



HATCHET FILE PHOTOS

Clockwise from top left: 1. Ibram Kendi, the founding director of the Anti-Racist Research and Policy Center, spoke at the first event in a Race in America speaker series. 2. Senior Imani Ross spearheaded legislation in the SA to condemn the post. 3. SA Executive Vice President Ojani Walthrast said the post sparked his campaign for the position. 4. Junior Simone Hunter-Hobson led the discussion at a town hall about the post.

YEAR AFTER SNAPCHAT: How GW has changed since racist post

NIA LARTEY & SARAH ROACH
STAFF WRITERS

One year ago, thousands of students woke up on the first day of Black History Month to a Snapchat post that would define GW's diversity and inclusion efforts for months to come.

The post depicted two members of Alpha Phi, one of whom held a banana peel, with the caption, "Izzy: 'I'm 1/16 black'" – which officials and students alike instantly condemned as racist. Over the next week and change, hundreds of students gath-

ered twice in Funger Hall to call for the chapter's removal and mandatory diversity training, while officials said the post wasn't surprising and promised to implement a slew of new diversity initiatives.

At the same time, students and administrators questioned the role and inclusivity of sororities and fraternities at GW. The Panhellenic Association apologized for the post the same day it made rounds on campus, and Alpha Phi released a statement the next day saying it would throw out the three members involved in the post –

but The Hatchet could not confirm that those students were removed after leaders of the sorority did not return multiple requests for comment.

Over the next several months, officials recruited 88 students, faculty and staff to contribute to a 12-page report outlining a nine-point plan to improve diversity and inclusion at GW. The demands included hiring a diversity and inclusion training director, hosting a new Race in America speaker series and requiring diversity training for freshmen, Greek life leaders and staff members

who work closely with students.

Diversity and inclusion also dominated student leaders' platforms in the weeks leading up to last year's Student Association election.

Now, after a year of changes, black students said the post offered them a platform to unmask racism on campus and demand that officials implement measures to help shift campus culture. They said the post helped band the black community together and move past the incident

See **REFORMS** Page 2



DONNA ARMSTRONG | CONTRIBUTING PHOTO EDITOR

Avia Zhang, the president of ISA and the SA's director of international students, said roughly 15 international upperclassmen will serve as mentors.

Student leaders launch international student mentorship program

KELLY HOOPER
STAFF WRITER

The Student Association and International Students Association are trying to help first- and second-year international students find a go-to person to help them navigate homesickness and culture shock.

The two groups launched the International Friendship Portal on the SA website Monday, where underclassmen can schedule meetings with older international students to get academic or personal advice. Student leaders said the program will help international students adjust to life at GW and find a mentor in those who have similar experiences and may speak their native language.

"Sometimes, I want to reach out to other interna-

tional students on campus or I want to know more experience from upperclassmen, but I don't get the resources," Avia Zhang, the president of ISA and the SA's director of international students, said. "I thought maybe we can find a bridge to connect our international student community."

She said roughly 15 international upperclassmen will serve as mentors. The portal features descriptions of each mentor, their picture and the schedule of times they are available to meet.

Zhang, an international student from China, said giving international students the chance to choose their own mentor allows them to meet with someone who might share the same major, interests or native language. She said students can

grab coffee or go for a walk with mentors and discuss topics like classes, internship experiences or mental well-being.

"We think it might be helpful if we can create this platform for other international students to find their international buddies who can speak the same language as they do," she said.

Zhang said the ISA and SA will promote the program to international students and potential mentors using social media, the associations' listservs and email newsletters from the International Services Office and the Multicultural Student Services Center.

GWHATCHET.COM

H for more on the new student-led mentorship program

SA senator reignites effort to change Colonials nickname

IZZY HARDY
REPORTER

A Student Association senator is trying to restart the push to change the Colonials nickname after the debate – which engaged hundreds of students and alumni last spring – fizzled out last semester.

SA Sen. Hayley Margolis, CCAS-U, will host an academic panel Wednesday at 7 p.m. in the Marvin Center Presentation Room, where three faculty members and a former Tanzanian ambassador will discuss the history of colonialism. Margolis said she wants to move the discussion about the nickname past a "casual conversation" and educate officials and students on the negative impact that the name carries for students from countries that have seen the effects of colonialism.

"I think that's a really good way to start that conversation on campus," she said. "When we talk about the Colonial in history, what does it mean? And is that really what we want our school identity to be?"

Students launched a petition last semester calling on the University to switch the Colonials nickname to something less offensive, like GW's unofficial mascot, the hippo. SA President Ashley Le urged officials to listen to students' demand in a statement last May.

Margolis said she will moderate the panel and question and answer session from members of the audience with Sen. Amy Martin, ESIA-U, and Lauren Bordeaux, the SA's freshman representative for the Mount Vernon Campus. Margolis said she will also collect students' contact information after the event and follow up with them to announce future events, which could include panels or open forums about the topic.

She said having the Colonials as the University's team name may discourage students from having "inclusive" school spirit because the moniker could be associated with ethnophobia – the hatred of a different race – and oppression.

