

THE JOHNSONIAN



Jamia Johnson/The Johnsonian

Some roles in certain departments have been fulfilled temporarily.

Winthrop departments and colleges battle hiring freeze

The Board of Trustees enacted a hiring freeze to temporarily hold off on hiring new employees in permanent positions due to budget constraints caused by the COVID-19 pandemic

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Faculty departments and divisions at Winthrop University continue to deal with the effects of the hiring freeze enacted last year due to COVID-19.

The hiring freeze was introduced and approved by the Board of Trustees in April 2020 to cushion the financial blow caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The decision saved Winthrop University approximately \$1.5 million through restricting expenditures, travel and hiring, according to Director of Communications, Monica Bennet.

“Requests to hire new Winthrop employees and requests to establish new state-funded positions will not be considered for approval unless specifically identified as an exception by the CPA/president,” said Vice President for Finance and Business Affairs, Justin Oates, in an email addressed to faculty and staff following the approval of the hiring freeze.

“Positions affected by the hiring freeze include: regular FTE staff (existing vacancies), non-instructional academic employees (existing vacancies) and new temporary hires (All temporary positions will be evaluated, including existing temporary employees for whom a new ePAF would be required on July 1, 2020,” said Oates.

Since then, many departments and divisions have had to find solutions to make up for positions currently held in stasis by the hiring freeze. The Division of Academic Affairs is currently one of the departments with the most vacant positions, having six vacancies, according to information provided by News and Media Service Manager, Judy Longshaw.

“At the division level, Academic Affairs has responded to several vacant leadership positions, which has resulted in some redistribution of duties in the impacted areas,” said Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, Adrienne McCormick. “In the colleges, we have hired adjuncts and redistributed some courses

depending on which faculty positions we are holding vacant.”

“In some instances, we have hired temporary help. Some staff members were able to take on additional duties. But for the most part, we have looked for ways to be more efficient in meeting the job requirements in the impacted areas. Times like these often result in innovations that we may not have considered without an external disruption, such as the pandemic. Deans and department chairs have modified faculty course assignments and hired adjuncts to fill instructional needs,” McCormick said.

Another Winthrop administrative department dealing with vacancies is the Athletics division.

“We have permanently eliminated 2 full time positions at the beginning of the fiscal year,” said Vice President for Collegiate Athletics, Ken Halpin. “We have an additional 12 positions that have been vacant this year so far. This represents just over 20% of our full-time positions having been vacant this year. These vacancies have included coaches as well as administrators.”

“Many of these positions were left intentionally vacant because the only sports that have been competing have been men’s and women’s basketball. We plan to leave many of these positions vacant for the remainder of the fiscal year in order to be as fiscally conscientious as possible, but we are filling a couple of positions now as we anticipate all of our sports beginning competition this semester,” Halpin said.

Bennet said that there is currently intention to end the hiring freeze as long as there is a need to minimize operating expenses caused by COVID-19.

“These are not easy decisions to make, but they are warranted to ensure that we have the resources to continue to engage in exceptional teaching, learning and service; be an employer of choice; and support our current faculty and staff as we move into the future. Thank you for your support through these challenging times. Together we will continue to meet our vital educational mission while balancing the finances of the university,” Oates said.

Peddling the petals; Christopher Johnson designing campus beauty

Sustainability Coordinator Christopher Johnson is the sole employee organizing and maintaining the Campus Green and its gardens



Photo Courtesy to Winthrop University

Christopher Johnson

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Every day, countless Winthrop students and faculty leisurely stroll past and through the Campus Green, taking in the natural beauty of the university’s neatly sheared green grass fields and seasonal prim gardens. What many do not know is that the Campus Green beauty and design is the work and toil of a single, dedicated architect, orchestrated by Sustainability Coordinator, Christopher Johnson.

Johnson began working at Winthrop University as Sustainability Coordinator in Sept. 2011, after spending 11 years working in the interior design and architecture field. Since then, Johnson has served as the chief coordinator of campus sustainability, overseeing and performing maintenance on gardens and greenery across the campus.

“The themed gardens require specialized attention, [so] it was important to me that the gardens receive this care and provides sustainability students an opportunity to learn more about native plants, pollinators and the care that is required to maintain these very special gardens,” Johnson said. “These gardens were installed as a collaboration between Winthrop, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts. As the benefactor of these young people’s hard work, we have been entrusted to care for these gardens as well as enhance the contribution these scouts have provided to our campus.”

Johnson utilizes different gardening and sustainability tactics based on the current season to create gardens that can create beauty while also being practical and to ensure that the gardens can receive the most optimal care possible.

“The needs in the garden vary by season. In the winter, tasks include mulching, trimming back dead stalks and plants, as well as weeding. There are some plants we can set in the ground including some bulbs. In the spring, we replace the plants we have lost. Most of our plants are perennials, which are plants that come back every year. These are cost effective and allow a diversity of color and texture throughout the year. We do have some annuals that we use to fill open space in the gardens. However, we would prefer perennials to avoid the costs of replacing the annuals each year,” said Johnson.

