

Faculty, students hope proposed performing arts center allows for a space to welcome local community

Elon plans to expand the performing arts center, allowing for more studio space, real-world experience to be developed among students and faculty

Grace Jackman
Elon News Network

As the Elon University performing arts program has expanded over the decades, so has the need for more resources. Elon was able to secure property across from the Inn at Elon to imagine what could become one of the next major campus products: a new Performing Arts Center.

University President Connie Ledoux Book said that, for now, the project remains in its early stages. As soon as the Slattery Center is finished, Elon will start fundraising for the new building. Book said she feels that the proposal of the new building can be transformative for the students in the performing arts, faculty and staff, and the greater Elon community.

Since the late 1980s when the Department of Performing Arts was created in the College of Arts and Sciences, Elon has been increasingly expanding opportunities for students to pursue their passions in the performing arts. Today, the Department of Performing Arts has three bachelors of fine arts and has been featured in Hollywood Reporter's 2026 list of "The 25 Best Drama Schools in the World."

Currently, Elon's Department of Performing Arts is housed in the Center for the Arts, Scott Studios and the Needham Pilates Studio. The CFA includes three performance studios and three dance studios, practice rooms and studios, scenery and



ALEXANDER SIEGEL | PHOTO EDITOR

Students walk through the atrium in the Center for the Arts building, Oct. 5. The building is home to three performance spaces and dance studios, practice rooms, and a costume shop.

costume shops and a pilates studio. Scott Studios houses the Roberts Studio Theatre, a dance studio and practice rooms.

Due to the small studio space in the current performing arts buildings, not all genres of dance and performing arts can be offered at

the same time, sophomore musical theatre major Treasure Capers said. However, the new performing arts space can allow for the expansion of these genres, including African dance and hip hop, which is currently offered every other year.

"There'll be a lot more space to rehearse, to dance, to get everything together," Capers said. "Just allow us to hone in on our creativeness. It honestly benefits us all in the long run when it comes to that."

Additional practice rooms for instruments and singing, along with dance studios, would also benefit the students in performing arts due to current limiting schedules. Assistant professor of music theatre Jacob Brent said that new dance studios will allow students to rehearse after class, go over monologues and have more space to film for auditions.

"We have tons of people on Broadway, and to be able to give them that real world experience here to simulate what they're actually going into, it would be nice," Brent said. "I'm excited about the possibility of having all the tools and the new technologies to be able to play with, so that our students have really experienced working with them before they go into the industry."

See PERFORMING ARTS | pg. 2

Advocacy groups campaign against tax amendments set to appear on November ballot

Constitutional changes will address income tax rate and property tax increases

Miles Hayford
Managing Editor of The Pendulum

Candidates won't be the only thing on voters' ballots this November.

Two tax-related constitutional amendments will be on the ballot, alongside an amendment that would require a photo ID to be able to vote. The tax-related amendments would prevent the income tax rate from exceeding 3.5% and would limit local governments from increasing property taxes.

Lawmakers who support the amendments said that they would protect taxpayers from future tax increases. Advocacy groups across North Carolina are campaigning against the amendments, saying that the amendments would restrict local governments from raising revenue and their ability to fund public services.

Progressive advocacy group, the Carolina Federation, is advocating against the amendment and is planning on knocking on more than 500,000 doors to talk to voters about the issue. Mel Norton, the research & policy director at the Carolina Federation,

said she believes that the amendments are going to take power away from municipalities and not help the affordability crisis.

"These amendments are going to make wealthy people and corporations and power-hoarding politicians the biggest winners," Norton said.

Norton said the amendments take away the power from local governments to set property tax rates to cover the cost of what is needed.

"Taxes make modern life possible," Norton said. "It's how we have water coming out of our faucet. It's how we have sewer lines. Taxes also facilitate community and opportunity. It's what funds our public schools and libraries and community centers."

By the Numbers

~80% supported the property-tax amendment before hearing arguments for and against it

69% supported it after hearing additional context

~2 in 3 supported the income-tax amendment, with little change after hearing context

Despite the opposition to both tax amendments, a recent Catawba College poll found broad support for the amendments. Almost 80% of respondents supported the amendment limiting property tax increases,

but only 69% supported it when told about the arguments for and against the amendment. The other amendment that would prevent the income tax rate from exceeding 3.5% did not see much change when context was given to respondents, and stayed around two-thirds support.

Politics and history professor at Catawba College, Michael Bitzer, said that since the amendments will be so far down the ballot, many voters won't pay attention to it as much. Bitzer said when an amendment is asking a basic issue like tax cuts, most North Carolinians are going to be for it.

"Getting a respondent to think more broadly, unless it's a highly engaged respondent regarding politics, may be a real challenge," Bitzer said. "So I think just the topic itself, the context of 'Do you want property taxes capped or income tax limited?' The way the question is framed certainly has an impact on how people are thinking about the issue."

