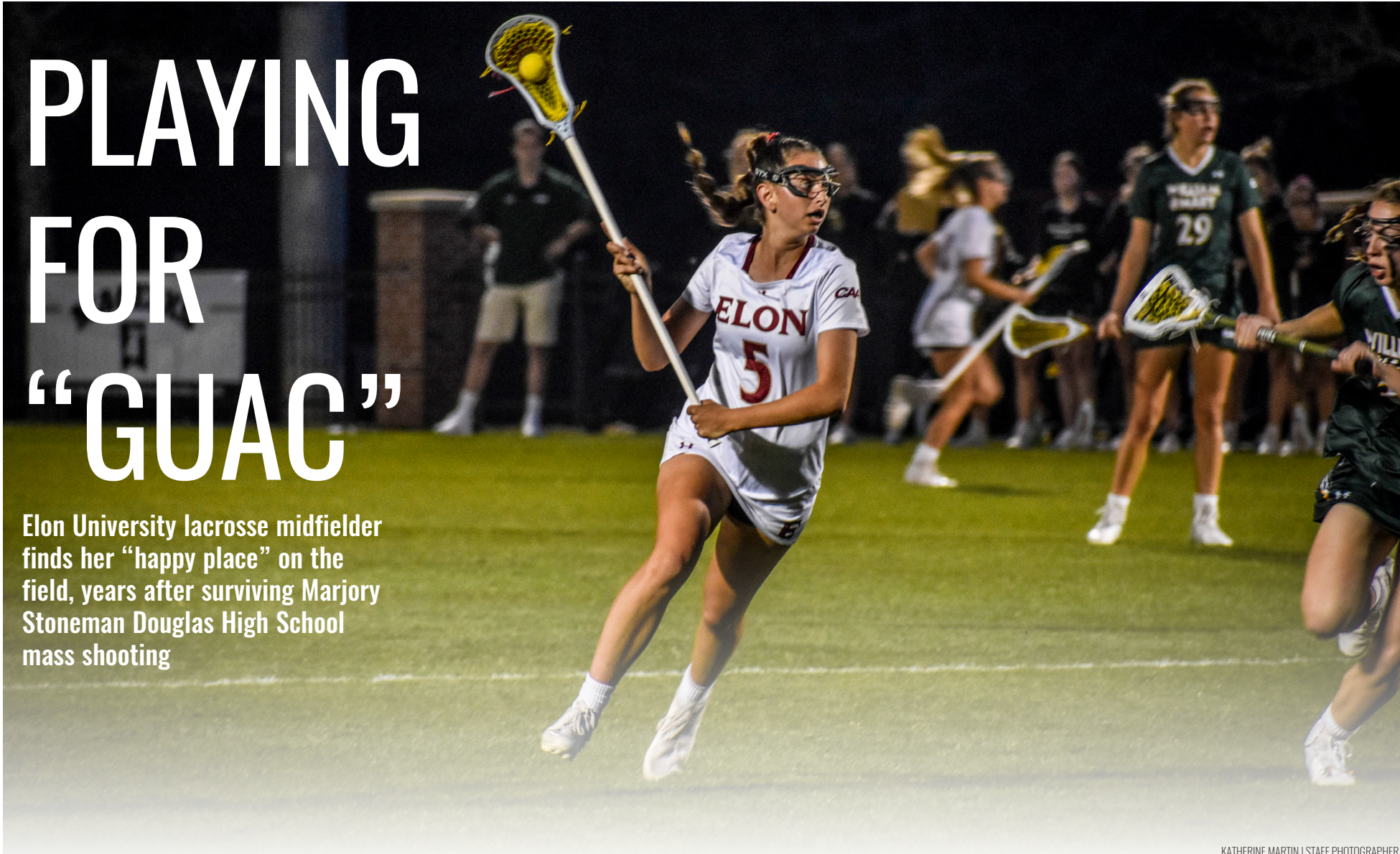


PLAYING  
FOR  
“GUAC”

Elon University lacrosse midfielder finds her “happy place” on the field, years after surviving Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School mass shooting



KATHERINE MARTIN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Family friend of Elon lacrosse midfielder Sammy Fisher, 17-year-old Joaquin “Guac” Oliver, was one of the victims of the mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Feb. 14, 2018. Fisher plays with an avocado sticker on her lacrosse stick as a reminder that “Guac” is always with her.

Mason Willett

Sports Director | @MasonWillett20

*Editor’s Note: This story includes descriptions of personal accounts of the mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Feb. 14, 2018. Discretion is advised.*

A spot on an all-conference rookie team is a major accomplishment for any new collegiate athlete, but the recognition means much more for

Sammy Fisher — a midfielder for Elon University’s lacrosse team and survivor of the mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School.

Last year in her freshman season, Fisher appeared in 15 games, making 13 starts. She was tied for third on the roster with 16 draw controls and totaled 20 points for the season, including 19 goals and one assist. In addition to being named Colonial Athletic Association Rookie of the Week March 7, Fisher made the 2022

CAA All-Rookie Team to finish off a strong freshman season.

“I was definitely proud of myself for being able to accomplish everything I did, being a freshman,” Fisher said. “It’s a whole new atmosphere being on a college team.”

Fisher said in middle school she played all types of sports but quit lacrosse after seventh grade before she got to high school. She began playing lacrosse again after encouragement from her father.

“Honestly, I don’t even know

how he convinced me. But it was just like, ‘You’re fast. You’re good. Just try it again,’” Fisher said.

Fisher began her lacrosse career at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School and was in ninth grade when a gunman opened fire in the school on Feb. 14, 2018, killing 17 and injuring many others.

The gunman pleaded guilty in October 2021 to 17 counts of premeditated murder and 17 counts of attempted murder. On Oct. 13, 2022, a Florida jury

sentenced him to life in prison without the possibility of parole.

Head coach of Elon women’s lacrosse Josh Hexter said he admires Fisher’s strength and composure on the field, despite all she has had to overcome. He said Fisher’s bravery is nothing short of inspirational.

See **FISHER** | pg. 10

Young adults return to classroom to earn GED

Young adults, experts share insights on going back to school later in life

Kyra O’Connor

Executive Director | @ko\_reports

Nicholas Barrett, 22, finished his coursework at Alamance County Community College in the High School Equivalency Program in August. The initiative is for adults to earn their GED diploma through ACCC, where he is one of 859 students enrolled this year.

In a few months, he hopes to enroll in ACCC to pursue his associate’s degree in English, with hopes of becoming a teacher. Both his achievements in HSE and his career aspirations are the result of the last year — and the opportunity to get back to learning.

In May 2023, Barrett will walk across the stage and accept his diploma. But what he is most excited for is getting back in the classroom next August.

“I’m ready to learn,” Barrett said. “I mean, isn’t everybody ready to learn?”

classroom for a number of reasons. From trauma endured in childhood that impacts their ability to learn into adulthood, to hardships and challenges later on in life, dropping out of school and ending the stereotypical path to learning happens across the country, every day.

Students in North Carolina can drop out of high school at age 16, when most students are in 10th grade. In the 2020-21 academic school year, nearly two students in every 100 dropped out of school — a 27.1% increase from 2019-20, according to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. Male students accounted for 63.3% of all dropouts.

For Barrett, dropping out of school was a choice he made not for himself, but for his younger sister Miranda.

Barrett grew up with parents who battled alcohol and drug use, which impacted his and his sister’s childhoods. He decided that to better support Miranda, he would drop out of school and work full-time.



KYRA O’CONNOR | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Nicholas Barrett and his cousin, Hattie Cox, are both students at Alamance Community College pursuing their GED diploma.

BY THE NUMBERS

2 of 100

students dropped out of school in the 2020–2021 academic school year. This is a 27.1% increase.

BY THE NUMBERS

63.3%

of all dropouts were male students.

Leaving the classroom

Students like Barrett leave the

See **GED** | pg. 6



# THE PENDULUM

A PUBLICATION OF  
ELON NEWS  
NETWORK

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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](mailto: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.

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## EDITORIAL POLICY:

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

## CORRECTIONS POLICY:

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

Contact

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to report a correction or a concern.

