

Britt Mobley elected university's student body president

1,825 votes cast in SGA's 2023 election, only 29.9% of the student population

Sophie Rosenthal

Elon News Network | @SophiRosenthal

Elon University junior Britt Mobley will be Student Government Association's next student body president after winning 68.9% of the vote.

"I'm feeling good," Mobley said. "Happy to be working with the student body and happy to continue the work that we started a few years ago."

This year, 1,825 students voted in the election, which is 29.9% of the student body. SGA members have been tabling around campus for the past week encouraging students to vote. Last year, 1,824 students, or 30.1% of the student body, voted in the election, and current Student Body President Nadine Jose said she had hoped to increase turnout by at least 100 students.

"The goal is really just to get at least 1,900 or over that, just to make sure that voting numbers continue to grow," Jose said.

Voter turnout has been a priority for SGA, but with increases in student population from the past two spring semesters, the proportion of students voting in SGA elections has actually remained about steady since 2021.

The election did not go without a hitch; after voting opened the morning of



KATHERINE MARTIN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

March 27, the system shut down temporarily due to an error that gave some students the wrong ballot. The senior class ballot also left off class president candidate Genesis Tolbert. Voting reopened by noon, and all students who voted before the correction were sent an email telling them they would need to vote again.

Jose said there are usually a couple students who are given the wrong ballot based on credit hours rather than intended graduation year, but this year, the issue seemed to affect a significant number of students. Jose said about 200 students voted before the correction, but SGA decided

it would be unethical to count the votes, and all were contacted with the corrected link. Though the first four hours of voting didn't count, she said she doesn't believe it had an effect on the election results.

"We wanted to take away any of those barriers, do some corrections," Jose said. "It wasn't a great feeling, but we were happy to get it resolved in a pretty short amount of time."

There were 20 races, making up 53 open seats, in the election. 28 of the 53 seats were left vacant, including the executive role of vice president of communication.

Only six races were

contested. In addition to student body president, the contested races were vice president of finance, class of 2024 president and all three class of 2026 races — class president, treasurer and five senators, with six candidates. In four races — vice president of communication, associate justices with three seats, class of 2024 senators with five seats and class of 2025 treasurer — no one ran at all.

Student body president-elect goals

Mobley is currently a School of Education senator and previously served terms as a class of 2024 senator and

Elon junior Britt Mobley is elected Student Body President on March 28, during the live results announcement in the Moseley Student Center.

sophomore class president. He was also briefly a School of Communications senator before going abroad for the fall 2022 semester.

As student body president, Mobley said he will focus on what he calls his three pillars: "access, connectedness and transparency."

First, according to Mobley, is making sure SGA feels accessible to the student body. To him, this starts with making sure students know the purpose of the organization.

"It's saddening to me that across campus, folks don't even know what SGA does, what their role is or even sometimes who are in those roles," Mobley said. "That's a huge problem for me, because, again, when decisions are being made, it affects the entirety of the student body."

As student body president, Mobley said he wants to redefine the purpose of SGA as a central hub for community on campus.

"I think we could truly have a lot of beautiful and fundamental and productive partnerships with a lot of different clubs and organizations across campus to make things done right," Mobley said.

Mobley said he wants to address his first pillar through his second goal of connectedness. In his words, this means creating opportunities for students to come together and see SGA in action.

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Dr. Sanjay Gupta discusses lifelong learning, his career

Dr. Sanjay Gupta is part of the 2022-23 university speaker series, "Living Well in a Changing World"

Kyra O'Connor

Executive Director | @ElonNewsNetwork

Dr. Sanjay Gupta a multiple Emmy-Award-winning chief medical correspondent for CNN, delivered the 2023 Baird Lecture on Tuesday, March 28. The lecture is a part of Elon University's Speaker Series, presented by WUNC North Carolina Public Radio, "Living Well in a Changing World."

Elon News Network sat down with Gupta for an exclusive one-on-one interview to discuss his lecture, his career and his advice to students on how to live healthier, happier lives.

This interview has been edited for clarity.

I would like you to tell me a little bit about yourself, and what your journey looked like?

Well, I'm a doctor. I'm a doctor first, but I'm always interested in health policy. I think whether you're a

physician or whatever facet of society you're involved with, understanding how that works and having a voice is really important. I got interested in health policy at a pretty young age when I was in medical school, and it sort of morphed from there. I started doing more and more writing in that area, advising people. Ultimately, I worked at the White House as an adviser to the president on health care policy, and I think it was the first time I realized that the way you communicate big topics is really important. Understanding [them] is important, but how you then communicate them is also really important.

And I think through a series of steps after that, that took me to journalism, where I can be both a doctor and a journalist. And as a journalist, I felt I had an opportunity to ask big questions, travel the world trying to find the answers to those questions and then reporting. Some of the biggest stories of our time were natural disasters, but also things like this pandemic, which obviously was something that affected everybody on the planet for the last several years."

Can you talk to me a little bit

about what you'd like to cover tonight, and what you hope students and Elon community members walk away with after hearing you speak?

I think one of the things I really liked about these types of events — and the reason I jumped at the opportunity — was I think in today's world, you get a lot of the news, you get a lot of the big ideas in all sorts of ways. You get it from your phone. I mean, you could read an article, but I think there's a lot of nuance that sometimes gets lost in all this. People get the two-minute headline, but they don't get the backstory, or they don't get how certain decisions were made. So I'm hoping when I'm having this discussion here at Elon that we can get into, not just the 'what' of things, but the 'why' and the 'how,' and some of those other types of things which we don't often get to talk about enough. I learn a lot when I come to these types of events as well, and I don't get to do nearly enough of them. I wish I could do more of it.



