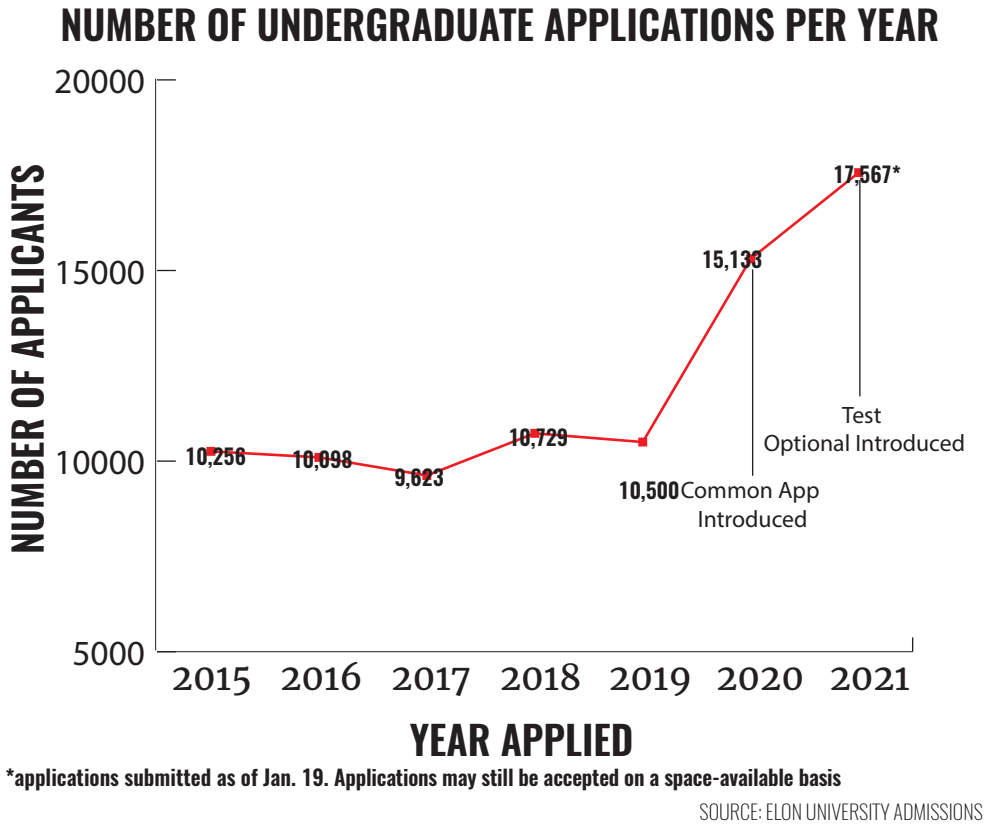
“The very first question I was asked during [our] first [Facebook] Live session back in March was whether we’d be requiring [test scores],” Zaiser wrote. “At the time, we had no idea the impact ... COVID would have on society and the admissions world, specifically. Overwhelmingly, students seem to be responding favorably.”

All of Elon’s peer institutions are also offering test-optional policies, with some — like the College of William & Mary — doing a pilot program similar to Elon’s. Others are continuing their test-optional program — like Rollins College, which has been test-optional since 2008.

While students are able to choose not to submit test scores in their applications, Zaiser wrote that once students are enrolled, they will be asked to provide test scores if they have them. If a student were unable to take a test due to the pandemic, then they will not be required to submit a score.

“We’ll use the test scores we have for admitted students to study student-success compared to those without,” Zaiser wrote. “It’s a three year pilot after which we will determine if we are test optional permanently.”

Elon has also added a Bachelor of Science in Nursing as well as new majors in the Love School of Business, two factors that Zaiser said may have contributed to the increase in applicants this year. The university also added affinity programming



BY THE NUMBERS

56%
of prospective students from the total pool of applicants did not submit test scores, according to Vice President for Enrollment Greg Zaiser

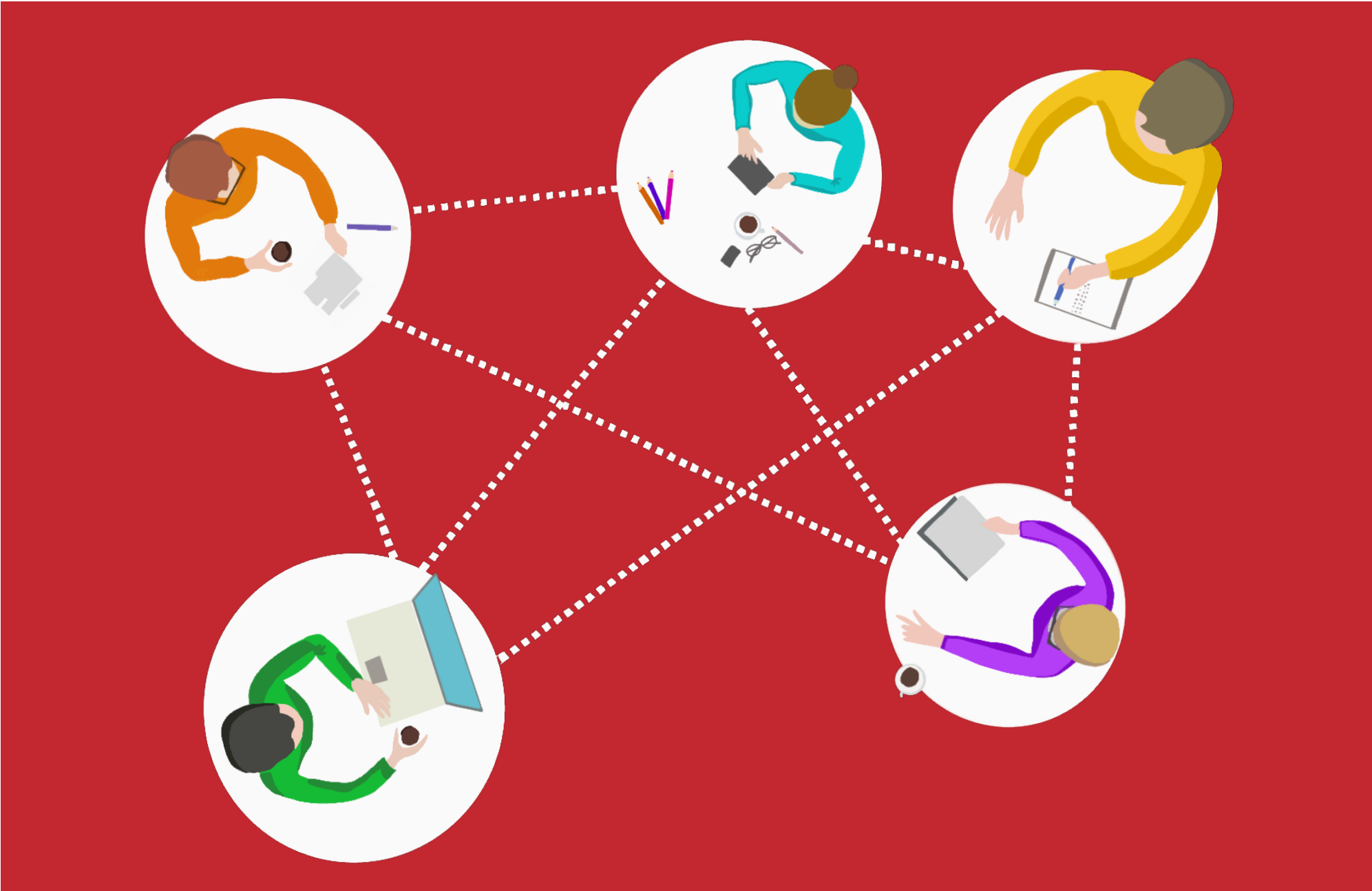
17,567
students have submitted applications as of Jan 19. Regular decision applications closed on Jan 10. Applications may still be accepted on a space-available basis

for Black, Hispanic and Latinx-identified students: The Black Advance and Viva Elon. The programs are meant to highlight the experience of Black, Hispanic and Latinx-identified students at Elon.