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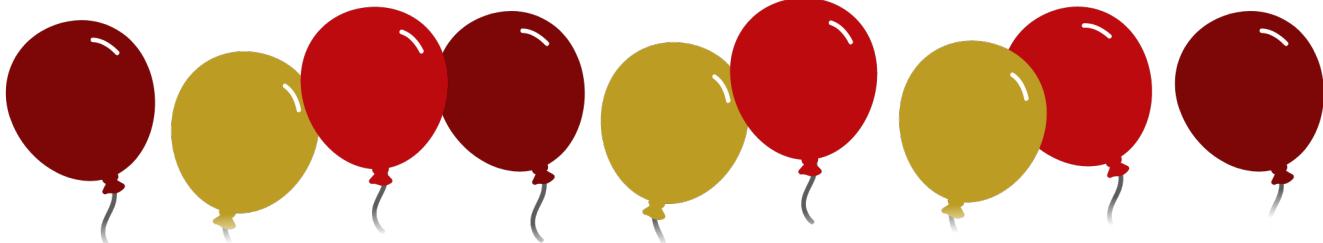
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## CORRECTIONS

In the Oct. 26 edition of The Pendulum, in the story "Years after diagnosis, Elon baseball player overcomes diabetes," the By the Numbers box incorrectly stated the number of Americans with diabetes. 1.45 million Americans live with Type 1 diabetes. Elon News Network regrets this error.



# HOMECOMING SCHEDULE

## WEEKLONG

### VOTING ON THE "E's"

10 a.m. - 5 p.m. | Young Commons  
For more information, see PhoenixCONNECT

### HOMECOMING COURT VOTING

PhoenixCONNECT  
For more information, see page 9

## NOV. 2

### STUDENT UNION BOARD FALL CONCERT

8 p.m. | Schar Center  
Elon University hosts Tai Verdes and Social House for the SUB Fall Concert

### S'MORES WITH OUTDOORS

9:30 p.m. | Koury Athletic Center Patio

## NOV. 3

### HOMECOMING WEEK STUDENT CELEBRATION AND NPHC STROLL

2 to 6 p.m. | Medallion Plaza  
The Elon University Student Union Board will host a live band, caricature artist and photo booth on the plaza.

### SUPER BINGO: HOMECOMING EDITION

10:30 p.m. to midnight | Upstairs Lakeside

## NOV. 4

### ROCK THE BLOCK: ELON HOME COMMUNITY BLOCK PARTY

5 to 9 p.m. | Young Commons  
The annual celebration for Elon University students, faculty, staff and alumni features food trucks, corn hole, live music and fireworks. East Haggard will be closed for the festivities from 3 to 11 p.m.

### SUBCINEMA: BULLET TRAIN

9 p.m. | Turner Theatre  
The movie is free and open to all.

### LATE NIGHT ELON: HOMECOMING GAME NIGHT

10 p.m. | Moseley Student Center  
Elon University SUB is hosting game night, featuring skee ball and a variety of arcade games.

## NOV. 5

### HOMECOMING HIIT CLASS

9 a.m. | Koury Athletic Center West Lawn  
Sign up is available on IMLeagues.

### STUDENT TAILGATING - PHOENIX PHAN ZONE

10 a.m. to 2 p.m. | Bank of America Drive  
There will be tailgating, an airbrush tattoo artist, a DJ and food and drinks available prior to the Homecoming football game.

### HOMECOMING FOOTBALL GAME

2 p.m. | Rhodes Stadium  
There will be tailgating, an airbrush tattoo artist, a DJ and food and drinks available prior to the Homecoming football game.

### HOMECOMING ROYALTY CROWNING

Third Quarter | Rhodes Stadium  
SGA crowning of Homecoming royalty, after the third quarter of the football game at Rhodes Stadium.







LUKE JOHNSON | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Hosted by the Truitt Center and co-sponsored by Elon Maintaining Pan-Asian Respect, Equity and Social Service and the Surtal Bollywood dance team, the Oct. 25 Diwali celebration at Elon University included henna, food and a dance performance by Surtal and sparklers.



SARAH MOORE | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Two teams compete for points in a round of tug-of-war during Greek Week 2022 on Oct. 25 at the Lambert Academic Village.



ELLA PITONYAK | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Senior Skylar Davis kicks off during the Elon University Football game against the University of Delaware at Rhodes Stadium on Oct. 29. Davis became Elon's all-time scoring leader and had an all-time kick of 53 yards during Oct. 29 game.



ELLA PITONYAK | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Elon University's Sigma Kappa chapter lines up during their dance at Elon's Greek Dance event Oct. 27 at Schar Center. This is Elon's first Greek Dance event since the 2018-19 academic year.



JOSEPH NAVIN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Head coach Tony Trisciani and Elon's football team were locked in on Oct. 29 when Delaware came to town. The Phoenix rolled to a 27-7 victory.



# PROTECTING CONFEDERATE MONUMENTS: how statues across the state of North Carolina remain standing

There are 173 Confederate symbols across the state and 42 monuments in front of courthouses, like in Graham

**Kyra O'Connor**  
Executive Director | @ko\_reports

Walking through downtown Graham, citizens and visitors alike are greeted by locally owned businesses and restaurants, colorful murals and the historic Alamance County Courthouse — home to one of 42 Confederate monuments that stand across the state of North Carolina.

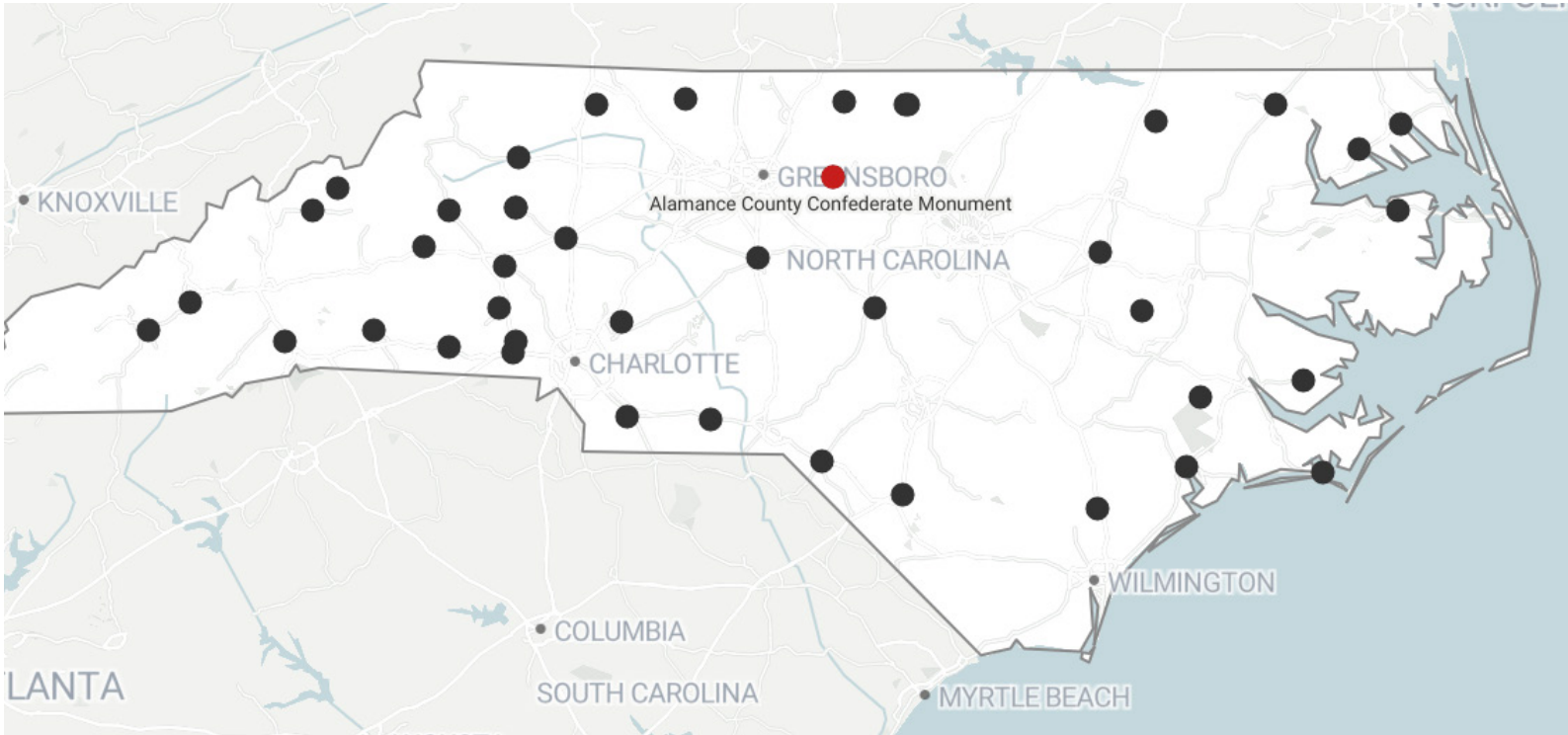
The North Carolina Commission on Racial and Ethnic Disparities tracks monuments across the state, many of which were erected by the United Daughters of the Confederacy in the 1900s. According to the NC CRED data, the Graham Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy sponsored the Alamance County Courthouse Confederate monument, and was dedicated in 1914.

