

THE JOHNSONIAN



Philip Nelson/The Johnsonian



Philip Nelson/The Johnsonian

Police officers car chased the suspects near Eden Terrace and Charlotte Avenue where the suspects ran a red light and hit another car.

Drive-by shooting near campus, three suspects in custody same day

Rock Hill police officer witnessed the shooting at 4:18 p.m., according to *The Herald*

Bryn Smyth
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A drive-by shooting, with no relation to Winthrop University, occurred near campus on Friday, April 16. No one was killed or injured in the shooting and three suspects were in custody by 5:40 p.m. that same day.

A WU Alert was sent to students, faculty and staff at 4:40 p.m. on Friday that read, "Shooting suspect in vicinity of campus. Black male, possibly in gray shorts. May be armed. Last seen at Eden and Charlotte. If seen, call 911."

At 5:40 p.m., a second WU Alert was sent to students, faculty and staff that read, "Shooting suspect in custody. All clear."

According to the Rock Hill Police Department, "A Rock Hill Police officer, in an unmarked vehicle, witnessed suspects in a silver Impala shoot into a residence on Lancaster Avenue."

The officer then followed the vehicle and as more officers joined, a chase began and the Impala ran a traffic light at Eden Terrace and Charlotte Avenue and hit another car. At that time, officers were able to apprehend two of the suspects and the

third was apprehended after other units, including K-9, joined the search, according to a statement by the Rock Hill Police Department.

"The streets filled with sirens and everything just happened so fast. It was honestly such an insane experience," said Gabby Gardner, a senior integrated marketing and communications major who witnessed the initial arrest. "I was actually taking a nap when I heard an extremely loud bang. I looked out of the window and the entire power line was shaking. I ran to the window and one of the suspects got out of the car and started running but he didn't get very far before cops tackled him to the ground and arrested him. The other suspect, I assume was the driver, was yanked out of the car window from the passenger side by other police. Cops and blue lights were immediately everywhere in front of our house.... I'm just glad no one was hurt and that everyone is safe. Just a reminder to Winthrop students on and off campus, always lock your doors because you never know what could happen!"

SIGN AND SHARE THE PETITION!



Graphic Courtesy to WU Students for Change

The student-led organization created a [change.org](https://www.change.org) petition with demands that they want to see on Winthrop University's campus.

Winthrop University Students for Change march on President's House

A student organization marched to the President's House to protest alleged mishandling of sexual assault investigation

Chase Duncan
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Large numbers of students and faculty marched on and around the Winthrop campus in protest of recent allegations against the school's leadership in relation to the mishandling of Title IX cases and victims.

The protest garnered roughly 80 students and several faculty members. Protesters and observers initially gathered in front of the Byrnes Auditorium, where participants were provided food and water by the WU Students for Change, the unofficial student organization that coordinated the march. WU Students for Change co-organizer and senior art major Rhinanna Raush said the group is unaffiliated with the student group that organized the sit-in protest earlier in the month, but share many of the same values and goals.

Participants were also given a list of chants to orate during the march as well as a list of student demands compiled by student leaders in the WU Students for Change. The document called for actions such as a zero tolerance policy for Winthrop entities that perpetuate sexual violence, the removal of staff members deemed irresponsible in their positions for protecting sexual assault victims and a formal apology to be issued by President Hynd on behalf of the university towards students and survivors who "have been re-victimized by Winthrop's apathy and victim blaming."

"How can Winthrop truly support survivors when their first instinct is to blame them?," Raush said to protesters. "When I read the story about Ellie and Summer, I was extremely inspired by their courage. It is because of them that I have decided to speak out today. How Winthrop University treats survivors has to be known. Indifference, interrogation and victim blaming are just some of the tactics that the Winthrop administration uses to approach the topic of sexual assault. ...Winthrop has continued to deny these things, but we have the power to help survivors' voices be heard and have their experiences validated."

The march began in front of the Byrnes Auditorium and continued onto Oakland Ave., Cherry Road and Alumni Drive. The march then cut through the Winthrop campus and back onto Oakland Ave., where students stopped to protest in front of the President's House and Tillman Hall. Slogans like "My body, my choice!" and "This is what community looks

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◀ Protest from front

like!” echoed across the campus and in front of the President’s abode.

“I’m out here protesting because it is bull**** what this campus has done to us, and it’s not fair that they don’t listen to us,” art major and sophomore Briana Luvy said. “So we gotta be out here making sure our voices are heard.”

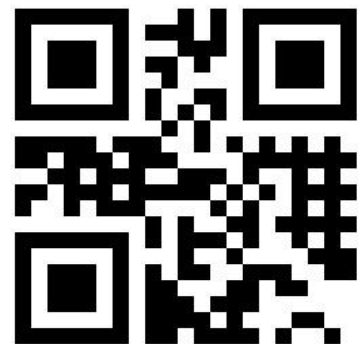
Mass communication major and freshman Ainsley McCarthy said part of the reason she came was poor communication from the university and their reluctance to commit to action.

“I’m sick and tired, as you probably

heard from the chants, of problems being confronted with fluff emails versus “action” that’s not action. I’m hoping that with all these protests Hynd and other higher-ups will be motivated to promote change, not just in emails and words but in real action and policy,” McCarthy said.

Fine arts major and WU Students for Change member Graice Kellam said the protest was a success, and the group hopes to gain the accreditation to become an official organization and to continue to fighting for Winthrop students and survivors even into the summer break.

To view more of our weekly COVID-19 data visit our website by scanning the QR code below



About The Johnsonian

The Johnsonian is the weekly student newspaper of Winthrop University.

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

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

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April 21, 2021

Vigil held for those killed in April 7 mass shooting

The April 7 mass shooting of Rock Hill took the lives of six people, including two children

Bryn Smyth
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The Rock Hill community continues to mourn the loss of the six individuals killed as a result of the mass shooting on April 7. A vigil was held on Sunday, April 11 at Fountain Park in downtown Rock Hill.

The Lesslie family made the vigil open to the public and issued a statement to The Herald that read, “Members of the Lesslie Family and close friends have organized the community memorial for a public remembrance and celebration of the lives of Robert, Barbara, Adah and Noah. Members of the community who wish to attend are asked to dress in bright colors and come in a spirit

of joy and hope in the grace and peace we have in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The outdoor service will include music, prayer and words of remembrance and hope. Candles and bubbles will be provided.”

The vigil was officiated by Rev. Barry Dagenhart of First Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church and the Rev. Bob Elliot of Edgemoor ARP Church, according to The Charlotte Observer.

Robert Lesslie was a prominent doctor in Rock Hill and served many families at his practice on India Hook Road, which closed on April 11 in response to Lesslie’s passing, according to wspa.com. At the entrance to the practice was a note that read, “We regret to inform you that a

tragedy has struck our Riverview family. To allow out staff time to process what has happened, we will be closed on April 8th. We sincerely regret any inconvenience this has caused you and ask for your understanding during this difficult time. We will post updates on a reopening date on our website and Facebook page. Please keep our loved ones in your thoughts and prayers.”

At the vigil, the atmosphere was at its most somber when there was talk of Adah, 9, and Noah, 5, the Lesslie grandchildren who died at the shooting.

“I watched those children grow up at Camp Joy and I count them as part of my family,” Elliot said. “Adah was a sweet little lady from the very beginning. She was the

apple of her daddy’s eye and she was so much like her mother, it was kind of scary, but not in a bad way. She was always a great helper... Both children liked to come and visit with my son and I while we were fishing... Noah would always just borrow my rod and hold it for a few minutes... he did catch a fish one time when we were down there doing that.”

On the same day as the vigil, Robert Shook, another technician at the shooting, died as a result of his injuries.

“We lift up the James Lewis family and ask your blessing upon them as they too have lost a loved one. Three children left without a father... We lift up the same for the Robert Shook family as he has passed away this day,” prayed Elliot.



Police Blotter

A roundup of crime on campus

Sarah Hassler
staff writer

On April 9, the Reporting Officer (R/o) overheard Rock Hill Dispatch say that a suspected individual was driving under the influence going down Chery Road. He was seen at the QT on Heckle Boulevard and Cherry Road with several open containers. The vehicle description given was a silver Chevrolet Cruze. As the R/O drove down Cherry Road he observed a vehicle matching that description. The R/O initiated a traffic stop at the intersection of Cherry Road and Constitution Boulevard in the City Limits of Rock Hill. The Tag displayed on the vehicle was a South Carolina temporary tag.