Even when Elon Admissions is able to return to hosting larger in-person events and tours, the university plans to continue offering virtual options, Zaiser wrote.

“It’s been fun to have students from all over the world in our virtual sessions,” Zaiser wrote. “However, seeing Elon is believing, [so it is] important that we are able to get students to campus in order for them to understand this unique and strong academic community.”

Students weigh staying home for spring semester



While Elon University continues to operate in-person, students are still able to choose remote learning for the spring semester.

CAROLINE BUNDER | DESIGNER

While Elon continues to offer in-person instruction, students approved for remote learning share their experiences

Jinger Callwood
Elon News Network | @jingerccallwood

The academic experience — all-nighters in the library, lab experiments, class field trips and connecting with professors during office hours — are all aspects of in-person instruction that have been redesigned due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Now, students are adjusting to an online learning environment as virtual instruction has become widely prevalent in the education process over the past 10 months.

Elon University has been using remote instruction in some capacity since the pandemic began, even after the school announced its Ready & Resilient plan for in-person classes on June 8, 2020. The plan offered a remote instruction option for students and faculty who provided documentation regarding a disability, health-related accommodations or unique circumstance approved by Disabilities Resources.

According to university registrar Rodney Parks, around 180 students were approved for remote learning in the fall. Individual requests for remote learning are still under review for the spring semester, but the registrar reported that 432 undergraduate students are currently approved in the system for remote learning, primarily for Winter Term with a low number of remote requests for the spring as of mid-January.

Remote learning allowed flexibility for students in various circumstances. Sophomore Caroline DiFrango opted for remote instruction for a more consistent schedule and to limit potential exposure to the virus so she can protect her family.

“I was super fearful I would bring COVID home to my immunocompromised family,” DiFrango said. “I was dealing with some mental health issues that had been exacerbated by the pandemic. With my doctors being in Richmond and the campus

climate shifting constantly, I thought it best I stay somewhere unchanging until I was healthier.”

Remote learning brought on obstacles for students nationwide, including sophomore Alicia Clanton.

“Remote learning was definitely rough. My days had no structure and I lost all my time management skills,” Clanton said. “It’s hard for me to focus on work in a home environment, and whereas at Elon I could resolve that by finding a quiet spot away from my dorm, the libraries in Maryland are still only open for drive-thru services. I felt disconnected from my classes, especially when it came to group work.”

The remote learning policy allows students who were previously approved for remote instruction in the fall semester to continue studying remotely throughout the spring semester if they choose. Clanton said she grappled with whether to continue studying remotely or return to campus.

“If you asked me two months ago, I would’ve told you there was no way I was staying home another semester,” Clanton said. “On one hand, I miss the freedom of living on my own, and I learn better when I’m actually at school. I also miss my on-campus job, since the school decided to stop allowing remote work toward the end of last semester.”

Clanton has worries about returning to campus due to rising COVID-19 cases in the country.

“As I get closer to the point where I need to make a decision, I’m starting to have doubts,” she said. “It doesn’t feel like it, but the rate of COVID cases is much worse than it was in August when I originally decided to stay home. I might run the risk of feeling socially isolated if I go back to campus.”

The virtual learning experience also allowed Clanton to reflect on what could be done to improve the process.

“I think the key to making remote learning less painful is to really make an effort to schedule your days and have the discipline to avoid distractions,” Clanton said. “That applies to college success in general, but it’s even more important at home because you’re in a relaxed environment and you’re

“

I THINK THE KEY TO MAKING REMOTE LEARNING LESS PAINFUL IS TO REALLY MAKE AN EFFORT TO SCHEDULE YOUR DAYS AND HAVE THE DISCIPLINE TO AVOID DISTRACTIONS.

ALICIA CLANTON
SOPHOMORE

BY THE NUMBERS

~180
students were approved for remote learning this fall

432
students are currently approved for remote learning for either the winter and/or spring semester

surrounded by distractions.”

Disabilities Resources is working diligently to accommodate students this upcoming semester, according to Zoe Nulty, the accommodations specialist.

“As many students will be learning remotely during the spring 2021 semester, we will continue to communicate and provide resources to them,” Nulty wrote in an email to Elon News Network. “They will have access to their accommodations, student mentors, as well as tutoring through Learning Assistance. Should their needs change, we are here to promote positive change and advocate for solutions.”

As DiFrango prepares to head back to campus after a semester of at-home instruction, she is hesitant about campus safety as COVID-19 cases rise around the country and in Alamance County.

“I am returning to campus for the spring,” she said. “What worries me most is just the shifting campus climate and the toll that may take on my mental health. It’s also just disappointing to see that not every student is taking it seriously, thus all my precautions may be in vain.”

Clanton remains undecided but is leaning toward another semester of remote learning.

“I have four more whole semesters at Elon,” Clanton said, “so I might just stick it out at home for another semester and make some changes to make online learning more manageable.”

Elon hopes to aid the community with COVID-19 vaccine

VACCINE | from cover

University physician and member of the Ready & Resilient committee Ginette Archinal said that getting approval to become a vaccine site is a process with a lot of moving parts. Not only does the university have to have the ability to store vaccine doses, but there also have to be enough people to distribute the vaccine, and any distribution site must have the ability to record the data from the vaccinations. Archinal said the university plans to “have everything in place” should the opportunity arise.

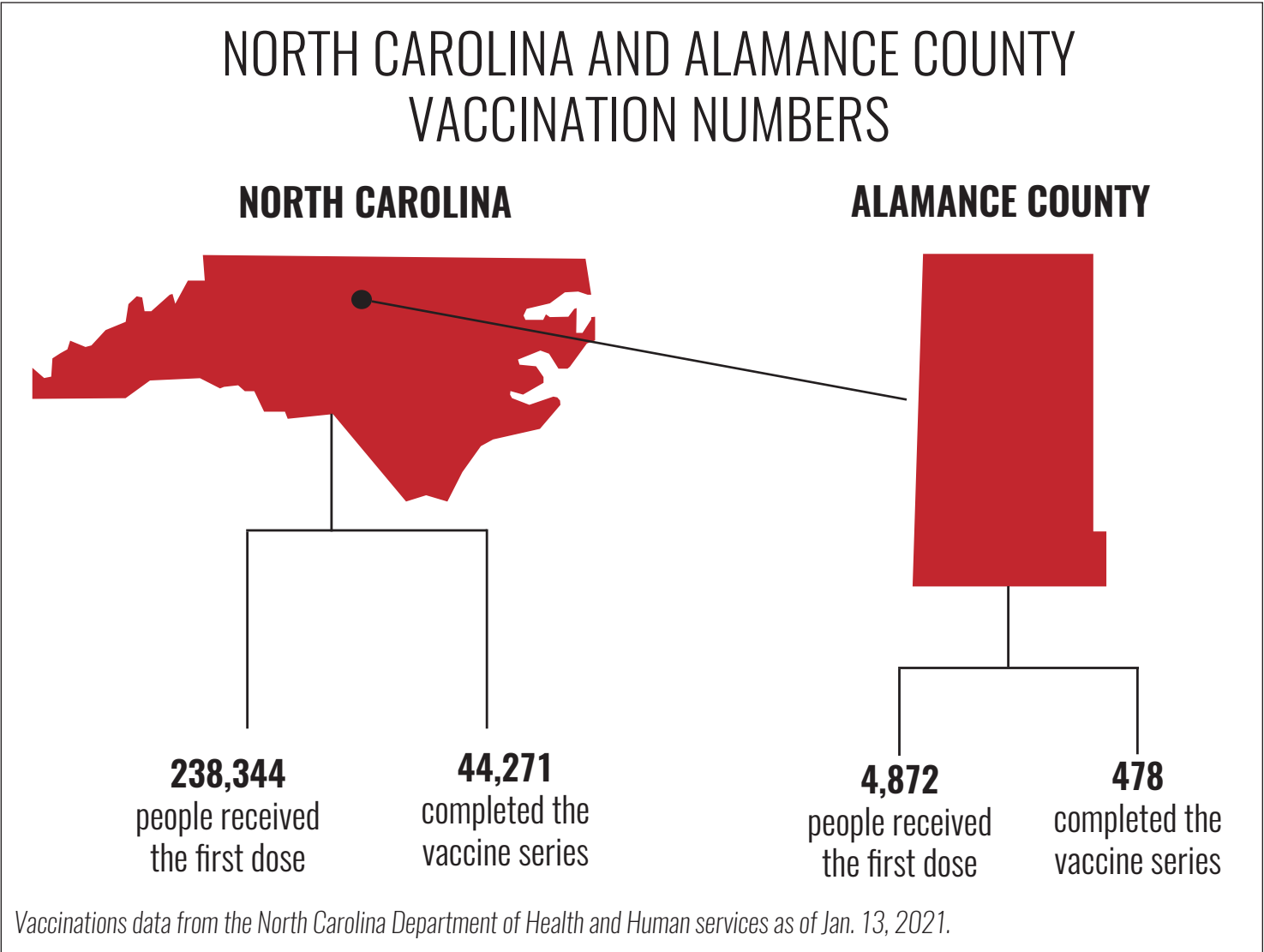
When students, faculty and staff, will be able to receive the vaccine is unclear, Archinal said. The timeline depends heavily on how many doses are available.

