

THE PENDULUM

STRIVING FOR CHANGE

A vertical collage titled "FOR CHANGE" in large, white, serif font at the top left. The collage features a variety of images of students and faculty at Elon University, set against a background of large, overlapping, dark gray geometric shapes (triangles, stars, polygons). The images include: a black and white portrait of a young woman; a woman speaking at a podium with a microphone; a basketball player in a white and blue "ELON" jersey; a woman in a white "Black Is Power" t-shirt and a face mask; a man in a black jacket and a face mask holding a red and black flag; a woman in a white "ELON" jersey running; a football player in a red jersey and a yellow "ELON" helmet; a woman in a black t-shirt with "#BlackLivesMatter" and "ELON" text, holding a red water bottle; a woman in a black blazer and a yellow patterned dress; a group of students posing together; and a soccer player in a white jersey heading a ball. The collage is framed by dark gray geometric shapes, some of which contain faint, larger-scale images of students and faculty.

Elon Athletics works to
create inclusive environment

BLACK HISTORY MONTH EVENTS

FEB
18

AfroLatindad

4:30 - 5:30 p.m. | Zoom

As part of El Centro's "What They Didn't Teach You in the Books" series, this presentation will discuss the identities of Black Latinx people, their history in Latin American countries, contributions and representation in the media.

FEB
18

Black History Month Trivia

6:30 p.m. | Zoom

Join East, Colonnades, and Historic neighborhoods for a test of knowledge about history and win some prizes along the way.

FEB
19-20

"Selma"

8 p.m. | Turner Theatre

In "Selma," civil-rights activists march from Selma, Alabama to Montgomery to secure voting rights for Black Americans in a docudrama which focuses on the actions of Martin Luther King, Jr.

FEB
22

Introduction to Afrofuturism and Rap

7 - 8:40 p.m. | Zoom

Rap, Race, Gender and Philosophy (PHL 363) is a class examining rap music, its history and relation to politics and economics and racial and gender injustices.

FEB
24

Our Shelf to Yours

8 a.m. - 5 p.m. | Moseley 224

This event allows individuals to select a free book by a Black author. The curated collection will feature a wide range of genres. Limited spots available and registration required.

FEB
24

Film & Discussion Panel

6:30 - 8 p.m. | Zoom

Members of Elon University and greater community are invited to screen the documentary "An Outrage," a short film about lynchings in the United States.

FEB
25

Opening Doors: Internships

4 - 5:30 p.m. | Zoom

Learn from alumni who have navigated the internship search as underrepresented students. Gain insights on companies that have notable programs for underrepresented students.

FEB
25

Afro-Latino Cooking Class

6:30 p.m. | Zoom

Join Kiah Glen, assistant director of the CREDE, as she hosts the yearly Afro-Latinx cooking class. Registrants can cook from the comfort of their homes during the livestream of this event.

FEB
26

Black Solidarity Day

10 a.m. - 5 p.m. | Zoom

Black Solidarity Day will take place at Elon University for its seventh annual conference. The conference aims to unite Black-identifying students, faculty and staff by providing an avenue and building solidarity.

FEB
26-27

"42"

8 p.m. | Turner Theatre

"42" tells the story of two men — Jackie Robinson and Brooklyn Dodgers General Manager Branch Rickey — whose stand against prejudice forever changed the world by changing the game of baseball. In 1946, Rickey put himself at the forefront of history when he signed Robinson.

ALAMANCE NAACP SPEARHEADS EFFORT TO RENAME GRAHAM PARK AFTER BLACK COUNCILMAN SLAIN IN 1870

The Graham City Council is leaning against renaming Sesquicentennial Park after Wyatt Outlaw

Mackenzie Wilkes
Executive Director | @macwilkes

At the site where the historic bell hangs in Graham’s Court Square, just yards from where the 30-foot Confederate monument now stands, Wyatt Outlaw, a Black councilman in Graham, was lynched in 1870.

Almost 151 years ago on Feb. 26, 1870, members of the Ku Klux Klan kidnapped Outlaw in the middle of the night, and his body was found the next morning hanging from an elm tree near the courthouse. 18 men were indicted for his death, but the charges were dropped.

Now in 2021, the Alamance County NAACP is trying to memorialize Outlaw and the lynching that took place over a century ago. Alamance NAACP President Barrett Brown said the idea to formally name Sesquicentennial Park after Outlaw came about almost a month ago.

The park was already known as Wyatt Outlaw Park among Graham residents, according to Brown. He said renaming the park would be an act of solidarity on behalf of the city.

“I would really have them consider the impact on the whole community and not just a privileged community that has maintained the status quo,” Brown said. “Just think in terms of what this could mean as far as moving forward as a healing community and not just flipped dismissal.”

After a summer of protests against racial injustice, Brown said renaming the park would be a symbolic gesture from the city and could begin to correct past actions from city officials. One such action was the now-dissolved ordinance that prevented people from protesting at the Confederate monument. A lawsuit against Graham officials determined that the ordinance violated the First Amendment.

“ I DON’T BELIEVE YOU ERASE ONE PIECE OF HISTORY TO CREATE ANOTHER. HAVING SAID THAT, I AM 110% — HEAR ME CLEAR — 110% IN FAVOR OF DOING WHATEVER IT TAKES TO RECOGNIZE WYATT OUTLAW IN THIS CITY.

MELODY WIGGINS
COUNCILMEMBER

“It just seemed to me that this was an olive branch to minority communities to say that ‘we understand that things have been unfair, we understand that the narrative of underrepresented communities has been lacking in Graham,’” Brown said. “This would be something significant.”

Members of the Graham City Council aren’t set on the idea of renaming the park, given the reason for its name in the first place. Sesquicentennial Park was built to commemorate Alamance County’s 150th anniversary on April 24, 1999. The park, which is 2,500 square feet, is covered with bricks bearing the names of residents who donated to build the park.

“I urge my friend Barrett Brown to do as what they did in 1999: find a location, raise



The Alamance County NAACP hopes to convince the Graham City Council to rename Sesquicentennial Park after Wyatt Outlaw, a Black public official lynched in 1870.

some funds and place a memorial to the life of Wyatt Outlaw,” Mayor Jerry Peterman said at the Feb. 9 city council meeting.

All other members of the council expressed their disinterest in the idea. Renaming the park after Outlaw would take away from the original intent of the park’s name — a celebration of the county’s founding — for Councilmember Melody Wiggins.

“I don’t believe you erase one piece of history to create another. Having said that, I am 110% — hear me clear — 110% in favor of doing whatever it takes to recognize Wyatt Outlaw in this city,” Wiggins said. “He is a deserving man, and we should be acknowledging him. It has been way too late, and it has been way too long, and I believe it is up to us to make those moves.”

Brown questioned why residents in favor of renaming the park should have to compromise when people “overwhelmingly” support it.

“What that means is more capitulation. And if this [is] what people have overwhelmingly asked for, I would ask the question, ‘Why not give it to them?’” Brown said. “Why should marginalized people be constantly put in a position of having to capitulate and get less than what we’ve asked for?”

Councilmember Jennifer Talley said the city should do something for this generation to memorialize Outlaw. She said the historical marker in Graham was one way the city had recognized Outlaw.

Currently, a historical marker on South Main Street in Graham makes an indirect reference to Outlaw. The marker, which was erected in 2006, memorializes the Kirk-Holden War that took place in Alamance and Caswell counties. The marker reads:

“Racial violence in Caswell and Alamance counties in 1870 led to martial law, under Col. Geo. W. Kirk, impeachment & removal of Gov. W. W. Holden.”

Part of this racial violence was the lynching of Outlaw. The Kirk-Holden War was named after Gov. William Woods Holden and a pro-Union militia leader George W. Kirk, according to research by historian and Elon University emeritus professor of history Carole Watterson Troxler. After Holden directed an investigation to be done by Kirk on

BY THE NUMBERS

8,234

was the number of white residents in Alamance County in 1870. 3,640 was the number of Black residents in Alamance County.

125,436

was the estimated population of white residents in Alamance County in 2019. 35,596 was the estimated number of Black residents in Alamance County.

Outlaw’s murder and the murder of white Caswell County leader John W. Stephens, the investigation and Holden’s subsequent impeachment and removal from office became dubbed the Kirk-Holden War.

Elon University has ties to the Kirk-Holden War and the lynching of Outlaw. Jacob A. Long, the brother of Elon’s first president William Long, took part in Outlaw’s lynching, yet denied it in court — using William Long as an alibi — according to Elon’s report on history and memory at the university. Jacob A. Long was Alamance County’s chief of the Ku Klux Klan, according to Troxler’s research.

To see reconciliation in Graham and Alamance County, Brown wants officials to address the desires of marginalized communities. The city council did not take a vote on renaming the park at their Feb. 9, meeting. The agenda for their March meeting hasn’t been set, but as of Feb. 16, City Clerk Darcy Sperry said the council has not asked her to add a vote to the agenda. The agenda will be finalized March 3.

“I think that elected officials have a responsibility to protect the rights of a minority population, and I don’t think you can do that by just ignoring them and dismissing them,” Brown said. “I don’t think that’s a good example of how to build community and to live in a diverse community.”

A LOOK INTO HISTORY

An excerpt from the Elon University Fall 2020 Committee on History and Memory.

When, in 1871, J. A. Long was perjuring himself denying his involvement in Outlaw’s murder, he turned to his elder brother for an alibi. J. A. Long claimed to have been asleep in his law office in downtown Graham when the assailants startled him from his sleep and to have “waked up [his] brother.” “What was his name?” the Chairman of the U.S. Senate’s Select Committee who was conducting the investigation asked. “W. S. Long, a minister of the gospel and principal of the high school,” J. A. Long responded. 29 Years later, in 1930, J. A. Long’s son, Ralph, recalled both the courage of his father in helping organize the Klan and the harmony of interests and ideas among the Long children. There was “not a semblance of a Black sheep in the half-dozen,” he wrote.

Advancing diversity, equity and inclusion for faculty and staff

Academic council committees and administrators for inclusivity continue efforts to make a more equitable environment for faculty and staff

Kyra O'Connor
Enterprise Story Coordinator | @ko_reports

In the months following the debut of Elon University’s diversity, equity and inclusion action steps, efforts to create a more inclusive environment for faculty and staff continue.

The working group for diversity, equity and inclusion of the academic council — the governing body over faculty — is working to include information addressing bias in the faculty handbook, particularly with regard to evaluation for faculty. The university is also working to redesign the bias response system and will debut a new training program for all university employees.

John Robinson-Miller IV, assistant director of the Center for Race, Ethnicity and Diversity Education, said because faculty and staff members all come in with their own professional standards, it can be difficult to ensure all standards are DEI-focused.

“When you then put all of those things into this higher ed context where we are prioritizing that, I think there has to be some unlearning and some integration into what your professional standards are ... and what the expectation is for campus culture,” Robinson-Miller said. “That’s where a lot of the gaps are.”

Randy Williams, vice president and associate provost of inclusive excellence, said faculty and staff DEI initiatives range from online training for preventing harassment and discrimination to improving the bias response system, a tool faculty, staff and students can use. These efforts not only promote a more inclusive environment for faculty and staff, but impact students as well, making sure they engage with DEI curriculum during their time at Elon.