Norton said the Carolina Federation has been working to inform voters that the issue extends beyond just raising taxes.

"Once we get to have the conversation with people, we find that overwhelmingly they understand what's at stake and who's going to benefit, and that it's not them," Norton said.

See TAX | pg. 4

WHAT'S ON YOUR BALLOT?

Income tax amendment

Would prevent North Carolina's income tax rate from exceeding 3.5%.

Property tax amendment

Would limit local governments from increasing property taxes.

Why supporters back them

They argue the amendments would protect taxpayers from future increases.

Why opponents object

They argue the amendments could make it harder for local governments to raise revenue and impact their ability to fund public services.



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NEWSLETTER



North Carolina eliminates vehicle registration stickers



DESIGN BY AMELIA METZ

Drivers can pull old stickers off their plates, as law enforcement officers will rely on digital systems

Molly Mattox

Elon News Network

Starting Oct. 1, North Carolina has switched from paper vehicle registration to an all-electronic system.

As of Oct. 1, drivers no longer receive license plate stickers or physical registration cards in the mail. Instead, registration will be available for electronic download.

The change comes after a new state budget bill removed funds previously used for paper registrations. Passed on July 7, the North Carolina Division of Motor Vehicles' budget was reduced by \$4.8 million. Lawmakers initiated the cut to eliminate physical documents and lower administrative costs.

Marty Homan, communications director for the North-Carolina-Division of Motor Vehicles, said this shift won't have much of an impact on the current process of

checking vehicle registration. He said law enforcement officers already use their own digital systems to check a license plate's validity.

"They either have license plate readers in their vehicles or they've got their computer right there next to them where they're punching in your license plate information," Homan said. "And they know before they get out of their vehicle and approach your window, whether you are current or not."

Drivers will still have access to physical registration cards if they want them. Drivers can now download a copy of their registration from the NCDMV website and print it themselves, or visit a DMV location in-person and have it printed for \$5.

Homan noted that the process for renewing vehicle registration will remain the same, and drivers will still have to pay fees and taxes. The only thing changing is they will not

automatically receive a paper card in the mail.

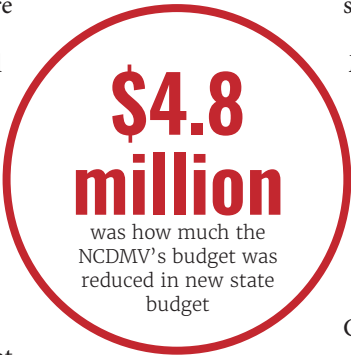
Homan also said drivers are advised to remove existing registration stickers after the change takes effect.

"That way you don't run into a case where, you know, there may be some confusion with law enforcement if you happen to be in another state and they're not familiar with our process and they see an expired sticker," Homan said.

North Carolina driver Melissa Carner-Baynes said she feels optimistic about the change.

"Here, you have user error, you have older people that really depend on those papers. So it probably has some kinks but it will be a faster process," Carner-Baynes said.

Homan said he believes that after getting through the first year of this process, drivers will begin to get used to the change and realize it is not a major adjustment.



PERFORMING ARTS | from cover

Along with the new building providing real-world experience, Capers said that the proposed performing arts center can provide more opportunities for a greater range of classes. Currently, because musical theatre shares spaces with dance, the musical theatre program is running out of space and time to offer all of the classes they'd like to offer.



I THINK THAT MORE SPACE WOULD GRAB A LOT OF ATTENTION BECAUSE IT WOULD ALLOW FOR MORE INCOMING STUDENTS TO BE MORE PULLED TOWARD HERE.

TREASURE CAPERS

SOPHOMORE MUSICAL THEATRE MAJOR

"Each person of each year could have classes that are individualized," Capers said.

With the musical theatre program currently accepting approximately 16 new students annually, according to the Elon University website, it allows for students to get acquainted with the space and to interact with

their chosen genres at a personal level.

"I think that more space would grab a lot of attention because it would allow for more incoming students to be more pulled toward here," Capers said. "If you have a lot of spaces in which you can craft or teach the things that need to be taught, then a lot of students are more gravitated toward the school."

Sophomore musical theatre major Jonashton Reid said that having more space for performing arts could help increase accessibility for the program and to allow the performing arts majors to grow altogether. The 2027 edition of "The Best 392 Colleges" by The Princeton Review ranks Elon University

among the best in the nation among multiple categories, including ranked as #1 Best College Theater.

"Accessibility is the biggest thing that would allow students to understand that the university itself actually values performing arts here," Reid said. "I feel like you don't really know what the school is known for without performing arts in a way. So I feel like we need to be showing respect to performing arts majors."