For example, as of Jan. 19, faculty and staff members who are over the age of 65 may be able to receive the vaccine in phase two, whereas a faculty or staff member who is younger than 65 years old would receive the vaccine in phase three, even though both are deemed essential frontline workers by the CDC. However, due to limited supplies of the vaccine, Alamance County is only vaccinating people who are 75 years and older.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention defines frontline essential workers as first responders, education and childcare professionals, workers in manufacturing industries, corrections officers, public transit workers, grocery stores employees, food and agriculture workers and U.S. Postal Service employees.

“Currently in Alamance County, they’re trying to do the 75-year-olds and over, and they can’t accommodate that; they don’t have enough. It really all goes down to supply and demand,” Archinal said. “You’ve got to have enough vaccine[s]. You have to have enough people to give the vaccine. And those are things that are beyond ... Elon’s control.”

In a previous version of North Carolina’s vaccination plan, there was a provision for K-12 and college students to receive the vaccine, however in the most recent update, that provision was removed. Stein said with the recent changes with the plan, there is some confusion as to who will be in each group, but the university hopes



BY THE NUMBERS

- 21
- days until the second dose is administered for those receiving the Pfizer vaccine
- 28
- days until the second dose is administered for those receiving the Moderna vaccine

to receive clarification on the plan as it pertains to Elon by next week.

The university is also exploring what they can do to make sure students are not unable to receive the second dose, whether due to travel or any other obstacle, Stein said.

Elon students from outside of North Carolina have the potential of receiving their first dose in North Carolina and their second dose in their home state, depending on when vaccines become available to students. For those receiving the Pfizer vaccine, the second dose is administered 21 days after the first, according to the CDC. For the Moderna vaccine, the time between doses is 28 days.

The way the vaccine rollout is being done is to ensure people at the highest risk of serious illness are prioritized, as they are the most likely to need to be hospitalized if they were to contract COVID-19.

“I know that there’s a lot of frustration that people can’t get the vaccine they wanted, but there’s a reason it’s being phased in,” Archinal said. “At the moment, we don’t have enough hospital beds. The goal is keeping people out of hospital, not allowing people to go to parties.”

According to the NCDHHS COVID-19 dashboard, 4,872 people have already received their first dose of the vaccine and 478 people have completed the vaccine series in Alamance County. In North Carolina overall, 238,344 people have received their first dose, and there are 44,271 people who have completed the vaccine series.

North Carolina received nearly 85,000 doses of the Pfizer vaccine when it was first made available the week of Dec. 14, followed by over 175,000 doses of Moderna’s vaccine. Through the end of January, the state expects to get 60,000 weekly doses of each vaccine. The amount of vaccines each state receives from the federal government is based on the state’s population of people 18 years and older.

Even though Archinal received both doses of the Pfizer vaccine as part of phase 1a, she said her habits will not change. While the vaccine can be helpful for the patient in terms of lessening symptoms, there is no guarantee someone who received the vaccine cannot pass on COVID-19 to others, which is why Archinal said she will continue to wash her hands frequently, wear a mask and remain physically distanced from others.

“There’s a lot we don’t know still.

“I KNOW THAT THERE’S A LOT OF FRUSTRATION THAT PEOPLE CAN’T GET THE VACCINE THEY WANTED, BUT THERE’S A REASON IT’S BEING PHASED IN. AT THE MOMENT WE DON’T HAVE ENOUGH HOSPITAL BEDS. THE GOAL IS KEEPING PEOPLE OUT OF HOSPITAL, NOT ALLOWING PEOPLE TO GO TO PARTIES.”