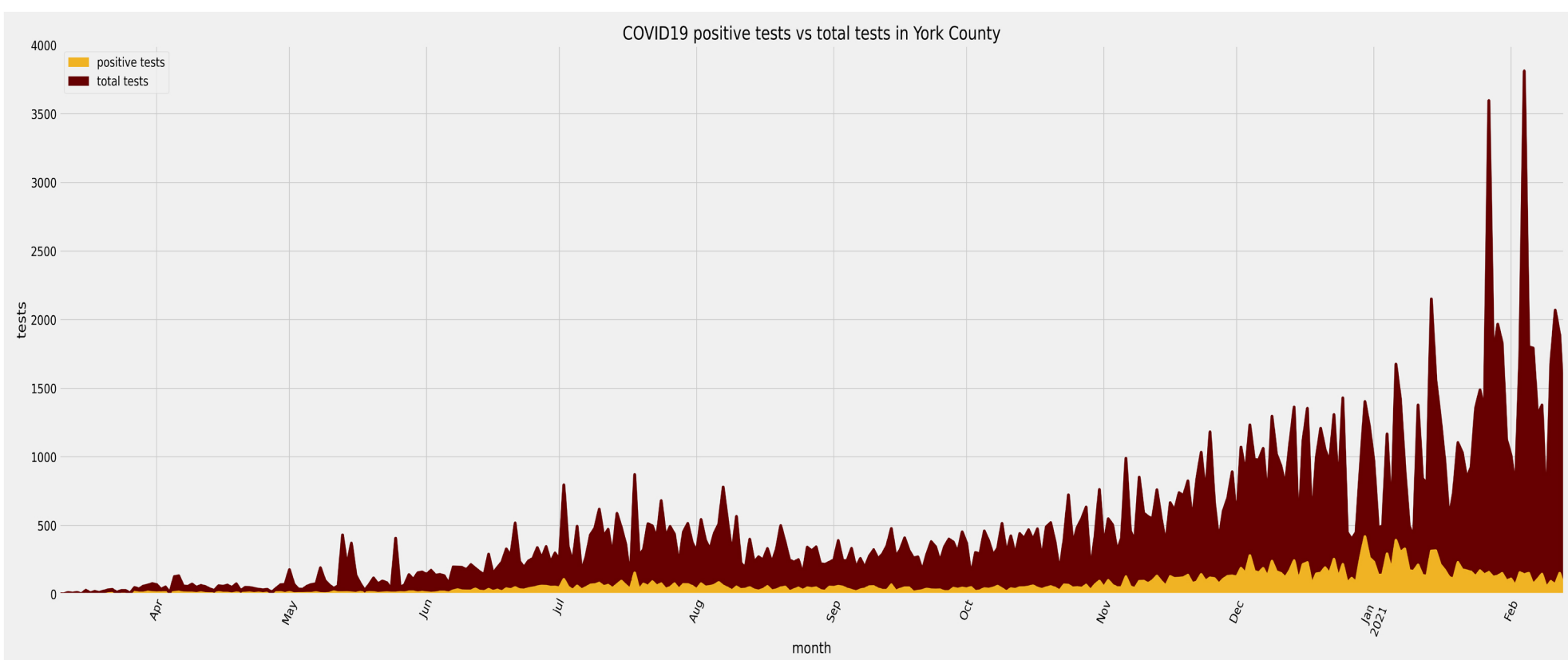
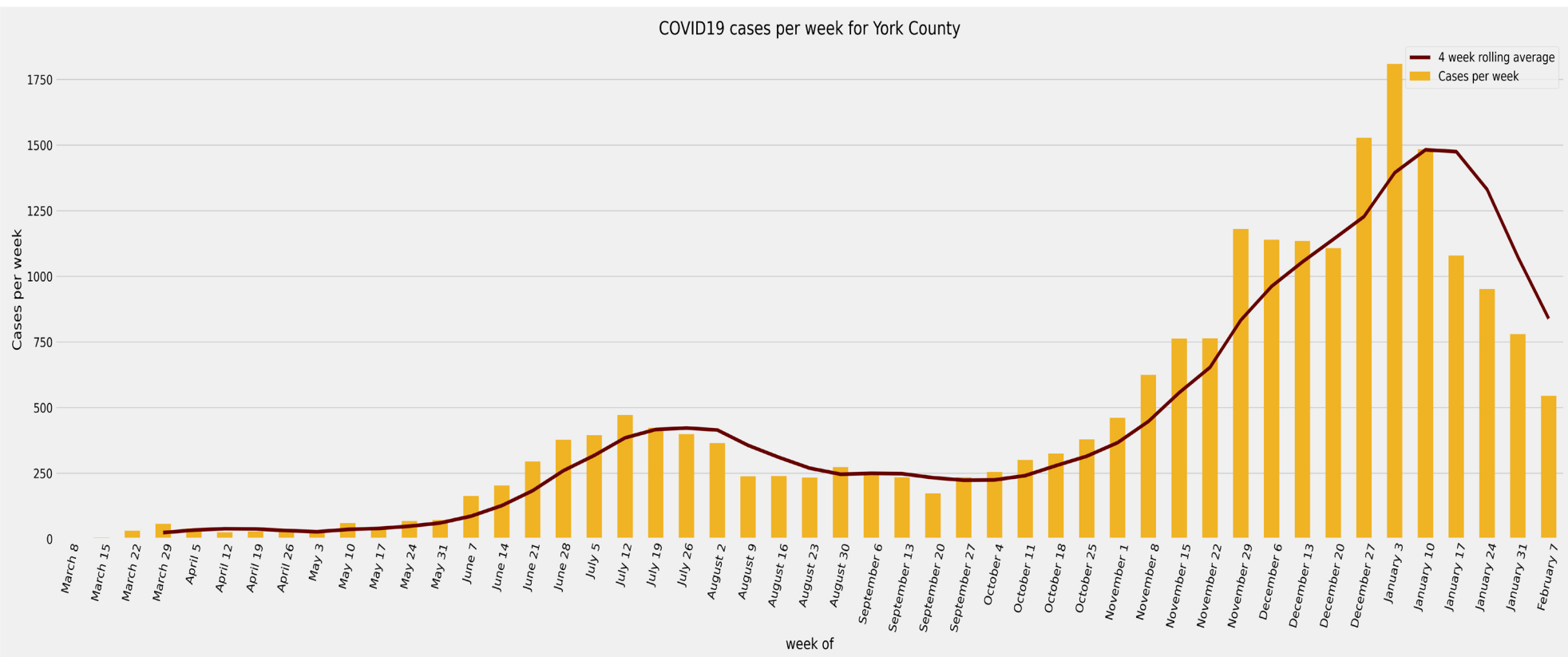
“In the summer, we generally focus on weeding and watering the gardens when we have extended dry

► see [Johnson](#) 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.



Johnson from front

periods. And in the fall, we work again on weeding and trimming any damaged plants and planting pansies in the late fall for the winter color.”

Johnson organizes and performs maintenance on all of the Campus Green gardens, as well as some of themed gardens around campus such as the “pollinator” garden behind Tillman Hall and the newly established “diversity and inclusion” garden next to the Rutledge Building. Although Johnson is the sole Winthrop employee spearheading campus sustainability, many students and other community members often participate in service events organized by Johnson to aid in sustainability upkeep.

“I require service learning in my sustainability courses which include several opportunities to help in the gardens. SEAC has also volunteered to plant some perennials in the fall of 2019 and last February, I had a group of students help in the gardens even while it snowed. Because of the limitations caused by the pandemic, many students have found comfort in growing plants and gardening. As a result, during the fall semester, RA’s planned a planting day where we planted pansies, which do well during the winter,” Johnson said.

Winthrop junior and biology major, Jamar Lewis, said that his participation in MLK Service Week events geared towards sustainability has become a consistent aspect of his campus experience.

“I’ve been participating in MLK service since I was a freshman,” Lewis said.. “This is something I love to do; I love giving back to the community and participating in all these service projects, whether they be cleaning up on campus or even opportunities to serve off campus. It’s great to give back to the people who need more.”

Johnson intends to hold more sustainability events throughout the semester, for which he encourages students, faculty and staff to participate in.

“Related to the gardens, I am working to plan campus outreach opportunities for members of the campus community. I have scheduled two work days February 19th and 20th to complete some winter maintenance. Anyone interested may sign up using Eagle Impact. Over the next two months we are participating in the national waste reduction campaign, ‘Race to Zero Waste.’ We will be sending out information during this time about recycling on campus as well as how to reduce waste consumption. Information about the gardens is being added to the interactive map located on the Office of Sustainability website for anyone to access and learn about our themed gardens,” said Johnson.

Johnson’s appreciation and work towards organizing and improving campus sustainability efforts has been echoed by university Interim President George Hynd, who announced the cultivation of a Campus Beautification Initiative on Jan. 19 in an address to faculty and staff.

“...Ours is an extraordinarily beautiful university campus, and its appearance reflects how we present Winthrop to our prospective and current students, alumni, employees and community. The Campus Beautification Initiative will offer the opportunity for all of us to participate in respecting our institution’s history by contributing energy, vision and engagement. The committee that will spearhead this initiative is currently being formed, and it will be led by Jeff Bellantoni. Please watch for more information that will be shared soon on how you can be involved,” Hynd said.

About The Johnsonian

The Johnsonian is the weekly student newspaper of Winthrop University.

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Trump's second impeachment trial begins

The Senate began trial to investigate Former President Donald Trump's involvement in the Jan. 6 insurrection

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Former U.S. President Donald Trump's second impeachment trial began in the Senate last week on Feb. 9, leaving elected U.S. Senators in charge of determining whether the former president is guilty of inciting the violent insurrection led by Trump supporters on the U.S. Capitol that took place 14 days prior to him leaving office.

The trial kicked off with opening arguments on the constitutionality of the trial from both House impeachment managers and Trump defense attorneys. Lead House impeachment manager Rep. Jamie Raskin led the first remarks of the trial, alleging that the case against Trump's impeachment is based solely in "cold, hard facts," and called for constitutional justice against the former president despite his departure from office.

"President Trump has sent his lawyers here today to try to stop the Senate from hearing the facts of this case," Raskin said to the Senate.

"They want to call the trial over before any evidence is even introduced. Their argument is that if you commit an impeachable offense in your last few weeks in office, you do it with constitutional impunity. You get away with it. In other words, conduct that would be a high crime and misdemeanor in your first year as president and your second year as president and your third year as president and for the vast majority of your fourth year as president, you can suddenly do in your last few weeks in office without facing any constitutional accountability at all. This would create a brand new 'January exception' to the Constitution of the United States of America. A 'January exception'."

Opening statements from Trump's defense team followed, with lawyer Bruce Castor arguing against the constitutionality of

holding the trial.

"...I've seen quite a number of the complaints that were filed against the people who breached the Capitol, some of them charge conspiracy. Not a single one I noticed charged with conspiracy with the 45th President of the United States, probably because prosecutors have an ethical requirement that they are not allowed to charge people with criminal offenses without probable cause. You might consider that," Castor said.

Following both sides' arguments, Senators voted on whether the basis of attempting to impeach a former president was constitutional, which the Senate confirmed 56-44. Six Republicans crossed the partisan aisle to proceed with the trial alongside a unanimous Democratic front and two independents.

The next two days, Feb. 10-11, saw the prosecutory arguments from the House impeachment managers against the former president, taking place over the course of almost 13 hours of in-session presentation.