"We're a very diverse institution," Margolis said. "There are students that, if we were back in Colonial times, wouldn't have been represented or treated equally. School spirit is something that should be based on equality."

Margolis said she wants the panel to create a more "official" conversation about the

issue because it will be the first time faculty, students and officials will be in the same room discussing the topic.

Dean of the Student Experience Cissy Petty said she was invited to the event and will attend to "hear student feedback and opinion regarding the University's mascot." She said the panel is an opportunity for her to listen to more student opinions.

"As with any SA-led initiative, we are here to help guide them as they formulate their ideas and proposals," Petty said in an email. "We are open to continuing our discussions with the SA leadership as they further explore this topic."

She declined to say whether she supports changing the Colonials nickname.

Fran Buntman, an associate professor of sociology who will speak at the event, said she will share her experiences growing up in South Africa during Apartheid, which sanctioned racial segregation between 1948 and 1994, to educate domestic students about the real-life impact of colonialism.

She added that the term "colonialism" is often misattributed to President George Washington's era, but Washington was an anti-Colonial who led an army of revolutionaries against British control.

"It's always mystified me as to why GW would want to be associated with the idea of colonialism, let alone celebrate it," Buntman said.

Buntman added that she wants to remain neutral on the topic as she speaks on the panel so students and officials can hear a solely educational perspective on the topic and form their own opinions.

"I do think I need to help them understand what a word means that they are embracing," she said. "I think sometimes, we don't know the history of something, and when we know that, it makes a difference to what we think about it."

Dane Kennedy, a history and international affairs professor who will sit on the panel, said he wants to inform students about the racial connotations of colonialism, given that the word often refers to a group of white people oppressing minority groups, like Native or African Americans.

"All I can say is that it is a term that has associations that we might not want to have GW associated with," he said. "The past is with us. The past is useful as a way of making sense of the present."

CRIME LOG

WEAPONS VIOLATION

Public Property on Campus (500 Block of 22nd Street NW)
1/23/2019 – 1:25 p.m.

Closed Case

The GW Police Department learned that an alumnus had a prohibited weapon in his vehicle parked outside of the GWPD office. The Metropolitan Police Department responded to the scene and received written consent from the male suspect to search his vehicle. Officers confiscated the weapon and issued the suspect a bar notice. Officers escorted him off of the property outside the police department.

Referred to MPD

PUBLIC DRUNKENNESS

1959 E St. NW
1/26/2019 – 3:14 a.m.

Closed Case

GWPD responded to a report of an intoxicated male student. EMeRG assessed the student and transported him to GW Hospital for further medical treatment.

Referred to the Office of Enrollment and the Student Experience

THEFT II/FROM BUILDING, DRUG LAW VIOLATION, LIQUOR LAW VIOLATION

JBKO Hall
1/27/2019 – 12:32 a.m.

Closed Case

GWPD responded to a noise complaint and smelled a suspicious odor. GW Housing conducted an administrative search of the room that yielded drugs, drug paraphernalia and alcohol. Officials also found a Panera Bread sign and returned it to the Marvin Center. EMeRG responded to the scene and evaluated an underage, intoxicated male student and decided he did not need further medical treatment.

Referred to ESE

DISORDERLY CONDUCT/INTOXICATION

District House
1/27/2019 – 2:24 a.m.

Closed Case

GWPD responded to a report of an intoxicated female student. Upon arrival, the student refused to exit a taxi cab. EMeRG responded and transported her to GW Hospital for medical evaluation.

Referred to ESE

STALKING

Various Locations
Multiple – Multiple

Closed Case

A female staff member reported to GWPD that she was being stalked by an unknown person. MPD responded and issued a report. There is limited information about the nature of the stalking.

Referred to MPD

CREDIT CARD FRAUD/FRAUD

West Hall
1/29/2019 – 4:10 p.m.

Open Case

A student reported unauthorized charges on his GWorld account after he misplaced his card.

Case open

— Compiled by Valerie Yurk

Diversity reforms followed racist incident

From Page 1

with a stronger, more unified voice.

"We're starting to talk about issues that affect us and trying to make changes on those issues rather than dwell on the past," junior Michael Ferrier, the president of the Black Student Union, said. "Alpha Phi is over – it's time to look forward."

A year of strength

Junior Simone Hunter-Hobson said that while students should not forget the incident, the black community is "not going to let this incident hold us down" as students focus on other projects, like planning the Black Heritage Celebration this month.

Hunter-Hobson, the president of the recently relaunched National Pan-Hellenic Council – which oversees six historically black Greek-letter chapters – said she is focusing her energy on "serving the black community in any way possible" through community service and fundraising events to support the chapters.

"We have our own council, we can make our own decisions, we conduct our own meetings," she said. "Being able to unite as black students and do good work for the community – I think that's my role."

Sophomore Kahleel Hester, the president of GW Posse – the student arm of the Posse Foundation, which recruits high-achieving racially, economically and geographically diverse students from Atlanta – said GW has taken a step in "the right direction" but needs to take a "leap."

