

THE JOHNSONIAN



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Board closes complaints against WU employees and board members

The Board of Trustees has closed a complaint levied against four individuals who were involved in eliminating the Winthrop Tennis program. This included other members of the Board of Trustees



Olivia Esselman/The Johnsonian

The complaint made against university officials was also sent to South Carolina State Ethics Commission.

Chase Duncan
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The Board of Trustees has unanimously voted to close an ethics complaint against four individuals involved in the decision to eliminate the Winthrop Tennis program, including the chair and vice chair of the board.

The complaint levied ethical grievances against the Vice President for Intercollegiate Athletics Ken Halpin, Interim President George Hynd, Board Chair Glenn McCall and Vice-Chair Kathy Bigham for their individual actions surrounding the elimination of the Winthrop tennis program in June 2020. The complaint also included several attached emails and a “list of people who have witnessed this unethical behavior and corruption,” says the letter. The document, issued to the South Carolina State Ethics Commission, alleged “unethical behavior and corruption that I never thought possible...,” said the complainant, who asked to be kept anonymous.

“I am absolutely sickened by what has happened, and what continues to happen, to cover up the most extreme unethical behavior,” said the complainant. “I am saddened that University and Board leadership is showing extreme ill will against me, a whistleblower, for alerting them to unethical behavior. I do care about the future of my university and it all starts with leadership and ensuring that ethics are the highest priority... as it should be with any institution of higher education.”

The complaint alleged Halpin of stating false budget information to the Board of Trustees in the financial meetings prior to the decision to eliminate the tennis program, as well as not providing any documentation before or during the board meeting to support his data. It additionally alleges that Halpin purposefully withheld information related to the tennis program’s funding and budget needs, as well as excluded a key member of the Athletics Committee from the meeting that approved the budget cuts that eliminated the tennis program.

The complaint alleged McCall of violating the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act by

▶ see [Complaint](#) pg. 2



Evan Santiago/The Johnsonian

Winthrop University officials respond to an article about the handling of two student-athletes sexual assault investigations.

Athletics director and other Winthrop officials respond to alleged mishandling of sexual assault investigations

University officials have responded to The Johnsonian’s article that highlights the investigative process with sexual assault cases that was published on March 24

Evan Santiago
staff writer

Winthrop officials are offering their response after allegations that sexual misconduct investigations involving the athletics department were mishandled surfaced in an article that was published by The Johnsonian earlier this week.

Winthrop University’s Director of Intercollegiate Athletics, Ken Halpin, and Title IX Coordinator and Chief of Staff for the Office of President, Kimberly Faust, have both responded to press inquiries issued by The Johnsonian.

President of Winthrop University, George W. Hynd, released a campus-wide statement which was delivered via email on March 26, two days after allegations surfaced.

An investigation involving a former student athlete, Eleanor “Ellie” Marindin, and a staff member within the athletics department who is accused of sexually harassing and groping Marindin was carried out by the Office of Human Resources in early 2019. The investigation was led primarily by Employee Relations Manager, LeeAnn Pounds.

According to an investigation summary obtained by The Johnsonian, the staff member involved was found innocent on the basis that there was not enough evidence to prove that a violation of policy occurred despite Pounds’ belief that Marindin was “touched in an undesirable manner.”

The accused staff member is still employed within the department of Winthrop University Athletics.

The document, signed by Pounds and dated March 18, 2019, states that the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics, Ken Halpin, reviewed a report of the investigation conducted by Pounds and the Office of Human Resources. Upon reviewing the report and recommendations sent by investigators, Halpin accepted the conclusion that there was not enough evidence to prove a violation of policy occurred.

“Upon review of the investigation report and recommendations, the Athletic Director and Vice President, Dr. Ken Halpin has concluded that while there was undesired touching by [the staff member] there was not a preponderance of evidence that the touching was of a sexual or intentional nature that violated Winthrop’s policy against sexual harassment,” the summary outlined.

According to Halpin, his involvement in Marindin’s case did not exceed reporting the incident to the Office of Human Resources and accepting their conclusion

after receiving a report of the concluded investigation.

Halpin claims that the athletics department has never engaged in the investigative process as it pertains to allegations made against athletics staff or student-athletes.

“There is no role that the athletics department plays in any Title IX process,” Halpin explained in an interview with The Johnsonian.

Halpin says that all Winthrop University Athletics personnel are trained to immediately report instances of misconduct after a complaint is made.

“Since I’ve been here, we have a track record. We have immediately reported everything without hesitation,” Halpin said. “There’s never been a delay.”

Halpin says that student-athletes within the athletics department have been stirred to action after allegations that sexual assault investigations involving athletics were mishandled surfaced in the article published on March 24.

“Obviously [the article] has sparked motion from so many of our students and our first priority is always their safety, especially our student-athletes whom I’ve been hired to care for,” Halpin said.

Halpin says that a number of steps are being taken to ensure that student-athletes feel safe in their department. Halpin claims to have already met with Women’s Lacrosse, the Student Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC), a group of student-athlete alumni, athletics staff, and head coaches at Winthrop.

“We’ve entered into active conversation with all students who have questions,” Halpin said.

Halpin also mentioned that the department is working towards hosting a student-athlete town hall where student-athletes might have the chance to voice their concerns about their safety within the department.

Marindin claimed that she was unaware of a Title IX investigation taking place while her allegations were being investigated by Pounds, however a new response from Kimberly

Faust, Title IX Coordinator at Winthrop, suggests that investigations involving students and employees are still reported under Title IX.

“Regardless of which division takes the lead on the investigation—HR or Student Affairs—the investigation is considered to be and reported as a Title IX investigation,” Faust wrote in a document sent to The Johnsonian on March 24.

▶ see [Response](#) pg. 2





◀ **Response** from pg. 1

The summary from the investigation led by The Office of Human Resources refers to the investigation as a “Human Resources investigation.” The letter does not make mention of Title IX policy or Pounds’ role as a Title IX investigator.

Marindin claimed that Faust was aware of the incident report and recalls her sitting in on a meeting with Pounds and Marindin. Marindin said she was unaware of Faust’s position or duties as Title IX Coordinator at the time of the meeting.

Faust wrote that she cannot comment on a specific case, but explained that it’s not uncommon for the Title IX Coordinator to sit in on meetings during an active investigation.

“It is important to note that the Coordinator does not investigate allegations,” Faust wrote. “From time to time, I may attend a meeting to observe the investigator’s and complainants’/respondents’ interactions as a way to monitor our practices and procedures.”

Citing “confidentiality requirements,” Faust declined to comment on the mishandling of Title IX investigations as alleged by Marindin and another former Winthrop student, Summer Phillips, who was gang-raped by three student-athletes in February of 2017 as detailed in the article published by The Johnsonian on March 24.

In addition to Halpin and Faust, President of Winthrop University, George W. Hynd is also offering a response to the allegations which surfaced in the March 24 article.

In a statement issued to all students via email during the evening of March 26, Hynd responded to the allegations by writing “Winthrop officials took seriously the allegations of the two students interviewed. Both cases were promptly investigated by the university using protocols established as best practice for Title IX compliance.”

The statement also explains the various roles of the university’s Office of Victims Assistance, The Dean of Students office, The Human Resources, Employee Diversity

and Wellness division, and the university’s Title IX coordinator—all in relation to Title IX procedure.

Hynd’s statement makes no mention of the study on student safety, or “campus climate survey,” conducted at Winthrop University in the Spring of 2017 which was recently obtained and reported on by The Johnsonian in the March 24 article.

The survey reports statistics related to sexual violence, sexual harassment perpetrated by faculty and staff, and student perception of administration among other data related to student safety.

The survey is considered a public record but was never released following its conclusion in September of 2017.

◀ **Complaint** from pg. 1

“hosting the majority of the Board Meetings in Executive Session, whether or not certain topics qualify for Executive Session.”

The Freedom of Information Act states that “public business be performed in an open and public manner so that citizens shall be advised of the performance of public officials and of the decisions that are reached in public activity and in the formulation of public policy. Toward this end, provisions of this chapter must be construed so as to make it possible for citizens, or their representatives, to learn and report fully the activities of their public officials at a minimum cost or delay to the persons seeking access to public documents or meetings.”

The complaint alleged that the Board’s decision to eliminate the tennis program in the executive session, amongst other decisions, violated this act.

The complaint alleged that Bigham withheld information related to a Conflict of Interest due to her financial donations towards the men’s basketball program and her close relationship to the current men’s head basketball coach, and therefore had a vested interest in maintaining one sport’s program over another. The complaint also alleged that Bigham was “instrumental in ensuring the voices of five distinguished tennis alumni were silenced by not allowing them to participate in the public session before the September Board of Trustees meeting.”

The complaint alleged Hynd of libeling against the complainant and eluding responses regarding investigations into Halpin’s conduct related to the tennis program’s elimination.

The Board said that there was “no evidence to substantiate any of the allegations” brought forth by the complaints against the four individuals at the Feb. 19-20 retreat. The motion to close the complaint was voted on without any discussion from Board members during the public session of the meeting. McCall and Bigham recused themselves from voting on the motion. General Counselor for Winthrop University Caroline Overcash said that this is a typical procedure for any behavior-related complaint that reaches the board.

“The theory of Executive Session is designed so that public bodies can talk about things in an open way and they can have an open debate, so you would want to remove anything that would taint them,” General

Counselor for Winthrop University Caroline Overcash said. “If they had a complaint against one of us [a Winthrop employee], they would discuss that in Executive Session and come out and say ‘We don’t find any merit, so we’re gonna close it,’ or decide ‘Hey, we think you did something wrong, so we’re gonna refer that over for further investigation,’ based on the evidence.”

The complainant said that they don’t believe the complaint was properly examined, and that instead a neutral third-party investigator should’ve been assigned to review the incident and it’s evidence.

“There are conflicts of interest with some Board members, but the bigger conflict involved those who are associated with the named respondents who were in charge of the so-called investigation and collection of evidence, which did not occur. I asked Ms. Overcash back in September if in her history of working with the Board if a Board member ever recused themselves from participating in discussion and voting due to a Conflict of Interest. I also asked her what kind of training/orientation new Board members receive. Because I did not get a response on either front, I assume none on both. When it came to tennis, there was another Board member who had a gross conflict of interest in that decision & that person was a committee chair, yet he was not named in the complaint. At this point, it’s all about covering up what happened and protecting those involved. I can tell you that there consistently seems to be a great deal of vital information being withheld from the majority of the Board by Board and University leaders. How can a board make a decision on insufficient information or when they only hear one narrative?,” the complainant said.