ERIN MARTIN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Dr. Sanjay Gupta on the patio of the Moseley Student Center on Tuesday, March 28.

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THE PENDULUM

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CHEAT SHEET

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

TikTok CEO questioned about national security in congressional hearing

The five hour hearing focused on national security concerns, harmful content

Abigail Hobbs

Associate Managing Editor of the Pendulum, Copy Chief | @AbigailHobbss

TikTok Chief Executive Officer Shou Zi Chew testified for a congressional hearing where members of Congress asked him questions surrounding their concerns of national user security and harmful content with the platform's relation to China.

Congress questioned Chew for five hours March 23, focusing on the app's parent company, Beijing-headquartered ByteDance. The hearing comes after TikTok was banned on government devices in December 2022, and the University of Texas, Austin and Auburn University banned the app on university wifi due to security concerns in January.

The Biden Administration is pushing for TikTok's Chinese investors to sell their shares in the company. The Chinese Commerce Ministry said it firmly opposes the forced sale of the app.

Brooks Fuller, director of the North Carolina Open Government Coalition and Elon professor of journalism, spoke with Elon News Network and explained what the Congressional hearings could mean for students.

The North Carolina Open Government Coalition's goal is to provide the public with governmental information, including records and meetings, according to its website.

What are Congress' concerns about security revolving around TikTok?

Congress appears to have a lot of concerns involving the way that young folks and teenagers use TikTok, as well as some national security concerns about how TikTok is owned by a Chinese company, and Congress is concerned about the data that TikTok may or may not share with the Chinese government.

Is this something that Congress has ever done before with social media platforms?

Internet regulation at the congressional level has been really fraught ever since the mid 1990s. When new technology comes into the public domain and develops rapidly, Congress and senators and representatives in the House sometimes get very fearful of the implications of new technologies. There's certainly been a number of different ways that Congress has tried to rein in apps that are owned by foreign investment firms.

For instance, WeChat, which is a Chinese owned chat platform, kind of like WhatsApp, except it's also owned by a Chinese company. There were attempts to ban WeChat that came out of the Trump administration. ... WeChat is very much still with us. I don't believe that they even enacted such a policy. They certainly didn't get such a policy through Congress. It never really came up for congressional debate. But TikTok is very much in their crosshairs because of the

political moment — a little bit different than the way that WeChat was several years back.

From a legal side, how can Congress ban an app like this?

It is really difficult to envision a situation where Congress can pass a law outright banning a social media platform for all users in the United States. The reason for that is because we have really strong First Amendment principles and case law that prevents federal and state governments from issuing what are called prior restraints on speakers and especially on entire platforms. If Congress wants to pass a law that outright bans an entire platform, then they are required to show in court if it's ever challenged under the First Amendment. They're required to show in court that the ban is narrowly tailored to serve some really important, and in fact, compelling government interests. So they have to show that the ban is absolutely necessary to achieve some national security or privacy or some other interests that can't be accomplished any other way. And it's really difficult to envision, under our case law, a situation where the government can make that case well.

What do you see the outcome of this being?

Most likely, the way to get protections for users in terms of their private data and to protect users who are minors — so under the age of 18, or under the age of majority in whatever state it is — is to pass more comprehensive privacy protections that can be enacted through other federal agencies, but not necessarily to ban the platform outright. There's lots of ways that Congress could address privacy concerns by putting requirements on the social media platforms of all stripes and not just laser focusing on TikTok because that's their pet boogeyman at the current moment. We've seen examples of this in all types of companies, both digital platforms and not, where federal authorities can create regulations that make products safer for young folks, or they make the way that products are marketed safer for young folks. You don't necessarily have to toss out the entire platform in order to accomplish those objectives.

Is there anything else students should know about this topic?

This may not apply directly to you or students necessarily, but maybe it could foreseeably. You may have seen moves by state governments to ban TikTok on government owned and operated devices or on government owned and operated networks. Those are going to be treated under different standards than an outright ban that Congress is talking about. Because where, let's say at a public school or a state-run agency, there's going to be a stronger government interest in protecting the security of their government owned and operated networks. That doesn't really exist when we're talking about our private networks at home, and the networks that our phones access through our cell phone providers and things like that. So you may see bans that narrowly target government operated networks that might actually be viable that a total ban just would not be.

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TikTok CEO Shou Zi Chew defended the app at a congressional hearing March 23.

CAROLINE MITCHELL | DESIGN CHIEF



More than 100 students, faculty and staff attended Elon University's celebration of Holi on March 24 on Speaker's Corner.

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Elon University students take a selfie after celebrating the Hindu festival Holi on March 24 in Young Commons.



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Cancer survivor Adrian shaves junior Connor Offshack's head during the Vs. Cancer baseball fundraiser March 26.



JOSEPH NAVIN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

U.S. President Joe Biden spoke in Durham at the Wolfspeed semiconductor factory on March 28. The stop launched his "Investing in America" tour, which lasts three weeks and is designed to highlight legislation and action toward job growth, rebuilding infrastructure and supply chains and lowering costs of programs like Medicaid.



JOSEPH NAVIN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Participants begin their run on Runway 5L/23R at Piedmont Triad International Airport in Greensboro for the annual PTI 5k/10k Run on the Runway on March 25.

Elon supports wellbeing awareness through first HealthEU Day

Students, faculty look to promote aspects of health beyond just physical, mental

Ryan Kupperman
Elon News Network | @RyandKupp

While admiring the hammock set up on the lawn of Young Commons, Charlotte Williams noticed the tightrope at the very beginning of her day. After going through her daily routine and passing it back and forth, Williams said she finally worked up the courage to attempt it.

