

Old Gold & Black

WAKE FOREST'S STUDENT NEWSPAPER SINCE 1916

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"Covers the campus like the magnolias"

wfuogb.com



Katie Fox/Old Gold & Black

Facing a new influx of patients in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, the University Counseling Center (UCC) is struggling with staffing shortages, most recently the departure of two counselors.

Another two counselors leave the UCC over break

As the counseling center is forced to turn students away, there is no timeline for hiring new staff

BY CATE PITTERLE

News Editor
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As the University Counseling Center (UCC) continues to struggle with funding cuts and an influx of new patients, two more counselors left the office over winter break.

The office has been feeling the strain for months, often unable to accommodate students for long-term treatment because of a lack of counselors to address demand. In July 2020, the *Old Gold & Black*

reported that a Change.org petition imploring the university to fully staff the office and hire more counselors to meet demand gathered over 500 signatures. However, that petition has not inspired any change at the UCC.

"I've been seen [at the UCC] for a year and they told me last semester that they can no longer have me as a patient because of the lack of counselors and the influx of new patients," said junior Dana Hindi. "I feel for them. I really do. It must be difficult to get a constant stream of people struggling in this pandemic and not have the staff to take care of them all. The UCC is an essential service and it's unfortunate that these were the cards they were dealt. I do appreciate their hard work, though."

Counselors Joshua Ziesel and Jillian Neill left the office to pursue other work. According to letters sent by the UCC's acting director, Daniel Paredes, Ziesel left on Dec. 15 and Neill on Jan. 15.

Paredes says that the office has been approved to search for two additional counselors to fill those positions. The office does not have a definitive timeline for when those new counselors will be hired, adding that the office is currently evaluating what resources are needed to meet client needs. Additionally, the UCC's new permanent director will not take over until this June, delaying the installation of a permanent head for the office. The Provost's Office, which handles staffing at the UCC and other campus programs, did not reply to a request for comment.

See UCC, Page 4

Third pandemic semester begins

Classes started Wednesday on Zoom and in-person, beginning another abnormal semester

BY ALEXANDRA KARLINCHAK

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Wednesday, Jan. 27 marked the first day of class for the spring semester on campus.

The bright weather throughout the day Wednesday mirrored the sunny dispositions of all those walking around campus. Chants of "FDOC" appreciation echoed around the quad and all-over social media.

On Hearn Plaza, students sat at shaded wooden tables, the quiet chatter from their first Zoom class of the semester pouring out into crisp winter air. The sidewalks, while not as populated as they were at the same time a year ago, were still peppered with students and professors walking at varying paces to their respective classes.

Brigid McNamara, a junior economics major, works at the Benson Information Desk and says that in previous semesters, she was used to seeing crowds of people.

See FDOC, Page 6

University tightens COVID-19 restrictions

As COVID-19 cases rise around the country, students return to campus under Orange status

BY AINE PIERRE

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Students returned to Winston-Salem this week after an unprecedented two-month winter break in which COVID-19 cases across the United States skyrocketed. In the last weeks of break, a new, deadlier strand of the virus was detected in the U.S.

University officials, however, were cheered by a number of factors that indicated relative COVID-19 safety in Forsyth County and the student population.

"We kept our eyes on [the public health situation] and had several go or no-go dates that we considered. Some of the things we looked at most carefully were the falling prevalence of COVID-19 in Forsyth County and the fact that our hospital was not stressed at all," said Vice President for Campus Life Penny Rue.

See COVID-19, Page 5



This column represents the views of the *Old Gold & Black* Editorial Board.

Editorial staff embraces changes

A new semester is upon us, and with it comes a plethora of new and exciting changes here at the *Old Gold & Black*. We have welcomed new personnel in nearly every facet of our publication, and are confident that this new staff will maintain the excellent journalistic standards implemented by previous editorial boards.

Our executive board is headed by sophomore Ben Conroy as Print Managing Editor, sophomore Will Zimmerman as Online Managing Editor, and junior Alexandra Karlinchak as Editor-in-Chief. There are plenty of new names to learn among the individual sections as well. First-

“It is our mission to publish pieces that analyze and bring to light those issues that have a tangible impact here on our daily lives in the forest...”

year students Essex Thayer and Christina DeNovio have signed on as Co-Editors for the sports section, with Jake Stuart pitching in as an assistant editor. Editing duties in the News Section will be split between first-years Cate Pitterle and Aine Pierre, sophomores Selinna Tran and Micah Porter will oversee our Life section, and sophomore Connor Mcneely will head up the Opinion section.

As always, everyone here at the OGB is thrilled to have the opportunity to tell stories both to and about the students and faculty of Wake Forest. It is our mission to publish pieces that analyze and bring to light those issues that have a tangible impact here on our daily lives in the forest, while also providing thorough coverage of the important things taking place everywhere else in the world.

But with this new semester comes change as well. Going forward, the *Old Gold & Black* plans to implement several new types of journalistic endeavors including deep-dive reporting, multimedia storytelling

and podcasting to our repertoire. It is our hope that these measures will allow us to expand our audience on campus, and form a deeper and more inclusive relationship with the students, faculty, and staff of Wake Forest.

Finally, we hope that all of you have had a stress-free beginning to the semester. As COVID-19 continues to inspire uncertainty in all of our lives, we wish you a safe and healthy few months here in Winston-Salem. Even amidst considerable chaos, the members of the *Old Gold & Black* are happy to be here, and we can't wait to get back to work.

Old Gold & Black

THE STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF
WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY SINCE 1916

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>> SUBMISSIONS

The OGB welcomes submissions in the form of story tips, columns and letters to the editor. Letters to the editor should be fewer than 500 words, and columns should be around 500 words. Send yours via e-mail to karlae18@wfu.edu the Monday before publication. We reserve the right to edit all letters for length and clarity. No anonymous letters will be printed.

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Deacon Profile: Matt Clifford

BY COOPER SULLIVAN

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Matt Clifford is the Dean of Residence Life and Housing and Assistant Vice President of Campus Life. He has helped direct spring move-in, including efforts to mitigate and track the spread of COVID-19 on campus. He received his Ed.D. from the University of North Florida.

Q: How's move-in going?

It's going pretty well, as far as I can tell. Spring move-in is much different because we have very few new students in the spring and most students don't really have to move back in; they just come back. You've got your keys and everything is in your room, you just return to campus, so it's very passive in our office. That said, all the pre-arrival testing and flu vaccine documentation is having to be navigated around that this time.

Q: Was that one of the biggest concerns, making sure everyone had everything they needed in order?

We knew that after coming back after two months, and with people coming from various locations that we wanted to start the school year off well at a baseline where we felt confident that we were keeping the virus really low in our community and on our campus. So we decided to put these pre-arrival expectations in place: restarting SneezSafe daily symptom monitoring, flu vaccinations, pre-arrival testing and quarantining. Those pieces together would give us the sense to really start the semester off well. For a large majority of students it was relatively easy to navigate and they just breezed on through, but for some, students might have had challenges submitting documentation or getting the right test or thought they submitted flu vaccine documents in the fall when they got it all. They needed to just get it all straightened out.

Q: You are the Dean of Residence Life and Housing and the Assistant Vice President of Campus Life. Can you tell me what your role is between each department and how they are intertwined?

My primary role is being responsible for our Residence Life and Housing program. At Wake Forest, that means being responsible for our campus



Photo courtesy of Wake Forest University

residential program, which is usually housing 4,200 students and working with all our buildings. We have over one million square feet of residence hall, believe it or not, between Deacon Place and the first-year buildings on South Campus and the Quad. That means managing and working with our partners to make sure things are in the best shape for students to have a good experience. That's my primary role. The Deacon OneCard office and physical security technology sits in Residence Life and Housing, so we work closely with a lot of partners across campus so that we have strong physical security and tech to bolster that, whether it's cameras or card readers or panic alarms or anything like that. And the connection to Campus Life really situates with the residential experience being such a central part of the student experience that it puts me into a leadership role.

Q: What have you learned from the fall that you can implement this semester to make sure everyone is safe

but socially engaged while also having a good time?

Yeah, that is a challenge for sure. I'll acknowledge that. One of the things that I would say is that we had a good semester. We finished it the way we started it and that was in-person and on campus. We all need to give each other credit for that. I give the students a lot of credit for navigating the expectations that we had for you so we could stay in person and so we could stay safe, keep the faculty and staff safe and the community at large safe.

One of the things we are trying to do to help students have an engaging experience — hopefully you have had a chance to see Manchester Plaza — is to make an engaging space outside. Students can plan events on Manchester or a small gathering of friends with the fires on. To be able to be with each other and enjoy each other's company, that's really exciting.

We continue to think about our other programming initiatives in terms of

what Campus Recreation has been doing. The Wellbeing Center is introducing a temporary game room that has air hockey, ping pong, cornhole, other games, kind of building on the RecreationGo aspects that happened in the fall as we move things inside.

Q: Incoming students are about to start putting down deposits. What have you been telling them to expect? Have you started the process for what housing in the fall will look like?

We are continuing to take a deliberate project-management approach to planning, so we are working on summer and fall plans right now. What we are doing, at least residentially, is examining what we have learned about our plans, how we've seen the virus spread on campus and how we can adapt our plans. By looking at virus transmission data from the dashboard and layering that on our residence halls, we can see transmission throughout the residence halls and will be able to make changes. Will we be able to open our residence halls as normal, or will we need to continue reduced occupancy in our buildings? We are keeping a close eye on vaccine distribution, so it may be frustrating to some students who want to know what it will look like in the fall. I wish I could tell you, but I think waiting and continuing to evaluate the environment is going to do us some good so we can understand how to take advantage of what the environment is providing and be flexible.

Q: Is there anything else you'd like to add?

Again, the biggest things I would reiterate is that we, across the university, are working really hard to keep everybody safe but also retain the essence of Wake Forest. We believe that we offer a distinctive educational experience and student experience outside the classroom. How can we keep the university safe and keep the spirit of Wake Forest intact? We are very cognizant of that. To students, because we care so deeply about this place: do the little things that help us finish the semester where we started. That means masks, washing hands, keeping distance; those are all critical aspects. And it's important we keep those efforts up throughout the spring semester.

Editorial Note: This interview has been edited for clarity and brevity.

IMPORTANT DATES SPRING 2021

With an accelerated semester, deadlines for certain classes will be coming up quickly. Here is the *Old Gold & Black's* guide to navigating the spring's key dates.

Key Add/Drop Dates:

February 10: Last Day to Add a Full-Term Class

The university is only giving students two weeks until they will be unable to add another class. Luckily, this should be plenty of time to shop around classes. Try to read the syllabus of each class you are considering taking and to drop in on a few classes/Zoom meetings to get a

feel for the class. If you think that you have a good chance of succeeding in that class and it's a class you either need or are interested in, go for it! If you do not think you can succeed, maybe wait until next semester.

March 4: Last Day to Drop a Full-Term Class/ March 29: Last Day to Drop a Full-Term Class with a "W"

If there is a class that is seriously jeopardizing your mental health or there is a significant chance that you will do poorly in the class, it is probably your best bet to get out, no matter what. However, if it's just a class that you do not like, try to get out by March 4 and make sure you are over

the 12-credit minimum for full-time students, or you will lose access to scholarships and eligibility for Dean's List.

Days Off:

March 2

Early March will likely still be cold, so this is a great time to relax out on Manchester with friends and/or to grab coffee and hot chocolate.

April 7

In early April, the weather should be just warm enough for a brisk hike at Hanging Rock or Pilot Mountain.

UCC: Departures impact counseling center

Continued from Page 1

The UCC is now focusing on short-term rather than long-term, Paredes said. The office continues to reassess the balance between retaining clients they've worked with before while serving new clients, as they might not be able to meet with clients on a weekly or biweekly basis.

"It's something that we really struggle with," Paredes said. "Most of us went to school for long-lasting clinical relationships."

Despite issues, the UCC still tries to meet the needs of students who request its services. Sophomore Rachel Edwards, who went to the UCC for much of the first semester of her freshman year, had a positive experience with her counselor.

"I was anxious at first but my counselor made me feel really comforted and supported, but I know that isn't the experience that everyone has," Edwards said. "But as someone who had never had therapy before, I was impressed with my experience."