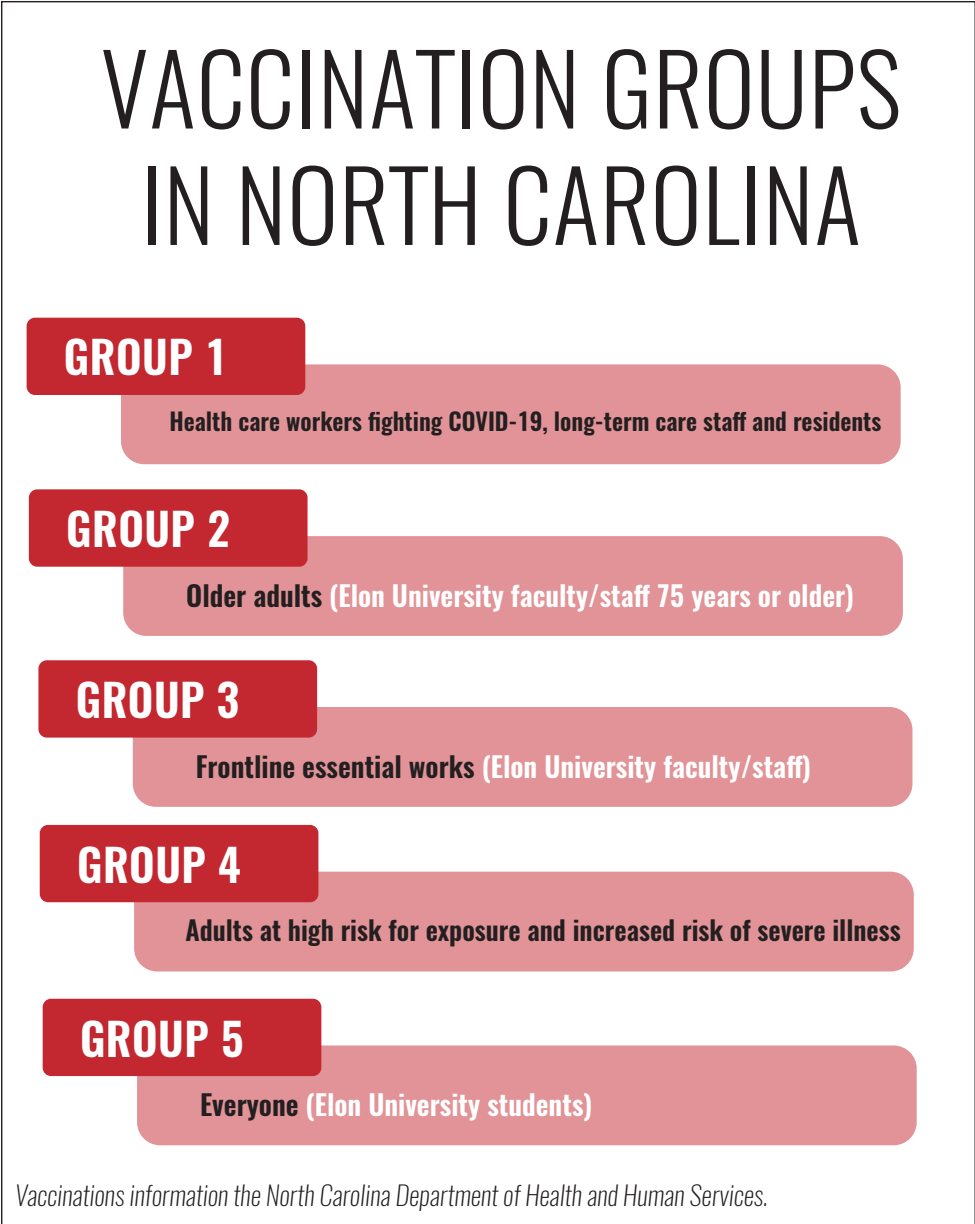
GINETTE ARCHINAL
UNIVERSITY PHYSICIAN

We’re not sure how long the immunity lasts,” Archinal said. “We also know that the vaccine, like all vaccines, is not 100% effective. But we know, just like any other vaccine, that if I get COVID, having had both versions of the vaccine, I’m at much less risk of ending up in hospital and getting ill.”

Because the vaccine is not yet widely available for all students, faculty and staff, the university has not made a final decision as to whether or not they will require the vaccine in the future.

The university did require students to receive the flu vaccine before returning to campus for winter term, however Stein said whether or not the COVID-19 vaccine will be required is a “question that remains unanswered.”

“There are complications here because this is an emergency use authorization by the FDA that impacts whether you can require it,” Stein said. “What we can say that is as much of an answer as it is a non-answer is that we want as many students, faculty and staff as possible to get the vaccine.”



DISPARITY IN VACCINE DISTRIBUTION

Q & A: Cornell Wright, executive director of NCDHHS’s office of minority health and health disparities said medical institutions need to address bias in care to build trust in the medical system

Mackenzie Wilkes | Executive Director | @macwilkes

THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC HAS exposed the inequities within the health care system that have caused racial disparities in health. In the United States, Black and Hispanic people disproportionately get COVID-19 compared to white people. This disparity isn’t just at the national level — both the state of North Carolina and Alamance County mimic this trend.

Two COVID-19 vaccines being approved for emergency use authorization in the United States, and over 230,000 people have received the first dose in North Carolina and 4,872 in Alamance County. But just as there is a **disparity in case numbers**, racial inequities also exist for **vaccine distribution** as well.

With the ongoing medical crisis and hopes that come with the COVID-19 vaccines, Cornell Wright, executive director of the office of minority health and health disparities at the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services discussed the implications of health inequities and disparities. Answers have been edited for clarity.

Q: Why do we see health inequities between races and ethnicities?

A: We’re seeing these inequities due to various factors, and a lot of historical context is connected to those factors as well. So we could talk about systems, we could talk about racism, we could talk about lack of access, and then how those play a part in how people are perceived and treated in systems of health and health care. And all that is a window into what we’re seeing with health disparities. So when we talk about **health disparities**, we have to look at the basic concepts of what it is so when we look at health equity, though, that is the idea that we want to equalize all people having good health.

When we look at those unfair differences that prevent that from happening, we call those health inequities and the way we measure it all, with the measurable distances, or gaps in between what you’re measuring, we call those the health disparities. So the disparity pretty much is a comparison, a comparative measurement between, let’s say, Blacks and whites or whatever you want to compare, that measurement when you see that there’s a gap, that is the disparity.

So we have seen years upon years, decades upon decades, and even centuries of the mistreatment of communities that we call historically marginalized communities or populations, and how systems play a role in that process has really expanded the disparity or the gap between what you’re measuring.

Health Inequities

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, health inequity lies in the difference in and access to treatment that can be measured by things such as the length and quality of life, rates of diseases and death rate.

Health disparities

Health disparities are the difference between the likelihood of disease, injury and violence which can be preventable according to the CDC.

Trust

A survey from the Kaiser Family Foundation — a nonprofit focused on national health issues — surveyed adults on their trust in the health care institution and providers. The poll found that 59% of Black adults trust doctors compared to 72% of Hispanic adults and 78% of white adults. 56% of Black adults trust local hospitals compared to 62% of Hispanic adults and 70% of white adults. The poll also found that 44% of Black adults trust the health care system compared to 50% of Hispanic adults and 55% of white adults.

Present bias

The KFF also found that Black adults are more likely to perceive discrimination in the health care system.

Tuskegee

The Tuskegee experiment, formally known as the “Tuskegee Study of Untreated Syphilis in the Negro Male” was a 1932 study where doctors studied the prolonged effects of syphilis — before there was a treatment — without the informed consent of participants. 399 men with syphilis and 201 men without — all who were Black — were told that they were being treated for illness when in actuality they weren’t, leaving some of the men to die from syphilis or related illness.

Q: What would you say is a common misconception about health equity?

A: I think people forget that health equity is more about a lens that promotes fairness and opportunity. And it’s not a one-size-fits-all kind of approach. We [have] got to meet people where they are.