Since it was put in the center of downtown Graham, the monument has been a magnet for protests, marches, demonstrations and conversation, including the March to the Polls event that ended in marchers pepper sprayed and multiple arrests.

For some, the statue may be a relic. But for Kristie Puckett Williams, the monument is a symbol of the racism entrenched in the community it inhabits.

“The ones at the courthouses are especially egregious because courthouses are supposed to be the halls of justice. Justice is supposed to be blind. It’s not supposed to care about race, money or any of those things,” Puckett Williams said. “But when you have a racist Confederate monument right outside of your court, then what does it say to Black and brown defendants about the type and amount of justice that they will receive in that building?”

But despite outcry from communities across the state who have similar statues or symbols, many monuments like the one in Graham still stand — not for the public, but rather because state law allows them to remain.



There are 173 Confederate symbols across the state and 42 monuments in front of courthouses, like in Graham, according to data obtained by the North Carolina Commission on Racial and Ethnic Disparities.

Puckett Williams, who serves as the deputy director for engagement and mobilization and the manager of the statewide campaign for smart justice at the American Civil Liberties Union of North Carolina, said she remembers a time before the monument in Graham had an 8-foot-tall iron fence around it, when it was on 24-hour watch by the Alamance County Sheriff’s Department back in 2020. To her, the monument in Graham represents “the tone and the tenor” of law enforcement in that county.

Thirty five symbols of the Confederacy have been removed from North Carolina, according to data obtained by the Southern Poverty Law Center. But 173 symbols statewide remain. North Carolina is among the states with the most Confederate symbols, with Georgia at the top of the list having 281 symbols of the Confederacy, according to the Southern Poverty Law Center.

The monument in Graham is one of the more forward facing symbols of the Confederacy, but Director of the Southern Poverty Law Center’s Civil Rights Memorial Center in Montgomery, Alabama, Tafeni English said the symbols of the Confederacy come in many forms. From streets named after

Confederate generals to school buildings and pedestals glorifying the history of the Confederacy, the SPLC has documented over 2,000 Confederate memorials that are publicly present around the U.S.

“Confederate symbols are living symbols of white supremacy, because we know that they were actually strategically placed in public spaces across the U.S., basically to intimidate African Americans during the height of the Civil Rights Movement,” English said.

The Daughters of the Confederacy is the nonprofit group that sponsored many of the Confederate symbols tracked by the North Carolina ACLU. The organization’s purpose lies in “the purpose of honoring the memory of its Confederate ancestors,” according to the organization’s objectives.

“Join us in denouncing hate groups and affirming that Confederate memorial statues and monuments are part of our shared American history and should remain in place,” President General Linda Edwards said in a statement on the organization’s website.

But the history Edwards and others are protecting, to English, ignores the history of slavery and the Jim Crow era.

“People were challenging Jim Crow racial segregation, and the history behind Confederate symbols having been used by white supremacist organizations, and they’ve always been used as tools of racial terror,” English said. “Again, that speaks volumes for wanting them to remain in these public spaces.”

However in his role as a staff attorney for justice systems reform at the Southern Coalition for Social Justice, Marcus Pollard said not everyone he talks to makes the connection between white supremacy and the Confederacy.

“When you talk to a person, depending on what history they were taught, shapes how they feel about the Confederacy, how they feel about the statues and how they feel about the flag,” Pollard said. “That’s why those monuments are still allowed to stand, because we cannot decide

on what really happened during that time.”

While Puckett Williams and other organizers have advocated for the removal of the statue as well as others like it across the state, there are many hurdles people must overcome before the actual removal, Puckett Williams said.

In the state of North Carolina, monuments like the one erected in Graham are protected by state law. There are limitations on removal of monuments: “an object of remembrance” is not allowed to be permanently removed from where it stands, unless it is moved to a site of “similar prominence, honor, visibility, availability and access” to where it was previously. However the N.C. general statute chapter 100 states that the new location cannot be a museum, cemetery or mausoleum if the monument was not originally located in any of those places.

“Some states have adopted legislation around making it very difficult for them to be removed, even to the point of charging significant fines if they’re moved or destroyed, or things of that nature,” English said. “Their very existence really reminds us how easily white supremacy can erode democracy and contribute to eroding democracy.”

While these monuments can be temporarily relocated, it must return to its original location within 90 days, according to the statute. To remove, relocate or alter a monument, memorial or work of art owned by the state of North Carolina in any way outside the limitations stated in the statute, there must be approval by the North Carolina Historical Commission.

All three experts compared the legality of Confederate symbols to the illegality of Nazi symbolism in Germany: a stark reminder to Pollard of the varied opinions when it comes to American history.

“It’s against the law to have a Nazi flag. It’s against the law to teach Nazi doctrine, and it’s against the law to speak against the Holocaust and say that the Holocaust was fake or made up — It’s illegal to openly be a Holocaust denier. That’s how serious they

took that event,” Pollard said. “Until our country gets serious about rectifying issues in the South with the Confederacy, we won’t move forward.”

Often, the argument for removal of one of the monuments centers around who owns it, and as such, whose responsibility it is to remove it. For Puckett Williams, this is central to the problem communities face when advocating for the monuments to come down.

“We will never get to who we need to be as a country as long as we are more concerned about marble and granite rocks than we are actual people,” Puckett Williams said.

As manager of the statewide grassroots campaign for smart justice, Puckett Williams said she wakes up every day to continue to advocate for the removal of these statues. While the fight has been long, Puckett Williams said she is not losing hope.

“I can imagine a time when these monuments will not be legal,” Puckett Williams said. “We have to get away from what’s legal and have to get back to what’s ethical, what’s moral, what’s principled. Because legal is often the lowest bar in this country for what’s right or wrong.”

“BUT WHEN YOU HAVE A RACIST CONFEDERATE MONUMENT RIGHT OUTSIDE OF YOUR COURT, THEN WHAT DOES IT SAY TO BLACK AND BROWN DEFENDANTS ABOUT THE TYPE AND AMOUNT OF JUSTICE THAT THEY WILL RECEIVE IN THAT BUILDING?”

**KRISTIE PUCKETT WILLIAMS**  
ACLU NC DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR ENGAGEMENT AND MOBILIZATION



The Alamance County Confederate monument sits in front of Graham’s historic courthouse.



# Innovation Quad continues to impress 2 months in

Engineering majors, nonmajors alike utilize new space

Anjolina Fantaroni  
Elon News Network | @ElonNewsNetwork

Located beside the McMichael Science Center, the Innovation Quad opened its doors in August as a hub for both studying and bringing new engineering resources to Elon. Within its facilities, the building contains Founders Hall, Hunt Atrium, the Advanced Prototype Lab and many other classrooms and study spaces where students can collaborate effectively.

Sophomore Jack Lanzillo, an engineering major, said he visits the Innovation Quad frequently to study with peers and attend classes.

“It’s nice for us to have our own space where a lot of my classmates and I gather together to do homework, or study,” Lanzillo said. “A lot of our teachers have their offices right in here, so it’s really helpful if we have questions for them.”

Lanzillo said it’s been easier to study and work on engineering projects this year rather than last, as this newer space is an upgrade from the former engineering setup in McMichael — where it felt crowded as a double space for science and engineering.

John Ring, the director of engineering outreach at Elon, has both his office and his Elon 1010 class for engineering scholars in the Innovation Quad. He said the environment provides a great collaboration space between students and allows the engineering classrooms features such as electrical drops and moveable tables.

“With all of that, I think it provides the best and most conducive atmosphere for learning. When you walk into a nice building, it’ll do something to your mindset,” Ring said. “When you come in here and see these great technical facilities, I think it automatically elevates your sense of what you want to accomplish.”