“I got on and I’m like, ‘Oh I need help. I need somebody to lean on.’ And at first, I didn’t want to say it, but I knew I’m going to need a little help to get that first footing. And so I did, and it was rough,” Williams said.

Williams, associate director of campus recreation and wellness for Student Wellness, said she was able to take a mental step back and remind herself that operating a full-time job, managing a family and working through a doctoral program were valid reasons for not upholding a strict, fitness regimen.

“It was a good reminder for me of what’s going on on the inside. A lot of times we just look at the outward — we might look at and compare ourselves to other people,” Williams said. “There’s plenty of things that I can do the quote-on-quote ‘tightrope on’ and excel at and master, but for this particular thing, yeah, I wasn’t able to do that, and it’s okay. If I want to do it, I’ve got to be intentional and work on it. But at least I was curious, tried and ... I have to decide, ‘Do I want to do this, or am I just gonna put my energy somewhere else?’”

The tightrope was one of many activities set up around campus at Elon’s first annual HealthEU Day on March 21 in order to emphasize the HealthEU initiative and discuss concrete practices surrounding wellness.

Williams said her experience

with the tightrope mirrored that of what campus recreation and wellness tried to embody through HealthEU Day, along with starting conversations and raising awareness about wellbeing.

“All of these things are real, everyday, practical things that we’re living through. It’s not some far off theory, it applies to our everyday life,” Williams said. “I really liked hearing the overlap of conversation and real life application. Making it practical.”

According to Williams, HealthEU Day also tried to embody holistic awareness of all dimensions of wellbeing. While physical health is one of the most well-known aspects, this also includes community, social, emotional, financial and purpose wellbeing.

Williams said she particularly loved hearing the discussions, activities and prize opportunities around financial wellbeing, as it is a crucial dimension of wellness for college students.

“It’s okay to talk about the reality that, yeah, it takes money to live, and am I going to do that by tapping into my purpose and making sure that I align with the job that I choose and enjoy it?” Williams said. “Or am I going to do something just to get a paycheck?”

In addition to providing good visibility around the HealthEU initiative, Williams said HealthEU Day also highlighted the resources that Elon already has on campus.

“Some of it is just what we’re already doing, but it’s a more intentional way of having a conversation,” Williams said. “It’s not this new thing I have to go out and do. It’s what I’m already doing, but how can I be more intentional or how can I enhance where I already am?”

Senior Peyton Pesavento ran a booth at the wellness fair as a Koury operations manager. Set up in Young Commons, Pesavento said he had conversations with students, faculty and staff about what HealthEU



ERIN HRONCICH | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Elon celebrates its first HealthEU Day on March 21. Campus recreation and wellness hosted a variety of activities, educational sessions and events to spark conversation about concrete wellness habits and raise awareness for available resources.

meant to them.

“Having an actual physical HealthEU Day outside with all these resources, where people could just walk up, get a bite of food, meet some new people, get some resources and win some free stuff was really awesome,” Pesavento said. “It’s not just about making grades and being involved, it’s about being your best self and whatever that looks like to you.”

Though he will be graduating at the end of the spring semester, Pesavento said he is looking forward to seeing how the Elon community builds upon HealthEU Day in the following years.

“Even if you don’t get too much out of it, other than some free food and a little wind-down time and some free merch, I think that is what they’re about,” Pesavento said. “It doesn’t have to be a holistic transformation in your life. It can be little things that just brighten your day, brighten your mood, just a little bit, to show that Elon is being intentional in that effort.”

According to Pesavento, HealthEU Day was a great initial step in raising awareness. In the future, he said he would like to see more engagement and suggested that Elon host more pop-up HealthEU events throughout the year to increase exposure.

Based on feedback from students, faculty and vendors, Williams said she is working on opening HealthEU Day to the surrounding Elon, Burlington and Alamance communities for next year. The committee that planned and organized HealthEU Day, to which Williams is a member, will be meeting in the next few weeks to debrief the event’s feedback and begin planning for next year.

Williams also encouraged students, faculty and staff to be vocal and share their HealthEU Day experiences by emailing their thoughts to HealthEU@elon.edu.

For Williams, trying to cross that tightrope reminded her of the validity of her personal health goals and allowed her to reevaluate

her wellness priorities. She also emphasized the importance of fostering an environment that allows people to feel comfortable and supported in doing so.

“We can all be going through things on the inside and no one really knows that necessarily, unless we share it, unless we feel safe to disclose it or unless we get deeper into a conversation,” Williams said. “Wellbeing has a lot to do with identity. You can’t have a conversation about wellbeing without talking about identity and where people see themselves in the picture. Do I see myself as part of HealthEU? Do I feel like I belong in this conversation? Do I belong in the greater Elon conversation? That’s what it represents and means to me in terms of how I think about student wellbeing on a day-to-day basis.”

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT HEALTHEU VISIT

www.Elon.edu/U/HealthEU/

Farmers market undergoes new management

Town of Elon ignites change for community event by creating, hiring new position

Anne Thyfault
Elon News Network | @AMThyfaulted

The Elon farmers market will begin again this year April 20 from 3 to 6 p.m., however, major changes have taken place as the town put together the Thursday market.

In previous years, Authentically Alamance Farmers Market Network — overseen by Healthy Alamance — ran the Elon farmers market. This year, Authentically Alamance did not receive a farmers market grant. In order for the market to continue, the responsibility of organization has been put onto the Town of Elon. Town Manger Rich Roedner said that the town has previously allocated \$15,000 to Authentically Alamance. The first time the town of Elon allocated funds to the farmers market was 2021. Now, that money is being reallocated to hire a new staff member to be the farmers market manager.