Hester commended the University for enrolling more black students this year – with about 870 undergraduates this year compared to 790 last year, according to institutional data – but noted that the group is one of the only minority populations that does not have at least 1,000 students on campus.

"We're not going to be at a school where we're about to associate ourselves with bigotry," he said. "I don't think it will ever end, but we need to find a way to just acknowledge it and just prevent it."

Ferrier, the BSU president, said the organization is focusing on bringing students together with town halls and events that "integrate" the black student

community. Several top administrators attended a BSU town hall last November for members of the black community to discuss issues like a lack of faculty diversity and the Snapchat incident.

Dozens of black student leaders championed the community in the weeks following the Snapchat incident and were involved in shaping the University's diversity and inclusion initiatives. The Hatchet reached out to 33 current and former black student leaders while reporting this story, but 17 declined to comment and 11 did not return multiple requests for comment.

A year of reform

So far, officials have met seven of the nine goals they outlined last spring – including implementing diversity training during first-year orientation and updating the student code of conduct to change the way discriminatory behavior is classified. Officials have two incomplete tasks:

the Race in America series last spring. Laguerre-Brown added that the Diversity Summit, held in the fall for the first time last semester, featured more than 20 educational sessions with students, faculty, staff and a keynote speech with journalist Jemele Hill.

Former Panhellenic Association President Elizabeth Jessup, who led the organization during the incident, said that after the Snapchat post, the association created a vice president of membership development position in December to make the Greek life community more inclusive.

She said Michael Tapscott, the director of the Multicultural Student Services Center, also facilitated a diversity training before recruitment for recruitment chairs and pi rho chis, members of sororities who temporarily disaffiliate from their chapters to guide students through recruitment.

"We've been doing the deep learning and work re-

Alpha Phi and representatives for Alpha Phi's international organization did not return multiple requests for comment. Emma Montag, the former president of Alpha Phi, and the three women involved with the post – the two pictured and the third who posted and captioned the photo – also did not return multiple requests for comment.

A year of advocacy

Former SA President Peak Sen Chua, who led the student body during the incident, said that prior to the post, he and other student leaders had discussed diversity training but it was difficult to prove to officials that the initiative was needed. He said the incident and the SA's resolution condemning the post "mobilized a response" from officials.

"The incident showed the University how much students really cared about it, how much it really hurt people," Chua said. "They might have not realized that if this incident hadn't happened, unfortunately."

Senior Imani Ross, a former SA senator who spearheaded the legislation condemning the post, said officials should be more proactive in preventing racist incidents and "anticipate the next set of issues" before they arise.

"Cleaning up this mess was just the beginning to a long, systematic disenfranchisement of black and brown students," she said in an email. "If administrators and students are serious about doing this work, it absolutely shouldn't end here."

SA Executive Vice President Ojani Walthrust, who was inspired to run after the incident, said that over the past year, the SA has created a diversity and inclusion assembly that helped ensure that student leaders could "hear out problems" from different communities. The assembly will wrap up its series of town halls for different minority groups at the end of the semester, he said.

He added that any administrative plans to improve diversity must be communicated through forums and meetings with students to ensure everyone is aware of the steps officials are taking to meet their concerns.

"Through all tough experiences, we have to make sure we see what happened and we prepare for it in the future to ensure that does not happen again," he said.

We're starting to talk about issues that affect us and trying to make changes on those issues rather than dwell on the past. Alpha Phi is over – it's time to look forward.

MICHAEL FERRIER
PRESIDENT, BLACK STUDENT UNION

opening up options for more multicultural housing and finalizing pending revisions to the University's equal opportunity policy.

Caroline Laguerre-Brown, the vice provost for diversity, equity and community engagement, said the action plan released last fall is "just a start" to the University's diversity and inclusion initiatives. Officials will also launch an online education module about diversity and inclusion for incoming students, she said.

She added that a bias incident reporting system included in last year's report is currently being tested.

"We still have more work to do, and I appreciate the efforts being made by so many of our students, faculty and staff," she said in an email.

Jordan West took over as the inaugural diversity and inclusion education director last semester and has since hosted workshops for students, officials and faculty to combat implicit biases and discrimination.

The University also invited its first two speakers for

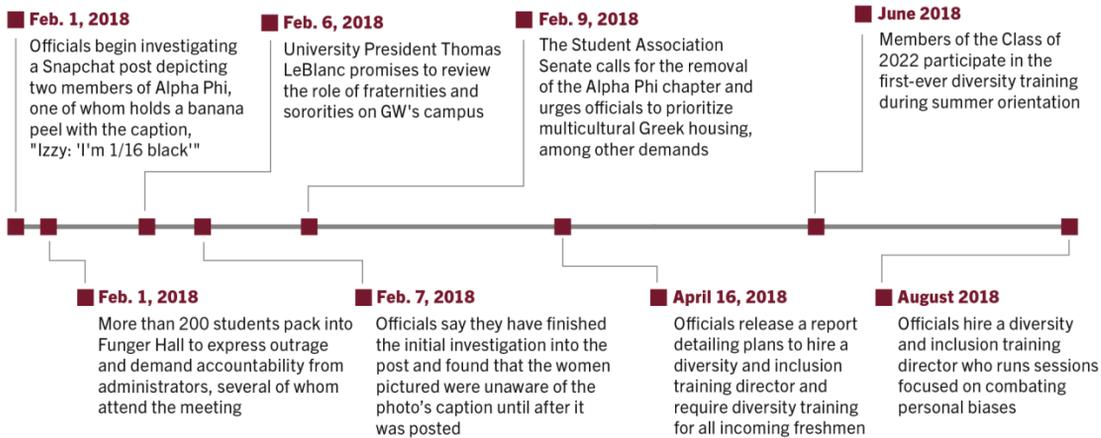
quired to develop long-term initiatives to better our community and our members," Jessup said in an email.