The R/O made contact with the suspect, who had no Winthrop affiliation, sitting in the driver’s seat. The R/O asked the Suspect if he had been drinking at all, and the suspect stated he had. The R/O asked the Suspect how much he had drank and the suspect responded that he only had a little bit to drink. The R/O detected a strong odor of alcohol coming from the suspect’s person. The R/O then asked the suspect if he would be willing to submit to Standard Field Sobriety Tests (SFST). The Suspect stated he would. The R/O asked the Suspect if he wore glasses or contacts, and he said no. The R/O then asked the suspect if he had any physical ailments that would prevent him from walking or balancing on one foot, which he also did not.

The R/O began the horizontal gaze nystagmus test by checking for equal pupil size, and equal tracking in both eyes. The R/O then observed a lack of smooth pursuit in both the suspect’s eyes. The R/O also noticed distinct and sustained nystagmus at maximum deviation in both the suspect’s eyes. The R/O observed the onset of nystagmus

prior to 45 degrees in both of the Suspect’s eyes.

After performing the horizontal gaze nystagmus test the suspect told the R/O to go ahead and do what we had to do. He advised that he did not want to continue the tests and he wanted to go to jail. The R/O advised the suspect that he still wanted him to perform the SFST to make sure that he could drive. The suspect then stated that he would continue the tests.

The R/O began to explain to the Suspect how to do the walk and turn. After telling the suspect not to move until instructed to do so, the suspect became irritated and moved from the starting position of the walk and turn. The R/O advised the suspect that the test was necessary and had to be done. The R/O explained to the Suspect that he needed to put his right foot in front of his left, keep his arms at his side, and not begin until he was told to do so. The R/O explained to the suspect he needed to look at his feet, count out loud, take a series of nine heel to toe steps, on the ninth step whichever foot is in front keep that foot planted, take a series of small steps to perform a turn, and take nine heel to toe steps back.

After the R/O asked the Suspect if he understood the instructions, the suspect stated that he did. The suspect was able to perform the first nine steps of the walk and turn well, but then became irritated and stopped the test. The R/O informed the suspect that he needed to complete the test and then asked him again if he understood the instructions, to which the suspect replied that he did. The suspect began the walk and turn again and took ten steps instead of nine, performed an improper turn, and took ten steps going back.

▶ see [Blotter](#) pg. 4

Xenophobia towards Asian Americans on the rise

Hate crimes towards Asians have been increasing in the U.S. since the outbreak of COVID-19 along with the use of anti-Chinese rhetoric by political figures

Sean Miller
staff writer

“Go back to China” were the words addressed to an unnamed Winthrop professor this semester as discrimination against Asians across the U.S. rises.

A Winthrop professor recently broke their silence about repeated harassment and discrimination by a student. According to a Winthrop University Police Department report, handwritten messages were delivered to the professor’s personal office that consisted of racist nicknames for COVID-19 and derogatory comments regarding the professor’s ethnicity, including the words, “Go back to China.” Although campus police have been made aware of the repeated harassment, no further action has been taken.

The verbal assault was addressed by a member of the Winthrop University Board of Trustees who expressed his disappointment in the situation and proposed a resolution of solidarity with Asian Pacific Americans at the next faculty meeting.

“A particular faculty member talked about having racist jokes posted on his office door and even being confronted by a student in a verbal assault. The student said to him that he could go back to China. Words matter, the tone that he said that in matters. It’s important right now that Asian American and Pacific Islander faculty and staff are being supported by the institution. A lot of conversations have already taken place between campus police, and members of the Asian American Pacific Islander faculty affinity group. And for my own part, I’ll be introducing a resolution at the next faculty conference to express our support for them” said Faculty Representative to the Board of Trustees and Professor of Political Science Adolfus Belk.

This event is part of an even larger pattern of discrimination consistent with xenophobia towards Asian Americans triggered by COVID-19 and fueled by political rhetoric blaming China for the virus. Former President Donald Trump referred to COVID-19 as the “Wuhan virus” and the “Chinese virus”

on Twitter despite widespread public condemnation of the racist terms.

China has repeatedly been a target of negative press since the outbreak of COVID-19 in the United States. Although The Federal Bureau of Investigation has not yet released their latest hate crime statistics in 2020, a new study by the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism found a dramatic increase in hate crimes targeting Asians in America’s largest cities.

“Anti-Asian hate crime in 16 of America’s largest cities increased 149% in 2020 according to an analysis of official preliminary police data by the Center for the Study of Hate & Extremism at California State University, San Bernardino, with the first spike occurring in March and April amidst a rise in COVID cases and negative stereotyping of Asians relating to the pandemic,” according to the study.

“More than one year ago, the COVID pandemic began to significantly impact the world. We all recall the shutdown in the US and have continued to struggle with the many

uncertainties since that time. One of the most unfortunate products of the pandemic has been the escalating rhetoric and violence that dehumanizes the Asians and Asian-Americans among and around us. I am disappointed that anti-Asian behavior has been reported on our campus,” wrote Dr. Takita Felder Sumter in an email sent to students in the College of Arts and Sciences on April 5. “The College of Arts & Sciences joins the many voices who have already eloquently stated their support of our AAPI students, faculty, and staff. We care about their safety and denounce systems of exclusion that have gone unacknowledged in America.”

“I’m more scared for other people than myself. I know that some people are, but I’m personally not afraid of getting attacked or anything. If it was my family or my friends, I would be more scared for them,” said Jacob Chan, a junior business administration major. “I think what makes some people afraid of Asian people is mostly fear and just not knowing who we are.”

▶ see [Xenophobia](#) pg. 4

Biden vows gun control after multiple mass shootings

Biden announced gun restrictions Friday beginning his fight for gun control after multiple recent mass shootings take place around the country

Taylor Sallenger
staff writer

In response to the recent gun violence that has taken place around the country President Joe Biden has announced limited gun restrictions in the form of executive actions and vowed to pressure Congress to focus on and pass gun control.

On the same day the Biden-Harris Administration announced their “initial actions to address the gun violence public health epidemic,” the city of Rock Hill fell victim to a deadly shooting.

This tragedy hit close to home for Winthrop University claiming six victims, including the former Winthrop University medical director and physician Dr. Robert Lesslie as well as his wife and two grandchildren.

In this initial announcement, the administration promises six limited gun restrictions among these are to propose a rule to stop “ghost guns,” which are guns assembled by an individual from parts without a serial number within 30 days, to publish a model “red flag” legislation within 60 days, and to nominate David Chipman

as Director of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. Chipman will be the first confirmed director of the bureau since 2015 if he accepts.

“The proposals may help a little bit around the edges, but the fact is that we really need much more major gun policy than we have,” said Dr. Chris Van Aller, a professor in the Department of Political Science.

Van Aller did show interest in the red flag gun legislation model but pointed out the flaws in initial action.

“I think the proposal I like the best out of all of them is the one talking about red flag laws but that is something that can’t really be mandated by the government, it’s more of an example,” Van Aller said

The initial action of publishing a red flag gun control model legislation is one of the most important parts of this announcement, as red flag gun laws would allow a family member or a member of law enforcement to petition the state court to temporarily remove any firearms from someone who is considered a danger to themselves or others. This model will make it so that states who want to pass red flag legislation will have an easier time doing

so. Biden is also pressuring Congress to pass a national red flag law; the idea along with the initial action with hopes that Congress could also pass legislation incentivizing states to pass red flag gun laws.

There is not much Biden can do other than these proposals and actions, since any sort of Executive Order can just be overturned by the next president and the best chance for lasting gun legislation is proposing a constitutional amendment which requires a two-thirds supermajority vote. “Biden is showing symbolically that he is trying, but he can’t get anything too major through this congress unless Republicans join with him,” Van Aller said.

Getting a supermajority of Congress to agree to any sort of major gun control is going to be almost impossible as can be seen in recent years.

Van Aller offers an example of this saying, “Things like mandatory background checks, which are supported by over 80% of the public, couldn’t even get passed after Sandy Hook.”

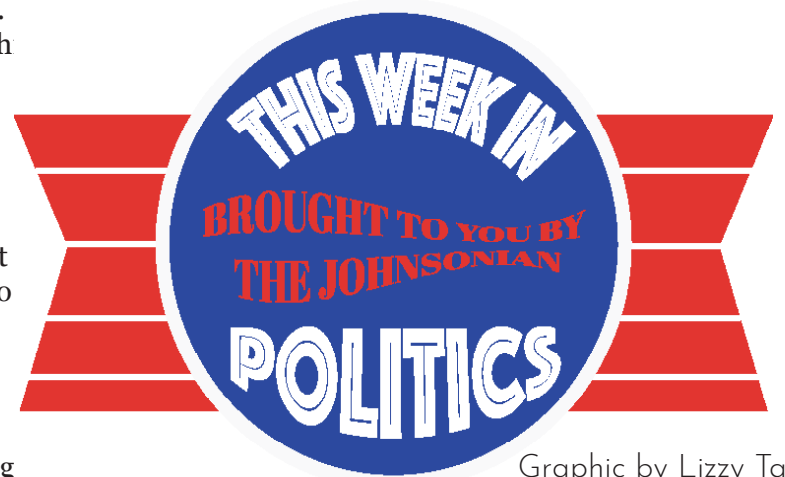
There are lots of different ideas for potential gun

regulations. Some Winthrop University students have their own ideas of what the government should do to handle gun violence in the United States

like focusing on mental health or creating a proper policing system that citizens can trust.