Appalachian State University graduate Sarah Bass was hired and began her work as farmers market

manager and downtown assistant last month.

In college, Bass studied sustainable development, agroecology and sustainable agriculture. She said her passion lies in sustainable agriculture, as she hopes to use her knowledge as she works in her hometown of Elon to build a good experience for the community.

“I’ve gotten to speak to a few farmers already and I’m just trying to let them know that it’s going to be different with my background in sustainable agriculture,” Bass said. “I took this position for the agriculture part of it. For the farmers.”

Bass said she has big plans for the farmers market, but reassures customers and vendors that they should not expect major changes right away. For now, Bass said she is focused on minor adjustments and a smooth-running event.

“I wanted to come in and do so much stuff. I kind of realized that that’s not super realistic with the deadline that we have and how fast everything is coming up,” Bass said.

For the 2023 farmers market, Bass’ minor changes include expanding the customer base for the market.

Bass plans on having a more child-friendly environment that may include games and crafts. In



NOAH GOLDSTEIN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

The town of Elon farmers market starts April 20 and runs from 3 to 6 p.m. in the Elon Community Church parking lot.

addition, Bass works part-time at the Twin Lakes Retirement Community as a bartender and hopes to use her connections in order to get shuttles to bring Twin Lake residents to and from the market.

In her month working for the Town of Elon, Bass has proven herself an asset to the downtown department, according to Downtown Development Director

Jill Weston.

“I am so grateful because she has really taken the ball and run with it,” Weston said. “She understands the farm and she can talk the language, and that is really good.”

Bass said she plans to work with the town for a couple of years.

“I was like most high schoolers, and I wanted out as soon as possible,” Bass said. “But now I’m back and

I’m getting to impact the local food system that I was raised on, so that’s pretty awesome.”

Bass expressed her appreciation for the job opportunity and excitement for the farmers market.

“Nothing is changing for the worse,” Bass said. “It’s going to be changing for the better but we want them to come back just as strong as they had the year before.”

Student body president-elect shares goals for term

SGA | from cover

The first step Mobley plans on taking toward this connectedness goal is revitalizing tailgate culture on campus. As a junior, Mobley came to Elon in Fall 2020 and has only experienced campus after the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Mobley said he believes campuswide tailgates will help bring different student organizations from across campus together and help create a culture of university pride.

“We get here, we find our core group of folks, but then we are all separated into little clusters on campus,” Mobley said. “But I always say, imagine the fun we would have if we were all surrounded by one common goal.”

Throughout his campaign, Mobley spoke about repairing the relationship between SGA and greek organizations on campus. At the SGA executive candidate forum March 23, Mobley said working closely with greek organizations will be a priority for him.

“I think folks within the greek life sector believe that they’re always kind of pushed away or pushed to the outskirts a little bit,” Mobley said at the SGA executive candidate forum. “There’s a lot of utilization between student government and greek life because we can

ELECTION RESULTS

VP OF FINANCE

Gabby Gutierrez

CLASS OF 2024 PRESIDENT

Chloe Higgins

CLASS OF 2025 PRESIDENT

Alexander Siler

CLASS OF 2026 PRESIDENT

Selma Maric

get students and get to the most of the student body that way.”

The final pillar, transparency, is the most important to Mobley. He hopes with his access and connectedness plans, students will become active participants in student democracy.

“Transparency means that I’m accountable to the student body,” Mobley said. “I expect and hope that people will challenge and criticize every decision that I make, whether it’s good or bad, and be knowledgeable about what’s happening. Not only know what’s happening, but understand why it has happened and ask those questions.”

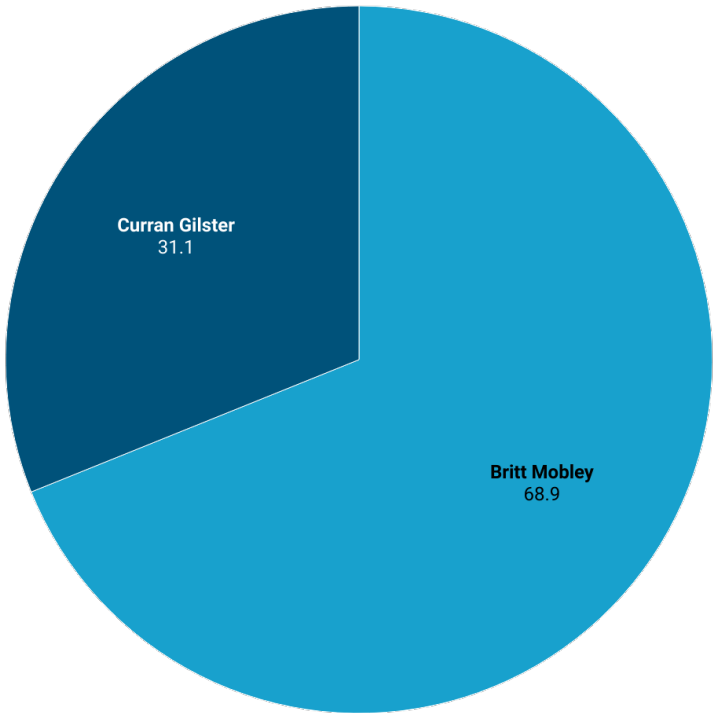
Though he’s been involved in SGA since the beginning of his freshman year, Mobley said he’s excited to get started in a new role.