“I serve on the executive board of a global non-profit in NYC and if any type of allegation of this nature is brought upon leaders of the board and/or our administration, there is only one course of proper action. That is to have the insurance carrier assign a neutral third-party investigator to fully investigate the claims and formulate an official report. Not only were respondents copied on emails to the claimant by the Human Resources representative but officials who were fully involved in the conduct, even though they were not named in the complaint, were involved in assessing the claim. Of course, you would think that the claimant would be thoroughly vetted and all of their evidence examined, but that didn’t happen. The lack of professionalism and seriousness for which claims are handled worries me for staff and students,” the complainant said.

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About The Johnsonian

The Johnsonian is the weekly student newspaper of Winthrop University.

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Campus safety ambassadors: here's what they're all about

Campus safety ambassadors Misha, Shivani and Erin share their experiences of being on the job

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Winthrop University, in an effort to further enforce COVID-19 safety guidelines as well as general campus safety, has implemented a campus safety ambassador program in which students are hired to walk around campus encouraging other students to adhere to safety guidelines.

Nine students were hired as campus safety ambassadors and found out about the job through a variety of different sources.

"I was looking for jobs on campus, and this was just one on the listing that was really high up and it really seemed like something I could do, especially because it was a new thing," said Campus Safety Ambassador Erin Catoe. "I just want to try something different, you know, and when I had my interview, they said it's a pilot program... I want to stick with this because it's just something different, and not many other

people have this opportunity." Campus Safety Ambassador Shivani Dahya also heard about the position through Winthrop's hiring announcements.

"It was my friend, she also works as an ambassador, and I was telling her how I needed a job, so then she was like, 'hey, this place is hiring, and they have positions available.' So, then I just went to it and applied on the careers page. That's how I heard about it," Dahya said.

The position was also announced at the information desk at the DiGiorgio Campus Center.

"I was actually looking into applying at the information desk and all of the positions were filled. So, I was talking to the head supervisor over there, I don't really remember her name, but she told me that this new position was coming out and that they were looking for people. So that's how I found out about it," said Campus Safety Ambassador Misha Madison.



Jamia Johnson/The Johnsonian

Safety Ambassadors are students hired to enforce COVID safety guidelines in DiGiorgio Campus Center.

The students who were hired as ambassadors were hired to the position because they genuinely want to make a difference on their campus and have the opportunity to connect with other students.

"I think my main purpose of applying is because I knew with this position, I would be able to talk to people, which was something we are not able to do right now because we're in a

pandemic, but it's easy with that job to go and talk to people while you're there," Madison said. "The job isn't just to tell people to put masks on or social distance; it's also to get to know people who are constantly at DiGs and kind of develop relationships with people. So, I like that because I'm a social butterfly, so it's nice to be able to talk to people."

▶ see [CSA](#) pg. 4

Winthrop named a 'voter-friendly campus' by the Fair Elections Center's Campus Vote Project

Winthrop has already been named a voter-friendly campus both in 2017 and 2019

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Winthrop University was deemed a voter-friendly campus by national nonpartisan organizations Fair Elections Center's Campus Vote Project (CVP) and NASPA – Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education. The two organizations seek to assist institutions in fostering campus environments that are conducive to democracy and honoring the right to vote.

"I am very pleased to report that Winthrop is one of more than 200 U.S. campuses, and one of four colleges in South Carolina, to be designated as a Voter Friendly Campus. Winthrop

previously earned the Voter Friendly Campus designation in 2019 and 2017," said President George Hynd in an email to faculty and staff sent on March 16. "During the latest election season, the campus was abuzz with a variety of virtual events and activities to get out the vote, and I appreciate the work of all involved who helped our students understand the importance of being life-long civically minded and engaged citizens."

Winthrop implemented a number of events and encouragements geared towards getting most of its students to participate in the 2020 election. Some strategies the university had already implemented before during past

efforts to encourage student participation in the election, but the university also implemented some new strategies in anticipation of the 2020 election.

Katarina Moyon, director of the John C. West Forum of Politics and Policy, created and led an eight-member steering committee of faculty and staff, as well as a student voting ambassador program.

The student ambassador program "focused heavily on a social media push to activate students to register and vote. Engagement occurred on Instagram, Facebook and Snapchat, as well as several election-related information events on Zoom," according to Judy Longshaw, news and media services

manager.

The university also worked to inform students on how to vote and various voting procedures through the West Forum website. There was also a five-part series on the Centennial of Women's Suffrage where students were eligible to receive cultural event credits.

Students also played a hand in encouraging others to exercise the right to vote.

Art students created a mural between McLaurin and Rutledge that promotes voting.

The university accomplished getting all student-athletes registered to vote. Teams of graduate social work students were created as a part of their field placements, who helped

▶ see [Vote](#) pg. 4

Police Blotter

A roundup of crime on campus

Sarah Hassler
staff writer

On March 7, the Reporting Officer R/O was conducting patrol on Cherry Road when he observed a Toyota Corolla with an expired license plate. The R/O then initiated a traffic stop at the intersection of Cherry Road and Patton Street. The R/O made contact with Suspect #1, a Winthrop student, and Suspect #2, no Winthrop affiliation. The R/O informed Suspect #1 of the reasons for the stop, and as they conversed, the R/O could detect an odor of marijuana coming from the vehicle.

The R/O asked both suspects if there was any marijuana in the vehicle, and both denied any Marijuana being in the vehicle.

The R/O then radioed for dispatch to have an RHPD respond to assist with a vehicle search. RHPD arrived and the R/O searched the vehicle. The R/O recovered a small baggie of marijuana, a marijuana pipe, a pineapple-shaped jar containing marijuana, a grinder, two lighters and a pack of cigarillos from a brown box in the passenger-side floorboard. The R/O also recovered a jar of marijuana, a pack of cigarillos, another grinder and a Victoria's Secret bag with a large number of used cigarillo packages in a black purse in the back seat of the vehicle that Suspect #1 stated was hers.

Upon searching the trunk of the vehicle, the R/O discovered a bottle of liquor. The R/O asked both individuals whose brown box was in the passenger side of the vehicle. Both suspects stated it was not theirs. Suspect #1 stated that it was her friend's box.

The R/O informed both individuals that he would not charge them with possession of tobacco by a minor or possession of alcohol by a minor, but they would be charged with possession of mMarijuana first offense.

On March 22, the Reporting Officer (R/O) and Officer

Rodgers were conducting patrol on Oakland Avenue near Oakland Avenue Presbyterian in Rock Hill. The R/O observed a silver Hyundai Sonata with a defective headlight on Oakland Avenue headed towards Winthrop University. The R/O initiated a traffic stop at the intersection of Oakland Avenue and Aiken Avenue. The R/O and Officer Rodgers made contact with the driver and passenger. Upon first contact, the R/O detected the odor of marijuana coming from inside the vehicle. The R/O asked Suspect #1 if she had anything illegal in the vehicle. Suspect #1 stated, "No."

The R/O then asked Suspect #1 if he could search the vehicle. Suspect #1 answered "yes."

The R/O proceeded with a probable cause vehicle search.

Rodgers identified Suspect #1 as a Winthrop student, and Suspect #2 as having no Winthrop affiliation. The R/O discovered a bag of marijuana and two rolling paper packages in the center console of the vehicle. The R/O also discovered a silver container with marijuana residue located within the storage compartment on the passenger-side front door. Upon searching the passenger-side rear seat, the R/O located a Tupperware bowl filled with marijuana inside of a green backpack. After the search was complete, the R/O asked both suspects if they knew who the marijuana belonged to. Suspect #1 and Suspect #2 stated that they did not know.

Rodgers informed both individuals that since neither of them wanted to claim ownership of the marijuana, they would both be charged. Rodgers weighed the bag of marijuana at 3.2 grams and the Tupperware bowl that contained marijuana at 21.3 grams. Suspect #1 and Suspect #2 were both issued a citation for possession of marijuana, first degree (under 28 grams).

Abortions to continue being available through Planned Parenthood's lawsuit against the heartbeat bill

A South Carolina judge extended a ruling that allows abortions to continue being available until a decision is made regarding the lawsuit against the heartbeat bill

Taylor Sallenger
staff writer

U.S. District Judge Mary Geiger Lewis ruled that abortions can continue in South Carolina during the Planned Parenthood lawsuit against the heartbeat bill. This was an extension to the previous ruling, made last month after the lawsuit was originally filed, that abortions could continue until March 19.

The heartbeat bill was signed by SC Gov. Henry McMaster last month. It prohibits doctors from performing an abortion if a heartbeat is detected during an ultrasound unless the pregnancy threatens the life of the mother, which could cause her severe and long-lasting health risks if the fetus is detected to be nonviable or if the pregnancy was a result of rape or incest.

This bill was criticized by Senate Democrats as well as women and civil rights groups, including the reproductive health organization Planned

Parenthood, with many calling out McMaster for potentially prioritizing stripping women's rights during a pandemic that has affected the state negatively.

Planned Parenthood and their allies released a statement in conjunction with their lawsuit targeting South Carolina lawmakers for prioritizing anti-abortion legislation rather than legislation that would improve health care and disparities in the state. They also explained how six weeks is too early in most cases for women to know they are pregnant and how this bill targets those who are already struggling with accessing and affording health care during a pandemic.

The organization, however, feels confident they can block it.

"This ban blatantly defies nearly 50 years of Supreme Court precedent protecting a person's right to end a pregnancy," Nancy Northup, president and CEO of the Center for Reproductive

Rights said in a statement.

"Many states have passed similar bans in an attempt to send a Roe test case to the Supreme Court, but courts have blocked them all. Yet, the bans keep coming, even in the midst of a pandemic. This ban was the first bill filed in the South Carolina Senate this year. There is a new administration in the White House, but reproductive rights are still under attack across the country. We expect many more anti-abortion laws to be passed this year and we will be in court to stop them."

Palmetto Family, a faith-based non-profit organization based in Columbia, believes that the bill has good footing for remaining law.

"Every bill passed by the South Carolina General Assembly is subject to challenges in the courts, and the Heartbeat Bill/Law would be no exception. However, Palmetto Family believes the South Carolina Heartbeat Bill stands a good chance of being

upheld in its entirety when challenged in the courts," said Joshua Putnam, president of Palmetto Family.