However, the two counselors leave behind gaps in services the office can offer. At the UCC, Ziesel was integral to serving Wake Forest's international students, particularly those from China.

"Ten percent of our population, thereabouts, is international students. That's one of our questions, how do we serve international students?" Paredes said. "We're trying to be really in tune to, are we serving, are we doing right by these students?"

Ziesel also headed up programs that served Wake Forest's LGBTQ+ student

population, such as In, Out, and In Between, a weekly therapy group oriented toward the queer community.

Paredes also cited male-identified counselors as a gap in the office's ability to address student needs. Currently, he is the only male-identified counselor working in the UCC.

"A big chunk of our population identifies as male, and if they say, 'I want to see a guy,' that's a gap for us. We're trying to fill as many of these gaps as we possibly can," Paredes said. "But the expectation is that if a male student wants to come in and see a female-identified provider or a queer provider, [he can] feel comfortable."

Neill, meanwhile, served as a staff psychologist and outreach coordinator. She worked with many Wake Forest students who, according to Paredes,

testified to her "positive influence" on them personally.

Paredes wrote in a letter upon Neill's departure, "she was key in the development of a social justice committee within the center and in advocacy for persons of marginalized identities."

Paredes admitted that the UCC has to turn away students without severe mental health issues — those who just want to talk to a therapist. The UCC's policy is to identify other offices, such as the Learning Assistance Center (LAC) or Friend in the Forest, to help.

"The way that college mental health is now — it's a constant pivot between access and treatment. We're always looking at what we can do," he said. "[We're always] trying to accommodate students as best we can, but we might not be the best fit."

Inauguration highlights unity as fears linger

A student volunteer from Wake Forest witnesses an unusual transition of power in D.C.

BY IZZY MCMAHON

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Themes of unity and democracy echoed across the National Mall on Jan. 20 during President Biden's inaugural address in a speech not heard by eager spectators, as it usually is, but instead by the 25,000 National Guardsmen stationed at the Capitol.

Throughout the inaugural proceedings, members of the Guard clad with semi-automatic weapons patrolled the Capitol grounds. Security checkpoints were scattered across the city and military tanks roamed the streets. These security measures established a firm perimeter around the heart of Washington, D.C. in a moment of heightened political tension.

This was a side of the inauguration seldom shown on television during the actual event, but one that weighed firmly on those in attendance, includ-

ing myself, as I served as a volunteer. Attendees of the inauguration were constantly reminded of a looming threat over this historic event, which was often flashing with the red and blue lights of police sirens.

Exactly two weeks prior, an armed mob of Americans stormed the Capitol to disrupt the certification of then President-elect Joe Biden's electoral win. Extremists were rumored to be planning a similar attack, yet the event remained peaceful.

Shielded by bulletproof glass, Joe Biden was sworn in as the 46th president of the United States without disruption on a cold January day. By his side was newly sworn-in Vice President Kamala Harris, the first woman to ever occupy the office.

The inauguration of President Biden fell not only during a moment of heightened political tension, but also during a time of unprecedented spread of COVID-19. Across the country, new variants of the COVID-19 virus continue to afflict the nation as vaccines slowly reach the public.

To ensure proper social distancing, the inauguration was only attended



Izzy McMahon/ Old Gold & Black

McMahon and her sister pose with inaugural poet Amanda Gorman, who captivated the nation with her poem "The Hill We Climb."

by a select number of congresspeople and notable guests. Former President Donald Trump, however, was not in attendance. The crowd of spectators usually found on the National Mall was replaced by nearly 200,000 state flags, each representing some of the 430,000 Americans who have died from COVID-19 since March.

As one of the few volunteers at the event, I stood on the National Mall with an N95 mask cutting deeply into my face — the same mask healthcare workers had struggled to acquire only months prior and a constant reminder of the issues already facing a new administration.

The speeches during the inauguration, however, offered a sense of hope to a large audience watching from home — about 40 million according to the New York Times.

The crowd at the inauguration seemed to calm when President Biden began his inaugural address. My fellow volunteers listened quietly to the president's words as a new administration began, and with it a new era in D.C. Watching from home, many Wake Forest students shared this sentiment.

"Biden's speech was very focused on the theme of unity, which I thought was nice to hear after everything that has happened this year," senior Taylor Rowland said.

This theme of unity was also touched

on by inaugural poet Amanda Gorman. In front of the nation, Gorman painted a future in which unity transcends division and discord. Gorman, hailing from Los Angeles, also earned the title of the youngest Poet Laureate to ever speak at a presidential inauguration.

One moment that particularly stood out to Wake Forest students watching from home was the inauguration of Vice President Kamala Harris, who was sworn in by Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor.

"Watching Kamala Harris' inauguration was very empowering," senior Lizzy Herbst said. "Since she's the first Black woman and also the first woman of South Asian descent to be vice president, I can imagine girls watching and thinking 'oh, I can do this because I see someone that looks like me doing this.'"

The inauguration ended in the evening with a fireworks display over the National Mall and remarks from the newly inaugurated President Biden and Vice President Harris. Later that night, the newly-elected administration signed 17 executive orders and actions, stagnating some of former President Trump's initiatives while in office.

"Watching the inauguration made me feel excited for the next four years," junior Angie Intriore said. "I'm hoping there will be a change in direc-



Izzy McMahon/ Old Gold & Black

Members of the National Guard defend the U.S. Capitol Building as Joe Biden and Kamala Harris take the Oath of Office.

Deacon Profile: Susan Wente

BY CATE PITTERLE AND AINE PIERRE

News Editors

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Susan Wente is the newly appointed president of Wake Forest University, a position she will begin on July 1. She is currently serving as provost and vice chancellor at Vanderbilt University. Between August 2019 and June 2020, she also served as Vanderbilt's interim chancellor. She received her Ph.D. in biochemistry from the University of California, Berkeley.

What's your message to our student body?

I am truly looking forward to meeting students and learning more about the excellent work you are doing in classrooms, labs and studios, on the playing fields and with the broader community.

I believe in the combination of scholarship, research and creative expression. Through those three elements, we learn how to interpret and connect our society. The teacher-scholar model and the collegiate university model are very distinctive, and I believe we need to ensure these elements remain hallmarks of the Wake Forest student experience. Making bold decisions is also a trademark of Wake Forest, and I am excited about what bold steps we will make together for this University.

What first led you from the field of biology to academic administration? Can you describe your journey?

I love research and engaging in scientific discovery, but found I also enjoy collaborating, networking and organizing. When I joined the Vanderbilt University School of Medicine to chair the Department of Cell and Developmental Biology, I continued running a lab and mentoring students and expanded my scope to also recruiting and mentoring faculty. When I realized the enormous energy I felt from building and creating environments to support others' successes, serving as associate vice chancellor for research and senior associate dean for biomedical sciences and then provost were logical next steps.

What does being Wake Forest's first female president mean to you?

I think what has become very clear in recent years is the importance of



Photo courtesy of Vanderbilt University

representation. Much of my work has been toward building inclusive and equitable environments for people to thrive. At Vanderbilt, I was the first woman to serve as provost, and I think that opened doors for our institution to grow in new ways. I hope that my leadership and representation at Wake Forest will provide more opportunities for others and encourage women and underrepresented groups to see themselves in similar roles.

In a time of great division and inequality, what steps are you committed to taking to ensure all Wake Forest students are given the same opportunities to succeed?

I believe in the power of education and the power of opportunity, and as part of this created the Office of Inclusive Excellence at Vanderbilt to focus on equity. Throughout the interview process for the presidency, I heard from the Search Committee that Wake Forest wants to be a national voice

on issues of leadership and character; embracing civility and meaningful discourse; and equity and opportunity for all. Those aspirations for Wake Forest reflect what I also embrace. I will continue to be a strong advocate for equity, diversity and inclusion. And, I am going to work to provide the needed support for our students to thrive. Together, we can keep the momentum going.

Do you feel your experience with biology makes you uniquely qualified to handle the university's COVID-19 response, and if so, what do you have in mind?

I am evidence driven and especially in the COVID-19 response, I think that data is critical to making decisions. This also requires taking lots of disparate information, including most critically listening to experts and soliciting input so that we can distill the issues and craft action plans.

But what has sustained our success-

ful efforts at Vanderbilt has been the commitment of the entire community to reducing the spread of the virus and to continuing the University's mission of education, research and discovery. For universities and for society, it is a time of change and of challenge. I have been impressed with the resilience, creativity and careful planning that are also at the heart of Wake Forest's response.

During his time as president, Dr. Hatch has been known for his emphasis on leadership and character. What do you value most?

Wake Forest is a special institution, committed to excellence with a tremendous ability to develop leaders of great integrity for our world. I am very impressed by and applaud Dr. Hatch's investment in Leadership and Character as a signature element of the Wake Forest mission and it is fitting given the commitment I have seen to our motto, Pro Humanitate. As I mentioned in my message to the Wake Forest community, I am committed to simple but profound guiding principles: trust, transparency and teamwork. I believe that through trust, transparency and teamwork, our cohesive community will make bold decisions together that will shape our pathway forward.

Can you comment on the legacy of your predecessor, Dr. Hatch, and how you hope to build on his accomplishments and build a legacy of your own?

I have the utmost respect for President Nathan Hatch, and I admire how he has guided Wake Forest through many challenges and transitions. His leadership will be important during these next months of his tenure. I know that we can now build on the strong foundation that exists and write the next exciting chapter of the University's story through the partnership and teamwork of our outstanding faculty, staff, students and alumni. Wake Forest has a history of taking bold steps as a leader in higher education. We will have the unique opportunity to envision what the next bold steps forward will be, and in doing so I believe Wake Forest can be a transformational force for good in our world. This is tremendously exciting.

Editorial Note: This interview has been edited for clarity and brevity.

SG GENERAL ASSEMBLY

BY JESS SCHMIDT

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I. Executive Reports

President Miles Middleton welcomed Dr. Susan R. Wente as Wake Forest's 14th president. He also reminded students to take COVID-19 protocols seriously as cases spike.

Speaker of the House Ally Swartzberg reported the appointment of Dr. Warrenetta Mann to lead the University Counseling Center (UCC).

II. Committee Reports

The Diversity and Inclusion Committee shared the launch of the Safer Sex Express. The Public Relations Committee is excited about Academic Resources Awareness Week, which begins Feb. 8.

III. New Business

Dr. Tanisha Ramachandran, Director of Religion and Public Engagement, and Dr. Mir Yarfitz, Associate Professor of History, led a discussion about Wake's cultural

diversity requirement. Ramachandran and Yarfitz are two of the faculty members working to change the requirement.

The new proposed plan would replace the old requirement with classes related to structures and systems of power, oppression and resistance throughout the world. The proposal was met with contentious debate, however, as some senators raised concerns over the language used in the proposal, at one point calling it incendiary, and possible political implications that students might associate with the proposal.

Senate Bill Eight, easing restrictions on experience needed to co-chair a senate committee, was introduced and passed.

FDOC: Classes begin as pandemic drags on

Continued from Page 1

Though students might stream through Benson in normal times, that was not the case this semester.

"I opened up Benson this morning and a few people were trickling in and out," McNamara said. "Things are not normal, but I am hopeful as vaccines get distributed, we'll get closer to what school usually looks like."

When asked about how her first day of class went, she adjusted the mask on her face and leaned forward on the desk, eyes crinkling.

"I didn't even have class today," she said, laughing. "I am in one blended class that meets in-person once a week. Other than that, my other three classes are completely online."

But not all class schedules are created equal.

Silvia Tiboni-Craft, an Assistant Teaching Professor of Italian, is teaching all three of her classes this semester in person. Today, she taught her first lecture-style class in the basement of Scales, a short walk from the Italian department's headquarters in Greene Hall.

"Faculty members were given the choice to select the course modality that they felt most comfortable with," Tiboni-Craft said. "Last semester, I decided to do part-time-online courses. But because I am only teaching three classes this semester, I chose to teach them all in-person."

"I like teaching in-person better," she continued. "There is a better interaction with students that way and I feel quite safe on campus. Honestly, I think that things will improve going forward, too. I am a very positive person — these days, you have to be!"

Josie Luizzi, a sophomore from Brookfield, Connecticut echoed Tiboni-Craft's optimistic feelings.

While Luizzi is now a sophomore at Wake Forest, this will be the first semester of her sophomore year on campus. Last semester, Luizzi chose to take classes at home.