“I really want to take some risks this year,” Mobley said. “I really think outside the box and ways we can connect with students across campus.”

Candidates for student body president

■ Britt Mobley

■ Curran Gilster



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CNN chief medical correspondent, neurosurgeon speaks at Elon University

SPEAKER | from cover

When I come, I learn a lot, and I’ve been able to take some of that for myself. I’m already reflecting on some of the experiences I’ve had today and being able to incorporate them into my reporting, my thinking, my discussions, fueling my own curiosity. So I hope if nothing else, I can convey that lifelong learning aspect of things and the desire to dig a little deeper beyond the headlines, into what’s really happening in the world.

Could you give us an example of one of those reflections that you’ve already had today that you are going to be putting into your reporting and what you do?

I spent some time at the donor lab at the Health Sciences building, and it’s really interesting. It’s been a long time since I took anatomy. It’s been over thirty years. And I hadn’t really thought about how that is being taught nowadays. It’s one of the most indelible experiences we have as medical students — gross anatomy. And the idea that there was this real reverence for the donors that were there in the lab, people who said that when they were living, they would donate their bodies to science, to be the silent teachers, as they were called.

We didn’t do that when I was a medical student. We didn’t think about things that way. But the idea that you would start to teach people how to deal with death, the reverence of the human body, protecting people’s private information, understanding how much you want to know about

your patients, in this case silent teachers. I thought that was really interesting. It wasn’t something that I had thought about one second before I walked into that room, and now I’ve been thinking about it for a couple of hours, letting it simmer in the back of my head. I think there’s a larger story there in terms of how we learn and why certain things stick. What medical school people will say is mostly about regurgitating the past, memorizing the past, but thinking about memorizing the past, but also being able to create the future. I think there’s always a story that I wanted to tell, and this was just an example.

You talked about digging deeper, going beyond the two minute headline; how would you recommend students particularly start to do that in their day-to-day lives?

“It’s funny, whenever I visit a college campus, I always think, I wish I could go back and experience this again, and now with what I know at this point in my life. Of course, you can’t do that. Or you could I guess, but I don’t know if it’s in the cards for me.

When you’re a student, life becomes so procedural. It’s [a] process, you have to get from one step to the next, day to day. And I get it, if you’re applying to graduate schools and medical school, you’re just checking boxes and that’s necessary. But the real joy of learning, I think, is something that I’ve come to appreciate as time goes on, and to really be able to learn for the sake of learning.

I get to do that as a journalist. If you’re a curious person,



ERIN MARTIN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Dr. Sanjay Gupta spoke exclusively with Elon News Network ahead of giving the 2023 Baird Lecture on Tuesday, March 28.

journalism is the best job in the world, because you can just ... ask questions and just find answers. But I think to be able to use some of that within your own student life is important, just learning for the sake of learning... I don’t know what that means, and I realize that sounds pretty euphemistic. But I do think that taking courses that you’re really interested in, learning beyond what you have to learn or just learning more deeply, having conversations with classmates about what you’ve just learned, all that stuff’s what you end up spending most of your time doing when you become an adult, just reflecting on what’s happening in the world and sharing those thoughts with people that you care about. So, doing that as a student, I think, is a great way to

make it a more joyful and better learning experience overall.

What advice do you have for the people who are going to be coming to your talk, Elon students, on how to get started on that journey?

I think one of the big things that I learned while working on that book, and just in my own research, was that we have often thought about certain parts of our body as being just these organs that are going wear and tear over time, and you get a certain amount of usage out of that, and then that’s it. And what I think we’re learning more than ever is that our body can continuously rejuvenate itself in ways that we’re still appreciating. I mean, there’s been a lot of research over the last

three decades now on stem cells, and understanding that stem cells will create new cells in the body. And that age itself probably shouldn’t be measured by the number of years that you’ve lived, but by the percentage of young, healthy, well performing cells in your body. The percentage of those cells at any given time is probably a better reflection of age than circumventing the sun a certain number of times. So, I think that there’s a lot that goes into that in terms of what that means for your day-to-day life and how you live your life. But I think what I’m most inspired by is that we have this capacity within our own bodies to continuously renourish and rejuvenate in ways that we haven’t fully appreciated. That is what people are really inspired by.

Prabh-appella: the Vital Signs music director’s journey

Sophomore promotes, highlights Vital Signs with his love for music, community

Betsy Schlehuber
Lifestyle Editor | @BetsySchlehuber

Whitley Auditorium brimmed with students, sounds and bright pink decorations as Elon sophomore Prabh Saini led Vital Signs in a set for the a capella group’s 10th annual Make-A-Wish concert Feb. 18. Once the musical mashup and intricate choreography came to an end, Saini ran off stage to continue mixing the rest of the show.

At the concert, Vital Signs planned to showcase its set from the International Championship of Collegiate A Cappella quarterfinals.

Due to miscommunication with scheduling

a sound engineer, Saini, using his experience with a cappella recording company Liquid 5th Productions, mixed audio for the concert when he wasn’t performing.

Saini is the music director of Elon a cappella group Vital Signs, a beatboxer in the beatboxing duo DoubleKill, an intern at Liquid 5th and a guest arranger for other a cappella groups on campus, such as Twisted Measure and Smooth Progressions.

Saini said he loves his busy schedule because it brings him closer to his goal for Vital Signs, which is to put the group “on the map” alongside prestigious collegiate a cappella groups. He is pushing the group to record more original songs and participate in competitions.

This year, Saini led the group to ICCA quarterfinals, but they did not place. Despite this setback, Saini was grateful the group got to compete at all.