“When you see initiatives where faculty are infusing this in the curriculum and finding ways to add it as a part of coursework, and as that continues with the student life side and other areas on campus, now the chances of one getting through Elon without engaging with this content becomes much more challenging,” Williams said.

According to Rosemary Haskell, a member of the DEI working group, the faculty handbook is continually being revised, and the revision relating to diversity, equity and inclusion was one of the tasks of the working group.

The working group was formed last summer and includes five faculty members. One goal of the working group is to help faculty members with their professional development in terms of DEI and anti-racism in their scholarship. The group also works to provide training for people such as the academic council, promotion and tenure committee and department chairs.

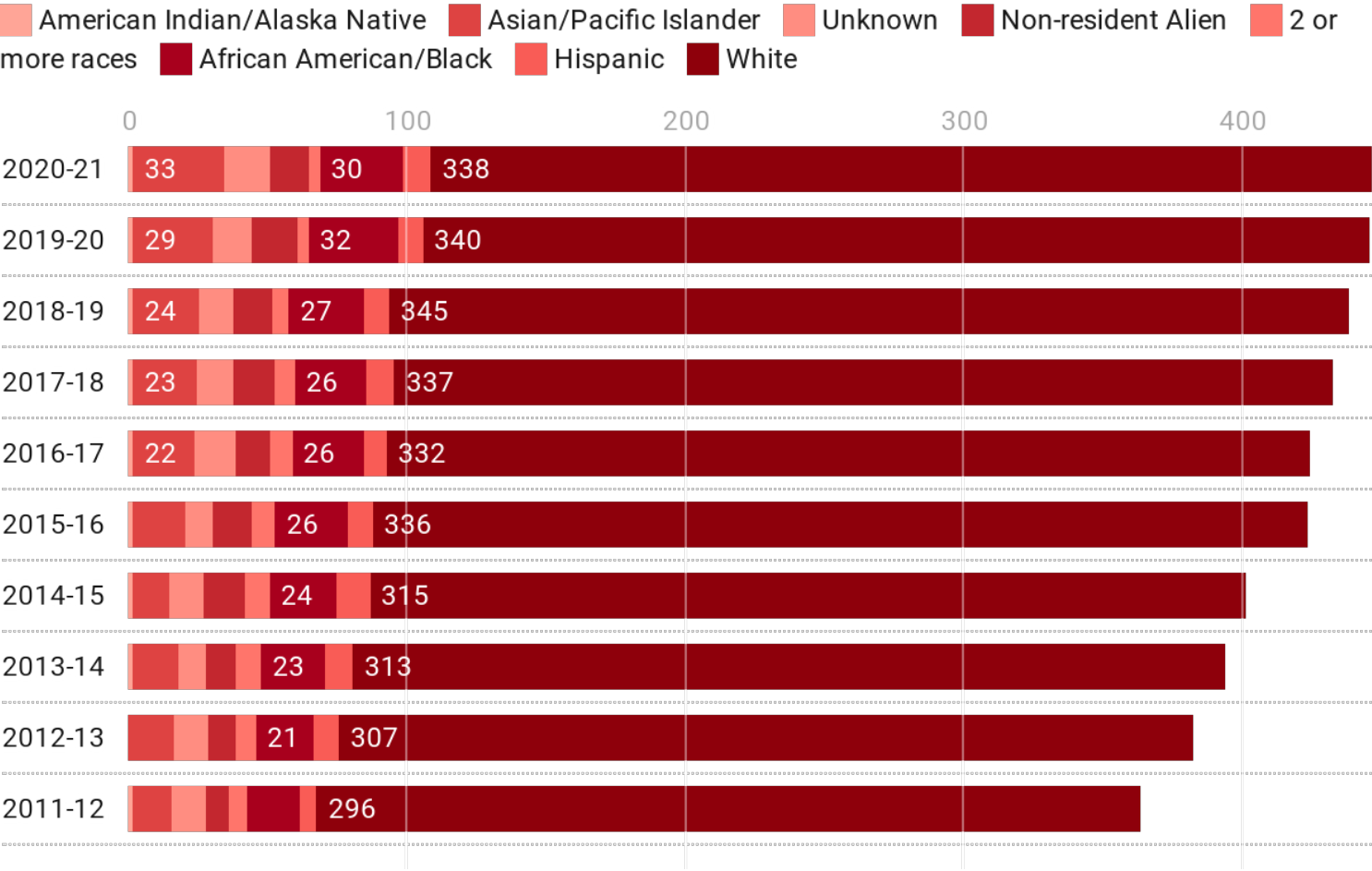
“We also work to institute regular awareness training ... to help those people, those groups, avoid implicit bias and be more alert to the needs of people from underrepresented groups,” Haskell said.

The group instituted two training sessions for the academic council in the fall to help the council be “alert” to the needs of underrepresented groups among faculty and how to address those needs. The academic council is made up of 19 faculty members who serve three-year terms. Haskell said all of the faculty members on the academic council this year are white, unlike past years.

“Our working group and other working groups asked faculty who are not white or ... members of underrepresented groups to work with us as consultants,” Haskell said. “We had one or two people from outside academic council work with our group.”

One of the group’s tasks, as outlined on the academic committee’s website, is to recruit more faculty of color to the academic

FULL-TIME ELON FACULTY BY RACE AND ETHNICITY



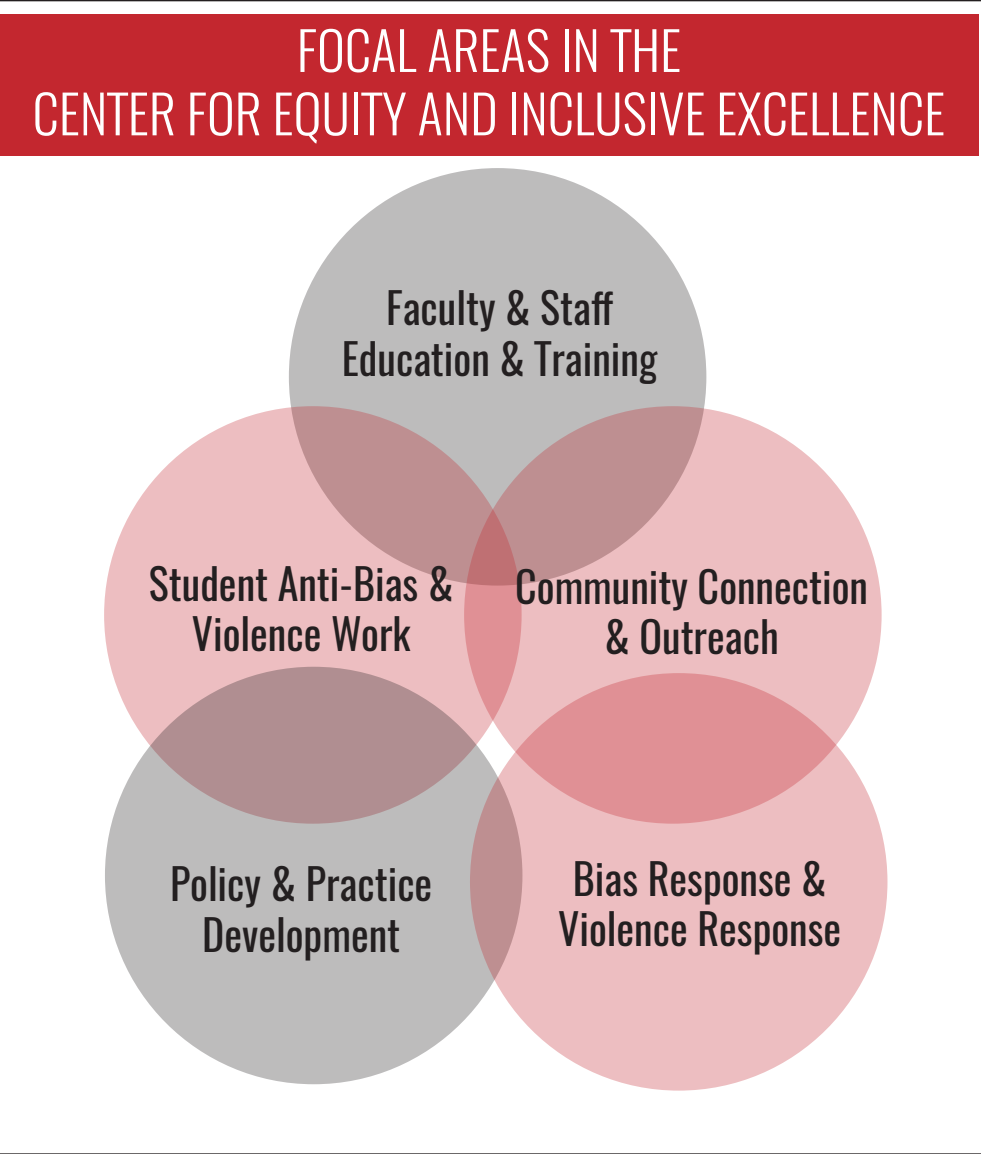
Bar chart showcasing the number of full-time Elon University faculty by race and ethnicity from 2011-2021.

KYRA O'CONNOR | ENTERPRISE STORY COORDINATOR

“

WHEN YOU SEE INITIATIVES WHERE FACULTY ARE INFUSING THIS IN THE CURRICULUM AND FINDING WAYS TO ADD IT AS A PART OF COURSEWORK, AND AS THAT CONTINUES WITH THE STUDENT LIFE SIDE AND OTHER AREAS ON CAMPUS, NOW THE CHANCES OF ONE GETTING THROUGH ELON WITHOUT ENGAGING WITH THIS CONTENT BECOMES MUCH MORE CHALLENGING

RANDY WILLIAMS
VICE PRESIDENT AND ASSOCIATE
PROVOST OF INCLUSIVE
EXCELLENCE



council. Haskell said after many discussions, a new committee was formed to focus on bringing diversity to the academic council called the professional development and faculty evaluation group. This group will work on guidelines for faculty on how to make their teaching and scholarship more attuned to the importance of DEI efforts.

A new version of the training for preventing harassment and discrimination Elon faculty and staff take when they are hired was launched in November. Williams said that all faculty and staff members, regardless of their type of employment, will complete the program upon the time of hiring. The university hopes to see a “significant improvement” in the number of people who have completed the training. Currently, not all faculty and staff members have completed the new training.

Williams and Vice President for Student

Life Jon Dooley are working with the bias response system working group as well as consultant groups — which include students, alumni and administrators — to redesign the bias response system.

The goals of the working group for the bias system are to have “clear follow up and communication on actions taken” and a process for faculty of color to “report and receive support” from the provost’s office.

Williams said the working group is currently identifying and researching other universities’ bias response systems. Following their research, which is scheduled to be presented in April, the group will provide recommendations to Williams and Dooley to improve the system at Elon.

Williams said the working group had to “regroup as far as the timeline” after Center for Equity and Inclusive Excellence director Leigh-Anne Royster left Elon in January.