Ring also touched upon the objectives of the Innovation Quad, one of which was to accompany the launch of the Department of Engineering — a milestone of the Boldly Elon strategic plan. According to past Elon News



Hunt Atrium and its prominent social stair are located inside of the newly constructed Founders Hall.

ERIN MARTIN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Network coverage, the university enrolled 48 engineering freshmen this year — Elon’s biggest incoming engineering class yet.

“The first intention was to bring engineering to Elon, and knowing that if you’re committed to having an engineering degree at Elon, you need the facilities to support it,” Ring said.

Ring said that Elon’s expansion of the engineering program has made it so students can have a bigger space to stretch their ideas and work harder to achieve shared goals.

Freshman Aadi Tripathi, majoring in entrepreneurship, has his physics class in the Innovation Quad and said the classrooms are interesting and something he’s never seen before.

“I like how the classrooms are different; I don’t know if I like it better, but I like how

the Innovation Quad has a lot of seating areas that are comfortable,” Tripathi said. “The classrooms are more like chemistry laboratories, but overall I like it.”

The laboratories are filled with prototypes, tools and technology such as virtual reality, and are available for students within the classroom.

Freshman Annika Lotsch, a psychology major, said she uses the Innovation Quad for its study rooms.

“I love the Innovation Quad because there are study rooms where you can sit there alone or with friends, close the door and just study in peace,” Lotsch said. “My go-to study spot is one of the rooms upstairs that has a window that overlooks campus.”

Lotsch said that it’s generally peaceful and quiet in the building, and she thinks it’s

because not a lot of students have discovered the space yet. Still, the Innovation Quad hosts many students every day — engineering majors and otherwise — either to study, work on projects or take part in classes.

Elon junior Demya Culp, an arts administration and drama theater studies double major, has been in the Innovation Quad once for a project with her management class.

“We had to go to the Innovation Quad to see the different environments and how it felt inside. As I stepped inside, it felt very structured, cozy and a very welcoming space for an engineering-based area,” Culp said. “There seems to be faculty that are very inspired there, and are willing to help you so you better understand what you’re doing.”

# University requests rezoning permit for research farm

Elon’s resident architect made the proposal to Burlington’s Planning and Zoning Commission Oct. 24

Abigail Hobbs  
Elon News Network | @abigailhobbs

Brad Moore, Elon University architect and Elon’s director of planning, design and construction management, proposed a rezoning request for 19.6 acres within the city limits of Burlington to the Planning and Zoning Commission — which unanimously voted to recommend the request to city council — at a meeting on Oct. 24.

Moore told the commission that the area would be used for a research farm, which may eventually include student residential buildings and a research building for local children to learn about sustainable farming.

According to the commission’s staff adviser Conrad Olmedo, the commission considers the future land use map in the city’s comprehensive plan, Destination Burlington, developed in 2015. Olmedo said this map is a reminder of what is compatible with the city looking forward.

“It tells us what future land uses we want to have here in the city,” Olmedo said. “It kind of helps inform the Planning and

Zoning Commission. ... Is that proposed zoning compatible or incompatible as it was with the community with the surrounding land uses in the area? Or is it in alignment with the future vision of the city’s growth with that land use plan?”

Elon Town Manager Rich Roedner said that possibly sharing the university’s tax exemptions with the city of Burlington does not bother him.

“That is an aspect that moving something into Burlington rather than Elon helps us from a taxation standpoint, in that that’s a facility that won’t be in Elon, not paying property taxes, if you get my drift,” Roedner said. “Sharing the tax exempt portion of the university with other communities — I don’t have a problem with that either.”

Roedner said the situation is not unique, as Elon Law is situated in Greensboro.

“I think it’s good to see the university financially healthy that they’re continuing to look at options for new facilities and expansions,” Roedner said. “I think that serves the area well.”

The area, 2635 W. Front St., is currently zoned for office institutional and light industrial and medium density residential development.

According to Olmedo, rather than a conventional rezoning, this is classified as limited use — which means because the request is through Elon University, it does not require a master plan.



The rezoning request for 2635 W. Front St. is within Burlington city limits.

CAROLINE MITCHELL | DESIGN CHIEF

“It helps the commission, helps the council, helps our citizens be more comfortable with the rezoning request without having to develop a full scale site plan that shows all these details on the property,” Olmedo said. “This limited use rezoning basically

allows the university to say, ‘Hey, we don’t really have a site plan that we’re ready to commit to. ... We just want to make sure that the use is going to be allowed here.’”

Olmedo said the commission did disapprove when Moore said

there is a possibility for livestock on the farm, due to the ordinance against chickens and other fowl kept in Burlington city limits.

The request will be brought before the city council in a work session Nov. 14, where it will then be scheduled for a public hearing.



# Students get back to learning

GED | from cover

“She’s the most important thing in my entire life, she always will be,” Barrett said. “Her successes are my successes. That’s really something that keeps me going in life.”

Antonio Purefoy, a student at ACC studying to earn his GED diploma, dropped out of high school as well, following his mother’s death in 2018. His attendance began to suffer, his grades fell and he lost his passion for sports, specifically basketball.

“Like a lot of people, my family encourages education. So, leaving high school, it left a little bit of a disappointment in my parents,” Purefoy said. “But when most people would just be done with it right then and there, I still wanted to pursue higher education and further my career. So, I decided to get my GED.”

Purefoy is one of an increasing number of younger students taking HSE courses. Instructor Baron Torres said ACC is already starting to see an influx of younger students, which he believes will only increase in the coming months.

“There’s going to be a lot more coming in just because of that hybrid and because of that fully online portion of the GED program, just because a lot of younger students, they have part-time jobs or maybe they’re working full time or they’re starting new families,” Torres said. “That’s definitely going to be a factor.”

## Deciding to try again

Purefoy said he was resistant to the idea of taking HSE courses at first.

“From what I had heard about it at first, a lot of people said taking the GED was pretty much taking the easy way out,” Purefoy said. “I didn’t want it to seem like I wanted to take a shortcut through life.”

Purefoy’s initial thoughts on the GED diploma preparation courses are not unusual — Aimee Gordon, HSE and Adult Basic Education program Coordinator at ACC, said she often runs into misconceptions about adult learning in her role.

“

I NEVER WANT PEOPLE TO COME IN AND FEEL LIKE THEY WASTED THEIR THREE HOURS IN CLASS.

**BENNETT YANCEY**  
ACC INSTRUCTOR

“A lot of people just kind of immediately connect that to lazy, or they just didn’t do what they were supposed to do kind of the first time around,” Gordon said. “When you hear these people’s stories and you hear the things that they encountered and the things that they have now overcome, these are some of the hardest working, most wonderful people who are really committed to bettering their lives.”

While Barrett said he was originally nervous to start classes, he decided to go back to school after seeing his cousin, Hattie Cox, try HSE classes. When he joined the class at the CityGate Dream Center — a community center in downtown Burlington — he sat right behind Cox and the pair supported one another throughout the classes.

“It kind of opened up a different life for me, essentially,” Barrett said.

## Preparing for testing

On Barrett’s first day of class last year, he said he remembers quickly realizing that he never learned how to divide — the lesson the class was learning the day he walked in.



KYRA O’CONNOR | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Alamance Community College hosts the Alamance County Mobile Library, pictured above — a favorite of many classes at the Dillingham Center campus in Burlington.

“When you start at a normal class, you don’t go back to what you think you’d be learning,” Barrett said. “I was very lucky because I turned to a girl in class, and I was like, ‘I don’t know how to divide,’ and she, no hesitation or anything, she got right up, [dragged] her chair over to me, and she stepped up and retaught me how to divide.”

In HSE classes, the curriculum is geared toward the end goal of taking the four subject tests. The GED diploma is the certificate one can earn based on the tests and is open to people 18 years of age or older.

Instructor at ACC Bennett Yancey said when he plans his lessons, he is intentional with the material he presents, as he knows that each and every student in his classroom took the time to be in class.

“They’re working, have families and stuff, so their time ... is very valuable,” Yancey said. “I never want people to come in and feel like they wasted their three hours in class.”

Especially in today’s job market, Yancey said he understands the pressure students are under to obtain their GED diploma.

“Years ago, you could go a while without having a GED, but now you basically have to have that,” Yancey said.

## Graduation

Barrett said he remembers the day he found out he passed his first test. While others in his class got their results just a few minutes after they finished, Barrett’s result took over an hour to come in.

