

# THE JOHNSONIAN



## Winthrop Board of Trustees voted on required standardized testing

Bryn Smyth  
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On Monday, Sept. 21, the Committee on Enrollment and Retention met in preparation for the Sept. 25 Winthrop University Board of Trustees Meeting to discuss the circumstances surrounding admission for incoming freshmen who are not able to take the SAT or ACT due to COVID-19 restrictions.

“The university was one of the first colleges and universities in South Carolina back in April of this year to suspend the requirement of standardized test scores... since then, as you may or may not know, most institutions, I would actually say the majority of institutions in the great state of South Carolina, have followed suit. Some have actually moved now to permanent test optional admissions, while some are just doing it on a temporary basis through the fall of 2021. That’s actually, obviously one of the reasons why we’re here today, we’re asking for the committee to consider extending our current test suspension policy, through fall of 2021,” Vice President for Access & Enrollment Management, Eduardo Prieto, said.

The committee voted to bring the issue to the Board of Trustees and use “the appropriate language that [the decision to suspend the testing requirement for admission] is temporary due to the COVID-19 pandemic,” Julie Fowler, chair of the committee, said.

In Richardson Ballroom on Sept. 30, the board of trustees discussed the concerns about suspending testing requirements temporarily. Prieto informed the committee of the impact COVID-19 restrictions have had, statistically, on test takers this year.

“By this time last year, there [were] approximately 1.3 million SAT test takers. Right now, it’s about 600,000, so less than half of last year’s numbers. In the great state of South Carolina, it’s a little bit better, but not much. So, this time last year in South Carolina, there [were] approximately 22,000 SAT takers and as of yesterday there [were] 13,000, so 9,000 less than last year,” Prieto said.



Olivia Esselman/The Johnsonian

The most concerning aspect of possibly permitting temporary adjusted admission criteria was freshmen eligibility for financial aid despite having no test scores.

“We were talking about merit aid,” Prieto said. “In traditional need-based aid is financial aid and so it’s true the financial aid piece of it is what usually typically goes out in the spring of a student’s senior year; however, the merit aid part typically goes out around the first of December.”

Regarding merit aid, chairman of the Council of Student Leaders Brandon Jackson asked, if not test scores, what criteria must incoming freshmen meet to be considered for admission. Prieto said that the details had not been ironed out yet, but admission will likely be based on students’ GPA, core class grades and AP and honors courses.

The board then voted on whether to permit the temporary suspension of required standardized test scores for admission.

“Winthrop University, until April 2020, has traditionally utilized the SAT and ACT standardized tests as part of the first-time freshman evaluation process for admittance. However, testing opportunities continue to be limited for prospective students due to the ongoing challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, in an effort to remain accessible to and competitive for prospective students from South Carolina and non-residents, Winthrop respectfully requests a continuation of current alternative methods of evaluation in lieu of a standardized test score,” read the meeting summary.

## Retired library dean neither censured or censored, WU professor says

Anna Sharpe  
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A political science professor objected to claims made by South Carolina legislators that retired Library Dean Mark Herring was censured by the University.

Scott Huffmon made these remarks at Friday’s board of trustees meeting. Huffmon said that Herring had neither been censured—which means to be criticized officially—or censored.

Huffmon’s speech follows Winthrop Provost Adrienne McCormick’s apology to Herring. However, because Herring was not named in McCormick’s initial email to the Winthrop community, Herring was not technically censured, Huffmon said.

“Herring was not named, nor was the publication named. Unless someone were already intimately familiar with the situation, there would have been no way to know that it was Mark Herring who was being referenced,” Huffmon said.

“In fact, until Mark Herring began publicly proclaiming an alleged injurious grievance, I had absolutely no idea what her email was

about. Therefore, Provost McCormick did not censure Mark Herring,” he said.

Herring’s article, titled “The Wuhan Wildings,” was considered offensive for the use of ethnically insensitive phrases such as referring to COVID-19 as the “kung flu.” The article appeared on the website Against the Grain but was quickly removed.

The Asian/Pacific American Librarians Association and Chinese American Librarians Association released a joint statement condemning Herring’s article and Against The Grain for publishing it.

“The comments expressed in this article are deeply offensive and perpetuate harmful stereotypes of Chinese people as disease carriers who eat wild and unsanitary animals. This is especially dangerous since we do not know what officially started/caused the disease,” a May 15 press release stated.



Huffmon

Photo Courtesy to Winthrop University



Maggie Claytor/The Johnsonian

## Police Blotter

Bryn Smyth  
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An officer with the Winthrop University Police Department responded to a call for “a welfare check” at Roddey Apartments on Aug. 28. The report states that a couple of friends of a Roddey resident were concerned for the resident’s well-being after he had recently experienced some familiar trauma that ended in the loss of his medication. The Roddey resident had sent some very concerning texts, prompting his friends to call in a welfare check.

When the officer was able to approach the Roddey resident and ask about his well-being, the subject responded by saying that his “life was a game, wrapped inside of a game.”

The subject then spoke about “hackers trying to hack into [his] game of life, so he constantly had to change levels of the game.”

The responding officer asked the subject if he had any intention of harming himself or others and the subject replied that he had no such intention, but that he had not had access to his medication in a long time. The responding officer then contacted Counseling Services where the subject was put in contact with Community Crisis Counseling. The subject’s pupils started dilating before EMS was dispatched.

When EMS arrived, they surmised that the subject might be under the influence of some sort of drug, but the subject declined to be transported to the hospital. Upon leading EMS out of Roddey Apartments, the responding officer was met by another Roddey resident who informed the officer that the subject had been found rummaging through his apartment. When he asked the subject to leave, he did.

The responding officer then spoke with a Residence Life employee living in Roddey who said that the subject had been causing issues all throughout the day and had attempted to enter more apartments in the building. The subject was placed into Emergency Protective Custody and taken to Piedmont Medical Center for evaluation.

On Sept. 16, police responded to a call about a person dancing in front of the windows of Richardson. The responding officer confronted the subject and the subject informed the officer that he was homeless and was there to meet people. The responding officer asked the subject to leave campus, but after the subject refused, the responding officer placed the subject on trespass notice.

On Sept. 16, police were told by a group of friends that they came across a suspicious

▶ see [Police](#) pg. 2

**Correction:** The article which ran in the Sep. 23 issue of The Johnsonian under the headline ‘Five feet tall yet a giant to us all’ stated that President Donald Trump appointed one Supreme Court justice during his term. Trump has actually appointed two Supreme Court justices during his term, thus far.