Hannah Blandon, the Panhellenic Association's first vice president of membership development, said officials responded to the incident "without many students' feelings or input in mind." Blandon, who served on one of the University task forces to implement freshman diversity training, said few students have had clear communication with officials about the status of each initiative.

"Students haven't gotten over it, myself included," she said in an email. "It's one of the reasons why I won't stop pushing for diversity and inclusion education even though I know it won't be the end-all-be-all for correcting institutional racism and prejudice."

In her current position, Blandon said she is working with members of the MSSC to plan diversity and inclusion training for chapter leaders and interested members this semester.

The current president of



EMILY RECKO | GRAPHICS EDITOR

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SA Senate to consider bill outlawing discriminatory behavior

SARAH ROACH
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

The Student Association Senate will soon debate a bill that would add an anti-discrimination policy to the SA's constitution for the first time.

SA President Ashley Le will propose legislation later this month to institute an anti-discrimination and harassment policy mandating that SA members are not denied positions on the basis of race, sex or ethnicity. Le said the bill would close a "loophole" in the SA's constitution that does not currently set grounds to punish SA members for discriminatory behavior.

"We thought this is time for us to step up and this is time for us to take the lead in making sure that the student government is a welcoming place, is an inclusive place, for all students," Le said.

The legislation would require SA members to uphold the student code of conduct, be "mindful" of their social media posts and respect one another "regardless of race, religion, gender identity, national origin, language, economic level, veteran status or disability." If a member of the SA exhibits discriminatory behavior or engages in harassment,



FILE PHOTO BY DONNA ARMSTRONG | CONTRIBUTING PHOTO EDITOR
SA President Ashley Le is proposing legislation Monday to institute an anti-discrimination and harassment policy mandating that SA members are not denied positions on the basis of race, sex or ethnicity.

illegal activity, sexual assault or violence, they are subject to censure and removal, according to the legislation.

The measure must go through the SA's governance and nominations committee, pass the senate by a two-thirds majority and be approved in a student-wide referendum during SA elections this spring to go into effect.

Le said the SA is currently the only student organization that does not

have an anti-discrimination policy after the University required all registered student groups to include similar language in their governing documents last March.

The SA could not add the policy at the time because senators would have needed to approve the measure in February, about a month before SA elections, to include a studentwide referendum on the ballot, according to the organization's bylaws.

"I don't think we are at fault for not having the policy because we need the student body to follow up on it, and that can only come once a year," Le said. "Now, as it stands, it does look inconsistent that the governing body of the student body at GW does not have the policy to say that we stand against discrimination."

Le added that an anti-discrimination policy could have assisted the

SA Senate last year when held a vote on whether to censure a former senator accused of writing anti-Semitic Facebook posts in 2014. A vote to censure the senator would have suspended him for up to a month.

Le said the constitution as it currently reads does not have a process for removing a member because of discriminatory behavior.

"It made me think about how the Student Association should be setting a high standard, but we didn't," she said. "We failed to censure a former senator even though his comments hurt a really big part of the community and to me, that doesn't make any sense."

SA Executive Vice President Ojani Waltrust said that if the policy is approved, the constitutional changes would mirror the University's efforts to update its own discrimination and harassment policies to include examples of repercussions for discriminatory behavior. The SA Senate unanimously passed a resolution commending the University's review of the policies in November.

"We're changing for the better, and we're progressing, and we're making sure we are represen-

tative of all students," Waltrust said. "We're following the same guidelines as other organizations."

Boston University is the only school of GW's 12 peer institutions to have an anti-discrimination policy in its student association's bylaws.

Andrew Chiao, the chair of BU's student government senate, said the student government added a non-discrimination policy about three years ago after two student leaders were accused of discriminatory behavior. At the time, a student leader was criticized for publicly categorizing Palestine's actions in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict as "terrorism."

He said the policy also illustrates that the student government has ethical standards for right and wrong behavior, which sets an example for the rest of the student body to follow.

"As a formal representative body of students, it's important to prevent things like discriminatory acts but also show to students that we are making an effort to support them equally, representing equally and also provide a supportive student government infrastructure for everyone," he said.



GRAEME SLOAN | CONTRIBUTING PHOTO EDITOR

The District Department of Transportation received 247 service requests for potholes in Ward 2 last month.