When asked about her return to Mother So Dear, Luizzi remarked that, although all of her classes on FDOC were on Zoom, she felt much more focused on campus.

"I sat and took all three of my classes today sitting next to my friend outside," she said. "There is something special about just being on campus — it's much easier to focus than it is at home, too."

Luizzi also commented on how happy her peers looked to be back on campus for the spring.

"It is so nice because you can still recognize people with their masks on," she said. "At least three people

came up to me and told me how happy they were to see me. It was so kind."

With the spring semester officially underway, students and faculty are optimistic that the next few months will prove just as meaningful as last semester.

"A lot of my friends said I didn't miss much being gone last semester," Luizzi finished. "But I don't think I believe them."



Katie Fox/Old Gold & Black

As campus reopened to the same Orange status precautions that ended last semester, FDOC saw many students taking their classes on Zoom rather than in a classroom.

Biden elevates science advisor to cabinet

The president chose Dr. Eric Lander, a geneticist who founded the Broad Institute at MIT and Harvard, for the role

BY JULIA OCHSENHIRT

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President Joe Biden has chosen geneticist Dr. Eric Lander for the role of science advisor to the president, which will be a cabinet-level position for the first time in history. As presidential science advisor, Lander will guide President Biden and other executive officers on issues related to science and technology.

Per the American Institute of Physics, Lander graduated with a degree in mathematics from Princeton University and went on to study as a Rhodes Scholar, earning his PhD in mathematics from the University of Oxford. He taught economics at Harvard for five years before beginning a storied career as a molecular biologist in 1986, when he joined MIT's Whitehead Institute for Biological Research. By the age of 30, he'd earned the MacArthur Foundation fellowship, commonly known as the Genius Grant. The \$625,000 award recognizes "talented individuals who have shown extraordinary originality and dedication in their creative pursuits and a marked capacity for self-direction."

Lander is renowned for his leading role in the Human Genome Project (HGP), an international effort to sequence all three billion DNA pairs composing the human genome. Lander also served as the founder and president of the Broad Institute, a genomics research center, from 2004 until his recent resignation to join

the cabinet. The Broad Institute is the largest producer of human genomic information in the world and has spearheaded projects like the HapMap, a catalog of common genetic variants, and the Cancer Genome Atlas, which identifies mutations responsible for cancer.

Techniques and technology associated with the HGP and Broad Institute were critical in the rapid sequencing of COVID-19 — which came less than two weeks after the virus was first identified — and vaccine development. The institute also continues the collaborative approach to science of the HGP. All of its data is available for scientists around the world to use. Lander's history suggests that as a member of Biden's executive team, he'll work with other nations to address issues like climate change and the pandemic, contrasting the isolationist mindset of the Trump administration.

Many members of the scientific community are thrilled with Lander's nomination. As reported by Wink News, National Institutes of Health director Dr. Frances Collins called Lander "brilliant, visionary, exceptionally creative and highly effective in inspiring others." Lander was described as "a polymath, a superb scientist and scientific leader and a deeply committed exponent of bringing science and technology to bear on improving the human condition" by Obama-era science advisor Dr. John Holdren, per The Washington Post.

Lander's nomination has also been met with some criticism. An article published in Scientific American chided President Biden for choosing a white man as the first cabinet-level science advisor, especially considering recent racial justice movements and the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on communities of color. The article also criticizes Lander for publishing

a report that downplayed the accomplishments of two female scientists.

These are reasonable critiques: we should always strive for diversity and hold public officials accountable. However, Biden's executive team is one of the most diverse in American history. Within Biden's core science team are Alondra Nelson, Kei Koizumi and Michael Regan, all people of color, and the Cabinet includes Latinx, LGBTQ and Native American members. Lander will be joined in advising the president by two female scientists, Maria Zuber and Frances Arnold.

The Biden administration's prioritization of science is a stark divergence from the Trump administration's. According to *Nature*, Trump left the position of science advisor vacant for 18 months, and the administration oversaw a disastrous COVID-19 response, withdrawal from the Paris climate accords and reversal of over 100 environmental regulations.

In a letter to Dr. Lander, Biden outlined his priorities for the next four years. He aims to improve public health, cement the United States as a scientific world leader, combat climate change, create new jobs and ensure the benefits of scientific advances are available to all Americans.

"I believe it is essential that we refresh and reinvigorate our national science and technology strategy to set us on a strong course ... so that our children and grandchildren may inhabit a healthier, safer, more just, peaceful and prosperous world," Biden wrote.

As Dr. Lander says in his podcast *Brave New Planet*, "The future is on the line today in ways it's never been before, and the decisions we make or don't make will affect us all for generations to come."

Public Opinion

Nugent continues to abuse status

Ted Nugent's history of bigotry and wrong-doing invalidates his celebrity and moral status



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I was recently on the drive from Dallas to Austin and had just gotten back into the rhythm of the freeway after getting gas at the Buc-ee's when I read the name of the road just a few exits away, Nugent Avenue. This road is named after the conservative rock icon and self identified alpha-male Ted "The Nuge" Nugent, for whom I have a strong distaste. Normally this kind of feeling would quickly slip away, but for some reason I could not let this go. Maybe it was because I was so close to Buc-ee's, one of my favorite road trip stops or maybe the sickening idea of Nugent having his own road. But maybe it was because I never realized how much I do not like Ted Nugent. Whatever it was, I let my negative feelings towards "The Nuge" consume

"I think what made my dislike so strong is that he is an objectively terrible person who holds some really irreconcilable beliefs..."

me for the rest of the drive. I think what made my dislike so strong is that Nugent is an objectively terrible person who holds some really irreconcilable beliefs, yet still has a large following of die-hard supporters. I know I won't be able to convince everyone that Nugent is horrible and, frankly, if you think he's great, this article isn't for you. If you're on the fence or just unaware of him, I hope I'll be able to convince you to avoid him.

Nugent grew his popularity in the 60s and 70's and was true to the "Sex, drugs, and rock and roll," lifestyle motto — save the drugs. However, despite his vehement opposition to drugs Nugent flaunted his vigorous sex life. Like many rockstars, he was known for having sex with underage fans and, although he denies it now, Nugent admitted in an episode of "Behind The Music" to having multiple affairs. I find his denial to be weak.

He has a song, "Jailbait", which is about him being attracted to a 13-year-old. In the late 70's Nugent was in a relationship with a 17-year-old from Hawaii and was

eventually made her legal guardian. In addition to his track record of sexual misconduct, Nugent's repeated denial of well documented scandals proves that he is a liar.

Nugent is a very violent person. His solution for crime is the death penalty, whether the charge be homicide or simple graffiti. Even though Nugent is on the board of the NRA, he was under investigation in 2012 by the Secret Service after he made a death threat to the former president Barack Obama. Nugent is an avid hunter and has a vehement opposition to animal rights. He believes animals (deer in this case) are "only interested in three things: the best place to eat, having sex and how quickly they can run away." Nugent calls hunting his "zen" as well as something that gives him a "full predator spiritual erection." Nugent also writes songs glorifying violence against women, such as his hit song "Stranglehold" about choking and beating a woman because she left him. It's safe to say Nugent makes it clear that violence is his solution to most problems.

Even though Nugent is a violent man, he is also a coward. Nugent dodged the draft. In a 1977 interview he claimed to have refrained from bathing for a month, defecating and urinating in his pants for a week and taking crystal methamphet-

amine to fail his physical exam for the draft. Although Nugent now denies it, he was given a 4F exemption, meaning that he was not fit for service. Normally I would say that this is fine. I believe that someone shouldn't have to go to war if they disagree with it. However, Nugent supported the Vietnam War and has vehemently supported the war in Iraq, saying that our only failure "has been not to Nagasaki them," a statement that must also stem from the rampant islamophobia that he is known for. Nugent is quoted as saying "I did not want to get my ass blown off in Vietnam," and that it was probably for the best that he dodged because "I'd have killed all the Hippies in the foxholes. I would have killed everybody."

You might have noticed some themes from the life of Ted Nugent: violence, sex, discrimination and when it came down to serving his country, fear. Nugent is incredibly racist and has a specific edge towards Muslims. He has a profane motive to hunt. He is a sex addict. He ran from service when was scared. It brings me to his quote about the three interests of deer: "the best place to eat, having sex and how quickly they can run away." I think he's that animal. A racist, sexist, pedophilic animal.

Pandemic & Politics

Forsyth community suffers in wake of pandemic

Local government must take a more active role in relief delivery to Forsyth County



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Forsyth County, N.C.'s deployment of COVID-19 relief grants, particularly to low-income residents, has proven ineffective in the months since mid-2020. As unemployment rises throughout the county — especially in the accommodation and food services sectors — financial relief is essential in the mitigation of this pandemic crisis.

That low-income and minority communities should be most drastically impacted by the economic downturn and public health crisis — to the extent that over half of low-income families reported experiencing job loss as a result of the pandemic — is expected given existing disparities in access to social services, healthcare, and employment opportunities. The Depression-era burdens fac-

"...A disorganized rollout of a relief funding hindered distribution efforts while the pandemic worsened."

ing low-income Americans as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic seem to belie the 2019 Health Security Index's first place ranking of the United States' pandemic response capabilities.

Much of the economic carnage resulting from widespread job loss might have been avoided had federal, state and local governments coordinated an effective distribution of pandemic relief. However, a disorganized rollout of relief funding hindered distribution efforts while the pandemic worsened.

Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) funding was deployed with direct aid dispensed based on a county population threshold rather than on more important indicators. Resultantly, whereas neighboring Guilford County, N.C. received \$93.7 million in CARES Act funding, Forsyth County received only a \$6.4 million share of the funding allocated to North Carolina.

The size of Forsyth's CARES grant hamstrung its pandemic response, forcing Winston-Salem, the county seat and fifth-most-populous city in the state, to reallocate unspent econom-

ic development money and raise funds from businesses, individuals and local governments to make relief distribution viable. However, the county's funding channels — particularly, its reliance on local nonprofits to facilitate aid distribution — made the actual deployment of relief funding complicated. Local nonprofits remain overburdened given the unprecedented demand for financial relief and social services. Most nonprofits possess neither the staff or the infrastructure to handle such an influx and in many cases limitations of the usage of CARES funding has prevented organizational growth.

Furthermore, local nonprofits in Forsyth County, such as Crisis Control Ministry and United Way, require extensive means-testing (a process by which an individual proves they are eligible to receive a grant) and an array of paperwork as part of their grant applications. In most cases, residents applying for pandemic relief are required to provide documentation of employment history, records of spending habits and personal finance documents that may be difficult to acquire. The arduousness of the grant application process is a deterrent for those who persist. Such administrative requirements significantly elongate the application process and delay the nonprofit's response. Many nonprofits also require in-person appointments at their local offices in order to receive aid. Beyond the public health implications of

such a requirement, in-person appointments frequently prevent those with jobs or who require childcare, as well as those without access to transportation, from acquiring necessary funding.

A considerable lack of transparency exercised by the nonprofits responsible for distributing aid has left questions about the funding remaining at the county's disposal. Housing advocates in Winston-Salem note that very few low-income residents are actually receiving relief grants and that well-qualified applicants are being denied funding. Simultaneously, many city and county governments were unable to allocate the entirety of their CARES funding prior to the end-of-year spending deadline due to similar distribution roadblocks, forcing Congress to extend the deadline through the end of 2021. These delays in aid distribution highlight both the detrimental impact of federal distribution of CARES funding and means-testing on access to relief funds.

The county's — and the country's — failure to adequately provide for those most vulnerable to the pandemic recession will disrupt the lives of countless residents and reverberate for decades to come. City and county governments must take a more active role in administering relief funding locally. Means-testing and other burdensome application requirements must be eliminated in order that funding becomes available to those who need it.

Fraternity and Sorority Life

Zoom rush provides comfortable benefits

Amid rush uncertainty virtual recruitment allows for new benefits



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Formal recruitment looked very different this year for Wake Forest's sorority members and potential new members. Instead of moving back into Wake Forest early and undergoing rush in person, hundreds of young women joined together via Zoom in order to find their perfect match. Leading up to virtual recruitment, anticipation was high amongst potential new members and sorority women alike. The uncertainty of undergoing a rush process in a format which had never before been attempted brought tension to virtual recruitment.