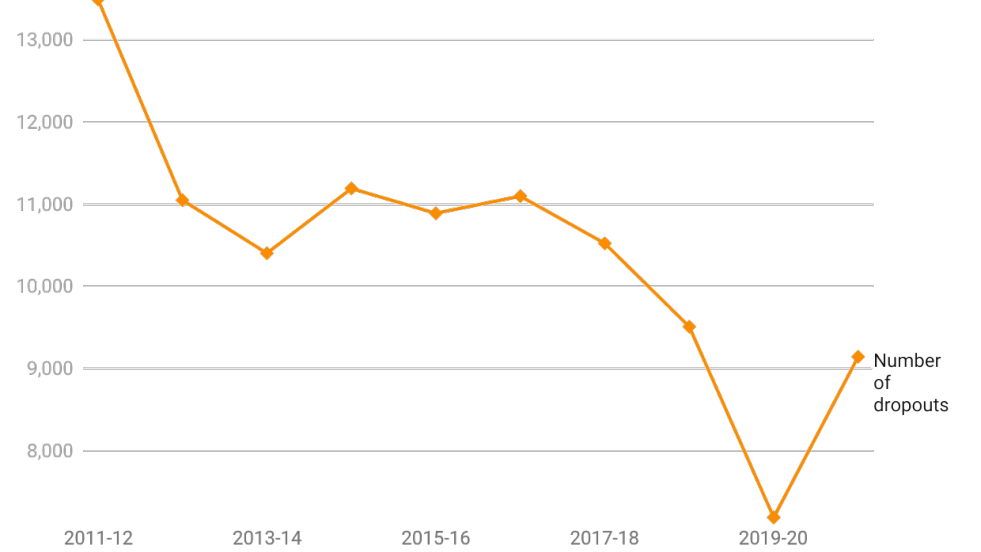
“I finally got my test results back and found out that I passed, and I was completely mind blown. Completely mind blown,” Barrett said. “I was just like, are we sure this is my test? Like, did I do this?”

After his first success, Barrett began taking tests every few weeks and finished the program Aug. 11, just ten months after starting in 2021. Now, Barrett and Cox hope to graduate together in May, walking across the stage to receive their diplomas just a few names apart.

Even as he thinks ahead to the next steps, Barrett said he is still thankful for the people in his life who pushed him to pursue his GED, and the opportunity to pursue it at ACC, something he hopes anyone wanting to go back to school considers doing.

“People kind of put it off for so long. I feel like everybody gets this general idea that they want to go back to school, but then when it comes down to it, they make excuses,” Barrett said. “If you can stop psyching yourself out of it and just jump right into it, you won’t regret it.”

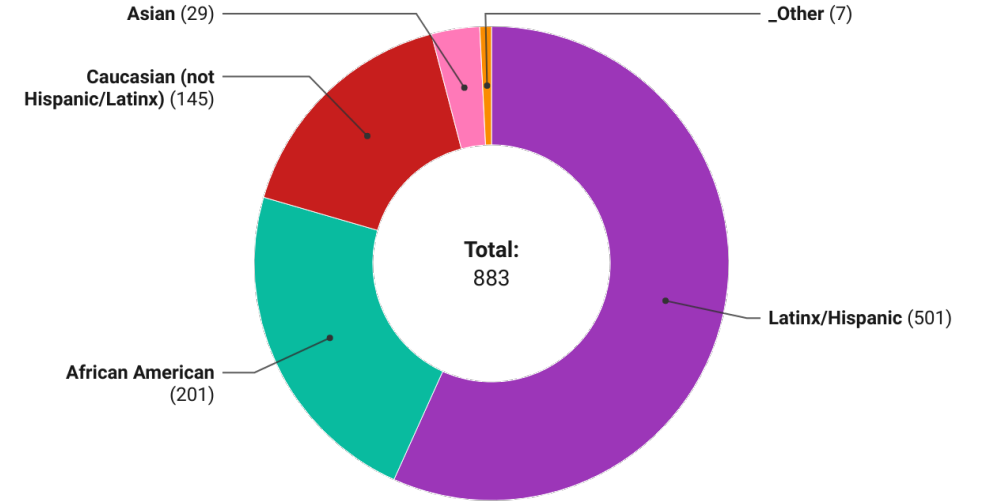
## NUMBER OF NORTH CAROLINIANS WHO DROPPED OUT OF HIGH SCHOOL, 2011 TO 2021



KYRA O’CONNOR | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

North Carolina recorded 9,147 dropouts in high school for the 2020-21 school year, which is a 27.1% increase from 2019-20. Data collected from North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.

## RACE AND ETHNICITY DEMOGRAPHICS, 2022



KYRA O’CONNOR | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The number of students in ABE/HSE classes at Alamance Community College as of Sept. 28. Data provided by Aimee Gordon, ACC’s HSE and ABE program coordinator.

## AGE DEMOGRAPHICS FOR HSE AND ABE COURSES AT ACC

Age	Number of students
18-65	852
16-17	17
Over 65	14

KYRA O’CONNOR | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The number of students by age in the High School Equivalency and Adult Basic Education programs at Alamance Community College as of Sept. 28. Data provided by Aimee Gordon, ACC’s HSE and ABE program coordinator.



# Behind the badge: A look into Burlington Police Department’s role in reform, officer training

Department creates measures to evaluate training procedures, community engagement

**Annemarie Bonner**  
Elon News Network | @ABonnerNews

Lt. Shelly Katkowski puts on her police uniform, straps a gun to her waist and heads to the Burlington Police Department. But when she takes off the widely recognizable outfit each day, she keeps her occupation close to her chest.

“It’s really hard when you go to work and you work really hard and then you go out and somebody shuts the door on your face and calls you something really ugly,” Katkowski said. “You just wish that they could see you as the person that you are, but they see the uniform.”

When she’s in the city limits, she feels safe — proud of her role as a police officer. She’s married to a fellow officer, but said when she goes beyond the city limits with her husband and daughter, she worries about disclosing that she works in law enforcement.

“It’s sad that we say we work in local government and we don’t say we’re police officers because we don’t know what that person’s going to say,” Katkowski said.

After playing basketball in college at Bucknell University and serving as a women’s basketball coach locally at Elon University, Katkowski began working with the Burlington Police Department 14 years ago. Now, instead of training athletes, she trains cops in a time where she said instruction is especially important.

The department has its own training facility, located in Haw River, where officers do simulations of what they would do while patrolling the community. Every other Friday, half of the patrol team trains for 10 hours.

Some of those training scenarios include high-risk traffic stops, crisis intervention and mental health first aid. When people sign up to become a police officer, Katkowski mentors them

in the academy from when they start to when they graduate.

However, she said training can only do so much for officers who are mentally exhausted in their career. She said in her experience, what the crimes officers see on a daily basis, including trauma, loss of life and domestic violence, can greatly affect their mental state.

The police department created a Community Police Advisory Team in 2020, which is a platform to allow community members to have direct connections to making change. Dejuana Bigelow is in charge of the team and grew up in Burlington. She said when she was younger, her view of law enforcement was negative because of how people of color were treated. Now, she said there is a better connection between the police and the community.

“There was definitely a disconnection in my neighborhood, in our community when it came to police officers and policing in our neighborhood,” Bigelow said. “It was definitely not the way that it is now. It was no one just coming around to see the residents and meet them before, it was no proactive measures. Everything was always bad.”

George Hill is also a member of the advisory team, having lived in Burlington for more than 30 years, and said short-staffing of police officers in Burlington directly affects community relationships. Even though he is working with the police department on reform, Hill said there is more to be done to improve the relationship.

“Our biggest problem is manpower. Until we can get policemen back in the community to get to know the people, and people get to trust them, you have to stay and talk to them,” Hill said.

For Bigelow, she said the biggest problems facing Burlington are juvenile crime and lack of civic engagement. Yet, one challenge they both agree on is representation in the department.

“Even though 23 to 93 sounds very short, it’s more than we’ve ever had, so I’m definitely proud of that. I’m definitely proud of the fact that they have stuck to their word and they have really worked hard to increase diversity



Lt. Shelly Katkowski pats an officer in training on the back during training at Burlington Law Enforcement Training facility on Sept 23.

within the Burlington Police Department,” Bigelow said.

According to the Burlington Police Department, there are 24 female officers, compared to 101 male officers. There are no Hispanic female officers while six male officers identify as Hispanic.

Hill said if the department hires enough officers, it can continue to work on community relationships. He said people don’t trust the police because of lack of visibility on some occasions, but sometimes they don’t act to change that.