STUDENT POET HIGHLIGHTS CODE-SWITCHING IN COMMUNITIES OF COLOR

Student poet composes thoughts on the racial divides in verbal expression

Sophie Rosenthal
Elon News Network | @sophrosenthal

After Elon University freshman Mal Turnipseed presented his poetry in a creative writing class during his senior year of high school, his teacher encouraged him to keep writing outside the classroom. When the COVID-19 pandemic began, he started to write more poems and created a second Instagram account to share them.

A recent poem of his titled “The Art of Code-Switching” addresses why many Black people change their vernacular around white people and how their speech impacts their lives. The poem was inspired by Turnipseed’s personal experience growing up in both primarily white and primarily minority neighborhoods. He said he decided to write the poem after watching a clip of the television show “Big Mouth” on TikTok about code-switching.

“

YOU'RE STILL
SPEAKING WITH
THAT SAME LEVEL
OF RESPECT ... JUST
BECAUSE YOU TALK
THIS WAY, YOU'RE
NOT A THUG OR A
CRIMINAL. YOU'RE
JUST YOU: YOUR
INTENTIONS ARE
THERE, YOUR HEART
IS THERE. YOUR
VALOR AND MERIT IS
THERE. IT'S JUST THE
WAY YOU SAY IT, IT'S
DIFFERENT AND THAT'S
ACCEPTABLE AND
THAT'S VALID.

CALEB MARTIN
FRESHMAN

“When you’re going for an interview or you’re going to do something around people who I guess will be considered proper, a lot of minority kids ... have to kind of switch their language up so that they seem more proper or they seem more like they were raised well,” Turnipseed said.

Turnipseed calls code-switching an art and said he considers it to be a talent.

“I guess [it’s] something that’s kind of sad to have to see that we have to do that,” Turnipseed said. “But still something that I consider to be very talented, and a skill that a lot of people kind of just naturally perfected over time, because we have to, because it’s safer. And it’s necessary for us to be able to move forward in life.”

Freshman Caleb Martin read Turnipseed’s poem and said that on a surface level, everybody changes the way they talk based on who they’re talking to. People rarely talk to their grandmother the same way that they talk to their best friend, but when it comes to race relations, Martin said it takes on a different meaning.

Referencing a line in the poem about being



MADDIE SHOSTEN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Freshman Mal Turnipseed writes poetry about the connection between speech and race.

pulled over by a white cop, Martin said there are times when choosing not to code-switch can be life-threatening.

“In my personal opinion, your worldviews, everything that you care about, doesn’t matter,” Martin said. “As long as you are a person in a car [who] is Black and there’s a cop with a gun, nobody cares about what you believe in.”

Martin said Turnipseed’s poem also highlights how “white rhetoric” can pit Black people against each other. When Black people try to “talk more white,” according to Martin, it becomes a competition. He said this is exemplified in the line of the poem that says, “You’re not like those ghetto boys and ghetto girls.”

“You’re showing the people that you’re trying to impress basically that you’re not like other Black kids, or Black men, or Black women, or Black whoever because you’re better than them, you’re more educated, so they should hire you over the other [Black people],” Martin said. “It shouldn’t be the reality, obviously.”

Though he believes it can be necessary, Martin said code-switching is ultimately harmful. If Black people continue to talk differently around white people to accommodate a white version of professionalism, it doesn’t allow white people to ever recognize that the way many Black

people speak naturally can also convey professionalism and respect, Martin said.

“You’re still speaking with that same level of respect ... Just because you talk this way, you’re not a thug or a criminal. You’re just you: your intentions are there, your heart is there. Your valor and merit is there. It’s just the way you say it, it’s different and that’s acceptable and that’s valid,” Martin said.

Freshman Britt Mobley said Turnipseed’s poem is an accurate representation of the reality of code-switching. Mobley said he agrees with Martin that code-switching doesn’t help the underlying problem, but he said it is a “quick fix” for a problem that Black people cannot solve on their own.

“In terms of code-switching, is it harmful to Black people? I would say yes, because it does not get to the root of the issue, the system[ic] idea of things,” Mobley said. “But ultimately, what else can you do? This is how society is right now. Are you going to put yourself in a situation where you’re trying to change society, but in doing so damage your own self? Or do you conform to what it is right now, even though it’s crappy, and aim to change the future?”

Turnipseed’s poetry can be found on Instagram at @seedmusicinc, which also accepts student poetry submissions by direct message.

The Art of Code Switching

By Mal Turnipseed

Hi! How are you?
Ayyee Yooooo!!!
Simple as that.
Two different sentences.
Same greeting.
Just saying hello to a friend.
An acquaintance.
Sometimes maybe a stranger.
For black kids living in different worlds. It’s as easy as saying their A, B, C’s.
Knowing what to say.
Who to say it too?
Takes time to learn.
Indeed it does.
But it’s necessary.
Safer.
It’s dangerous to be caught in a situation.
Where you don’t know this art.
Pulled over.
Cop staring you down.
Gun on his hip.
Hand straying ever closer.
To shake your hand.
You got the job.
They liked you.
You’re not like those ghetto boys.
Those ghetto girls.
They laughing with you.
Migos blasting through the house.
Henny in one hand.
Your boo’s hand in the other.
Rocking at the barbecue together.
Family laughing.
Unc on the grill.
Friends playing ball.
They approach you.
The police.
The bosses.
The crew.
The fam.
I hope your familiar with the Art of Code Switching.

via @seedmusicinc

Chemistry professor highlights importance of diversity in STEM

Professor Nyote Calixte draws on personal experience to increase minority visibility in STEM fields

Madalyn Howard

Elon News Network | @madalynhoward_

Nyote Calixte knew by the age of 10 she wanted to become a doctor. It was the obvious choice — growing up, the Elon University professor was fascinated by all things science, and the subject came to her naturally.

As a first-generation college student and Black woman pursuing a career in STEM, Calixte recognized she would be paving her own path to success.

“I wanted to be a doctor ever since I was 10 years old,” Calixte said. “But I didn’t know what that looked like. There was no one in my family who had gone to college, let alone been a physician.”

While minority groups in the United States continue to grow in population, they are vastly underrepresented in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and math. According to the U.S. Department of Education, historically Black colleges and universities graduated 27% of all Black people with bachelor’s degrees in STEM disciplines, despite HBCUs making up only 3% of the nation’s colleges and universities. In 2019, the Education Researcher published findings revealing that Black and Latino students drop their STEM majors at nearly twice the rate of white students.

Mentorship in her chosen field proved invaluable for Calixte, who recognized her passion but struggled to conceptualize her place within a STEM industry. She took her first chemistry class in her sophomore year of high school and, after encountering some difficulties initially, sought after-school help from her teacher.

The teacher, who would quickly become a mentor to Calixte, also served as the adviser for her high school’s Science Olympiad team. One of the first times they met together, Calixte’s teacher showed her around a Science Olympiad meeting.

“They are in there popping popcorn, they were doing Alka-Seltzer boat races and just geeking out, building all this cool stuff,” she said. “I was like, ‘What is going on in here?’”

When her teacher showed her around, Calixte was immediately drawn to the chemistry-based qualitative analysis event in which participants competed to determine the identity of unknown substances.

Calixte said she “fell in love” with qualitative analysis and, by extension, chemistry. By the time she graduated, she had taken two Advanced Placement chemistry courses and placed regionally in the qualitative analysis event, an competition intended for teams of two in which Calixte competed solo.

Upon graduating high school, Calixte attended Xavier University of Louisiana to study chemistry. Xavier, an HBCU in New Orleans, is known for its record rates of Black students who go on to graduate from medical school, and Calixte thrived in the environment.

“I was just mesmerized by all of the Black and brown students who came from all over the country that were just absolutely brilliant,” she said.

While at Xavier, Calixte’s classmates and advisers helped her begin to actualize her STEM passions. The summer before her junior year, she was recommended for an internship conducting research for Procter & Gamble.

“I had a great time,” she said. “As a first-gen kid, this is the most money I’d ever made with the internship. I thought I was balling, you know; corporate-sponsored dinners, pitch competitions and all this kind of stuff. I was like, ‘Man, this is the life.’”

The internship convinced Calixte she wanted an industry job. After graduating from Xavier, she enrolled in Louisiana State University, the country’s top institution in granting doctoral degrees in chemistry to women and minority students.

As an LSU graduate student, Calixte studied analytical chemistry. Her program required students to spend at least one year as a teaching assistant in a lab, and Calixte excelled in the position. She said she found the work “fulfilling,” and by the time she received



COURTESY OF NYOTE CALIXTE

Professor Nyote Calixte draws on personal experience to mentor students and increase minority visibility in STEM fields.

“

A LOT OF PEOPLE WANT TO TAKE THE RACE CONVERSATION OUT OF SCIENCE. WHAT I TRY TO DO WITH DEI WORK IS TO KIND OF RE-CENTER BACK ON THAT GOAL. THIS IS WHAT SCIENCE HAS HISTORICALLY DONE. THESE ARE THE REPERCUSSIONS OF IT. SO, HOW CAN WE AS SCIENTISTS CORRECT THAT.

NYOTE CALIXTE
PROFESSOR OF CHEMISTRY

her doctorate, she had won two excellence in teaching awards.

When it came time for her to enter the workforce, Calixte said she was torn between industry work and academia. Her doctorate program had brought her to North Carolina, and she decided to accept a position at Duke University within their academic advising center.

As director of academic engagement for the natural and quantitative sciences at Duke, she advised hundreds of STEM students yearly, exposing them to various career opportunities and mentoring them on what a career in STEM really looks like.

One thing Calixte said she noticed while advising students of color was a hesitation to explore interests outside of their chosen field.

“They felt like they didn’t have a lot of leeway to explore things that they liked,” Calixte said. “Extracurricular exploration at times was not as high on their list, and I really tried to advise students to do some of that because you never know what it is you’ll gravitate towards.”

At Duke, Calixte taught a specialized course she loved called “examining racial disparities within STEM fields.”

“I found that I was really starting to miss chemistry. I knew that the longer that I spent away from teaching chemistry, the harder it was going to be to get back into it,” Calixte said. “My identity as a scientist kind of felt like it was waning.”

After five years at Duke, she decided to return to the classroom full-time and began teaching chemistry at Elon in the fall of 2019.

“It has been a learning curve just kind of getting reacclimated to being back in the classroom, and that is always rife with challenges,” she said. “But the excitement of

being back in the discipline is definitely still there.”

Unwilling to abandon her passion for mentoring students, Calixte accepted a position as the faculty adviser for Elon’s new STEM for Black Lives Matter club. STEM for BLM was formed last summer by Elon students and STEM club board members after months of protests nationwide against racial injustice.

One of the things Calixte said drew her to STEM for BLM was its goal of addressing and raising awareness of the disparities that exist within the sciences for students of color.

“That’s not a posture that says we have all the answers,” Calixte said. “It’s to say we acknowledge that Black and brown scientists exist, and society’s view of what a scientist looks like has been inherently flawed because it excludes people who don’t fit a particular phenotype.”

As an advocate of diversity, equity and inclusion, Calixte objects to the belief that organizations like STEM for BLM initiatives are meant to “guilt white people” and said it is important to acknowledge sociological issues within the natural sciences.

