

AI SOFTWARE EMERGES AMONG UNIVERSITY POLICE DEPARTMENTS



Elon Campus Police Chief Joe LeMire works at his desk Feb. 6.

CLARE GRANT | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Elon becomes open to AI as campuses adapt higher-grade surveillance technology nationwide

Ryan Kupperman
News Editor | @RyAndKupp

Joe LeMire, Elon University's chief of campus safety and police, first heard about the use of artificial intelligence software to track student social media activity at the annual North Carolina Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators Conference on Feb. 2.

During a break in between conference sessions, LeMire spoke to other North Carolinian directors and chiefs of police about the practicality of using AI software as a viable campus safety measure. While LeMire said Elon does not currently use or have plans to implement AI software, the concept is on his mind as the practice becomes more common and effective nationwide.

LeMire said the deciding factor on whether or not to implement these softwares in the future is if the AI programs can yield a proper return on investment for safety.

"The AI there is only as good as what you plug in," LeMire said. "Think about the code words that you could put into an AI software that you would want to be tipped off if it was out there. So the return would be how often did that actually work and give you actionable information that you could do something with in order to keep campus safe."

In light of Tyre Nichols' death at the hands of police Jan. 7, LeMire said police departments across the country kept a close eye on social media after protests erupted in Memphis and concern developed over where else they might take place — Burlington, Greensboro and Charlotte included. Nichols, a Black man, was pulled over by Memphis police for alleged reckless driving Jan. 7. Nichols' attorneys stated that body camera footage reveals police verbally threatening Nichols as well as physically holding him down, kicking him, pepper spraying him and beating him with a baton before he died, according to ABC News.

For protests and events that could become violent or dangerous, LeMire said he could see a blanket AI software that could efficiently alert and dispatch responders as needed — as opposed to officers having to manually navigate social media by searching keywords or terms.

"Every active shooter event or every major thing that happens nationwide, if you ever go back, you always find those people who said, 'Oh, yeah, so and so said, XYZ.' Well, nobody reported it for whatever the reason," LeMire said. "If we had that software, you might catch where people are because there's a great percentage of people that commit violence, that foreshadow that they're going to do it, and oftentimes, it's on social media."

According to LeMire, he is also aware of AI software that utilizes security camera footage to track people, vehicles and suspicious behavior. LeMire said he thinks AI programs for security cameras may be more effective in keeping the community safe than software geared toward social media.

"Just from a standpoint of somebody comes on campus, commits a crime and they say it was a black Ford F150 pickup truck, and the AI software was able to find a black F150 pickup truck and find out where it was, what time, what direction it traveled and get information," LeMire said. "So I see it in the camera world probably a little bit more and there's really no expectation of privacy out there that way — where I think people could feel a little bit of invasion of privacy probably in the social media world."

Although LeMire acknowledged that the general public is concerned about invasion of their privacy at the hands of AI, he said the younger generations tend to be more accepting of these softwares, programs and algorithms because they are used to this technology.

"It's kind of funny when stuff like this comes up. ... There's older people that are a little more nervous about it when it comes to internet searching, cameras, other things," LeMire said. "Sometimes the age group of people that are going to school aren't as troubled by it because they just know it exists. That's kind of the world they grew up in."

Despite this, the use of such softwares through social media has already sparked controversy on college campuses. Campus police at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill utilized "geofencing" technology — allowing them to collect social media posts of people who are within or entering a virtual boundary — from 2016 to 2019.

See AI | pg. 4

Elon University selects School of Health Sciences dean

Maha Lund comes to Elon from Emory University

Avery Sloan
Politics Editor | @AveryLSloan

Maha Lund will serve as Elon University's next dean of the School of Health Sciences, according to an email from university President Connie Book on Feb. 6. After a national search, she was one of three finalists for the position.

Lund, doctorate of health sciences from NOVA Southeastern University, will join Elon after serving as the division chief and director of the Physician Assistant Program at Emory University School of Medicine.

Lund did not respond to Elon News Network's immediate request for comment, but when she presented to the student body on Nov. 28, 2022, she shared her goals for Elon and the School of Health Sciences, and how that fit in with the Boldly Elon Strategic Plan.

"I believe that if we work together and hear everybody's voice then the outcome will always be better than if one person only makes decisions," Lund said. "Making the difference in their community, however big, however small that community is, however you choose to define your community, but making a difference. I believe that with the privileges and education that we receive, we have responsibilities to the people around us."

Ann Bullock, dean of the Dr. Jo Watts Williams School of Education since June 2016, chaired the search committee. In an email to Elon News Network, she said the search was a competitive one.

"I am thrilled with the appointment of Dr. Lund," Bullock wrote. "She will provide great leadership to the already successful School of Health Sciences. As a colleague, I look forward to collaborating with her to move the mission of our university forward."

Miranda Ferrante contributed to the reporting of this story.



MIRANDA FERRANTE | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Maha B. Lund, a Program Director and Associate Professor at the Emory University School of Medicine speaks inside Clohan Theatre on Nov. 28, 2022. Lund was the first presenter in the search for the next dean of Elon University's School of Health Sciences.

Jury finds Rev. Gregory Drumwright not guilty from 2020 Graham march, rally

The Greensboro pastor was found not guilty of resisting a public officer at a march to the polls event prior to 2020 general election

Elon News Network

The Rev. Gregory Drumwright was found not guilty Feb. 6 on one charge of resisting a public officer during the Oct. 31, 2020, "I Am Change" march to the polls in Graham. The verdict states the Greensboro pastor has been found not guilty of three charges related to the rally.

In September 2021, Drumwright was acquitted of a misdemeanor riot charge in district court but convicted of failure to disperse on command and resisting a public officer. After appealing to a superior court, he was granted a new trial, which began Feb. 2. The failure to disperse charge was dismissed Feb. 3.

The Alamance County clerk of court did not respond to Elon News Network's immediate request for comment.

The district attorney did not respond to Elon News Network's immediate request for comment.

THE PENDULUM

A PUBLICATION OF
ELON NEWS
NETWORK

Established 1974 | Volume 52, Edition 17

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

KYRA O'CONNOR
Executive Director of Elon News Network

CAROLINE MITCHELL
Managing Editor of The Pendulum,
Design Chief

ABIGAIL HOBBS
Associate Managing Editor of The Pendulum,
Copy Chief

MIRANDA FERRANTE
Managing Editor of elonnewsnetwork.com

ELLIS CHANDLER
Executive Producer of Elon Local News

ERIN MARTIN
Executive Producer of ENN On Air

RYAN KUPPERMAN
News Editor

AVERY SLOAN
Politics Editor

SYDNEY SPENCER
Sports Editor

BETSY SCHLEHUBER
Lifestyle Editor

ERIN SOCKOLOF
Opinion Editor

ERIN HRONCICH
Sports Editor

ABBY SHAMBLIN
Analytics Director

ANJOLINA FANTARONI
Social Media Coordinator

COOPER LYON
Social Media Coordinator

Sarah T. Moore, Hannah Sharpe, Evie Wittmann and Ranya Russo contributed to the design of this edition. Gram Brownlee, Madalyn Howard and Nyah Phengsitthy contributed to the copy editing of this edition.

EDITORIAL POLICY:

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

CORRECTIONS POLICY:

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

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

WHEN WE PUBLISH:

The Pendulum
publishes weekly on Wednesdays

Elon Local News
broadcasts Mondays at 6 p.m.