Despite my personal reservations about what the formal recruitment process would be like online, I now argue that virtual recruitment actually had more benefits than pitfalls for all parties involved. To begin with, virtual recruitment allowed for a more casual environment in which potential new members and active members could get to know one another. During my recruitment process freshman year, I

"I now argue that virtual recruitment actually had more benefits than pitfalls for all parties involved."

remember feeling incredibly anxious about what clothes I should wear. I was honestly more nervous about what to wear than I was about the actual conversations. I could control what I would wear but I could not control how the conversations would go.

This year, new members were encouraged to wear sweatshirts or t-shirts for three out of five days of recruitment as opposed to a normal year where tee shirts were only allowed during one of four days of recruitment. This alone alleviated the pressure of formal recruitment, as potential new members may feel more comfortable in their clothing and less preoccupied with how their wardrobe would be perceived, especially since only the top part of their outfit would show on a Zoom screen.

Another reason I prefer virtual recruitment was brought to light by one of my best friends, Grace Powell. Grace wears hearing aids and mentioned that during in-person recruitment last year, she struggled to hear the active members of each sorority when they were speaking. Her hearing aids picked up and amplified conversations that were happening nearby, thus making it more difficult to have a seamless conversation with the active member she was paired with.

For virtual recruitment, each potential new member and active member join a breakout room, which excludes any side conversations that could interrupt an exchange. Grace also mentioned that Zoom offers a closed captioning feature that writes out the conversation as it occurs. This feature served to help Grace's understanding throughout virtual recruitment as well.

Additionally, virtual recruitment offers all participants the luxury of living at home while undergoing a stressful process. Many of my closest friends and I struggled greatly during in-person rush as freshmen, as there was a thin line between checking in with one another and accidentally making someone talk about a day that may have deeply upset them. Especially for freshmen with roommates, many young women struggled to navigate that balance and did not have much space to be alone or process their day. At home, however, it was easier to find physical and emotional distance when needed. On top of that, being surrounded by loved ones who were removed from the situation offered a great deal of comfort to me when I was feeling frustrated with the process. It was a blessing to speak face to face with my family about how my day had gone.

Lastly, I found virtual recruitment to be convenient from the standpoint of maintaining a routine that provided comfort to me throughout the process. When I went through recruitment last year, I felt emotionally and physically

exhausted from moving away from my home state before I even attended my first recruitment party on day one. Instead, this year I felt more mentally prepared to undergo the recruitment process in the comfort and established routine of my home.

With all of these differences in mind, I believe that virtual recruitment provided solutions for problems which have long plagued traditional recruitment. Although I agree that staring at a screen for many hours a day is difficult in its own way, I feel that the comforts of home and the benefits of Zoom outweighed the negatives that accompany a traditional formal recruitment.



Photo courtesy of Zoom

Zoom has supported numerous productive social and academic environments

Craftsmanship

Quilt museum shines as bastion of individuality

An excursion to the National Quilt Museum gives deserved attention to talented creators



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This week, I pulled through Paducah, Kentucky while I was on my way back to school for the semester. As I sat in the driver seat, I repeated the funny sounding town's name under my breath to the detriment of everyone in the car, "Puh-doo-ka. Puh-dooooo-kah. Puh-doo-ka."

My eyes read over the passing green signs along the side of the road which listed the restaurants, gas stations and any other attractions that might exist in the local area. The usual McDonalds, Shell Stations and Taco Bells were flashing unremarkably below my gaze. Then, all of the sudden, it was listed: The National Quilt Museum. Blown away, I could not believe that an entire museum exists for the sole

"It's absurd to suggest that [Shelton] would be anything but a liability to the Fed's crucial independence."

purpose of quilt appreciation. Who would want to go look at a bunch of blankets all afternoon?

Now, perhaps I am completely uncultured and should have known about such a place. Maybe any grandmother in the United States can tell you that The National Quilt Museum is in Paducah, Kentucky, open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Sundays. But I doubt that is the case. The intense specialization on something about which I had never thought critically is what ended up standing out to me more than anything. I'll say it: I don't currently have a particularly grand passion for quilts. They're nice to snuggle up under but in my world, that is about as big a place as quilts have. However, while I kept on driving, it wasn't the quilts themselves that began to completely occupy my thoughts. What I could not stop thinking about were the individual lives devoted to the preser-

vation of those cloths. Any national institution such as the one I passed must have intensely dedicated, driven and passionate individuals furthering their respective causes. After realizing the endless number of hours people gave to something I initially scoffed at, I began to feel ashamed. As I continued down the road, I wished that I was not on a tight travel schedule. I wanted to stop in so that I could rectify the disrespect to individuals' passions which I had produced, just because those passions didn't initially align with my own or those of popular culture on a surface level. By making a concerted effort to actively consider the degree of human effort that is imbued in all of our surroundings, I believe a new degree of wonder and, ultimately, a secret happiness can be attained.

With this in mind, I began to think about the enormously encouraging message that an institution such as The National Quilt Museum presents: follow your passions. A museum like that points out the amount of creative space which can be manifested around any general interest, even if it might not be the most popular. In a world where it is far too easy to

be tempted into the clutches of conformity, we all need to do a better job of taking time to appreciate the examples within our world of individual efforts that go against the grain. Somebody loved quilts so much that they spearheaded an effort which resulted in a nationally recognized museum that has now been functioning for 30 years. Regardless of your opinion of quilts, that point alone should create a sense of awe within.

Earlier tonight, I went to The National Quilt Museum's website and was astonished by the amount of resources, classes and information which has been curated by the institution. The National Quilt Museum clearly conveys a message in regards to conformity and the possibility to truly pursue that which interests us.

However, the amount of information which can be found surrounding quilts on the website also further serves as a remarkable example of the jaw-dropping amount of information and academic study which has gone into so much of the world which we might not have considered. One thing is for certain, next time I am in Paducah, I am going to the National Quilt Museum.

John Wolford takes the road less traveled

From quarterbacking the Demon Deacons to working in finance, Wolford's road to the NFL was long and winding

BY ESSEX THAYER

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Leading into the final week of the regular season, the Los Angeles Rams were stumbling along the line that clearly defines a season's story. On one side of the line sat the post-season and all the glory that comes with it. The other side would involve an all too early cleaning out of lockers and watching other teams play on the television while lamenting missed opportunities. In such a critical time, teams are forced to lean on their star players to lead them to victory. For the Rams, that player would be Jared Goff, their first-round-pick, star quarterback who holds one of the richest contracts in football. Yet, Goff was not preparing to play in a must-win Week 17; he was undergoing surgery for a broken thumb sustained the prior week.

In the biggest game of the season, the Los Angeles Rams were forced to turn to a player who had never thrown a pass in an NFL game, John Wolford. Wolford spent the 2019 season as a member of the Rams practice squad, tasked with mimicking opposing quarterbacks in practice to prepare the first-team defense. He did well enough in that position to be elevated to the active roster in 2020, becoming the second-string quarterback behind Goff.

Wolford's road to starting under center took far more turns than most traditional starters. In his early days, Wolford was the main man at quarterback, beginning at Bishop Kenny High in Jacksonville, Fla. As a 14-year old freshman, he won the starting position on the varsity team. To the Los Angeles Times, Wolford's high school coach, Mark Thorson, explained, "He was a very mature kid and had a lot of ability and [a lot] of skills. To walk in as a freshman and handle the huddle and all the things that are expected of you, I knew at that point he was pretty special." In his high school career, Wolford went on to break several records previously held by a Florida legend, Tim Tebow.

Following high school, Wolford was initially committed to play football at East Carolina University, until newly hired Head Coach Dave Clawson and Offensive Coordinator Warren Ruggiero visited his home after his senior season in 2013. Following the visit, he flipped his commitment to Wake Forest.

At Wake Forest, Wolford started as a freshman, leading the Demon Deacons to a 3-9 record. For a program with a new staff and devoid of much talent, it proved to be a step in the right direction. In his junior season, Wolford led Wake Forest to their first bowl win since 2008, beginning what is now a five-year streak of bowl appearances.

In his senior year, Kendall Hinton pushed Wolford in a tough battle for starting quarterback. Propelled by his defeat of Hinton for the position, Wolford caught fire. In a ten-point victory against future Heisman Trophy winner Lamar Jackson and Louisville, Wolford passed for 461 yards and accounted for six total touchdowns. In the following two games, he threw three touchdowns each against Notre Dame and Syracuse. Wolford completed his college career by tossing 400 yards and four touchdowns in an upset against Texas A&M in the Belk Bowl.

Thirteen quarterbacks were selected in the following NFL Draft in 2018. Wolford was not one of them. He did get an opportunity to compete with an NFL team after the draft, playing with the New York Jets in training camp. Wolford appeared in one preseason game and was then released. Following his release, it appeared that an NFL career was not in the cards for Wolford, who, per his still active LinkedIn page, joined Teall Capital as a Private Equity Analyst.

Six months later, football came calling once again for Wolford, who joined the newly formed Alliance of American Football. In the draft, Wolford was once again overlooked, taken as the eleventh overall quarterback. He was the second quarterback chosen by his own team, the Arizona Hotshots, after Oklahoma QB Trevor Knight was taken in the first round. Wolford beat out the first-round pick for the Hotshots' starting spot and threw fourteen touchdowns in the shortened eight-game season. His performance led Wolford to Sean McVay and the Los Angeles Rams.

While Wolford projected immense confidence in the lead-up to his first NFL start, the game began inauspiciously for the quarterback, as his first pass from under center went directly to Cardinals linebacker Jordan Hicks. Commentator Boomer Esiason was quick to come to his defense, remarking that Brett Farve's first career pass was also an interception. The throw was misguided at best, but Wolford maintained his composure. The broadcast cameras caught him saying "We're good," to his lineman on the bench following the throw. Wolford backed up his promise with a solid performance following the interception by not throwing another. He also passed for 231 yards while rushing for 56, leading the Rams to victory and the playoffs.

Though Jared Goff was active for the Rams' playoff game against the Seattle Seahawks, Wolford started under center once again. By the middle of the first quarter, Goff, twelve days following thumb surgery, was in the game. Wolford was knocked out of the game by a vicious Jamal Adams hit, which was initially flagged but then picked up. Fox's officiating specialist, Mike Perriera, thought Adams should have been penalized on the play because Wolford was "defenseless." Wolford was taken to the hospital with a neck injury but was later able to return to celebrate with his teammates following their win. The next week, in the Rams' loss to the Green Bay Packers to end their season, he was inactive due to the neck injury.

Despite an early exit from the spotlight for Wolford, there is hope that the quarterback can solidify himself as a potential starter in the future. Wolford is under contract with the Rams for the 2021 season. Although the Rams are in the middle of a \$134 million contract with Goff, Head Coach Sean McVay recently told reporters, "We're moving forward, we're looking forward, and I can't answer any of those questions [about the quarterbacks] until I take a step back and evaluate everything that is in the best interest of the Rams."

Regardless of the Goff situation, Wolford turned heads this season. From being undrafted to working in finance to playing in an unsuccessful football league, Wolford reached the big time and proved he's here to stay. John, I think it's about time to delete that LinkedIn account.

Recapping the winter break for men's, women's basketball

Over the break, women's basketball looked to build on a superb start, while the men's team looked for its first win

BY JAKE STUART

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This year marks the beginning of a new era for both the Wake Forest Demon Deacons Men's and Women's basketball teams. Tim Duncan, Chris Paul, Muggsy Bogues, Dickie Hemric, Len Chappell... the list goes on. For a Wake Forest basketball team full of talent over the years, going 78-111 under coach Danny Manning, coupled with eight losing seasons over the past ten years, was not going to cut it. Enter Head Coach Steve Forbes. In five seasons coaching at East Tennessee State, Forbes led the Buccaneers to a 130-49 record. He was the Southern Conference Coach of the Year and winner of the Hugh Durham Award during the 2019-2020 season, with his team winning an astonishing 30 games and losing only four. Additionally, while serving as head coach at Northwest Florida State, Forbes put up 62 wins to just six losses. As a coach with a winning pedigree, Forbes made the jump to the ACC and to the hardwood of Winston-Salem, where he became the only major conference coach to be hired during the COVID-19 offseason.