“I wish we had another alternative to fight gun violence as I feel like gun control is a temporary solution to a huge issue,” political science major and freshman Ella Miller said. Gun control/background checks don’t really fix the root cause of gun violence which I feel is mental health. Ideally I would like free mental health support, anti racism education in schools and better mental health outreach in high school. Unfortunately that is not an option at the moment and we don’t have time to make it one, so I support gun control as a temporary solution.”

“I believe gun violence in America is a cultural issue. People feel unsafe at the hands of our government and police system which makes them depend on guns, political science and



major and freshman Amaya Patterson. They want looser gun restrictions which allows them to fall into the wrong hands. Until we have proper policing that makes us feel safe, we cannot escape this cycle of government and civilian gun violence. I believe that the people should be able to protect themselves but we shouldn’t have to depend on guns the way we do.”

Other students think the solution is to come together and make a decision as a country in a bipartisan way rather than making it an argument between the political parties.

“I believe we need gun regulations, and we need to come together as a country and figure out a way to decrease the violence together,” exercise science major and freshman Alexandra Elliot said. “Although, I do not know how to do it.”

When it comes

Graphic by Lizzy Talbert
to passing any sort of gun legislation in America one must keep in mind that those in favor of it need to focus on what is possible to get passed in our current system and what can realistically be done. While it may not seem enough, there are just some things that in our current political climate that are not going to be able to get passed because of the extreme difference of opinions.

Overall, it’s important to note that Biden’s initial actions will not change much or be noticed right away. They’re mostly suggestions models for what states and/or Congress could possibly do if they choose to do so. Any sort of actual gun regulation and legislation on a national level would have to happen in Congress and at this point in time any sort of extreme regulations would have very little chance of happening.

◀ Blotter from pg. 3

The R/O then began the one-leg stand test. The R/O informed the suspect to stand with his hands by his side and feet together and not to move until instructed to do so. The suspect then became irritated again and informed the R/O that he knew he was going to jail and they just needed to take him. The R/O informed the suspect again that the test needed to be performed. The suspect then calmed down and began to listen to the R/O’s instructions. The R/O informed the suspect that he could choose either his left or right foot to raise about

six inches above the ground, look at his foot, count out loud in the fashion of one thousand and one, one thousand and two, one thousand and three, and not stop until told to do so.

The suspect began the one-leg stand and then stopped during the course and informed the R/O he did not want to continue. The R/O informed the suspect that he already began and needed to continue the test.

The suspect then began again and while performing the test he put his foot down and lost his balance.

The R/O informed the suspect that he

was under arrest for driving under the influence.

The suspect then became very irritated and informed the R/O not to touch him. The R/O then informed the Suspect that he was going to bring him to the front of his vehicle and read him his Miranda Rights.

The R/O then took the suspect by his arm and attempted to lead the suspect to the front of his vehicle.

The suspect then began calling the R/O names such as “bitch” and told the R/O no to touch him. As the suspect raised his voice at the R/O, the R/O read the suspect his Miranda Rights

and DUI advisement from an SCCJA issued traffic safety unit card.

The R/O then attempted to search the suspect and the suspect continued to raise his voice telling the R/O not to touch him and that he knew his rights. During the search of his person, the R/O discovered two rolls of cash in the suspect’s pocket. The R/O informed the suspect he was going to give the cash to the suspect’s girlfriend. The suspect agreed.

The R/O then asked the suspect to sit in the back seat of his vehicle. The suspect remained agitated and refused to sit down.

The suspect stated

over and over again that the R/O had no reason to stop him. The suspect then asked to see the RMS log to verify that an individual had called about an intoxicated driver.

Officer Thomason from RHPD showed the suspect the call in his RMS system and the suspect continued to argue with the R/O that he did not have a reason to stop him. The R/O then asked the suspect multiple times to sit down in the back of his vehicle. The suspect continued to tell the R/O not to touch him. The R/O then assisted the suspect into the back of his vehicle, and

the suspect stated that he hit his head and he was going to sue the R/O because he had a good lawyer.

The R/O then transported the suspect to the Rock Hill City Jail. The R/O asked the suspect if he would be willing to submit to a breath test and he refused. The R/O still went into the data master room and gave the suspect a chance to reconsider refusing the test. The suspect was then booked into the Rock Hill City Jail for Driving under the influence 1st degree.

◀ Xenophobia from pg. 3

The university is striving to cultivate a campus environment that is free from xenophobia.

“At Winthrop, we value diversity and all that the word represents. Diversity is one of Winthrop’s five core values, along with excellence, service, community

and leadership. Our commitment to, and appreciation for, diversity includes respecting the diversity of all cultures,” wrote Interim President George Hynd in an email sent to the Winthrop community on March 23. “Winthrop is proud

to be a ‘home away from home’ for Asians, Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders and other people of color.”

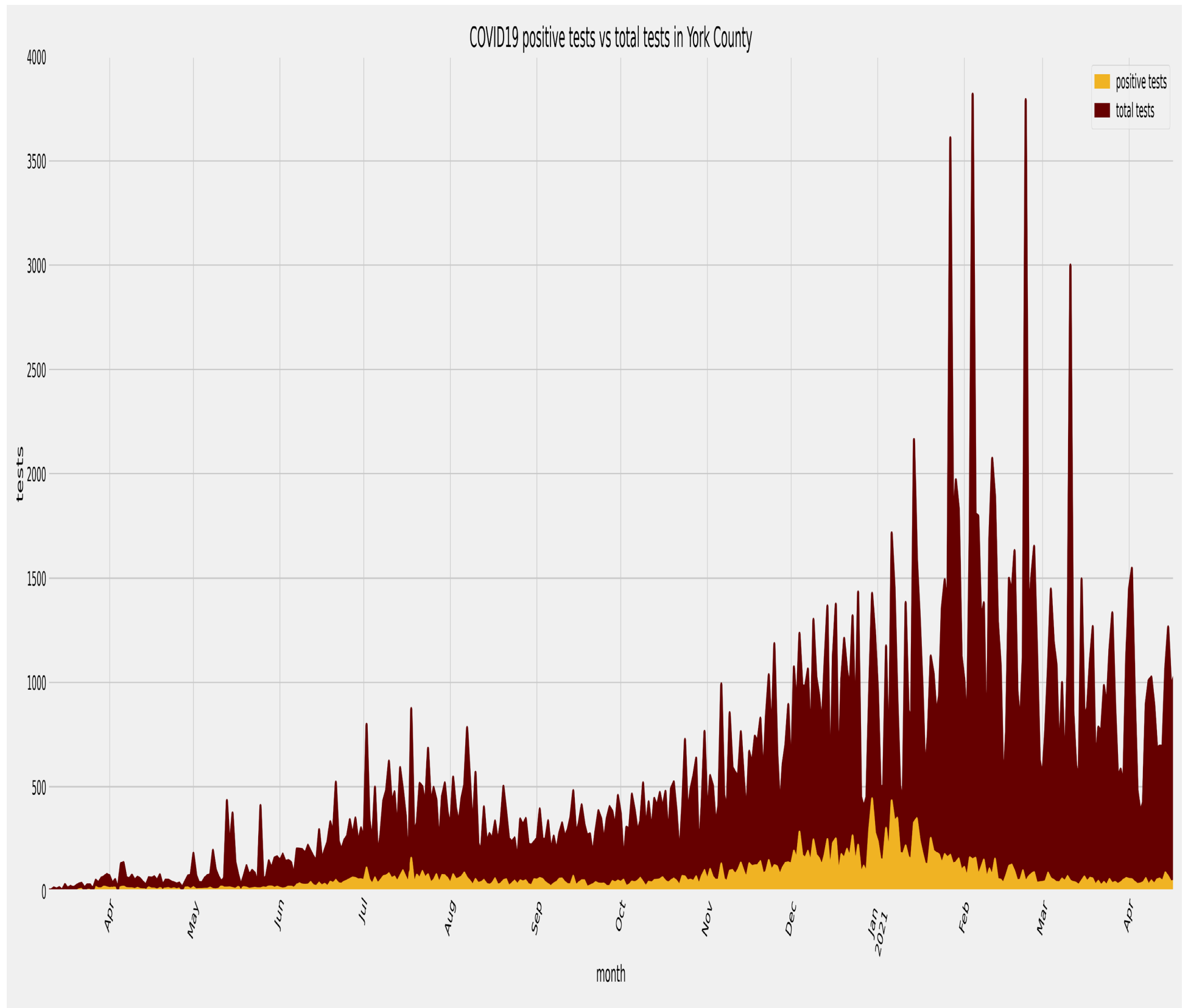
For any students who have been impacted by racism or xenophobia, please contact Counseling Services at 323-2206.