Brent said that the Center for the Arts also serves as a cultural hub within the county and surrounding areas as he remembers coming to the same building as a kid. He said he hopes the new center will also help the community.

"I hope that the idea is that this building is more outside in than inside out, that we're building a space to welcome the community, to bring in the community, to share what's happening at Elon," Brent said. "I would love for us to give back, sort of be that beacon of performing arts excellence in the county."

Capers feels that the Elon performing arts is like a family because of its smaller size and generations of students and community members who have walked through the building's doors. Capers said she hopes that the feeling continues to grow with the new building.

"We share so much and we get to communicate so much, which makes us a very nice family," Capers said. "I think there's a beauty in growing, and we are all growing together, and that is my hope with everything expanding. Us expanding means that we all morph into something that's more beautiful."



PHOTO BY KARSYN VANN



ALEXANDER SIEGEL | PHOTO EDITOR
Elon University senior women's tennis player Mariana Reding juggles tennis balls while speaking to junior women's tennis player Cornelia Kack on the court during the Jimmy Powell Invitational, hosted by Elon at the Jimmy Powell Tennis Center, Oct. 2. The invitational brought other colleges and universities to Elon, including James Madison University and Davidson College. Kack said the team has big goals in mind as the team looks to win their third straight conference championship in this upcoming season. "I think we have a great team this year, and I think we have a very good chance of winning," Kack said.



ALEXANDER SIEGEL | PHOTO EDITOR
Elon University senior outside hitter Cameron Lanier serves the ball in the fourth set of their match against Stony Brook University in Schar Center, Oct. 3. The Phoenix lost three of four sets, ending their three-game winning streak.



VENUS SOTO CASTANEDA | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Attendees dressed as vampires from the movie "Sinners" at Student Union Board x Center for Leadership bingo on Oct. 1 in McKinnon Hall. Participants were encouraged to dress up for an extra bingo card.



ALEXANDER SIEGEL | PHOTO EDITOR
Sophomore Addison Gully and senior Ella Schultz, who play Everybody/Somebody, practice for opening night of "Everybody," Oct. 2, during their final dress rehearsal, Oct. 1 in Roberts Studio Theatre. The production ran from Oct. 2 to Oct. 6. The play is centered on "Everybody" as they search for a companion on their journey toward the afterlife.



VENUS SOTO CASTANEDA | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Attendees grab food at the Campus Safety Cookout at Young Commons on Oct. 2. The event offered free food, music, yard games such as cornhole and Connect Four, and the chance for students to meet Campus Safety officers.

Worker conditions in North Carolina fall to all-time lows

Recent Oxfam report shows North Carolina’s lacking working conditions

Brinna Hayes
Elon News Network

As North Carolina moves into a new year, workers are facing increasingly difficult obstacles.

In a recent Oxfam report, North Carolina ranked last for Best States to Work, comparing data for wages, worker protections and the right to organize.

At the same time, North Carolina ranks in the top two states for business.

Clermont Ripley, the co-director of the North Carolina Justice Center’s Workers’ Rights Project, said she believes the main issue is the state’s priorities.

“I think we are making policy decisions where we are prioritizing maximizing corporate profits, minimizing taxes on corporations,” Ripley said. “We aren’t investing properly in public education or childcare and things that are needed for a business to be successful in the long term.”

Health and safety protections are another significant issue, according to Ripley, due to rates of high heat exposure.

“North Carolina has no enforceable protections to protect workers from heat illness or heat stress,” Ripley said. “And people are getting sick and dying.”

In 2021, NPR held an investigation about heat-related deaths in the workforce. They found that at least 384 workers had died in the U.S. between 2011-2021.

Heat-related stress in the workforce is a prevalent issue in immigrant populations as well. Forty-three percent of the agriculture, fishing and forestry occupations in the U.S. were made up of immigrant workers in 2022, according to a 2024 study from Pew Research Center.

According to a National Library of Medicine study from 2025, non-U.S. citizens working on farms in the U.S. died more often from heat exposure than U.S. citizens, with 19.8% of deaths for non-U.S. citizens being heat-related.

Ripley said language and social barriers make it difficult to get protections at work, like issues related to heat.