Pothole service requests more than triple in Ward 2

ANDARA KATONG & ZOYA WAZIR
REPORTERS

The District Department of Transportation is fixing three times more potholes in Ward 2 this year than it was a year ago, city officials said.

The department received 247 service requests to fill potholes last month in Ward 2, which encompasses the Foggy Bottom Campus, compared to 76 in January last year, Lauren Stephens, a public affairs specialist at the DDOT, said. Local representatives and officials said excess rain has contributed to the increased number of potholes and the greater number of requests can also be attributed to residents being more aware of how to submit repair requests.

Pothole service requests have surged across the District in the past month, with 776 across the city between Jan. 1 and Jan. 24. DDOT received less than half that number in 2018 with about 350 reports filed, Stephens said.

She said potholes are formed when rainwater seeps beneath asphalt, freezes and later thaws, so the "extremely" rainy year boosted the number of potholes in the District.

The District received a record-high 71 inches of rain in 2018, The Washington Post reported.

Stephens said it usually takes about three days to fill a pothole, but repair teams can be delayed if snow falls.

"Our crews are working around the clock to fill potholes," she said in an email. "Mayor [Muriel] Bowser has beefed up DDOT's capacity to respond to potholes with the purchase of new equipment."

Last April, Bowser kicked off the 10th annual "Pothole-palooza" campaign – a month-long effort to fill potholes across the city – and announced the launch of PavementDC, a plan to improve more than 300 roads and sidewalks in poor condition by 2024. As part of the plan, she an-

nounced that DDOT would begin using eight new hot boxes to maintain asphalt's proper temperature, which Stephens said now allows the department to operate "much more efficiently."

Detrick Campbell, a member of the Foggy Bottom and West End Advisory Neighborhood Commission, said heavy traffic in the District, on top of poor weather conditions, has contributed to an increase in potholes. Congested roads can also delay DDOT workers in filling potholes, he said.

"The District is one million people, and so many cars on the road can have the roads give way," he said.

Campbell said the time and cost of repairs can vary depending on the size of the pothole and how busy the street is. He said DDOT sometimes repaves an entire street if a block with a pothole is in need of other repairs.

"DDOT generally has a measuring system or a tracking system where they take in multiple factors into account and rank which potholes on which street need to be fixed," Campbell said. "That can always change."

Trupti Patel, an ANC commissioner, said the increase may also be attributed to better education about the ways residents can submit service requests. She said DDOT has been more "proactive" in reaching out to the D.C. community and informing them that they should contact 311 to report maintenance requests.

Patel said repairing potholes also benefits the city by preventing lawsuits from residents who may damage their cars while driving on roads in need of repair.

"It would mitigate costs for the city in legal fees, time spent in having to go back and forth in court to try to settle this," Patel said. "It's just cheaper for them to say, 'We're on it, let's repair this.'"

—Ilana Peng contributed reporting.

Law school overhauls writing curriculum

HAYDEN SMITH
REPORTER

Law students will take on a more rigorous writing curriculum this fall.

Law school officials announced a series of major adjustments to the law school's Legal Research and Writing Program late last month – the first changes to the school's core curriculum "in more than a generation," administrators said. The revisions include a switch from an adjunct to a full-time staff, the addition of a new course focused on lawyer-client relationships and an increased credit-hour requirement.

"These changes, which position GW Law as a curricular leader, will augment our already-strong program, add a professional development component and make our students practice-ready," Dean Blake Morant said in a law school release last week.

Starting in the fall, the program will account for six credits instead of four "at a time when most U.S. law schools are offering four or five credits." The new writing course included in the updated curriculum will focus on administrative law and regulatory interpretation, the release states.

Morant said the new curriculum changes offer students more time to hone their skills in areas like client interactions.

"No other law school

in the area offers this innovation, and it remains rather rare in the legal academy at large," Morant said in the release.

Law school officials said the changes will make it easier for students to gain hands-on writing and research skills that can be directly applied to their careers.

Christy DeSanctis, a professor of legal research and writing and the director of the program, said Morant appointed a task force more than two years ago to assess the writing curriculum, compare it to peer schools and evaluate feedback from students and alumni. After more than a year, the 14-person committee proposed a series of adjustments that aimed to "produce more self-directed, self-sufficient, 'practice-ready' lawyers," DeSanctis said in an email.

"The research and writing curricular changes – those are skills that virtually every legal employer lists as first most important for junior attorneys," DeSanctis said.

She said the new writing components of the first-year course will focus more on profession-specific writing and relationships between attorneys and their clients. She said the writing projects in the program will be "more numerous but much shorter," and officials hope the expanded curriculum mirrors what lawyers do every day.

"We do not see this change as an intensity move; rather, the goal

is to better contextualize the writing that one does as a lawyer with the role of a lawyer and the relationship between the lawyer and client," she said.

DeSanctis said the change from the adjunct model to full-time faculty will help develop "mentor-mentee relationships" between the new professors and their students. She said the school will still utilize some adjunct professors to teach other courses "as needed."

She added that the revisions are a "tremendous advance" for the program and put the law school "ahead of the curve." A "significant" number of competitor law schools have changed their first-year curricula over the past 10 years to include courses focused on legislation regulation or statutory law interpretation, while a "few" universities have implemented five-credit programs, DeSanctis said.