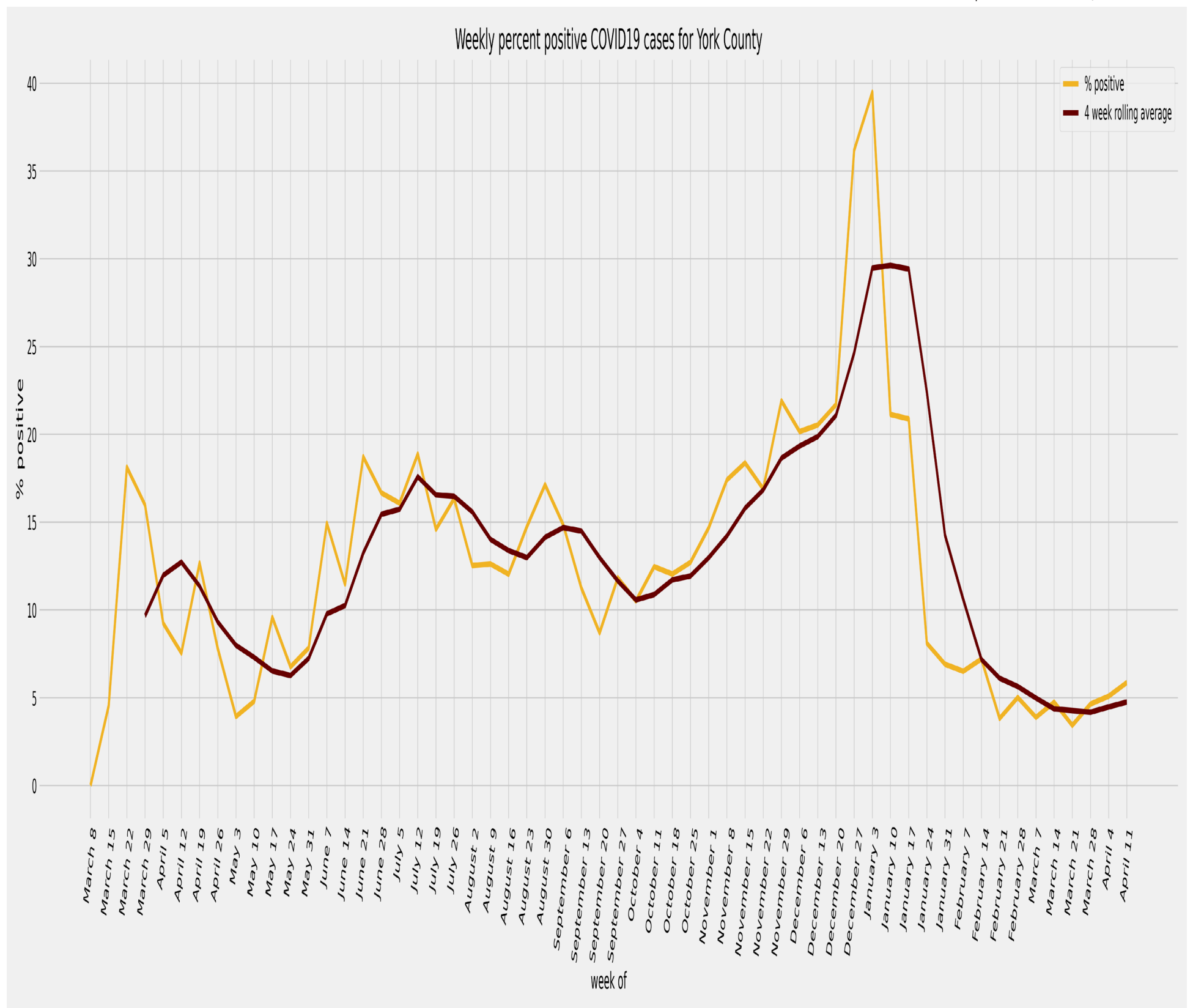
The front banner for the Stop AAPI (Asian American/Pacific Islander) Hate website. A number of councils, as well as the Asian American Studies Department of San Francisco State University, launched the Stop AAPI Hate reporting center on March 19, 2020.

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



Philip Nelson/The Johnsonian



Philip Nelson/The Johnsonian

New sports at Winthrop?

Board of Trustees hints at what could be next for athletics



Olivia Esselman/The Johnsonian

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Last June, Winthrop Athletics announced the discontinuation of both the men's and women's tennis programs following a vote by the Board of Trustees. The decision to eliminate tennis was a result of financial impacts caused by COVID-19.

Fast-forward ten months and members of the Board of Trustees have discussed what sports could be seen next at Winthrop.

"We talked about the possible addition of sports in the future," Tim Hopkins, chair of the committee on student life and athletics, told those present at the Board of Trustees meeting on April 9. "This is just a 'for instance.' This isn't

a 'definitive,' this is a 'for instance.'"

"If we were to add any sports in the future, we discussed perhaps beach volleyball," Hopkins said. "It's a sport where we have facilities already in place here that we can offer such a sport, and the overhead costs associated with it are within reason that we can afford it.

"We talked about wrestling for women, which is a sport that's really gained popularity across the country. We talked about swimming and diving. We have a nice swimming pool in the West Center even though there would be some other things that would need to be taken care of with the diving portion of that," he added.

Hopkins made no

mention of the loss (or any potential reinstatement) of tennis. Other sports he said his committee had discussed as potential programs Winthrop could add were triathlon for women and men as well as and acrobatics and tumbling.

Hopkins noted that Winthrop currently meets the minimum requirements to remain a Division-I athletic program, which include having a minimum of 14 NCAA sports (specific to schools that do not offer football), having at least six sports for men, fielding men's and women's basketball, and fielding at least one sport with each gender during the fall, spring, and winter.

What sparked the conversation about

possibly adding sports at Winthrop was the criteria for compliance with Title IX, a federal law that prohibits sex-based discrimination at federally-funded educational institutions.

According to Hopkins, to be in compliance with Title IX, a school must exhibit three things: proportionality (meaning there is a proportionate share of opportunities for male and female students), full accommodation (meaning programs are available for all male and female athletes that wish to participate in sports), and engagement in continued program expansion (meaning the school seeks to add sports opportunities going forward).

While the Board

of Trustees seems to be looking toward the future, Hopkins acknowledged that the athletic department is still feeling the financial impact of COVID-19 and could be for some time.

"It's pretty different to run an athletic program when you can't allow fans into the arena to watch the basketball games. That generates most of our revenue," he said. "It's important that we get back to normal as quickly and as soon as possible.

While the athletic department may have made severely less revenue off ticket and concession sales over the last year, Hopkins also noted that there have been financial windfalls thanks to the success of the men's basketball team.

For winning the Big South Conference Tournament last year, Winthrop pocketed \$100,000. After winning the same tournament this year, Winthrop received an additional \$100,000 plus an extra \$75,000 from the Big South Conference for earning a 12-seed in the NCAA Tournament.

Whether or not the funds are there, Hopkins made sure to reiterate that any discussions about adding sports at Winthrop at this time are hypothetical.

"We talked about some of the costs associated with [adding sports], but once again this is 'for instance.' Not really something we want to get into."

Setting Softball Records

Winthrop's McCall and Gilreath etch their names in program history

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During the fifth inning, while competing against Presbyterian on April 11, junior Macy McCall broke the single-season stolen base record with her 34th of the season. The record was previously set by Susan Funderburk in 1995 with 33 stolen bases.

"I have tried not to focus so much on breaking the record, but instead just performing well for my teammates and coaches. Breaking the record has just been a bonus," McCall said.

This is McCall's first season with the Eagles as she recently transferred to Winthrop in the fall of 2020 after her previous school in

Ohio canceled the softball program due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I actually struggled to perform well at my previous university. I have realized that I was focusing too much on performing well, rather than just having fun and playing the game that I have loved for so long. When I got to Winthrop, I decided to just play softball and let the successes come to me," said McCall.

Senior Ansley Gilreath had high praise for her teammate.

"I have said this many times and I will say it again; if I could be any other softball player, I would want to be Macy McCall," Gilreath said. "She can do it all. She can bunt for a hit, she can slap for a hit, she can steal

bases, and she can hit bombs. She is insane and I am sure she will break even more records during her time at Winthrop."

Gilreath is also on track to break a Winthrop softball record, with her 32 career home runs placing her just a couple of homers away from passing the record.