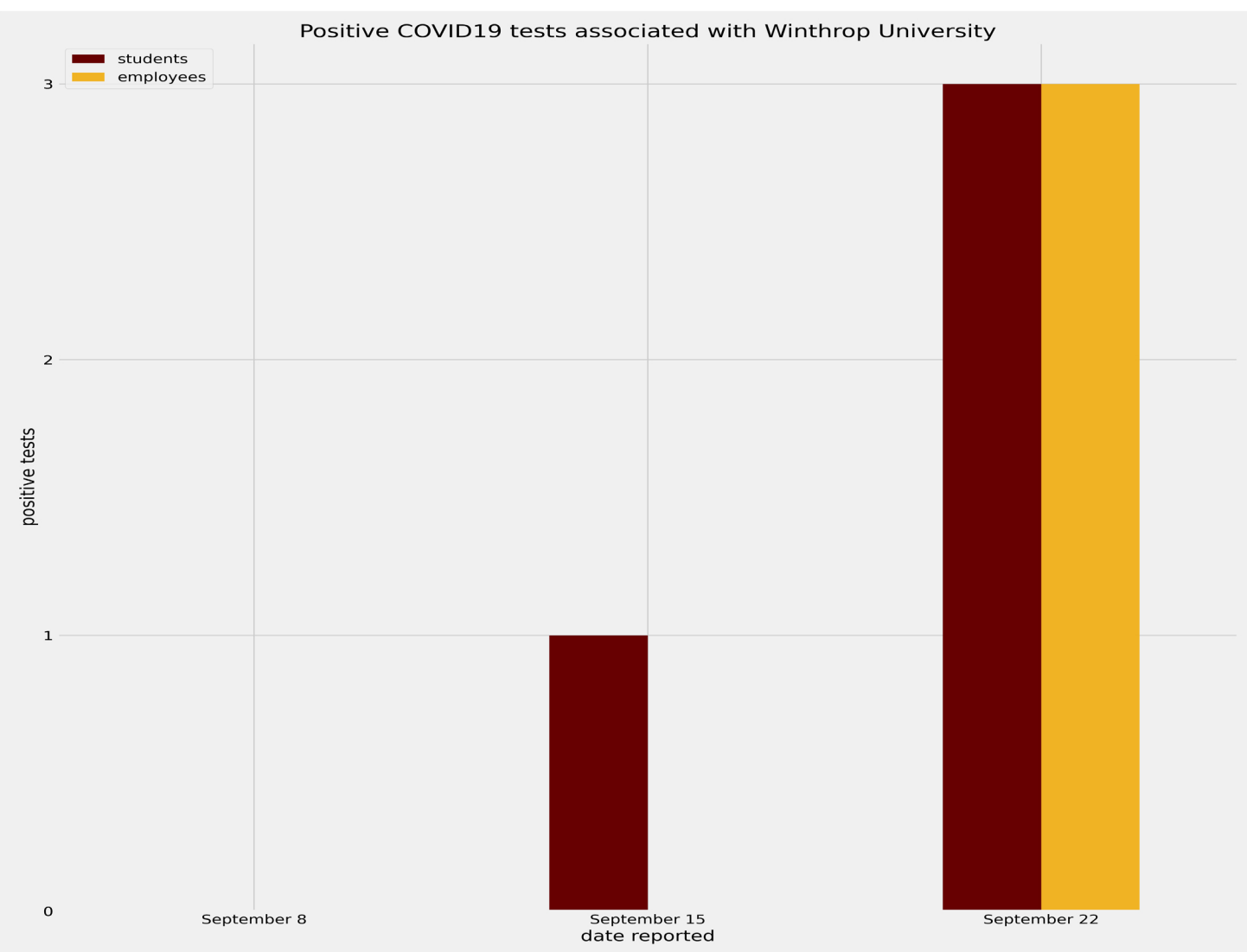
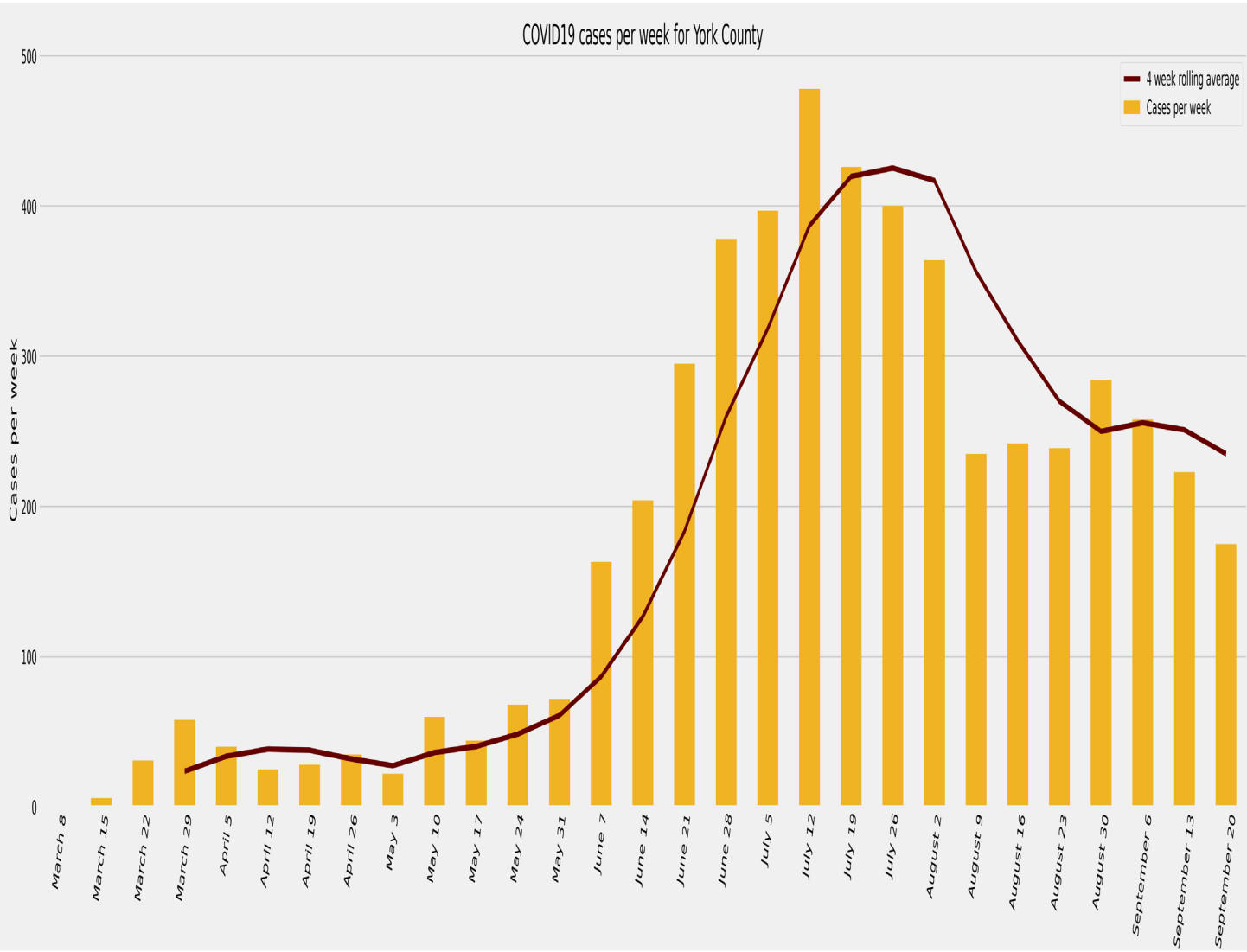
▶ see [Speech](#) pg. 2





# COVID-19 data

During the pandemic, The Johnsonian wants to keep you up to date with the number of positive cases in the York County area and on Winthrop University's campus. Each week we will have weekly data charts informing you of what is new.



Philip Nelson/The Johnsonian

### ◀ Speech from front

The article was also removed from Winthrop's Digital Commons, but according to Huffmon, it should have never been included in the Digital Commons to begin with.

"I don't know how items are chosen to be put in the digital commons, nor do I know who established the ridiculously low bar that op-ed pieces should be admitted, but for the sake of Winthrop's scholarly reputation, I urge that this criteria be revisited," Huffmon said.

The removal of Herring's article brought into question the censorship of conservative ideas by the university. Huffmon rejected this claim as well.

"Personally, I feel that the racism in the opinion piece has now been established. However, I am more disturbed by the claim that removing a racist piece from the digital commons somehow amounted to silencing a conservative voice. This, in my opinion, is patently absurd and, frankly, disgusting. Racism has no place in true conservative thought," Huffmon said.

Huffmon called for an apology to McCormick "for the excoriation she received."

### ◀ Police from front

person while walking around. The friends told the officer that the suspicious subject approached them and made them feel uncomfortable. A person in the group gave the suspicious person five dollars. The subject then said he "would be back."

On Sept. 17, Human Resources informed the Winthrop University Police that a member of Winthrop faculty and staff had been arrested by the Rock Hill Police Department for assault and battery of a high and aggravated nature. As a result of the subject having been charged with ABHAN, even though the incident happened off campus, the subject was placed on trespass notice.

To see more data visit our website by scanning the QR code provided



## About The Johnsonian

The Johnsonian is the weekly student newspaper of Winthrop University.

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Letters and feedback can be sent to editors@mytjnow.com or by mail at The Johnsonian, 104 Campus Center, Rock Hill, S.C. 29733. Comments submitted online at www.mytjnow.com may be printed as letters and may be shortened for space and edited for clarity. Please include

your name, major and year if you are a student; your name and title if you are a professor, or your name and profession if you are a member of the community. Letters, cartoons and columns reflect the opinion of the authors and are not necessarily the opinions of The Johnsonian Staff.

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## In record time: Republicans rush to replace RBG

Just hours after the passing of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg, Republicans were mapping out the road to her replacement



Ruth Bader Ginsberg

Graphic by Lizzy Talbert

**Elijah Lyons**  
copy editor

Just two hours after the passing of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg, Kentucky Senator and Senate majority leader Mitch McConnell pledged a speedy confirmation of President Donald Trump's eventual supreme court nominee.

This promise came after reports from Clara Spera, Ginsberg's granddaughter, stating that her grandmother's dying wish was that she "not be replaced until a new president is installed," according to NPR.

Grief spurred on by the passing of Ginsberg, an iconic champion of gender equality and civil rights, had just begun to proliferate national media, and already the conversation was shifting drastically. Joey Smith, a former theater performance and mass communication major, remembers there was little time for mourning.

"I felt a mix of grief and horrific fear of the future, so it was a very uncomfortable feeling," he said.

The following day, Sept. 19, South Carolina Senator and Chairman of the Judiciary Committee Lindsey Graham came forward to support McConnell's pledge in a

tweet. "In light of these two events, I will support [Trump] in any effort to move forward regarding the recent vacancy created by the passing of Justice Ginsberg," he said.

These bold moves forward threaten precedent both Graham and McConnell set under former President Barack Obama. After the sudden death of Justice Antonin Scalia in Feb. 2016, Senate republicans blocked Obama from holding hearings to consider Judge Merrick Garland for his replacement, arguing that a supreme court seat should not be filled so close to that year's election - nine months away.

Graham made an impassioned speech on the Senate floor attempting to establish some precedent regarding the matter in March 2016.

"If there is a Republican President in 2016 and a vacancy occurs in the last year of the first term you can

say Lindsey Graham said, 'Let's let the next president, whoever it might be, make that nomination,'" he said, adding that "you could use those words against me and you'd be absolutely right."

But under President Donald

Trump, with less than 40 days until the election and a vacant supreme court seat for the taking, Republican ideology has shifted on the matter.

"They don't really seem to care about precedent, or emotions or anyone's wishes if they don't agree with them, and that's been apparent over the last four years," Smith said, adding that, ultimately, he was unsurprised by the effort.

"While I do think that it is awfully hypocritical... I kind of believe that Democrats would honestly probably do the same thing if we were in that position," he said.

Still, Trump has since claimed that his nominee will "likely be a woman," and in the days since, a suspected shortlist has begun to circulate.

"In order to get points with women - female voters - I feel like it works in his favor to nominate another woman on his team this close to the election," freshman political science major Ella Miller said, adding that she was "surprised he would put a woman in charge of women's rights."