ENN On Air
uploads Wenesdays at 6 p.m.

elonnewsnetwork.com
publishes daily

CORRECTIONS

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

CHEAT SHEET

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

Florida Bans AP African American Studies

Education professor discusses how ban will affect education in Florida

Michael Leung
Elon News Network



Randy Williams

Upon assuming office on Jan. 8, 2023, Ron DeSantis rejected a new version of the Advanced Placement African American studies course for Florida's public schools. During a press conference Jan. 23, DeSantis argued that the course was pushing an agenda on students.

On Feb. 1, College Board revised the African American Studies in correspondence to Florida State Law and released a new curriculum for the new Advanced Placement course. However, critics have noticed that the program has several important voices and themes from black scholars missing from the curriculum such as Black feminism literary thought and Black queer studies.

Florida's Board of Education supports DeSantis's actions, claiming that the indoctrination of students into "woke culture" would violate state laws regarding how race can be taught in the classroom.

This is not the first time DeSantis placed restrictions on education. Last year he signed the Florida Parental Rights and Registration Act – also known as the Don't Say Gay Bill – prohibiting classrooms from teaching sexual orientation and gender identity in elementary grades.

Randy Williams, vice president and associate provost for Inclusive Excellence and professor of education, spoke with Elon News Network and explained how this new policy will influence education in Florida.

What do you think will be the biggest impact because of this policy?

I've read some of the news reports and watched some reports as well. But obviously drawing attention to this particular class of AP African American history having, I believe the quote is, 'No educational value, is troubling to understand.' Separating any group from American history is

difficult, challenging thought from my perspective. So I think it will have a damaging effect on what we know of our history, not just what we know about history, but how we understand our contemporary time as well. So I believe that this would have an effect on the learners in the state of Florida, but it also radiates out beyond the borders of the state into other areas of this country as well. I think we also have to be concerned with precedents being set for citizens and how other states and political leaders will follow suit or find some interest in this as well.

Do you think this will affect diversity and equity education in Florida somehow?

Diversity, equity, inclusion for sure, and because there are going to obviously be limitations on what can be taught then, at least according to law. So there's going to be challenges of this sort for sure in the state of Florida.

How similar do you think this new policy is to the Florida Parental Rights and Registration act, commonly known as the Don't Say Gay bill in Florida, where they are also preventing young children from learning about LGBTQ education?

I haven't read either policy side by side and sort of compare, but the whole idea when I zoom out and think about this from a higher level — and just seeing the suppression of understanding about identities, and we all have differences, we have similarities, but we all have differences as well — and if we could better understand those differences, we could probably live more civilly together. So the suppression of learning on any type of identity seems to be in a direction that's not aligned with educators who are truly trying to develop people.

How would you respond to supporters of the ban saying that the class is indoctrination?

I would say that just because you don't like something doesn't mean that it's not education. And again, I don't understand how you can separate the history of one particular group from American history, particularly when you think about indigenous people and the dispossession that they experience, and then African people what the enslavement that they experience. So without understanding those, you can't have a near complete or complete education of U.S. history. So I think you have to understand that any community and sub community within the larger have to have an understanding of the group.

NEWS BRIEFS

QUICK TAKES ON STORIES YOU MIGHT HAVE MISSED THIS WEEK

1. N.C. Governor visits ABSS school, honors National School Counseling Week

Gov. Roy Cooper spoke with B. Everett Jordan Elementary guidance counselor Meredith Draughn, who is the American School Counselor Association's 2023 national school counselor of the year

Sophie Rosenthal
Elon News Network | @SophRosenthal

Gov. Roy Cooper honored National School Counseling Week at B. Everett Jordan Elementary, where 2023 national school counselor of the year Meredith Draughn works.

School counselors from across the Alamance Burlington School System and fourth graders at the school were invited to hear the governor speak in Graham Tuesday afternoon. In his speech, Cooper said he will allocate more funding to public school systems to prioritize better counseling in his budget proposal later this month.

"We need ... better pay for all of our educators, more counselors, more psychologists, more social workers, more people who understand that we need to make sure we're paying attention to the whole child," Cooper said in his speech.

Draughn, guidance counselor at B. Everett Jordan Elementary, was named the 2023 national school counselor of the year by the American School Counselor Association. Draughn said she's excited to use this honor to advocate for more school counseling across both North Carolina and the country.

2. Elon University men's tennis team sweeps home opener

Phoenix defeats NCCU 7-0 for first win of season

Celsey McMahon
Elon News Network

The Elon University men's tennis team swept North Carolina Central University on Sunday, winning 7-0 in its first home match. This is Elon's first win of the season after losing against Rice and Wake Forest to start the season.

To open the match, Elon won the doubles point with back-to-back

victories. Junior Daniel Martin and freshman Oskar Antinheimo won 6-2 before senior Nicholas Condos and junior Ben Zipay matched them by winning 6-2.

Elon followed up its strong doubles performance by breezing through singles, starting with freshman Ahmed Hosni, who won 6-0, 6-0. He was followed by Condos, who won 6-0, 6-1. Martin clinched the match for Elon, scoring the fourth point by winning 6-0, 6-2 against Central's Sebastian Pino.

"It could've been tough if we weren't focused and concentrated," Martin said. "But it was nice to get a win at home.

Hopefully, we can take it forward."

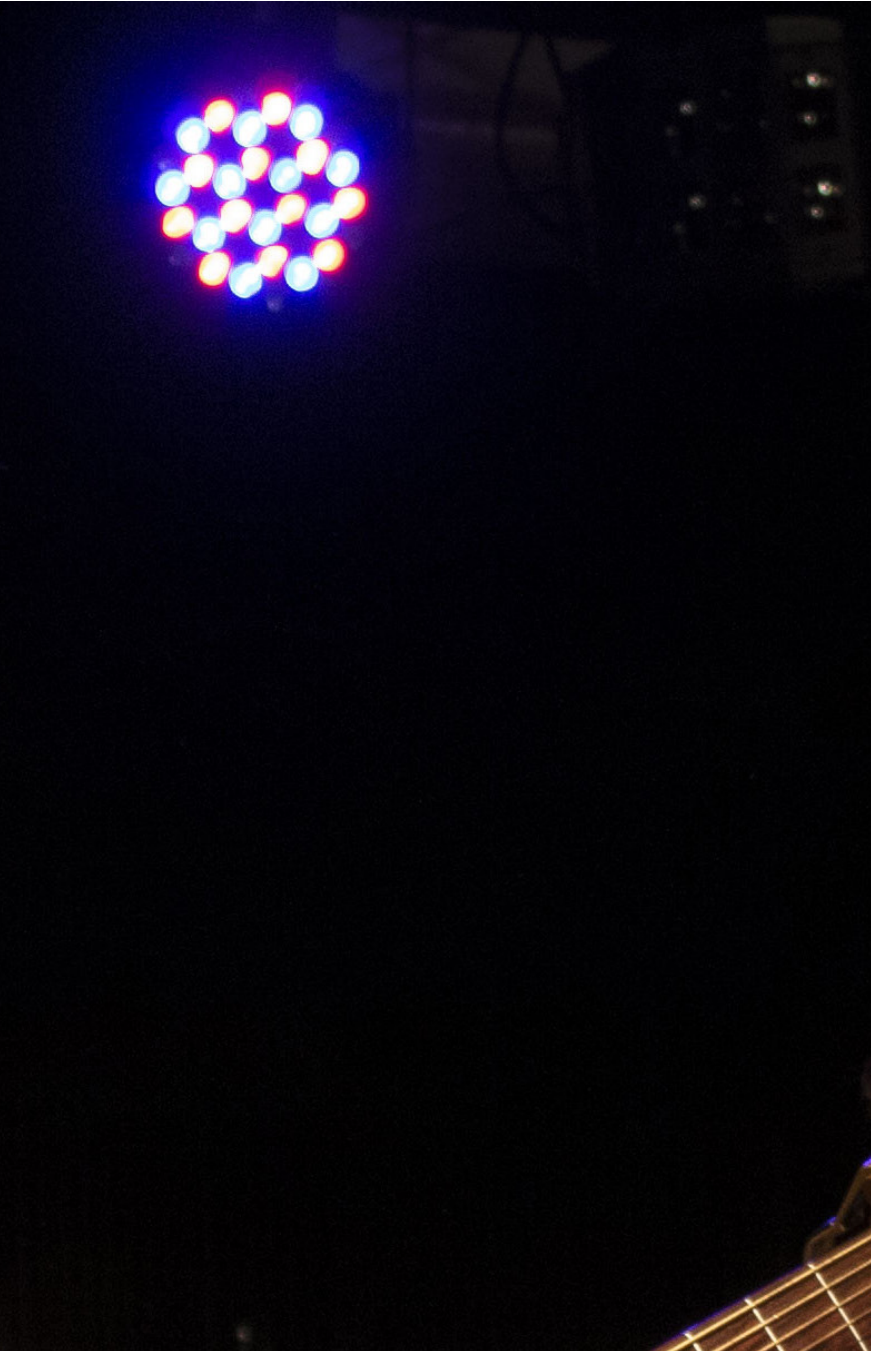
Freshmen Antinheimo, Hosni and Veljko Krstic all finished out their matches with big wins as the only freshmen in Elon's lineup. Antinheimo won 6-1, 6-1 and Krstic 6-2, 6-2. The freshman trio has combined for five singles victories in Elon's last two matches.