With both pro-life and pro-choice organizations feeling confident in their sides' abilities to win the lawsuit, it is difficult to guess which one may end up coming out on top.

Winthrop students have their own opinions on the situation. Some appreciate the work Planned Parenthood is doing in the state, regardless of whether they plan on ever getting an abortion or not, and are hoping for pro-choice to come out on top.

"I am glad to see Planned Parenthood advocating for abortion rights. Many individuals do not even know that they are pregnant at six weeks and if they do know, chances are, they are not going to easily decide to have an abortion. You have to understand the pressure and the mental health struggle of having to make a choice like

that. A choice that will forever affect your life, no matter the decision, should be fully processed and not rushed by law. Law will not change a person's choice to abort and they have the right to safe healthcare no matter the circumstances," said Tanna Morrison, a junior psychology major. "It saddens me to see that the decades of hard work and the progress of healthcare choices may be reversed. I do not know if Planned Parenthood will win the lawsuit to prevent this strict legislation, but I do know that abortions will continue to be practiced even if this law does go into effect. For this reason, people should be more concerned about access to safe healthcare. Individuals should have a choice. I personally would not get an abortion, but I am choosing for myself because that is my right. If someone decides that an abortion is the best for their life, trust me, this decision was not made lightly and they

deserve to be respected and understood no matter what."

With the state's political climate, however, it is difficult to predict whether or not this lawsuit will succeed or fail in getting the heartbeat bill thrown out.

"I think it is ridiculous that the government is trying to regulate people's bodies, especially with something as serious and permanent as pregnancy. I really hope that this lawsuit succeeds in striking down the heartbeat bill, but since South Carolina is such a conservative state, it is hard to predict which way the lawsuit will go," said Emilee Kellett, a junior theatre performance major.

Everyone is entitled to their own opinion. Abortion is a popular topic in today's political climate that can be argued one way or the other, but it is important to respect differing beliefs. In the coming weeks, it is expected the result of this lawsuit will come to fruition.

◀ CSA from pg. 3

The job of campus safety ambassador is most easy to students who are naturally outgoing individuals; however, it is not essential that ambassadors be extroverts.

"Funny enough, I'm actually really not an extrovert," Catoe said. "I'm able to do it for work and stuff, but outside of work, when I'm not in uniform, I'm really not that extroverted. So, I do think that it is necessary to be able to be that way for the job just so that you can actually build relationships with people because otherwise this job wouldn't work. ...This job helped me get out of my bubble a little bit and it was hard to talk to big groups, especially with seniors, it's a little intimidating, but otherwise, I find it pretty easy and kind of second nature."

The majority of campus safety ambassadors are underclassmen, and some find their newness to the school to be a potential roadblock to connecting with other students they come across while on the job.

"Because I am a

freshman, I don't know very many people on this campus. I actually hang out at my apartment most of the time, so I haven't really gone out of my way to meet a bunch of people. You can tell when people are seniors or juniors," Catoe said. "They're a little bit more stubborn because they've been here longer, and they haven't had to deal with everything that COVID has made us deal with this year... so it's a little bit more intimidating because I'm at the bottom, and they could probably tell I'm a freshman. They're not gonna listen to me because they've never seen me before."

The ambassadors have had both positive and negative experiences while on the job. Some of the most positive experiences have involved making new friends while on the job.

"I liked making a friend with one of the people in DiGs. He's usually in the gaming center and he is just really chill with everybody. He'll let me play games with him whenever I'm off my patrolling for a few

minutes, and it's really relaxing to not have to just stay cooped up in my office all the time and still being able to keep an eye on everything," Catoe said.

Some ambassadors have only had positive experiences while on the job.

"I haven't had any bad experiences, thankfully," Dahya said. "You would think when you apply for the job, and first start out, people aren't gonna like you, like, they're going to be mean to you, but people have been actually very friendly. They say hi when you walk by, like, they acknowledge that you're there."

Some ambassadors, however, have experienced some adverse reactions from other students while on the job.

"A guy shook his water bottle at me one time when I told him to put his mask back on, and it was really weird," Madison said. "Unless you're actively eating or drinking, because that's the policy, keep your mask on in the building. Unless you're actively eating or you're taking a sip of water at that time, otherwise, you

put your mask back on, and so I was just trying to explain that to him, and he picked up his Gatorade bottle and stuck it in my face, and I said, 'Are you actively drinking that, sir?' A lot of people usually are either going to meet you with indifference, or they are going to act like you're not there, but they hear you, and they comply. If they start laughing behind your back, which happens a lot, we're just supposed to walk away and be a bigger person and know that we did our job."

As of now, campus safety ambassadors are only stationed in the DiGiorgio Campus Center in the evenings but have plans to soon patrol the West Center as well.

The campus safety ambassador program is going to stay around even after the university no longer finds it necessary to implement COVID-19 safety guidelines because the ambassadors are doing a great job with encouraging general safety on campus as well as COVID-19 safety.

◀ Vote from pg. 3



Emma Crouch/The Johnsonian

Winthrop University is home to people of many different backgrounds and political beliefs. Winthrop has been named as a voter friendly campus by Fair Elections Center.

both South and North Carolina residents register to vote.

"As part of the Voter Friendly application, Winthrop evaluated its campus plan, how the university facilitated voter engagement efforts, and offered a final analysis of its efforts, all in the face of the disruption caused by a global pandemic. The Voter Friendly designation is valid through December 2022," according to Longshaw.