"Home runs are not really my focus right now, but scoring the runners in scoring position and making the plays on defense are my main focus. Also, I just hope to enjoy the rest of the season. There are only a few games left and I am trying to remember how blessed I am to play this sport and have this opportunity to play again," said Gilreath.

Gilreath and McCall are both thankful for their parents' support throughout the years of softball.

"My mom has actually never even missed a single college softball game for me since I have been on the team. That's five years and never missing a game. Her dedication to seeing me play really motivates and inspires me to be the best version of myself on and off the field," said Gilreath.

"I am always working hard to make them proud and they play a huge part in my successes," McCall said.

On April 13, the Eagles traveled to Clemson to compete against their newly rechartered softball team. Although the double-header did

not end in favor of Winthrop, the outcome did not surprise Gilreath due to Clemson's top 20 national ranking.

"I am very proud that we held our own in the second game and did not back down. I think everyone enjoyed getting to see the new facilities and playing at Clemson. It was definitely an experience and I am grateful for it," Gilreath said.

The Eagles are currently 22-22 overall, and having players setting career records is definitely helping keep the team motivated and doing their best.

"Macy is someone that is always going to be on base at some point in the game no matter what, so it makes the rest of us

work even harder to score her. I also think the rest of the team looks up to Macy and she is such a great role model. I really think she's made the biggest difference on the team this year," said Gilreath.

"Transferring was never a plan that I had in mind, but I now understand that this was the path that I was supposed to end up on. I have made nineteen new lifelong friends and gained some pretty awesome coaches as well," McCall said.

Next up, the Eagles will take on South Carolina State at home in Rock Hill with a double-header on April 21.



Olivia Esselman/The Johnsonian

Eagles of the week: Grant Nicholson and Big Stuff

Sam Hyatt
staff writer

Every Winthrop student has had the experience of seeing Winthrop’s mascot, Big Stuff. It’s always fun to see him at athletic events or just walking around campus giving people high fives and waving to students. But have you ever wondered who is actually inside the Big Stuff costume?

There has always been an unspoken rule about not telling others if you are the mascot for your school. That secret can be difficult to keep, but since the current student in the Big Stuff costume is graduating this May, he no longer has to keep the secret.

Grant Nicholson, a senior environmental studies major, has been the mascot at Winthrop since the fall of his freshman year. In 2017, he was the backup mascot for the school, and he took over completely in the spring of 2018 and has been Big Stuff ever since.

“A lot of people I hang out with know that I’m Big Stuff but I still act like Big Stuff when I’m in costume

because I have a job to do,” Nicholson said.

Nicholson was the mascot for his high school too, wearing the River Bluff Gator costume.

“It was a lot of fun. I went to camps and watched a lot of YouTube videos, and then I just created a character,” he said.

“My favorite part [about being Big Stuff] is seeing people’s smiles and reactions and making people happy. I really enjoy sharing God’s love with people, and it has allowed me to really break out of my shell and let go in life.”

There is more time that goes into being a school’s mascot than people may think. Big Stuff attends over 200 events in a typical year. Nicholson said he spent numerous hours planning skits and finding new ways to interact with Winthrop sports fans and students.

“Anybody can be funny in a costume, but the really good guys have a plan. Being a mascot is more than standing around and dancing. It’s really about trying to bring home a character and communicate what that character is.”

Apart from working all sporting events, planning and creating videos, planning performances, posting on social media and attending private parties separate from the school, Nicholson also attends meetings with others at Winthrop along with attending meetings with mascots from other schools. In these meetings with other mascots, they are able to feed off each other’s success and share ideas.

At the end of April, Nicholson will be traveling to Orlando, Florida to compete in the National Mascot Tournament.

“I’m ranked second in my division and I’m glad I got this opportunity,” he said.

After graduation, Nicholson wants to become a professional mascot, which he said involves a lot of coordinating people and events. By filling the role of Big Stuff, Nicholson has learned how to work with others while also planning events. At his church, he has organized a special needs prom called “Night to Shine.”

Nicholson also hopes to put to use the information he has

learned while working toward his degree at Winthrop.

“I’d really like to teach people about environmental issues,” he said. “It really starts with getting into the elementary schools and teaching the younger generations.”

For the next Big Stuff and all those that will follow, Nicholson has some advice:

“Enjoy it because college goes by really quickly. It’s about trying to embody that character. I think of Big Stuff as one that isn’t afraid of anything and is a risk-taker, and he’s proud being the mascot for Winthrop.”

“It’s bittersweet to have to let Big Stuff go soon and it’s going to be sad to take off the costume for the last time,” said Nicholson. “Trying to go out on top is definitely a goal of mine.”

“I hope I contributed to the program and I hope to continue to advance the program after I graduate. I’ve learned to take risks and to embrace the kid in me. You don’t always have to live up to everybody’s standards and sometimes it’s ok to just be you.”

Esports preparing for postseason

Sides says teams hope for a strong showing

Alex Romano
staff writer

As the spring semester draws to a close, the esports teams are only getting started, with both the Rocket League team and the League of Legends team preparing for their postseason run.

After falling short at the College Rocket League (CRL) qualifiers, the Rocket League team was unable to secure a spot in this year’s CRL tournament. Their loss came at the hands of the University of Ohio after a very close series.

“Since we were coming from the losers bracket, we had to win two best-of-fives instead of one, so we beat them in the first best-of-five 3-0, and then the second best-of-five we were up 2-0, [but] they ran it back and reverse swept us,” said head coach Josh Sides.

“We’ve won a couple smaller tournaments here and there throughout the semester with the Rocket League team. We didn’t quite make CRL because one of our players is a pro player and had a match on the day of the CRL qualifiers, but we’re doing PlayVs, which is the other big collegiate Rocket League tournament out there,” said Sides.

The League of Legends team will also be seeing some postseason action after only losing one game during the entire regular season.

“We ran through all the regular season matches very unblemished aside from one week,” said Sides. “We had one of our players who had to miss the match that week so we had to play with a sub.”

Although the team lost to the University

of Houston during the regular season, it didn’t stop them from sweeping them, along with every other team that they faced during the College League of Legends (CLoL) South Region tournament.

“We were hoping to meet them in the finals to get revenge,” Sides said. “We got our 3-0 win to UCF in the quarterfinals, 3-0 win against George Mason in the [semifinals], and met up with Houston in the finals and with all of our players available we 3-0’d them as well. It was a really fun tournament.”

As the team prepares for their postseason run, Sides said that they hope to have a strong showing.

“Most people don’t consider the south to be a strong conference. Most people consider it the weakest or the second weakest, but we’re hoping to make some noise in the tournament and kind of prove that a team can come out of the south and get it done,” he said.

Looking ahead to next semester, the Overwatch team is preparing to rebuild its roster. Senior Trevor “Qwickzzz” Greshell graduates after this semester and several players on the team have moved from Overwatch to Valorant (a game that Winthrop will see its first collegiate action in this coming fall.)

Postseason schedules for the Rocket League and League of Legends teams have yet to be released, though they are expected to be out within the next week. Make sure to follow @WinthropEsports on Twitter and

@winthropesport on Instagram to stay up to date with the teams and their postseasons.



April 21, 2021

The dehumanization of Asian Americans in media

Hollywood's negative influence on the perpetuation of Asian American stereotypes

Mari Pressley
staff writer

Since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic, Asian Americans have seen an increase in hate crimes and racism. Last month, a white man killed eight people in Atlanta, Georgia, six of whom were Asian women. These events have opened a wider discussion about America's racist view of Asian Americans and how some of it has been influenced by Hollywood's racist stereotypes.

Often oversexualizing Asian Americans, boxing them in as sex workers, STEM professionals, or obsessed with the image of success, Asian characters are often presented helping a white character's development or even depicted as an honorary white character.

In an opinion piece published by CNN, Rev. Laura Mariko Cheifetz, assistant dean of admissions, vocation and stewardship at Vanderbilt Divinity School, wrote, "Our ethnic identities matter to us, but not to American White supremacy. We who are Asian or Asian American women have our own lives and agency, but to American White supremacy, we are hypersexualized dragon ladies and young brides to be sold. And to the shooter, objects

tempting him to sin. Objects to be eliminated."

Hollywood often refers to all Asian Americans as "just Asian," ignoring that Asia is a large continent composed of a plethora of origin groups, including Chinese, Indian, Filipino, Vietnamese, Korean, Japanese, etc.

When East Asian female characters are not being depicted as sexual or submissive in Hollywood, they often fall under the rebellious girl or

"dragon lady" trope who wears a blue or purple streak in her hair.

TV Tropes defines that "The Dragon Lady is characterized by her overt sexual and physical aggression, untrustworthiness, and mysteriousness. Probably wears a qipao or kimono often with a dragon on it (even if she's not Chinese or Japanese), and knows martial arts."