“A lot of people want to take the race conversation out of science,” she said. “What I try to do with DEI work is to kind of re-center back on that goal. This is what science has historically done. These are the repercussions of it. So, how can we as scientists correct that?”

Calixte is the first to admit she doesn’t have a definitive answer to solve the racial disparities inherent in STEM fields. If she did, Calixte said, she would probably be rich. But remembering her own experiences, she hopes to continue mentoring students and slowly dismantle biases present in STEM today.

BOUNDLESS BLACKNESS RAISES AWARENESS OF RACIAL INJUSTICE



Soniya Robinson is the founder of Boundless Blackness, a fashion and storytelling brand dedicated to elevating voices in the Black community.

FRANCES O'CONNOR | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Boundless Blackness is the product of several Elon University students and their desire to highlight their heritage

Jinger Callwood
Elon News Network | @jingerccallwood

The racial injustices repeatedly replayed on the news in the summer of 2020 were getting to Soniyah Robinson. Frustrated, the Elon University sophomore took action to raise awareness about police brutality and racial discrimination.

Thus, Boundless Blackness was born out of Robinson's passion for promoting racial equity. The company sells clothing canvassed with logos celebrating Blackness and shares stories on Black experiences.

The Black Lives Matter movement and a summer of protests against racial injustice inspired her to follow suit and raise awareness about the plight of Black people in America, which led her to create the company on Jul. 22, 2020.

"[Entrepreneurship] is something I always saw myself getting involved in. But this summer, being in quarantine and having more time to think things through and do research,

I realized I really wanted to start a business," Robinson said. "With the [Black Lives Matter] movement getting a lot of attraction over the summer, I wanted to create a platform that emphasized how limitless Black people are."

Robinson is interested in the representation of Black people in television and film and wants her brand to be a positive outlet. This led Robinson to create an independent major — she chose to call it "social justice" — which includes courses about African American studies, poverty and social justice and women's gender and sexualities studies minors.

The brand shares Black experiences by interviewing members of the Black community and sharing their stories on the company's website. Robinson has covered stories on Black artists, politicians, advocates, health care workers and entrepreneurs. Her goal through her writing is to amplify Black voices.

"I want Boundless Blackness to be that space that Black community members can go to when they want to feel heard, when they want to feel seen, when they want to tap into their limitless potential, when they want to share their stories, or just be authentically Black in an authentically Black space," Robinson said.

The clothing includes designs of the

Black power fist paired with text that says "revolutionary and limitless" and a Malcolm X quote on the back. Another design portrays the African continent with the words "descended from greatness."

Plans to make a video series documenting the experiences of Black people are in production. The series is expected to launch this month on the website and social media with the help of Miracle Smythe, a sophomore cinema and television arts major.

“

I WANT BOUNDLESS BLACKNESS TO BE THAT SPACE THAT BLACK COMMUNITY MEMBERS CAN GO TO WHEN THEY WANT TO FEEL HEARD, WHEN THEY WANT TO FEEL SEEN, WHEN THEY WANT TO TAP INTO THEIR LIMITLESS POTENTIAL, WHEN THEY WANT TO SHARE THEIR STORIES, OR JUST BE AUTHENTICALLY BLACK IN AN AUTHENTICALLY BLACK SPACE.

SONIYAH ROBINSON
SOPHOMORE

Smythe is one of the digital creators and videographers for the company. She said she likes being part of Boundless Blackness and it has instilled within her a sense of belonging. "Initially, I was just going to be taking pictures for merchandise sales, but when I

saw Soniyah's vision through my camera lens, I realized how important this brand could be for so many people," Smythe wrote in a text to Elon News Network. "My familiarity with the meaning of Blackness allowed me to find more confidence in my work."

Boundless Blackness is looking to partner with on-campus organizations such as the Black Student Union, the Center for Race, Ethnicity and Diversity Education and the National Pan-Hellenic Council to engage in racial equity initiatives and spread the mission of the company.

Robinson hopes to inspire other students who are thinking about starting their own business with her entrepreneurial efforts.

"There is no better time than now. Stay resilient through it and believe in yourself. And do not get caught up on superficial things," Robinson said. "I think social media makes people think that starting something can be easy and you may get a ton of followers and a ton of sales all at once, but [understand] that things take time. Keep pushing at it. Believe in yourself and believe in your mission."

SCAN TO VIEW
BOUNDLESS BLACKNESS
OR VISIT
BOUNDLESSBLACKNESS.COM



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



Sweatshirt and t-shirt merchandise from Boundless Blackness.

FRANCES O'CONNOR | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

MAKE HEADLINES

**INTERESTED IN JOINING
ELON NEWS NETWORK?
WE'RE HIRING.**

OPEN TEAMS:

- Multimedia Reporting
 - News
 - Lifestyle
 - Sports
 - Opinions
- Photography
- Design
- Broadcast Production
- Copy Editing
- Social Media
- Media Analytics
- Business
- Web
- Public Relations

WHY JOIN:



Elon News Network is an incredible organization that has presented me with endless opportunities to learn and grow. I am constantly inspired by hard-working individuals who push me to step out of my comfort zone and try new things. ENN provides me with resources to further develop my skill set and ultimately, make me more marketable for future employers.

MIRANDA FERRANTE

SOPHOMORE, LIFESTYLE EDITOR



What I love about Elon News Network is the passion that our staff has for the work we do to serve our community.

MACKENZIE WILKES

JUNIOR, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**WATCH ELON LOCAL NEWS LIVE
AT 6:00 PM ON MONDAYS**

**GRAB A COPY OF THE PENDULUM
ON WEDNESDAYS**

EMAIL US:
ENN@ELON.EDU

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2021
VOLUME 50, EDITION 18
ELON, NORTH CAROLINA

THE PENDULUM



Jean Vines packs a takeout order at the Village Grill on Friday, Feb. 5.

GRACE TERRY | MANAGING EDITOR

Through the help of loans and reopenings, small businesses in Burlington have begun to recover from the pandemic

Grace Terry
Managing Editor | @gfterry9

The parallel wooden bars attached to the ceiling above Ityra Robinson’s massage table lay vacant for months. Robinson typically uses the bars to support herself while giving customers Ashiatsu massage — a type of massage in which she uses

her feet. Her business, Grove Park Body Therapies, was deemed non-essential in an executive order signed by North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper in March, meaning it had to close down for 3 1/2 months during the coronavirus pandemic.

The economic disruption small businesses have faced has exposed the fragility of some, according to Peter Bishop, the director of economic development for the city of Burlington.

“Another thing about small businesses is a lot of them don’t keep a ton of cash on hand necessarily to cover expenses or emergencies,” Bishop said.

BY THE NUMBERS

66%

of small businesses in North Carolina have seen decreases in revenue since the start of the pandemic, according to a survey conducted by the North Carolina Department of Commerce in October.

According to a survey conducted by the North Carolina Department of Commerce in October, 66% of small businesses in North Carolina have had decreases in revenue since the start of the pandemic. In Burlington, about 58% of businesses are considered “microenterprises” — businesses that have fewer than five employees — according to Bishop. Robinson’s is one of those.

See **BUSINESSES** | pg. 4

Connecting students to the classroom and beyond

Alamance County officials have sent hotspots, Chromebooks to students, but access to internet goes beyond devices

Mackenzie Wilkes
Executive Director | @macwilkes

Melissa Jobes’ children have had to go to the homes of friends in order to complete their school work remotely. Her family lives in rural Alamance County, an area that lacks internet availability in many places.

Remote and online work has been the reality for teachers and students in Alamance County for the past 11 months. Teachers are sitting in classrooms with rows of empty desks and are greeted by students on a computer screen, but for some kids, accessing the internet isn’t always feasible.

Alamance-Burlington School System has tried to bridge the digital divide — the

gap between those who have internet access and those who don’t — as most schools have been engaging in remote learning.

ABSS has distributed 3,850 hotspots and 17,304 Chromebooks to students. This effort by the school system is to ensure that students who need access to the internet and technology can complete school remotely.

Jobes, the parent of a middle and a high school student, said her family received a hotspot from the school district. She said the hotspot has been helpful, but their internet connectivity issues still persist.

“We did get a hotspot from the school, but where we are, the connection is not great,” Jobes said. “My son is a senior this year and has been an honor student and is kind of struggling because he can’t get into his classes. A lot of the time, it’s really connection issues.”

As of 2019, 22.62% of households in Alamance County have no internet access. 14.92% of households have no

“

MY SON IS A SENIOR THIS YEAR AND HAS BEEN AN HONOR STUDENT AND IS KIND OF STRUGGLING BECAUSE HE CAN’T GET INTO HIS CLASSES. A LOT OF THE TIME, IT’S REALLY CONNECTION ISSUES.

MELISSA JOBES
ALAMANCE COUNTY RESIDENT

computer and 31.38% of households have children, according to the North Carolina Broadband Infrastructure Office.

Connecting students to the internet

Along with the school system’s efforts to connect students to the internet, the county and state have taken steps as well. Alamance County Public Libraries has hotspots available at branches to check out for 28 days at a time as a part of their creating connections program. The public libraries received a \$10,000 grant from the State Library of North Carolina to make hotspots available at branches in Alamance County.

The grant is a part of the Library Services and Technology Act grants that aim to promote digital equity. The SLNC awarded over \$2 million in grant money in 2020.

See **CONNECT** | pg. 5



NEWS • PAGE 3
Performing Arts department addresses white caucus



LIFESTYLE • PAGE 7
Group X changes student exercise experience



SPORTS • PAGE 8
Men’s tennis finds early success in season

THE PENDULUM

A PUBLICATION OF
**ELON NEWS
NETWORK**

Established 1974
Volume 50, Edition 18

Elon News Network is a daily news organization that includes a newspaper, website, broadcasts and podcasts. Letters to the editor are welcome and should be typed, signed and emailed to enn@elon.edu as Word documents. ENN reserves the right to edit obscene and potentially libelous material. Lengthy letters may be trimmed to fit. All submissions become the property of ENN and will not be returned.

MACKENZIE WILKES

Executive Director of Elon News Network

GRACE TERRY

Managing Editor of The Pendulum

JACK NORCROSS

News Director of Elon Local News

ELLIS CHANDLER

Social Media Coordinator

THOMAS DENOME

Chief Copy Editor

AVA GIRARDI

New Member Coordinator

NYAH PHENGSIITHY

Design Chief

CLARE GRANT

Photo Editor

KIERAN UNGEMACH

Politics Editor

MIRANDA FERRANTE

Lifestyle Editor

KYRA O'CONNOR

Enterprise Story Coordinator

BEN MUSE

Analytics Coordinator

ANNEMARIE BONNER

Sports Director

Catie Mannato, Jacob Kisamore, Ted Thomas, Andrew Zagari, Henry Zinn, and Caroline Bunder contributed to the design of this edition. Amelia Arcaro-Burbridge, Max Crider, Madalyn Howard, Mary Jenks, Kyra O'Connor and Sophie Rosenthal contributed to the copy editing of this edition.

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
corrections@elonnewsnetwork.com
to report a correction or a concern.

WHEN WE PUBLISH:

The Pendulum

publishes weekly on Wednesdays

Elon Local News

broadcasts Mondays at 6 p.m.