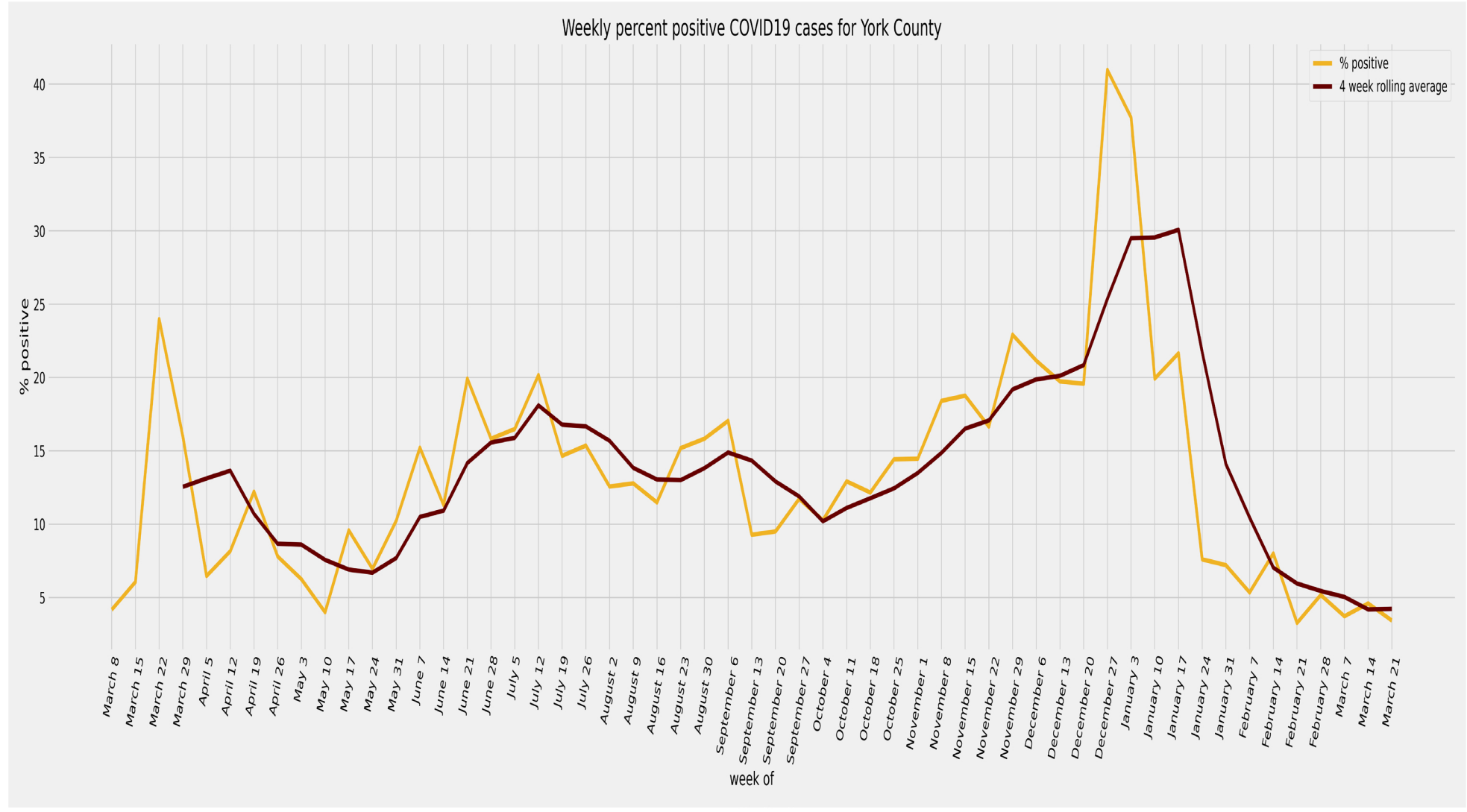
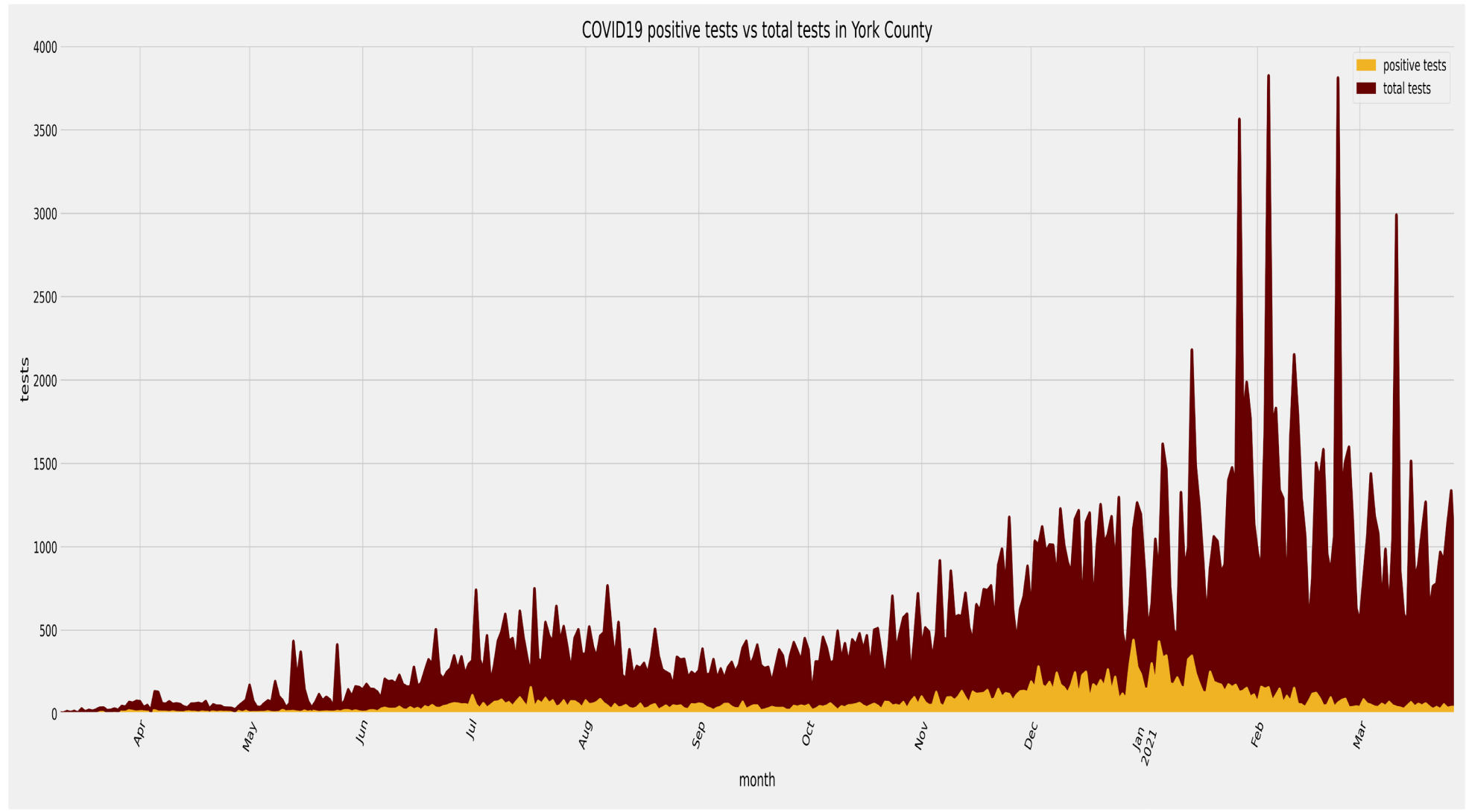
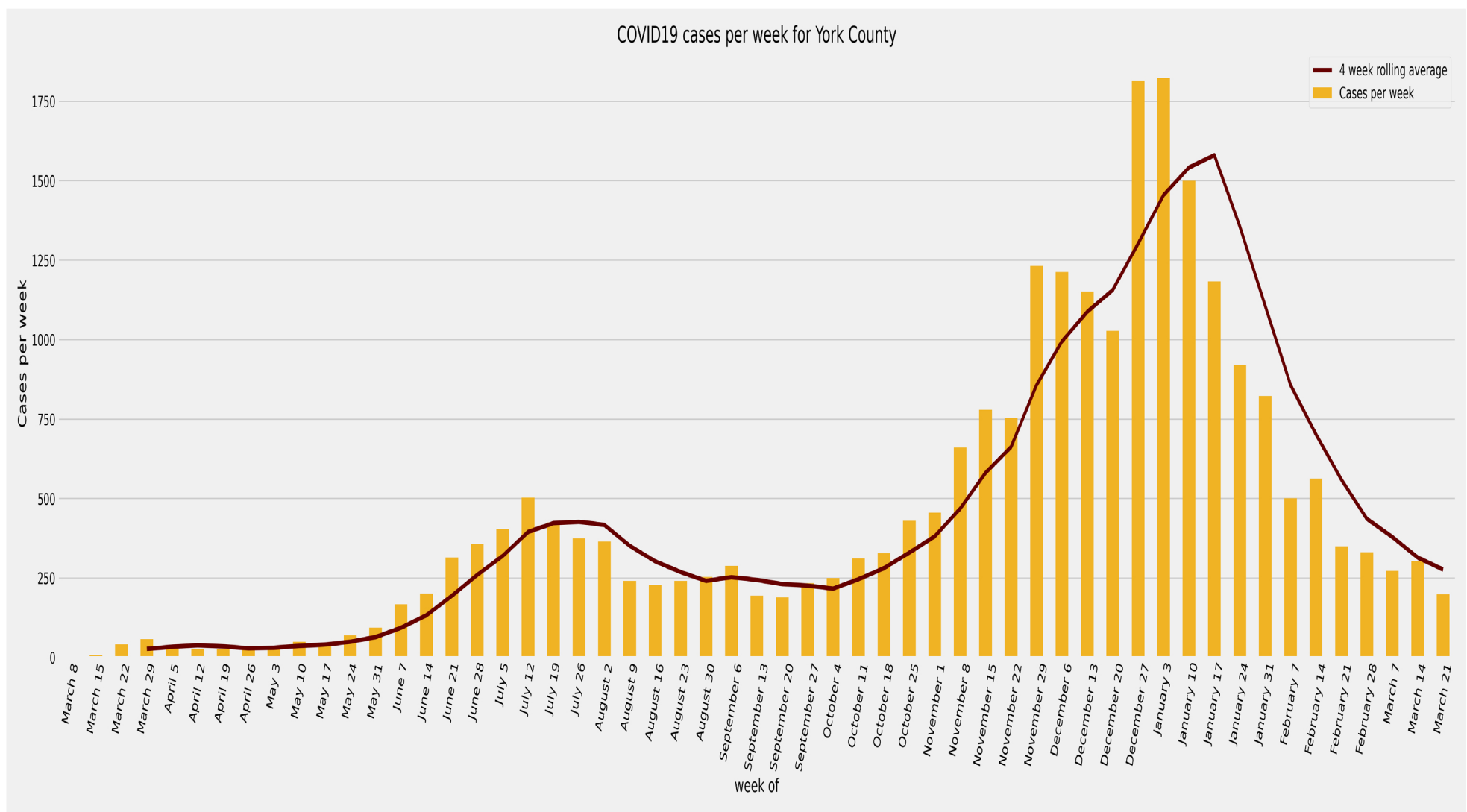
"We have been

impressed with the civic engagement by the Winthrop campus," Hynd said. "Winthrop not only embeds civic lessons throughout its curriculum and gives students plenty of opportunities to hear about policy issues, but it also helps register students and encourages them to vote either in York County or their hometowns."

The university hopes to again be recognized as a voter-friendly campus in 2024.

York County 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. Each week we will have weekly data charts informing you of what is new



Pat Kelsey leaves for CofC

Several coaches and players expected to depart from Winthrop men's basketball program



Matthew Shealy/The Johnsonian

News of Kelsey's departure was officially announced on March 26.

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Former Winthrop coach Pat Kelsey was introduced as the next head men's basketball coach at College of Charleston on Friday, March 26. Kelsey spent the past nine seasons as the head coach at Winthrop.

"One thing I'm really proud of is my relationship with the city of Rock Hill," Kelsey told attendees at Friday's press conference in Charleston. "It's emotional leaving that town because of the connections and relationships, and the amount of time that I poured into it. I commit to you that this is our new home. I will commit to making Charleston better by doing my part."

Kelsey started and ended his speech with the same two words – "Our city."

It's no surprise that Kelsey has

moved on to a new city. He almost left Winthrop in 2017 when he signed a contract to coach at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, only having a change of heart 30 minutes before his scheduled press conference.

What is surprising is Kelsey's decision to go to Charleston when many thought he would take over a program with more prestige. While Charleston does own the seventh-highest all-time winning percentage among Division One teams (the Cougars have only been D-I since 1991), the opportunity to beat big-name schools is far less great in the Colonial Athletic Association as it would be in the Big East, the ACC, or other such conferences.

The one obvious reason that Kelsey would leave Winthrop for Charleston is

the pay upgrade. According to Kevin Bilodeau of Live 5 News, Kelsey's 5-year contract will earn him \$550 thousand in his first season with the Cougars (compared to the \$250 thousand a year he was making at Winthrop), and his salary will increase by \$50 thousand each season after that.

His contract also includes incentives similar to those he had at Winthrop, earning him bonus money for winning a conference championship and for advancing in the NCAA Tournament.

College basketball insider Jeff Goodman was the first to announce the news via Twitter, reporting at 3:45 p.m. on March 25 that Kelsey was expected to make the move to Charleston. Three hours later, College of Charleston Athletics officially announced that Kelsey had been named the head coach. Kelsey posted an official statement on his own Twitter account that night.

"[A]s I reflect on our last nine years here, so many memories come flooding back. The Kelseys have had a great run here and are forever grateful to this city for being a wonderful home for our family," he wrote.

Kelsey continued on about how hospitable the people of Rock Hill had been to his family and he then addressed his "beloved Winthrop":

"What can I say... I love you and will miss you. You took in a young coach who had little experience and lots of dreams and helped them all to come true. When I asked for support, you responded.

"You tolerated my goofy antics when promoting games including disrupting your lunch at Thomson and DIGS with an impromptu pep rally. I worked hard to do my part and to earn my keep. I wasn't perfect but I gave you every last ounce of what I had. You, Winthrop, will always hold a special place in my heart. Until we meet again... ROCK THE HILL."

Around the same time Thursday night, Adonis Arms' name appeared in the college basketball transfer portal, meaning he informed Winthrop that he intends to transfer. Arms averaged 10.5 points per game off the bench as a redshirt senior this season but is eligible to play one more year since the NCAA is granting players an additional year of eligibility to make up for this season being impacted by COVID-19.

"My two years here have been great and I will have lasting memories for a lifetime. Going back-to-back in the Big South tournament as champions is the best feeling ever,"

Arms wrote in a post on his social media accounts.

"As I talked to God and my family I think it's best for me to enter the transfer portal and continue the journey God has already written for me."

On Friday morning, redshirt freshman Joshua Corbin's name also appeared in the portal. Corbin led the Eagles and made three-point attempts this season with 47 hits from behind the arc.