But the two most frequently discussed candidates (as of Sept. 25), namely Barbara Lagoa, a Cuban-

American judge from Florida, and Amy Coney Barrett of Chicago, have exhibited "pro-life" leaning tendencies in their time on the court, a reality that causes concern for Miller, who worries her rights may soon be threatened.

"Trump has often used minorities as tokens when his policy does not actually represent the interests of those groups," Smith said.

Miller says she's confident, however, that recent events may galvanize young female voters and cause them to turn out in higher numbers this November.

"I feel like a lot of us are pro-choice and a lot of us are democrats and I feel like that will energize us," she said.

The impact of replacing a liberal supreme court justice with a conservative nominee could impact the Supreme Court and American politics for decades. With this decision, a 5-4 conservative majority court lurches even further to the right, sealing in a 6-3 majority.

President Trump will choose to nominate Judge Amy Coney Barrett, as of the night of Sept. 25, according to the New York Times.

## Winthrop reaches highest ranking yet

Winthrop just reached its highest rankings ever in several U.S. News categories

**Sean Miller**  
staff writer

Winthrop University has just received its highest U.S. News and World Report rankings ever and the university administration is ecstatic, but what do these rankings mean and what are their significance?

U.S. News ranks universities across the country to give prospective students insight into where they should apply and what different schools have to offer. According to the U.S. News website, they mine the rankings upon "user feedback, discussions with schools and higher education experts, literature reviews, trends in our own data, availability of new data, and engaging with deans, and institutional researchers at higher education conferences."

Winthrop climbed from number 8 to number 6 in the top public

schools category, the university's highest rank yet. This is due to "Winthrop University's 6-year graduation rate, its commitment to undergraduate teaching, assistance to veterans and

of its social mobility graduates," as reported by U.S. News.

"One of the things that has contributed to us moving up in the rankings is that we have been consistent in the data that we have presented over the years. A number of universities, they go up and they go down in the data that they present, [but] ours have been consistent," said Winthrop President George Hynd. "I also think it's our treatment of veterans...our innovation, with the number and the kinds of programs we have and our reputation as an undergraduate teaching institution, those things all go into

those ratings as well." Winthrop ranked number 7 in the best colleges for veterans and is a purple heart and yellow ribbon university.

"The Yellow Ribbon Program allows for the university and the Department of Veterans Affairs to provide funds for tuition and fees for students that are wanting to come back after their military service. And we have exceeded our established threshold under the post 9/11 GI Bill," Hynd said.

"We also have a dedicated student Veterans Center. And in my prior experience at other universities, we frankly offer our veterans more services and I think that contributes to our rankings as well," Hynd said.

The university also reviews the training that veterans have received and awards academic credits based on the military coursework they

have completed. Winthrop also placed number 13 for the regional universities South category, due in part to its increase in innovation. This puts Winthrop ahead of other notable universities in the region such as Coastal Carolina and Western Carolina University.

However, some Winthrop students feel as though this ranking may be too high.

"I can understand why they have the ratings that they do. However, I don't believe Winthrop is the 12th most innovative school," said Malik Smith, a junior computer science major. "The A/C needs to be upgraded, the wi-fi and many of the older buildings need to be renovated".

Winthrop's lowest ranking was number 41 in the best value category, which means "the best bang for your buck" in layman's terms. However, the university placed 12th in innovative schools and President Hynd says they are continuing efforts to expand and create new programs for students.

► continued on pg. 4

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## Life on Venus

*There was a recent discovery of possible microbial life on Venus*

Shyanne Hamrick  
staff writer

Recent detections of a strange and pungent gas in Venus's atmosphere have prompted astronomers to reconsider the possibility of life on Earth's neighboring planet.

On Sept. 14, an article was published by Jane Greaves in *Nature Astronomy*, which detailed the discovery of traces of phosphine in the clouds of Venus. Greaves, a professor of astronomy at Cardiff University, led a group of astronomers from various institutions to conduct this research.

"[T]hey have detected traces of a gas in the Venusian atmosphere that, according to everything they understand about Venus, shouldn't be there," Marina Koren wrote in an article for *The Atlantic*. "They considered many explanations for what could be producing the gas, known as phosphine, and settled on an explanation guided by what they know about our own planet."

On Earth, phosphine is typically produced by microorganisms in anaerobic, or oxygen-deprived environments. Phosphine is considered a biosignature, or a marker which suggests the existence of biological processes.

Other planets, such as Jupiter and Saturn, possess phosphine with their atmospheres as well. However, the presence of phosphine is explained by the combination of high temperatures

and pressures on these two planets.

Research has also examined other possibilities to explain the occurrence on Venus, including lightning, tectonic plates, meteorites and volcanic activity. Each potential explanation yielded little results in comparison to the amount of phosphine found on the planet, according to Greaves.

"[Phosphine] could originate from unknown photochemistry or geochemistry, or, by analogy with biological production of [phosphine] on Earth, from the presence of life," Greaves said.

Although scientists and experts remain hopeful about the potential for microbial life on Venus, the presence of phosphine could be explained by other means.

"Unfortunately, the presence of phosphine gas does not mean that life has been discovered on Venus," said Victoria Frost, an assistant professor in Winthrop University's biology department. "It sounds exciting but from what I understand the presence of this gas could be associated with any number of different reactions causing its presence. A lot more research would be required to really understand what – if any – the significance of this discovery is."

Prior to the discovery, Venus was entirely disregarded as a hospitable planet because the

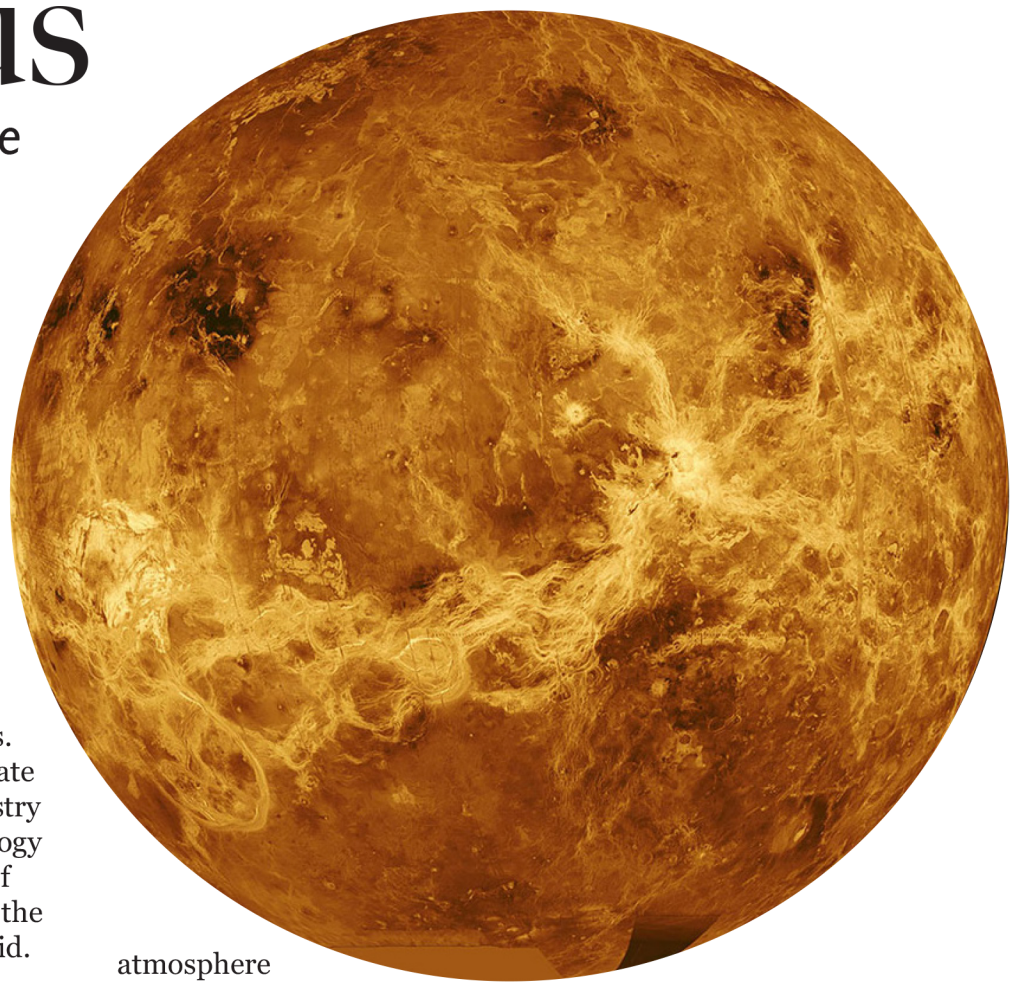


Photo Courtesy to NASA

atmosphere is composed of sulfuric acid. The runaway greenhouse effect also causes the planet to retain heat into the atmosphere. This results in a scorching climate with temperatures of nearly 900 degrees Fahrenheit, which is high enough to burn lead, according to NASA.

"There is, however, a narrow, temperate band within Venus' atmosphere, between 48 and 60 kilometers above the surface, where temperatures range from 30 to 200 degrees Fahrenheit," Jennifer Chu wrote in an article for *MIT News*. "Scientists have speculated, with much controversy, that if life exists on Venus, this layer of the atmosphere, or cloud deck, is likely the only place where it would survive. And it just so

happens that this cloud deck is where the team observed signals of phosphine."