The prosecution displayed a compilation of never-before-seen footage taken from Capitol security cameras showing the Jan. 6 Capitol riots from all angles, demonstrating scenes such as former vice president Mike Pence fleeing alongside Secret Service from agitated rioters calling for his death for refusing to aid in overturning the election, as well as various other Senators and staff members hiding and blockading doors.

Raskin and other House impeachment managers stated their belief that these events were the direct result of Trump's inflammatory behavior and language for months prior to the riots, and specifically cited statements made by the former president during a speech to his followers hours before the attack.

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Kaily Paddie/The Johnsonian

Freedom Walkway, located on E. Main Street honors fight for racial equality

Reflecting on a Rock Hill landmark: Freedom Walkway

Freedom Walkway was completed in 2016. It is an alleyway with a large mural and a brick pathway full of historic

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Completed back in 2016, the Rock Hill landmark, Freedom Walkway, continues to empower and inspire racial justice in Rock Hill and surrounding areas.

Freedom Walkway is located at 139 E. Main St. in Rock Hill. The landmark consists of a mural as well as a mosaic and many other objects that symbolize various historical events that involve the fight for racial equality and justice.

The walkway was officially inspired by the story of the Friendship Nine.

According to a sign outside of the landmark, "On January 31, 1961, 10 students from Friendship Jr. College were arrested when they refused to leave McCrory's [a restaurant on Main St.]. Nine would not pay their fines and became the first Civil Rights sit-in protesters in the nation to serve jail time. This new 'Jail No Bail' strategy by 'the Friendship Nine' was soon adopted as the model strategy for the Freedom Rides of 1961."

There were numerous local artists who worked together to create Freedom Walkway such as Juan Logan, Laurel Holtzapple, Carrie Gault and Sharon Dowell along with

several civil, structural and electrical engineers.

"Think about everything that would have to go into it from putting in the electrical grid, to plants, the stonework, even the building next door, and how it was sort of integrated into the landscape and the space that was being built for the apartment building. So, everyone working together is what I think a successful project is really about," Logan said.

Because of the various designers and engineers who had a hand in establishing Freedom Walkway, Rock Hill residents and visitors are now welcome to visit the landmark and learn about the numerous symbolic elements incorporated into the project.

"The turbulence and the obstacles that have been happening for 400 years, in the 60s and then, of course, within the last year, it seems to bubble up and I don't think our country has properly addressed it, so it keeps on bubbling up," Holtzapple said. "I think the symbols that we've included such as the boulders that represent the historical obstacles and the turbulence you can see working its way up the wall, are ideas that are still going on today, unfortunately."

Parts of the walkway were designed and created by the artists involved in the project, while parts of the walkway are considered historical artifacts and the artists were diligent in incorporating them into the project.

One of the most significant parts of the mural is the word "fatigue." The word was left over from what was originally displayed on the wall.

"Can you imagine working and struggling for freedom for 400 years plus and just how tired you would be after all of those years. [Fatigue] just seems so appropriate," Logan said in a video featured at [freedomwalkway.com](#).

The wall in which the main part of Freedom Walkway lies is the wall of the Woolworth and the McCrory's lunch counters where the Friendship Nine were denied service. The building was slated for demolition in 2014, but the wall was able to be salvaged with a few of the original paintings that inhabited the wall.

"Rock Hill has a lot of these passageways and alleys, which is great because it provides that connectivity for the pedestrian," Holtzapple said. "[The city] wanted to create an artwork in this specific alleyway to honor the Friendship

Nine. So, the impetus was to honor the Friendship Nine, but then it became the honoring of just, courageous acts and courageous people within the history of Rock Hill."

The most prominent part of the mural is the words, "LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL."

"The opportunity to paint the mural in the Freedom Walkway was a pleasure. It was an honor to contribute to the first civil rights themed public art in Rock Hill, one that was thoughtfully and beautifully designed," Dowell said. "The summer of 2016, BLM protests erupted all over the country. I remember sitting on the scaffolding painting the words 'LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL' and my heart was heavy, feeling the poignancy of the project, the importance of the imagery incorporated into the walkway, tied to highlighting the local flora and fauna, but also the historical inequality and systemic racism in our country."

Although the walkway was completed in 2016, its relevance and importance still hold true today, especially in light of the strides towards racial justice in 2020. The walkway serves as an important reminder that the fight is not over.

Top Democrats call on Biden to deliver on higher ed promises

Democratic leaders have been pushing for President Biden to sign an executive order to forgive student loan debt up to \$50K

Sean Miller
staff writer

During the 2020 presidential race, President Biden campaigned on a platform of progressive education policies that would provide for student debt relief and extensive changes to higher education. Now, Democratic leaders are demanding he deliver on his promises.

As a candidate, Biden promised to cancel student loan debt up to \$10,000 via executive order to the Department of Education. However, as President, he has yet to make good on that promise. For many college-aged voters, this single issue was the deciding factor in their vote. Nearly 48 million Americans have been adversely affected by student loan debt, which has ballooned to over 1.6 trillion dollars.

In an effort to show voters that they are still focused on progressive issues despite the ongoing impeachment trial of Donald Trump, a group of Democratic legislators reintroduced a largely symbolic resolution to ease the burden of debt for students. On Feb. 4, Senator Elizabeth Warren, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer and Representative Ayanna Pressley supported the resolution and called for immediate executive action.

The measure taken by Democrats was previously passed by the last Congress and is a clear signal to President Biden, who previously said that he wanted to see congressional approval, that a more progressive education policy is on

the docket.

Progressives and moderates alike have vociferously supported student debt relief as necessary changes to address racial disparities and unfair economic burdens. Even before COVID-19, expert economists have largely agreed that cancelling student debt for lower income families would boost economic growth for the United States and help mitigate income inequality for future generations.

Most GOP lawmakers, however, remain opposed to student debt relief at the public's expense, maintaining that university administration officials burden students with superfluous expenses and worthless degrees for profit. Conservative political pundits such as Tucker Carlson have also supported the idea that universities should share in the liability of student loans.

Dr. Christopher Van Aller, a political science professor and expert in international relations at Winthrop University, believes the U.S. should observe the examples set by social democratic countries and place a higher emphasis on education of its citizens rather than vastly outspending the militaries of foreign powers. He believes the state and the federal government should be expanding financial assistance for the students most in need.

"Foreign students in other countries don't have remotely the kind of debt that American students do. There's an effort on the part of our social democratic allies, like Canada, or Britain or Australia, to consciously not make

students take on too much debt," Van Aller said. "I certainly think that public higher education, of which Winthrop is a part, should have much more support from the state. A lot of people may or may not know that South Carolina is the third harshest state on basically stopping or restricting money from the state to college institutions. The United States is about 50 years behind other countries when it comes to thinking about higher education."

A battle in congress will continue to be fought over whether education should be considered as a right for all Americans. Student debt relief will likely be at the epicenter of progressive policy-making for the foreseeable future and will face immense opposition from Republicans.

"I think some sort of massive debt relief is unlikely, because the Republicans will probably dig in their heels to anything that requests, you know, a meaningful bite out of that trillion dollar debt that students have accrued. So they will fight it, there's no doubt about that," Van Aller said. "Conservatives ask, should we continue to fund institutions that keep expanding all the time? I think that's only one half of the argument. They keep expanding partly because they have to keep attracting students all the time and they're competing with other [universities], because there's no state funding. So it's kind of a vicious cycle."

Rep. and House impeachment manager Eric Swalwell said. "He spent \$50 million from his legal defense fund on these ads to stop the steal and amplify his message."

The prosecutors also cited interviews, court documents and video footage of rioters who have cited that their actions were the result of wanting to act upon the former president's wishes.

Trump's defense team denounced the deadly attacks on the Capitol and maintained that their client held no accountability to the events, whereas the prosecution argued for Trump's conviction to set precedent that

could prevent events such as the politically charged riots from "becoming the new normal," House impeachment manager Joe Neguse said.

The vote was brought into motion late Saturday afternoon. A two-thirds majority, or 67 votes, would be required in order to formally convict the former president. The final vote was 57-43, acquitting Trump of involvement in the Capitol riots. Seven Republicans voted Trump guilty, ten short of the partisan opposition needed to convict him.