"I feel like our guys were really dialed in from beginning to end, and I was impressed with that," head coach Michael Leonard said. "Sometimes, you get in these situations where you lose focus and next thing you know you're in a war with some players."



Sophomore Lucas McKeown sings under the colored lights Feb. 1 in Taphouse. McKeown has been singing since he was 3 years old, starting with “Sweet Escape” by Gwen Stefani and is a guitarist and vocalist for Thistle Ridge Band.

BETSY SCHLEHUBER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER



Elon freshman guard Raven Preston shoots a layup in Colonial Athletic Association play against NC A&T on Feb. 3. The Phoenix beat the Aggies 63-56, updating Elon's conference record to 3-9.

ANTHONY BAMFORD | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER



Senior Nicholas Campbell sets up for a backhand during his singles match against North Carolina Central University on Feb. 5 at the Jimmy Powell Tennis Center. Campbell won 6-3, 6-2 as Elon won 7-0.

CELSEY MCMAHON | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER



Dogs and cats are available for adoption for \$14 from Feb. 4 to 25 at Burlington Animal Services. The shelter also offers a Dog Day Out program where people can adopt a dog for the day and interact with them throughout the day.

JACK SEEDS | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

AI software spreads among university police departments

AI | from cover

According to NBC News, UNC paid \$73,500 for a three-year geofencing software contract, in which state investigators and college police used it to collect personal cell phone information from antiracism protestors prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In July 2020, the Electronic Frontier Foundation and the Reynolds School of Journalism at University of Nevada, Reno launched a database of more than 7,000 surveillance technologies deployed by law enforcement agencies across the U.S. Through the database, the EFF reported that college campuses are implementing a “surprising number of surveillance technologies more common to metropolitan areas that experience high levels of violent crime.”

Some of these technologies include bodycam footage, drones, automated license plate readers, social media monitoring, biometric identification, gunshot detection and video analytics.

Senior Hailey Crawford, who is majoring in economic consulting and minoring in computer science, conducted data mining and machine learning research on surveillance last spring and said the use of AI softwares by universities can be largely positive without much risk to personal privacy.

“You have to think about you’re being monitored anyway,” Crawford said. “In terms of social

media, I think that these algorithms are already being used to target against you. ... You just have to be careful in what you’re posting everywhere.”

Yet, both LeMire and Crawford said they feel the practical use of AI softwares is not yet ready for the present day. Through her research, Crawford said her biggest finding was that when scanning for potential crimes, threats or repeating offenses, AI held inherent biases for minority groups.

Since AI software is typically developed from existing databases, Crawford emphasized that racial minority groups are profiled more frequently — often because of skewed population demographics and higher incarceration rates. Especially with the majority of Elon’s community being white and Christian, Crawford said she worries about the effectiveness of such programs if they were to ever be implemented at Elon.

“In some ways, it would be useful to know who’s wearing or doing what, but obviously then it comes into cases of what is privacy and does that make me feel safer?” Crawford said. “Or is that going to end up targeting certain people or certain things?”

LeMire and Crawford also both expressed concern about the cost of implementing AI softwares, as LeMire estimated that a high quality AI software contract could cost the university up to \$80,000 a year. As a student, Crawford said she would be worried about how much a contract of that nature

would raise tuition.

While LeMire said he could see AI software being implemented at Elon at some point in the future, he emphasized that the university does not currently have any concrete plans in the works.

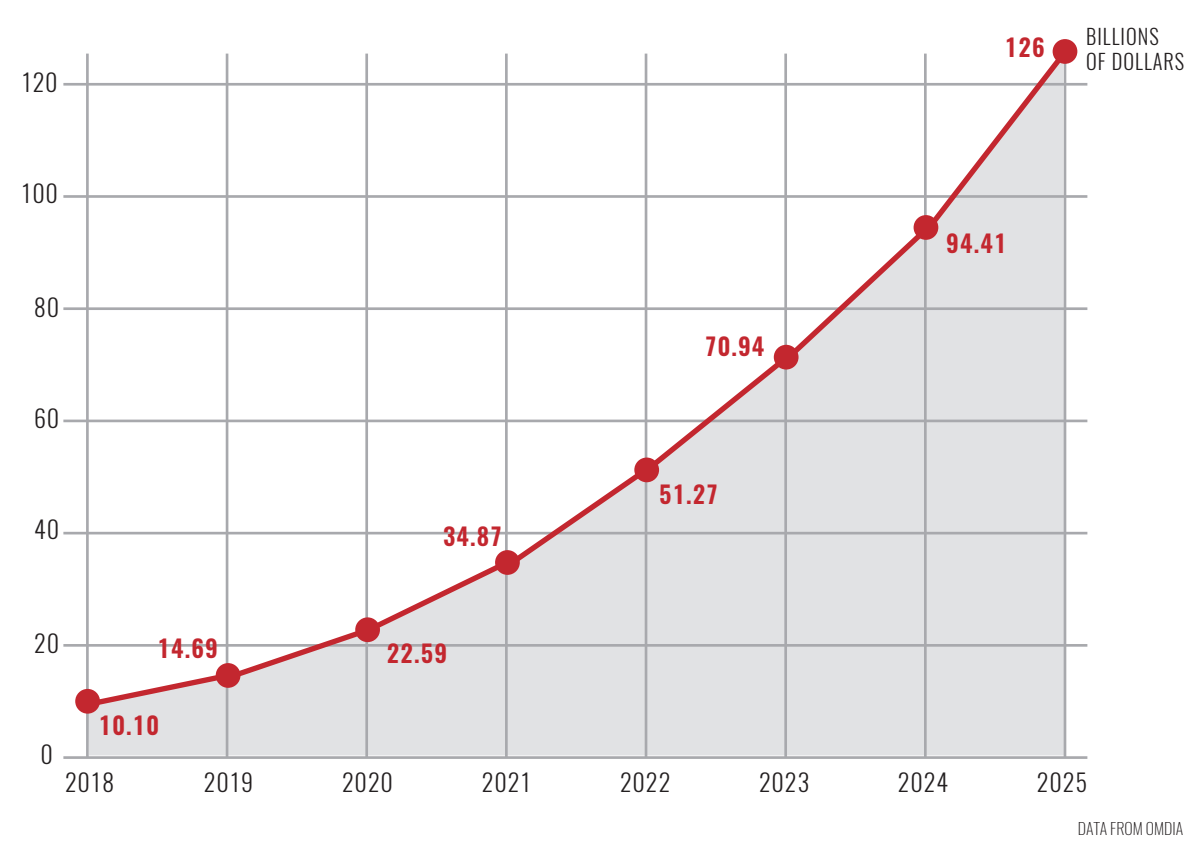
“I think the pros outweigh the cons,” LeMire said. “Artificial intelligence is still a little bit on the new side, I’d rather somebody work out the bugs for us.”