The latest evidence for life on Venus is a breakthrough discovery in astronomy, but the notion would require further research. Currently, Japan has a spacecraft orbiting the planet. In 1985, the *Venera 14* space probe survived long enough to transmit data from the surface of Venus for approximately 56 minutes.

"If this discovery is confirmed, which will likely require sending a spacecraft, we would know for the first time in human history that the solar system has two planets where life exists," Koren said. "In a cosmic sense, we wouldn't be alone anymore."



## TECH TIP OF THE WEEK

An easy and fast way to proofread your essay is to copy and paste it into Google Translate. This way you can hear any mistakes made you would not see otherwise.



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Lizzy Talbert / The Johnsonian

## Wins for Winthrop Esports

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Winthrop Esports saw its first action of the season as the League of Legends team competed in the Harrisburg University Esports Invitational on Sept. 19 and 20.

The Eagles opened the tournament with a 1-0 win against the University of Michigan. They then played Illinois Wesleyan University to earn another 1-0 victory.

With a 1-0 win over the University of California Irvine, Winthrop advanced past the group stage to the Round of 16. There, the team had to face another school from the Big Ten.

To round out their Saturday sweep, the Eagles defeated Ohio State University by a score of 2-0. This win advanced Winthrop to Sunday's quarterfinals.

Winthrop's thrilling run came to an end after a 2-0 loss against Harrisburg University, one of the top esports programs on the collegiate scene.

This year's League of Legends team features five veteran players who all return from last year's inaugural team, which was ranked as high as fourth in ESPN's college League of Legends coaches poll last spring.

Esports also competed on Sept. 23, earning the program's first-ever Rocket League victory with a 3-0 win over Hawkeye Community College. Rocket League is one of two new esports at Winthrop this semester, the other being Valorant.

Be sure to follow Winthrop Esports on Twitter (@WinthropEsports) and Instagram (@winthropesport) for gameday scores and updates.

# Pump it Up

Group Fitness classes now available in-person and virtually

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Fall semester is in full swing, and students can breathe easy knowing that group fitness classes are offered ten times a week, both online and in-person, giving everyone multiple opportunities for a solid workout.

For students who chose to remain off campus enrolled in online courses, they are able to stretch out from the comfort of their own home.

Online classes include Basic Yoga/Meditation, Chakra Vinyasa Yoga, Gentle Flow Yoga, and Vinyasa Yoga.

Students back on campus can get their hearts pumping in the West Center with Indoor Cycling or Cardio Hip-Hop.

"My freshman year, I attended Yoga, Zumba, Cardio Hip-Hop, and Aqua Zumba classes, which started my love for the classes and led me to get certified and teach my own classes," Perez said.

Kim Perez, senior Elementary Education major, teaches the Cardio Hip-Hop classes on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

The number of attendees for each in-person class depends on what the class is and where the class is taking place. For instance, Perez's Tuesday class can have twenty participants, whereas her Thursday class can only hold twelve, as the two classes are located in different sized rooms.

"I've always enjoyed the Cardio Hip-Hop and Zumba classes because of the high energy levels, great music choice, and the chance to dance and have fun with your friends," Perez said.

Even though Perez leads weekly in-person classes, she also enjoys participating in the virtual fitness classes.

"The best part about the virtual classes is that they can

be done anywhere! So even when it's raining or you're joining halfway, you can just pop in and get started," Perez said.

Now that most students have a grasp on their classwork, virtual classes are becoming more popular.

"I had a 50% increase in participation this week from six to nine participants. I hope to grow our class throughout the semester," Lawson said.

Stephanie Lawson, Associate Professor of Marketing, is one of the new leaders for virtual yoga classes, beginning her teachings only a couple weeks ago.

"The most difficult thing for me is setting the camera up properly so participants can see me in both floor and standing poses," Lawson said.

Although Lawson misses playing music and getting to know her students while leading an in-person class, she believes online yoga is still especially beneficial for students as "they can find time to move their bodies, which helps every aspect of our lives."

Yoga is an excellent class for beginners, but all group fitness classes are available for everybody of all skill levels.

Jen Bossi, Assistant Professor of Exercise Science, teaches two in-person cycle classes, one on Tuesdays and one on Wednesdays.

"I was pretty nervous at first going back to teaching cycle," Bossi said, "With people breathing hard, and sweating, things like that. However, the West Center staff did a really good job on ensuring safety and also training us on what we needed to do before and after class to make sure everybody is safe."

Instructing cycling classes at both Winthrop and the local YMCA before the Covid-19 pandemic, Bossi is glad to be

back and have things running smoothly.

"So far so good," Bossi said, "I think the biggest thing for me is watching people either try something new or work towards achieving their goals. It's just a really cool feeling to be a part of all of that, which is what I enjoy the most."

Regarding the cleaning of equipment, Bossi explained that instructors wipe down all bikes and set them up on specifically marked spots that are six feet apart to follow social distancing guidelines. This extra spacing allows for only twelve bikers per class.

Bossi also mentioned that towels are under each bike to catch sweat, but the floors are still completely mopped after each class. Cyclers also must wipe down their bike after class, followed by a second wipe down by the instructor for maximum cleanliness.

Bossi believes the social connection part of in-person classes is beneficial, even if it is socially distanced.

"I think social and mental health is just as important as physical health, so I try to really encourage students to try these in-person classes as long as they feel comfortable," Bossi said.

However, any type of exercise is worthwhile, and Bossi does understand the appeal of online workouts.

"I found that people like virtual classes because they don't feel as judged, especially with beginners who may feel uncomfortable or embarrassed doing something new," Bossi said.

Group fitness schedules are set for the semester as the variety of classes depends on what instructors are available

"I'm trained in cycle, so it'd be really hard for me to teach a cardio dance class," Bossi said.

Regular attendees will never be bored as each class may be a similar format, but the order of exercises is always switched up. "I'm always going to do some hilltracks, some sprinting, we'll do some recovery, but I'll change up the order we do them," Bossi said.

Switching workout routines is not the only thing that helps make a successful fitness class, but also rotating music playlists.

"I think something that really mixes up the class is changing up the music. If you have different music, a lot of times different participants won't even notice if the class is exactly the same."

For students interested in joining virtual group fitness classes, visit the Recreational Services Instagram page, @wu\_rec.

Students looking to participate in classes located in the West Center can register beforehand on the WU Rec app.

FALL 2020 GROUP FITNESS SCHEDULE

September 7th - November 20th

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday And Sunday
<b>Yoga/ Meditation</b> 5:30-6:30pm <b>ONLINE</b> Maria	<b>Indoor Cycling</b> 11:15-12:00pm Room 122 Jen	<b>Gentle Flow Yoga</b> 5:30-6:30pm <b>ONLINE</b> Isabella	<b>Vinyasa Yoga</b> 10:00-11:00am <b>ONLINE</b> Isabella	<b>Vinyasa Yoga</b> 2:00-3:00pm <b>ONLINE</b> Isabella	<b>NO CLASSES</b>
	<b>Chakra Vinyasa Yoga</b> 11:15-12:00pm <b>ONLINE</b> Stephanie	<b>Indoor Cycling</b> 6:00-6:45pm Room 122 Jen	<b>Cardio Hip Hop</b> 6:30-7:15pm Room 122 Kim		
	<b>Gentle Flow Yoga</b> 5:30-6:30pm <b>ONLINE</b> Isabella				
	<b>Cardio Hip Hop</b> 8:00-8:45pm Room 206 Kim				

Schedule is subject to change:  
see WU Rec Services app for updates

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Graphic Courtesy to Winthrop Recreational Services



# Eagle of the week: Jeremiah Boyd

Lily Fremed  
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Photo Courtesy to Winthrop Athletics ed,” Boyd said.

“I think it is important for college athletes to be team oriented and hard working. It is also important to be focused on school first. My favorite part about being a college athlete is being surrounded by very talented athletes that are all pushing each other to be faster.”

Jeremiah Boyd, sophomore Math and Education major, grew up in Plainview, Texas, moving to Donalds, South Carolina before his seventh grade year.

“Throughout my childhood I was always interested in road races because my father ran a lot of marathons,” Boyd said.

Despite years of interest, Boyd did not have the option to run competitively until his freshman year at Dixie High School, where a cross country team was newly established.

“My high school running career was all about building a running culture. I trained hard with my teammates to be the best that we could be with the tools that we had,” Boyd said.

For Boyd, Winthrop began as just a name on a long list of universities he was considering. After an extensive amount of research, “Winthrop was the only place with good athletic programs and the academic program that [he] want-

Ben Paxton, head coach for both men’s and women’s cross country and track and field programs since 1993, was one of the main reasons Boyd chose Winthrop for his collegiate running career.

“Winthrop cross country is coached by the most experienced coach in the area. The opportunity to learn from Coach Ben Paxton was a big deal for me,” Boyd said.

Paxton’s years of coaching have led the Eagles to fifty-nine individual titles, ten relay titles, two team championships, and more than 300 athletes earning All-Big South honors.

The abundance of determination and experience in both programs helped lead Boyd to four outstanding personal records for the 2019-2020 season, with two for cross country and two for track.

During his first collegiate cross country event, Boyd set a 5K PR time of 17:43.0 at the Coastal Carolina Invitational on Aug. 30, 2019, earning him a 16th place finish.