Read more online at mytjnow.com

Polar Bear Litter Pickup: an anti-litter initiative

Polar Bear Pickup is an anti-littering initiative created by Rock Hill Clean & Green and Keep York County Beautiful



Jamia Johnson /The Johnsonian

To promote litter reduction, the organization Rock Hill Clean & Green is helping to keep Rock Hill beautiful.

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York County residents are invited to clean up their cities with organizations Rock Hill Clean & Green and Keep York County Beautiful for an anti-littering campaign called the Polar Bear Litter Pickup.

"Polar Bear Pickup is a litter pickup we're doing right now, and it is a 15-member volunteer Keep America Beautiful affiliate. We're a group of volunteers that meet year-round to focus on litter reduction, recycling and beautification," said Elizabeth Morgan, director of Rock Hill Clean & Green.

The initiative is called the Polar Bear Litter Pickup because it takes place during the winter months where the lack of vegetation lends itself to higher visibility of litter.

This is the first year that the Polar Bear Litter Pickup has taken action and its service is most needed along major roads and highways within York County.

"In South Carolina, the biggest source of a litter is unsecured loads. It is against the law to operate a vehicle that allows materials to sift, fall, spill, etc. while the vehicle is in motion. There are people who will throw items out the window or who don't store waste items properly inside the vehicle and that allows the material to escape," said Alysen Woodruff, director of Keep York County Beautiful.

"[Litter] is incredibly frustrating

to see because it is so easy to prevent. It is not just unsightly, it can be hazardous to humans and wildlife, is expensive to clean up and negatively affects local economies. Continued population growth will only exacerbate the problem," Woodruff said.

York County is becoming an increasingly popular place to live and while that is good news to some, for the environment, it entails an influx of environmental hazards such as litter and varying types of pollution.

"It's very apparent as you drive, mostly on our state roads and on our larger connecting roads, that there is a lot of litter around town. So, we wanted to encourage people to get out and clean up litter, so we thought about a fun title, Polar Bear Litter Pickup, because it's cold outside," Morgan said.

York County residents participating in the Polar Bear Litter Pickup will receive a variety of incentives.

"Offering t-shirts to all groups (5 each) is a fun way to encourage pickup during the winter months and it will hopefully create a good habit and the group will want to clean more than once. Each group that submits a cleanup report will be entered into a drawing for an eco-prize pack," said Woodruff.

"We are incentivizing with long sleeved t-shirts that say, 'Polar Bear Litter Pickup: Freezing for a reason,' with a cute

polar bear... and they also get litter grabbers, bag holders, safety vests, gloves and trash bags to clean up with," Morgan said.

All York County residents are invited to participate in this anti-littering initiative, including Winthrop University students who are not from York County. The process for signing up is quick and easy, according to Morgan.

"Many contact us through social media, either Keep York County Beautiful or Rock Hill Clean & Green. If you're in the city of Rock Hill, you can contact me [at 803 329 7027], if you're in the county, contact Alysen Woodruff [at 803 628 3181].... Just let us know how many t-shirts and your sizes and where you want to clean up and if you're not sure where you want to clean up, we have plenty of ideas and we can assign a spot," Morgan said.

Even if one is not participating in the cleanup, all York County and Rock Hill residents are encouraged to dispose of their waste in the environmentally appropriate manner in hopes of restoring their cities to their former beauty.

"To have a successful litter prevention, there must be a behavior change," Woodruff said. "That change emerges when the following factors work in concert: awareness, tools (such as litter pickups and proper containers), ordinances/laws and enforcement."



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February 17, 2021

Winthrop Basketball back in win column

Eagles respond to first loss of the season with two wins versus Radford

Matthew Shealy
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Thirteen days after Winthrop's nationally-recognized 21-game win streak came to an end, the Eagles traveled to Virginia to take on their most daunting opponent in the Big South Conference – Mike Jones' Radford Highlanders.

While Winthrop versus Radford may not be an official rivalry, tempers have flared recently when these teams competed. Jones, the coach of the Highlanders, received a one-game suspension (imposed by Radford) last February after he and Winthrop coach Pat Kelsey exchanged words and gestures and were both assessed technical fouls just minutes into a game inside Winthrop Coliseum.

This year's games provided a calmer atmosphere, with only a limited number of fans allowed in the Dedmon Center. Though Radford played Winthrop tough during both contests, the Eagles outperformed the Highlanders in each second half, earning victories on Feb. 11 and 12 to extend their lead atop the Big South standings.

Thursday's match got off to a hot start, with both teams shooting over 50 percent from the field in the first

half. Winthrop's D.J. Burns scored the first six points of the game for the Eagles, totaling ten points by halftime.

Winthrop trailed 31-23 with just under eight minutes to go in the first half, but the Eagles ended the period on an 18-5 run, taking a five-point lead to the locker room.

The Eagles carried that momentum into the second half, leading by as many as 19 points. Winthrop's Burns finished with 18 points, but redshirt freshman Josh Corbin earned player of the game honors, recording 17 points while shooting 5-of-9 from behind the arc.

Friday's contest was not the offensive highlight reel that Thursday's game was. 13 minutes into the match, Winthrop had amassed a measly five points. Lucky for the Eagles, Radford had recorded just 12 points of their own.

When the halftime buzzer sounded, the Eagles trailed 22-18 for just their third halftime deficit of the season (their previous halftime deficit being the loss to UNC Asheville).

Four minutes into Friday's second half, Winthrop had captured the lead behind four points from Burns and three-pointers from seniors

Charles Falden and Chandler Vaudrin.

Five more points from Vaudrin and back-to-back triples from sophomore Russell Jones Jr. gave the Eagles a ten-point lead with 13:23 remaining. However, a 12-2 run for the Highlanders tied the game at 41-41 with 5:20 to go.

A basket from Radford's Fah'Mir Ali (who recorded 37 points in two games against the Eagles) gave the Highlanders a one-point lead with under three minutes left, but an 11-2 run in Winthrop's favor (including nine points from Falden) sealed the deal for a Winthrop victory.

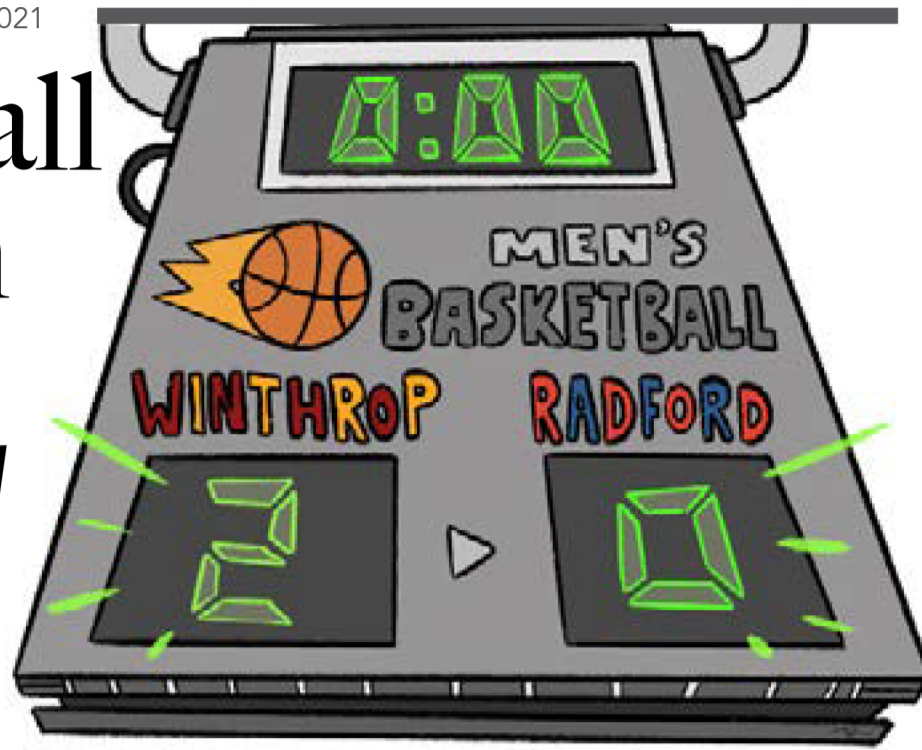
Falden's 14 total points and clutch performance down the stretch earned him player of the game honors in Winthrop's eighteenth win of the season, a 55-47 victory. He and Vaudrin were the only Eagles to record double-digit points on Friday.