"I want to start by thanking God for everything – the highs and lows of my first two years playing college basketball. It has been a dream come true. After talking with my family and friends we have decided that I will be entering my name in the transfer portal," Corbin shared on social media.

A third player revealed that they would be leaving Winthrop on Friday, though the announcement was less surprising than the other two. Redshirt senior, Chandler Vaudrin, informed ESPN that he would decline his extra year of eligibility and declare for the NBA Draft.

Unfortunately for Winthrop, Kelsey's departure also means the departure of several elite assistant coaches.

Kelsey told Jeff Hartsell of the Post and Courier that

he plans to take Associate Head Coach Dave Davis, Assistant Coach Brian Kloman, and Strength and Conditioning Coach Eli Foy with him to Charleston, leaving Justin Gray as Winthrop's interim head coach (though he, too, could follow Kelsey to his new home, according to Hartsell).

Gray's name has also been mentioned as a candidate to replace Kelsey. One staff member inside the athletic department said they believe Gray is top two on the list of potential suitors to be Winthrop's next head coach since he is viewed highly by the players currently on Winthrop's roster.

Gray became an assistant coach at Winthrop in June of 2019 after playing 12 seasons of professional basketball overseas. Prior to playing professionally, he averaged 16.2 points per game during four seasons at Wake Forest, where Kelsey was an assistant coach.

The biggest drawback to promoting Gray is that he has no head coaching experience. However, Kelsey had none either when Winthrop hired him.

The other name at the forefront of the head coaching conversation is Mark Prosser,

▶ see COFC pg. 7



Baseball boasts 8-7 record after double-header sweep against USC Upstate

Lily Fremed
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On March 23 the Eagles walked away with their first home conference win of the 2021 season after beating Charleston Southern 4-1. This was the first time the Eagles competed against the Buccaneers since 2019, where Winthrop was victorious in three consecutive games.

After a strong start to the week, the Eagles fell short against USC Upstate on March 26, finishing 5-0 in the two-day series opener.

Juniors Joey Tepper and Dillon Morton and Senior Spencer Yankle were all 1-for-4 at bat.

Morton was left on base in Winthrop's half of the first inning after doubling to left field with two outs.

The Spartans scored their first run in the third inning. By the bottom of the fourth, Tepper had a double down the left field line, putting himself in scoring position with no outs, but even after advancing to third he was stranded on base, keeping USC Upstate in the lead 1-0.

In the top of the fifth, Winthrop committed two errors, leading Upstate to tack on two insurance runs.

Things were looking good for the Eagles in their half of the fifth with bases loaded as Tepper was up at the plate, but the inning ended without any runs when Tepper went down on a 3-2 count.

Upstate increased their lead to 4-0 in the sixth inning, and then again getting 5-0 in the ninth, where the game

finally ended in the Spartan's favor. The loss put the Eagles 6-7 in the season, but luckily, they had two chances at home on Saturday March 27 to redeem themselves. After back-to-back games at 1:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m., the Eagles were successful in defeating the Spartans.

Saturday afternoon opened with freshman Luke Hannum hit by a pitch, giving Winthrop its first base runner of the afternoon. Hannum moved to second when Tepper hit a single.

After Morton and Yankle got out, freshman Andrew Jenner reached first on an error, which sent Tepper to third and Hannum home, scoring the first run of the game.

Freshman Ty Hooks finished off the inning with a two-out, two-RBI single to right, bringing home Tepper and Jenner, giving Winthrop a solid 3-0 lead into the second inning.

The Spartans made their first run during the second inning. The next run was from the Eagles in the fourth inning, where Hooks came home after freshman Joseph Szvetitz singled to center, making the score 4-1.

Szvetitz also led the Eagles' half of the ninth inning with a hit down the left field line, sending Tepper home for a 5-1 game. In the ninth inning Upstate actually got a run across on a fielder's choice, but the game was soon over with Winthrop winning 5-2.

Later that afternoon, after an uneventful

first inning, there was a bit of excitement when a lightning delay paused the game for an hour and eleven minutes.

Once play resumed, Szvetitz put together a one-out single to right on an 0-2 count and advanced to second base on an error by the Spartans during the third inning. With Szvetitz in scoring position, Hannum hit up the left side, taking Szvetitz home and giving Winthrop a 1-0 lead.

After freshman Willie Lumpkin came in to pitch during the fifth inning, the Spartans tied the game 1-1 in the sixth inning.

Jenner walked to lead off Winthrop's half of the eighth inning. Yankle doubled to left field, putting Jenner in scoring position with no outs. Freshman Ethan Fewell loaded the bases after a walk on a full count. With two outs, Will Martin drew the bases-loaded walk, putting Winthrop ahead 2-1 late in the game.

Senior Colten Rendon sat the Spartans down in order in the top of the ninth, giving Winthrop the 2-1 win.

Proud head coach Tom Riginos wrote on Twitter, "There was some toughness going on at the Winthrop Ballpark today," after the Eagles' weekend sweep.

With Upstate under their belt, the Eagles are 8-7 overall and 5-2 in the Big South Conference. The Eagles travel to Campbell on April 1-2 for a single game on Friday and another double-header on Saturday.

winning 25-19. Winthrop handedly won sets three and four of the first match against Presbyterian, earning their eighth victory of the season.

Outside hitter Nikkia Benitez was one of the team's top performers, recording 35 attacks, eight kills, and four blocks. Along with Benitez, defensive specialist Leah Metzger recorded 25 digs and setter Jana Owens had 25 assists.

On Friday, Winthrop celebrated its seniors who will be leaving the program. Prior to the match, outside hitters Jessica Young and

Emily Wunder were both honored for three years of service to the Winthrop volleyball program.

The Eagles battled back and forth with the Blue Hose during the first set before pulling away with a 25-20 win. Winthrop took a 15-8 lead during the second set and finished strong with its biggest margin of the day, a 25-17 victory.

With all the momentum in their favor, the Eagles scored the first two points of the third set. After Presbyterian took a 5-3 lead, Winthrop battled back to regain the lead and win the

Eagle of the week: Malik Harper

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At the 49er Classic in Charlotte on March 20th, Malik Harper beat his old PR for the 100 meter run by 0.13 seconds, coming in 4th with a time of 10.81.

This last weekend at the Winthrop/Adidas Invitational, Harper came just shy of his recent PR, coming in third with a time of 10.87.

"When I ran my race I felt really good and I was happy with the time, especially this early in the season. I am hoping to improve that time and have multiple personal bests this season. I always try to stay in shape and my coaches always do a great job by having us prepared for the meet day," said Harper.

Before this season, the last time Harper recorded a personal best in the 100 meter was with a time of 10.94 seconds two years ago at the Winthrop Twilight in 2019.

Harper began running as a high school sophomore in Duluth, GA to improve his football skills, but he "never anticipated it could take [him] this far."

"I did not start taking track seriously

until my junior year of high school when I realized I could be really good at it," Harper said.

When preparing for a big meet, Harper always enjoys a large breakfast in the morning, not eating again until he has completed all of his races for the day. He also always listens to his "game day playlist," and prays before and after all races "no matter the outcome."

At the March 27th Invitational, Harper also ran the 200 meter with a time of 22.59, the fastest time for the Winthrop men's team that day, and the 4x100 meter relay with Brandon Edmond, Colby Thorn and Evan Hailes with a time of 42.36.

Former NFL and MLB player Deion Sanders, who is currently the Head Coach for Jackson State University, is Harper's favorite athlete of all time "because of how he carried himself."

"He was so cool and just had a different swagger to his game," said Harper.

However, Harper's true inspiration is his mom.

"She is the true definition of a hard worker. She always gives her family and job a 110% and has

taught me a lot about life," Harper said.

Harper hopes to finish the season with a time of 10.6 seconds or faster and finish top three all time in the 100 meter dash at Winthrop.

Currently, Harper is ranked 5th all time for Winthrop, with his new PR being only 0.04 seconds from beating out Kandrick Cooper, who is ranked third with a time of 10.77 from 2009.

"My most memorable experience [at Winthrop] has been my sophomore year of track because I really became a consistent runner and better all-around athlete," said Harper.

Now a senior Sport Management major, Harper plans to finish this semester like he did in the fall, with a 4.0 GPA, and is looking forward to a career in the sports world after graduation.

"I have always loved sports since a young age and would like to have a career in something that I am passionate about," Harper said.

The Eagles head to High Point, NC for the VertKlasse Meet on April 1-2, giving Harper his next opportunity for a PR.

◀ COFC from pg. 6

a former associate head coach at Winthrop and son of the late Skip Prosser, who served as Kelsey's coach at Xavier and coaching mentor at Wake Forest.

Prosser just completed his third season as the head coach at Western Carolina. Unlike Gray, Prosser has tons of coaching experience,

though his 42-76 record as a head coach is not exactly stellar.

While Winthrop Athletic Director Ken Halpin will want to do his due diligence on as many available coaching options as possible, he will also likely want to move fast. There are players to be recruited and perhaps some to be re-recruited.

Kelsey leaves Winthrop with a 186-95 overall record and an impressive 110-46 record against Big South Conference opponents. His Winthrop teams won four Big South regular season titles and three Big South Tournament championships.

Winthrop Volleyball sweeps Blue Hose

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The Winthrop women's volleyball team collected two more wins last week, beating Presbyterian 3-1 on Thursday, March 25 and 3-0 on Friday, March 26.

Winthrop's double-header against the Blue Hose was the final series to be played in Winthrop Coliseum this season.

The Eagles trailed 18-13 in the first set on Thursday before winning the set on a 12-4 run. However, the Blue Hose prevailed in the second set,

winning 25-19. Winthrop handedly won sets three and four of the first match against Presbyterian, earning their eighth victory of the season.

Outside hitter Nikkia Benitez was one of the team's top performers, recording 35 attacks, eight kills, and four blocks. Along with Benitez, defensive specialist Leah Metzger recorded 25 digs and setter Jana Owens had 25 assists.