At the Winthrop Adidas Cross Country Invitational on Sept. 14, 2019, Boyd Set an 8K PR time of 29:21.0.

Although he preferred cross country during high school, Boyd said he now loves the one-mile race in track and field. “I am very happy with my race times from last season, but I still want to get faster,” Boyd said.

For his collegiate track & field debut at the Carolina Challenge from Jan. 31-Feb. 1st, Boyd set a PR for the mile with a time of 4:40.31.

Later at the VMI Indoor Classic from Feb. 14th-15th, Boyd set an 800m PR with a time of 2:05.30.

“Our coach does an excellent job getting the team prepared for race day. Beyond preparing the body it is important to get your mind ready to race. I find that visualizing the race beforehand is a powerful thing,” Boyd said.

Praying for strength and endurance while tying his shoes before

each race, Boyd also looks to his favorite verse for inspiration.

“Hebrews 12:1 let us run with patience the race that is set before us. I love this verse because it is a reminder to stay focused and to be patient because God’s timing is perfect,” Boyd said.

With the 2020 outdoor track season postponed due to Covid-19, Boyd is still training and working towards his goal of bringing his team closer together.

“The closer the pack runs together the better the team will be in the long run. Our team is very young and we are all pulling together for a potential winter cross country season,” Boyd said.

Even though the postponement of fall sports seasons is disappointing for many, Boyd is using the time to focus on other hobbies and his academics.

“Besides running, I work on the family farm in the summers. I love spending time with my teammates and sharing meals with them,” Boyd said.

With even a couple more years to bond with his teammates and competitively race, Boyd is already dreaming of life beyond the Winthrop campus.

“After graduation I want to use my knowledge in math and running to teach high school math and coach cross country and track. I definitely want to start my career in South Carolina,” Boyd said.

# Hilinski’s Hope at Winthrop

*Mark and Kym Hilinski speak with student-athletes about mental health awareness*

Matthew Shealy  
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In recognition of September being National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month, the Winthrop University Student-Athlete Advisory Committee hosted a virtual town hall on Sept. 23 featuring the Hilinski’s Hope Foundation.

Hilinski’s Hope was founded by Mark and Kym Hilinski in 2018 after their son Tyler, a quarterback at Washington State University, died by suicide. The goal of the organization is to eliminate the stigma surrounding mental illness and promote awareness and education of mental health among student-athletes.

“We think if this can happen to Tyler, it really can happen to anybody,” Mark Hilinski said. “That’s sort of a scary thought and it’s not meant to worry you or make you uncomfortable, but rather just open your eyes and mind a little bit.”

The Hilinskis described Tyler as happy and kind and noted that he did not show any obvious warning signs of being depressed or having suicidal thoughts.

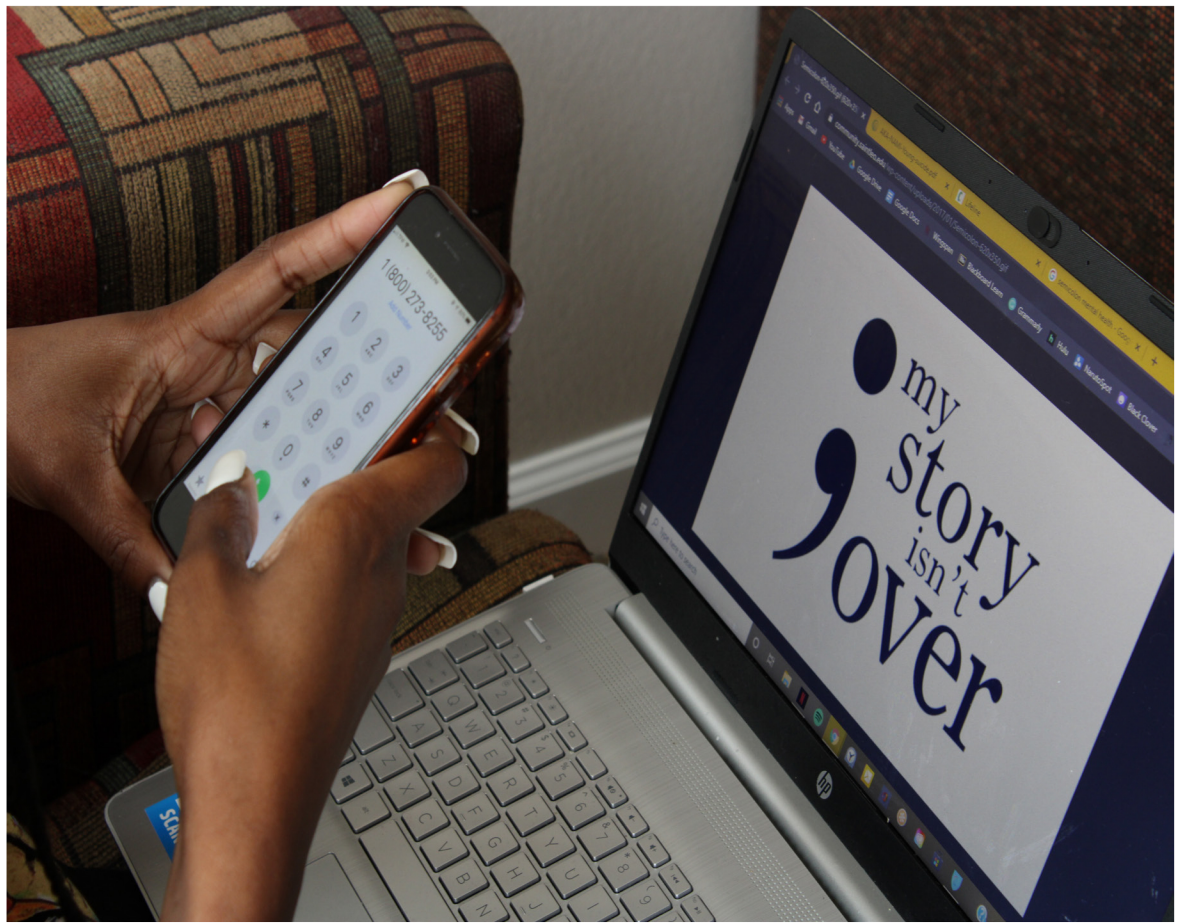
“It paints a picture of many people you see in your sports – folks that you’re very close to, teammates maybe that you don’t know so well, teammates in others sports, perhaps coaches – and you can’t always take on face value that they’re happy and they’re excited and they’re funny [because] you may not understand what’s going on underneath,” Mark Hilinski said.

The Hilinskis discussed the importance of counseling but pointed out that those who are struggling aren’t always capable of asking for help. Mark Hilinski said that Tyler frequently drove a friend (who had lost his mother to cancer) to counseling in college, but never sought counseling for himself.

“I’m tempted to say the same thing – ‘shame on Tyler for not asking,’” he said. “But guys, if it’s your brain that’s making the mistakes, if it’s your thought process that’s interrupted or chemically imbalanced... we can’t just accept that the person who needs the help is capable of asking for it.”

Dr. Gretchen Baldwin, Clinical Coordinator for Winthrop Counseling Services, also spoke during the town hall. Baldwin provided information on how to sign up for counseling at Winthrop and answered questions about the counseling process.

Baldwin said that due to COVID-19, walk-in appointments were no longer permitted. Counseling is only being offered virtually at this time, and students must schedule an appointment



Marisa Fields-Williams/The Johnsonian

through the “Patient Portal” link found on the Health and Counseling Services website.

According to Kym Hilinski, the Hilinski’s Hope Foundation works closely with two programs: Step Up (a peer-to-peer bystander intervention program) and Behind Happy Faces (a mental health curriculum). She said the foundation also started a podcast during quarantine called “UNIT3D,” which is hosted by sports psychologist Dr. Josie Nicholson of Ole Miss and can be found on Spotify, iTunes and SoundCloud.

Hilinski’s Hope has also arranged for this coming week to be the inaugural College Football Mental Health Awareness Week,

kicking off on Saturday Oct. 3, or “3Day.” Schools around the country, including Clemson University and the University of South Carolina (where Tyler’s brother Ryan plays), are set to participate by wearing stickers on their football helmets and raising three fingers in the air during the first play of the third quarter of their respective games.

You can learn more about Tyler’s story and Hilinski’s Hope at [www.hilinskishope.org](http://www.hilinskishope.org) and follow the organization on social media @hilinskishope. Winthrop students can find more information about counseling services at [www.winthrop.edu/hcs/](http://www.winthrop.edu/hcs/). The national suicide prevention hotline is 800-273-8255.



## Coded concerts

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The entertainment industry has taken a major blow as a result of the COVID-19 health crisis, as gatherings of any kind are to be avoided whenever possible. One could argue that musicians have been hit particularly hard by the loss of the income they would normally receive from live gigs. Some singers and bands have taken to performing virtual performances from their own homes and trying to keep things as close to normal as they can. Others have taken to video games.

In late April earlier this year, two massive music performances took place on two of the world's biggest games. The first took place inside the best-selling video game to date, Minecraft. 100 geeks, an American musical duo, hosted a virtual musical festival called Square Garden. The festival took place on an open Minecraft server and featured a dozen different artists. The festival was free for admission and collected donations for the Feeding America organization.

That same weekend, Fortnite held a concert, fittingly named "Astronomical," featuring rapper Travis Scott. Much like the Minecraft festival, Scott's performance took place entirely in Fortnite and was made possible through a collaboration with the game's developers, Epic Games. The concert allowed players to enter a special world in the game and watch a giant version of the rapper perform.