In order to begin opening the Elon community up to the idea of AI software, Crawford said she believes Elon should incorporate more back-end or behind the scenes AI courses into its STEM curriculum. Not only did Crawford say she thinks this will better prepare students for a very important part of the world’s future, but she also said it might help ease general fears and confusions if

people can better understand how it works.

“I think the awareness about AI in general is good and how it has negative aspects in terms of privacy and data collection,” Crawford said. “But also, if it can form the next cancer solving drug or can cure cancer without having to go through years and years of research methods, ... I think that it can be really powerful.”

Artificial intelligence software market revenue worldwide 2018-2025
Revenues from the artificial intelligence (AI) software market worldwide from 2018 to 2025 (in billion U.S. dollars)



Elon students, alumni selected as Fulbright semifinalists

12 semifinalists compete for nearly 1,900 grants awarded by U.S. student program

Claire Schoenfeld
Elon News Network

Twelve Elon students and alumni have been selected as semifinalists for the 2023-24 Fulbright U.S. Student Program. The Fulbright Student Program provides students, recent graduates and graduate students opportunities to study, research and work around the world.

“I think if not the single most, one of the most transformative experiences I’ve had at Elon was applying for these Fulbright fellowships,” senior Hugh Goldstein said.

The Fulbright U.S. Student Program annually awards roughly 1,900 grants in various fields of study. Students, recent graduates and graduate students compete for opportunities to undertake international graduate studies, advanced research and teaching worldwide.

This year’s semifinalists from Elon are Goldstein, JoyceLyn Bentley ’22, Heeba Chergui ’22, Pierce Johnson ’22, Emily Katz



Senior Hugh Goldstein (left), 2023-24 Fulbright Student Program semifinalist, discusses his class schedule for the upcoming semester with senior classmate Gabriela Rivas-De Leon (right).

’22, Alexis “Austin” Moore ’22, Morgane Smith ’22 and seniors Madeline Fayne, Louisa Malchodi, Samantha Schwamberger, Natalie Triche and Rebecca “Emerson” Wells.

“I actually had no intention of applying for Fulbright. ... I was more interested in the Watson Fellowship,” Goldstein said. “But for me, it’s turned into

a really intentional period of time where I have to think about what have I done for the past four years, and really the past 21 years of my life, that make me a really competitive candidate.”

The Fulbright Program, founded in 1946, is the flagship international education-based exchange program sponsored by the U.S. government.

The program is designed to expand participants’ perspectives through academic and professional growth opportunities and cross-cultural encounters. Recipients of Fulbright grants are selected on the basis of academic or professional merit and ability, in order to advance the Fulbright aim through intercultural adaptation

among other personal qualifications.

Many students who apply to Fulbright choose to do so through the university they attend or have graduated from. At Elon, 22 faculty and staff from a range of departments, such as policy studies, arts administration, spanish and communication design, preside over a Fulbright Committee. The

committee assists with application reviews and conducts interviews and evaluations of all Fulbright applicants who chose to apply through the university.

For semifinalist Pierce Johnson ’22, Ann Cahill — a member of Elon’s Fulbright Committee — was the driving force behind his decision to apply.

“I was actually first urged to apply for the Fulbright between my junior and senior years by one of my philosophy mentors, Dr. Cahill, who would eventually become my Fulbright application advisor,” Johnson wrote in an email to Elon News Network. “While I wasn’t able to apply between junior and senior year, Dr. Cahill kept encouraging me to apply after I graduated. I knew the Fulbright process would help me with my graduate school applications, so I figured why not try for a Fulbright grant and see what comes out of it.”

As semi finalists, students and alumni have been recommended by the National Screening Committee of the Institute of International Education for final consideration for a Fulbright award. They will be notified of their final award status this spring beginning in late March.



College Board makes major changes to AP African American Studies curriculum

Topics such as the Black Lives Matter movement and critical race theory are no longer required in courses

Madison Powers
Elon News Network

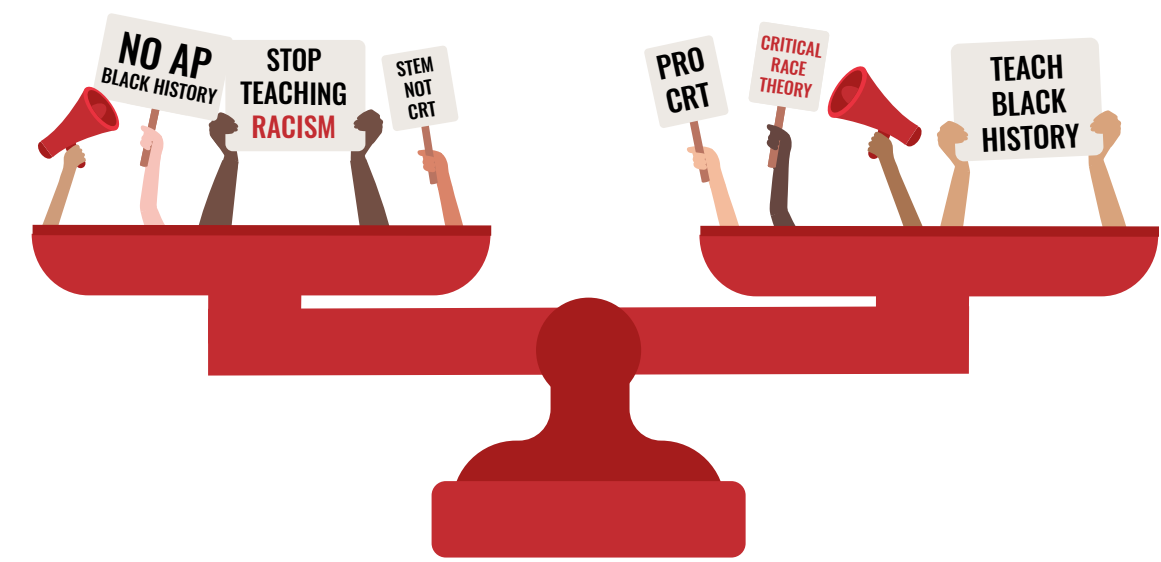
The College Board released a stripped-down curriculum for its new Advanced Placement African American Studies course, removing topics like critical race theory on Feb. 1 — the start of Black History Month.

The course was first announced in August 2022 and received political backlash, especially from Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, who said he would ban the curriculum. However, a statement from the College Board shows that the organization planned to cut certain topics before DeSantis announced that Florida would not teach the course.

Elon University senior Christina Carr, president of the university's Black Student Union, said she was not surprised by this decision.

"My reaction was not one of surprise or shock. It was something that was expected in a way. I think that in 2020, there was a lot of discourse of Black Lives Matter and wanting to really support Black and brown bodies," Carr said. "I think a lot of that has gone away."

The new curriculum makes contemporary topics including the Black Lives Matter movement



optional to teach nationwide and omits Black female writers like Audre Lorde and Gloria Jean Watkins, who goes by pen name "bell hooks," though these authors and others will be available as optional secondary sources.