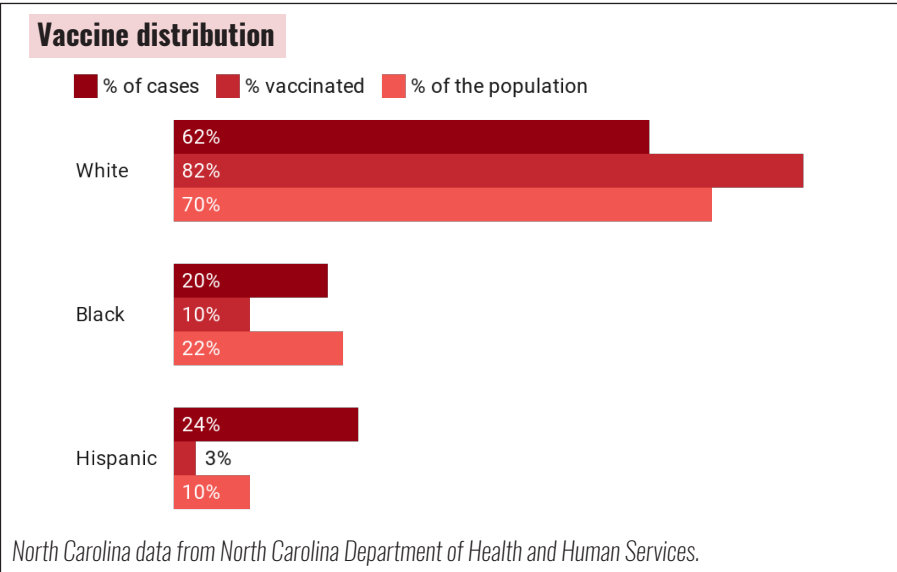
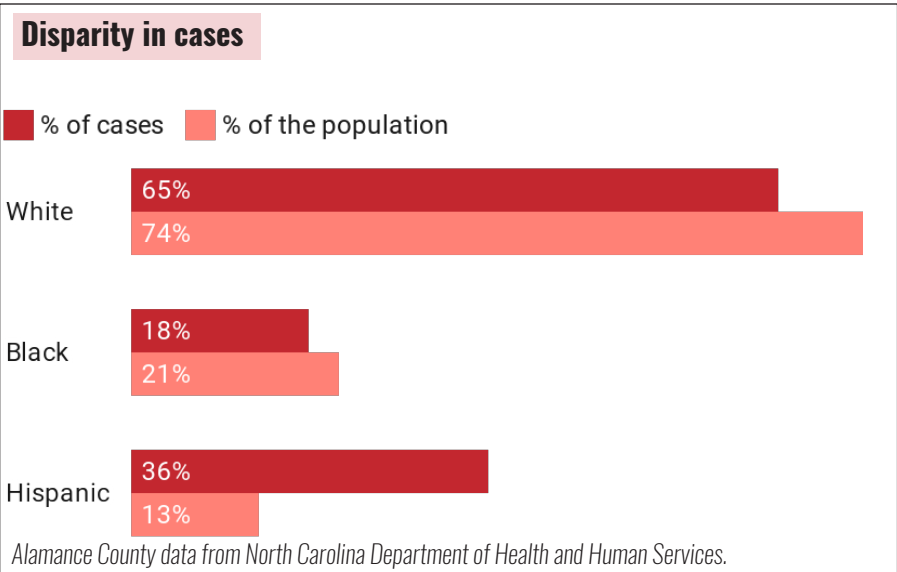
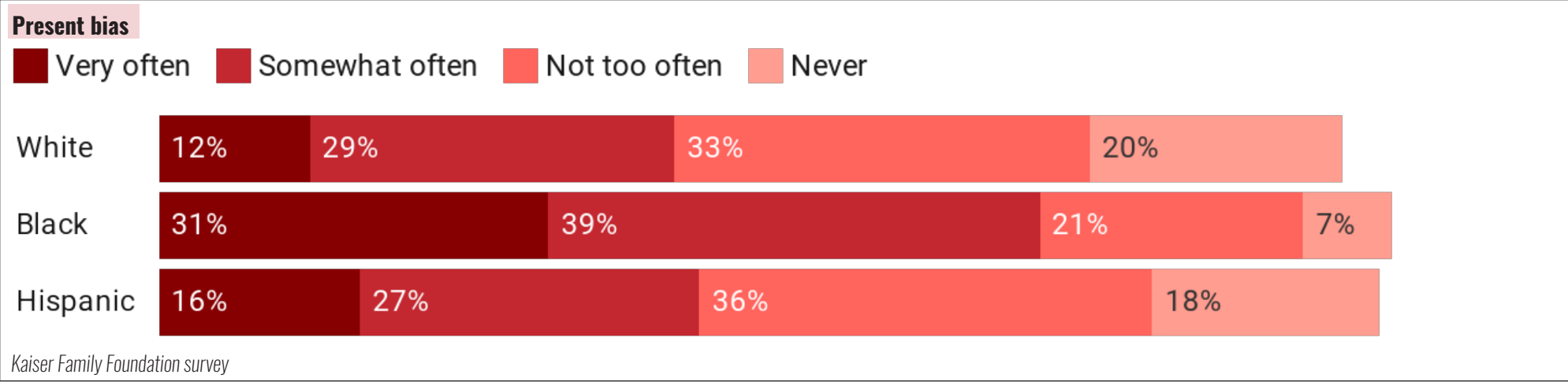
Q: I’m interested in the standard of care for different marginalized communities. And so I think, that has historically bred mistrust in the medical institution as a whole. And so how do you see building that trust back, because a lot of [communities] — particularly the Black community — have a mistrust in the medical system because of past events, so with things like the [COVID-19] vaccine coming and everything, how do you build trust for people to take the vaccine or to trust in the medical system as a whole?

A: When we look at the drivers and determinants of health, we tend to fall upon the basic ones that come up, like housing, education, violence, food security, things of that nature. We don’t really talk about one of the biggest one, which is **trust**. And so when we build trust, we also need to be building capacity in communities. And so we also have to check bias in these systems of health and health care.

There’s a lot of people that have preconceived notions about certain populations. Whether they’re true or not, that **presents bias**, and then that can change the way you care for somebody.

And then also looking at the way things are set up: Is it a one-size-fits-all kind of system? Or are we really tailoring our approaches for those populations?

So to build trust, we do have to talk about historic traumas and triggers. We have to talk about **Tuskegee**, we have to talk about eugenics, we have to talk about, you know, the history of mistreatment in this country that has prevented trust in a lot of areas. And so when you don’t skirt away from it and tackle it head on and have that conversation, those difficult conversations, in those communities that helps build trust, but also being there and being consistent are some of the bigger pieces, but also treating people like people and not just treat them like a case number? It goes a long way.



LIFESTYLE

TRANSPORTATION TRANSFORMED INTO SIMPLE LIVING



Lisa (top) and Megan Donahue (bottom) sit in the entrance of the latest bus they are transforming, Tobius.

GRACE TERRY | MANAGING EDITOR

Elon alum converts school buses into mobile homes

Grace Terry
Managing Editor | @gfterry9

“Tobius” sits still, basking in the sunlight on the concrete driveway. It’s the same spot that Angus, Brutus, Marcus and Gus once sat, but they have new families.

Elon University alum Megan Donahue ’20 and her mother, Lisa, cover Tobius’ metal sides with paint looking for any spots that need touch-ups. Megan is trying to make the 30-foot vehicle look perfect before he hits Craigslist.

“They don’t leave until they’re perfect,” Megan said. “You can eat off the floor of them. I say I want to advertise like that: a video of me eating off the floor because I would.”

Tobius is the latest bus the mother-daughter duo is transforming into a home under the banner of their company Live Simply. The company began as a way to honor Megan’s brother, Michael, who died in 2015 after getting hit by a car.

Michael always loved being outdoors and a week before he died, he tweeted, “It is the simple things in life that make it worth living.”

Megan wanted to find a way to take that mentality and turn it into a project that her whole family could be a part of. Originally they thought of flipping houses, but decided against that due the large financial commitment required. They realized that they could afford a

school bus instead, and thought a home in a bus epitomized Michael’s message.

“I think people now, especially with the pandemic, they’re realizing that all of this is not worth it,” Lisa said, gesturing at her home. “It’s the quality time, and that’s what we’re trying to promote.”

That same month they went to a junkyard and found a little bus, which they named Gus. Gus was the first of five buses they have redone.

Gus took over a year to transform because Megan was still in school at Elon and could only come home to her family’s house in Graham on the weekends. In order to complete the job, they worked with carpenters, electricians and plumbers. Once the design was complete and safety inspections were passed, he took only 12 hours to sell.

They attribute the fast sale to the effort they put into the appearance of the bus and their work to make it economical.

“We want to make sure [the price] is reasonable,” Lisa said. “But at the end of the day, we just want it to go to somebody who is going to spread the word about Michael.”

They do not want to use sorrow as a reason to make a sale, though.

“Just keep my brother’s name going, and that’s all we can really ask for from whoever buys them, but not in a sad way; my brother goes everywhere those buses go,” Megan said. “We don’t do it as a pity thing. We don’t tell the story about him at all until the check is in our hand because we never want to make a sale because of a tragedy.”

According to Megan, they have turned people down in order to fulfill that goal. She remembers when they were selling Marcus, someone was willing to give them \$8,000 more than they were asking. They turned them down and instead sold it to the “most perfect person”: Laura Thomas.

“Laura comes over here, she had beers with us and would bring her dog and family and they celebrated her grandpa’s 94th birthday in it,” Megan said. “We take a lot of pride in who buys what we make and everyone we have sold a bus to keeps in contact for the most part.”