“It was a very tough quarterfinal, honestly to the point where it felt like a semifinal round,”

Saini said. “At the end of the day, we were just lucky enough to get on that stage and perform with amazing groups.”

Aside from ICCA’s and leading up to Make-a-Wish, Saini invited his best friend, sophomore Wedler Lordeus’s, a cappella group called Vibe A Cappella, from University of Houston to be the guest performer.

Lordeus and Saini started doing a cappella while they were students at Cypress Lake High School, a school that specializes in the arts. In the middle of his sophomore year, Saini joined The A Cappella Group through a closed audition initiated by Lordeus, who had already been in the group since his freshman year.

Because of Lordeus’ encouragement, Saini performed with T.A.G. from 2019 to 2021, participating in the International Championship of High School A Cappella as well as guest performing at the 2019 ICCA semifinals in Florida.

“I owe him so much credit for really getting me into the art and cultivating me into those fields,” Saini said.

At Make-A-Wish, Saini and Lordeus also performed together as a beatboxing duo named DoubleKill, a decision made a mere two weeks prior to the show. Lordeus first taught Saini how to beatbox in preparation for a middle school pep rally, with more sophisticated teaching arriving later in their high school years.

DoubleKill was formed in the summer of 2021 at a Florida bar called Kava Culture, where Lordeus spotted two microphones on stage and asked Saini if he wanted to freestyle. They beatboxed for 20 minutes, choosing their name on the spot.

Since they attend different universities, they had not rehearsed their DoubleKill set since winter break, but Lordeus said it sounded like they had been rehearsing for months.

“We knew what to perform and we had the general sound but some of the things that happened in the set definitely were improvised,” Lordeus said. “It worked out so perfectly.”

Lordeus said he and Saini both have

creative minds and are “open with each other in terms of musicality and personally,” which is how they are able to hype each other up and encourage one another to be successful.

“I definitely want to help out because I know he has literally the potential to be a superstar,” Lordeus said. “I just don’t think he sees it that way.”

Saini attributes community to why he sticks with a cappella, even at his lowest and said he found this through Elon a cappella — a quality he noticed immediately upon first seeing Vital Signs.

While on a gap semester interning at Liquid 5th, Saini’s boss urged him to see the group at Elon’s Masquerade a cappella show in November 2021. Upon arriving from Chapel Hill and sitting in the back of Whitley, he said he was “simply in awe.”

“It’s a live community of a cappella that is thriving, which I’ve never seen before in my life,” Saini said. “In T.A.G, we were always competing or we were always making albums and we never really collaborated with other groups; It was just us.”

Witnessing Vital Signs perform and meeting them afterward inspired Saini to apply to Elon. It’s been a year since he arrived on a campus that Lordeus and the rest of Vibe A Cappella described as calm, and Saini still embraces his love for a cappella. Saini said it’s the one thing he nurtures and believes he’s good at – and believes it has to be worth something.

“My overall goal for Elon a cappella is to make everyone better, not just Vital Signs,” Saini said. “It comes from a place where I love the art so much, and seeing everyone do better and sound better puts us more on the map.”

With Saini’s schedule freeing up after ICCA’s and Make-a-Wish, he said he is preparing Vital Signs for their spring concert May 6, which will be held in Whitley. There will be a 10-song set, which he said will “tell a wonderful story.”

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Sophomore Prabh Saini helps Vital Signs practice their medley during rehearsal on March 23. He tells them how to use their voice to get the result he desires.

Daytime music educator, nighttime a cappella leader

Vital Signs alum Miles Caraballo ‘22 creates a musical outlet for adults, Queen City Vocals

Jenna Rudolph
Elon News Network | @JennahRudolph

Elon University alumnus and former member of Elon a cappella group Vital Signs, Miles Caraballo ‘22 formed his own a cappella group — Queen City Vocals — based in Charlotte.

After graduating, Caraballo said he spent the summer working in the food industry, but he quickly came to realize there was a part of him that remained unfulfilled without music. Eventually, he took a job as a band teacher in the Charlotte area.

While Caraballo said becoming a band teacher was a great step toward incorporating music into his day-to-day life, he wanted to start something that felt more personal outside of work.

“I was still really bored because when I was in college, I sang all the time, and I was with a bunch of people I always had a lot of fun with,” Caraballo said. “So I was like, ‘I’m just going to go ahead and start my own a cappella group to have a fun musical outlet as well.’”

He formed Queen City Vocals from the ground up, like he did with his high school a cappella group at Myers Park High School in Charlotte.

“I was like, ‘Where am I going to find singers?’” Caraballo said. “Because just walking around asking people if they can sing, which I’ve done, is not the best tactic to go about.”

In September 2022, Caraballo used some of his connections from high school and college to recruit members, but he said his initial numbers wouldn’t cut it for the group he had envisioned. Caraballo knew he had to find other resources to reach out to members of the community.

Caraballo found Facebook groups such as “Charlotte Musicians” and “Singers Around Charlotte.” Upon asking if anyone was interested in joining his group, he received a lot of interest.

When asking for and receiving audition videos, Caraballo said he found it difficult to choose members for his group. He said he began to learn that certain individuals may not be what he expected, but often turned out to be what he needed.

“The challenges are just trusting strangers and having to maybe cross the path where they’re not quite what I thought they were going to be,” Caraballo said. “I was certainly taking a bit of a leap with letting these strangers into my group, but it paid off.”

For Caraballo, high risk comes with high reward. He has spent the last four months creating some of his fondest memories — some of those memories taking place at Elon.