Carr said this updated curriculum will affect discussion in and out of the classroom.

"I think that it's going to decrease how much different teachers are going to talk about issues about race and also other identity based discrimination. I think that it's going to lead into also discrediting a lot of what people may learn outside of the classroom and what they hear in the news," Carr said.

She said that this will have an effect on freshmen's transition into college.

"We're just going to see a lot of unlearning that students

have to do whenever they get to university," Carr said. "It is a little bit harder for students to learn those things in college because it's going to be their first time hearing about it."

Carr said that while the university has work to do, Black history classes are available to students who seek them out.

Elon University offers an African and African American Studies minor and is planning to have a diversity, equity and inclusion course requirement — beginning with the class of 2027.

Naeemah Clark — the coordinator for Core Forums, Collaboration and Diversity Initiatives in the Core Curriculum — helped lead the initiative for this course requirement.

She said that after summer 2020, when the Black Lives Matter movement grew nationwide,

there was a lot of discussion on social media from Elon students and alumni about their lack of preparation from the university.

Clark said that many people wrote on social media about how they had not discussed racism during their time in school.

"We are not ready to have these hard conversations. We don't ever talk about racial inequity. We talked about globalization, we talk about sustainability. We never talk about racism. Why do we never do that?" Clark said, quoting social media posts from students and alumni.

Clark said that she formed a committee with five other faculty members to address this need. With the help of President Book and the provost at the time, Aswani Voley, they proposed changes to the university core curriculum.

"Students are asking for this. Alumni are asking for this. And clearly society needs it," Clark said.

In May 2022, Elon University faculty voted to add equitable thinking to the core learning goals and require a course focused on racial equity.

"My goal is that when Elon students graduate, they are a part of a solution and not a part of a problem," Clark said. "Whatever the background — students of color from marginalized identities, white students, whoever — that they see where something is not right, where something isn't happening fairly for a group of people, and they have the skillset to try to remedy that inequity."

It has not been decided whether the university will accept the AP African American Studies course, but it would count as a 1000-level course. Clark said that it will be up to Keshia Wall, the African and African-American Studies coordinator and the dean of arts and sciences, as to if the university will accept AP credit for the course.

The AER course will not be required for current students unless they change to the 2023 course catalog.

Carr said that this decision is telling of the state of education in America.

"There's this lack of wanting to take a risk too, and to step out and actually make real change in the world," Carr said. "I think it shows a lot about who matters."

Provost and vice president for Academic Affairs discusses goals for the future, tuition

Rebecca Kohn comes to Elon from Arcadia University in Pennsylvania

Kyra O'Connor
Executive Director | @ko_reports

Elon University's new Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Rebecca Kohn rounded out her first month at Elon at the start of the spring semester. Kohn comes to Elon from Arcadia University in Pennsylvania, where she served as the senior vice provost and dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

"People have been so welcoming and that's been making the transition to the university so much easier," Kohn said. "I really appreciate

everyone's great attitudes in terms of bringing me into spaces to talk with people and just have conversations and get to know them."

Kohn said she heard of Elon University's reputation as a student-centered institution and is "completely in agreement" with the university's priorities.

"Everything we do, no matter what level or what office we're working in at the university, it all feeds back into the student experience," Kohn said.

As the chief academic officer and chief operating officer at Elon University, Kohn said she is working on a number of initiatives, including what the university's curriculum will look like in the future.

Former Provost Aswani Voley was in the position last year when

Elon University raised tuition by 9% for the 2022–23 year, and Kohn said the university wants to be mindful that Elon is an "affordable program" for students.

Kohn said she will wait for an "official announcement" from the university regarding whether or not Elon will raise tuition in the upcoming year.

"In terms of the tuition increase, that's something that will happen overtime as costs fluctuate, as we're doing exciting new things here at the institution," Kohn said.

For students who are struggling to afford tuition, or who may be worried about a potential increase next year, Kohn said she encourages students to work with financial aid to find support.



CLARE GRANT | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Rebecca Kohn, the new provost and vice president for Academic Affairs, was selected in November and started her role in early January.

May 26, 2022
Aswani Voley leaves Elon University. Voley was the provost of Elon University from 2019 to 2022, and left his job at Elon to become chancellor of University of North Carolina at Wilmington.

Sept. 30, 2022
The provost search committee announces three potential candidates who will interview for the position at Elon University. The three candidates are Rebecca Kohn, Elizabeth Sayrs, and Robert Aguirre.

Oct. 4, 2022
First presentation takes place.

Oct. 5, 2022
Second presentation takes place.

Oct. 6, 2022
Final presentation takes place.

Nov. 3, 2022
Rebecca Kohn is named Elon University's next provost and vice president for academic affairs.

Jan. 2, 2023
Kohn's first day as Elon University's new provost and vice president for academic affairs.

Timeline of Rebecca Kohn's Hiring Process

Link Transit in preliminary steps to coming to Elon

Elon town council voted to consider including six stops of the free transit system

Abigail Hobbs & Joseph Navin
@abigailhobbs @josephanavin

At its Jan. 23 regular meeting, the Elon Town Council voted to continue looking into the option to extend the blue line of Burlington's fare-free Link Transit bus system, adding six stops in the town of Elon.

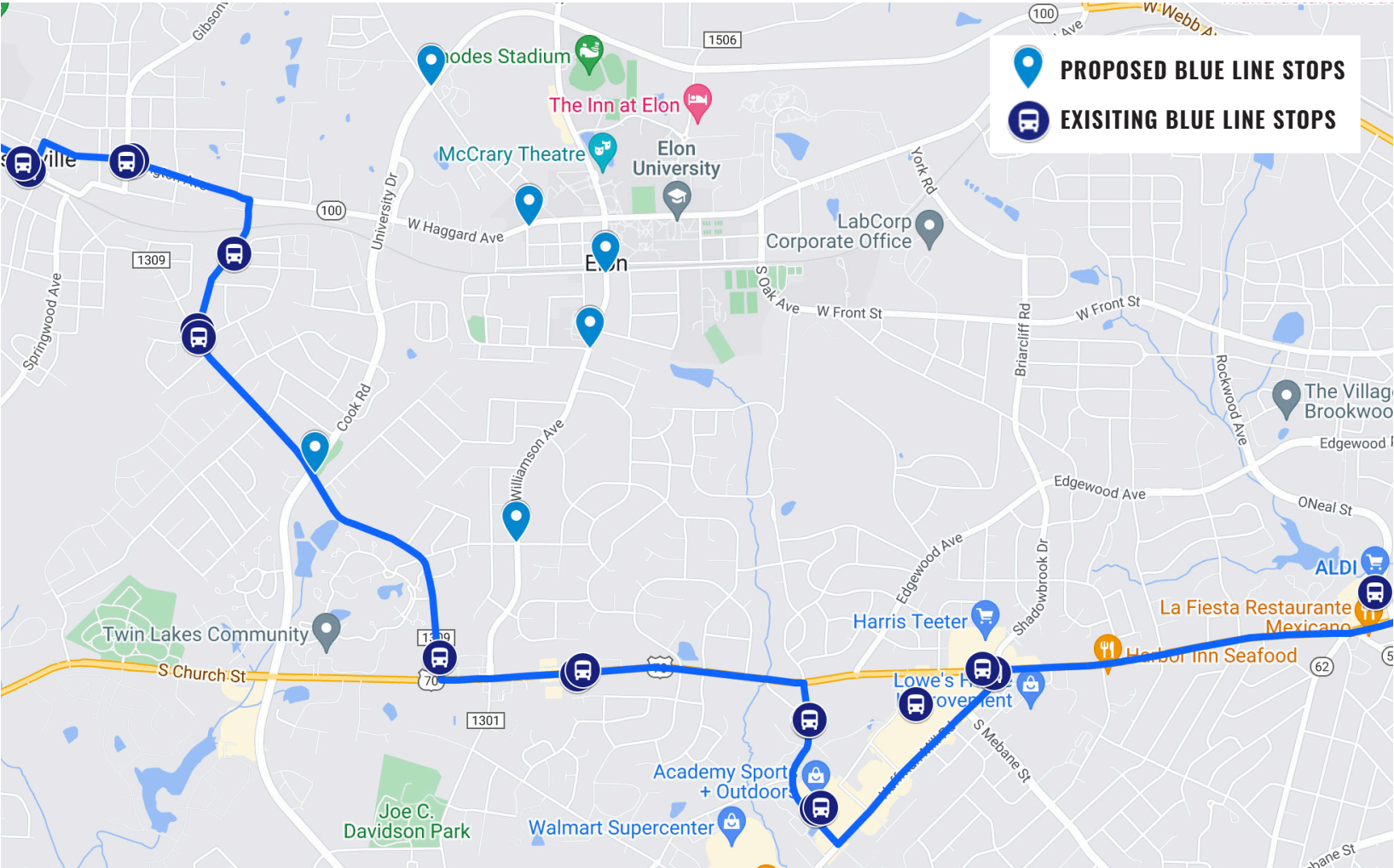
The Link Transport proposal would mark the first time in 62 years that Elon has been linked with train service using public transport since the Elon College station, served by the Southern Railway, closed in 1961. The Elon College depot once stood on the corner of Lebanon and Williamson Avenues.