A whopping 27.7 million unique players attended one of the several performances that took place over the course of three days, according to gamesindustry.biz. Some players decided to watch the performance again, resulting in players watching an accumulative 45.8 million times.

"I think it's extremely cool," sophomore psychology major, Raegen Grooms, said. "We're currently in a very uncertain time and things like the music industry have to adapt and that's a way for musicians to still reach out to the fans and interact with them without doing it in person."

Sophomore social work major Alicia Zindars said, "It is a lit-

tle lame...it is a cool way to connect fans, but personally I just don't see the appeal in it. But for younger fans and those really into [the games], it is really a good chance for them to experience [these artists] with how things are right now."

"I would give it a chance," Grooms said. "It's not my exact cup of tea, I'm not really big into video games and I doubt it would have the actual concert feel to it. However, if it's an artist that I like and it's an opportunity to see them perform...of course, I'd give it a shot."

Zindars, on the other hand, said that she would "probably not" attend a virtual concert. "It just doesn't seem really interesting to me. I find it cool for fan outreach...but it doesn't seem any different than a Instagram Live or Facebook Live thing, you're not seeing them live...I would be interested in playing a game with the [musicians] I really like."

Despite the success of Scott's Fortnite venture, Grooms does not think that these types of performances will be something that will be "long-lived after COVID." However, as long as we are in our current situation with the coronavirus, she can see virtual concerts sticking around and would "love for them to. It is a wonderful opportunity for artists to still interact and get some money." She called it a "beneficial situation for both fans and artists."

Zindars believes that these virtual concerts will continue, but only for the sake of money. "I mean honestly I feel like some artists will do it for their fans, but it is likely only for the money behind the scenes," she said. "Now that video games companies see the impact these musicians have on bringing in players, they'll begin using them to get more traction and more money. So, I don't doubt this will become a more common thing."

Whether artists do it for money or their fans, it might be worthwhile to keep an eye on how video games studios and musicians interact moving forward as we all await the day that proper concerts can return.



Tate Walden/The Johnsonian

## Upcoming releases to Disney+

Are students at Winthrop excited for the new releases to Disney+, such as *The Mandalorian* season 2 and *WandaVision*?

Allison Reynolds  
staff writer

With the changing season normally comes season premieres of everyone's favorite TV shows. However, with the COVID-19 pandemic, many shows have had to pause production and fans have been left wondering "how will this work?" Luckily for TV show lovers, Disney+ has come to the rescue, by dropping a trailer for *The Mandalorian* season 2 on Sept. 16 and a trailer for the new Marvel tv show, *WandaVision*, on Sept. 20. On top of these glimpses Disney+ showed us of their original TV shows, they've also announced movies that they will soon be putting on the platform. Disney has said that they are putting critically-acclaimed movies such as *Maleficent*, *Hidden Figures*, *The Fault in Our Stars*, *Into the Woods*, *Sky High* and *Mary Poppins Returns* on their streaming services within the upcoming months.

While everyone is excited about the new TV shows and new movies coming onto the platform, fans are still wondering about the TV shows that were promised when the streaming service was first announced. Before Disney+ was released, the company had talked about several original TV shows that we have yet to hear anything about outside of speculative rumors, including spin-offs about Marvel characters such as *Hawkeye*, *Ms. Marvel*, and *She-Hulk*. Disney also discussed

spin-offs about Star Wars characters, such as *Rogue One's* Cassian Andor and fan-favorite character, Obi-Wan Kenobi from the original and prequel trilogies.

"I'm really excited because when you think Disney+, you might think of the younger kid movies, but also there's an option for teenagers to enjoy a cheesy romance. Also the representation with *Hidden Figures*, I feel like that will empower a lot of people," said freshman theatre education major Abigail Vinson.

When asked about the upcoming Disney+ original Marvel TV shows, Vinson said, "I personally am not a big superhero fan, but I know my friends are and I'm excited for them."

"I've seen the trailer for *WandaVision*. That's the one I'm most excited about since I'm a big Marvel fan," said freshman theatre education major Janny Salguero.

"I haven't seen the trailer for season 2 of *The Mandalorian* because I'm still watching season 1 and I didn't want any spoilers." When asked about the tv shows that the fans haven't really heard anything about, Salguero said, "I am really upset we don't have much information about the shows. I would like to hear a date for a trailer at least."

Disney+ has the perfect cure for no season premieres blues. With *The Mandalorian* season 2 having a premiere date of Oct. 30 and *WandaVision* promising a speculative "coming soon" statement, fans have a lot to be excited about.

Disney fans can look forward to the upcoming releases of movies such as *Sky High* and *Mary Poppins Returns*. Non-Disney movies are also coming to the service, though, including *The Fault in our Stars* and *Hidden Figures*. Disney+ continues to introduce exciting additions to their line-up of movies and TV shows.



Tate Walden/The Johnsonian



# Artist Spotlight: Keeping art alive

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For many artists, the COVID-19 pandemic has redefined or even halted their methods of work. Digital artist William Rivera, however, is not only sustaining his creativity, but is drawing even more attention to his projects online.

Rivera is a sophomore illustration major at Winthrop University. After everything at Winthrop became digital, he decided to use his talents in creating all of the artwork for an online tournament called PRIZM, incorporating well-known characters from video games, books and television with musical mashups.

While Rivera said that this “mashup community” is nothing new, he is the leader of an online server hosting 500 people that were drawn in by his art style. He creates stark representations of these popular characters, using a single accent color with a black and white digital palette.

While Rivera remains humble about his endeavors, he said he has been called somewhat of an “inspiration” by some of his followers for all of his hard work. Rivera said he truly enjoys the ability to stay creative with such support and feedback from this community. “I like when I get to talk to somebody, when I get to draw and they are interested in what I’m doing...as somebody who has ADHD, it keeps me on task,” he said.

Rivera said that he has been interested in art from a young age and has been drawing digitally since the seventh grade. As he has been working to improve his artistry skills, he said that he is able to see growth in his work year after year, which is encouraging for him.

Luckily, this growth has not been affected by the pandemic this year. In sharing what he called an “unpopular opinion,”



Marisa Fields-Williams/The Johnsonian

Rivera said, “Everybody freaked out when Zoom started...I’m made for this.” He said he finds comfort in the ability to receive immediate feedback in his art classes online while not having to turn his camera on or physically be in class.

As much of the art industry struggles to move online, Rivera said that he and his community “just keep trucking [and], honestly, you get more traction because you are online and you can talk to people whenever.”

Rivera urges those who may be hesitant to become involved in these types of online communities to push themselves and try it out. “Most of the time you meet a lot of people you probably would not have, people you probably like more because they like more things you do,” he said.

And in this time of physical isolation, this digital connection is more important than ever. Rivera said he has always been involved in this form of “online interaction” and that he has improved greatly because of it. “As someone with ADHD and mild autism, I meet a lot of people like me in these communities...It’s very comforting,” he said.

While Rivera is unsure exactly what his future may hold, he said that “I would just like to be paid for what I want to do,” which is a statement that many artists can relate to. As for PRIZM, Rivera said, “This is anything but ‘fine art.’ It is really a passion project, but I am happy to keep art alive, in a sense.”

# A new freshman experience

Aerieal Laymon  
staff writer

Unlike the upperclassmen at Winthrop University, the freshman class has yet to experience a normal fall semester. Despite all the obstacles, they are still striving to be great students.

Even with the struggles of the pandemic, these students still seek out the “freshman experience” in their own way. Many first-year students are just happy that they have gotten a chance to even be on campus. Winthrop freshman biology major Gwen Krauss said, “I feel really lucky to be on campus right now, and while it’s not what I had hoped, I’m in the STEM Scholars program so I’m getting face to face interaction I’d be lacking this year. Overall, I’m thankful for the opportunity I’ve been given and I’ll make the most of it.”

While the pandemic has affected her class the most, these students are still hoping to find their place and, as Krauss said, “make my mark here.”

Normally, students are able to make many of their college friends in-person at the events that Winthrop would usually hold, but because of the pandemic this year, many freshmen had to step out of their comfort zone to meet people virtually.

“I’m a part of a program that gets me interacting with people in person, a way that some can’t get right now, so I’m really glad that while most of my classes are online, which sucks, I still get to interact with people. ACAD is fun and I’ve met some awesome people there too,” Krauss said. Because Winthrop is so into helping the freshman class, classes like ACAD 101 have helped the students interact with each other on another level.

Student organizations have also played a large role in improving the freshman experience. While many of the meetings have

been held online, Winthrop is still managing to encourage freshmen to take part in these organizations. Krauss has joined some organizations herself, including “the STEM scholars program, a future health professional group, and a Disney club.”

For freshman dance major Steffan Mayrides, meeting new people was never a problem. His freshman experience has been great. He even said, “It has been amazing. I knew a plethora of people coming in so I never faced an awkward moment.”

The expectation of coming into college for the first time can be really stressful for some freshmen. But as they have begun to settle into college, some realize that the college experience is better than what they think. “It was way better. I’ve made great friends and have the freedom to see them every day,” Mayrides said.

For Mayrides, COVID-19 has changed the way he has begun his freshman year. “I contracted the virus in July and was not symptom-free until two weeks before moving onto campus. My lungs will start to hurt after walking around too much and my heart will send constant pains if I exercise or dance too much,” he said.