Laura is also planning on bringing the bus to Alaska, which means a lot to the Donahues because it was always Michael’s dream to go there.

Megan wants to one day have a potluck with all the people who own one of the buses.

Another dream of Megan’s is get the buses on a property in Vermont and turn them into rental properties. For now though, she thinks her next step is getting into real estate.

Megan said she knows her brother would be proud of her. She even was told so by him after the mother of an old basketball teammate of Megan’s went to a medium and Michael came through.

“My brother came through and was like ‘tell my sister how much I loved the buses,’” said Megan “I hadn’t talked to this girl in like 10 years.”

Beyond carrying on Michael’s legacy, they also got grow their connection

“We were best friends before,” Megan said, “but now it’s just like a new level.”



GUS



MARCUS



BRUTUS



ANGUS



TOBIUS

PHOTO COURTESY OF MEGAN DONAHUE
The inside of each bus the Donahues have transformed thus far.

Elon alum shares passion through opening local film school

Cornelius Muller '93 and his colleague share their passion and movie star dream through their new venture

Miranda Ferrante
Elon News Network | @ferrantemiranda

When dreams of becoming a professional basketball player fell by the wayside, a passion for the arts landed Elon alum Cornelius Muller '93 in the entertainment industry. Muller and his colleague Joseph Gray opened Actors Studio in Burlington this past October with the hope of inspiring others through film.

During his time at Elon, Muller was not involved with acting nor filmmaking; instead, he spent his time playing basketball for the university and graduated with a degree in human services. After a few failed attempts to play after college, Muller felt encouraged by the movie "Jerry Maguire" and soon after began taking drama classes at Herbert Berghof Studios in Brooklyn.

Muller said success did not happen overnight, and it took years of trial and error before his career was launched.

"At that time, I don't think I was really serious about the craft. I think that with the disappointment of basketball, acting seemed like the next best thing," Muller said. "I was more or less kind of trying to wing it with no success at all."

Eventually, Muller decided to return to North Carolina. He said at that time 20 years ago, Wilmington was a popular place for film production in the United States. He began studying more seriously at Actors Group in Winston-Salem under the instruction of esteemed actor Burgess Jenkins, where he met Gray. He has continued training

intermittently for the past 14 years, dabbling in commercials and independent films.

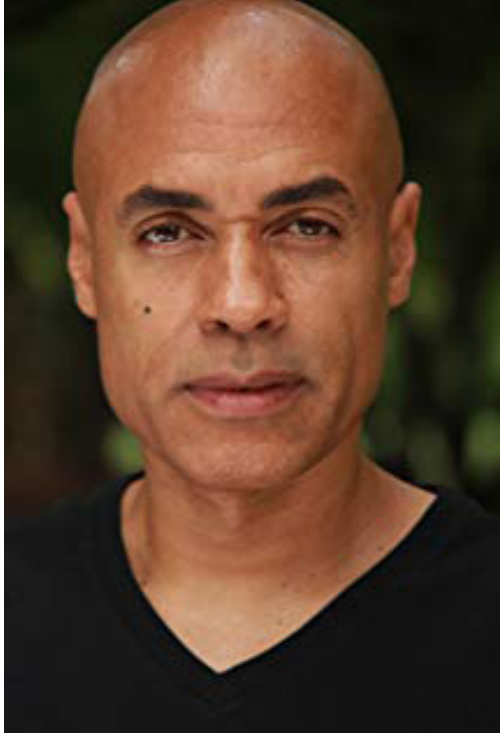
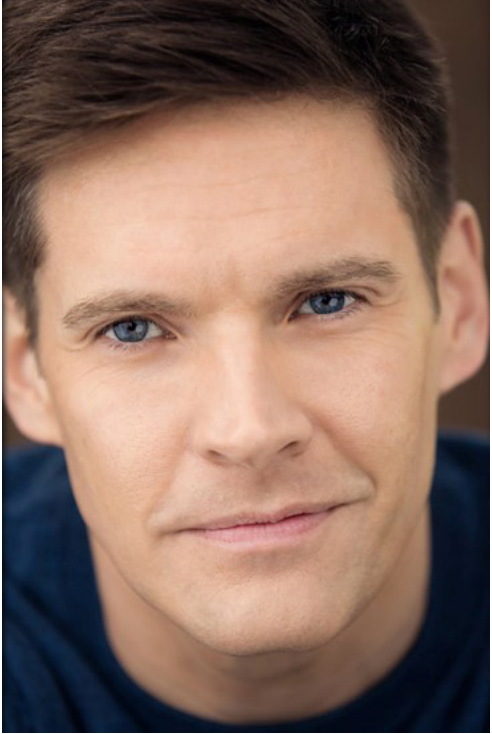
A personal family tragedy sparked Muller's first work as a screenwriter, a short film entitled "Brother's Keeper." He believes the film served as the birth of Cornelius Muller Productions — his own North Carolina-based film company — where Muller and Gray have produced the films "Find a Way" in 2012 and "Sacred Hearts," set to premiere nationally next month on PureFlix, a family version of Netflix, according to Muller.

"We had always talked about opening up our own studio or classroom space," Muller said. "Several years ago, we met at the Actors Group, under Burgess in Winston-Salem, so we thought we would bring a place to Burlington."

They have structured the studio much like Jenkins' in Winston-Salem, teaching children and some adults the Meisner Technique for film and television — an approach to acting developed by American theatre practitioner Sanford Meisner. Gray said the classes are not meant to teach students to pretend; rather they teach them to dig deeper and connect on a more personal level with the characters being portrayed.

"What we seek to do is remove as much artificial as possible while at the same time having the individual be connected to something that's real and impactful to them," Gray said. "A lot of people have not experienced this before they come to a class like this; they think acting is just strictly pretend. So once they get to a point of understanding what we teach and having more of an experience in a scene, it's really fun for them."

Gray believes teachers have an impact on a student's life, and at Actors Studio, both instructors said they draw upon their



Joe Gray (left) and Elon alum Cornelius Muller (right) '93 opened Actors Studio in Burlington in October 2020 in hopes of inspiring others through film.

own experiences in the industry to create moments that resonate with their students.

"We try to articulate it in a way that's like, 'This is what we've seen, this is what we've experienced,' either on set or heard from other people that are much more experienced than us, that have been doing this for years, that have credentials," Gray said.

Gray and Muller believe they are not just selling the "you could be a movie star" dream and said they are truly passionate about what they do.

"We love the craft of it," Gray said. "We love the whole thing, doing the thing. We love acting itself and all of the exercises and elements that go with it."

The pair hopes to share all they can with equally passionate and interested students who walk through their doors.

"At the end of the day, if there's something that they can learn just being a part of the school that's going to enhance their lives, that's worth it in itself as far as opening up the school," Muller said.

The studio opened on Oct. 19, 2020, and is located at 422 Huffman Mill Road in Burlington.

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Elon alums find work while theaters remain dark

Performing arts alumni turn to digital offerings as a source of income and creativity during the pandemic

Ellis Chandler
Social Media Manager | @ellis_chandler

“Anyone can cook” may be the main message of the Pixar movie “Ratatouille,” but anyone can also create a Broadway production on a social media platform, as demonstrated by a TikTok trend that made its way to a virtual stage.

During a time where live theatre is at a standstill, Broadway professionals and TikTok creators partnered to bring “Ratatouille: The TikTok Musical” to life.

So far, the musical has raised over \$2 million for The Actor’s Fund, a charity that supports workers in the performing arts and entertainment industries. The musical marked the largest fundraiser in the history of the fund, and most of this money will go toward emergency financial assistance and programs that offer health insurance counseling and career guidance to current and former workers in these industries.