ELN Morning

broadcasts Thursdays at 10 a.m.

ENN Radio Podcast

publishes Friday at 8 a.m.

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA:

Facebook

Elon News Network

Twitter/Instagram/Snapchat

@elonnewsnetwork

YouTube

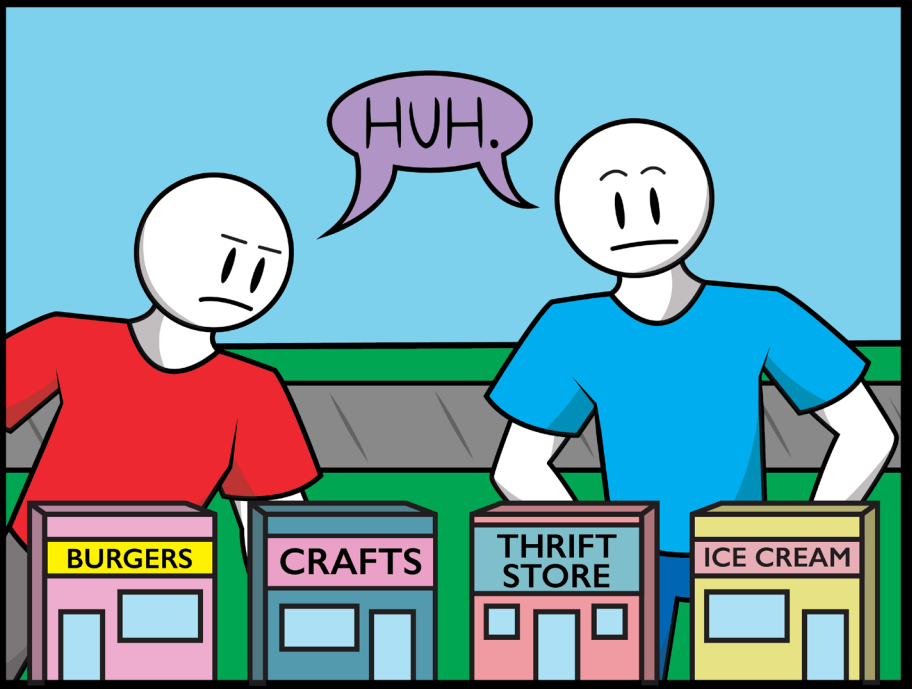
Elon News Network

CORRECTIONS

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

COMIC

SMALL BUSINESSES



COMIC SAMS – SAM POROZOK

**SCAN FOR AN ANSWER KEY TO THE
FEB. 10, 2021 CROSSWORD PUZZLE**

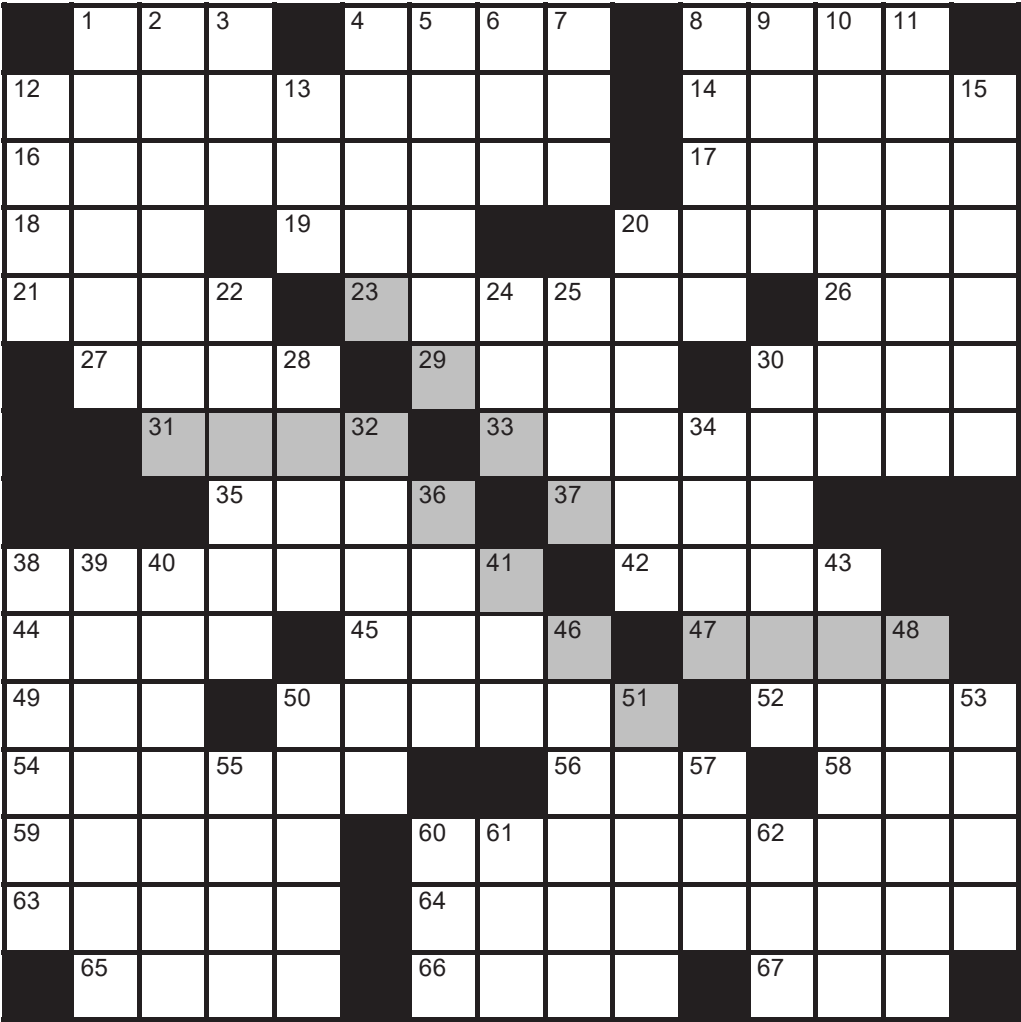


1. Open your phone camera
2. Focus on the QR code
3. Click the pop-up link

CROSSWORD

All That Jazz

By Thomas Denome | @tddenome



Across

1. ___-cha slide ("Everybody clap your hands" song)
4. Prayer word
8. Select (for a play)
12. Come from
14. ___ and unders
16. Miami suburb
17. Crow and shrike relative
18. ¡Una ___!
19. Time div.
20. Gerrymander, perhaps
21. Bias
23. Non-vegan cord
26. ___ Wednesday
27. Kind of dog
29. Like Beethoven
30. Ancient colonnade
31. See 47-across
33. Sewer discharge
35. Branch bit
37. Miss (as a chance)

38. A decade

42. Newts
44. Scent
45. Spot
47. See 31-across
49. Mud, metaphorically
50. French
52. Cut and paste
54. X-Men founding member
56. Embrace
58. "The Matrix" hero
59. Take ___ (travel)
60. Salt and pepper
63. Brouhaha
64. Some narwhal relatives
65. College in Portland, Ore.
66. Spanish liqueur
67. Trip producer

Down

1. Kicks it

2. The man ___

3. What wine does
4. Prank
5. "Raving one" in Greek
6. Fraternity letter
7. Homer's neighbor
8. Desire
9. All fired up
10. Notched
11. Benedict Arnold offense
12. ___ law
13. Commune or social suffix
15. Davis and Coltrane collaboration in the mode of 38-down
20. A chip with ridges
22. Certain boxer, informally
24. Swing site

25. Fishing tackle for large catches
28. First light

30. Largely unseen

32. Makeshift telephone
34. A sail's forward edge
36. Lass
38. Hint to the shaded squares
39. Pump-based tool
40. Circle
41. Feel sick
43. Gloom
46. Type of kebab
48. Ranked
50. Stared stupidly
51. Some metaphorical edges
53. Fling
55. ___-en-scène
57. Slime
60. Jacuzzi
61. Forever
62. Common soccer score

PERFORMING ARTS DEPARTMENT RESTRUCTURES WHITE CAUCUS



Gaspard and Dancers perform in “L’esprit” in McCrary Theater on Sept. 13, 2019.

CLARE GRANT | PHOTO EDITOR

The sessions will no longer be called white caucuses and will offer training to students of all races

Ellis Chandler
Social Media Manager | @ellis_chandler

Elon University’s performing arts department has postponed a white caucus to later this month after students urged department chair Lauren Kearns and other faculty to rethink the event. This follows the cancellation of a similar event hosted by the School of Education.

Caucuses are also known as affinity groups and are opportunities for those who share a common identity to meet separately to gather, connect and learn. They then allow time for people of different ethnicities to gather in a single group and engage in conversation.

Kearns wrote in an email to Elon News Network that the sessions will no longer be called white caucuses and will offer training open to all students.

“We felt it was important to address those questions in a thoughtful manner,” Kearns wrote. “Our initial thought was to provide white-identifying students with anti-racist tools, but we have shifted to discussing anti-racist concepts and actions with all of our students.”

Elon junior and acting major Will Bruno first heard about the caucus in the email performing arts students received earlier this semester and “didn’t think much of it” when he signed up. He said he became and remains apprehensive about it, which is why he and other students in the performing arts department spoke out.

“It was very obvious that hearing of such an event was distressing and traumatizing to a lot of BIPOC students across campus,

which should be an immediate deal-breaking criterion for any kind of anti-racism programming,” Bruno wrote in an email to Elon News Network.

He added that it was fortunate that professors took the students’ reactions seriously and intend on integrating their feedback into the restructured sessions.

“

OUR INITIAL THOUGHT WAS TO PROVIDE WHITE-IDENTIFYING STUDENTS WITH ANTI-RACIST TOOLS, BUT WE HAVE SHIFTED TO DISCUSSING ANTI-RACIST CONCEPTS AND ACTIONS WITH ALL OF OUR STUDENTS.

LAUREN KEARNS
PERFORMING ARTS
DEPARTMENT CHAIR LAUREN
KEARNS

The discussions will be focused on how to actively practice anti-racism in the performing arts and how “white-identifying” community members can combat the idea of white supremacy. The sessions are in partnership with training students have recently begun with external facilitator Melissa Kievman, who specializes in race and theatre.



CLARE GRANT | PHOTO EDITOR

Elon’s School of Education recieved backlash after hosting a white caucus about racial issues, leading the performing arts department to pospone and alter their similar event.

Bruno said as far as he knows, there was no confidentiality agreement for performing arts students to sign, but said having to sign one would be suspect.

Bruno said he thinks caucuses like the ones Elon’s Center for Race, Ethnicity and Diversity Education hosts are crucial spaces for students of various marginalized identities to confer with one another and gain peace of mind and spirit in navigating predominantly white spaces and institutions like Elon.

The events from the School of Education and the performing arts, however, were a misnomer, Bruno said.

“I understand and wholeheartedly agree with the practice of white people not relying upon Black people’s labor or energy in dismantling racist systems of oppression

that we, as white people, created, but it just confounds me that no one in charge of programming thought that maybe the optics of creating a space exclusively for white people to talk about racism would be very poorly received,” Bruno wrote.