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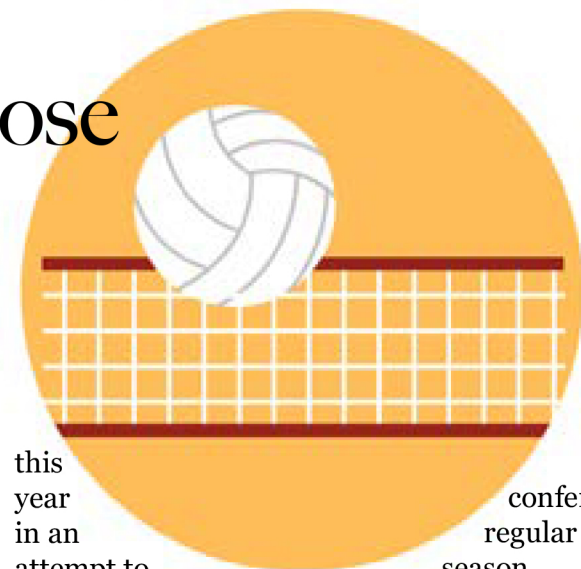
With all the momentum in their favor, the Eagles scored the first two points of the third set. After Presbyterian took a 5-3 lead, Winthrop battled back to regain the lead and win the

set, sweeping the Blue Hose three sets to none.

Benitez once again led the team on Friday, recording 28 attacks, 20 digs and 10 kills. Middle blocker Morgan Bossler also recorded nine kills and five blocks.

Winthrop's Owens and Metzger also made significant contributions during Friday's sweep, recording 30 assists and 15 digs, respectively.

With ongoing concerns about COVID-19, the Big South Conference only played conference games for volleyball



this year in an attempt to limit travel and help ensure the safety of student-athletes.

Along with only playing conference games, the Big South elected to not have a post-season conference tournament, instead presenting the Big South's automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament to the

conference regular season champion.

The Eagles had a solid season but did not have the best record in the conference, therefore they will not repeat as the Big South's representative in the NCAA Tournament.

A&C the Johnsonian

March 31, 2021

Preparing for final exams this semester

Students share study tips due to final exams coming up



Katelyn Miller/The Johnsonian

Sam Hyatt
staff writer

Midterm exams are completed, and we are nearing the finish line for the Spring 2021 semester. Even though seniors can almost taste graduation and underclassmen are getting excited about their summer plans, final exams still stand in the way.

We have all taken final exams during our college careers, and we know how important it is to begin preparing for our exams earlier rather than later. Waiting last minute to study for exams is stressful, and we don't always retain as much information as we would if we started studying earlier.

According to the Princeton Review, students who create a game plan of which topics they are going to study (and which subjects they are going to spend a specific amount of time on)

have a better chance of studying effectively and seeing that reflected by their final exam grade.

"For finals, I usually just write information down because the more I write something, the more likely I am to remember and understand it," said Kirsten Morrell, a senior middle-level education major. "I like to make flashcards and use colorful pens as well." As finals approach, students are beginning to look toward these exams and the work that needs to happen to earn the grade they want at the end of the semester.

Mikaell Sanchez, a sophomore graphic design major, said, "I feel ready and nervous for my finals this semester and I am already starting to prepare myself for my finals."

Even though it is still necessary that we observe precautions to stay safe and healthy during this

time, getting out of the dorm or apartment to study may be a good idea when reviewing notes for final exams.

Winthrop's campus is full of great hidden places to study. The upstairs table in DiGs is a great place to work with friends, as are the tables outside around the building. Tables outside Johnson Hall or spots in Hardin Garden are quiet places to get work done as well.

Along with the nearing of final exams, some students are upset and extra nervous because of Winthrop's announcement concerning the return to the traditional S/U policy. Some students have fallen behind in coursework because they are still navigating online learning, and many are having to quarantine and miss their in-person classes.

"I feel like the S/U policy should have stayed the same as the previous semester

because we are not fully back in person, and I know many students are struggling," said Jonathan Nivens, a senior mass communication major. "I understand that Winthrop is trying to transition back to in-person learning, but they are not effectively accommodating students that have to be quarantined."

Whether or not we agree with the changing of the S/U policy, it is certain that we will be having some type of final assessment from our professors this semester and we should begin preparing for these exams sooner rather than later. Students can find study tips online and can ask their professors for advice on how to study for their specific exams.

"I hope everyone at Winthrop does great on their finals and finish this semester strong," Sanchez said.



Katelyn Miller/The Johnsonian

The Oscars will air on April 25.

The Oscars Nominees for 2021

A preview of some of this year's Oscars nominations

Mari Pressley
staff writer

The Oscars are one of the most anticipated events in Hollywood every year. While its normal date was pushed a few weeks back due to COVID-19 restrictions, the annual award show is coming back on April 25 at 8 p.m.

This year's nominees represent some of the most diverse Oscars nominations in history.

According to The Cut, "British Pakistani actor Riz Ahmed is the first Muslim to be nominated for Best Actor in a

Leading Role for 'Sound of Metal,' while Chloé Zhao is the first woman of color to be nominated in the Best Director category for 'Nomadland.'

"(Emerald Fennell's nomination in the same category makes it the first time in the ceremony's history that more than one woman will be joining the category in a single year.) Also historic is that two Asian American directors received nods: In addition to Zhao, Lee Isaac Chung was nominated for 'Minari.'"

Amongst the nominees for Best Picture are "The Father," produced by David Parfitt, Jean-Louis Livi and Philippe Carcassonne; "Judas and the Black Messiah," produced by Shaka King, Charles D. King and Ryan Coogler; "Mank," produced by Ceán Chaffin, Eric Roth and Douglas Urbanski; and "Minari," produced by Christina Oh.

Also on the list are

"Nomadland," produced by Frances McDormand, Peter Spears, Mollye Asher, Dan Janvey and Chloé Zhao; "Promising Young Woman," produced by Ben Browning, Ashley Fox, Emerald Fennell and Josey McNamara; "Sound of Metal," produced by Bert Hamelinck and Sacha Ben Harroche; and "The Trial of the Chicago 7," produced by Marc Platt and Stuart Besser.

Notably, "Judas and the Black Messiah" is the first Best Picture nominee with all Black producers.

"Judas and the Black Messiah" received nominations for Best Original Screenplay and Best Supporting Actor for both Daniel Kaluuya and LaKeith Stanfield, as well.

Despite the Netflix film "Mank" being this year's most-nominated film, Variety's Film Awards Editor Clayton Davis predicts that "Nomadland" is slated to win Best Picture this year.

"The Producers Guild of America Awards awarded Chloé Zhao's 'Nomadland' with their top prize, one of the key indicators for the Academy Awards, particularly the best picture category," Davis wrote in his predictions for the magazine.

A complete look at all of the nominees for each awards category can be found on the Oscars website: <https://www.oscars.org/news/93rd-oscars-nominations-announced>.

'Malcolm & Marie': a movie review

Zendaya and John David Washington star in a new romance/drama Netflix movie

Mari Pressley
staff writer

This article contains spoilers for the Netflix movie, "Malcolm & Marie"

"Malcolm & Marie" debuted Feb. 5 on Netflix, a movie created during COVID-19 lockdowns.

The director of "Euphoria," Sam Levinson, reunites "Euphoria" music composer Labrinth and lead actress of "Euphoria" Zendaya along with actor John David Washington for a film that is not a love story but a story about love.

The movie follows a couple, Marie, a

24-year-old recovered addict, and Malcolm, a 36-year-old film director, arriving at home after the screening of Malcolm's new film. The film follows the couple's many arguments and makeups throughout the night as they both rehash their anger with each other.

The central reason surrounding the couple's argument is that Malcolm forgot to thank her in his speech after the film screening. If simply being his girlfriend was not a good enough reason, I'm sure being the inspiration for the film was. However, Malcolm claimed that Marie was

only a small part of the inspiration.

This highlights a greater issue: women in Hollywood not being given credit where credit is due. When Marie mentions this, Malcolm attempts to belittle her into thinking that she is being dramatic and oversensitive.

In the film, Marie says, "It's not just about you forgetting to thank me, Malcolm. It's about how you see me. And how you view my contribution, not just to this relationship, but to your work. Specifically in a movie you made about my life."

Marie criticizes his

choice to sexualize the main character of his movie while Malcolm rants about the judgment he receives for being a Black male director making a movie about a young woman.

Malcolm says, "It's because I'm Black! If I was white, she would've said I fell for the trope. But because I'm a man, she can question my intention saying that I'm reveling in the trauma of a woman. 'Better implied than depicted.' The f*ck out of here! Why? Because Taylor took her shirt off?"

▶ see **Malcom** pg. 9

◀ *Malcolm from pg. 8*

Marie responds, “I’m sure she just doesn’t think that the nudity was necessary.” Malcolm realizes that his perspective as a director is heavily factored into how movie critics and viewers see the movie.

Both characters had their moments of vitriol throughout the film. It felt almost like a competition back and forth of who would get the last word or say the most hateful thing next.

While the movie has a rather unclear plot, it realistically portrays toxic relationship traits. It considers the arc of both characters and the evolution of their perspectives throughout the film.

With two Black leads, Levinson chose the bold aesthetic of a vintage noir look using only black and white throughout the film’s entirety. The set, both contemporary and

upscale, was a strategic choice for the film. “This was built 10 years ago but comes out of the midcentury legacy, is upscale, and has the open floor plan we wanted. It’s a magical house with a lovely connection to the landscape and an economy of design that wouldn’t interfere with the intensity of the drama,” Michael Grasley, the production designer of “*Malcolm & Marie*,” said in an interview with Architectural Digest.