Other law institutions ranked similarly to GW, like Boston University and the University of California Irvine, have employed full-time staff to oversee their writing programs and upped their curricula to six credit hours over the past five years. The law schools at Emory and Cornell universities both maintain four-credit legal research and writing programs that are taught by full-time staff.

D.C.-area law schools, like American and Georgetown uni-

versities, both assign four credits to their first-year legal writing courses. Georgetown's legal writing program consists of only full-time faculty, while American's employs a mix of full-time and adjunct faculty, according to their respective website.

Teresa Godwin Phelps, a professor of law and the director of the Legal Rhetoric Program at American University's Washington College of Law, said that while hiring all full-time faculty may have a larger price tag, limiting teaching positions to full-time faculty helps foster one-on-one relationships with students.

"It can be hard to corral so many adjunct faculty together sometimes," she said. "Having just a few full-time faculty makes it easier to ensure that there is consistency across the program."

Robert Volk, an associate professor of legal writing and the director of the Legal Writing and Appellate Advocacy Program at the Boston University School of Law, said making his program's first-year course worth six credits allowed him to incorporate more training activities, like drafting law briefs, into the class. He added that having full-time faculty in the program grants students the most access to professors.

"The extra credits certainly helped make room for more activities," he said. "We have a pretty comprehensive program."



SKYLAR EPSTEIN | PHOTOGRAPHER
Law school officials announced a series of major adjustments to the law school's Legal Research and Writing Program late last month – the first changes to the school's core curriculum "in more than a generation," administrators said.

STAFF EDITORIAL

As universities question outdated blue light system, GW must expand safety measures

College campuses across the country are outfitted with bases where students can click a small button and call for help from the GW Police Department. These systems, called blue light systems at GW, are touted as a way to keep students safe — especially on urban campuses like GW.

But as technology advances, universities are grappling with whether a system from nearly three decades ago is adequate to keep students safe.

More than three dozen blue light stations are scattered throughout campus, which can help make students, administrators and faculty feel safe, especially late at night. But these safety measures merely give the illusion of safety and are no longer practical. Considering that the system is old and there are more effective solutions available, the University must invest in other security measures in addition to the blue light system.

Darrell Darnell, the senior associate vice president for safety and security, said GW likes "redundancy when it comes to campus safety" and therefore employs multiple security measures including closed-circuit cameras, blue light emergency phones and officer bike and foot patrols, among other security tactics.

But GW needs to step these measures up to fully protect students.

As students walk around with smartphones that can do far more than call 911, a stationary system that calls the police feels archaic. The system was implemented in the '90s and officials have confirmed that they have seen a decrease in the system's use over the years.

While it cannot hurt to have the

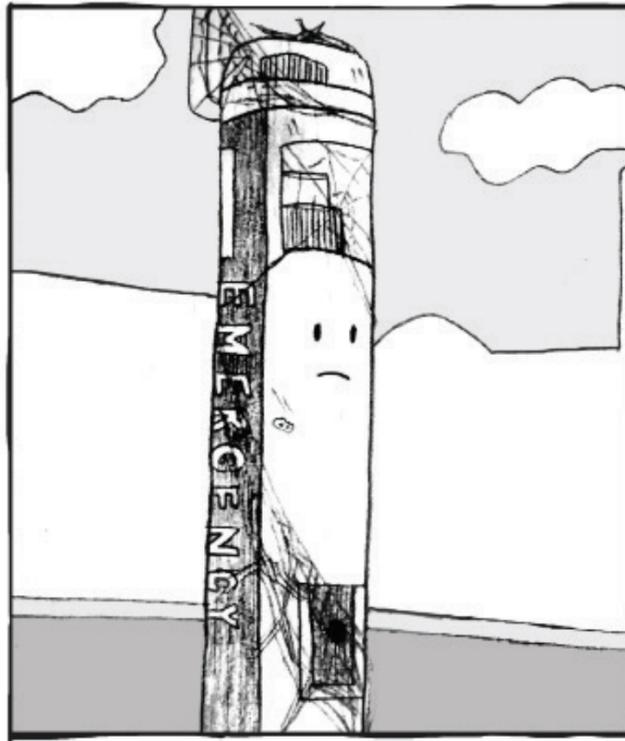
blue light system installed around campus, GW touts the service to both current and prospective students as one of its main methods of security and it must focus its resources on other methods of security and stop advertising the service as a way to keep students safe.

In recent years, the University has made an effort to expand its security measures, including rolling out an app called GW PAL. The app works like a mobile blue light in students' pockets and offers users the option of calling the police, calling 4-RIDE and informing users when the sun will set so they

can avoid walking alone in the dark.

While the app is a strong step in the right direction, the University can continue advertising this option to students beyond first-year orientation and bolster other means of security.