Currently, the blue line stretches from Gibsonville to downtown Burlington but bypasses Elon entirely. According to Mary Katherine Harward, planner for the town, Elon would pay around \$34,000 for the service extension for one year. Harward said the next steps to bring Link to the town is for her team to finalize the amount of stops that will fit inside the budget.

The six stops are tentatively at South Williamson Avenue and Westgate Drive, South Williamson Avenue and Ball Park Avenue, South Williamson Avenue near Town Hall, West Haggard Avenue and Manning Avenue, University Drive and Manning Avenue, and Westbrook Avenue and University Drive.

"We're just looking forward to hopefully bringing links to service our community," Harward said. "I think it'll be great."

This comes as the North Carolina Department of Transportation recorded the highest ridership in the Piedmont's 32-year history in 2022, serving 522,000 passengers, according to a release published in January.



Map of the proposed Link Transit stops and the current blue line. For a full interactive map visit elonnewsnetwork.com.

"We're tremendously excited by the ridership that we've seen on both the Piedmont and the Carolinian," Deputy Director of the NCDOT Rail Division Matthew Simmons said in October. "We are seeing just really good demand. When we look at that, we think that means we're providing a good service to the citizens of the state."

The Piedmont service, which runs between Charlotte and Raleigh, is jointly operated by NCDOT and Amtrak.

The proposal would also connect Elon with the Holly Hill Mall & Business Center, downtown Burlington and the city's Amtrak station, which is served by Amtrak's Piedmont and Carolinian train routes.

Link has been operating in Burlington and Gibsonville since June 2016, but Elon did not join due to concerns of

low ridership, according to Link interim transit manager John Andoh. Other towns in Alamance County, including Graham and Mebane, also opted not to join the service.

Considering the town's previous concerns about ridership, Harward said when the planning committee first considered bringing the service to Elon, it sent a survey to community members in 2022 to gauge interest.

"We had about 120 responses from all different types of people — people who had cars, who didn't, who would be willing to take the bus," Harward said. "We had a lot of really good opinions and feedback."

Moving forward, Andoh said Burlington's City Council and Elon's Town Council both need to vote for an "interlocal agreement of service."



Link Transit bus driver Sebastian McCullough checks the bus door prior to closing it before the bus departs downtown Burlington on Feb. 4. The bus was operating on Link Transit's blue line, which was given preliminary approval to extend service into Elon during the Jan. 23 meeting of Elon's Town Council. Prior to working for Link Transit, McCullough worked as a bus driver for Elon University's bus service, the Elon Express, formerly called the BioBus.

Opportunities fair to expose students to majors, minors, organizations

SGA event will host staff, students from each department

Abigail Hobbs
Associate Managing Editor | @abigailhobbs

Elon University's Student Government Association is hosting its annual Steven D. House Opportunities Fair from 4 to 6 p.m. Feb. 16 in McKinnon Hall.

According to senior and SGA Academic Relations Committee Chair Curran Gilster, the fair seeks to expose students to majors, minors and other academic organizations.

"We want students to come who may not know what they want to major or minor in, and so we'll have faculty and students from different departments there that they can talk to," Gilster said.

The fair will include stations with professors and students across almost every academic department on campus. Gilster said the inclusion of student representatives is important when learning about what each department entails.

"I think that peer to peer stuff is really valuable because it's sometimes a little intimidating to approach either a faculty or staff member and talk to them," Gilster said. "For students who are interested in how that major, minor or academic program can benefit them while they're at Elon, but even more importantly, once they move into their professional career."

Alexa Morrissey, SGA One Phoenix committee chair and class of 2025 president, said the event is held in the spring semester to give freshmen time to adjust to college and figure out what they are really interested in.

"I think it's just great to be held in the second semester ... because it solidifies more of your interests, because you might come in first semester thinking, 'Oh, I want to do XYZ.' But in reality, you actually want to do ABC or something like that, on those lines," Morrissey said. "So I think second semester really is like the stepping stone for more of your future in college."

Morrissey said that while the event is targeted toward freshmen, it

will benefit all students looking for new opportunities.

"I also know a lot of sophomores and juniors who are always looking for new opportunities on campus, who maybe didn't because of COVID purposes, or just cancellations," Morrissey said. "I think that even sophomores and juniors can have a chance to attend and see what they can do across campus."

Students can also learn about other campus opportunities such as involvement with the Global Education Center, Media Services, Writing Center and even undergraduate research.

"They're good resources, but a student may not always know who to talk to," Gilster said. "It's bringing the vast array of different academic offerings here at Elon into one place for students."

IF YOU GO
Where: McKinnon Hall
When: Feb. 16 | 4 to 6 p.m.



LIFESTYLE

A LOOK INTO THISTLE RIDGE BAND



Thistle Ridge Band is signed to Limelight Records and plans on moving past their usual covers, bringing Elon students together

Betsy Schlehuber
Lifestyle Editor | @betsyschlehuber

(From left) Shawn Kelly, Lucas McKeown, Peter Collins, Cajetan Evans, Quinn Tuff and Julian Brown of Thistle Ridge Band. Kelly made his debut performance with the band Friday, Feb. 3 at Oak House.

Elon University sophomore Lucas McKeown's grandfather owns a farm in Mississippi called Thistle Ridge. Decades later, McKeown would found an ever-changing band of the same name.

Thistle Ridge Band is a cover band signed to Limelight Records — Elon's on-campus record company. McKeown said band members have changed overtime, but right now, he is on acoustic guitar and vocals; sophomore Peter Collins and senior Quinn Tuff are on electric guitar; sophomore Julian Brown is on bass and vocals; junior Shawn Kelly is on keyboard and junior Cajetan Evans is on drums.

The band mainly performs covers of classic rock and country songs such as "Lookin' Out My Back Door" by Creedence Clearwater Revival and "Polk Salad Annie" by Elvis Presley, but McKeown said the band "draws influences from just about anybody," especially with Brown's knowledge of music.