The Vital Signs annual Make-A-Wish concert is one that Caraballo is very familiar with, having performed it with the group in the past. On Feb. 18, Queen City Vocals was invited to perform at the concert, an opportunity Caraballo described as a very special moment for his group. Caraballo said performing at concerts like this provides an opportunity to be around people to “just be social with outside your job or your family.”

With Queen City Vocals, Caraballo hopes



Queen City Vocals, the a cappella group started by Elon alum Miles Caraballo ‘22, performed a two-song set as part of Vital Signs’ annual Make-A-Wish concert on Feb. 18.

to open doors for future students to take initiative beyond a school setting to start their own musical groups.

Caraballo’s one piece of advice he hopes resonates with others is to always try to achieve your goals.

“In my experience, the worst thing you can do not is not try,” Caraballo said. “If you do it and it doesn’t work out, you learn something. If you do it and it does work out, you learn something. You can always learn something no matter what.”

Caraballo’s plans for the future of his group is to continue to rehearse with one another. Step one in continuing this journey with Queen City Vocals — and for Caraballo — is to “have fun and make music.”

Most importantly, Caraballo hopes to inform others about how influential music can be on everyone’s lives.

“Music is a lot more powerful than any of us really know,” Caraballo said. “So it’s important to keep it in our lives and not take advantage of it.”

Students form new dance and singing group to embrace Korean pop culture

The group was formed after a successful Elon “Burst the Bubble” class, bringing students together

Erin Martin
Executive Producer of ENN On Air | @ErinMartin35

Some Elon students have embraced Korean pop culture with the launch of a new K-pop dance and singing club on campus. K-DNS, short for K-pop Dancing n’ Singing, came about after a successful Winter Term “Burst the Bubble” class.

Junior MariLu Ravel and one of her friends came up with the idea to host a “Burst the Bubble” K-pop dancing and singing class their freshman year. “Burst the Bubble” classes are short programs held over Winter Term where students who have a talent or specific interest share their knowledge with their peers. After having around five students sign up the first time in 2021, Ravel decided to hold the class the next year, this time alone after her friend transferred to North Carolina State University.

“We wanted to have a group like this and there wasn’t anything like this on campus,” Ravel said.

Her friend got her interested in dancing to K-pop songs, and Ravel’s singing background helped form the idea of a K-pop dance and vocal cover group.

In 2022, only one student signed up, but Ravel decided to still hold the class. The one student who signed up the second year was senior Nia Griffin. Griffin was also in

the class the first year and was looking for a K-pop community.

“I have been really having a good time doing it because I’ve never done anything like that before,” Griffin said.

This past January, the two decided to hold the class again, this time with Griffin focusing on dancing and Ravel focusing on the singing aspects of the club.

This year they received more interest with around 10 students participating. Many of the active members joined the class without prior dance experience and joined to find fellow K-pop fans and community. After a successful class and feedback from students to continue meeting, Ravel and Griffin decided to form K-DNS.

“It ended up going really really well this year, better than we could have ever anticipated, and it sort of just morphed into this organization we have now,” Ravel said.

K-pop, or Korean pop, has gotten more popular in recent years with viral groups like BlackPink and BTS exploding on the music scene in the U.S. Griffin said BTS is the group that got her into the K-pop “world.”

Elon junior and K-DNS member Lexi Mulholland said she joined the class after seeing the “Burst the Bubble” listing and it immediately caught her interest. Mulholland said her favorite thing is getting to hang out with others with similar interests.

“It’s a great way to incorporate a shared interest we all have, we all love listening to K-pop and it’s a great way to get some exercise in,” Mulholland said.

The organization is not yet an official group on campus but has submitted paperwork and is awaiting approval from Student Involvement with hopes of being approved before the end of the academic year.

K-DNS is set to perform at Limitless, a student artistry showcase hosted by Late Night Elon, from 9 to 11 p.m. March 31 in McKinnon Hall.

K-DNS plans to hold auditions later this semester for the fall term and also plans on holding an end of year performance. For students who are interested in learning more about the group or auditioning for the fall semester, follow K-DNS on Instagram at @kdns_nc for updates.



ERIN MARTIN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Founder of K-DNS MariLu Ravel practices choreography at a workshop with member Lexi Mulholland on March 22.



ERIN MARTIN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Members of K-DNS and Kappa Phi Lambda practice choreography to “OMG” by the K-pop group, New Jeans.

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SPORTS

BASEBALL

Elon will face off against No. 2 Wake Forest at 6 p.m. April 4 at Latham Park

DANCE TEAM

Elon dance team will have its NDA Nationals send-off at 7 p.m. April 3 in Schar Center

The JUCO Journey: How two baseball players got their special start

Tanner Holliman and Adam Berry join Elon Baseball after unique path to Division I athletics

Joanna Dwyer
Elon News Network

The journey to play Division I athletics is different for many student-athletes. Typically, playing at a Division I university begins with the recruitment process in high school. For other student-athletes, opportunity takes a different path.

Junior colleges, also known as JUCOs, are another way for student-athletes to make it to Division I athletics. These colleges provide athletes with the opportunity to learn more about their sport, train their bodies and get early experience with college level drills and competition. Elon welcomed four junior

college transfers to the team for the 2022-23 year after bringing in one or two per year for the past few seasons. Redshirt junior infielder Tanner Holliman is one of the transfers who followed this path to Elon.

Holliman, who transferred from Northern Oklahoma College, said attending a JUCO was the best option for his baseball career before moving up to a Division I school.

“I felt like it was an opportunity for me to play and get better,” Holliman said. “It was able to provide me with the opportunity to go to the next step and play Division I baseball.”