The simplest way to make students safer on campus is to ensure GW Police Department officers are fully trained and present so students



Cartoon by Maggie Grobowski

know there is someone around to help should a dangerous situation arise. GWPD's top two leaders both resigned suddenly last year and the department restructured, which experts said could improve oversight in the department, but some students called for increased transparency and we have yet to have it about how this will affect the department.

increase students awareness of what is going on around them at night and help them stay safe. Some areas of campus already have this, but expanding the lights could help make all of the community feel safer as well.

GW also already offers services to drive students around campus late at night, but both students and drivers employed to run the service

However, while an increased police presence could mitigate some issues and make some students feel more at ease, over-policing is a huge issue as well and some students may be uncomfortable with an increased presence of officers. While these concerns are valid, bad policing is more of a problem than over-policing, and if the University properly trains its officers this solution could improve security and increase student trust in GWPD.

The University is situated in a city so street lights line the streets of campus, but installing floodlights on the side of buildings in poorly lit alleyways could in-

crease students awareness of what is going on around them at night and help them stay safe. Some areas of campus already have this, but expanding the lights could help make all of the community feel safer as well.

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have spoken out to call 4-RIDE ineffective. Drivers said the outdated system causes them to be late, so improving the technology used to run the system would also ensure the service actually keeps students safe. In addition to the 4-RIDE service, GW could follow the lead of universities — including one of its peer schools the University of Southern California — by partnering with Lyft or Uber to offer free trips late at night.

GW has also already made steps toward expanding building access to students, and it should continue that work to increase safety. The University granted freshmen tap access to other freshman residence halls in an effort to build a community among first-year students, but this is a safety improvement as well. Students can now wait inside buildings for rides or could tap into a nearby residence hall in case of an emergency — and GW should give this option to all students to further spread the benefits.

Relying on ineffective blue lights can't make students safer and implying that the lights improve security on campus is misleading to prospective students and parents.

There is one service that GW must provide students that has immeasurably high consequences. GW must keep students safe and that requires expanding digital resources for students while maintain the non-technology based safety measures as well. By expanding ride services, keeping campus well lit, providing tap access to all campus buildings and bolstering a support GWPD force, the University can provide real safety improvements to students and move forward from an outdated system.

Creating separate debate tournaments reinforces gender stereotypes

Harmful gender stereotypes are all around us. And while these can be damaging and create inequalities, not all solutions to this problem are productive.

The GW Parliamentary Debate Society announced last week that its second tournament of the academic year will be strictly for women and transgender individuals. The tournament is the first time in the national organization's history that women and transgender individuals have been given their own space to debate.

The new tournaments were created with the goal of empowering women and transgender individuals by giving them a safe space to debate. While the premise of the tournament is admirable, creating gender-separate institutions to combat gender inequality takes men out of debates without actually holding them responsible for their toxic actions.

If men aren't present to address the issue, don't even for a second have to consider giving up their privilege and get to "sit this one out" — then women and gender minorities will remain marginalized.

Debate tournaments are model scenarios for gender stereotypes to play out. Individuals are tasked with laying out their opinion on a certain topic and then go back and forth with their opponent to defend their position. While

men may be lauded for standing their ground and even being slightly aggressive in proposing their viewpoint, women are often painted as combative or rude no matter what their debating style is.

Whether these stereotypes play out through side conversations between participants and onlookers or in docked points by the panel of judges, it is easy to see how stereotypes could be damaging in a debate forum.

However, separating

Galen Ekimov
Writer

participants by gender is not the answer. While the new debate tournaments have been framed as a way to prioritize women and gender minority debaters, this sort of arrangement does little to actually bridge disparities in the way genders are treated differently when it comes to debate.

The problem with gender-separate tournaments is clear. The organization separates men from the conversation about male toxicity and gender minority disempowerment in regular tournaments. Instead of instituting structural changes about the way gender power dynamics in debate play out and attempting to solve the issue, the American Parliamentary Debate Association is effectively shelving the issue of

gender inequality and pushing it to its own tournament.

Gender-separate tournaments are contrary to empowerment because they reinforce the negative stereotypes that women and gender minorities cannot compete against men. The separate tournaments reinforce false stereotypes and confine their experiences, struggles and achievements to a different category.

Considering tournaments that separate participants by gender is a solution is akin to creating separate but equal institutions, and we cannot ignore the history of our nation which consistently shows this is not the answer.

Proponents of the gender minority tournaments might insist that the special tournament is just one competition out of dozens throughout the year, but even one event that reinforces the idea that gender stereotypes hold truth is too many.

We shouldn't seek to make women and transgender individuals more comfortable by separating them from men. Instead, the goal should be to make structural changes in how the American Parliamentary Debate Association deals with the lopsided power dynamic between men, women and gender minorities, to ensure equality for all.

—Galen Ekimov, a freshman majoring in international affairs, is a Hatchet opinions writer.

With several vacant leadership positions, GW should prioritize hiring diverse candidates

Voters across the country flocked to the polls this fall to choose who would represent them in some of the most powerful political seats in the country. With those votes, the American people elected the most diverse Congress in its history to represent the country on Capitol Hill.

But in Foggy Bottom, students are represented by a president, provost and Board of Trustees chairman who are all white men. The University currently has six vice president and dean positions open — so now is the time to shift the demographics and diversify key roles by hiring talented and qualified people of color and women to lead the University.