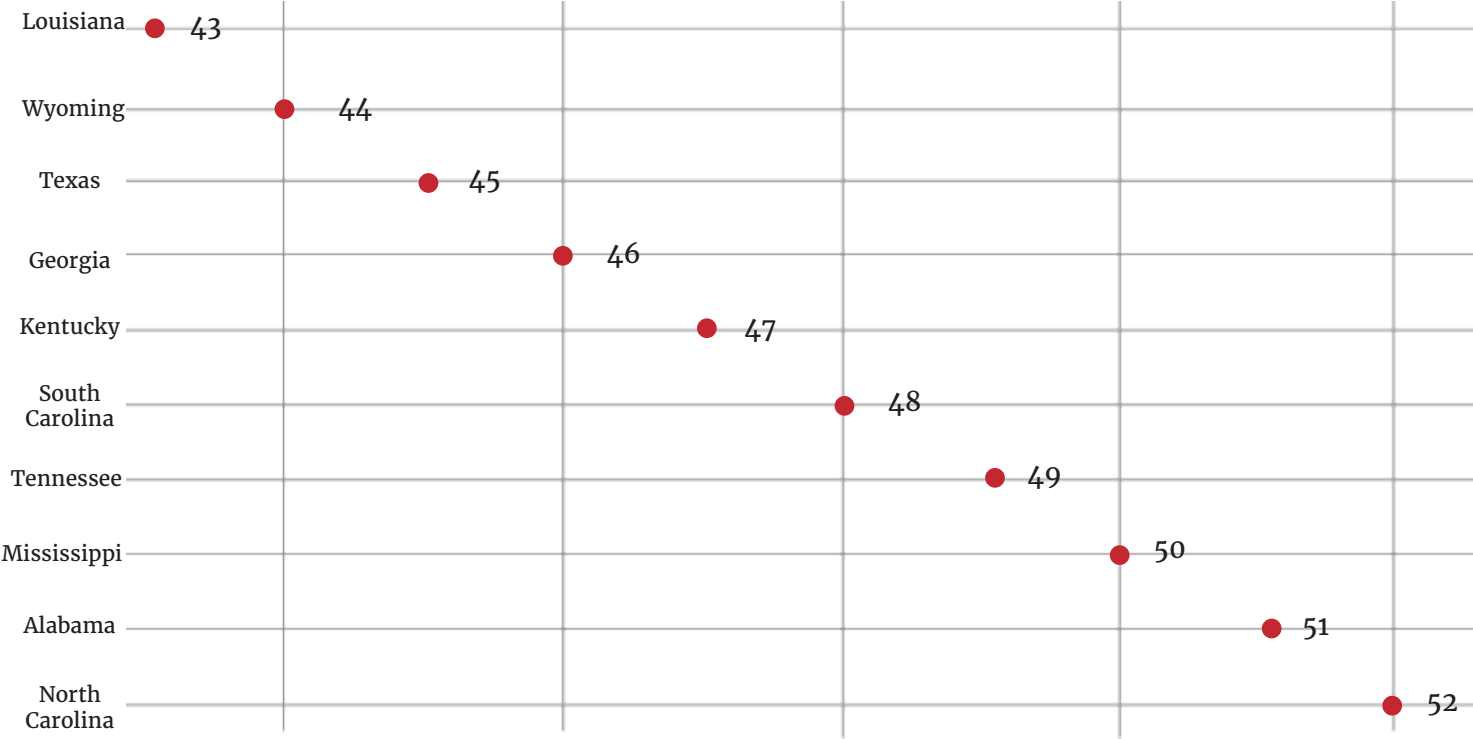
“It is a lot harder for those workers to stand up for themselves and demand the rights that they are entitled to,” she said.

North Carolina’s minimum wage has been \$7.25 since 2009. Ripley said the living wage — the minimum income to cover basic needs like food, housing and healthcare — for one person in North Carolina in 2026 is now \$20.

The minimum wage is also an issue for

Oxfam report finds bottom ten worst states to work in 2026

North Carolina ranked 52nd in Oxfam’s Best States to Work report, which compared to data for wages, worker protections and the right to organize. List included all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.



Data from 2026 Best States to Work in the U.S. Oxfam Report.

North Carolina Rep. Kanika Brown. In the past, she has worked with other representatives on bills that would increase the minimum wage to \$15, but none have succeeded.

A common argument against a minimum wage increase is that small businesses may not be able to afford it. To Brown, that shouldn’t be the end of the discussion.

“I understand some businesses and they can’t afford it, but I think sometimes we just have to go back to the table and figure out how we can make it work,” she said.

Brown said minimum wage impacts other parts of North Carolinian’s quality of life too.

“Rent doubling and tripling in our state, childcare gaps and other things, are related barriers that can be improved by increasing the minimum wage,” Brown said.

Arleatha Patterson, the community engagement associate for Partnership for Prosperity, a nonprofit that aims to reduce poverty and inaccessibility, works with low-income communities to improve their facilities and resources.

Patterson said many low-income parents struggle to get to work because their children are under the school-age. According to Patterson, collaboration between nonprofits and government agencies is needed to improve not just childcare, but transportation, license access and more.

One solution Patterson is exploring in Winston-Salem is study circles, which are powered by Partnership for Prosperity.