“Citizens do not trust the police. I think it’s a myth with them because they don’t get out. They do not attend meetings. When they attend, it’s a gripe session. They’re always griping about something, it’s not like, ‘OK, let’s listen,’” Hill said. “They want immediate gratification.”

Bigelow agreed with Hill, but noted that having 23 Black officers in the department is still progress. She also said there is still a level of mistrust between her and law enforcement, but is actively working to build trust and change her community’s perspective. Her solution is funding for more programs to decrease juvenile crime and build

community engagement with law enforcement.

“I have to be involved in hopes that our children, my children, your children, the people that live here in Burlington, especially those of color, so that they’ll one day have a fighting chance,” Katkowski said. “They’ll one day be able to pick the phone up and feel very comfortable, just as my white friends who feel comfortable calling the police. We deserve that same security.”

Katkowski said she feels that residents need to take into account more than just one experience they had with a police officer. To help combat this issue, she said she trains her officers on various scenarios, including use of force.

“What we learned was that we need to step up, like duty to intervene. You got to say something, you got to save each other,” Katkowski said. “As hard as it can be telling a sergeant, ‘Hey, get up off them’ or, ‘Hey, back off,’ whatever that is, we’ve gotta train our officers to be able to do that.”

Use of force has been a major area of concern since 2020, when George Floyd, an unarmed Black man, was killed by a police officer in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Hill, a Black man, said this affected the Black community’s relationship with the police greatly.

“It seemed like they always got off and seemed like to me, once body cameras got involved and citizens got involved taking photos and letting people see what was going on, it brought a change, some change,” Hill said. “I’m not saying we are there yet, but it brought some change.”

According to the FBI, 60% of police departments throughout the country reported instances of use of force to the FBI in 2021. Only 36 out of 580 agencies in the state of North Carolina reported such data so far this year, including Burlington.

Burlington Police Department has addressed its use of force policy in their 8 Can’t Wait Memo, released in 2020. The policy reads:

“Officers shall not apply direct pressure to the throat, windpipe or airway of a person with the intent to reduce or prevent the intake of air (chokehold), unless deadly force is justified.”

If use of force is warranted, the officer has to be able to justify it and report it to the department. In 2021, there were eight instances of excessive use of force at the Burlington Police Department.

Katkowski said when evaluating how police departments warrant force, it goes beyond examining individual police departments. She said it extends to the criminal justice system as a whole, but because police departments are on the front lines, as they are labeled.

Bigelow said her goal through working on reform is for communities to know that there is a safe place to voice concerns and make changes in Burlington.

“Even though I’m a woman of color, I support the police. We need the police. I can’t imagine not being able to call the police, but we do want fair police the same way you want to have a hospital that’s willing to serve everybody,” Bigelow said. “You want a police department that is willing and open to serve everybody.”

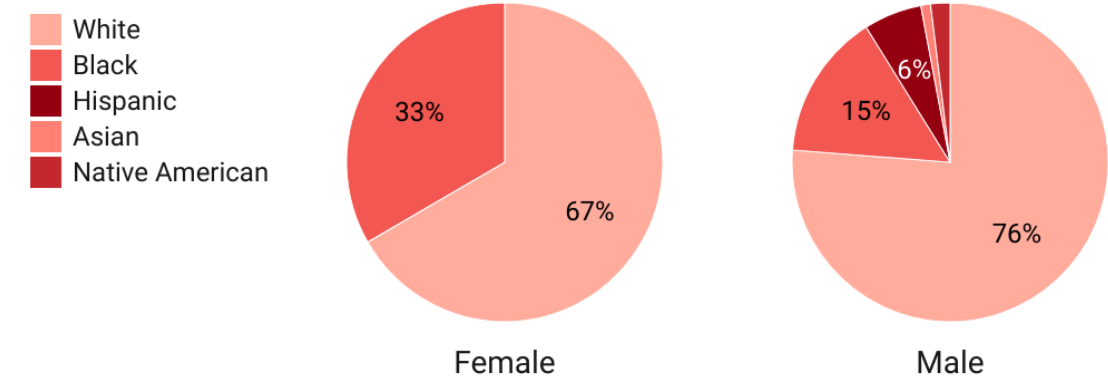
As for Hill, he agreed that there is still work to be done to get community members to trust the police department, including encouraging community members to express problems and solutions to police officers directly, including neighborhood visits.

Katkowski said while there is still work to be done, she is happy with where they stand now to improve trust and relationships with the community.

“At Burlington, one of the things that we have been so successful about is we have been doing things so proactively,” Katkowski said. “We’re so progressive that we had things in place, and training in place and policies and procedures in place, and have built relationships — strong relationships with people in the community,” Katkowski said.

## Demographics of Burlington Police Department Officers

As of September 28th, 2022, there were 125 sworn police officers. There are 24 female officers compared to 101 male officers.



Source: Burlington Police Department • Created with Datawrapper



# LIFESTYLE

## Elon University’s fall musical celebrates identity, community

Two more performances for “Head Over Heels” will be held Nov. 3, 4

**Sarah Moore**  
Elon News Network

When Elon University sophomore Collin Flanagan learned the 2022 Fall Musical was James Magruder’s “Head Over Heels,” he knew he needed to be a part of it.

Flanagan had participated in a local production of “Head Over Heels” when he was in high school, but the show was disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

“This is very full circle for me ... to do this show,” Flanagan said. “It’s such a big emotional connection to me.”

Flanagan became the assistant choreographer for the show, alongside sophomore Ella Huestis. The two worked with professor of performing arts Alexandra Warren to choreograph the show.

“This is my first official show that I have choreographed,” Flanagan said. “It was so much fun to actually get into it and spend hours in the studio working with Ella and choreographing the show and just sharing my art with a dance ensemble that cares so much about the show and is so passionate about it.”

“Head Over Heels” is a The Go-Go’s jukebox musical based on “Arcadia” by Sir Philip Sydney, which creates a contrast between its Elizabethan era, Shakespeare-style dialogue and rock music score. The musical features several hit songs from The Go-Go’s discography, including “We Got the Beat,” “Our Lips are Sealed” and “Heaven is a Place on Earth.” The show follows the kingdom of Arcadia and its people as they attempt to avoid fulfilling an oracle’s daunting prophecy.

“Head Over Heels” is also the opening song of the show’s second act.

“It was the first song that Ella and I ever choreographed,” Flanagan said. “Seeing that come to life in the beginning of act two is really, really emotional for both Ella and I.”

Junior Jaid Green is a member of the show’s dance ensemble and praised Warren’s, Flanagan’s and Huestis’ work.

“It’s the fiercest, kick your face, pirouettes to no end, jazz dance choreography, and it’s just so much fun to just challenge myself to do that ... and to get to show that off,” Green said.

Green had heard of the show before learning about auditions but was not very familiar with it. Since rehearsals started in August, she said she has grown a deep connection to the show and what it stands for.

“There’s a lot of queer characters, and I identify as queer, so seeing that representation on stage is really, really nice and to be a part of that representation,” Green said. “I feel very proud to be doing that and to be part of a show that is so diverse in gender, sexuality and all that.”

Going into opening night on Oct. 28, Green said she was excited to perform the show in front of an audience for the first time.

“I’m looking forward to hearing what will get laughs,” Green said. “I’m really excited to see how an audience will affect the cadence of the show, ... how it affects the cast’s entire energy and how we push through and have fun.”

As a member of the dance ensemble, Green transitions through several characters during the show.

“I go from being an Arcadian citizen and then I go to being a snake and then I’m an owl and then I’m a mermaid,” Green said. “I just get to have a whole bunch of different fun, spunky characters throughout the whole thing.”

Senior Jackie Mate plays the role of Philoclea, the youngest princess of Arcadia. Mate interacts with each of the performers throughout her



Junior Jaid Green and senior Jackie Mate backstage after opening night of “Head Over Heels.”

SARAH MOORE | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

time on stage, but she said she also connected with all of the cast members during the rehearsal process.

“They’re all incredible,” Mate said. “Working with them through this crazy process for six to seven weeks has been a privilege, and I am so — no words — over the moon happy.”

As a senior, “Head Over Heels” marks Mate’s last Fall production for Elon.

“I couldn’t ask for a better way to go out. This cast and crew are the most hardworking, resilient, fierce group of people you could ever come across,” Mate said. “Everyone involved poured everything they had into this show.”