Bruno added that the CREDE offers beneficial events and programming opportunities that various departments across campus could have required or encouraged their white students to go to instead creating a whole new space exclusively for white people.

Students received an email saying that performing arts students would have the opportunity to meet as a full department Feb. 19 to discuss exactly how to proceed, but they have not received notice as to what the restructured sessions will look like.

BURLINGTON BUSINESSES BEGIN TO BUILD BACK

BUSINESSES | from cover

“My landlord was amazing,” Robinson said. “He helped me to get through it and stay. [At] one point I wanted to close down upstairs ... because I was like, I couldn’t afford it.”

She kept both rooms and opened her doors again in July. However, she retained fewer than half the customers who originally were booking appointments.

“Before COVID starts, you may have eight clients a day,” Robinson said. “After they let you open back up, you have one or two clients a day.”

Due to the low number of customers, Robinson is still relying on loans to keep the business functioning. One program that Robinson’s business qualified for through the city of Burlington was called the CDBG-CV Burlington Microenterprise Loans. These loans have been offered to qualifying businesses in the city with fewer than five employees.

According to Blake Moyer, who is overseeing the loan program, the City of Burlington received about \$120,000 from the federal CARES Act for this program. The amount given was why the city of Burlington chose to focus on microenterprises rather than small businesses.

“If we had decided to just do a small business, and to define small business ... nationwide small businesses [are] less than 500 employees, we could drain our funds, really quickly,” Moyer said. “So the amount of funds that we had, we wanted to make the most impact per fund.”

Businesses that qualify and are accepted can receive a one-time forgivable loan for up to \$7,000. The program has accept 6 business

Wayne Blunting and Randy Cox — who own Village Grill and Blue Ribbon Diner — relied on Paycheck Protection Program loans from the federal government to get through the pandemic.



Jean Vines packs a takeout order at the Village Grill on Friday, Feb. 5.

GRACE TERRY | MANAGING EDITOR

“We are very fortunate that we applied and got the first PPP loans. We have three locations: two Blue Ribbons — one in Mebane and one is in Burlington — and Village Grill,” Blunting said. “The one in Mebane suffered more than the Blue Ribbon here. That helped us survive, that helped us make Mebane survive through those first initial two or three months that we’ve suffered.”

Overall, Blunting and Cox’s sales for all three restaurants were down 20 to 30%

BY THE NUMBERS

58%

of businesses in Burlington are considered “microenterprises” — businesses that have fewer than five employees — according to Peter Bishop, the director of economic development for the city of Burlington.

\$120,000

is the amount of money the city of Burlington received from the federal CARES Act.

6%

is North Carolina’s unemployment rate as of December 2020, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

““

WE HAVE BEEN WORKING TOWARDS ACCOMMODATING OUR BUSINESS MORE AND MORE. THEN THIS PANDEMIC JUST ACCELERATED EVERYTHING.

RANDY COX
VILLAGE GRILL AND BLUE RIBBON DINER

for 2020. One reason their sales had not fallen further was that they were already working on an app to place food orders at Blue Ribbon Diner.

“We have been working towards accommodating our business more and more,” Cox said. “Then this pandemic just accelerated everything”

However, according to Blunting and Cox, the restaurants only started breaking even when indoor dining was permitted again in May.

Bishop believes economic recovery in Burlington should be better than other parts of the country, but the recovery of individual small businesses will also come down to type of company.

“I think there’s a lot of considerations based on the type of business and the market it’s in,” Bishop said. “Now in Burlington, we’re in a growing state in a growing corridor. So we have been adding individuals, adding jobs at local and regional centers. So we’re very well positioned post-pandemic to continue having folks relocate to this area and continue our own natural growth here.”

The population of Burlington was estimated to have increased 6.9% between 2010 and 2019, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

Alamance County had a 3.2% unemployment rate at the end of 2019, according to the North Carolina Department of Commerce.

“The unapplied unemployment rate went from 3.2%, which some would say is full employment and not a positive. That means there’s no workers available for new jobs that are created,” Bishop said.

A year later, in December 2020, the county was down about 2,300 jobs and the unemployment rate was almost at 5.9%, which, according to Bishop, means there are people to fill vacant positions.

As of December 2020, North Carolina’s unemployment rate is 6.0% and the national unemployment rate is 6.7%, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Neither Robinson and Blunting nor Cox had to let people go during the pandemic. Robinson is the only employee of her business, and Blunting and Cox only cut hours of staffers. Some left on their own.

Bishop thinks small businesses in the area will continue to develop.

“I believe small businesses look at those trends and that data and see that opportunity and they will continue to come and grow Burlington,” Bishop said.



Ityra Robinson stares down at her massage table while holding wooden bars she uses to give Ashiatsu massages on Friday, Feb. 5.

GRACE TERRY | MANAGING EDITOR

In rural Alamance County, students struggle with internet

CONNECT | from cover

Susana Goldman, director of the library system, said her department saw the need for the program before the pandemic, but they were inspired to make hotspots available for checkout once COVID-19 accelerated the need for expanded internet access.

“When COVID happened, all of a sudden the question of how much our community needed, it stopped being a question and started to be blatantly obvious,” Goldman said. “Because all the schools needing remote learning having to basically close schools down last [school year] and then having it continue for so long, the need just sort of grew.”

Goldman hopes to expand the hotspot program and have it funded through the library system’s budget after she saw the success of the program.

As the county and state search for solutions to the digital divide, connecting students to the internet goes beyond that. Mark Samberg, director of technology programs at North Carolina State University’s Friday Institute for Educational Innovation, works at the intersection of information technology and K-12 education.

Samberg said factors such as economics and location affect why people don’t have internet access. Hotspot programs at public libraries and schools are addressing the economic issue of internet connection, but don’t address location.

“Some of those barriers are economic in that internet access is expensive, families can’t afford it. And districts have done a really good job with that, giving out hotspots. That doesn’t do a whole lot of good for another whole group of families who can’t get internet access because of where they live,” Samberg said. “There is no cell service, the cable company won’t give them cable, they might be able to get satellite but satellite internet access is expensive and it’s not that good ... so there [is] a significant number of people in North Carolina [for whom] internet access is just not an option.”

According to Samberg, hotspots won’t

solve the lack of cell or internet service problems. If there is no internet service — whether it be by fiber, satellite or some other service — a hotspot or computer won’t solve the problem. 11.01% of households in the county have access to fiber. .63% have access to digital subscriber line — known as DSL — which provides internet access through phone lines.

“If you were there where there isn’t adequate cell coverage — and so that’s an issue — also ... you can have the hotspots, and you can have the devices and you can give them out but there is going to be still a percentage of people who just can’t get it,” Samberg said. “Right doesn’t matter; like there’s just not anything you can do at their house where they live.”

Jobes, who has satellite internet that she said is “pretty terrible,” had a cellular company install a cellular reception booster. Satellite internet, coupled with the booster and a hotspot, still doesn’t provide the internet speed her family needs, according to Jobes.

“A lot of times we don’t, especially if it’s cloudy or rainy, we just don’t have the connection that we need. And only one of the kids can get on the hotspot at one time and it’s super slow,” Jobes said.

Economic and physical location barriers to internet access are often exacerbated by other factors, such as race and ethnicity, which further disadvantages students. Race and ethnicity widen the “homework gap,” which is the divide between students who have internet access and those who don’t. According to a 2018 Pew Research Center study, 25% of Black teens and 17% of Hispanic teens are unable to complete their homework because they don’t have access to a reliable computer or internet connections.

“MY SON IS A SENIOR THIS YEAR AND HAS BEEN AN HONOR STUDENT AND IS KIND OF STRUGGLING BECAUSE HE CAN’T GET INTO HIS CLASSES. A LOT OF THE TIME, IT’S REALLY CONNECTION ISSUES.”

MELISSA JOBES
ALAMANCE COUNTY RESIDENT

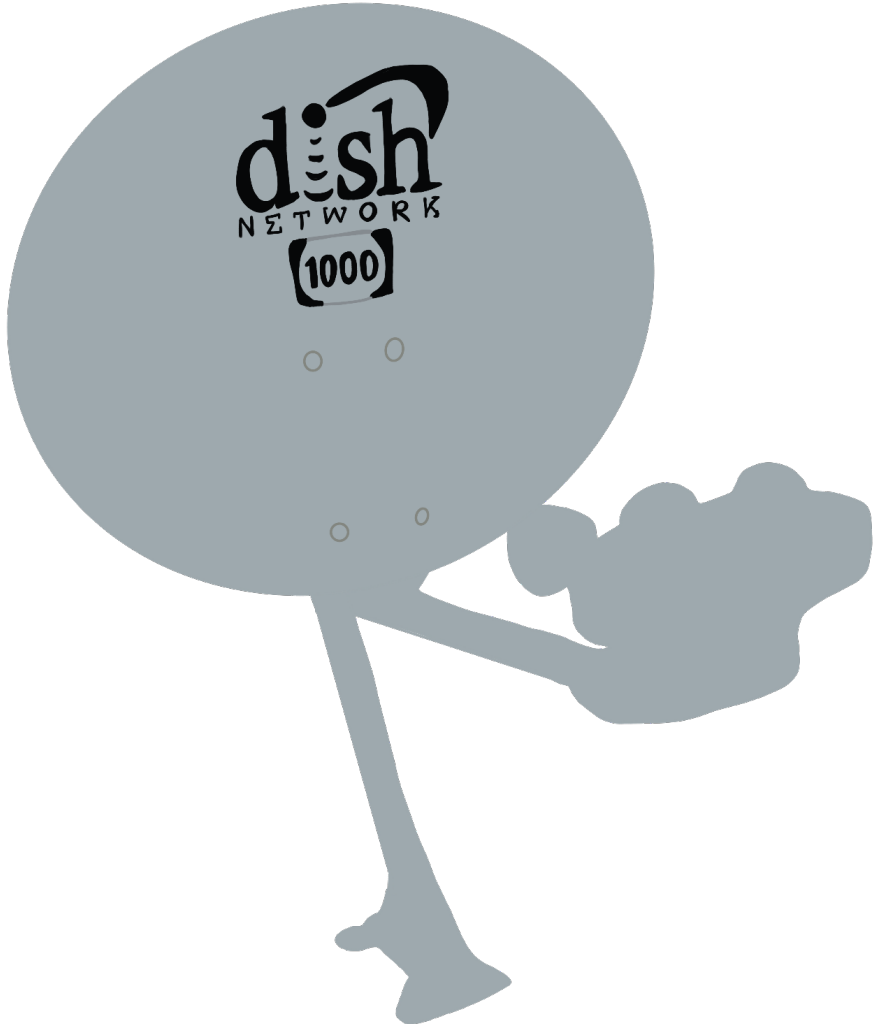
“There just are some barriers, which does tend to disproportionately hit students who are already underserved in the education system, right, so students of color, students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, students with disabilities who are already at a disadvantage,” Samberg said.

ABSS is sending some students who have internet connectivity issues physical worksheets and lessons. The public libraries also has a bus with WiFi that goes around the county to help students connect to the internet to do work. Samberg said solutions like these only address one area of connecting students to the internet.