One of the nation's leaders in

assists, Vaudrin recorded just seven dimes total in Winthrop's previous two games against UNC Asheville. He looked more like himself in this series, totaling 13 assists to go with his 27 points and 16 rebounds against Radford.

If Winthrop's victories against Radford were not impressive enough, it should be noted that the Eagles completed both contests utilizing just ten players. The team had been competing with a twelve-man rotation, but freshman Toneari Lane and senior Adonis Arms did not play against the Highlanders.

Winthrop will compete next on Feb. 18 at 9 p.m. against High Point, in a game that will be featured on ESPNU. The Eagles will also play the Panthers on Feb. 19 at 7 p.m. before returning to Rock Hill to host Hampton in their final series of the regular season.



Michael Yelton/The Johnsonian

Eagles fly through Rocket League tournaments

Winthrop Rocket League team wins Big South Championship, finishes second in Collegiate Esports Invitational

Alex Romano
staff writer

After claiming the Big South Championship on Feb. 3, the Winthrop Rocket League team made another run in the Collegiate Esports Invitational Rocket League Championship, this time coming in second place overall, which put an end to their undefeated record throughout the entirety of the tournament.

"We basically ran unopposed through to the finals, I think we had two or three goals scored on us through the entire tournament until the finals, we were just crushing it," said Head Esports Coach Josh Sides.

The team was dominant throughout the tournament, not losing a single game until the finals, where they lost 4-1 against UT Arlington.

"They are a CRL team, which means that they are one of the top 16 teams in the west, so we realized we had [a] task ahead of us with that. We had been watching their games throughout the day, and we might have went into it with the wrong tactics in place for the game, and in hindsight, we have some things to work on," Sides said.

Sides said that they are still extremely proud to have made it that far as they had some incredible performances leading up to the finals.

▶ see Esports pg. 7

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STAFF WRITERS

Winthrop volleyball bounces back



Eagles dominate USC Upstate after shaky start to season

Lily Fremed
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Although losses against Charleston Southern in the first two games of the 2021 season put the Eagles off to a rocky start, Winthrop Volleyball had a major comeback with two sweeps against USC Upstate on Feb. 11 and 12.

“I think the initial losses at Charleston Southern were a good wake up call to put us in the right mindset and attitude for the rest of the season. I believe it was better that the call was at the beginning of the season rather than in the middle,” Olivia Blackketter said.

A freshman from Bloomington, IN, which is home to Indiana University, Blackketter joined the Eagles as a middle blocker when she wanted to venture out farther than her college town home.

“Winthrop was farther than I first anticipated going, but I knew that the distance would force me to grow up a little and find myself. Coach Rey gave me the option to play volleyball here and I couldn’t pass it up,” Blackketter said.

After finishing the 2019 season undefeated in the Big South Conference and earning an overall

record of 24-5, the Eagles were unable to compete for over a year due to the worldwide pandemic, so they were thrilled to finally welcome another team into the Coliseum.

Thursday’s game opened with Upstate taking the first point, but the Eagles quickly recovered and had a 7-3 lead by the first timeout. Having an eight consecutive point streak halfway through the game, the Eagles remained strong and defeated the Spartans 25-14.

Opening strong in the second match, the Eagles soon had a 21-10 lead. Blackketter made her collegiate debut with a kill, helping the Eagles quickly crush the Spartans 25-11.

Unlike the first two matches, Thursday’s third and final set was a constant exchange of points. Upstate gained a four-point lead; the Eagles tied it up, then Upstate took a two-point lead. Interrupted by four timeouts, the back-and-forth play continued until the end, where the Eagles won by only two points for a final score of 25-23.

Seniors Morgan Bossler and Nikkia Benitez dominated the court on Thursday with nine kills each, in addition to Bossler having three blocks and Benitez

racking up 21 attacks. Sophomore Leah Metzger scooped up 16 digs, while freshman Brookelynn Thomas scored two aces.

The Eagles returned to rock the hill against Upstate on Friday, winning the first set 25-18. The second set was too close for comfort from the get-go, seeing seven ties and three lead changes throughout. Finally, the Eagles took the lead at 10-9 and maintained it until the end, 25-20.

The Eagles dominated the third match with an 18-9 lead. Even when the Spartans shortened the gap to 19-14, Winthrop successfully beat Upstate 25-18 with a winning kill from Blackketter.

Other notable contributions included Benitez with 11 kills, 33 attacks and 12 digs, Metzger with 21 digs and junior Jana Owens with 22 assists.

Entering college during a pandemic, Blackketter was “fully shell-shocked, homesick very often,” and disappointed at the lack of social gatherings to meet new people due to COVID-19 restrictions. However, with one semester under her belt, Blackketter feels more prepared to take on this spring

season.

“This semester I came back to school after winter break with different expectations and a new mindset towards college and all it entails, and it helped me become better adjusted and more comfortable,” Blackketter said.

She is also looking forward to competing against UNC Asheville as she has a high school club teammate who plays for the Bulldogs. Aside from working to maintain a GPA of at least 3.7, Blackketter does not have any high expectations for this season as she knows this freshman year is filled with many “firsts.”

“This season I am looking to fulfill whatever role the team needs me to play and to play it well. I’m doing my best to give myself lots of grace during this time, but also holding myself accountable,” Blackketter said.

The Eagles’ next two series are home games beginning with back-to-back matches against Campbell on Feb. 27 at 4 p.m. and Feb. 28 at noon, then March 4 at 6 p.m. and March 5 at 2 p.m. against Gardner-Webb.



◀ Esports from pg. 6

“Beating UNC Asheville 12-1 in the second game of the Big South Finals, I was just wondering how many we could score at that point. Usually Rocket League games are 2-1 or 3-1, but 12-1 was pretty incredible from the guys,” Sides said.

With the addition of two new players on the roster, Matt “JKFoshizzle” Kelly and Tristian “Tcorrell” Correll, the team had yet to make their first appearance in the collegiate Esports scene until this tournament.

“This was the first collegiate tournament we played in. We had done a couple of amateur tournaments and semi-pro tournaments, just like single-weekend or single-day type of events, but yeah this was our collegiate debut for the team,” Sides said.

Even though the team maintains a positive attitude about their performance in the tournament, they are still finding ways to improve their chemistry and level of play.

“We are brand new. We have two new players on our A-team this semester, so we’re still building those synergies together. At the point of the finals, we had been playing together for five weeks, so it’s a long way to go,” Sides said.

Although the team came just shy of the championship, this won’t be the only time that they get to compete this semester, as there are many more opportunities for Winthrop to win big.

“Rocket League has a big schedule this semester. There’s so much buy-in in the collegiate space for Rocket League right now, there’s just so many different tournaments,” Sides said.

Going forward, the team is looking to improve however they can, and they hope to be back in the finals again soon.

“The team is coming together, and we have big expectations for them this year,” Sides said. “It’s a really strong team.”

SCORES

Men’s Basketball

Win on Feb. 11 at Radford, 80-64
Win on Feb. 12 at Radford, 55-47

Women’s Cross Country

3rd place finish on Feb. 12 at Highlander Invitational

Women’s Volleyball

Win on Feb. 11 vs USC Upstate, 3-0
Win on Feb. 12 vs USC Upstate, 3-0

Men’s Cross Country

3rd place finish on Feb. 12 at Highlander Invitational

Women’s Softball

Win on Feb. 12 vs. Florida Atlantic, 4-2
Loss on Feb. 12 vs. Florida International, 9-1
Win on Feb. 13 vs. Florida Atlantic, 5-4
Loss on Feb. 13 vs. Florida Atlantic, 8-1
Loss on Feb. 14 vs. Florida International, 5-3

Men’s Soccer

Loss on Feb. 14 at South Carolina, 4-2

Lacrosse

Win on Feb. 14 vs. Presbyterian, 19-6

February 17, 2021

Celebrating Random Acts of Kindness Day

Students share their thoughts on Feb. 17, Random Acts of Kindness Day

Sam Hyatt
staff writer

Sometimes it's hard to find reasons to be positive when there seems to be an abundance of negativity around us. However, if every person did one random act of kindness each day, maybe there might not seem to be as much negativity.