Mate, Green and Flanagan outlined several reasons to see the performance, including the show’s sense of humor and complex choreography. However, they said the show is more than its witty writing, intricate costumes and performances of Elon’s dancers and actors.

“It’s about learning more about yourself,” Green said. “It’s about acceptance. It’s about embracing change.”

Remaining performances in McCrary Theatre are at 7:30 p.m. on both Nov. 3 and 4. Tickets are \$15 or free with an Elon ID and can be reserved or purchased on the university’s ticketing website, [elon.universitytickets.com](http://elon.universitytickets.com).

This performance includes theatrical haze, strobe lighting, adult themes and adult language. The show has a 2 hour and 45 minute run time, including a 15-minute intermission.

### IF YOU GO

**Where:**  
McCrary Theatre  
**When:**  
Nov. 3 and 4, 7:30 p.m.

**Head Over Heels**  
the musical

**SONGS BY THE GO-GO'S**  
**BASED ON 'THE ARCADIA' BY SIR PHILIP SIDNEY**  
**CONCEIVED AND ORIGINAL BOOK BY JEFF WHITTY**  
**ADAPTED BY JAMES MAGRUDER**

ORIGINAL BROADWAY PRODUCTION PRODUCED BY  
CHRISTINE RUSSELL LOUISE GUND DONOVAN LEITCH RICK FERRARI GWYNETH PALTROW  
SCOTT SIGMAN HUNTER ARNOLD TOM KIRDAHY JORDAN ROTH  
THE WORLD PREMIERE OF 'HEAD OVER HEELS' TOOK PLACE AT OREGON SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL  
BILL RAUCH/ARTISTIC DIRECTOR; CYNTHIA RIDER/EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
DEVELOPED WITH THE SUPPORT OF NEW YORK STAGE AND  
FILM & VASSAR'S POWERHOUSE THEATER, SUMMER 2016'

**DIRECTED BY: JULIO AGUSTIN MATOS JR.**  
10/28 AT 7:30, 10/29 AT 2:00 & 7:30, 11/3 AT 7:30 AND 11/4 AT 7:30  
ELON UNIVERSITY: MCCRARY THEATRE, CENTER FOR THE ARTS

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2023 SEASON • FALL MUSICAL • 2022

COURTESY OF ELON PERFORMING ARTS

“Head Over Heels” is an ‘80s mashup musical featuring original songs from The Go-Go’s.



# Seniors run for Homecoming royalty

Ten seniors are vying to be crowned royalty on the Homecoming Court during the third quarter of the Homecoming football game. Students can vote for two candidates on Phoenix Connect until 5 p.m. on Nov. 4.



**CHRISTINA CARR**  
Major: Psychology  
Hometown: Charlotte, North Carolina  
Charitable Cause: Soul Fire Farm

“Since my time at Elon, I’ve been really involved in student organizations, such as the Black Student Union and the Student Union Board, really helping connect students to one another and creating environments and spaces for them. I have been in the background of a lot of those things, and I think being a part of Homecoming royalty will allow me to continue to do that.”



**MAHOGANY MADDEN-ROBERTS**  
Major: Biology and Public Health Studies  
Hometown: Sparks, Maryland  
Charitable Cause: Black Girls Do STEM

“I truly believe throughout my four years here, I’ve been able to embody the true Elon spirit — whether that was through working in New Student Orientation, traveling abroad in Cambodia for biology or doing ... things such as the Black Student Union. Being able to win Homecoming Court would allow me to not only represent myself but also represent my peers, my organizations as well as my philanthropy that I’m supporting.”



**KENNEDY BOSTON**  
Major: Cinema and Television Arts  
Hometown: Greensboro, North Carolina  
Charitable Cause: Guilford Green Foundation

“Since getting to Elon, I’ve always been very outwardly critical of the school in a lot of ways. But there was a question on the application that asked us, ‘What does it mean to have Elon spirit?’ and I said it’s wanting to see better from a place you love so much. I really do love Elon. It’s why I’m a tour guide, it’s why I’m so heavily involved in the Elon community. ... I’m running because I really want to see Elon be and do better, as someone working to improve that.”



**ELLIS CHANDLER**  
Major: Journalism  
Hometown: Fort Mill, South Carolina  
Charitable Cause: Gift of Parenthood

“I wanted to be on Homecoming Court because it allows me to tie together all of the connections I’ve made, the friends I’ve made and all of my experiences over the last four years. Elon is where I get my education, but it is also ... a place where I have really grown as a person. I feel like Homecoming is an opportunity to celebrate tradition ... and celebrate Elon in a year where I feel like morale has been particularly low, so it’s a time to build community.”



**KYLE BORGNA**  
Major/Minor: Strategic Communications, Professional Sales  
Hometown: Rockaway, New Jersey

“I chose to run because I feel like Elon has done a lot for me, and so I think that just running and giving a little more back to Elon would be a really good thing for me.”



**GRACE CLIFT**  
Major: Psychology and Sociology  
Hometown: Louisville, Kentucky  
Charitable Cause: NEDA

“I decided to run for Homecoming Court because it’s something I have watched everybody else the past couple of years run for, and it seemed like a really cool opportunity to represent school spirit and also raise money for a really great charity.”



**LAURA MCGUIRE**  
Major: Arts Administration  
Hometown: Raleigh, North Carolina  
Charitable Cause: Celiac Disease Foundation

“I decided to run for Homecoming Court because it’s something that I’ve always seen over the years and I thought, you know, what’s the worst that could happen, I could either get it or not ... And so I thought that it would be a great way to show my love for Elon, it’s given me so much, and I would love to give something back to it.”



**SHAI BEY SUPERVILLE**  
Major: Statistics  
Hometown: Brooklyn, New York  
Charitable Cause: March of Dimes

“It’s kind of cool to actually see how much of campus actually really knows you and would vote for you if they saw you. ... I’m just running for fun at the end of the day.”



**LUCAS REILLEY**  
Major: Biology  
Hometown: Riverside, California

“I decided to run for Homecoming Court to represent Elon. I feel like I had great times here, and I’d love to be an advocate for them. ... Honestly, Homecoming means coming together as a community, and I would get to see a bunch of alumni. I know that some of my friends that graduated are going to come back and it’s going to be awesome to see them and have them see me kind of represent Elon and its values.”



**MALLORY POFF**  
Major: Psychology  
Hometown: Charlotte, North Carolina  
Charitable Cause: Soul Fire Farm

“I’m involved with the arts, especially with our music ensembles and music programs; I’m an engineering major, so I’m involved in that new area; I’m in a Panhellenic sorority; I am also involved with multiple Christian groups on campus, as well as learning assistance. ... When you think of Homecoming, it’s about bringing all these entities all together. I thought it would be a really fun experience and help to bridge those gaps between different areas of the school.”



# Elon athlete heals through lacrosse, teammate support



KATHERINE MARTIN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Elon lacrosse midfielder Sammy Fisher said she has found family amongst her new teammates, who have been critical to her healing process.

## FISHER | from cover

“Since she was courageous enough to share that, it’s been easier for the team to really be more understanding and to really just love her for that and take care of her,” Hexter said.

Hexter said as a parent to a 19-year-old, he couldn’t imagine if his own child experienced something to the magnitude that she has.

“There’s no rulebook for something like this,” Hexter said. “I put it into my own personal life, what if that was my child?”

Fisher said she remembers sitting in creative writing class when the fire alarm began to sound. She ran into the hallway with classmates, thinking they heard a computer cart crashing. Soon, they realized it was gunshots.

“The teacher behind me started screaming for everyone to get back in their room,” Fisher said. “Me and nine other students got back into my classroom which is located right next to the stairwell — which the shooter came up.”

The shooting lasted six minutes, but Fisher said that time felt like eternity.

“We saw that this was real,” Fisher said. “We just heard moaning noises from the hallway, and we had no idea what was going on.”

When the SWAT team arrived, everyone was escorted out of the building, but not before Fisher said she saw the gunman’s weapon dropped next to her classroom.

“I saw a body laying down next to the bathroom,” Fisher said. “My school had locked our bathrooms to prevent kids from smoking. He tried to get into the bathroom to hide, but unfortunately, the door was

locked.”

Fisher later learned this victim was 17-year-old Joaquin Oliver, a teammate of Fisher’s older brother. Fisher had become friends with Oliver in the weeks before the shooting, after he came to watch her first varsity basketball game. She said she planned to return the favor by supporting him at his next basketball game. She never got the opportunity.