These study circles are led by members of low-income areas to create localized action plans. These groups talk about the barriers they face, but also solutions they want to see implemented.

“They talk about actions that they can participate in, looking for transportation, childcare stipends that can help them, entrepreneurship and other opportunities that can help them supplement the income,” Patterson said.

Many issues are found in North Carolina’s relationship with unions, too. North Carolina AFL-CIO is the biggest labor union in the state. The president, Braxton Winston, believes existing systems benefit the wealthy while workers suffer.

“It’s an exploitative state where the workers are not benefiting from their work,” Winston said. “Only their bosses are.”

According to Bureau of Labor Statistics reports from September this year, labor is increasing while wages are at record lows. The labor share, the percentage of economic output that goes to workers’ compensation, was at 52.8% — the lowest recorded value since data

was recorded in 1947. Labor productivity is up 1.4%.

AFL-CIO and other labor unions in North Carolina have to contend with right-to-work laws. Right-to-work laws prohibit employers and unions from requiring employees to join unions or pay union dues, even if unions are still representing them.

“It starves unions and makes it difficult for them to operate,” Winston said.

A prevalent issue in North Carolina is the lack of paid sick, medical and family leave.

“Workers have to choose between putting food on their table, taking care of a sick loved one,” Winston said. “That shouldn’t be the case.”

Solutions lie with North Carolina’s laws. Rescinding the ban on public sector collective bargaining and right-to-work laws would be a start and recognizing the importance of unions is essential, Winston said.

Rep. Brown said bipartisan support is necessary to implement such solutions.

“Republicans, Democrats, we have to come to the table,” Brown said. “We have to have bipartisan support and we have to have people, elected officials, that care about the people. That’s number one. They have to care.”

384
workers died due to heat-related causes from 2011-2021

Amendments to limit property tax, income tax rate increases

TAX | from cover

Public education advocates are also worried about how it could impact school funding. Isabell Moore, one of the lead organizers for North Carolina Families for Public Schools, said the amendments would shrink public school funding that is already being impacted by private school vouchers.

Norton said that the amendments will hurt public schools.

“North Carolina is right now dead last in the entire country for per pupil public school funding. We put less money per pupil into our public schools than any other state in the country,” Norton said. “This is going to cut off the options that we have for rebuilding our public school system to be the public school system that we all deserve.”

At the Sept. 28 Alamance-Burlington School Board meeting, community members expressed concern over the amendments. During the public comment portion of the meeting, Shannon Fitzgerald, a team lead for the North Carolina Families

for Public Schools, urged the board to pass a resolution in opposition to the amendments, which the Durham Public Schools Board of Education did Sept. 24.

“Collectively, you have the power to send a message about the dire straits the tax amendments would put our public schools in — the same public schools that you spend your time and energy in support of,” Fitzgerald said to the board.

Two other members of the public expressed similar sentiments, including Mebane City Council member Sean Ewing, who is running for a seat on the Alamance County Board of Commissioners.

Moore said that North Carolina Families for Public Schools’ campaign has been successful, and said that many voters are receptive to their message.

“What this comes down to is what kind of state we want to live in, and what kind of responsibility we feel like North Carolinians have to each other, and what kind of responsibility we feel like the wealthiest and corporations have to the communities whose resources they use to run their lives and run their businesses,” Moore said.

REFERENDA

Constitutional Amendment

Constitutional amendment to require all voters, not just those presenting to vote in person, to present photo identification before voting.

For

Against

Constitutional Amendment

Constitutional amendment to keep the State income tax rate from being raised higher than three and one-half percent (3.5%).

For

Against

Constitutional Amendment

Constitutional amendment requiring limits on property tax increases by local governments.

For

Against

End of Ballot

GRAPHIC BY AMELIA METZ

ElonTHON brings families and volunteers together for Field Day

Event featured games, activities while raising awareness about ElonTHON's mission

Jordan Poncher
Elon News Network

Eleven- year old Braeden Deaver has attended several ElonTHON events, including the dance marathon, open gym events, and baseball games. At ElonTHON's latest Field Day, he said his favorite part was being able to spend time with other people and playing games.

Families and volunteers gathered at South Campus Gym on Oct. 3 for ElonTHON's Field Day, where they spent the afternoon playing soccer, kickball, badminton, hula hooping and tug of war. The event was from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and gave children supported by ElonTHON a chance to spend time with volunteers and other families.

"It's socializing and seeing people have fun. I like playing the games," Deaver said.

ElonTHON is a six hour dance marathon that raises money for Duke's Children's Hospital through the Children's Miracle Network. Throughout the year, the organization holds smaller fundraising events, including Field Day, pickleball tournaments and profit shares. These events lead up to ElonTHON's main event in April.