The Demon Deacons entered the season with both a revamped coaching staff and roster. Only seven players and one coach, former Wake Forest superstar Randolph Childress, returned to Wake Forest this season. For the Deacs, the year started with a slam dunk. The team earned a commanding win in Forbes' Wake Forest coaching debut, a 60-point win over Delaware State. Another win was added against Longwood, as the team seemed to be gaining chemistry and poise before starting its ACC campaign.

In an unfortunate series of events, the team was put on pause due to the coronavirus pandemic, having five of its 'confidence' games postponed or canceled. Following a 34-day absence from play, the Deacs beat Catawba College and moved to 3-0. However, the long break proved to be costly, as the team went through a gauntlet to start the season in the ACC, facing ranked opponents such as Virginia, Duke, Louisville and Virginia Tech. Wake Forest did not win any of their first six conference matchups. However, by taking a deeper look at Wake Forest's losses, fans can find a silver lining and glimmer of hope: The team has battled in each of the losses. In all four of the Demon Deacons' losses to ranked opponents, they have found a way to stay tight early before falling away in the second half. One has to think that experience has hurt Wake Forest down the stretch, but as Coach Forbes continued to say, the team had to cross the line and "finish." On Saturday, behind Ishmael Massoud's 31 points and eight 3s, Wake Forest finally found a way to finish and eke out their first ACC

win by beating an eight-win team in the Pittsburgh Panthers. The team will look to use the game as momentum for the rest of the season, with more matchups against top-ranked ACC opponents on the horizon.

For the Wake Forest Women's basketball team, their strong start to the season (7-6) has been extremely encouraging. The Demon Deacons opened the year winning four of their first five games, with their only loss coming to the No. 14 ranked Arkansas Razorbacks. This season has been a drastic improvement over the last, which saw Wake Forest winning just one game in the ACC and finishing the season dead last in the conference with ten wins and twenty losses. Four of the team's marquee wins this season have come against formidable ACC opponents, notably North Carolina and Miami, along with a statement win over No. 24 ranked Missouri State. Wake Forest has fought hard in nearly all of its losses, most recently coming up just two points shy of an upset against Louisville, the nation's top-ranked team.

The Deacs wrap up the season with ten straight games against formidable ACC opponents, including NC State and Georgia Tech. Leading the team is senior Forward Ivana Raca, averaging 16 points and ten rebounds a game. Senior guard Gina Conti has added 15 points per game while leading the team shooting 37% from the three-point mark. Wake Forest is currently chasing its first NCAA tournament appearance since 1988. The future looks bright, and the team looks to keep its momentum rolling.

Exploring the mystery behind Kyrie Irving

Kyrie Irving drama ensues after he makes a stand following political turmoil

BY BEN CONROY
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Over the past few years, Brooklyn Nets point guard Kyrie Irving has transformed into one of the most polarizing figures in all of sports. After a lackluster stint with the Boston Celtics from 2017-2019 and a subsequent unceremonious departure from the team, reports began to surface that Irving was nothing but a locker room cancer, a diva whose ball-dominant style wasn't conducive to championship-caliber basketball. Irving then sought a trade to Brooklyn, where he teamed up with elite scorer and two-time NBA champion Kevin Durant. Then, shortly after the 2021 regular season campaign began, the Nets acquired superstar guard James Harden from the Houston Rockets in a stunning three-team trade, effectively creating the NBA's newest superteam.

On the court, there is no denying Irving's unprecedented talent. The 28-year old star boasts some of the most outstanding ball-handling skills in recent NBA history, along with career averages of 22.5 PPG and 5.7 APG. There are few players in the league that can electrify an audience the way Irving does; his storied ten-year career has resulted in countless memorable moments, namely his historic game-clinching 3-pointer in Game 7 of the 2016 NBA Finals against the Golden State Warriors.

To the casual observer, it would seem that the stars had finally aligned for Irving and the Nets. He was once again surrounded by the same type of generational talent that had allowed him to capture the NBA title alongside LeBron

James in 2016. Furthermore, he'd been backed by a front office and a young head coach who'd made it clear that Irving was a priority for the franchise moving forward. A deep playoff run seemed probable, if not expected, within the organization. However, as is often the case with Irving, his recent actions have woven a complicated tapestry, provoking questions to which there are no simple answers.

On Jan. 6, a massive group of protestors marched on Washington, D.C., in an effort to dispute the results of the Presidential election in which Donald Trump was ousted from office in favor of Democratic nominee Joe Biden. The protestors took unprecedented action, many of them breaching the U.S. Capitol building and throwing the country into a state of panic. These individuals' actions further increased tensions surrounding the ongoing social justice movement, which has arisen in response to the horrific deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and many other African Americans at the hands of law enforcement officials.

In the wake of these events, numerous professional athletes utilized their platforms to call for change. Many were outraged that the individuals at the Capitol (a predominately white crowd) were permitted to violate federal laws seemingly without consequence in the context of a protest. On the other hand, Black Americans faced tear gas, pepper spray, and even deadly force amid the Black Lives Matter protests that occurred during the summer of 2020. This double standard cuts straight to the heart of the social injustices that continue to plague America each and every day.

Irving's response to the situation was a sharp departure from that of his NBA colleagues. He took an abrupt leave of absence from the Nets, missing five consecutive games and citing "personal rea-

sons" as his motive. Communications with Nets Head Coach Steve Nash were minimal, putting Nash in an awkward position when addressing the media. Immediately, controversy began to swirl. The situation garnered even more negative publicity when Irving was recorded attending a large public gathering without wearing a face covering, a clear violation of the NBA's COVID-19 health and safety protocols. This detail, in particular, seemed to tip many NBA analysts over the edge. Several seemed to conclude that Irving's presence within any organization, no matter how ideal the surrounding circumstances, was simply unsustainable. The most notable sound bite came from Stephen A. Smith on ESPN's First Take, in which Smith called for Irving's retirement from basketball, stating that he was "no longer worth the drama."

Irving has since rejoined the Nets, shedding further light on his absence by saying in a press conference by saying that he "needed a pause." He dazzled in his first game back with the team, posting 37 points in a double-overtime loss to the Cleveland Cavaliers.

At first, Irving's prolonged absence from Brooklyn left more questions than answers. It seemed no one had any knowledge regarding Irving's whereabouts or what he was up to during his time away. Eventually, however, more details began to emerge. On Jan. 13, Irving popped up on a Zoom call with local social justice leaders from the city of Brooklyn. Six days later, on Jan. 19, the news broke that Irving had recently purchased a house for George Floyd's family to honor his memory.

Public opinion on Irving seemed to soften a bit as these stories developed. The line between general acceptance and condemnation in the NBA is a fine one, and Irving has walked it like a tightrope his entire career. Sometimes, however,



Elsa/Getty Images/TNS

Nets' Kyrie Irving blocks Miami Heat player Goran Dragic.

it seems that Irving's negative headlines remain at the forefront of sports news cycles far longer than those that would bolster his reputation. Because of his polarity, his critics around the NBA are eager to write him off as a distraction at the first sign of trouble. In other words, the proverbial vultures often begin to circle Irving before he's had a chance to defend himself.

I don't think many people around the NBA understand Kyrie Irving, and I'm not sure they ever will. That's part of his brand, and instinct tells me it'll remain the most divisive aspect of his legacy. What truly makes a man like that tick? The world may never know. But that's all part of the mystery. Isn't it?

Brady and Mahomes to meet in Super Bowl LV

The Tampa Bay Buccaneers and Kansas City Chiefs win Conference Championships

BY CONOR ROBBINS
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Legacies were on the line this past Sunday in a pair of heavily anticipated conference championship games which were promoted largely in association with the notoriety of the four remaining quarterbacks left at the helm for each squad.

The battle at Lambeau Field between the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and Green Bay Packers provided football fanatics with their first (and most likely last) glimpse of playoff competition between Tom Brady and Aaron Rodgers as each looked to further cement their Hall of Fame resumes.

While the veterans duked it out in the cold, the matchup at Arrowhead Stadium between the Buffalo Bills and Kansas City Chiefs showcased young upstarts Josh Allen and Patrick Mahomes. The matchup could prove to be the first episode of a long winding saga of postseason contests

between two of the most exciting quarterbacks under twenty-five in the league.

Buccaneers: 31, Packers: 26

Brady's afternoon could not have gotten off to a better start, as he promptly took his team down the field on his first possession of the day before linking up with his favorite vertical threat, Mike Evans, for a 15-yard touchdown in the corner of the endzone. After a defensive stand dictated by frequent backfield pressure, and ultimately a sack of Rodgers on third down, the underdog Bucs had quickly re-established the same blueprint that led to their 38-10 drubbing of the Packers back in Week 6 of the regular season. Rodgers proceeded to seamlessly move the chains in the ensuing drive, with the drive culminating in a 50-yard strike to Marquez Valdes-Scantling.

On the brink of halftime, with the Buccaneers up 14-10, Brady found himself with a critical third-down near midfield. As a result of a head-scratching man coverage scheme from the Packers, Scotty Miller was able to break behind his cornerback for a game-changing touchdown

reception, sending Tampa Bay into the locker room up by eleven. This would not be the last back-breaking mistake for Green Bay.

After crawling back from a 17-point deficit and cutting the Bucs' lead to eight, the Packers faced a critical 1st-and-goal late in the fourth quarter. Three failed plays later, Head Coach Matt LaFleur took the ball out of his superstar quarterback's hands on 4th-and-8 and instead elected to kick a field goal to cut the deficit to five. It's a mistake in its own right to rob Aaron Rodgers of such an opportunity, but an even bigger mistake to give the ball back to six-time champion Tom Brady.

Rodgers was never able to touch the ball again. Now, Tom Brady gears up to play in his record tenth Super Bowl, and his Bucs will be the first in NFL history to play it in their home stadium.

Bills: 24, Chiefs: 38

After the first of two contests, attention turned to Kansas City, where Bills Mafia quickly found themselves with a 9-0 advantage after capitalizing on a crucial

special team's fumble at the Chiefs' goal line. However, Patrick Mahomes didn't flinch. He fearlessly reeled off 24 straight points and seamlessly dissected the Buffalo defense with a mix of vertical throws to speedsters Tyreek Hill and Mecole Hardman, and bullet passes to tight end Travis Kelce.

After a shaky Josh Allen regained control of his team's offensive scheme to begin the second half, Sean McDermott took a page out of Matt LaFleur's book and conservatively elected to kick a field goal. With the score creeping as close as 24-15, Mahomes responded with two straight touchdown drives.

Following what proved to be a masterful performance from Mahomes (325 yds, 3 TD) in his third straight AFC Championship Game, the stage was set for a Super Bowl matchup straight from the pages of a Hollywood script. All Brady does is win, but at age 43, can he find a way to do it on a new team and against the best of the next generation of quarterbacks? Come Feb. 7, two stars will have the opportunity to compete on the grandest stage in sports, proving that even in a COVID-19 riddled season, a storybook ending awaits at the finish line after all.

Tennessee fires Head Coach Jeremy Pruitt

After going 16-19 in three years, Pruitt was fired due to recruiting violations committed by his staff

BY COOPER SULLIVAN

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While public support surrounding the compensation of collegiate athletes has grown over the years, the NCAA continues to reap the benefits of its athletes performances. University of Tennessee coaches are guilty of engaging in said exploitation over the past few seasons.

Head football coach Jeremy Pruitt, along with nine other assistant coaches and recruiting personnel, were terminated from their duties due to "level I and/or II NCAA recruitment violations." The investigation is still ongoing, and the NCAA will not release full details, but it is believed these issues stem from the recruitment of prospects Amarius Mims and current Volunteer Eric Gray.

The university first received word about potential "serious violations" on Nov. 13 and enlisted New York-based attorneys Bond Schoeneck & King to conduct an internal investigation starting Nov. 19.

Nearly two months later, on Jan. 14, Pruitt was interviewed by NCAA officials for seven hours in which evidence was laid out, and Pruitt had the opportunity to admit involvement in such practices. On the morning of Jan. 18, Pruitt and three assistant coaches and six player-personnel staff were handed termination letters effective the next day.

The letter included this excerpt: "Your failure to promote and maintain an atmosphere of compliance and to monitor the activities of the coaches and staff members that report, directly or indirectly, to you has led to the current NCAA investigation and is bringing and will likely continue to bring the university into considerable public disrepute, embarrassment, contempt, scandal, and/or ridicule."