"Minari" is a recently released movie about "a Korean-American

family that moves to an Arkansas farm in search of their own American Dream," according to the A24 website. The film has been classified under the "foreign-language film," only adding to the "foreigner" stereotype that Asian Americans face in Hollywood.

"Asian Americans have been in some ways treated in this fashion as the other; as perpetual foreigners. And that this violence against

▶ see Asian Americans pg. 9



Graphic Courtesy to Stopaapi

The front banner for the Stop AAPI (Asian American/Pacific Islander) Hate website. A number of councils, as well as the Asian American Studies Department of San Francisco State University, launched the Stop AAPI Hate reporting center on March 19, 2020.

Down to Earth with Zac Efron

Zac Efron and Darin Olien travel the world to learn about sustainable living

Sam Hyatt
staff writer

Over the last week, I have been watching the eight-episode documentary series "Down to Earth with Zac Efron" on Netflix, and it has earned a spot in my top ten favorite documentaries.

"High School Musical" star Zac Efron and his friend Darin Olien, an expert in living and teaching about sustainability and clean living, traveled the world to see how other countries are living sustainably and in a way that is fighting against climate change and the many other major issues in the world.

The first place the two visited was Iceland. Here they learned about the major ways the country is making renewable energy efforts. Civilians use the ground as a means to cook their food. As a result of having an active volcano in the country, the ground stays hot enough for people to cook foods like fish, bread, and eggs by placing them in a hole in the ground and letting them sit for several minutes.

France was their next stop, where they learned about the country's use of a clean tap water system, reducing the usage of single-use plastic. In the cities, there are numerous water fountains that provide free and clean water to everyone. This allows clean water access to those who are homeless and are unable to pay for water much like other countries.

Costa Rica and the way of living there was the topic of the third episode. Many people created their own eco-friendly community where they grow and harvest their own foods while also teaching children how to do the same. The community's school allows the children to learn how to contribute to the community while also learning skills like building and planting.

The crew next visited Sardinia, an island off the coast of Italy. This island is considered a blue zone, which means that people in this area live longer than other places in the world. Scientists have been working to find the reason for the longer life expectancies for these people. It is believed that it is in correlation with the low protein diet they partake in, which is the opposite of the diet trends in the United States. In the fifth episode of the series, Efron and Olien experienced the lifestyles of those living in Lima, Peru. Scientists in this area of the world are working to make copies or "backups" of different plants, especially potatoes. They believe that, with the changing climate, they need to train various plants to adapt to different environments. Essentially, these scientists are working to make sure people do not experience a global food shortage with the rising temperatures and changing climate. Thankfully, these scientists have copies of their original copies, a precaution to the possibility of the different cities experiencing a natural disaster or other fatal event. During Efron's and Olien's time in Puerto Rico for episode six, they were able to see the devastation that was left over from Hurricane Maria in 2017. A lot of the country is without a safe home and electricity. While filming, the crew decided to clean up one area around a family's home since they were physically unable to do it themselves. Puerto Rico is currently in the process of building concrete houses that are powered by solar panels in order to provide electricity and a safe place next time there is a major storm.

During Efron's and Olien's time in Puerto Rico for episode six, they were able to see the devastation that was left over from Hurricane Maria in 2017.

▶ see Down To Earth pg. 9

The Duke bows out

Actor Regé-Jean Page is furthering his career and stepping away from "Bridgerton"

Emily Curry
staff writer

In December of 2020, Netflix released "Bridgerton," a period drama series that followed the lives of the noble Bridgerton family as they navigated the London season in early eighteenth-century England. The show quickly became a sensation as viewers watched the eldest Bridgerton daughter, Daphne, fall in love with the rakish Simon Basset, the Duke of Hastings, played by Regé-Jean Page.

The show was renewed for a second season in January,

but it was recently announced that Page would not be returning as the fan-favorite Duke. The announcement came on social media styled as a letter from the show's narrator/gossipmonger, Lady Whistledown; "While all eyes turn to Lord Anthony Bridgerton's quest to find a Viscountess, we bid adieu to Regé-Jean Page, who so triumphantly played the Duke of Hastings."

According to an article written for Variety, "News of the duke's departure will likely not come as a surprise to fans of the

Julia Quinn novels on which the series is based, as the character's storyline largely plays out in the first book."

In Quinn's series, each of the eight Bridgerton children got a book dedicated to their journey for fulfillment. The first book, "The Duke and I," does center around Daphne and Basset, but the second book, "The Viscount Who Loved Me," which the second season of the Netflix series will be based on, focuses on the Bridgerton heir, Anthony.

Revealed in the same article, Page

explained to Variety exclusively that his departure was not a surprise to him and even that "the short-term commitment was a big part of the role's appeal." Page told "Variety" that he has "nothing but excitement for 'Bridgerton' continuing to steam train off and conquer the globe."

While the Duke of Hastings will be missed, Page will be able to explore new opportunities to continue building a name for himself in the entertainment world.

▶ see Duke pg. 9



Photo Courtesy to Tatler

Regé-Jean Page is stepping away from his role as Duke of Hastings in the Netflix series “Bridgerton.”

◀ **Duke** from pg. 8
 However, one role that Page was hoping to land was reportedly denied to him because of his race. The series “Krypton,” which originally aired in March of 2018, explores the life of Seg-El, the grandfather of Kryptonian superhero Superman. Page auditioned for the leading role, but recently The Hollywood Reporter revealed that Geoff Johns, who was overseeing the project, reportedly vetoed the casting of Page because “Superman could not have a Black grandfather.” Page responded to this revelation in a tweet, writing, “Hearing about these conversations hurts no less now than it did back then. The clarifications almost hurt more tbh. Still just doing my thing. Still we do the

work. We still fly.” Johns’s PR told Teen Vogue, when reached for comment in response to the allegations, that “the expectation for KRYPTON was that it would initially be perceived as a possible prequel to ‘Man of Steel’ by the fans and the lead was expected to invoke a young Henry Cavill.” But whether or not this justifies Johns’s decision is a question yet to be answered. Nonetheless, Page has a very bright future in front of him. The notoriety he received from his role in “Bridgerton” will, no doubt, open doors to new and exciting opportunities. In fact, rumors are out there that Page is a favorite to replace Daniel Craig as James Bond and possibly even have a role in the “Black Panther” franchise.

◀ **Asian Americans** from pg. 8

Asian Americans has been reflected not only in attitudes and criminal activity, but in terms of legal and political and social ways in which Asian Americans, since the very time they stepped on these shores, have been treated in the United States,” said Paul Watanabe, director of the Institute of Asian American Studies, in an interview with WBUR, Boston’s NPR station. The 1961 film “Breakfast at Tiffany’s” is a movie that is remembered often for its charm in terms of fashion and aesthetic. However, it has come under fire in recent decades because of its racist depiction of its only Asian character, Mr. Yunioshi. As it turns out, the character was actually played by Mickey Rooney, a white actor. Rooney used yellowface to portray himself as an Asian man with an offensive stereotypical “Engrish” accent. In 1990, writer for the Boston Globes, John Koch, described Rooney’s portrayal as “an irascible buck-toothed nerd and an offensive ethnic carica-

ture.” Asian Americans are being portrayed as caricatures instead of real characters with story developments far too often. The depiction of Asian Americans as the “model minority” and without “real problems” only limits individuality and leads to more discrimination. “For years, Cayden Mak and the grassroots community groups he works with knew that attacks against vulnerable Asian seniors in Chinatowns across the country were a perennial problem. But he said the model minority myth, a persistent stereotype that paints Asian Americans as inherently successful and problem-free, particularly in contrast to other minority groups, had helped keep the story ‘from being a big deal before this,’” Victoria Namkung wrote for NBC News. Overall, Hollywood is in dire need of more diversity and representation for Asian Americans both in front and behind the camera in order for better stories to be told about Asian Americans on screen.

Popular Twitch streamer left out of Jimmy Fallon stream

Allison Reynolds
 staff writer

On April 10, Jimmy Fallon hosted a Twitch stream with popular streamers Valkyrae, Sykkuno and Corpse Husband and “Stranger Things” stars Noah Schnapp and Gaten Matarazzo. The stream involved the group playing the murder mystery game Among Us.