Paige Postufka, president of ElonTHON, said the organization's events are also about building relationships with the children and families it supports.

"It is very clear that we're making a real impact in the community just through the relationships we have with these kids, the smiles we see on their faces," Postufka said.

ElonTHON works with families whose children have been directly impacted by



ALEXANDER SIEGEL | PHOTO EDITOR

Attendees at ElonTHON's Oct. 3 field day take part in activities, including indoor kickball and hula hoop races. The event was held in the South Campus Gym.

care at Duke Children's Hospital. The families are invited to events throughout the year and participate in the annual dance marathon.

Stephanie Deaver, Braeden's mom, said that her family has been involved with ElonTHON for several years. She said

she was surprised by how much effort students put into making the family feel included when they first attended the dance marathon.



IT'S NICE TO KNOW WE'RE DOING SOMETHING FOR GENERATIONS.

PAIGE POSTUFKA
ELONTHON PRESIDENT

"He loved it. It was way more than I was even expecting. They went all out and made him feel so special. He had a blast," Stephanie Deaver said.

Stephanie Deaver said the fundraising done through ElonTHON has a direct impact on the children and their families.

"The money that they raise to donate goes to such a good cause," Stephanie Deaver said. "So many kids are really struggling and anything that anyone can do to help them, help their families, bring a little joy to their

lives even the little things makes such a big difference to these kids."

For Sal Mazzurco, the connection to ElonTHON goes back years before his own children became involved. Mazzurco said he supported ElonTHON through his restaurant in Burlington for about 25 years before his family became a part of the organization.

"We never thought that having kids, we would be kind of full circle with ElonTHON," Mazzurco said.

Mazzurco said seeing the impact of the money raised by ElonTHON has been meaningful for his family, especially through the resources and activities provided to children receiving care.

For Postufka, the relationships formed through ElonTHON are part of what makes the organization's work meaningful.

"It's nice to know that we're doing something for generations," Postufka said.

As ElonTHON continues its fundraising throughout the fall, the organization is also looking for students to get involved with its staff and upcoming events.

For Braeden, the events are something he plans to keep coming back to.

"I'm looking forward to all the next events, the next games, and all that good stuff," Braeden Deaver said.



MEGAN COFFEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Miracle kid Braeden Deaver jumps to touch his sign at the ElonTHON Field Day on Oct. 3 in the South Campus Gym.

ADVERTISEMENT

ENN ELECTION CENTER

The Pendulum's voter guide will include voting resources, information about all candidates on the Alamance County ballot and stories on issues surrounding the election.

VOTER GUIDE AVAILABLE OCT. 14

Elon University's Creepy Flock Cameras

They're always watching you... so you're safe?



Miles Prenda
Columnist

Someone is standing behind McEwen Dining Hall. When you drive through downtown, they take out a notebook, jot something down, and do it again when you come back. They are there all day, all night, seven days a week.

But it isn't a person; it's a Flock camera. Every time you drive past one of these Automated License Plate Readers (ALPRs), it snaps several pictures of your car, and according to Elon University Campus Safety & Police interim police chief Doug Dotson, the data it collects is kept in their database for up to 30 days, regardless of whether you're suspected of a crime.

Despite the extent of this data collection on the Elon community, there is little transparency from the university. We don't know all the details of how the system works, how it's audited or what it costs, and as a private university, the administration doesn't need to tell us anything.

Elon operates several of these Flock Safety ALPRs at locations including the intersections of West Haggard Avenue and Church Street, West Haggard Avenue and North Manning Avenue, and along North Williamson Avenue and South Williamson Avenue, according to the department. These cameras are only a few of more than 120,000 that Flock Safety says make up its ever-growing surveillance network across the United States.

This summer, you may have seen Instagram and TikTok videos of ALPRs being toppled with circular saws, shot with paint balls and blinded with green lasers. Flock's suite of surveillance systems came to the forefront of public debate after concerns related to their use in immigration enforcement, warrantless surveillance and

abuse surfaced.

Elon University's Flock Cameras

Elon University has operated ALPRs since at least 2015, when the university deployed 14 high-definition cameras.

As Dennis Franks, chief of Elon University Campus Safety & Police at the time put it in a 2015 Today at Elon article, "You'd be hard pressed to get onto campus without us getting your license plate."

At some point during Flock's rapid post-pandemic expansion, Elon jumped on the bandwagon. Unfortunately, we cannot know exactly when and how these cameras were installed, with Dotson saying that as a private institution the university does not disclose its agreements with third-party vendors. In fact, as a private institution, records of Campus Safety & Police are generally not considered public under North Carolina state law. State and federal law only require Elon to make certain information available, including a daily crime log and an annual security report. Because of this, Elon community members have few ways to understand how the system was set up, how it operates and even how much the university spends on these cameras.