Embarrassment and ridicule were indeed not far behind. According to Dan Patrick, the violations were so out in the open that recruits received "McDonald's bags of cash" as if their official visit had turned into a fun drive-thru experience. Tennessee was so sloppy that rival SEC coaches had their own opinions of the situation. Kentucky head coach Mark Stoops said he was "not one bit" surprised that punishment was given.

Pruitt's five-page termination letter was signed by the university chancellor and athletic director Phillip Fulmer. Fulmer was later replaced by Danny White, the former athletic director at UCF.

Former Auburn defensive coordinator Kevin Steele was named interim head coach, six days after being hired as a defensive assistant. Steele reportedly knew about the ongoing investigation but was not aware that he would promptly be promoted to the prime coaching position.

Pruitt released a statement through his attorney Michael Lyons, in which he states that this action is "more about financial convenience and expediency than a fair and complete factual determination by the University." Pruitt had signed a 5-year contract extension at the beginning of the season and was set to have a \$400,000 salary increase starting next season. Since he was fired with cause, the University will not have to pay his \$12.8 million buyout.

Despite leading the Vols to a 2019 Gator Bowl victory, Pruitt's career in Knoxville was known for two dismal seven-loss, last-place seasons in 2018 and 2020.

In the statement, Pruitt and his attorney maintain that no wrongdoing was committed and that the firing was the only way for Tennessee to retain the buyout money they owed Pruitt. The violations and subsequent terminations have led four starters to enter the transfer portal, including the Vols leading tackler Henry To'o'o and leading rusher Eric Gray.



Kevin C. Cox/Getty Images/TNS

Pruitt was replaced by former UCF coach, Josh Heupel, where he was hired by and worked with new Tennessee Athletic Director, Danny White.

Six Demon Deacons selected in pro soccer drafts

Five men's soccer players and one women's player were picked in the MLS and NWSL Drafts

BY CHRISTINA DENOVIO

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Courtesy of Wake Forest Athletics

Calvin Harris was drafted with the second overall pick by FC Cincinnati.

To say Wake Forest soccer is killing it would be an understatement. Men's team players Calvin Harris, Michael DeShields, Justin McMaster and Andrew Pannenberg were all selected in the 2021 Major League Soccer SuperDraft. On the women's side, Hannah Betfort was selected by the Portland Thorns FC in the National Women's Soccer League draft.

Harris was the second overall pick and went to FC Cincinnati, and defender DeShields was picked number five by D.C. United. This draft marked the first time that two Demon Deacons were in the top-five of the MLS SuperDraft. Harris appeared in 32 games and made 25 straight starts for the Deacons. During his time at Wake Forest, Harris recorded ten goals and five assists and became the highest MLS SuperDraft selection from the university since 2016. At FC Cincinnati, Harris will be joining Demon Deacon alum Lucas Gdula, who was drafted No. 13 in 2019. He is the fourth member of the Wake Forest soccer team to be selected in the top-three of the SuperDraft.

DeShields played in 60 games during his time at Wake Forest; 49 of those appearances were starts. He is the fourth Demon Deacon to be selected by D.C. United.

McMaster started in 27 of his 58 career games for the Demon Deacons. In those 58 games, he recorded 12 goals and eight assists. He will be the second Wake soccer player to go to Minnesota FC. On the topic of being drafted, McMaster said, "I am excited to grow as a player and make my name in the league." He also said, "Being at Wake for the past four years has molded me into a stronger player, mentally and physically. There were ups and downs at Wake, but my experiences definitely built character within me, and I couldn't be more excited to show my capabilities in Minnesota."

Pannenberg was picked 49th overall in the second round by Orlando City SC. Of his 32 appearances, he recorded 22 victories and 79 saves. Pannenberg also put

up 13 clean sheets with 0.789 goals against, and a 0.760 save percentage. When asked what he is looking forward to in the MLS, Pannenberg responded, "The league is growing incredibly quick[ly] and the fan support and buzz is only getting better each year. I am really looking forward to competing at the next level and growing and developing on and off the field."

"I am also really looking forward to seeing many of my former teammates as there are plenty of Wake alums scattered throughout the league," he also explained.

"Ever since I stepped foot on campus four years ago, I have met so many great people. So many of the guys who came before me really showed me what it looks like to work hard and be a good teammate," Pannenberg remarked. "I have learned so much about what it takes to win and how to battle through tough times and adversity." The goalkeeper will be joining Demon Deacon Joey Dezart, who went in the second round during the 2020 draft, at Orlando.

Betfort became the sixth Demon Deacon ever selected in the NWSL draft and the ninth currently on a professional team. She was the 37th overall pick of the draft. With 65 game appearances and 59 starts, her four years at Wake Forest have been a success. In her almost 5,000 minutes on the field, she has recorded eight assists and six goals. Betfort began her freshman year as a forward, but she later moved to outside back. In 2019, she became team captain and led the team in assists. Betfort will be joining six other Demon Deacons who currently play in the NWSL. On the topic of playing in the NWSL, she explained, "I am looking forward to playing soccer at the highest level. It will be an incredible challenge and I am excited to see what I can do against some of the best players in the world." She also said, "My time at Wake prepared me for this next step in a lot of ways. However, primarily, my coaches always demanded the most of me, pushing me to become the best player and person that I could be."

CFB teams undergo coaching carousel

Failure, delusion and politics drive college football coaching changes

BY CHARLIE BENEDICT
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Back in August, many around the college football landscape secretly doubted whether the modified season would come to fruition. Although there were noticeable bumps along the way, the season was relatively successful and exceeded many expectations. At the end of the season when Alabama was crowned champion, the insane and obsessive practice of replacing football coaches began. Neither the backdrop of a global pandemic nor the shrinking university budgets quelled the insatiable thirst for better performances across the country.

I'm of the school of thought that there are three main reasons that Athletic Directors make changes with football programs: failure, delusion and politics. Sure, there's overlap and other circumstances that can lead to dismissals, but firings usually fall into one of these three. Let's first talk about those who failed and who replaced them.

Kevin Sumlin's tenure at Arizona was an abject failure. Sumlin was released from his duties following a 0-5 season and a 70-7 defeat at the hands of in-state rival Arizona State. The Wildcats struggled throughout Sumlin's three years in Tucson and won just nine games. Brought in with the task of fixing Sumlin's mess is 43-year-old Jedd Fisch, most recently the quarterbacks coach for the New England Patriots. Fisch, who has never been a

head coach at any level, is definitely an outside-the-box hire, but it could work. Like the Wildcats of the SEC, I think basketball-crazed Arizona is happy with just fielding a competent football team.

Derek Mason and Lovie Smith are two more examples of failure. Mason went 27-55 and made just two bowl appearances in seven years at Vanderbilt. Being the Vanderbilt head coach is one of the most challenging jobs in the country, but Commodore fans expect a little more than what Mason was providing. Replacing Mason is Clark Lea, Notre Dame's defensive coordinator. Lea, a 38-year-old Vanderbilt alum, served as a linebackers coach at Wake Forest in 2016 and 2017. Mason himself has jumped over to the SEC West, where he will be Auburn's defensive coordinator.

Lovie Smith was released from his duties at Illinois following a 2-5 campaign in 2020. During Smith's five years, The Fighting Illini went just 17-39. He'll be replaced by Bret Bielema, who last worked in college as the head coach of Arkansas, but most recently served as the linebackers coach for the New York Giants. Bielema made three consecutive Rose Bowl appearances with Wisconsin before bolting to Arkansas, where he led the Razorbacks to three straight bowl games, a tall order in the SEC West. Bielema will not lead the Illini to the College Football Playoff anytime soon, but I like the hire. Now onto delusion.

Texas and Tennessee, two programs known for their unrealistic fan bases, made questionable coaching decisions. Texas fired Tom Herman, ponying up for a \$15 million buyout. Herman won all four of his bowl games and finished ranked in the AP Top 25 in his final

three seasons. Nonetheless, he was shown the door days after Texas' 55-23 Alamo Bowl win over Colorado. Herman's teams were good, occasionally great, but not close to the dominance expected of Texas teams of the past. Herman didn't win a single Big 12 Championship and went just 1-3 against Oklahoma. Add to that a 2-6 record against TCU and Iowa State, programs Texas fans insist they should beat every time, and that's how you get a coaching vacancy. Filling the job is Alabama offensive coordinator Steve Sarkisian.

Sarkisian had well-publicized alcohol abuse problems as the headman at USC, and Texas won't be a job without pressure. It'll be interesting to see what Sarkisian can do at Texas; my hunch is he'll struggle at times without the absurd talent he had at Alabama, and Texas will be searching for a new coach after three or four solid, but unspectacular years.

Similarly, high on the delusion scoreboard is Tennessee, who fired Jeremy Pruitt after a 3-7 season in 2020. Pruitt received a contract extension just four months before his dismissal amidst a bevy of NCAA recruiting violations. Pruitt went 16-19 overall and 0-6 against Tennessee's three main rivals, Georgia, Florida and Alabama. Tennessee expects to be competing with and beating those three dominant programs, but they haven't for the past 20 years. It's time to face the music, Peyton Manning isn't walking into Knoxville anytime soon.

Auburn, another school that wins a lot but not enough, let go of Gus Malzahn. Malzahn went 68-35 in eight seasons at Auburn, including three huge wins over Alabama, but it wasn't enough to save his job. Malzahn wasn't

perfect by any stretch, but Auburn's always going to be the little brother as long as Nick Saban is in Tuscaloosa. Replacing Malzahn will be Boise State's Bryan Harsin, who went 69-19 in seven seasons in Boise. Harsin was never able to bring Boise to the elite levels they were occupied under Chris Peterson, but his Broncos were consistently the cream of the crop in the Mountain West and even won the most forgettable BCS bowl in recent history, the 2014 Fiesta Bowl against Arizona. In my eyes, Harsin is a lateral move at best from Malzahn, a lateral move that will leave Auburn paying their former coach a \$21 million buyout.

Finally, my favorite reason to fire a football coach: politics. Marshall's Doc Holliday was informed in early January that his contract was not being renewed. Holliday went 85-54 in 11 seasons at Marshall, and the 2020 season was a good one for the Thundering Herd. Marshall finished 7-3 and rose to as high as No. 16 in the AP Poll, but it wasn't good enough to save Holliday's job. According to the *West Virginia Gazette & Mail*, West Virginia governor Jim Justice, a billionaire graduate of Marshall, has pressured Marshall's President and Board of Trustees to remove Holliday since 2017.

Justice was reportedly unhappy that he was not allowed to watch the team practice in the summers. Holliday will be replaced with Alabama assistant Charles Huff, who has been lauded as a big part of the Crimson Tide's recruiting success. Whether or not Holliday's dismissal was a good decision remains to be seen, but it shows the overlap between state politics and college football. The coaching carousel never stops, so buckle up for another wild year of speculation.

Nets acquire Harden in blockbuster trade

Harden disappoints Houston Rockets fans and takes his talents to Brooklyn

BY BEN WILCOX
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James Harden, recently baptized as a Brooklyn Net, has forced his way out of Houston to join fellow NBA superstars Kyrie Irving and Kevin Durant. Throughout the last three seasons, Harden has led the league in scoring, as he repeatedly put up Jordan-esque numbers. With the Rockets, he was bolstered by surrounding talent nearly capable of toppling the Curry-Durant Warriors dynasty but now joins Durant in Brooklyn. Harden leaving for the Nets proves that coming close to the top wasn't good enough; he wants to win it all.

Following the trade, Houston's future is among the bleakest in the league. The Rockets forked over four future first-round picks to the Oklahoma City Thunder in exchange for Russell Westbrook, who was then traded away after only one season. This decision, among others made by management,

ultimately caused Harden to leave the team. Harden's forcing of a trade out is a prime example of a new era in the NBA that puts the players — not the organization — in the driver's seat. Now, teams are forced to placate their superstars by selling future picks to fill the roster with as much talent as possible. For example, the Milwaukee Bucks recently sent three first-round picks, along with several pick swaps, to the New Orleans Pelicans for Jrue Holiday, an aging point guard. The Rockets failed at making similar moves to keep Harden in Houston.