The virus has affected him in many ways. He even talks about how “walking used to never be an issue,” but now that his “lungs are weaker than they used to be” he sometimes has to be sure to take breaks to “regain the strength to keep going.”

The freshman experience is all about being able to succeed academically while still getting to know the school better through the people around them. Many first-year students have been able to begin accomplishing their goals as a college student despite the obstacles they have faced. With the support of Winthrop, these freshmen will be able to succeed in many ways and continue to fulfill their freshman experience.

# Mask peer pressure

Jeb Bartlett  
staff writer

Mask mandates remain in effect around the country to aid in the fight against COVID-19, and college campuses are no exception. But what kind of pressures do students feel about wearing masks and interacting with others?

Winthrop University’s COVID-19 safety guidelines state, “Face Coverings are required in all campus buildings, including classrooms and common areas.” Similar guidelines have also been implemented by both Clemson and the University of South Carolina. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, masks help to prevent respiratory droplets being released into the air or getting onto others. They also advise that masks should be worn in areas social distancing is difficult to maintain.

For freshman early childhood education major Mckenzy Brooks, getting adjusted to wearing a mask was a challenge. “At first it was a little weird to get used to,” Brooks said, “but now I’m used to it, and it’s just second nature. I have one

hung up by my door, so I don’t forget.”

Mask comfortability aside, has COVID-19 changed how friends interact?

“With my group of friends, we’ve been around each other for weeks now, so we feel comfortable taking them off around each other,” Brooks said. “If we’re meeting up on campus, of course we’ll have them on. But if we’re going somewhere, once we get to the car, we take them off.”

For students like Josiah Johnson, a freshman music education major who is completing this semester from home, concerns over spreading COVID-19 have also had an impact on how he associates with people. “If I’m out in public, in a big area, I’d feel safer if everyone would wear a mask,” Johnson said. “With my friend group, if someone has been exposed, they usually don’t come to our meet-ups. We’ve had a couple people with COVID scares, and they had to take it easy before we hung out again.”

However, Johnson did not feel the same concerns regarding family members. “When I’m with family - as opposed to strangers - I get the

feeling I’ll be fine. So, I take it off. Because they’re family, and we have the same blood, I feel alright about it,” Johnson said.

So when exactly should people be masking up? With no definite answer to this question, instances of ‘mask peer pressure’ are likely to occur in social settings, for better or worse.

Whether it be through university safety guidelines, or signs posted around campus, there is a clear atmosphere at Winthrop to engage in social distancing and mask wearing. “I think they’re just trying to encourage you to wear one,” Brooks said, “but I wouldn’t say I feel pressured.”

Off campus, though, Johnson feels there is a definite pressure to participate in wearing a mask. “Obviously I think there is pressure because it limits spread of virus. But, if it helps decrease the spread, I think we need to wear it,” Johnson said. “I’m not having a problem with it personally, but I think a lot of people are.”



Olivia Esselman/ The Johnsonian

Both Brooks and Johnson agreed that when it comes to removing one’s mask around others, consent is key. Johnson said that “I think... in a group, if someone is taking their mask off, everyone should consent. If one person, or multiple, are taking it off, there should be a conversation to see if everyone is ok with it. If people aren’t ok with it, they should all leave the masks on.”

World Health Organization and CDC officials cite wearing a mask as an essential way to prevent the spread of COVID-19, and it is always important to have a conversation with those close by before removing your own.



September 30, 2020

# Consent is not conditional

Opening up a campuswide discussion about consent and what that means for the modern college student

Autumn Hawkins  
staff writer

With the newest edition of Clemson University's code of conduct, they explicitly included consent.

With the inclusion of consent in their public code of conduct, Clemson has started a campuswide discussion of sexual assault and how it should be handled. Under the student behavior clauses, consent is defined as "requiring speech or conduct indicating a freely given, uncoerced by means of threats or force, agreement to engage in sexual contact."

Clemson's handbook then goes on to identify requirements for consent, such as being understanding of the situation, unambiguously agreeing to any and all sexual interactions, and making a firm decision whether or not to engage in any sexual or romantic activity.

The student handbook also lists how to evaluate consent, and when it cannot be given. Reasons for not giving consent can include mental and physical incapacitation and withdrawal of consent in previous situations. Silence, lack of physical resistance and feeling pressured into any situation never count as consent.

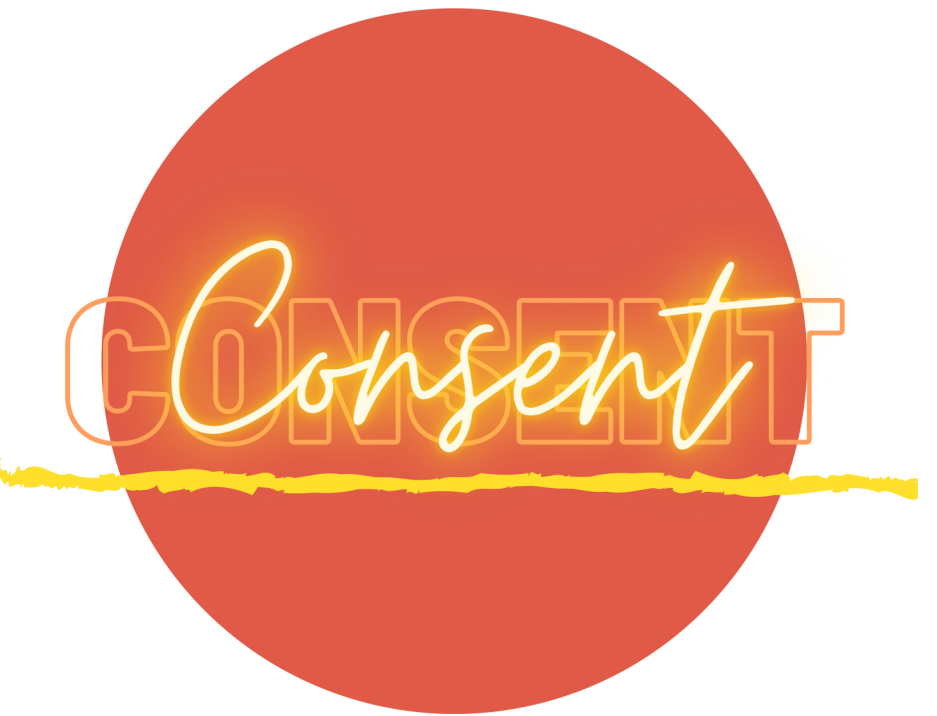
What does this mean for the modern college campus? The Rape,

Abuse & Incest National Network reported that college-aged students are one of the most at risk age groups for being sexually assaulted. According to their 2019 statistics, 11 percent of all college students, regardless of gender, experience sexual assault through physical force or some type of incapacitation.

With activist campaigns such as the #MeToo and #TimesUp movements, sexual assault is coming to light now more than ever. Testimonials of surviving these attacks are documented worldwide, regardless of sexuality or gender expression. Campuses are hearing these voices and taking action to prevent further attacks.

With the recent death of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, it is imperative to advocate for sexual assault to be put to an end. Ginsburg fought for equitable rights - particularly those of sexual assault survivors - for the entirety of her career. In an interview earlier this year, Ginsburg was asked what the #MeToo movement meant to her. "For so long, women were told 'there's nothing you could do about it.' But now the law is on the side of women and men who encounter harassment, and that's a good thing," she said.

College campuses are amplifying the support and resources that are



Lizzy Talbert/The Johnsonian

available to sexual assault survivors. Support group sessions are popular, as it gives students the ability to meet others who have gone through similar situations. Health centers are also offering free, confidential testing for pregnancy and any sexually-transmitted diseases that the survivor could have gotten while being attacked.

Winthrop in particular advocates for the mental and physical health of assault survivors. The Department of Health and Counseling Services has opened a subdivision dedicated solely to protecting the rights of survivors while pursuing

justice. Victims and Trauma Services allows students to obtain testing as well as counseling and reporting the assault, all while staying completely anonymous.

Victim and Trauma Services can be found in 104 Crawford Building, or contacted via phone at (803) 323-2206. They also encourage students to contact the local crisis center, Safe Passage, for more resources after an attack of any kind. Safe Passage can be contacted at their 24-hour hotline (803) 329-2800.

# New Netflix documentary delves deep into social media

Netflix's documentary "The Social Dilemma" explores the problems with social media

Connor Brandenburg  
staff writer

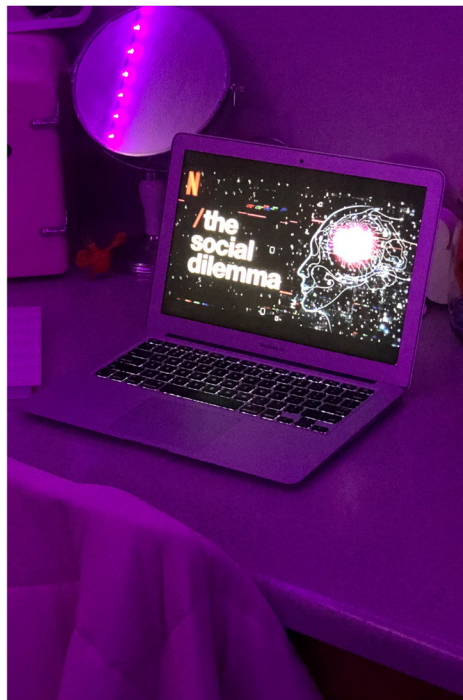
Netflix's urgent documentary "The Social Dilemma" addresses the serious side effects of online social interaction.