Jamia Johnson/The Johnsonian

The three streamers, Valkyrae, Sykkuno and Corpse Husband, are part of a group called Amigops with a fourth streamer, Disguised Toast. However, Disguised Toast was not included in this Among Us stream that Fallon put together. Why is that? The fact that Disguised Toast was not present disappointed not only him, but his fans as well, considering that he was one of the streamers that helped Among Us blow up in the first place, “I was big when Among Us first started, but I’m not as big as the others anymore. It just doesn’t make sense from a marketing perspective for Among Us or Jimmy Fallon to have me on instead of the others,” Disguised Toast said on a recent stream

of his on Facebook Gaming, in response to his being left out of Fallon’s stream. Disguised Toast went on in the stream to explain that his brand is not very marketable. “Even when I was on Twitch, I wasn’t part of their marketing, or anything. Like, almost everyone in my circle were. At TwitchCon, I remember seeing the banners of a lot of my friends. “It doesn’t matter how many viewers I get, doesn’t matter how much I have an impact on the scene, it’s just always going to be someone better to promote. Is it a race thing? Is it a gender thing? This is reaching dangerous territory. “I think, from a marketing perspective, there’s no reason why I stand out. Because if you look at me, look at my content for a little bit, there’s nothing

there.” Disguised Toast only streams his gaming content on Facebook now instead of Twitch, signing a deal with Facebook Gaming in November of 2019, though he will occasionally host a Just Chatting livestream on Twitch. Even though he has a significantly smaller audience than that of if he streamed on YouTube or Twitch, he is still very popular. Disguised Toast also doesn’t believe he is getting treated like this because of his decision to leave Twitch. By reading his comments, anyone can see that he was getting treated like this even before he left Twitch to stream on Facebook. Disguised Toast hosted his own separate stream on the same date as Fallon’s Among Us stream, where he unboxed packages and talked

in chat. As he opened up an Among Us keyboard keycap, he threw shade at Fallon for not being included in the stream. “I’m kind of known as the Among Us guy; just ask anyone...except Jimmy Fallon,” he said. His fans got a kick out of it, spamming the chat with comments, laughs and emojis as he continued to unbox. While the lack of Toast’s presence in the Among Us stream may have seemed like drama at first, Disguised Toast seems to have calmed down from the exclusion. He even seems to the point where he can have fun with and laugh about the situation now. Disguised Toast has even gained support and backing from Valkyrae, who said she would invite him to anything and everything she could moving forward.

◀ **Down To Earth** from pg. 8

A lot of the country is without a safe home and electricity. While filming, the crew decided to clean up one area around a family’s home since they were physically unable to do it themselves. Puerto Rico is currently in the process of building concrete houses that are powered by solar panels in order to provide electricity and a safe place next time there is a major storm. The seventh episode features Efron and Olien in London. Bees play a significant role in our world by pollinating all of the trees and other plants. Without them, we would be unable to breathe oxygen that is produced by the trees. In London, concrete walls of large buildings have been turned into a place where plants and vines can grow, along with creating safe places for bees to make their hives. Iquitos, Peru, was the crew’s last stop for the series. Here, Efron and Olien learned about holistic medicine and healing and were able to participate in traditional healing practices. The natives use their knowledge about the



Emma Crouch/The Johnsonian

“Down to Earth” is a new documentary series on Netflix starring Zac Efron. plants around them to perform these healings. Additionally, many natives that were living in this area voiced their experience with the drastic change in their environment that they continually see. While filming the episode, Olien found out that his home was completely burned to the ground from the massive forest fire in southern California in 2018. His being directly affected by climate change affected this episode as he was dealing with the sadness and devastation he was feeling, along with his anger that these events are happening and that people don’t care or believe in climate change. Our world is changing drastically because of climate change, and it’s imperative that we take action if we want to leave a safe and healthy Earth for future generations. Efron’s documentary series keeps you engaged by the funny commentary and the adventures the crew experiences. It is definitely not a documentary that will bore you or put you to sleep. 10/10, I recommend this documentary for anyone who wants to learn ways to take action against climate change. Filming for a second season of “Down to Earth with Zac Efron” has begun, Efron revealed on social media in a March 8 post. The exact release date has yet to be announced, but it is currently projected to be released on Netflix in 2022.

April 21, 2021

Opinion sections and their bad raps

Why editorial writing is still needed in the 'fake news' era

Mary Hicks

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In more recent years, the Opinion section of newspapers has developed a bad reputation, due to critics claiming that it causes readers to confuse editorial writing with actual news reporting.

However, the main contributor of that confusion most likely stems from news television channels that broadcast editorial shows without clearly differentiating those hosts from the news reporters. For example, Fox News' Sean Hannity as well as CNN's Don Lemon host editorial shows. Yet, in contrast to newspapers, television broadcasts do not clearly define the categories. At least in most newspaper publications they have

a straightforward 'OPINION' tab that makes it much easier to know what you're reading.

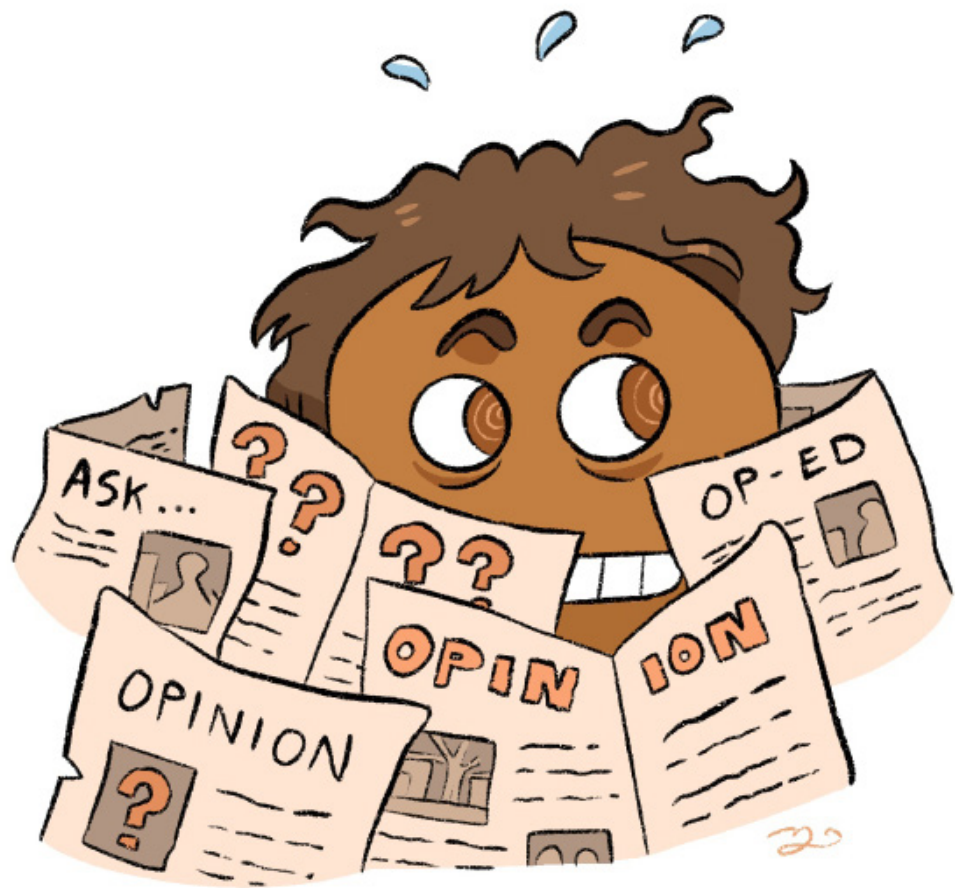
Today, because of the 'Fake News' era we live in, many readers and viewers only want pure reporting, which is understandable considering how much misinformation is around. However, when it comes to certain news that is more difficult to digest, the opinion section is extremely valuable because it tells the reader what the implications are in regards to the news. Opinion journalism isn't here to spread lies, but quite the opposite. Its purpose is to decipher the truth and provide a perspective on the information around us.

In any form of journalism, the writer should still be as

objective as possible, fact-checking every detail. This is still true with editorial writing – background, data, and putting everything in context is crucial to backing up the argument and points that the writer is making. In contrast to regular news reporting, Opinion journalism tells the reader WHY an issue or topic matters, how it should be handled, and often even offers suggestions on what the reader can do about it.

Because of the fact that the general public is so accustomed to consuming the latest news report, then moving on to the next thing that happens, opinion columns help give us a reality check on how critical these stories actually are. If it weren't for writers offering their opinions

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Micheal Yelton/The Johnsonian

Stop Hate!

A look at South Carolina's hate crime bill after sexual orientation was added to the legislation

Sam Hyatt

staff writer

under constant threat. Though the bill was drafted in direct response to the Emanuel AME shootings of 2015, every minority group benefits from its ratification.

The House's draft of the bill protects Americans who may be a target for hate crimes based on their "race, color, sex, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, or physical or mental disability - regardless of whether the offender's belief or perception is correct." With the inclusion of gender, sexual identity, and disability, the South Carolina government has opened dialogue in order to achieve true equity for all citizens. Emphasizing different minority groups allows each marginalized group to feel safer, which is something that should have been allowed in the first place.