According to Dotson, its ALPRs are not equipped with live-video capabilities, instead capturing still images of passing vehicles. This may sound less creepy, but in reality it contributes to an even more encompassing surveillance regime. Whereas long cuts of video feed are difficult to search through, images can be associated with exact times, license plates and locations, allowing your vehicle to be cataloged. If your car is captured enough times, it would be fairly simple to map out your routines, habits and movements around campus.

These databases can become expansive, even with the image retention period limited to 30 days. In September 2026, hackers at an unknown location in the United States ripped a Flock camera from above a roadway and reproduced a near-complete copy of the data within it, along with its software. Analysts at WIRED found that over 21 days of activity, the camera logged 1.6 million images of 50,200 vehicles. They further discovered that on average, a Flock



GRAPHIC BY AMELIA METZ

camera takes 28 images of a passing car, and occasionally more than 100.

Police departments across the country tend to cite the usefulness of ALPRs to justify their deployment. Elon is no different, stating that the cameras have been "invaluable" in investigating cases. While ALPRs might make the police's job easier, the technology comes at a steep price for everyone else. Your movements, as an innocent person, can be consistently monitored and cataloged into a database and stored for a month.

At Elon, only authorized officers can access the database, and they are required to log a reason for their search and enter the case number for the incident they are investigating. Dotson said that periodic audits are done to ensure the database is being used for legitimate purposes, but they are being conducted by the university itself. Members of the Elon community are essentially being asked to blindly trust that this database is not being abused, with no publicly disclosed audit results or independent oversight to back that up.

But even if you are completely innocent, Flock cameras misreading license plates have caused serious issues in other areas. In February 2026, KATV ABC 7 reported that a Sherwood, Arkansas police officer

pulled over a mother and her one-month-old in a Kohl's parking lot, drawing his weapon and detaining the driver, but the Flock camera that flagged the vehicle had been off by one letter. While Flock Safety claims that its cameras correctly read license plate characters more than 96% of the time under optimal conditions, an analysis of 1,427 Flock alerts sent to the Roseville Police Department in California from 2023 to 2024 found that 71% of alerts sent to the department involved misread license plates. Fortunately, officers of the Roseville PD are required to verify these alerts before taking action, but because of Elon's lack of transparency, it is unclear how officers of Campus Safety & Police are trained to deal with such alerts.

And what can we do?

In the fight against mass surveillance, we've seen the overwhelming power of community. In August, the city of Asheville and Davidson County both voted to terminate their contracts with Flock, with Davidson reallocating the freed \$76,000 to their emergency services. Both of these actions occurred in the wake of packed public meetings and intense community-wide backlash.

You are a member of the Elon community. You have every right to know how surveillance technology is used on your campus. Our safety does not require a shadowy network of mass surveillance. As members of the Elon community, we must demand a commitment from the university administration to disclose its contract with Flock Safety, explain how it operates its cameras and allow third-party audits of its ALPR systems. Until Elon University's ALPRs are brought into the light, they will remain creepy.

ABOUT ELON'S FLOCK CAMERAS

- Known as Automated License Plate Readers
- Snaps several still images of passing vehicles
- Collects data for up to 30 days
- Only authorized officers can access database



A Flock Safety camera located to the rear of McEwen Dining Hall facing the intersection of N Williamson Avenue and Haggard Avenue, as pictured on Oct. 6.

ALEXANDER SIEGEL | PHOTO EDITOR

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Former Elon baseball player returns as director of player development

Kenny Mallory Jr. is ready to help current athletes navigate the same program he once played in

Peyton Spencer
Elon News Network

A year ago, No. 2 walked out of the Elon dugout at Latham Park, leaving the field for what would be his last time as a player. Now, Kenny Mallory Jr. steps onto the same field in a different role, coaching both the new players and some of the teammates he once played beside.

After graduating in the spring of 2025, Mallory knew he wanted to begin a coaching career. The former outfielder and first baseman spent a year in his home state of Georgia as the assistant hitting and outfield coach at Peachtree Ridge High School before returning to Elon as the director of player development.

Returning to Elon gave Mallory the opportunity to contribute to the program from a new perspective while still pursuing the same goal he had as a player.

“Being a player here, we always want to win,” Mallory said. “So, just coming back and trying to get these guys in the right position to win ball games for us.”

The shift from player to coach has also required Mallory to navigate a different relationship with some of the players he once shared the field with. This familiarity has created a new dynamic as he adjusts from being a teammate to a member of the coaching staff.

“We mess around like we are old teammates, but also when it comes down to business, they know I want to win, and so do



COURTESY OF ELON ATHLETICS

Director of player development Kenny Mallory Jr. watches from afar at an Elon preseason baseball practice this fall.

they,” Mallory said.