Wednesday, Feb. 17, is Random Acts of Kindness Day. On this day, random acts of kindness are encouraged. Even though we all should do things that are kind to those around us often, it is heartwarming to know there is an entire day dedicated to doing random kind acts.

The good thing about doing a random act of kindness is that it does not always require a lot of effort or money. Oftentimes, people think they cannot do something good for others because they do not have the money to spend.

However, kindness can be as simple as complimenting a stranger on their outfit or holding the door for the person behind you that has their hands full.

LJ Hardy, a sophomore exercise science major, said, "To me, random acts of kindness have so much power because it's the randomness that can brighten up a person's day."

On the Random Acts of Kindness foundation website, www.randomactsofkindness.org, there are several different ways that one can celebrate the day dedicated to doing good for others. Sending a letter to a friend letting them know they are appreciated, making a random acts of kindness jar and handing out small care packages are suggestions for those who want to acknowledge this positive day.

Doing a random act of kindness is something that not only affects those who are receiving the kind gesture. Usually, the act of being kind also affects the one who did the act because they see the excitement and thankfulness of the person that receives the kindness, or they know they have done something good for another person.

Colby Thorn, a fifth-year exercise science major, said,



Kaily Paddie/The Johnsonian

Greet people with kindness.

"I have always been someone who loves to give back and do things for other people and see the joy that it brings them."

Right now, the world feels uncertain and many are struggling with their mental health because of the inability to see their friends and family while also having to change their daily routines. However, the positivity that can come from random acts of kindness can help make the world seem not as bad as it might feel.

"I love doing random acts of kindness," senior social work major Catherine Kinder said, "because I love having the opportunity to give

someone else a reason to smile."

Even though Feb. 17 is the day dedicated to doing random acts of kindness, it is important to remember that we can continue to do kind things for others on the other 364 days of the year. Simple ways to be kind can be by buying coffee for the person in line behind you in a drive thru, calling a friend just to chat, or by smiling at the person you pass in the hall. You may not see their actual smile, but the squinty eyes may give it away.



Photo Courtesy to Wikimedia

The Golden Globes will be held on Feb. 28.

The 78th Golden Globes nominees

What to expect from the first major awards ceremony of the year

Emily Curry
staff writer

The Golden Globes are one of the oldest and most prestigious award ceremonies in the entertainment industry. According to their history on their official site, "The first awards presentation for distinguished achievements in the film industry granted by Hollywood Foreign Correspondents Association - the precursor of today's Hollywood Foreign Press Association - took place in early 1944 with an informal ceremony at 20th Century Fox."

The Golden Globes has awards for both movies and television, as opposed to the Academy Awards, aka the Oscars, and the Emmy Awards, two separate awards ceremonies for movies and television, respectively. There are 27 categories in the Golden Globes: 15 for motion pictures, and 12 for television. The nominees for this year were announced on Feb. 3, which, according to an article written for IndieWire, was later than usual due to the pandemic.

Awards for Best Picture, Actor and Actress in Motion Pictures are further split into two categories, Drama and Musical/Comedy. The nominees for the Best Drama Picture this year are "The Father," "Mank, Nomadland," "Promising Young Woman" and "The Trial of the Chicago 7." The nominees for Best Musical/Comedy Picture are "Borat Subsequent

Moviefilm, "Hamilton," "Music," "Palm Springs" and "The Prom."

Some were surprised at the nomination for "Hamilton," which was released on Disney + over the summer, because as written in an article for The New Yorker, "It is not cinema. [It] is a well-shot theatrical production featuring performances captured nearly five years ago." The Golden Globes can often set a precedent for the Academy Awards, as the same article pointed out that last year, the ceremony "accurately predicted most of the eventual Oscar winners." If Hamilton is also nominated for and wins an Academy Award, it would provide writer Lin-Manuel Miranda the Oscar he needs to become an EGOT winner, individuals who have won an Emmy, Golden Globe, Oscar, and Tony Award.

Another unusual nomination is for Chadwick Boseman for Best Actor in a Motion Picture. Boseman, who sadly died in August, starred in Netflix's "Ma Rainey's Black Bottom," which was released in November of 2020.

While Boseman will not be the first to win a posthumous Golden Globe, he will be in very small, but excellent company, including, according to an article written for People, Heath Ledger, who portrayed the Joker in The Dark Night, and Howard Ashman, the lyricist behind some of Disney's most iconic songs.

▶ see Golden pg. 9

Zoom attire for professors at Winthrop

Winthrop professors share how virtual teaching has affected their attire

Sam Hyatt
staff writer

Since the beginning of the pandemic, people have begun to dress differently because of excessive sitting and having to work from home.

College students have definitely taken advantage of wearing lounge clothes while working on classwork online and attending Zoom classes.

However, students are not the only people taking advantage of casual wear while working from home.

We all have seen the commercials where business people dress professionally from the waist up, but then are wearing sweatpants or pajama pants. But are professors doing this? Or are they still continuing to dress professionally?

At Winthrop University, professors have always dressed in a way that is appropriate for the field of study they are teaching.

Professors that are teaching classes that are physical classes, such as weightlifting or basketball, can be found wearing athletic clothing or clothing that allows movement easily.

Other professors who mainly give lectures in front of the class are found wearing business attire. However, since most of our classes are online or meet through Zoom and Blackboard Collaborate, professors, like students, may begin falling accustomed to wearing clothing that is more casual or clothes they would not wear to a class in a traditional setting.

English professor

Dr. Jo Koster shared that as we continue meeting for class virtually, she has begun mainly thinking about what she looks like in the small amount the computer camera shows. "I think the rhetoric of self-presentation is changing as we interact more online," Koster said. "I know I think mostly about how I look from the shoulders up on my teaching day because that's what students will see on camera."

Dr. Peter Judge, the department chair of philosophy and religious studies and a professor of religious studies, shared that he too has begun to dress more casually for Zoom classes. "I've become a bit more casual when our class meetings are exclusively on Zoom," Judge said. "I don't wear a tie as much,

but I will still wear a collared shirt."

However, as many professors are beginning to dress more casual compared to the way they previously would dress for class, assistant English professor Dr. Joyce White said, "I always try to look professional and put together." Many professors dress professionally because of the important and leadership position they hold, as well as following a specific dress code required by their workplace. For many professors, the professionalism of their attire is worn in order to gain the respect of their students.

"I do think dressing in a professional way shows a certain respect for our profession and often times, like it or not, dressing professionally

▶ see Zoom pg. 9

◀ Golden from pg. 8

The third Best Picture category is for Best Animated Picture. This year's nominees include "The Croods: A New Age," "Onward," "Over the Moon," "Soul," and "Wolfwalkers". Disney Animation Studios and Pixar Animation Studios, both owned by the Walt Disney Company, have had a steady record of wins in this category throughout the last decade, interrupted only four times. The competition to knock Disney from their pedestal is always steep.

A difference to this year's nominees comes in the Best Director of a Motion Picture category. Last year, every nominee was male, despite the fact that there

were several movies released that year with female directors. The same trend followed for the Oscars, prompting some to speak out. According to an article written for Insider, actress Natalie Portman had her Dior cape embroidered with the names of the snubbed directors for the red carpet of the Academy Awards.

Movies may have been scant in 2020, but evidently, not even a pandemic will prevent the Hollywood Foreign Press Association from passing judgement. The 78th Golden Globes will take place virtually on Feb. 28, hosted by comedians Tina Fey and Amy Poehler.

Artist Spotlight: Danielle Banks

Jada Strong
staff writer

Starting college under normal circumstances can be scary, much more so when a global pandemic factors into the equation. However, freshman musical theater major Danielle Banks has been making the most of it.

"It's really good," she says of her experience so far. "Everyone's so nice, and the atmosphere is just so welcoming. My favorite part of my day is just the walk to my classes because I wake up and I'm like 'I can't believe I'm here.' The community here is so comforting because, being a Black and Hispanic actress, it's comforting to know that there's other people here who look like me that are trying to do the same that everyone is so passionate about. There's so much diversity and so much love."

Banks starred in last semester's musical production, Rossum's Universal Robots or RUR. "[The play] was about robot's revolution from the early 1900s. It was where the word 'robot' was originated," she said. "I played a technical director."