“I did not realize it was him at the time,” Fisher said. “I just didn’t believe it. Like I couldn’t comprehend that I was just talking to him and I’m never gonna be able to speak to him again.”

Oliver’s support of Fisher is something that she carries with her to this day. She said everyone in her town called him “Guac,” so she played last season with an avocado sticker on her lacrosse stick — serving as a reminder of him when she steps onto the field.

“If I’m ever sad or down or stressed during a game, I just look at that and remember my motivation for playing,” Fisher said.

Fisher said she feels grateful for her Elon teammates and coaching staff, who have helped her navigate the aftermath of the shooting.

As Fisher prepares for the lacrosse season approaching, she said after being on the all-rookie team, she hopes to get to the CAA team — First Team All-CAA or second team All-CAA. But more significant, she said, is the success of her team.

“More importantly is my team goal, which is, one, to win the conference championship, but to get to the NCAA finals,” Fisher said. “I think that’s a lot more important than my individual goal at the moment.”



KATHERINE MARTIN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Sammy Fisher looks to attack in a March 2022 game against William & Mary. Head coach Josh Hexter said he admires Fisher’s composure on the field.



# ELON PREPARES TO FLOOD THE RUDD

Phoenix looks to tackle the Colonial Athletic Association championship tournament after a historic regular season

Max Wallace  
Elon News Network | @MaxCWallace

A season ago, Elon University’s men’s soccer playoff run ended in heartbreak with a 3-2 loss to Hofstra University in the Colonial Athletic Association championship tournament final. While all 30 members of the team were forced to move on, the 21 players that returned to the locker room for the next season would not forget that loss.

Now, less than a year later, the Phoenix claim sole possession of the CAA regular season title for the first time in program history and look to make up for last season’s misstep. Senior forward Mason Duval said that the loss didn’t linger in the locker room — instead, it made the team that much stronger and hungrier.

“That was a big motivation,” Duval said. “It definitely fueled the fire.”

After rallying past 10 tough teams and winning nine hard-fought conference games, head coach Marc Reeves said he was proud of the group for emerging on top of the extreme conference.

“It’s an incredible achievement by this group,” Reeves said. “We will celebrate it and move on to the next phase which is the tournament.”

The regular season title will bring both a new banner and the postseason home, as the entire CAA championship tournament will run through Rudd Field. However, while the achievements look nice on paper, graduate student and goalkeeper Ryan Bilichuk said the placement means a lot more than just where the tournament is set to take place.

“It’s an advantage, but it’s earned,” Bilichuk said. “We worked so hard throughout the whole season for this moment, and we are definitely going to capitalize on it.”

Having home field doesn’t just save the team from travel fatigue. It also allows for familiarity with the training equipment when it matters most. Reeves also hopes the Phoenix faithful will flood the Rudd bleachers on Sunday for Elon’s semifinal match.

“It’s a massive deal not having to travel, being in the comfort of your own training environment,” Reeves said. “We are hoping we get a good crowd as well on Sunday.”

On top of earning the right to host the tournament, the Phoenix also received a bye to the semifinals and is only two matches away from winning it all. Reeves emphasized the importance of the Phoenix having an extra week to

prepare for its next game. The Phoenix will face the winner of the Nov. 6 Northeastern and Drexel contest.

“We will use the week to prepare correctly as we always do,” Reeves said. “Being regular season champions is unbelievable, but there’s six great teams in it right now, and it could be anyone’s.”

Duval also said it is vital to have a week to rest after competing in last year’s tournament without one. Previously, the Phoenix faced a quick turnaround after advancing from the quarterfinals to the semifinals.

“It’s not like you can save yourself for each game, you have to give 110%,” Duval said. “Us being able to rest and then play against a team that’s going to be more tired will be an advantage.”

While the Phoenix returned 21 players from the 2021 team, Bilichuk wasn’t one of them, as he was brought on during the off-season from the University of South Carolina. Regardless, Bilichuk only added to an already elite Elon team with his potent net protection and was one of the key reasons the regular season title was achieved.

He said it is an honor to bring such a momentous accolade to the team and university, even if this is his first season representing the maroon and gold.

“I haven’t been here for four years like the rest of these guys, but the honor is still the same,” Bilichuk said. “To be a part of this group is something that’s going to tie us in the history books forever.”

Although only a year apart from last season’s team, the improved team chemistry has been the biggest difference this time around, Duval said, and this past experience will allow the Phoenix to soar above the competition in the tournament.

“We have a lot more chemistry. The guys on the field, we are just in tune with each other,” Duval said. “Our togetherness and being in tune with each other will lead to our success.”

The regular season title wasn’t the only way Bilichuk and the Phoenix broke into the history books last Saturday. The 0-0 tie marked the team’s tenth shutout on the season, tying for the most shutouts an Elon team has ever recorded in a single season. While getting that recognition is tremendous for the program, Bilichuk said winning the tournament is the team’s biggest concern.

“It’s a great feeling,” Bilichuk said. “But I want to continue to win games for the team. That’s what matters the most. Just keep winning and see how far we can go.”

If the Phoenix are able to cap off the historic season with a tournament victory, it will find itself in the NCAA tournament. However, Duval, as well as the rest of the team, recognizes there is a lot of soccer to be played until then.

“Nothing matters in the past,” Duval said. “You just have to focus on the present.”

## BY THE NUMBERS

2022	2021
TOTAL SHOTS - 172	TOTAL SHOTS - 208
TOTAL GOALS - 25	TOTAL GOALS - 25
GOALS PER GAME - 1.56	GOALS PER GAME - 1.32
SHOTS PER GAME - 10.8	SHOTS PER GAME - 10.9
ASSISTS - 27	ASSISTS - 24

### TOP PLAYERS



MASON DUVAL

POINTS - 14  
SHOTS - 29  
ASSISTS - 0  
GAME WINNING GOALS - 3



SCOTT VATNE

POINTS - 12  
SHOTS - 37  
ASSISTS - 6  
GAME WINNING GOALS - 1



DEMUND HOLE VIK

POINTS - 10  
SHOTS - 6  
ASSISTS - 4  
GAME WINNING GOALS - 2



RYAN BILICHUCK

SHUTOUTS - 10  
SHOTS FACED - 141  
SAVES - 34  
GAMES PLAYED - 16

PLAYER PHOTOS AND DATA COURTESY OF ELON ATHLETICS



JACOB KISAMORE | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

The Elon University men’s soccer team huddles prior to its match against William & Mary at Rudd Field on Oct. 8. The teams tied 0-0.

## Men’s club volleyball hopes to rebuild team culture

Club team graduated five seniors after a notable last season

Lexi Rogers  
Elon News Network | @LexiRogersENN

Elon University men’s club volleyball team found historic success in its last season, coming in second at the Eastern Collegiate Volleyball Association East Coast Championship and making a run at nationals in 2021. But that

success turned to struggle at the end of the season, when the team graduated five seniors.

Senior and team president Lucas Reilley has been on the team since his freshman year and said he has taken on the task of rebuilding the team.

“It affected the team chemistry a lot, having to rebuild from virtually nothing,” Reilley said. “But the guys that did come in are some great players, some really, really well developed, and overall just good people.”

Sophomore outside hitter Mason Kaiser said the team has

had to adjust for changes in some of its most important positions.

“We have also had guys who have changed positions, just because we needed them,” Kaiser said. “We’ve got a new setter. The setter is a huge position, it’s kind of who leads the team. We have a new guy that’s a freshman, so just kind of getting to learn with him and having him learn how we all hit.”

Reilley said this group of incoming freshman players is showing a promise for success, and he hopes to lead and mentor them just like how he was mentored three years ago. Reilley

said community and brotherhood are two of the most important messages the team wants to instill in its new members.

This message has been felt by freshman player Chris Holt, who played football throughout high school and decided to give volleyball a try when he got to Elon. After meeting some current volleyball players, he said he was excited for tryouts and experiencing the team’s culture.

“Everyone just forgets about their school work, and they are just here to have a great time and everyone is excited to be here,”

Holt said. “No one really ever wants to miss a practice. Everyone wants to come and bring good energy.”

All three players highlighted how much they appreciate each other and the community the team has become for them at Elon. Reilley said the games matter to the team, but leaving an impact on the younger players is what’s most important.

“I make sure that they are all positively impacted by what we do today, or any other practice — always try to leave on a positive note,” Reilley said.



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