Despite Thistle Ridge's love of doing covers,

McKeown said original music is in the works, spanning many genres such as country, folk and "Maroon 5 style pop." At its Feb. 3 Oak House performance, Thistle Ridge debuted an original song titled "Te Cantaré," which translates from Spanish to "I Will Sing To You."

McKeown said the song is inspired by old country music, and he and Brown wrote it in Spanish because they wanted to "try something new." Two other sneak peeks of original music have been posted to McKeown's TikTok page — @mississippiluke — and the comments sections contain all positive feedback.

"You can't really make a career off of just covers, you have to write your own stuff, so that's what we're trying to do," McKeown said. "It should be pretty fun."

Thistle Ridge Band was formed last spring after McKeown left his previous band and met Collins at the Limelight open mic night. After Collins's performance, McKeown came up to him and asked if he wanted to play at the Oak

House together. Collins accepted immediately.

After a semester of playing together, Thistle Ridge Band took a break for the summer. This past fall, Brown was introduced to McKeown by the president of Limelight — senior Keith Montena — after his previous band, Judy Chicago, ended. Brown said he became their bassist quickly.

Brown said he has been playing guitar since he was 10 years old but has always been surrounded by music — especially growing up with his grandparents who owned an electric and acoustic guitar. Brown originally got accepted into the jazz guitar program at Berklee College of Music but ultimately chose Elon instead.

"I was about to sign with them and go to college, but then I visited Elon and saw their studios and all the people here, and I was like, 'This might be a better gig than Berklee,'" Brown said.

Brown said his favorite part about being

in Thistle Ridge is being around the band members and laughing with them.

McKeown also said performing and singing in front of a crowd "is the most fun." McKeown's musical journey started when he was just 3 years old with his love for singing.

"The earliest I remember was when 'Sweet Escape' by Gwen Stefani had just come out," McKeown said. "I was in a retail store with my parents, and my dad said I was singing and I couldn't stop."

Besides singing, McKeown said he's been playing piano since he was five and picked up rhythm guitar a little over a year ago. Collins, on the other hand, started playing music his freshman year of high school with electric guitar. Collins said he has always loved listening to music throughout his life.

While he loves performing for people and seeing their enjoyment, Collins said he's in Thistle Ridge Band for the music and doesn't have many expectations beyond that.

"If we bring people together and have some kind of following or community, that's awesome. If we don't, that's fine," Collins said. "I'm just here to play some music and have some fun."

Brown also said he has a strong passion for music because of how it connects people and he can always turn to it "when times get tough."

"Without borders or anything, people just come together when music is playing, and I've seen that happen," Brown said.

McKeown's goals for Thistle Ridge Band mirror Brown's musical interests. Not only does McKeown want success for the band, but he said he wants there to be a space where Elon students can come together and watch Thistle Ridge perform once a week.

"I have a dream where Elon becomes this sort of 'band central,'" McKeown said. "It would be like, 'Let's go to Elon and start a band!'"

McKeown hopes Thistle Ridge could inspire other students to form their own bands. He also said he has plans for the band to perform at locations outside of Elon, such as Chapel Hill and Greensboro. McKeown said he believes success will come to them.

"We just got to get there," McKeown said. "Once we start putting out our own stuff, it's really about what all we write and the energy we bring."

Thistle Ridge Band can be found on Instagram @thistleridgeband, and McKeown's work, in the band and beyond, can be found on TikTok @mississippiluke. The band performs at the Oak House two Fridays a month. Its next performance is Feb. 24. Admission is free.

ELON WATCHES: "Skinamarink" Shakes Up the Horror Genre

Elon Watches is a column that reviews films and TV shows

Tucker Price
Elon News Network | @tuck_stew

When I first watched this film, I was horrified. For around half of it, I watched "Skinamarink" (2022) through my fingers and from behind my girlfriend's shoulder. The last 20 minutes of the film were excruciating. I practically begged for it to end as horrific images and sounds assaulted my senses.

After a sleepless night, I rushed to buy tickets to see it again — this time with my brother. We both recently got into a genre called "analog horror," and this was right up his alley. My brother, a 31-year-old man who chuckles at even the most disturbing modern horror films, let out a sigh of relief when "Skinamarink" ended.

I love horror films. I live and breathe horror — often going out of my way to find the next big thriller. The only other time I have literally covered my eyes while watching a movie before this was the first time I watched a horror film when I was 11 years old.

For "Skinamarink," it's best if you go in blind. I think that for this film especially, it's important to have a sense of discovery. Don't look at plot synopses, or at Letterboxd reviews, don't look at anything — not even the rest of this review.

But if what I have said already about the

film does not convince you of how important it is for horror fans to see this, keep reading.

The debut feature-length film of Canadian director Kyle Edward Ball, "Skinamarink" is an experimental horror film following two children — Kevin, played by Lucas Paul, and Kaylee, played by Dali Rose Tetreault — after their parents, played by Jaime Hill and Ross Paul, disappear inexplicably along with their house's doors and windows.

When I say "experimental horror," I mean it. The film is shot the opposite of traditionally. While other horror films follow the actions of the main characters directly, "Skinamarink" follows them indirectly, often using seemingly random shots of the house in which the film takes place to advance the plot.

For this reason, the film is hard to follow. "Skinamarink" does not hold the audience's hand, and it's much better off because of that. If you are not paying extremely close attention, you will get lost. The audience is led to decipher what is going on in the film, often through audio cues and shadows.

"Skinamarink" is a puzzle for the theater to solve, and the more focused they become on the puzzle, the harder the horror hits. You are sucked into the film's events, watching for every movement, looking in every shadow until you find something — and at that moment, you will have made a terrifying discovery.

But because you are so focused, when a jump scare happens — however rare — it really works. I audibly yelled at a specific

jump scare in the film. I don't think I have ever done that, and yes, it was super embarrassing.

The film does not rely on jump scares, which I admire in a horror film, especially when it can scare me without them. That is partially because of its presentation. It has the feel of an old VHS tape, even though it is not a found-footage film. Rather than something out of "The Blair Witch Project," it feels like the videotape from "The Ring." It's a cursed-feeling film about children practically being tortured by an unknown force, and that is enough to make me uneasy.

However, I do not think "Skinamarink" will work for everyone, and it might not work in every environment. Both times I watched this film, it was basically in perfect conditions. The theaters were utterly silent — except for when I screamed that one time — and I sat front and center both times.

Apart from a limited theater release, this film was released exclusively on Shudder — a streaming service dedicated to horror. I'm not sure if the film will have the same effect on a smaller screen where you can pause at any time, but there is a solution, and it might make the experience better than in theaters.

If you want an interesting horror experience, watch it completely in the dark with whatever headphones you have. If you can help it, do not pause the movie, no matter what is happening on screen. For a little extra spice, if you have a closet or something in your room, keep it open — I guarantee you will want to get up and close it within the first

30 minutes.

Bottom line, this is one of the best horror experiences I've ever had, and I would recommend it to anyone who wants a new kind of horror experience.