Of course, due to COVID-19, the showing of the play was a lot different than previous productions. They couldn't have the typical in-person audience that actors are used to having.

"Our director, Chris Brown, was very smart about how we would put the play on, he made it COVID-friendly but also still made it feel like a live performance," she said. "We had two rows of computers and green screens and we all had our own little station where we could have our masks off and act towards the cameras essentially...The process of doing it was just like a real show. We had our own area to be safe around each other."

Banks is also looking forward to a production she is in this April to be performed at Winthrop's Amphitheater. She said, "I just got cast

in 'The Courage to Right a Women's Wrongs,' which is a classical Spanish play. And I get to play a character named Lisarda."

Banks has been pursuing acting since her freshman year of high school. She had heard of a theater club at her middle school that piqued her interest.

"One of my favorite memories is the first time I was on stage," she recalled. "I was in a musical called 'Bye Bye Birdy'. I was feature ensemble and I was nervous because I'd never acted on stage before. I was backstage and I hear my cue and the lights go on and I run out there and I feel this wave of all the anxiety I had built up just leave my body. I felt probably the most endorphins I had felt in a long time."

Banks's passion for acting is what she has

"I don't think I'll ever stop acting,"

Freshman theatre major, Danielle Banks

set her mind to do for the rest of her life.

"I don't think I'll ever stop acting," she said. "I do have an interest in directing as well, it's also why I consider being a theater teacher. I've had great experiences with my past theater teacher, and she taught me a lot of lessons that I don't think anyone else could've ever taught me. I do, after college, want to try going to New York and getting into some productions and certain theaters and then one day teach."

Banks has learned a lot from acting including the importance of making art and showcasing our creative sides. "It's shown me how much people need art," she explained. "How many people out there, mostly older folks, who are like, 'oh you need to go to school and get a stable job in accounting.' However, everyone needs art,



Photo Courtesy to Danielle Banks

everyone needs an escape from their everyday lives, especially now. Everyone is consuming art from everywhere. And I want to provide that. I'm also well-versed in music. I play the violin, ukulele and piano. So, I'm doing everything I

the most emotional processes [an actor] could go through in my opinion," she said. "I was in a show and we were producing it for months and months, and then a week before we opened one of the characters had to drop out and we had to shift the play... It was sort of like losing a loved one. It was very emotional to me."

Banks has her mindset on quite a few potential characters she'd like to embody sometime in her career. One character Danielle would love to play is Mimi from Rent. "The songs on the soundtrack are wonderful. 'Out Tonight' is one of my favorite songs in the world," she said.

What really drew Banks to wanting to play Mimi is her character development. "Her character development is so interesting, and I want to do it justice. Where she comes from is completely mysterious, she never explains it. She's this presumably mixed woman with a known Latina side. She's 19 in New York working as a stripper. She's making it out in this world and she's the symbol of independence, but she's able to be independent and knows when to ask for help. She's really inspiring to me."

Bank's next play at Winthrop, "The Courage to Right a Woman's Wrongs," should be showcased from April 7 to April 11 this year with tickets available closer to that time.

Banks also talked about how heartbreaking it was to lose a character she was so passionate about portraying on stage. "Bringing a character to life is one of



Emma Crouch/The Johnsonian

Professors tend to wear their professional clothing while in person, but in Zoom classes are more relaxed, while staying professional.

◀ Zoom from pg. 8

elicits a certain respect from our students," Judge said, "but ultimately, respect comes from who you are and how you treat people, not from what you wear."

As we begin to transition back to in person classes opposed to Zoom meetings, it will be intriguing to see how professors dress. Will

it be the business attire they wore before the pandemic, or will their dress be more casual and laid back?

"When we go back to face to face, you're going to see more informality in some people," Koster said, "but also some people who break out the nice clothes just because they haven't worn them in a while."



Tate Walden/The Johnsonian

The hallway between the Maclaurin and Rutledge building, has a Black lives Matter mural painted on the floor. Be sure to check it out during this month or any time at all but especially during Black history month.

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February 17, 2021

Miracle Park: a response to subtle ableism

With the creation of Miracle Park, families are learning about intersectionality and how to fight back against ableism

Autumn Hawkins
staff writer

In December of 2019, Rock Hill construction workers broke ground to create the nation's first sports park designed for inclusivity: Miracle Park.

Miracle Park is located off of Cherry Road, and will span over fifteen miles once construction is completed. This park will be the first public park in the world to receive Universal Design certification. Universal Design refers to the inherent accessibility of amenities or equipment.

Miracle Park features fully accessible playgrounds, two

multi-purpose fields, two baseball fields, a picnic area, a fishing pond and so much more. Before Miracle Park's construction, these facilities were largely inaccessible to the disabled community. Playgrounds often require children to climb or jump, making them difficult to use for children with limited mobility. Ledges and ladders further limit mobility, as typical playgrounds are not wheelchair accessible. Picnic areas are often on slightly raised concrete foundations, which may not have a ramp for wheelchairs, walkers and other mobility aids.

Baseball fields are often not designed for deaf access, consid-

ering that announcements are made through an intercom system. This is especially true for local sports leagues, as residential area parks may not receive enough funding to hire American Sign Language interpreters for the season. However, it is still unclear whether or not Miracle Park's fields will be made accessible for the deaf and hard of hearing community.

Why does intersectionality matter? From a young age, children heavily socialize in playground and park settings. Between play dates, recess and weekend park visits, these are situations that children will be frequently exposed to

before they enter middle school. Children with disabilities are ostracized, often unintentionally, during these social experiences. Children with sensory disabilities may not be able to handle the noise level of playing on a playground, or the feeling of the equipment. As stated before, mobility is taken for granted when designing play spaces for children. High ledges and ladders may be dangerous for children who are blind or have limited vision, as they could run and not expect the sudden drop.

By creating a space that is equitable for all children, Rock Hill has created a safe space for children



Emma Crouch/The Johnsonian

Eden Terrace is the road that leads directly in and out of Winthrop. Depicted is a picture of the road sign on the corner of Eden Terrace and Oakland Avenue.

and families with disabilities. Miracle Park gives children with disabilities the ability to socialize on a playground without the fear of it being

inaccessible. However, this should not be something that families ever have to worry about.

Read more online at mytjnow.com

Cancel culture: helpful or harmful?

Students' opinions on cancel culture

Allison Reynolds
staff writer

It seems like every month, a new celebrity is being cancelled, but what exactly does that mean? Fox News defines being cancelled as, "being culturally blocked from having a prominent public platform or career." How does cancel culture affect a celebrity's career and why do some people not agree with it?

Most people do not take a part in cancel culture because they believe that it is toxic and sometimes uncalled for. For example, Twitter was quick to cancel Jimmy Fallon because of a 20-year-old video that resurfaced of Fallon doing blackface and imitating actor Chris Rock. However, Twitter users against cancel culture were quick to defend Fallon, saying that he was young, did not know what he was doing was wrong, and was only doing what his boss said so

he could make money to put food on the table. Fallon apologized, admitted that what he did was wrong and thanked his fans for holding him accountable for his actions.

Many members of the Republican Party disagree with cancel culture because they believe that the movement condemns the First Amendment, more specifically the idea of free speech.

The argument against this, however, is that celebrities get cancelled because of their disrespectful actions and words. On the other hand, some people love cancel culture, especially Twitter users.

Dr. Jill McCorkel, a professor of sociology and criminology at Villanova University, told the New York Post that we, as a society, love cancel culture because, "it's psychologically intoxicating to feel part of a group and to feel a part of something larger than yourself."

▶ see [Cancel](#) pg. 11

Getting your daily dose of vitamin D

When screen time feels more natural than being away from gadgets

Wren Brooke
staff writer

With classes almost completely online during the fall and many staying that way this semester, working electronically has started to feel more natural than in-person classes. Here's a few reasons why you should probably get some fresh air.

In the past month, many of us have been able to breathe a sigh of relief in at least partially returning to real classrooms rather than Zoom or any of the various group call programs professors had to resort to over the past year. However, when you look at the course offerings archived in Wingspan, the numbers are staggering.

This semester, 1,006 of the classes were hybrid and 521 were fully online. This seems like a vast improvement from this past fall, when 643 were hybrid and 996 were online.