In the first nine months of 2020, a total of 30,000 people were assisted by the fund’s grants and services. 70% of those supported last year were performers, with the other 30% being crew members.

The performance aired through TodayTix with over 200,000 tickets sold on Jan. 1. Its opening night success brought an encore performance to TikTok on Jan. 10 that gained 150,000 viewers. The show featured several Broadway and Hollywood stars, and each member of the ensemble has Broadway credits of their own — including Elon alum J.J. Niemann ‘17.

“When they announced that it was actually going to become a show and they were going to do a benefit concert, I was like, ‘Oh my gosh, I have to be a part of this,’” Niemann said.

His TikTok presence and prior connections with different departments of the musical helped him land his role in the vocal and dance ensembles.

This project was the first one that Niemann — who prior to the pandemic had been doing eight shows a week and performing full-time since graduating — booked since March. The cast met over Zoom the week of Dec. 21 in preparation, and Niemann attended the rehearsals virtually from his childhood home in Wilmington.

Since returning home, Niemann now pursues TikTok as a pastime and a way to stay in tune with his craft, creating video content for millions of viewers.

“It’s not like crazy money yet, but it depends,” Niemann said. “If I have a video that does really well and gets a couple million views — which happens pretty frequently — I can make 150 bucks in a day from that,



COURTESY OF J.J. NIEMANN

Niemann’s last performance prior to the pandemic was the world premiere of “Bliss” in Seattle.

“

IT IS SURVIVAL JOB MODE. FOR SOME OF US, YOU’RE FORTUNATE TO WHERE YOU CAN GET A TV JOB. I WAS VERY FORTUNATE TO GET [A JOB WITH] NBC AND STUFF LIKE THAT, BUT THAT ONLY IS A WEEK’S WORTH OF WORK. IT’S HARD GOING BACK TO FINDING OTHER WAYS TO MAKE MONEY.

DREW REDINGTON
ELON ALUM



COURTESY OF J.J. NIEMANN

Niemann made his Broadway debut in “The Book of Mormon” in 2017, and the show is one of the many likely to return when live theatre reopens.

which is wild.”

He called it a “mini part-time job” and also works as an online coach with the Broadway Collective, an educational program that connects music theatre professionals and students. Because of his steadily growing social media presence, Niemann said he’s been able to expand his client base and bring in more income.

Other alumni in the performing arts industry are getting creative with their employment. Elon alum Drew Redington left school when he was 19 to pursue his career, and since the pandemic began, he’s found himself fortunate to be employed, but still picking up babysitting and assistant jobs to put money in his pocket.

“It is survival job mode,” Redington said. “For some of us, you’re fortunate to where you can get a TV job. I was very fortunate to get [a job with] NBC and stuff like that, but that only is a week’s worth of work. It’s hard going back to finding other ways to make money.”

Redington was in the ensemble of the “Mean Girls” musical and most recently performed with the cast in the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade and NBC’s “One Night Only: The Best of Broadway.” “Mean Girls” announced on Jan. 7 that they will not reopen when Broadway resumes production, but Redington had put in his

two-week notice right before the pandemic.

“Unfortunately, we’re not the first and we’re not going to be the last,” Redington said. “This is now my third Broadway show that I’ve closed and it is a part of the business. It is a part of our fairy tale of living in New York. It’s something we don’t ever really think about, but it’s very common.”

The Broadway League announced in October 2020 that the suspension on performances, which began in March, is extended through May 30, 2021. “Mean Girls” is one of five Broadway shows that announced they will not reopen, but there are 15 shows that are currently rescheduled to open over the course of this year.

Neither Niemann nor Redington have a definite answer as to when they think the curtains will rise, but both agree there is a heavy mental toll that comes with the uncertainty of unemployment.

Although they’re both still figuring out what to do with some of their newfound free time, Niemann said there are still silver linings to be found.

“I hope a big takeaway from this time will be that art can come from anywhere,” Niemann said. “I think people will trust new things that come about, maybe put themselves out there a little more, and maybe it can make theatre feel a little more accessible for people.”



COURTESY OF J.J. NIEMANN

Niemann leaps high into the air in a 2016 production of “Cats” held in McCrary Theater.

OPINIONS



45th President Donald Trump speaks to his supporters in the Bojangles' Coliseum on March 2, 2020. Trump was impeached by the U.S. House of Representatives on Saturday, Jan. 16.

CLARE GRANT | PHOTO EDITOR

TIME TO LEAVE TRUMPISM BEHIND

CAMPUS VOICES



Daniel Dorociak
President of Elon University College Republicans

It was on Dec. 5, 2020 that I realized I might have supported the wrong president. On that day, former President Donald Trump requested a list of Republicans who had called Joe Biden the president-elect. This was just after a Washington Post survey revealed that eight GOP representatives answered as such. A strong majority of the GOP has yet to answer the question as to who won the election despite several swing states certifying their vote counts and almost all of Trump's lawsuits being thrown out of courts on lack of legal standing.

So why is part of the GOP and those who represent it refusing to stand up to Trump? Are we not the party that claims to be the sole remaining force protecting the Constitution from the rise of the radical left? Do we not consistently say that we only want what's best for the country regardless of who is in charge?

On Dec. 15, then-Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell recognized the Biden electoral victory, setting up a potential struggle over who is in charge of the Republican Party. Although it is late, I saw this as a good sign that some in our party were starting to recognize the danger of Trump's refusal to concede.

As one who considers myself a conservative Republican, I am genuinely ashamed of the way

members of my party are acting. After witnessing and soaking in this chaotic past year, I've realized that the presidential candidate I voted for is now a threat to the very republic our Founding Fathers fought so hard to establish.

Leaders in the conservative movement openly claim that "we're trending toward secession." A conservative lawmaker from Texas "file(d) legislation this session that will allow a referendum to give Texans a vote for the State of Texas to reassert its status as an independent nation." And just recently, thousands of MAGA supporters stormed the U.S. Capitol in a brazen attempt to stop the certification of Biden being elected president.

What followed after only made me more upset with my party. House Democrats quickly moved to issue an article of impeachment against the president for "incitement of insurrection." Despite the overwhelming evidence that Trump and his associates did in fact incite this insurrection, only 10 House Republicans voted to impeach the President and a whopping 8% of Republicans support the president's impeachment, according to a Fox News Poll.

It seems as if the Republican Party is still in bed with Trumpism and I'll be honest:



CLARE GRANT | PHOTO EDITOR

A supporter of 45th President Donald Trump holding up a sign at his rally in Charlotte on March 2, 2020 in Bojangles' Coliseum.

this is not the Republican Party I want to be a part of. I recently wrote my thoughts about the Republican Party in a separate individual statement, but to summarize: the Republican Party I know and love is the party that Abe Lincoln founded. And unlike our current party, it fought to actually preserve the Union, not secede from it and decry incitements of insurrection. The way our current Republican leadership is acting casts dark

shadows on the legacy of our party's founders and the struggles of hundreds of thousands who fought to preserve our great union. To the members of the GOP still proclaiming Trump won, I ask that you look deep inside yourself and do the right thing. Only you have the power to save our American Republic. Stand up to Donald Trump and his lies and help rebuild and reunify the United States of America.

SPORTS

PHOENIX LOOK TO FUTURE AFTER LONG LAYOFF



CLARE GRANT | PHOTO EDITOR

After almost a month of no games, the Phoenix look to take leadership of a wide-open CAA

Alex Reynolds

Elon News Network | @reynolds_14

Coming into the 2020-21 season the Elon men’s basketball team had much to live up to. But just like in many other parts of life, the coronavirus pandemic took over, sending the season into disarray. The Phoenix have been through a lot in the past three months, and this is where they stand now.