That recent experience as a player has been one of Mallory’s biggest strengths as a coach. Having played under head coach Mike Kennedy himself, Mallory understands what is expected of the players and how Kennedy communicates with the team.

“He knows how we do it,” Kennedy said. “He knows how we go about it. He knows what it takes to be successful. More than

that, he knows how to handle me as a coach. He’s been through it as a player, and he can let those guys know, ‘Hey, I’ve been through that. You’re going to be fine.’”

Kennedy’s trust in Mallory extends beyond his familiarity with the program. He said Mallory’s work ethic and attitude as a player are traits that make him a valuable member of the coaching staff.

Mallory played three seasons for the

Phoenix, appearing in 161 games with 143 starts. He finished his Elon career with a .294 batting average, 155 hits, 100 runs, 29 doubles and 28 stolen bases. His 102 career walks also place him eighth in program history.

“He was always self-motivated,” Kennedy said. “I didn’t have to push him to do things right. He knew what was right and what was wrong, and he did all those things. Guys like that, they make good coaches, and when you have those types of guys coaching with you, they make you better in that area as well.”

Those qualities later made Mallory a strong fit for a position on the coaching staff when he began looking for ways to continue his career in baseball. Coaching became the next step for Mallory as he transitioned from playing the game to helping the team from the dugout.

“Still being young, I thought, why not try and give coaching a chance and see where it goes,” Mallory said.

As Mallory gained experience as a coach, he began to see the role as more than conducting drills or helping players perform on the field. He also came to value the responsibility coaches have in preparing players for life outside of baseball.

“We’re trying to get these guys ready to go out in the real world,” Mallory said. “So just continue to help them in any way to get them to be successful outside of the field.”

The desire to help players grow is something Kennedy said comes naturally to Mallory because of his passion for the game.

“He loves the game,” Kennedy said. “When you love the game, I think this part becomes easy. You want to be out here. You want to be a part of it. You want to be able to use some of the experience you had to help someone grow.”

Elon Elementary student receives national attention for basketball skills

7-year-old MaKenna Brewington excels in ball-handling

Abigail Hines
Managing Editor of elonnewsnetwork.com

It started with a toy basketball hoop and a small plastic ball. Michael Brewington said his daughter’s basketball journey began when she was just a year old.

Now, MaKenna Brewington, an Elon Elementary student, is seven years old and receiving national attention on social media for her ball-handling skills.

MaKenna was recently in the running for Youth Athlete of the Year, a national competition that supports the Why Not You Foundation, founded by Super Bowl champion and former NFL quarterback Russell Wilson. She finished in fifth place in her group.

When he’s not working with his daughter, Michael trains local student basketball players. He said he first noticed MaKenna’s talent on the court when she was five years old.

“Over time, I just saw something special in her, like I think I have something,” Michael said. “As a parent, you feel like, alright, everybody thinks their kid’s special. But I’ve been hearing it from other people, which confirmed what I was feeling about her.”

As a trainer, Michael takes the same drills he uses with his other players and challenges MaKenna with them during practice. He said she can keep up with the older kids.

“Whatever drill I do with her, I do with a high school or college player, and she’s only seven. Her basketball IQ is amazing,” Michael said. “She rarely watches basketball, but you wouldn’t know that from watching her play.”

Those difficult drills are one of MaKenna’s



ABIGAIL HINES | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

MaKenna Brewington, an seven-year-old Elon Elementary student, dribbles one-on-one against her father, Michael, on Sept. 27. The two often practice ball-handling skills.

favorite parts of the game.

“I like practicing on my own, and I like my dad doing challenging stuff for me,” MaKenna said.

Michael said MaKenna’s strongest asset on the court is her ball-handling skills, which he features heavily on her social media account. MaKenna’s Instagram account currently has over 2,000 followers. Her most popular content is of her dribbling the ball between her legs and driving to the hoop.

MaKenna’s videos also landed on Overtime, an Instagram page for sports

content with 10 million followers.

“We just keep doing what we’re doing as far as putting in the work, and everything else will follow,” Michael said. “It says a lot that she’s getting this kind of attention. It lets me know what we’re doing is right.”

The work MaKenna and Michael do on the court isn’t just about building her skill set. It also builds a father-daughter bond between the two.

“The relationship that we have, I think it started here,” Michael said. “She always just wants to be around me, so me training her,

I feel like she’s more receptive to what I’m saying.”

On the court, MaKenna said she enjoys learning from her father, but also playing against him.

“We can play one-on-one. Sometimes, he’s a little bit slow,” MaKenna said, laughing.

In those one-on-one matches, MaKenna is confident with the ball, even finding time to trash-talk her dad.

As for her future, Michael said he isn’t sure what MaKenna will pursue, but he hopes she puts her everything into it.