Without this bill in place, South Carolina would see an increase in marginalized groups being the target for unnecessary violence. According to the Department of Justice (DOJ), each

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Shootings, gun control, and the NFL

The need for restrictions on weapons, and more safety in football

Allison Reynolds

staff writer

On April 7, former NFL player Phillip Adams shot and killed five people in Rock Hill, SC. Among the victims include Dr. Robert Lesslie, his wife Barbara Lesslie, their two grandchildren Adah and Noah, and James Lewis. Adams also shot Robert Shook, though he was alive when authorities arrived. Shook was flown to a Charlotte hospital but unfortunately passed away several days later. Lewis and Shook were at the Lesslie home working on the HVAC system. After the shootings, Adams walked to his parents house, in the same neighborhood, and shot himself. Adams had played for the 49ers, Patriots, Seahawks, Raiders, Jets, and Falcons.

According to ProFootballTalk, Adams' agent and another NFL player stated that Adams was not on any drugs or alcohol at the time of the shooting. However, it is difficult to believe that Adams was not on some sort of substance in order to commit this crime. If he was supposedly a good kid, one would think drugs and/or alcohol had to have been involved.

York County coroner Sabrina Gast said she will be working with Boston University while performing the autopsy at the Medical University of South Carolina. The autopsy will include a procedure to test for chronic



Katelyn Miller/The Johnsonian

traumatic encephalopathy (CTE) to look at the former athletes brain trauma.

Adams' father Alonzo Adams gave a statement to WCNC-TV saying, "I can say he's a good kid, I think the football messed him up." Adams' sister told USA Today that her brother's mental health was degrading fast and terribly bad in recent years including an escalating temper and personal hygiene effect.

The day after, Winthrop University President George Hynd tweeted his condolences, stating that Dr. Lesslie had been the school's supervising physician for over 25 years.

The NFL made a statement in regards to the shooting: "our hearts go out to the families and

friends of the victims of the devastating tragedy." Although Adams had not played for the NFL in a substantial amount of time, the major football ambassador should have said more, especially considering that medical examiners are looking into the possibility of football related concussions being the cause of Adams committing this crime.

Just two days prior, on April 5, Farhan Towid, 19, killed his family and himself in Allen Texas. The bodies of him and his family were found after he posted an 11-page letter to Instagram, starting with the statement "hey everyone, I killed myself and my family." Towid killed his brother Tanvir Towhid, his father Towhidul Islam,

his mother, Iren Islam, his grandmother Altafun Nessa, and his twin sister Farbin Towhid. The family moved to the United States from Bangladesh about 15 years ago. According to the police report, Farhan and Tanvir made a suicide pact together and decided to take their family with them.

These two incidents are proof that gun rights activists are going to use in fighting for gun control. Not to mention the other mass shootings that have occurred in 2021 so far. (As of March 31, 126 mass shootings in America). This includes the Atlanta spa attacks that occurred on March 16 and the Boulder, Colorado grocery store shooting that occurred on March 22.

◀ **Opinion** from pg. 10

about what is going on in the world it would be more difficult for the general public to stop and pay attention. The columns give readers a chance to look at the extent of the reports, the facts, and put it all together, whether the reader agrees or disagrees with the author. In particular, complex societal issues that run deep and require extensive research are perfect for Opinion articles because many people are looking to writers for them to break it all down, lay out the evidence, but put it together in a way that they can understand. It is especially important to interpret and decode news regarding legislation, and letting readers know how it could impact people.

Another instance when the Opinion section is necessary is after tragic situations such as the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. When a few people out of a particular ethnic or religious group commit a crime or an act of terrorism, and the news reports on those events are endless, it is important for the Opinion writers to bring everything back into perspective, reminding the public that those few individ-

uals do not represent those groups of people as a whole.

Overall, opinion pieces help attract attention to the issues and is a way to get the public involved. Regardless of the kinds of careers individuals have, they need to be informed about things within their country that could possibly impact their lives. Just as early journalists often called 'muck-rakers' began raising awareness about child labor, working conditions, and unregulated corporations during the progressive era, investigative reporting as well as Opinion and Advocacy journalism today is very much needed when it comes to exposing the injustices of our time.

While the writer does want others to see and understand their point of view, the object is never to get someone to completely agree. Instead, it is mainly to get readers THINKING about those topics. After all, everything happens first with a single thought, idea, or impression. If thought-provoking enough, one seemingly simple opinion piece could change the world!

What led to decrease in suicides during quarantine

People banding together virtually during quarantine allowed many to feel connected with others while taking time to enjoy life at home



Katelyn Miller/The Johnsonian

◀ **Stop Hate** from pg. 10

STOP HATE

group mentioned in the Hate Crime Bill has been the target of at least one hate-fueled attack in the last three years. These attacks largely took place in metropolitan areas, versus rural communities - the larger a population is, the more likely there is a bigot in that community.

As more legislative acts come to light with the goal of protecting and advocating for minorities, the American people will grow to become more accepting overall. The bystander effect states that if a crime happens, then the majority of the witnesses will not come forward under the assumption that someone else will. This effect has kept countless hate crimes from being reported, which is part of the problem. By having a more outspoken opinion about what it considered right or wrong, South Carolina citizens will be keeping future hate crimes at bay by simply

showing the oppressors that there is a support system behind their target.

With the ratification of this bill, South Carolina would stop being one of four states that has yet to acknowledge their citizens' being attacked for simply existing. The United States is one of the world's most diverse countries, yet it is one of the last first-world countries to develop a legal response to the terrorism of minority groups. By acknowledging that minority communities in the South are at risk for hate crimes, South Carolina has opened a dialogue for its citizens on what it means to be in danger by being alive.

This bill is yet to be ratified, and South Carolina citizens can do something about it. Contact your local and district representatives to express your concerns - if enough constituents voice disapproval changes will be made!

Despite the hardships many have faced during the pandemic, there was a decrease in suicides during the quarantine period.

Sam Hyatt
staff writer

Everybody remembers what it was like to be in quarantine in March and April of 2020. At first, we thought two weeks of staying at home and not seeing friends was going to be impossible. But after those two weeks turned into months, the lifestyle of being socially distanced and in quarantine became the new normal.

During this time of prolonged quarantine, medical professionals began to worry about the increase in suicide rates as many may have felt trapped or severely isolated from others in addition to the constant updates of deaths around the world. In a New York Times article from May 10, 2020, Matthew Nock, a psychology professor at Harvard said, "We've never had anything like this - and we know social isolation is related to suicide."

"I guess quarantine was a blessing in disguise because people were able to cope with this differently," junior mass communications major Jamia Johnson said.

While it was expected that there would be a substantial increase in suicide, especially

those of children and adolescents, professionals are finding that there was somewhat of a decrease in these rates. We were living in a time where there were numerous deaths, store shelves were bare, and individuals were losing their jobs and worrying about how they would feed their families. However, according to AP News, suicide rates fell about 6% during the pandemic starting in March of 2020.

Brooke Stout, a sophomore human development and family studies major said "I can totally see suicide rates going down because as someone with anxiety and am an introvert, quarantine was a dream for me. I was able to focus on myself and my own needs without the influence of bad relationships and life getting in the way."

While the entire country was locked up in their homes and jobs were brought to a halt, people were forced to slow down. People began to do things they didn't have the time to do before. Activities such as gardening, trying new recipes, adopting animals, and home improvement projects were popular amidst the beginning of quar-

antine.

According to NBC News, studies display that in many areas of the country suicide rates either remained flat or decrease, but cases of depression, anxiety, and eating disorders increased. During this isolation period the world was constantly talking about COVID and the thousands of deaths that were happening to people we knew. This feeling of loneliness was a factor that led to eating disorders, along with depression and anxiety disorders.

According to the World Health Organization, over 93% of mental health services were paused due to exposure and the then unknown information about the virus. Therefore, those who were developing these negative health experiences were unable to meet with health professionals in person. Nor were they meeting with or being referred to health counselors, therapists, or psychiatrists.

In those months of quarantine, there was a lot more than a pandemic happening in the United States. People marched the streets to bring awareness to police brutality and justice for those of the African American community that were

victims to the injustice in our country.

Even though many of the peaceful protests were met with violence, the Black Lives Matter movement brought people together to fight for the same cause.

Senior biology major Josh LeClerg said, "The BLM movement gave people a cause to rally around, so even though it stood in opposition to violence, which normally increases suicide rates, it was a source of solidarity and community."

Community is what has brought us thus far in this pandemic. When we cannot meet up with our friends and families, we utilize Zoom calls and FaceTime to connect with other people because it is what we are used to.

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused an immeasurable amount of devastation and loss. Seeing a decrease in suicide cases is what everyone would like to see as many individuals have been affected by this world health crisis. Unfortunately, we have seen an increase in mental health issues in young adults. Thankfully, various of the mental health diagnoses can be treated with therapy and medication.

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