By focusing on social media, an integral form of communication, especially during quarantine as of recent, director Jeff Orlowski is able to discuss the inner workings of the online industry without condescension. What results from the multitude of experienced interviewees is an insightful exploration of the relationship between people and their social media accounts.

While social media was initially created to make connecting with other people more accessible, the concept has become an integral part of society. Due to this popularity, advertising has become internalized within these sites' infrastructures.

Netflix's "The Social Dilemma" investigates the ways sites specialize advertising for each user. Essentially, each of these sites rely on the personal data uploaded onto their server by users.

Winthrop University marketing professor Hemant Patwardhan shared his knowledge about the topic. "Whatever you put up online to create an account, I would say a website, or with a business, or a social media account, all the activity that you engage in over the internet in terms of maybe browsing histo-



Gabrielle Reid/The Johnsonian

ry, or buying products, or saying something to friends or relatives, all that is your own personal data. The website would normally use that information to offer you some goods and services based on your likes and dislikes and your past purchase history."

Through the marketing of their users' interests, Tristan Harris, the president of the Center for Humane Technology who "The Social Dilemma" referred to as being "the closest thing Silicon Valley has to a conscience," simplifies this dynamic.

"If you are not paying for the product, you are the product," Harris said.

The information that social media websites use to define their

users to others is simultaneously being appropriated for marketing and advertising. The circulation of personal data on social media also plays a hand in the distribution of fake news. Based on the political leanings of an account, certain articles produced by less than reliable news sources can be recommended. With a clickbait title or thumbnail, the article can gain traction and eventually be interwoven with reality.

"When the same news comes to you from various different times off of various different sites, you tend to believe that it is true. So, even fake news can eventually be part of the factual thing," Patwardhan said.

As these sites obtain compensation in the form of clicks or views, the misinformation can become fake news and spread around the internet. Another interviewee from the Netflix documentary, Justin Rosenstein, who is an American software programmer, gave insight into the matter. "Essentially, you vote with your clicks. If you click on clickbait, you're creating a financial incentive that perpetuates this existing system," Rosenstein said.

Since personal information and false information can be spread so easily on social media sites, it is inevitable that they can bleed into someone's life and mental health, particularly for younger people. Younger users on social media websites are much more susceptible to becoming addicted to their

account because of their large amount of free time.

"Social media starts to dig deeper and deeper down into the brain stem and take over kids' sense of self worth and identity," Harris said. Once younger users become addicted to their account, their mental health becomes increasingly tied to their online reputation. Despite social interaction and validation being a key component in adolescence, the sheer amount enabled by social media is not beneficial.

"But were we evolved to be aware of what 10,000 people think of us? We were not evolved to have social approval being dosed to us every five minutes," Harris said. Humans are an inherently social species, but the overwhelming rate of interaction at which social media promotes is wildly outside a human's genetic makeup, no matter their age.

However, this level of addiction is not strictly exemplified by younger users. "The Social Dilemma" aims to present the widespread effects of social media as a universal problem. The credits of the film themselves present this direction, with the title glitching into "Our Social Dilemma."

For humanity's intense relationship with social networking to halt, people must realize that this problem originates from a human-made program, and so, other humans are the only source to control it.



## Avoiding political discussions with family

Autumn Hawkins  
staff writer

As we are just around the corner from the holidays, many are already bracing themselves for heated political debates over turkey and stuffing.

2020 may not be over yet but it has already been an insanely frightening ride for most of us, featuring everything imaginable from the pandemic, economic crisis, wildfires, hurricanes, even down to a national coin shortage. To top it all off, 2020 is an election year.

Political discussion among families has always been common and what some might say to be an American tradition. However, due to the increasing polarization and partisanship of almost every topic, issue and decision, giving one's personal perspective around family members may not be particularly appealing.

Senior and forensic chemistry major Reagan Auton gave her thoughts in response to whether or not her political views have changed since attending college and if she now disagrees with members in her family who she used to agree with.

"My opinions definitely did change, especially with my dad who has more conservative beliefs, whereas me and my mom are on the same page a little bit more," Auton said.

Like Auton, many students are not fully exposed to different aspects of issues prior to college because their parents may only be watching one news channel, or are not surrounded by people who hold different beliefs and opposing views. Numerous students wholeheartedly believed that their parents and family were on the "right" side of every issue, until they actually learned how to properly research and find the facts for themselves only to discover that they see things differently now. It is understandable why many would choose to simply be quiet about their own recent discoveries around family.

"We just kind of avoid talking about politics for the most part. It depends on the topic, sometimes I may try to explain things by using examples, back it up with facts, and share what I've learned from college," Auton said.

Unless seriously dangerous circumstances could occur, don't run from political discussion. Rather, circumvent making things personal regarding the other side. Explaining what you have learned, experienced for yourself and why you see things the way you do, is the best way to keep people from feeling threatened or insulted.

Prepare to speak on the issues you are passionate about. Have a clear understanding of what you believe and why. Know the facts and be sure to remind everyone that your sources are unbiased, objective and bipartisan.

It may seem impossible to find such sources in the age of misinformation but a few examples are The Associated Press, PBS News, BBC and NPR. It is also important to take advantage of the Dacus Library database as well.

Bring up historical facts and instances that relate to the present times in a way that might be able to shed light on issues today. Steer the conversation toward each per-

# Endowments: what are they good for?

*Taking a look at what university endowments are, and if they help students or just use them*

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Amid the current decline of student enrollment due to financial hardship and astronomical tuition rates, it is appropriate to question university endowments and their use. But first, you might be asking yourself, "what is an endowment, anyway?"

Executive Director of the Winthrop University Foundation Robin Embry shared information about the foundation and Winthrop's endowment.

"We are a charitable organization which has been granted 501(c)(3) status by the IRS. This means that we are recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a charitable organization exempt from income taxes, and we are allowed to accept donations from donors," Embry said.

Embry briefly touched on something important: "Our endowment is the pool of money we have received from donors that we invest, manage and pay out according to the donors' wishes. These wishes can include scholarships, funds for research, building improvement, student travel, internships and much more." In case you missed it, some key words and phrases she said included "invest," "pay out" and "donors' wishes."

More insight the executive director gave was about what these funds are used for. "As donors may designate their gifts, many are for need-based scholarships for low-income students, for student emergency funds (this could be for books, food, medicine or any basic need), faculty support (including research, travel and professional education.)"

She went on to explain, "That an endowment or pool of restricted funds is strictly regulated by state and federal law. Foundations are bound by those laws to uphold the donors' intent and to only use the funds according to the donors' directives."

With this information in mind, it seems reasonable to assume that donors have quite a bit of say-so as to the purposes of their donations. Although, as Embry said,

son sharing their own individual thoughts and analyses, with the intention of listening to each other, instead of creating sides and trying to win a battle.

It could feel awkward, difficult or frustrating to do, but try to view this challenge as an opportunity for yourself to grow and help others broaden their minds. These are the kinds of conversations that, if carried out in a non-threatening way, can deepen relationships.

Sharing your thoughts and knowledge on issues that impact the world we live in will help others see you in a new, more mature, light. Not everyone will agree with you, but at least they can say that you have taken the time to find the facts and have deeply considered the issues with great thought and reasonable perspective.



Lizzy Talbert/The Johnsonian

many of Winthrop's donations are actually for scholarships, student needs and faculty support, it has grown more common for universities across the country to invest in hedge funds, companies, stocks and natural resources such as oil.

Comedian Hasan Minhaj brought up this ambiguous topic on his Netflix show "Patriot Act," in which he made the claim that, "when you donate to a university, you're basically donating to a hedge fund with the same name as a university."

Because of the simple fact that it takes money to make money, it is obvious that the people who donate to college foundations are at least somewhat wealthy. Many wealthy people continuously regenerate their wealth by investing in various funds, which potentially could mean that when they invest in universities that are using their endowment to invest in stocks, essentially the rich are becoming richer.

Of course, there is nothing wrong with being smart in regards to one's finances and multiplying it wisely. However, what is problematic is the possibility of higher education being used to widen the wealth gap rather than help the next generation achieve feats unimaginable by the people who came before them.

Though any specific action concerning the issue of university endowments would have to take place at a national level, during a crisis such as COVID-19, Winthrop and all other universities in the country should consider taking out more from the endowment to help at-risk college students who are being negatively financially impacted due to the pandemic. To universities it might seem risky to take this action, but because students are the most valuable investment, funding should be allocated to them rather than hedge funds.



Emma Crouch/The Johnsonian



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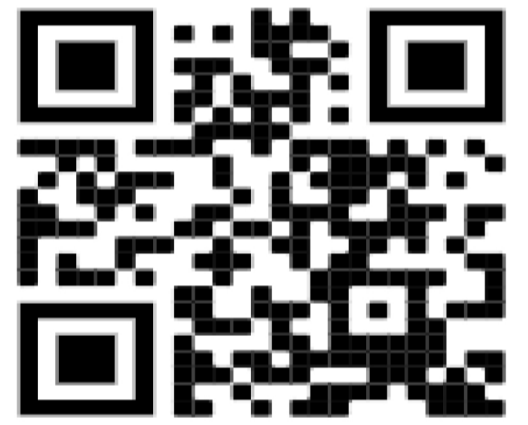
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