FINAL SCORE: 10/10



COURTESY OF IMDB

SPORTS

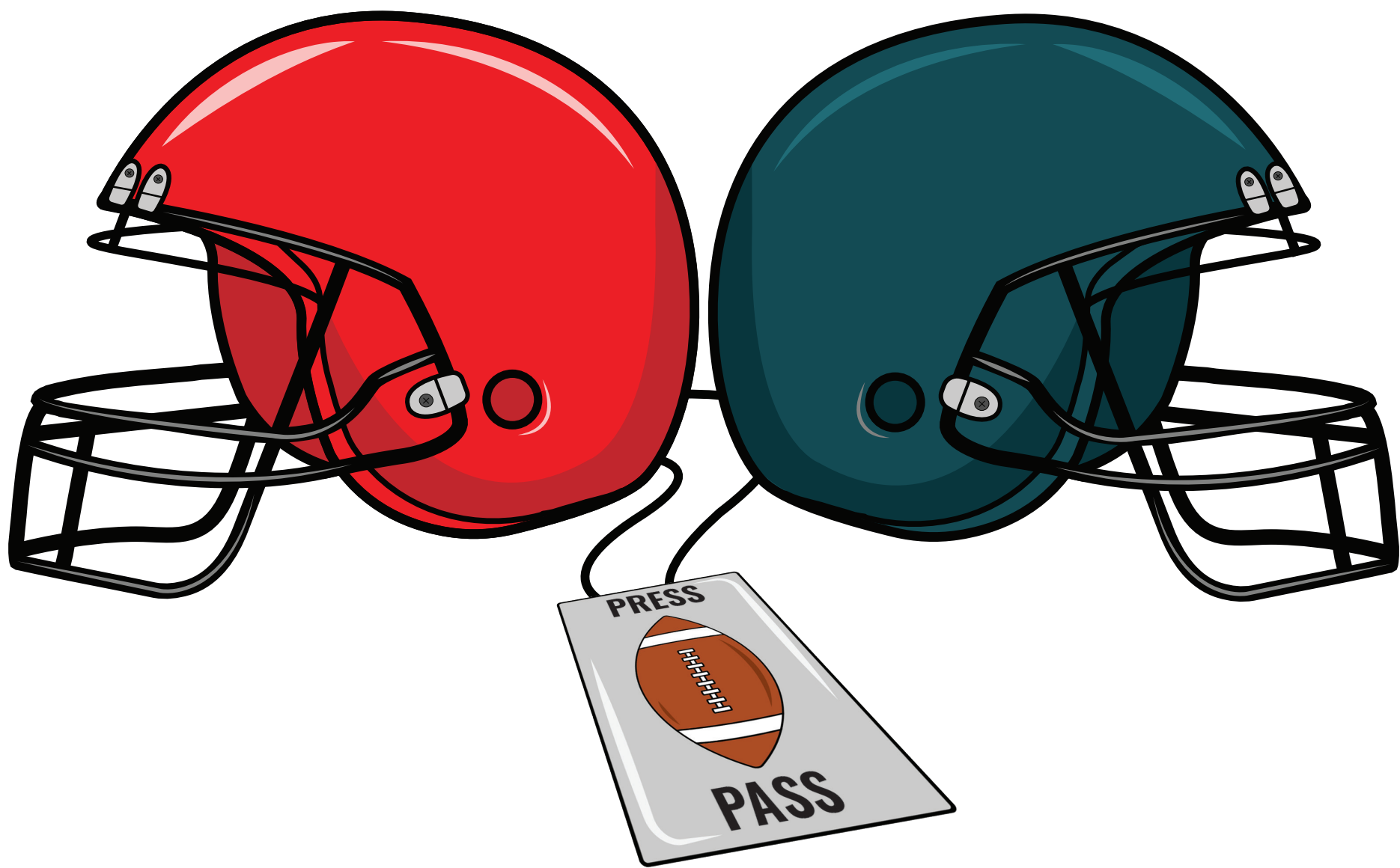
Elon Softball Classic
Tournament | Hunt Softball
Park

FEB. 10, 11, 12

Elon Womens Lacrosse vs Old
Dominion University | Rudd
Field

FEB. 11 AT NOON

ELON ALUMNA COVERS 2023 SUPER BOWL



ERIN MARTIN | DESIGNER

Former Pendulum, Edge and NPPA photographer Caroline Brehman will be shooting the game for Eagles

Sydney Spencer
Sports Editor | @SydneyASpencer

Super Bowl Sunday is always an exciting day for most Elon students, but this year's game has a special connection.

Elon University alumna Caroline Brehman '18 will not only be attending the 2023 Super Bowl game between the Kansas City Chiefs and the Philadelphia Eagles on Feb.12 in Phoenix, Arizona, but she will also be on the sidelines working as a photojournalist for the Eagles through European Pressphoto Agency.

Brehman said she is excited to not only experience the game, but to also have the opportunity to capture the major sporting event.

"I get to be there and have one of the best seats in the house," Brehman said. "It's things like that where I just feel incredibly lucky to experience it and get to tell the game through my own way and story through my lens, so it's definitely a privilege."

Brehman said she first found her passion for photography in high school when she took introductory photo courses, but she never imagined that she would turn her passion into a career.

"I didn't think I could make a career out of it," Brehman said. "I always thought it was something I could just do on the side."

When she first arrived at Elon, Brehman

said she planned to major in psychology. But after attending the fall organization fair her freshman year, her path changed. Brehman connected with the National Press Photographers Association and was able to reignite her passion for photography.

Randy Piland, professor of communication design and adviser of NPPA, said he is proud of her for finding her passion.

"She's the one that discovered it and she then set out to do this type of work," Piland said. "I really take very little credit for it because it's really her ambition that drove her to do this. All I like to do is to help facilitate that by giving her opportunities and trying to connect her with the right people."

The communication design student left her mark on many communications programs throughout her four years at Elon, including photography roles for student-run magazine, The Edge, and The Pendulum.

"What I really love about Elon's communication school is that they really encourage you to get hands-on experience," Brehman said. "Obviously learning things in the classroom is very important, but doing organizations like The Edge and The Pendulum really got me out there and helped to build my portfolio."

Over the course of her career, Brehman interned and worked all over the country pursuing photojournalism, beginning with an internship at The Burlington Times News. She also interned at the Las Vegas Review Journal and worked for Roll Call in Washington D.C., covering Capitol Hill. Piland said he is proud of everything she has accomplished in her career at such a young age.

"I think she is a perfect candidate for all those opportunities because she has the personality, she has the skills and the desire to really advance in what she's doing," Piland said. "When those doors open, she's there and she's stepping in to take advantage of every opportunity she can. It's been amazing what she's done from being in Washington and working for the congressional Roll Call publication doing politicians, to now, where she's doing a lot of everything."

Brehman currently works as one of two photographers covering the Los Angeles area for the international wire service EPA Images, serving a widespread audience. Originally from Wayne, Pennsylvania, which is about 30 minutes away from Philadelphia, she is even more excited to get back into sports photography and cover her hometown team, the Eagles.



I JUST FEEL INCREDIBLY LUCKY TO EXPERIENCE IT AND GET TO TELL THE GAME THROUGH MY OWN WAY AND STORY THROUGH MY LENS.

CAROLINE BREHMAN
EUROPEAN PRESSPHOTO AGENCY
PHOTOGRAPHER

"I've always liked sports and been a big fan of sports," Brehman said. "I like going to sporting games and I really like the atmosphere. Shooting sports helps you to be a better photographer, it improves your reaction and your skill sets, it just helps sharpen all those things."

Piland said that it's important to be able to capture many different areas of photography when working as a photojournalist, which is also a trait he sees in Brehman.

"I think it's very important to be well rounded as a person in photojournalism because you deal with something different almost every day," Piland said. "If you're just one type of photographer like a wedding photographer, then your world is all about weddings. When you're a photojournalist, you're almost a little bit of everything, and you might do things that you wouldn't normally do in your daily work."

After the Super Bowl, Brehman will be covering more national events, such as the Oscars, and is looking forward to what's in store for the future of her career.

"I don't really know what the future holds but at this point in my career I'm just trying to push myself to grow as a photographer and keep pushing myself and putting myself out there and in different situations," Brehman said.

MOSELEY WATCH PARTY

Where:
Moseley Student Center
When:
Feb. 12 at 6 p.m.