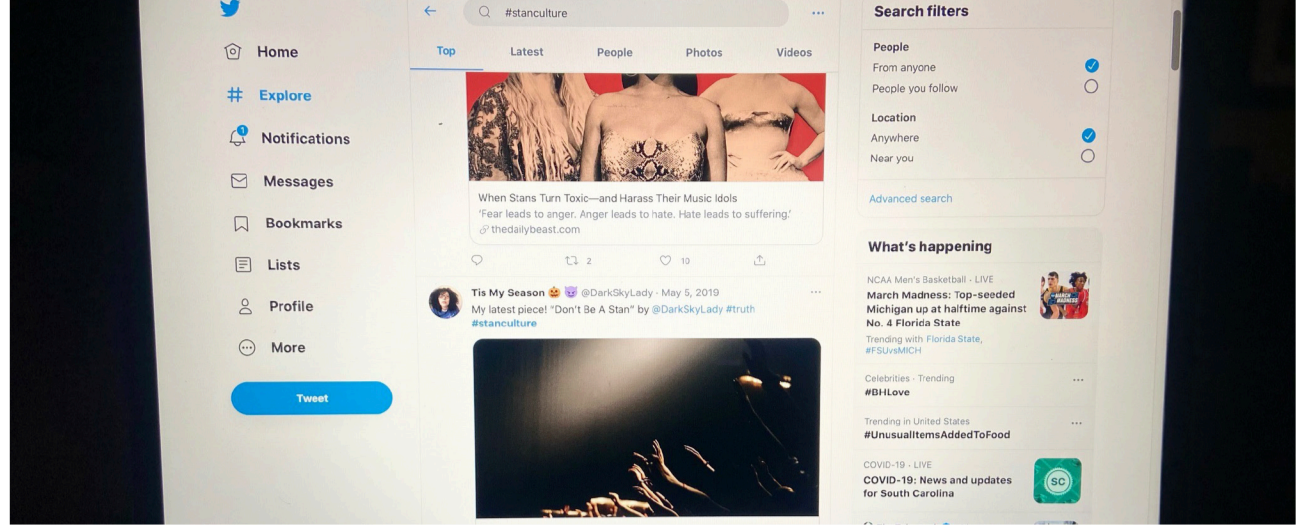
Overall the movie’s stark black and white contrast highlights its ability to portray two characters who are reliant on each other. “*Malcolm & Marie*” is like a live adaptation of the yin-yang, depicting the beauty of dissimilarity and contradiction but also vulnerability and equal amounts of co-dependence.



Emma Crouch/The Johnsonian

Malcolm and Marie is a new movie on Netflix that stars Zendaya and John David Washington.

The toxicity of stan culture



Allison Reynolds
staff writer

Nowadays, due to internet lingo and words taken from Twitter, when you like a music artist or band, it is said that you stan them. For example, I personally like Harry Styles, so you could say that I am a Harry Styles stan. However, attaching yourself to the word stan might not be the best thing to do.

Stan culture, along with cancel culture, is seen as very toxic. Why?

Many stans of certain artists, bands, even TV shows have been rude to those who dislike those artists, bands and TV shows. Not only that, many stans of certain bands will gatekeep and say that you can’t like a certain member or you can’t listen to that band.

The only personal experience I’ve had with stan culture happened when I was in middle school. I was in eighth grade, and I had only really listened to classic rock up until this point. I was beginning to go through my emo phase, and I had asked two of my friends who some

of their favorite bands were that made emo-type music. They told me All Time Low, Fall Out Boy, Panic! At The Disco, Sleeping With Sirens, My Chemical Romance, etc.

I started listening to their music and quickly became obsessed with members as well. Of course, as most fans do, I started picking out who my favorite members were. When I went back to school to talk to my friends about it, they immediately started gatekeeping the bands.

“You can’t have him; he’s mine,” or “Why don’t you go back to listening to that old rock music.”

It really hurt me at the time, but knowing how bad stan culture has gotten, I only got the tip of the iceberg.

One of the most toxic group of stans are the K-pop stans. More specifically, the BTS stans. Several Black fans have shared stories of racism within the BTS fandom, also known as ARMY.

One fan told BuzzFeed News in 2018, “I’ve been called ni**** and also told to go pick cotton and it’s always anonymous. But they always let me know they’re Armys because they end

their message [with] ‘we don’t claim you in Army.’”

Sophomore social work major Franchesca Ross said, “As a huge K-POP fan, the toxicity of stan culture in the community is pointless.”

Another example of toxic stans are the Nicki Minaj stans, also known as the Barbz. A writer for British GQ wrote an article about Cardi B adopting Minaj’s style of music and the Barbz did not hesitate in attacking the writer.

The Barbz started tweeting at the writer, and messaging her on Instagram and commenting on her and friends’ posts across different social media platforms. She received hundreds of death threats, members of the Barbz stan community saying things like, “You better to delete that before we get your address and start hunting you and your family down!!”

Apparently, stans of the cartoon Steven Universe are pretty brutal as well.

According to an article from The Daily Star, “An artist (Zamii070) was driven to suicide because her art didn’t

appeal to the fandom. ... The worst thing is that some of the cyber bullies didn’t apologise, but rather gloated that they were able to make Zamii attempt suicide. There is speculation on whether Zamii did attempt or not but the bullying is not justifiable.”

“As a huge anime fan, it’s hard not to associate myself with other fans,” said James Goodman, a freshman musical theatre major. “However, some fans are so brutal online. I don’t want people thinking that I’m like that.”

“I’m a huge Harry Potter fan, but some of the other fans are extremely toxic,” said Kerry Gareau, a freshman musical theatre and political science major. “I’ve never had any type of bad experience personally, but I’ll see online, Twitter especially, other fans gatekeeping characters. A lot of stans also will bully you sometimes if you call yourself a fan if you’ve only seen the movies.”

Stan culture is not necessarily as bad as cancel culture. However, stan culture is extremely toxic, and it should stop now.

Kaily Paddle/The Johnsonian

Disneyland reopening at last

How is Disney handling the reopening of its original park after over a year of being closed?

Emily Curry
staff writer

On March 14 of last year, as the presence of COVID-19 grew in the United States, the unthinkable happened. Disneyland closed its gates. According to The Washington Post, this was only the third time in over sixty-five years that the beloved theme park closed, indicating just how dire the pandemic might be.

But now, after over a year, the Happiest Place on Earth will finally be welcoming guests back on April 30.

The Walt Disney Company was greatly affected by the pandemic. Its two main commodities are movies and theme parks, and neither were able to make much revenue for several months. However, in July, Disney began a tentative reopening of their parks in the United States. Walt Disney World in Florida was able to reopen all four of its parks by mid-July with limited capacity. However, Disneyland was only able to reopen its Downtown District. In February, Disney-

land announced a Touch of Disney, which, according to an article written for Variety, will be “ticketed food events” that will serve as a sort of stepping stone for reopening.

Just as Walt Disney World has done, Disneyland will put many safety measures into place in order to keep any mass spreading from occurring. According to the Disneyland official site, this will include required face coverings, temperature screening, social distancing and enhanced cleanliness procedures.

In addition, only California residents will be welcomed initially, and even then, the two parks will only be operating at 15% capacity.

However, according to Len Testa, a notable figure in the Disney Parks

community, with only 15% capacity, Disneyland will actually be operating at a loss. It takes many, many

Jacob Klingensmith, a senior mass communication major, thinks that this can be welcomed as “a trial run, to see how

not held any parades, firework shows or other performances that may draw a large crowd. They have, however, been

doing Cavalcades, which are shortened parades that happen spontaneously throughout the day to give guests a chance to see their favorite characters. Although it hasn’t been officially announced, Disneyland may try something similar.

There are also other events that will surely have to be postponed or even canceled. There has been no word if Avengers Campus, the new themed area in California Adventure that was supposed to open in summer of 2020, will open anytime soon.

Klingensmith says that he doesn’t “see it opening with everything else; there’s really no reason. If you’re not witnessing

it with the full crowd, the attraction loses its energy.” Another event that may have been celebrated on a much larger scale is Walt Disney World’s 50th birthday, which will occur on Oct. 1 of this year.

When Disneyland turned 50 back in 2005, Disney Parks around the world took part in the celebration with new attractions and special decor. While Disney has announced some of the special events that will happen in Disney World, there has been no word about the participation of other parks.



Kaily Paddle/The Johnsonian

Disneyland is taking the precautions to open again since the pandemic.

cast members to keep these theme parks running smoothly, and with the revenue from only a fraction of the guests these parks usually host, it simply won’t be enough to break even. This knowledge has caused some people to wonder if reopening right now is even worth it.

Winthrop student

it goes and make sure all the health protocols are in place, and in time raise the capacity. In that regard, I think they’ll be fine.”

Aside from the safety precautions, there are sure to be other aspects of the Disney experience that will be affected by reopening in this manner.

Walt Disney World has

March 31, 2021

The Keystone XL Line - Throwing Away Opportunity or Just a Pipe Dream?

SC Attorney General along with 20 other states are suing Biden for canceling permit to build oil pipeline (Keystone XL Pipeline)

Wren Brooke
staff writer

On January 20, President Joe Biden signed an executive order addressing environmental protections, including revoking the permit for the Keystone XL Pipeline. Was this the right choice, or should states fight to overturn the order?

Last year Canadian company TC Energy gave the go-ahead for the construction of a pipeline connecting Hardisty, Alberta, to Steele City, Nebraska, an \$8 billion venture that would transport 830,000 barrels of crude oil per day. The next stage of the plan following its completion would be another pipeline from Steele

City to Texas that would provide crude oil to the Gulf Coast area.

The goal of the pipeline according to TC Energy is to create employment for its construction and maintenance and more safely transport crude oil. According to the U.S. Bureau of Transportation study cited by the company's website, moving oil by pipeline is safer than the other options of transport such as by railway, truck, or barge.

However, as environmental activist group NRDC points out, the pipeline would be transporting tar sands oil rather than conventional crude oil, which is significantly more corrosive and haz-

ardous to humans and the environment than its conventional alternative. According to their website, "between 2007 and 2010, pipelines moving tar sands oil in Midwestern states spilled three times more per mile than the U.S. national average for pipelines carrying conventional crude," which is not an encouraging sign.

Tar sands oil carries another risk regarding potential spills. Its cleanup is significantly more difficult than that of normal crude, in part because tar sand oil sinks down to the bottom of the waterway. This means that it would immediately taint local water sources, which would worsen in

▶ see [Pipeline](#) pg.11



Photo Courtesy to Wikimedia
U.S. President Joe Biden revoked the permit for Keystone Pipeline.

Higher education should be made more affordable

College students continue to struggle with student loan debt

Sam Hyatt
staff writer

College students are not unfamiliar with having to take out student loans and accepting some type of financial aid on Wingspan each year because of the high and increasing price of college tuition. It is also not uncommon to know someone who has had to take out more than one loan, along with the parents taking out their own loans.

Unfortunately, this is something that feels like students will always have to deal with. College students across the country felt a sense of relief when President Biden promised to erase \$10,000 of student loan debt. We know now that this will not be happening like expected.

"President Biden's broken promise has really upset mostly all college students" Jayon Babb, junior religious studies major said. "I can't say that I'm shocked because we should

be used to politicians not following through on their promises."

According to Education Data, student loan debt in the United States has reached \$1.7 trillion and there are about 43.2 people who borrow money from the government in order to pay for their college tuition. The average borrower owes about \$36,000 on their loans.