Long-term efforts to connect rural areas to the internet

The state broadband office is working on long-term solutions to get internet access in rural areas. The Growing Rural Economies with Access to Technology program funds broadband service in rural areas. Grants from the GREAT program give money to private broadband service providers to establish internet access in North Carolina’s Tier 1 and Tier 2 rural census areas, as well as rural parts in Tier 3 areas.

Alamance County is a Tier 2 area, meaning it has a moderate level of



CAROLINE BUNDER | DESIGNER

economic distress, with Tier 1 being the most distressed and Tier 3 being the least. The county is ranked as the 68th most distressed area out of 100 counties by the North Carolina Department of Commerce. Counties 1-40 are all in Tier 1 — the most distressed. Property tax, population growth, median household income and the unemployment rate determine the tier and ranking.

Eighteen counties were awarded GREAT grants in 2020, but Alamance County was not among them. The county, along with 72 other applicants, applied for an application to receive broadband from Spectrum Southeast LLC. Ten broadband service providers were given \$29.8 million, which is expected to connect 15,965 households and 703 businesses to high-speed internet.

The broadband office has given Alamance County’s broadband availability a score of 81.9% in 2019, a 6.1% decrease from the year before. The northern and southern regions of the county have the lowest broadband availability.

Jobes lives in southern Alamance County and said she’s moving out of that region, in part because of the lack of broadband service in the area.

“Just as the way things are going, a lot of things are remote now [and] it’s just not feasible to live in the middle of nowhere and not have any access to technology,” she said.

She said teachers have been understanding of their connectivity issues, but Jobes said her kids need a stable connection to get their work done.

“With the way society is now, everybody needs internet,” Jobes said. “I mean, it used to be a luxury, and now it’s a necessity for school [and] for work.”

Efforts to reopen school continues

While connecting students to the internet is an ongoing process in Alamance County and across the state, efforts to get children back into physical classrooms continue.

In March 2020, ABSS schools went remote at the onset of the pandemic. In the 2020-21 school year, only special education and pre-K classes have returned to in-person learning. For some K-8 students, it’s been almost a year since they’ve been in the classroom. The school board’s current plan has K-8 students going back to class in-person March 1, but this plan has continuously been pushed back since

BY THE NUMBERS

22.62%

of households in Alamance County have no internet access, as of 2019.

14.92%

of households in Alamance County have no computer, as of 2019.

25%

of Black teens are unable to complete their homework because they don’t have access to a reliable computer or internet connections, according to a 2018 Pew Research Center study.

17%

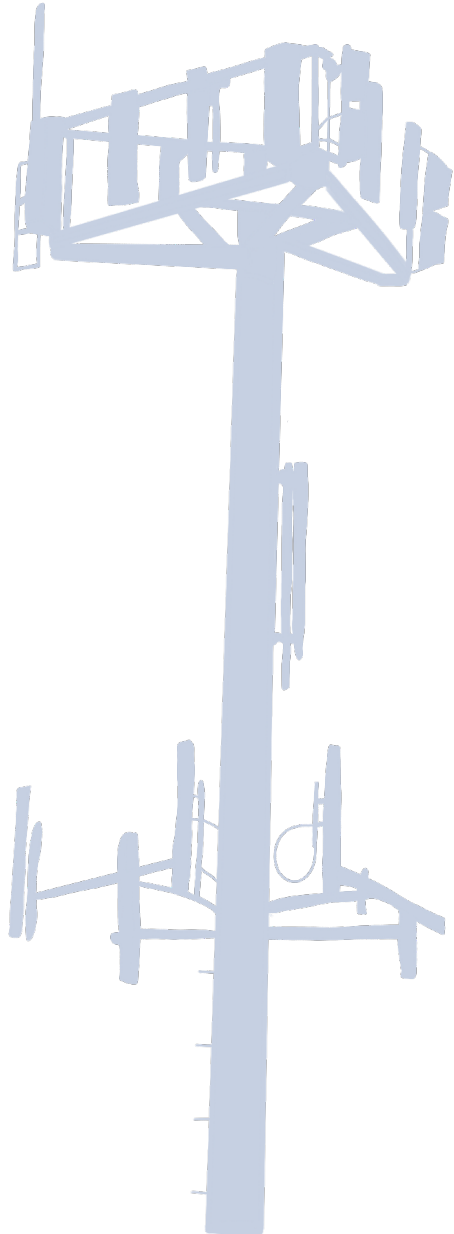
of Hispanic teens are unable to complete their homework because they don’t have access to a reliable computer or internet connections, according to a 2018 Pew Research Center study.

October.

The North Carolina House of Representatives passed a bill mandating that schools across the state return to in-person learning. The bill has not been introduced to the state senate. Alamance County representatives Dennis Riddell (R-64) and Ricky Hurtado (D-63) voted for and against the bill, respectively.

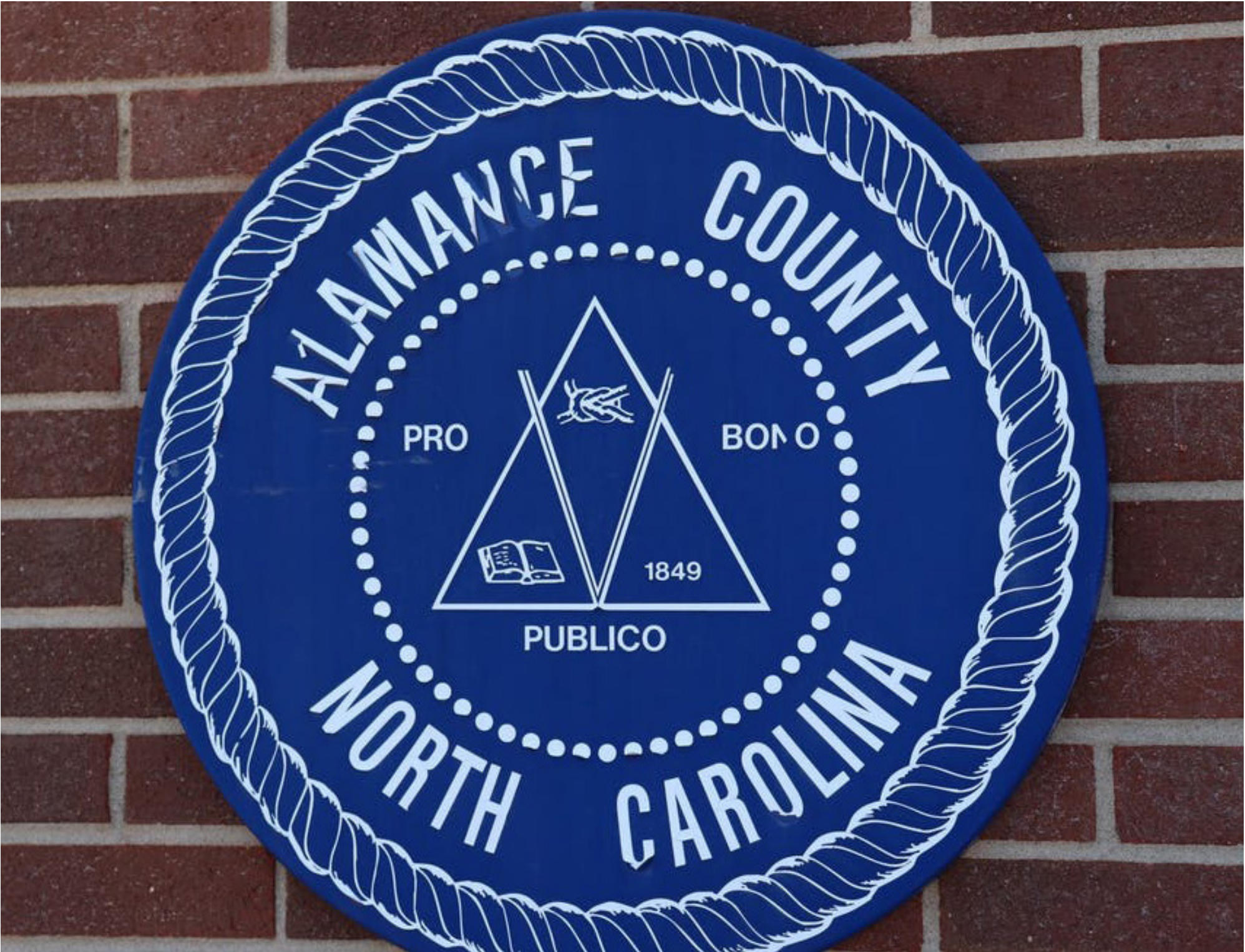
Jobes said she’s hesitant to send her kids back to school in-person. She works as a nurse and said she is already potentially exposing her family to COVID-19 and wouldn’t want her family to be even more at risk for the virus.

“I’m a nurse and I have enough exposure without putting them [at risk] or even bigger exposure hazard. They’re kind of nervous about it as well,” Jobes said. “So again, another reason why we went ahead and decided to go ahead sell our house and maybe try to finish out the year with decent connection and have them be able to function a little better.”



CAROLINE BUNDER | DESIGNER

Alamance County Commissioners increase sheriff funding and discuss county coronavirus cases, vaccination efforts



The seal of Alamance County. At the county board of commissioners' latest meeting, the sheriff's budget was raised and ongoing efforts to distribute coronavirus vaccines were discussed.

KIERAN UNGEMACH | POLITICS EDITOR

At their Feb. 15 meeting, the Alamance County Board of Commissioners discuss increasing funding

Graysen Shirley
Elon News Network

The Alamance County Board of Commissioners passed motions to increase funding for the Alamance County Sheriff's Office and Alamance Community College at their Feb. 15 meeting. The commissioners also discussed the decreasing COVID-19 infection rate in the county and the North Carolina vaccination plan.

Increase to sheriff's office budget

The Alamance County Commissioners passed a motion to increase the jail budget by \$1 million for the renewal of the county's contract with Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The budget amendment is expected to be used to fund the ICE program through the end of June. This is an increase from last year's budget of over \$12.5 million.

Currently, Alamance County has the only 72-hour holding center in North Carolina for immigration detainees.

In a written comment, Alamance County resident Jeffery Clayton told the commissioners that Sheriff Terry Johnson's efforts were helping to continue to enforce the laws of the United States.

"Thank you, Terry Johnson, for continuing to enforce the laws of our country," Clayton wrote. "Keep fighting for American citizens, Terry."

In another written comment, resident Carey Griffin told the board of

commissioners that the sheriff's department budget should not be increased, and the county should end its contract with ICE.

"I love the rich tapestry of folks from all walks of life that call this county home," Griffin wrote. "Yet not all of the people who live here feel safe or welcomed in large part due to sheriff's partnership with ICE."

Alamance Community College requests funding

ACC requested \$335,600 in capital funds from Alamance County to cover the cost of facility renovations for their Emergency Medical Services program. Algie Gatewood, president of ACC, said enrollment in the program has rapidly increased in recent years, and the community college's current facilities do not support the growth of enrollment in the program.

"It's an incredibly important program," Gatewood said. "The facilities we have are insufficient and cannot support the growth that we are achieving."

The Emergency Medical Services program at ACC is currently located in a space smaller than 3,000 feet and was temporarily housed in former computer-integrated machining program labs.