But the truth is that we've become desensitized to it. In Fall 2019, 66 classes were hybrid and 171 were fully online. That means that students are at least 6 1/2 times more likely to have any given class be taught online current-



Kaily Paddle/The Johnsonian

Go on walks and get some time away from your computer screen.

ly, compared to before COVID-19.

Obviously, the blame can hardly be laid on our professors. Courses are mainly planned around the material and student safety, so the Winthrop faculty deserve recognition for managing as well as they have, given current circumstances.

However, the fact remains that we need to go outside and get away from our screens occasionally in order to stay healthy. According to a 2010 Harvard Medical letter, Americans spent 90 percent of their time on average indoors. Thinking back to ten years ago, most of us would have to admit being inside even more than that.

There are a whole host of psychological problems that arise from not going

outside or getting sunlight, including seasonal affective disorder (SAD). SAD is usually seen in people who live in areas with longer winters, but can also occur when someone doesn't get enough sunlight as well.

Another factor is vitamin D, which our body makes naturally when we get sunlight, and one that many Americans don't have enough of. There are supplements that also provide vitamin D, but not nearly as effectively as spending time outside.

If you are considering stocking up on vitamin D to last you for a while though, think again! Long periods of uninterrupted direct sunlight can put you at risk of skin cancer, and the types of UV rays that sunscreen blocks the best

are also the kind that provides the vitamin D we need.

If there are all of these problems, then what should you do to get all your vitamins during a pandemic? Even if your classes are online, try to take a walk outside when possible. At the very least, try for 10 to 15 minute periods of sunlight on your arms and legs a few times each week.

Even if you've dedicated yourself to being a COVID-19 hermit though, all is not lost. Light therapy boxes, also nicknamed SAD lamps, are available online. While not as effective as natural sunlight, the Mayo Clinic advocates for their use.

So, get outside and give your friends a wave and a socially distant air hug.

White History vs American History: why there is no “White History Month”

There is no “White History Month” because whiteness has been the default or set “standard” in every area of society in America



Michael Yelton/The Johnsonian



Michael Yelton/The Johnsonian

Is cancel culture toxic?

◀ *Cancel* from pg. 10

Examples of celebrities that have fallen victim to cancel culture, just in 2020, include YouTuber Shane Dawson, actress Lea Michele, singer Doja Cat, actress Vanessa Hudgens, author J.K. Rowling, and talk show host Ellen DeGeneres. Dawson was cancelled following the resurfacing of videos of him making racist comments and of him making sexual jokes towards singer Willow Smith, when she was just 11-years-old. Michele was cancelled after fellow Glee co-star, Samantha Ware, said that Michele threatened to have her fired and made jokes about defecating in Ware’s wig during the filming of Glee.

Doja Cat fell victim to cancel culture after videos surfaced of the singer in racist chatrooms. Hudgens was cancelled after she posted a video on Instagram, in which she said, in response to Coachella being cancelled due to the pandemic, “even if everybody gets it, like yeah, people are going to die, which is terrible... but inevitable?”

Rowling was cancelled after making transphobic comments on Twitter. DeGeneres was cancelled after it was revealed that she acts very rude off camera and that being on her talk show is a very toxic environment.

So how do WU students feel about this? Sophomore psychology major, Sam Ryan, said, “Cancel culture is toxic and should be removed because most of the time people don’t use it for the right reasons.”

“Cancel culture can be beneficial in the sense of taking away the plat-

form of someone who is spreading hatred, however, the level of extremity that cancel culture has come to support is not healthy,” said sophomore french major, Gray Balen. “Cancelling someone for a minor issue or a one time mistake seems to spit on the idea that people deserve a chance to mature and apologize.”

“I personally think that cancel culture shouldn’t be a thing; there’s so many different things that it could be called,” said sophomore exercise science major, Nicole Weiss. “Calling it cancel culture is implying that it is a way people live day to day. It’s healthy to boycott some things, but it actually does a number on mental health if a person dwells in the negative feelings too long.”

“When people find out how trashy a person is, they get on it, it’s a toss of dice really,” said sophomore theater performance major, A’vion Williams. “I don’t care much about it but it can be very annoying at times.”

I personally believe that cancel culture is a perfect example of right idea, wrong execution. The concept of holding people accountable for their actions is a great idea, however, I don’t believe that we should cancel a celebrity for something they did 15+ years ago and have since apologized for. People can grow and change personally. Hopefully the toxicity of cancel culture can be removed in 2021. I wonder who will be cancelled next, and what they will be cancelled for...

Mary Hicks
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Growing up in predominantly white neighborhoods, white churches, homeschooled, and surrounded by other white homeschoolers, I have often heard the question which those who ask don’t seem to want to hear the answer: “If there’s a black history month, why don’t we have a white history month?”

On the surface, that may seem like an honest question — that is, without knowing much about America and the country’s past.

The problem with this question is that most people who ask it are not actually interested in the answer, but instead are simply attempting to make a point. The only times I have heard people make this statement is amongst other whites who feel the same way and only contribute to the ignorant mindset. What many are often oblivious to is the reality that whiteness has been the set “standard” or default in every area, industry and way of life in America for so long. Because of this default, the curriculum taught in American History classes throughout schools consist of white men and THEIR discoveries, achievements, or narratives. Furthermore, many of the most monumental feats discussed concerning American history are made up of white men being given the credit for what people of color have accomplished.

Onesimus is one of far too many examples of a person of color whose achievements were accredited to a white person. From 1721 to 1722, a smallpox epidemic swept throughout Boston. Onesimus was a slave who told his

master, Cotton Mather, about an age-old African medicine practice. What Africans had already been practicing was inoculation, which Onesimus introduced to Mather. By Onesimus’ sharing of knowledge and tradition, the groundwork was laid for further development of life-saving vaccinations. Yet, very rarely is Onesimus ever celebrated or even mentioned. The one who is most often given recognition in regards to this first step of development is Mather.

It wasn’t until the premier of the movie, Hidden Figures, that many people learned of the legendary African American women who used their exceptional gifts in mathematics and science to help NASA lead the Space Race. This is such an important, key piece concerning NASA in American history that is too often erased from the average classroom.

Not only has there been an erasure of African American accomplishments, but the whitewashing of history, culture and society has been consistent. From incredible inventions to music that has impacted future generations, credit has been given to whites for so many things that African Americans created. Another example being the fact that many do not know that the song Elvis sang, “Hound Dog” was written and sung first by an African American woman who went by the name Big Mama Thornton.

Another form of whitewashing has been seen throughout entertainment, art, fashion and literature by creating the false notion that white or fair skin is equated with beauty or virtue. Because the majority of movies, television shows, magazines and books have

displayed and promoted only white men and women, people of color have had to create their own channels, radio stations, beauty products, etc. They’ve had to create their own way and include the word “black” because mainstream society in America has been almost exclusively white. There are virtually no radio or television stations, products or things of that nature that include “white” in the name because whiteness has been the automatic assumption.

Unfortunately there are still many who do not care to research the very question they ignorantly ask. In some households, children are being raised under the impression that Black History month should not be observed by white people, even going so far as to view certain movements associated with civil rights as left-wing extremism. Organizations such as the Black Panther Party have often been seen as terrorists. Yet, if white Americans could experience not only the unjust treatment that African Americans felt, but also the help that the Black Panthers provided through food and necessities to help underprivileged families in the community send their children to school, perhaps many would realize their significance.

So, the real question is not, “why do they have a month?” The real question is, “Why do they only have a mere month?” Black history is AMERICAN history; it should be celebrated, learned and taught about every single day. The narrative must change; the default of whiteness must be transferred to the standard of unity, equality and representation for all.

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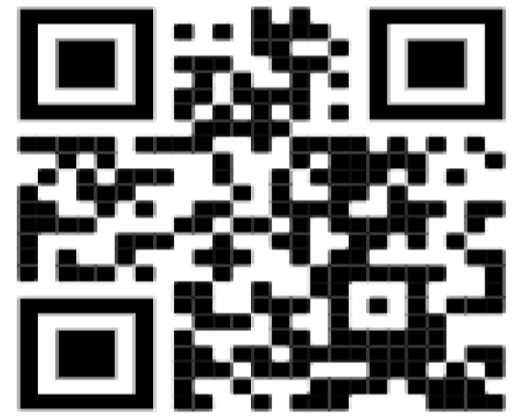
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