As if paying back student loans wasn't hard enough, the pandemic impacted people's ability to make payments on their loans, causing the payment amount to increase and, in some cases, it caused the interest amount to rise. In 2020, around the time of the beginning of the pandemic, the student loan debt balance will increase by 8.28%.

There is controversy surrounding the topic of what to do about the large amount of student loan debt.

Some believe that student loan debt

▶ see [Education](#) pg.11

Human trafficking in South Carolina

A look at whether local human trafficking is blown out of proportion, or if the cases are valid

Wren Brooke
staff writer

In observation of National Human Trafficking Awareness Day on January the 11th, the South Carolina Attorney General released the state's annual report on human trafficking for 2020 — but is awareness of human trafficking important or helpful?

Attorney General Alan Wilson reported 139 cases of human trafficking and 179 incidents reported in South Carolina in 2020. In order by the number of reports, the counties with the highest rates are Horry County, Charleston County, Greenville County, Richland County and Anderson County. However, Wilson pointed out that these statistics go to show reported trafficking cases in those areas, not necessarily the concentration of victims.

During the news conference, First Lady Peggy McMaster announced January was Human Trafficking Awareness Month in South Carolina. The state task force advisory council that was initiated last year to combat human trafficking will see two expansions this year in the Department of Mental Health and the Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services.

One of the primary

arguments against this awareness-centered campaign against the trafficking industry is that it does not address the problem at the source, but instead focuses on treating the symptoms. According to the International Labor Organization's estimate, there are hundreds of thousands of trafficking victims in the U.S., which by South Carolina's population count puts the number of victims in the thousands, making the reported 139 feel like just a piece of a larger story.

Another point criticism regarding the anti-trafficking efforts is the vast amount of resources expended in the course of rescuing victims. Entire teams are required in order to take in reports, track down sources and information and perform investigations, compared to the relatively smaller number of detectives and officers involved in analyzing other crimes.

However, an important thing to keep in mind is that the nature of human trafficking itself means that the number of perpetrators will often vastly outweigh the number of victims. Even home-grown traffickers only holding one or a few captives will use a number of forensic countermeasures and have a certain level of organized crime.

For an active trafficking ring though, it is a

matter of business and money, and most of the ring members are not the type of captors you see on TV shows. Human trafficking rings will sometimes use multiple businesses just to act as cover and serve money laundering purposes, and the white-collar aspect can outweigh the more recognizable type of human traffickers.

When talking about resources dedicated to human trafficking, there is also a level of basic humanity to it. Unlike many other forms of crime, trafficked individuals suffer long-term victimization, and are not exactly willingly released by their captors. Repeat offense rapists and murderers rack up numbers of victims, but a single trafficked individual might spend years or even a lifetime in captivity, so while it doesn't show in the statistics very well, each rescued person counts.

So, when it comes to whether campaigning against human trafficking is worth the resources required, the answer is a resounding yes. If anything, that branch of investigation doesn't have nearly enough funding. There are millions of people who are victims of the industry and the number of solved trafficking cases barely begin to scratch the number of rings that are

yet to be found.

The most vulnerable victims to trafficking are those in poverty or an unstable living situation, have previously suffered violence or other trauma, and involvement with substance addiction. By demographic, LGBTQ+ people and people of color are the most frequent victims, but trafficking can happen to anyone.

Common signs of human trafficking to look out for are would-be employers not providing an understandable contract or requiring fees for the 'opportunity' of work, someone developing a relationship that is overwhelming, fast-moving, and asymmetric (e.g., large difference in age or financial status) or with someone they solely contact through social media, someone showing signs of abuse or living with a person who is not their legal guardian and job opportunities that are too good to be true or require the person to move a long distance away without being provided details about the job.

If you are a victim to or a witness of possible trafficking, call the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 1-888-373-7888, text 233733, or go to their website at <https://humantraffickinghotline.org/>.

◀ **Education** from pg. 10

should be erased completely because of the outrageous amount that has been accumulated, while others believe that it is only fair that people pay their loans back since so many people have finished paying on their loans or have already paid a lot into their loans. “Personally, I believe that the student debt people have accumulated over the years should be erased. I know there are many people that have already paid a lot toward their student loans and while it may seem unfair that younger generations are getting the loans removed, I believe the elimination of the rest of their loans would cause a lot of joy as well.” Karl Volg, a sophomore mass communication major shared.

Fortunately, for many people, the CARES Act was able to bring some financial support and relief. According to Education Data, the CARES Act offered student loan debt relief and affected at least 20 million people. Additionally, students at Winthrop were able to apply for funding from the CRRSAA Act to help with pandemic and spring expenses.

However, even with the different places to apply for money to

go towards student loans, many students still feel overwhelmed and worry about how they will pay back their student loan debt.

“I don’t feel confident in paying it back at the moment. For me it would have to depend on what job I would be getting to help me pay for my student loans. Even after getting a job, however, I feel like I might have a difficult time paying student loans along with rent and other bills as well,” Matthew Crisman, a senior business administration major shared.

Sadly, there is no clear answer to what will happen with student loan debt except to pay them back over the next many years. Even though it is a privilege to be able to obtain higher education, both community colleges and universities should be made more affordable rather than causing young adults to fall into debt straight out of high school. At this point, we can only hope that a decision is made sooner rather than later and that it is one that will be beneficial for students now and those to come to an end in order for us to have a spring break.

◀ **Pipeline** from pg. 10

the course of its removal.

There is also the issue of location. The pipeline would pass by the corner of North Dakota and through Montana, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas and Oklahoma before reaching Texas. In addition to bisecting swaths of preserved natural wilderness, the plan drew lines parallel to a considerable amount of land belonging to various Native American tribal reservations.

In 2017, the existing Keystone pipeline poured 407,000 gallons of oil close to the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate tribe’s reservation, the second Keystone spill just in South Dakota in seven years. TC Energy’s prediction to the U.S. government estimated and reported that no more than one spill would ever happen in South Dakota over the course of 41 years.

Biden’s executive order included reversing the Trump administration’s go-ahead to allow the Keystone pipeline to be built in such close proximity to tribal reservations. This had previously been illegal, but the pursuit of money led to the Trump executive order which nullified the tribes’ legal rights.

The Native American Rights Fund (NARF) and associated Native American communities applauded Biden’s move to restore their rights and environmental protection interests.

Unfortunately, TC energy’s ignorance of product effectiveness has not been an accident. When a recent leak released nearly a swimming pool-sized pool of crude oil, it went completely undetected - because the design only detects leaks of at least 13,000 barrels worth of spillage. The pipes being used, which had once been certified as safe to contain the corrosive tar sands oil, were left exposed to the elements for a decade and can no longer perform as they once did.

In response to Biden’s executive order, TC Energy has filed a lawsuit and many are calling for states to join in or file their own suits. While the Keystone XL Pipeline venture promised to invest billions into the U.S. economy and open employment opportunities, the American people need to pursue options that do not involve the destruction of our land and environment.

NCAA must respect female athletes

Female athletes call out the NCAA for inequality



Katelyn Miller/The Johnsonian

Sam Hyatt
staff writer

Basketball fans love the month of March because that means it’s March Madness and there’ll be nonstop basketball games for a few weeks. Sports fans look forward to creating brackets trying to predict upsets and who will end up in the sweet sixteen during this time.

However, this year’s March Madness tournament has been a little different because of the continuation of having to follow COVID-19 guidelines along with people across the country calling out the NCAA for the poor treatment of female athletes.

Sadly, seeing women treated in a lesser light compared to men is not something that should surprise many of us, but thankfully, men and women in the United States have spoken out against this inequality. Professional athletes such as NBA’s Stephen Curry and US women’s soccer player Alex Morgan took to social media to speak out

against the unfairness these female athletes were experiencing from the NCAA.

The problem came to light after women at the NCAA San Antonio bubble began sharing videos and pictures of the meals and workout equipment that was provided for the athletes. Sedona Prince, the forward for the Oregon Ducks, began posting on Twitter and Tik Tok concerning the meals and weight room equipment the women were provided.

“It’s sad that the NCAA had to wait until it became an internet sensation before they did anything about the issue,” Morgan Alexander, a senior mass communication major said.

The women were met with a single rack of dumbbells and yoga mats, whereas the men in the tournament were provided an entire weight room. The NCAA spokesperson stated that the organization did not think there would be enough room to provide the same workout equipment for the women like they did

the men.

Alongside the issue with the workout equipment, the gear that the women were provided did not match the quality or quantity of the men’s. Additionally, all athletes had to be tested for COVID-19. However, according to the Washington Post, the men were receiving the PCR test whereas the women were being administered the rapid antigen test, which would give a better chance of missing an infected person causing the virus to spread.

“It’s depressing to see the women’s tournament treated without the same respect as the men’s tournaments,” Marrin Brooks, a junior business administration major said, “Situations like these should not require people to speak up.”

As a response to the complaints from athletes, coaches and sports fans, the NCAA was finally able to provide adequate workout equipment for the women athletes. However, there is a lot of talk that the NCAA did this originally be-

cause of budget issues.

It is true that the men’s March Madness tournaments generate more profits in comparison to the women by far. But, in the end, the NCAA was able to provide the same standard equipment as they provided the men athletes. If they were able to make this happen, they should have been able to do it before being shamed by the internet.

Zachary Clary, a junior sports management major said, “I believe women’s sports should get more attention as there are tons of female athletes that most Americans have not heard of. Even on our own campus we have some phenomenal female athletes that don’t get the attention and support they deserve.”

Moving forward, maybe the NCAA will be mindful of the way they treat their athletes and will now take into account the disrespect these female athletes felt as they were met with subpar conditions.

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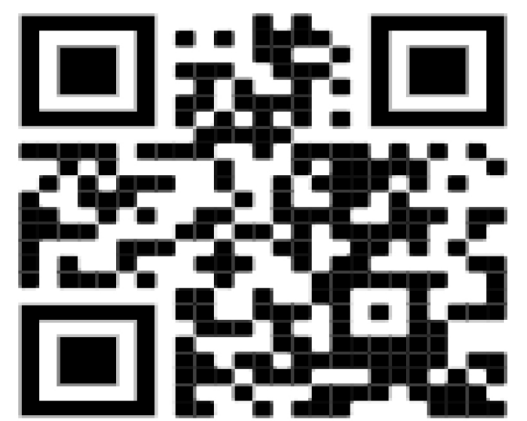
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