Holliman committed to Elon after three seasons at Northern Oklahoma College. Before his visit, he said he didn’t know much about Elon, but is impressed with his experience so far.

“The education here is great,” Holliman said. “The coaching staff here is unbelievable and the team, the guys here are awesome too.”

Holliman has enjoyed his time at Elon but also said that going to a junior college was a great experience.

“I feel like junior college has been a really fun opportunity,” Holliman said. “It’s kind of one of those things where you don’t understand it unless you go.”

Similarly, sophomore outfielder Adam Berry transferred to Elon after attending Pasco-Hernando State College in the 2021-22 year. Berry said that the experience he

received there has been influential toward his career, and that more people should take advantage of junior colleges.

“Even though junior college might not be the coolest thing to go to, I think it’s something that all people should experience if you have the opportunity to do it,” Berry said. “They could pay off for you.”

He said moving to North Carolina was a big decision, but that it was worth it in order to move to the next level in his athletic career.

“It’s really competitive because of a lot of guys, really, they’re trying to move on to the next level,” Berry said. “They’re working as hard as they can and are just trying to get seen, get noticed and get recruited to another school.”

Elon’s newer facilities, weight rooms, equipment and new teammates have been a breath of fresh air for Berry, but he credits his junior college experience to be the reason for his prepared background.

Head coach Mike Kennedy said both Berry and Holliman came out of junior college baseball prepared for Elon baseball.

“Their first experiences of Division I baseball playing at the highest level have put a little bit of pressure on themselves, but they’re both very talented,” Kennedy said.

Being recruited from a junior college to a new university is similar to the process of being recruited out of high school. The benefit is that students have

more high level game experience and there are more opportunities for college coaches to see a player in action. Coaches such as Kennedy count new players at JUCO games and showcases.

“You’re seeing more and more kids going that route, especially with COVID,” Kennedy said. “With the older kids on rosters, high school kids are seeing that some of their opportunities are limited as to what it used to be.”

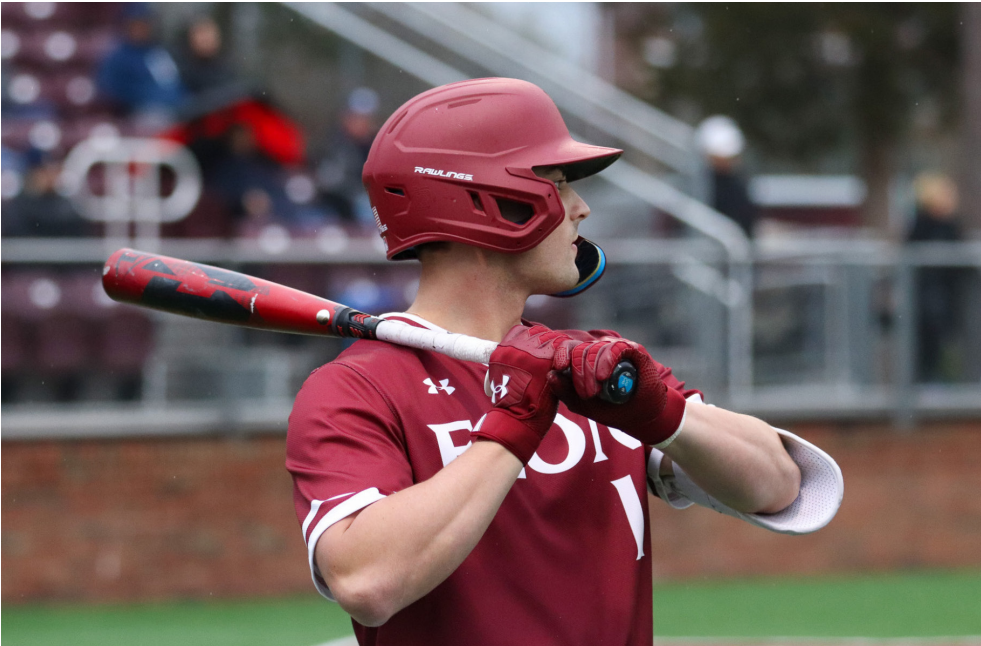
Both Holliman and Berry credit success to their coaches and teammates around them, but they do whatever it takes to do their part — even if their personal preparation is unconventional.

“I take a shower before every game, I always have to have two pieces of gum in, and before every at bat, when I step into the box, I re-lace my batting gloves or re-tape them and take a deep breath,” Holliman



SYDNEY SPENCER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Sophomore outfielder Adam Berry runs off the field after an inning at Wake Forest University on March 21. The Phoenix lost 20-0, and Berry had one of the two hits during the game for Elon.



SYDNEY SPENCER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Redshirt junior infielder Tanner Holliman prepares for his at-bat Feb. 25 against the University of Akron Zips. The Phoenix lost 12-5, and Holliman scored one of the five runs off of his walk.

said.

Holliman leads Elon’s roster with seven home runs this season. Berry’s routines include a pre-game meal at Boar’s Head and in-game rituals.

“The order I put on my batting gloves and where I place my bat in the dugout,” Berry said. “If I don’t get a hit with it being in a certain spot, it goes to a different spot.”

Kennedy believes Berry is someone to watch on the base path, having stolen three bases on three attempts so far this season.

Holliman and Berry said they have enjoyed the competition the Colonial Athletic Association has provided them so far, and they said they have high expectations for the rest of the season.

“Our team’s expectation is to win the CAA Championship,” Berry said. “Nothing less, and I think we’re fully capable of doing that.”

After their conference series sweep against the University of Delaware, Elon sits atop the CAA standings.

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