As a result of the move, the Nets have the potential to be the greatest offense in recent NBA history. Durant appears to have fully recovered from a torn Achilles, a feat that only a few NBA players have accomplished. Irving has been a bystander so far this season and is known to be an unpredictable player. When Irving returns, any contribution will be a bonus. This team looked like contenders even before acquiring Harden, but having him will certainly strengthen their chances at a Finals appearance.

More than anything else, it appears that the Nets' Achilles Heel will be its chemistry. Due to injury, Irving and Durant have played less than 40 games combined for the team since last year.



Jason Miller/Getty Images/TNS

James Harden joins Kevin Durant and Kyrie Irving on the star-studded Brooklyn Nets team coached by Steve Nash.

With Harden, who never seems to be content for long, and what may be too many egos in a room, this team has the potential to erupt. The three stars are each free agents in 2023, and the Nets

don't own any of their first-round picks through 2027. The Nets have clearly made a move to win now, selling away the future in the process. The only thing left to do: win.

Student - led podcast hits ground running

Juniors Katherine Finch and Katherine Cornett speak out about mental health awareness in their new podcast: *Afterclassers*

BY ELENA MARSH

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As the students of Wake Forest face yet another semester hijacked by the COVID-19 virus, two young women are breaching the conversation surrounding what it means to be a productive student in a pandemic.

The Afterclassers is a new podcast started by Katherine Finch, a junior at Wake Forest, and Katherine Cornett, a sophomore at Cornell. Both of these young women possess stellar grades, expert organization skills and herald a long list of extracurricular activities.

In weekly episodes released every Sunday, the Katherines invite their listeners along for the ride as they discover new tips and tricks for leading a successful life no matter the circumstance.

"Nobody ever thought a global pandemic was going to happen," says Finch. "So, I think the biggest lesson I learned was that you can work so hard and you can have goals but you still don't know what is going to happen or where you are going to end up."

Finch hopes that through this podcast she can share the keys to success that she has absorbed and applied in her time in high school and college.

"The tools that I am sharing with people are stuff that has helped my life that will stay with me forever," says Finch.

Cornett, while sharing a similar mindset to

her co-host, remembers her time at Cornell last semester and having to prioritize a work-life balance that she felt used to come naturally to her.

"I focused a lot on working and then taking time to myself to read a book or watch a movie," says Cornett. "I didn't have access to the things I normally would have during the semester, so I had to be more focused on my mental health."

An imitable characteristic of *The Afterclassers* is the contemplative philosophy behind the podcast itself. The attitude and approach to the academic world feels fresh, inspired and aimed at a generation of students raised behind computer screens and learning in isolation.

The conversations between Finch and Cornett emphasize the importance of internal success related to growing yourself and toward goals. Furthermore, the focus is placed on good feelings associated with the work accomplished as opposed to the grade received for that work.

"It's really not about getting the perfect grades or setting some sort of crazy goal; sometimes life gets in the way," says Finch. "You need to have a point in your life where you say, 'I've worked as hard as I possibly could and realize school is a work in progress and there is always something I can improve.'"

Tyler Curtis is a sophomore at Wake Forest with an intended philosophy major. He is an avid podcast listener who believes that *The Afterclassers* relaxed conversation style and positive message is exactly what students need during this time.

"It is easy to lose track of the ultimate goal of why we're here," says Curtis. "It truly is because of the love of the pursuit of learning and that was something that [the podcast] really reminded me of as I'm sitting here getting ready for this new semester."

They may have the same first name, but their areas of study could not be more different. Katherine Finch is majoring in philosophy with a minor in politics and international affairs and dance while Katherine Cornett is in the engineering program at Cornell and majors in earth and atmospheric studies with a minor in public policy.

Their differing fields of study in the Humanities and STEM make for

"We are redefining what it means to be a successful student - to be proud of the effort you put in. And by effort we mean working on the growth of yourself and your goals."

- *The Afterclassers* Motto

lengthy conversations where listeners feel like they have something to learn from both of the hosts.

"Those are two very different areas of study, so they have varied views and that does allow, in my opinion, for a lot more diverse tips and things to talk about," says Curtis.

The relationship between Finch and Cornett stretches all the way back to their high school days in New York City. Their rapport is certainly a sizable part of why *The Afterclassers* feels so natural and welcoming.

Listeners cannot help but feel as if they are joining a conversation between two supportive women whose entire purpose is to offer advice and aid to every kind of student.

"It almost feels like it's a conversation that you are sitting in on and I really enjoy that kind of laid-back style," says Curtis.

The co-hosts and listeners agree that the strongest part of their podcast is their friendship. Finch and Cornett share many past experiences helping one another through school and mark that as the foundation for their show.

"I think the podcast works so well because Katherine and I are such good friends," says Cornett. "We already had the same work ethic and philosophy when it came to schoolwork, so it was natural to start something like this."

Both of the women are used to helping one another through high school and college and hope to take that spirit into each and every episode no matter the topic.

"I was in the grade above her and so when I went to college, I would give her advice and she would give me advice in things because she really loved STEM and I loved the humanities," says Finch. "We always had a very supportive relationship."

Based on the episodes released so far it is clear that the goals of Finch and Cornett are within reach. There is much potential for the exact kind of compassionate, valuable and community-based show the two young students want *The Afterclassers* podcast to become.

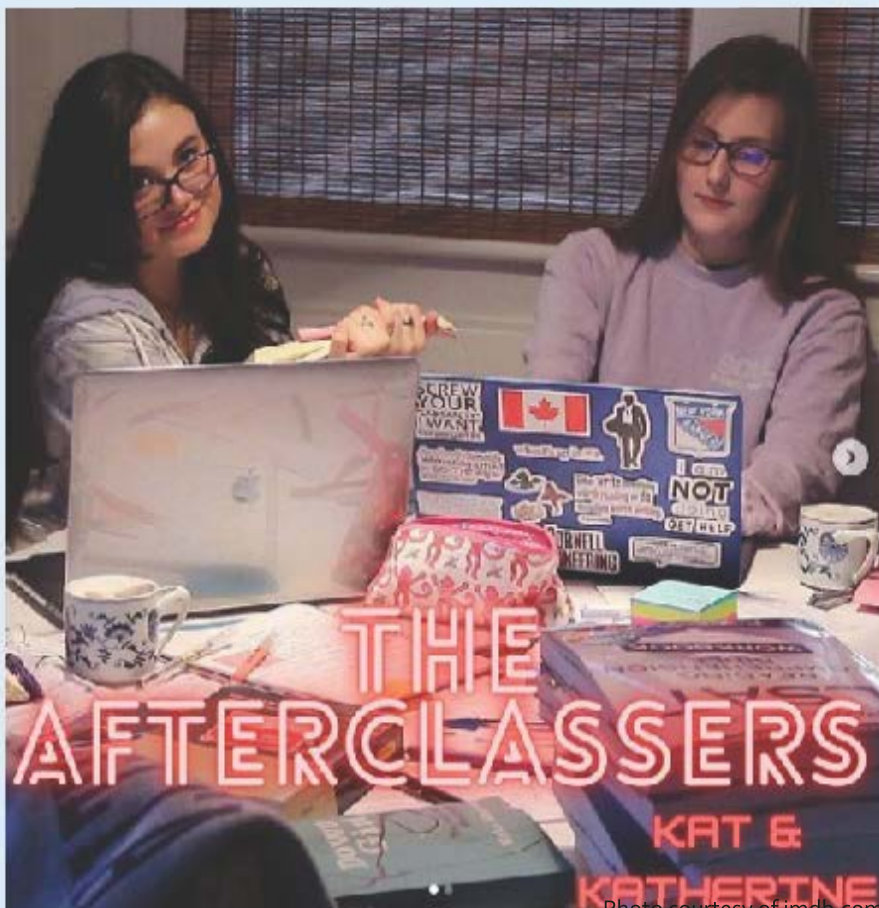


Photo courtesy of imdb.com

Movie Review | *Jungleland*

Themes of hardship highlighted in hit drama

Jungleland follows the story of failed boxer, Stanley, as he navigates the struggles of relationships and abuse at home

BY FRANK GALLAGI
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Jungleland is an emotionally raw film that follows the journey of three lost souls — Stanley, Lion and Sky — as they travel across the country in hopes of escaping their pasts and finding purpose. In *Jungleland*, Director Max Winkler painstakingly creates a gritty and unforgiving world shrouded by a cast of characters and events that focus on the themes of family, failure, redemption, corruption and love.

Stanley and Lion Kaminski, played by Charlie Hunnam and Jack O’Connell, command the screen as two brothers whose bond has endured years of abusive relationship, parental abandonment, and unthinkable dreams, including becoming a champion boxer. The performances by Hunnam and O’Connell are incredible. You feel the pain and

suffering each character has with acute empathy and hope that they will persist through every bad hand that they are dealt.

Lion, wounded, bloody and with a rat tail, is a tough competitor whose bodily bruises reflect the years of abuse life has thrown at him. Boxing is his salvation, and he wants desperately to use his skills in the ring or, more accurately, in back alley and basement fight clubs to set himself and his brother up for a better life. Knowing a sanctioned boxing championship is out of the question, he desires ultimately to make an honest living, open a dry-cleaning business and keep Stanley and him out of harm’s way.

Stanley’s aspirations are much different, and his innate capacity for failure is overwhelming. While his love for Lion is unquestionable, he cannot beat his addiction to losing. His consistent of failure drags Lion, as well as everyone else around him, down. Whether it is getting Lion disqualified from becoming a pro boxer or taking a risky bet that puts their lives in danger, Stanley continually fails. However, Lion is there for him every step, and misstep, along the way. At their core, Stanley and Lion

are good men, who, as a viewer, you care deeply about and want so desperately to get out of the underbelly of the world in which they live.

An early turning point in the movie is the introduction of Sky, a young runaway whose reasons for joining the two men are unknown. Played by Jessica Barden, Sky is a conflicted character subject to violent emotional swings that bring another level of complexity to Stanley and Lion’s life. Sky provides much-needed clarity to Lion and shows him a possible path to love while causing further destruction to Stanley’s spiraling life. The three are bound by their desperation. Winkler uses most of their familial ties to create a unique and life-altering relationship.

The trailers for *Jungleland* make this film look like a boxing movie, but it is a far cry from one. The fight scenes are intense, bloody and raw, and the viewer is hit hard by the harsh realities these characters are fighting against and for. *Jungleland* is a journey of human tragedy and the search for deliverance. I highly recommend this movie with a keen nod to the incredible dialogue, acting and grit.

Writing Advice | *Email writing*

Developing professional skills for the workplace

Haleigh Cadd describes the steps necessary to achieve effective communication

BY HALEIGH CADD
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In a virtual world, communication has become considerably more challenging for students searching for opportunities to connect one-to-one with professionals in their goal-industry. For instance, job fairs aren’t happening and, by default, the first impression students used to be able to make can’t happen, either.

That is, unless you can convince said professional that you’re a superstar right off the bat in your initial email to them.

Thus, here are a few golden rules that can guide your email creation – regardless if you’re sending a ‘Hello’ email to potential employer or an ‘I need answers right now’ email to a professor or staff member at Wake Forest.

This basically means to use correct punctuation and split your eight-sentence paragraphs into smaller chunks. Smaller chunks allows for easier readability — and correct punctuation lends itself to polished professionalism.

Use the ‘Schedule Email’ Button
You know what’s really impressive? A

student who sends emails at 8:00 a.m.

If sent at 4 p.m., the email is read, not responded to and then forgotten altogether by the next working day by the reader. Second, said email is buried by the next batch of emails the recipient gets the next morning and my internship email is lost or moved down the email queue.

Instead, what I could have done is schedule the email to be sent to the recipient early in the morning. Either way, the key is to get the email at the top of the recipient’s inbox so that when they log on, it’s the first email they see.

Use this structure: Greeting, Punchline, Details, Move Forward

Hi, Tamara!

I hope you’re doing well. Thank you for sending along the job description—I’m very excited about this opportunity. (Greeting)

When you have a couple of minutes in the future, can I ask for fifteen minutes of your time to talk about the weekly hours I’ll be expected to work this summer? (Punchline)

I’m also taking summer school and just want to make sure that my classes don’t interfere with my work schedule. (Details)

I’ll send a Zoom link if that’s preferable, just let me know what days are best for you to chat. (Move forward)

Thank you,
Marc

Here’s the reasoning for this structure: People, in general, don’t read every word of every email. Your email needs to be concise while also giving all of the needed information.