Pandemic Pitfalls

Elon men’s basketball (3-3, 0-2) is currently at the bottom of the Colonial Athletic Association. This ranking is misleading because the Phoenix have seen their conference schedule completely upended. The Phoenix play a conference opponent twice each weekend in order to limit travel exposure. They have had six games pushed back due to COVID concerns: two each against James Madison, Towson and Drexel.

Earlier this year, the Phoenix had positive tests within its men’s basketball program, which was a huge blow early in the non-conference schedule. The Phoenix missed the opportunity to play the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill and Duke University, the sixth-highest ranked team in the nation.

Playing these teams serve as a benchmark to where a team is talent-wise early in the year. Last year the Phoenix traveled to Chapel Hill to face the Tar Heels. The Phoenix were tied with the No. 5 ranked Tar Heels at halftime, in part because of the proficient 3-point shooting from their freshman guards and the inside scoring ability of graduate guard Marcus Sheffield. Both of those components would lead the Phoenix to success in 2019-20.

Elon University freshman Hunter McIntosh breaks down the court against the College of Charleston sophomore Zep Jasper in Schar Center on Jan. 9, 2020.

Being forced to cancel high-profile exhibition matches is one byproduct of the pandemic. Another is the mental challenge the schedule alterations pose. The Phoenix went 18 days without playing a game against another school. Long breaks like this can interrupt the flow of a given season, especially if a team is on a winning streak. Sophomore guard Hunter McIntosh said the team didn’t come in with the mindset that this would be a normal season.

“Coach [Mike Schrage] alluded to [it] at the start of the season, it wasn’t going to be a typical season, there might be a lot of unexpected things happening,” McIntosh said, following the team’s first break in schedule. “We just wanted to be thankful and grateful to be playing again.”

The Phoenix are currently in the midst of a 27-day break from competition in the middle of conference play. The team’s last matchup was a double-header against the Northeastern Huskies on Jan. 2-3. The Phoenix dropped both of those games and have not played since. After postponements, the Phoenix’s next potential game would be Jan. 30 at the University of Delaware. If the Phoenix take on the Blue Hens at the end of the month, it will be a full 27 days since its last game. Head coach Mike Schrage said that the time off is not an excuse this year.

“Every team is going through this. We can’t ever have an excuse,” Schrage said. “There are going to be teams in this country that go through these gaps and pauses and hopefully it will stop at some point and we’ll control what we can control like every team is trying to.”

Race to the Finish

Last year, the Phoenix season was highlighted by an underdog run through the CAA Championship tournament. In Schrage’s first year as head coach, the Phoenix were able to fight to the semi-finals of the tournament despite having a lackluster 13-21 record.

The Phoenix effort was spearheaded by freshman shooters like McIntosh and Hunter

Woods who have since blossomed into leadership on the team. This season McIntosh has carried the torch he shared with Sheffield last year. McIntosh is the overwhelming point leader this season. He averages 17.3 points a game and has 104 points in the limited time played. He also leads the team in 3-pointers (17), field goals (31), free throws (25) and assists (15). In a defining win this season it was McIntosh’s free throws that lifted the Phoenix over the High Point Panthers in a come-from-behind 76-75 win.

“[Sheffield] was a special scorer, and we’ll have to go to a few different guys,” Schrage said. “But Hunter McIntosh, every time he’s got space he raises up, he’s built for those moments.”

The loss of Sheffield has left the Phoenix without an older, physical style of player that can get to the hole. This year junior center Federico Poser has started

to shine after a productive CAA tournament. Poser averages over seven points per game and has 20 rebounds this season.

Complementing and matching Poser’s physicality is one of the Phoenix’s new additions, redshirt junior forward Jerald Gillens-Butler. Gillens-Butler had to sit on the sidelines after transferring to Elon last year due to transfer portal restrictions. This year Gillens-Butler averages 15.7 points per game, second only to McIntosh.

With only six games under their belt through mid-January the Phoenix are behind compared to others in their conference. Towson University is the next closest with only seven games played but others have played over 10 games this season. In a turbulent year, the Phoenix can only focus on what is in front of them: Delaware at the end of the month.



CLARE GRANT | PHOTO EDITOR

Elon University freshman and guard/forward Hunter Woods rushes towards the basket during the Phoenix’s home opener against the Mars Hill Mountain Lions in Schar Center on Tuesday Nov 5.

BERNARDI BRINGS UNCONDITIONAL ENERGY TO THE BURLINGTON SCHOOL

The recent Elon graduate is now the athletic director and head basketball coach at The Burlington School and has already garnered national recognition

Max Crider | Elon News Network | @mcrider91



PHOTO COURTESY OF RYAN BERNARDI

THE BURLINGTON SCHOOL'S BASKETBALL team is maintaining its spot atop the mountain. They are ranked second in the North Carolina Independent School Athletic Association, have a very strong 14-2 record — including a win against a top 30 team in the nation — and a three-star prospect leading the way.

No team is complete without a coach, however, and Elon alum Ryan Bernardi '19 is the mastermind behind The Burlington School's newfound reputation for having a winning culture.

Bernardi, who was first given a one-year gig at Burlington Christian Academy in 2018, impressed schools across the state with his passionate coaching style and turned that into a job opportunity at The Burlington School. That blossomed into him becoming the athletic director there, as well as the basketball coach.

Bernardi brings many philosophies to the team, but none as prominent as the idea of "unconditional energy." He defined it as energy someone needs to have, no matter how good or bad they may be feeling on any given day.

"You've got to have it all the time, regardless of circumstance, and I think I feel like I need to bring energy because as the leader of the program, I need to set an example to our players," Bernardi said.

The idea has rubbed off on his players. The Burlington School senior Isaiah Escobar mentioned unconditional energy and how Bernardi has taught him to always have it around.

Bernardi's influence has been felt throughout the team. He and Escobar have known each other since the latter was in eighth grade. They met at a Midstate Magic basketball camp that Escobar showed up at almost an hour late, but he knew Bernardi was a great guy after he let him sign up for the next tryout on the B-team.

"He pushed me to be the best player I can be," he said. "He's been on my side, been in my corner helping with basketball and not only basketball, [but also with] being a better man, too."

Bernardi has also been a major influence on the life of senior Kuluel Mading, whose parents immigrated from Sudan. Before he had met Bernardi, Mading claimed he was on the fence about whether he wanted to become a basketball player. Mading has

since developed into a three-star prospect and has committed to Howard University, where he will join Makur Maker, the fourth highest-rated center prospect in the nation. He compared his relationship with Bernardi to the "big brother-little brother" archetype.

“

YOU'VE GOT TO HAVE IT ALL THE TIME, REGARDLESS OF CIRCUMSTANCE, AND I THINK I FEEL LIKE I NEED TO BRING ENERGY BECAUSE AS THE LEADER OF THE PROGRAM, I NEED TO SET AN EXAMPLE TO OUR PLAYERS.

RYAN BERNARDI
THE BURLINGTON SCHOOL HEAD BASKETBALL COACH

Mading also talked about another mantra the team adapted when Bernardi signed on to be The Burlington School's head coach that he himself has taken to heart: get one percent better everyday.

"One percent better" [got] stuck in my mind because you want to progressively get better," Mading said.

Bernardi is grateful for the opportunity given to him by The Burlington School and felt that despite feeling accomplished for establishing a winning culture and a national reputation, he is most proud of the impact he's left on the lives of players such as Mading, Escobar, and current Phoenix guard/forward JaDun Michael, another The Burlington School graduate.

"That's what this is all about," Bernardi said. "We want to win games, don't get me wrong, but at the end of the day, when you're sitting on your deathbed, it's how many lives you've impacted, and hopefully we're doing that on a day-to-day basis."

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