The proposed plan for expansion of the EMS program is to dedicate 6,300 square feet of space to the program and to create simulation labs, including a simulated emergency room where students in the program can practice their skills. The proposed plan seeks to build a control room for observation and critique, along with a simulated ambulance. Construction of new facilities is expected to start in May.

COVID-19 update for Alamance County

Tony Lo Giudice, the health director of

BY THE NUMBERS

\$1M

increase in the jail budget for the renewal of the county's contract with Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

\$12.5M

was last year's sheriff's office budget.

Alamance County, spoke to the board of commissioners about the amount of active coronavirus cases in the county, which has declined since his last update on Feb. 1. Lo Giudice said there were currently 618 active cases compared to 1,276 active cases reported in his update at the Feb. 1 meeting.

Lo Giudice also reported the positivity rate of coronavirus cases in the county had dropped from 14.9% in January to 8% as of Feb. 15.

"The goal here is to get below 5%, and we've seen a very significant drop over the last couple of weeks," Lo Giudice said.

Vaccination efforts in Alamance County
Lo Giudice said the indoor vaccination site at 2401 Eric Lane is being prepared for first dose operations, and the county is working alongside vaccine providers to distribute doses out to the community. Walgreens was recently added to the county's COVID-19 vaccine distribution site list recently with a plan to administer 100 doses a day.

The Alamance County Health Department is partnering with Piedmont Health Services and the General Baptist Convention of North Carolina to host a vaccination clinic on Feb. 20 at the Burlington Athletic Stadium. The event is expected to administer 300 to 500 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine.

Alamance County Board of Commissioners also discussed Gov. Roy Cooper's recent announcement to move vaccination distribution to Group 3, which consists of school, childcare and essential workers over 65 years old. Lo Giudice said the county's decision to shift current vaccination efforts is tentative on demand from Groups 1 and 2 and the amount of vaccine doses allocated to the county.

LIFESTYLE

Elon Group X instructors innovate student exercise experience

How a positive mentality and research influence the people behind Elon’s group exercise classes

Gabriela Rivas-De Leon
Elon News Network | @grivasdeleon

Looking down from her own exercise bike, Senior Liv Mitchell encourages her participants, reminding them of their strength. A group exercise instructor at Elon University since her freshman year, Mitchell is passionate about the community she creates in a workout class. The most normal of days feel special, she said, knowing that her students take the time to come work out. The motivation goes both ways — on a day when she was feeling down, her students were her inspiration. “Everyone was definitely uplifting my spirits and made it a lot easier for me to teach,” Mitchell said. “It was just such a party and we had such a good time. So many girls came up to me at the end and they were like, ‘That was so much fun.’ It just completely changed my day.” The group exercise classes — also known as Group X — are Campus Recreation and Wellness programs and change every semester according to their popularity and students’ instructor preferences, according to Elon senior Emma Scott Singletary, a yoga and pilates instructor. While Group X instructors direct a workout class, they understand the fine line between fostering a safe environment and pushing participants to reach their full potential. Singletary said she often studies YouTube and IGTV workouts to diversify her routines each week. “I would describe planning a workout class

like a bell curve,” Singletary said. “You start slow, work your way up to the peak, and then your peak is your hardest challenge.” Even though she comes to class with a routine prepared, Singletary said she will reassess her plan if the participants have a request for what they want to focus on that day. Some classes are easier than others to lead on the fly. “With practice comes more consistency, and so my yoga classes, like a normal yoga flow class, I just pull that out of thin air,” Singletary said. “That’s because I’m so comfortable teaching.” Mitchell has learned an instructor’s attitude is just as important to creating an engaging class as the ability to teach on the fly. “You can teach how to teach a class, or you can teach technique, but it’s way harder to teach that kind of charisma and spunk,” Mitchell said. The key to keeping her class upbeat, Mitchell said, is her music choices. The majority of her weekly planning is researching new music and making playlists. As a more rhythmic teacher, Mitchell believes it’s important that the beat of the song is sustainable so her participants aren’t at risk of falling behind. If Mitchell herself falls behind, she feels it’s much better to unite the class over a small mistake than try to cover it up. “I really like to show humility when I have made a mistake,” Mitchell said. “Just because I know, as a participant, you know, watching an instructor make a mistake, it’s like, ‘Oh, it’s OK if I mess up too.’” The instructors’ efforts have not gone unnoticed. Last semester, Singletary gained a following, teaching a full class with a waitlist every Wednesday. Singletary said she was able to create lasting relationships with many of her



Elon senior Emma Scott Singletary demonstrates a pilates exercise on a stability chair.

FRANCES O’CONNOR | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

frequent participants. “Those students will come up to me after and be like, ‘What are you teaching next semester?’ or, ‘I loved your playlist, could you text it to me?’” Singletary said. For senior Alex Pirsos, the social element of a Group X class is almost as important to her as the physical element of the workout. With her social life limited because of the pandemic, getting to know other regular attendees and becoming familiar with her favorite instructors provides community. Reaching their goals as a group, she said, is much better than working out alone in her room. Pirsos appreciates how her instructors are engaged and willing to receive feedback. “I just logged on the other day, and they have some HIIT class, and they have some new strengthening classes,” Pirsos said. “It’s nice to see from their perspective that they’re pushing themselves to try out new things as well.”

SCAN TO LEARN ABOUT
EXERCISE CLASSES
OR VISIT
ELON.EDU/U/CAMPUS-REC-
REATION-WELLNESS/FITNESS/
GROUP-EXERCISE/



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

THE ELON BITE

THE ELON BITE IS A COLUMN THAT REVIEWS RESTAURANTS AND FOOD VENDORS IN THE LOCAL AREA

Saigon Vietnamese Grill hits and misses equally



Jack Chambers
Senior

Happy 2021, and welcome back to the Elon Bite. This week, I drove into Burlington craving a sandwich I have not had in a long time — a Banh Mi — and hibachi at Saigon Vietnamese Noodle & Hibachi Grill. The overall experience was pleasant. Good service, good prices and a relatively satisfying meal. To begin, I started with the Banh Mi. If you are unfamiliar with Banh Mi (pronounced Bon-me), it is a blend of French cuisine and traditional Vietnamese food. A traditional French baguette as the bread of the sandwich with a small layer of meat plus Vietnamese pickled vegetables and herbs inside. The combination of French and Asian culture has made the Banh Mi a massively successful culinary export of Vietnam. The restaurant, located at 3409 S Church St., was where I sought out my Banh Mi. It was fine and just that. I ordered a pork Banh Mi and instantly fell in love with the bread. The French loaves were spectacular and lured me into the sandwich, but unfortunately, the pork was dry and tough, and I found the vegetables to be lacking in quantity and the briny punch you want when you bite into something pickled. I would recommend ordering the sandwich with extra vegetables and perhaps with chicken or beef instead of pork. Also, if you have an affinity for spice, these sandwiches pair perfectly with sriracha sauce, and it is always a must-have for me.

JACK’S SCORE

6 of 10

Every week the restaurant reviewed is given a score out of 10

Aside from that, I think it was a pretty OK sandwich that could easily be improved and did not break the bank at \$5. The hibachi tray I ordered with the Banh Mi was actually quite tasty. The chicken was prepared nicely, and the hibachi vegetables were cooked very well; the crisp and snappy texture with a hearty taste played nicely. The rice was neither mushy nor crunchy, a perfect fluffiness that added a lot to the dish. However, my favorite part of the tray was the side of lo mein noodles, which were cooked nicely and tasted better than anything else I ate. They were firm and toothsome, yet tender to bite and the white sauce brought it all together with a sweet finish on top. Overall, I would say Saigon was worth the trip, but it certainly was not the best Vietnamese food I have had. I will say that it is very cost-effective, and you can get a large amount of food for what you pay for, especially with lunch specials. If you see it on South Church Street, stop in at lunchtime, but I cannot say it was my favorite. In the end, six out of ten for me.



JACK CHAMBERS | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Chicken hibachi tray with noodles and vegetables from Saigon Vietnamese Grill.

SPORTS



Junior Nicholas Campbell (left and right) and sophomore Luke Queiroz (center) play against North Carolina A&T on Feb. 6. Elon won the second match 7-0.

JOSEPH NAVIN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

MEN’S TENNIS FINDS SUCCESS EARLY IN SEASON

Elon men’s tennis is serving up wins despite unusual circumstances

Colby Cook

Elon News Network | @Cook_Colby20

After having their season cut short by the coronavirus pandemic last year, the Elon Men’s Tennis team is back on the court with a 4-1 record. Their lone loss was at Liberty University in Lynchburg, Virginia. Last season, the team ended with a 6-7 record.

This season presents challenges for the athletes, such as playing in masks and not being allowed to have as many people in a locker room. Training routines are also more spaced out, and bus spacing is carefully planned to keep players safe.

“Even when we talk as a group, we keep our distance,” senior Kyle Frankel said. “In the locker rooms, for example, only allowed four-at-a-time. We’re taking the right precautions to just stay as safe as we possibly can.”

Frankel is 4-0 in singles play and 4-1 in doubles play. Frankel said the time off presented difficulties for him, but he is starting to find his groove again. “It was tough after not having played matches for eight months or something to all-of-a-sudden [be] playing a season again,” Frankel said before the team’s most recent match against Gardner Webb University on Feb. 13.”

Senior Jacob Bicknell said also starting to play more matches has helped him regain his comfort level. Bicknell is 2-1 in singles play, and 1-0 in doubles play.

“It was tough when we just don’t play any matches for a very long time,” Bicknell said. “Now that we’ve gotten into more matches, we’re getting more match

“

WE’VE BEEN TRAINING REALLY HARD AND JUST LOOKING FORWARD TO EVERY SINGLE MATCH AND TAKING IT AS IT GOES.

KYLE FRANKEL
SENIOR

SCAN TO READ MORE
SPORTS COVERAGE
OR VISIT
[ELONNEWSNETWORK.COM](https://elonnewsnetwork.com)



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



Senior Camilo Ponce returns the ball against North Carolina A&T on Feb. 6.

JOSEPH NAVIN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

experience. I think I’ve improved since it started in the beginning [of the season].”

Bicknell said he wants to improve technical aspects this season, like his serve and his volleys.

Despite this season’s challenges Frankel said the players are grateful for the opportunity to be back on the court and show out for the Phoenix.

“Our whole team is extremely excited about playing the whole season out ... we’re looking forward to that and also having a conference tournament, hopefully,” Frankel said. “We’ve been training really hard and just looking forward to every single match and taking it as it goes.”

Frankel said that he believes Head Coach Michael Leonard is focused on helping the team push through the pandemic and play to their ability.

“Coach just wants us to focus on the next match and just [be] improving day by day. He definitely wants the right attitude, at every single practice [and] at every match,” Frankel said.

According to Frankel, the team has found it vital to maintain a positive work ethic in these times. One of his personal goals for his final season is to maintain a positive attitude and work harder than he has in years past.

“For me, it’s just looking at the next match and then taking them one step at a time, and then just improving so that toward the end of the season I’m playing my best tennis and I’ve improved as much as I could,” Frankel said.”

The next scheduled match for the Phoenix comes Feb. 20 at Campbell University in Buies Creek, North Carolina.