Like many people who enjoy writing, I used to bury the punchline in a paragraph of details. However, that meant that I was forcing people to look for the point of my email, aka skim it and miss crucial information I was including.

In other words, they got bored more quickly. By putting the point of the email — the punchline — at the beginning, you’re giving the reader a clear snapshot of what you want.

Also, by segueing into the details following your punchline, you’re outlining the why and what of your email. This will give the reader context and a larger story, allowing them to help you get the information or response you need.

Finally, by providing a ‘move forward’ statement in your email, you’re both taking the initiative on the next steps, and moving the process forward.

THE HOT LIST

Top 10 Cursing Alternatives

By Selinna Tran

1. Poop
2. Heck
3. Darn it to heck
4. Crap
5. Tartar sauce
6. Gee wilikers
7. Marlarkey
8. Shootfire
9. Poop nuggets
10. Chuckles

DRINK OF THE WEEK

Midnight Blue Marg

- Is this a rip-off of a juice shop smootie? Maybe...
- 1.5 oz tequila blanco
 - .5 oz blue curacao
 - .75 oz blueberry syrup*
 - .5 oz meyer lemon juice

Instructions:

Shake ingredients with ice in a cocktail shaker, then serve in a chilled cocktail glass. Garnish with blueberries speared on a cocktail toothpick.

Bring ingredients to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for 5 minutes. Let the mixture cool, then strain out blueberries.

Courtesy of Micah Porter
21+ Please

Music Review | Hether Band

Indie musician releases EP titled *Sticky Thumb*

Up-and-coming indie EP is created through Paul Castelluzzo's solo project: Hether

BY ELLY HONAKER
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Paul Castelluzzo, through his solo project Hether, has recently released a new EP entitled *Sticky Thumb*. Though the album title nods to a sensation of isolation and drug-induced stupor, it is also an expression of increased self reflection. The hazy edges around Castelluzzo's riffs make his music a living thing, something to reckon with. Don't be fooled by the easy going sound, the composition of this music is capable of drawing out emotional revelation. The beachy surf rock of "Sex Wax" and "Sticky Thumb" elevates the album, an energy that just as quickly rebrands itself as vulnerability. "Sex Wax" is a song about a sandy summer fling intermingling the smell of surfboard wax with the sensation of a relationship slipping away. It is an interesting exercise in metaphor, as it expresses in a few words the concept of a scent connecting memory to the present — it's as if this spontaneous outpour of feeling was prompted by walking past a surf shop with its doors

open. The wet reverb and alternating picking of the guitar also creates an immediate connection to the past with such obvious nods to 60s surf rock. Here it becomes apparent that we are witnessing a personal history of sorts. One that both aurally and olfactorily connects his current state of existence to a past no longer existing. One that filled his ears with surf rock, freshly waxed surfboards, and easy love. For a moment we can be there with him, as he departs from a current reality and more subtly interfuses with the past. But this may only be for a moment, as the song ends with him saying the word "faded" repeatedly, as if the sunset dipping beneath the western horizon has finally gone and the sky once brilliant with color has turned twilight. It is in this twilight that the vulnerability of "Twinkle" is illuminated. No longer living in the past, we now must interact with what is real. Castelluzzo, "tortured by the echoes of wondering," expresses the sense of letting go that love so requires. "Twinkle" is the agony of waiting to see if the other person loves you the way you love them — the hope followed by swift and ruthless resignation. The chords bring about a sensation of being pulled in two different directions; it is a feeling



Photo courtesy of Spotify
Hether's latest EP features 8 tracks of beach vibes with psychedelic beats.

of bliss and utter despair at once. To describe this world in terms of twilight seems particularly fitting. It's dark everywhere and yet you can see still shadows illuminated, you can see outlines where things once stood whole. This is the feeling that "Twinkle" elicits, it's a quickening darkness, and it stands as a main tension from the happy recount that is "Sex Wax." This tension I've attempted to point out, the sunny image of the past versus the shadowed present, is certainly a major component of *Sticky Thumb*. But one song partic-

ularly reveals a sense of purpose in drawing out this tension. Near the end of the album, Castelluzzo covers The Misfits "Hybrid Moments" in "Highbrid." But I believe such a cover also shows a veneration for Duster, a predecessor of the band Helvetia who also performed a cover of this song. These bands I feel share a kindred sonic impulse, the likes of which DIIV and Snail Mail also attach themselves to. An ethos thus arises. As music is stretched out, it reveals an elasticity, one of both time and space. To express admiration for Duster, a band whose late 90s albums fell into obscurity until the rise of streaming platforms, is to acknowledge time as an irrelevant marker of feeling. As this album shows us, powerful emotion can be felt from both our past and present, and thus the album becomes imbued with a poetic timelessness. Feeling may be fleeting, but to fossilize it into music makes it capable of remaining forever. That isn't to say I find Hether's music to be particularly important or canonical, but it is an acknowledgement that time creates an objectivity. In the same way we look back and view Duster as a band we are glad was saved from disappearing in time, Hether creates music that saves feelings that may have otherwise fallen to the same fate.

Lifestyle Column | Writing Letters

Using letters to communicate during COVID-19

With barred communication due to COVID-19, we turn to traditional letters

BY SELINNA TRAN
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The COVID-19 pandemic has touched almost every single corner of our lives and affected the ways that we communicate and build relationships with each other. With this in mind, it is difficult for many of us to maintain the relationships we've built throughout our lives and in the midst of our college careers. Social media has helped us to keep in touch with people that can be thousands of miles away. But where's the intimacy? Are we still building meaningful connections and relationships with our peers or is our only form of communication through a digital like or comment? I, of course, am a part of the majority of college-age students that utilize social media as a main form of communication with my friends. But I feel a disconnect when it comes to whether

or not these relationships are actually meaningful. As a result, over winter break, I decided to take advantage of the little free time I had in between work and life to be more traditional. To me, traditional meant going back to a long loved tradition and form of communication: writing letters! The thought of writing someone a letter and shipping it to them and having that person wait a few days or a week to receive seems arbitrary now that we can easily send someone a message in less than two seconds. However, I wanted a way to show appreciation and foster the relationships I've created through something heartfelt and traditional. I created the letters using various scraps of vintage/junk papers/patterns that I found at local eclectic shops in Winston-Salem and my hometown to put together something that I hoped would bring my friends a smile. Within the letters, I wrote them each a message about our friendship and my appreciation for having them in my life as I rem-



Photo courtesy of Selinna Tran
The letters were created using mostly repurposed papers and items found at Cookie's antique shop located in downtown Winston-Salem.

inisced on the memories that we've shared. Included in the letters were unique pieces of art that I added as a little gift. Finally, the letters were all sealed with a traditional wax seal and sent off into the wind. Although it took a great deal of time and energy to put together these letters, the only thought in my head as I was making them at 2 a.m. was the reaction my friends would have when receiving them. Soon enough, the letters eventually made it through multiple states (and a few countries!) to their final

destination. They were met with an abundance of joy and disbelief to have received a handwritten letter. When you think of it, even though a letter is quite a simple thing, it can easily make someone's day and add a level of heartfeltness and intimacy to a relationship. It's important, in my eyes, for us to try to continue to cultivate and build the relationships around us (in a safe way) even through a pandemic. Try reaching out to your friends through a letter today.

Four icons share a night in Miami

Amazon Prime's latest release, *One Night in Miami* is met with praise of the thought-provoking story of the connection between the private and public lives of Black activists

BY ERICOMOROGIEVA
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February 1964 marked the intersection of many cultural events in American history. On Feb. 9, the British Invasion began in the U.S with The Beatles appearance on the Ed Sullivan Show, America was still recovering from the tragic assassination of President Kennedy, the Civil Rights Bill was still looming and on the night of Feb. 25, Cassius Clay (AKA Muhammad Ali) defeated Sonny Liston in one of the most famous showdowns in boxing history. *One Night in Miami*, the directorial debut of Oscar and Emmy award winning actress Regina King, keys in on the latter of these events by creating a narrative around the friendship between Ali, Black Muslim leader Malcolm X, NFL star Jim Brown and singer Sam Cooke. The story, based on the stage play by Kemp Powers, is fictional, but ties directly into the true friendship and history fueling its narrative. This movie's impactfulness and insightfulness is achieved through a series of conversations and arguments amongst the four leads. Leslie Odom Jr., Kingsley Ben-Adir, Aldice Hodge and Eli Goree star in this film released widely on Amazon Prime Video.

One Night in Miami attracts viewers first by showing where each of these men are in their lives at this time. Ali was just coming off of an embarrassing loss and struggling over his decision to follow Malcolm X's footsteps in becoming a Black Muslim. Malcolm X was in the midst of deciding whether to sever his ties with the Na-



Photo courtesy of imdb.com

Director Regina King (right) is seen with Actor Eli Goree (left) who portrays Cassius Clay, a main character in the film that plays the role of famous professional boxer and activist, Muhammad Ali.

tion of Islam (NOI), Cooke bombed his big night at the Copacabana night club and Jim Brown was unsure of where his career was going next. This leads us into the big night where Ali defeats Liston and enjoys a night in the hotel with his three friends. The ideological differences between the men is illustrated instantly through Cooke and Brown's distaste for Malcolm X's conservative attitude against partying and drinking. Tensions rise as discussions continue over how to entertain themselves, with arguments between Malcolm X and Sam Cooke being the prominent moments of the story. Taking place in a hotel room the majority of the film, space is used as a tool to illustrate the tension.

What's impressive about the arguments in this film is that no one is ever wrong. The ideas that are posed by each leading man are valid, reasonable and although challenged heavily, are never disproven entirely. This is an important way not only to show the depth of these four leaders' characters at the time, but to respect that everyone comes from different backgrounds and opinions which make their experiences useful to discussions.

This movie succeeds most in its portrayals of each character. Kingsley Ben-Adir as Malcolm X is the best example of this, his portrayal focuses on sides of the leader that have never been depicted much before. Instead of the serious stature we are all used to, the film decides to use Malcolm X's love for cameras as his trigger for happiness, bringing a more soulful and light-hearted approach and separating his performance from Denzel Washington's 1992 portrayal. Leslie Odom Jr. as Sam Cooke steals the show with his singing throughout the film and his important character development that allows him to find a way to make songs that connect better with the lives of African Americans. The story depicts his envy of Bob Dylan's "Blowin' in the Wind" as a catalyst for his seminal track "A Change is Gonna Come," released to radio just two weeks after his tragic death in December 1964. In addition, the film depicts his strive to become a better performer

and music executive for his people. As Muhammad Ali, Eli Goree had the tough challenge of portraying such a charismatic legend, but does it gracefully, highlighting the internal conflicts of what it meant for someone of his celebrity to convert to the Nation of Islam.

History plays an important tie-in as well. Wrapping this fictional night into the larger history of America at the time is not easy, but this film does it well. All of the characters' gripes and tensions fit right in to what is going on in the country at the moment. You can feel the weight of responsibility on these men's shoulders at this time in their lives. All are at major crossroads in their lives and careers, and have secrets that they hope to keep from the rest of the group. These small details add a level of intrigue into the narrative, especially when secrets are revealed to the rest of the group, and the characters must unpack their way through it.

One small gripe in the execution of historical tie-ins arrives during the relationship between Muhammad Ali and Malcolm X, where it is insinuated that Malcolm X is tricking Ali to join the Nation of Islam as a way to make his exit less of a story. Ali being aware of this doesn't entirely add up to the events that precede regarding their friendship. If Ali knowingly joined the NOI understanding Malcolm's tactics and their close bond, there would be no reason for their friendship to have fallen apart as it did the latter of the year, when Ali began to lose contact with Malcolm X because he was no longer an NOI member. While this is a small issue among the many successes in the movie, it is still something to note.

Overall, *One Night in Miami* is a fascinating debut film for King and serves as a unique story of friendship, leadership and an important moment in the lives of four Black icons of the 60's. The entire cast shines, the writing is excellent and the lessons learned can only serve to challenge us in a positive way. If you are one who enjoys dialogue-packed films, portrayals of historical figures and stories of friendship, this movie is for you.



Photo courtesy of imdb.com

One Night in Miami is now streaming on Prime Video and is directed by award winning Regina King.