Three top leaders left GW last month alone. Matt Manfra, the senior associate vice president for alumni relations and Ann McCorvey, the deputy executive vice president and treasurer, announced their resignations and Jeffrey Akman, the dean of the School of Medicine and Health Sciences, stepped down last month, joining three deans who have left their posts since University President Thomas LeBlanc took over in 2017. While many positions are in transition and turnover is difficult for any institution to handle, this fits into a trend that leaders change direction when a new president takes over. GW now has the opportunity to diversify the leadership of key administrative offices and schools like the School of Engineering and Applied Science and the College of Professional Studies.

Students have spoken out about GW's lack of diversity on various occasions over the past year. The campus became embroiled in controversy when a racist Snapchat post spread around campus at the start of Black History Month and the conversation continued through the year. The post became the subject of town halls and a Student Association Senate meeting, sparked a new diversity training for incoming students and was a cornerstone of conversation during SA elections in the spring. In the fall, students reignited a charge to rename the Marvin Center because it is named after Cloyd Heck Marvin, a former University president who supported segregation.

Zach Nosanchuk
Writer

In recent years the University has made efforts to diversify the student body by employing a test-optional policy and enrolling an undergraduate population that is the most diverse in at least a decade, with minority students making up 49.2 percent of undergraduates. But if new students come to a campus led almost entirely by people who do not look like them, it is unlikely they will feel welcome here.

Of GW's 12 schools and 19 administrative positions, there are currently six white women and five men and women of color who are vice presidents or deans. While this number is encouraging, if administrators want to create a truly

inclusive campus, we need an increasingly diverse set of individuals to lead these students.

While GW is not the least diverse of its peer schools, the University is not at the most diverse either. The University's 12 peer schools are split with half the schools filling half or more of their positions with diverse candidates. GW falls in the middle with slightly less than half its positions currently filled by women or people of color.

GW falls in line with its peers in diverse leadership, but it can improve further by continuing to choose the most talented candidates for these posts while exercising an awareness of the need for greater administrative diversity. If the administration seeks to practice what they preach, decision-makers should prioritize filling open positions with women and people of color who are often underrepresented in leadership positions at institutions across the country.

While it is easy for universities to offer simplistic statements in support of diversity, it is much easier said than done. Administrators must continue to employ diverse leaders that reflect the institution they lead and the values of diversity they hold.

With several vacant leadership positions, it's time for GW to continue to show its commitment to diversity by hiring a slate of qualified leaders from minority groups to lead the University into the next decade.

—Zachary Nosanchuk, a freshman majoring in political communication, is a Hatchet opinions writer.

BRYCE VINE
Union Stage
Feb. 8 • \$25
Indie-pop artist Bryce Vine sings bright songs to warm you up in February.

COIN
9:30 Club
Feb. 8 • \$25
COIN's tour features funky beats and groovy melodies to accompany an alternative rock vibe.

ESTELLE
Birchmere
Feb. 10 • \$29.50
With songs inspired by reggae, Estelle's album "Lovers Rock" highlights her natural voice and range on stage.

RELEASED THIS WEEK: 'THANK U, NEXT,' AN ALBUM BY ARIANA GRANDE

Alumna expands company that hosts workshops for female artists in the District



ZHOUYI SHEN | PHOTOGRAPHER
Kathryn Zaremba, who graduated with a master's degree in exhibition design from the Corcoran School of the Arts and Design in 2012, sketches a drawing at her workshop Wednesday night.



ZHOUYI SHEN | PHOTOGRAPHER
Participants in The Lemon Collective's Drawing Night work on sketching flowers at She Loves Me, a flower shop that the collective frequently collaborates with.

ANNA BOONE
REPORTER

When an alumna visited an old, rundown deli in Park View, she said she wanted to transform the "horrible" space into a workspace fashioned with funky wallpaper and eclectic pieces of art to bring artists around the District together.

Kathryn Zaremba, who graduated with a master's degree in exhibition design from the Corcoran School of the Arts and Design in 2012, created The Lemon Collective — a workshop that hosts almost daily guided classes like embroidery for

beginners and how to build a cheese board. After starting The Lemon Collective in 2015, Zaremba and her business partners have created a space to bring female artists, entrepreneurs and activists to gather in the District.

The Lemon Collective moved to a new location at 808 Upshur St. NW last month and while the new location in Petworth is slightly smaller, Zaremba said by mid-February, the group will have a second space next door that will allow them to host more events.

The group hosts medi-

tation sessions, classes and art shows and often forms the topics around local issues. In days after the country's longest government shutdown, The Lemon Collective will host a show Feb. 17 that displays work from previously furloughed government workers alongside personal notes about how the shutdown affected them.

"We do try to bring awareness to things that are happening in the city, even if they're not happening in our space," Zaremba said.

Zaremba said the two co-founders of The Lemon Collective — Holley Sim-

mons and Linny Giffin — were the only people who expressed interest in the workspace.

"We all just really wanted to have a space outside of our homes where we could teach our trades to people, gather and make our work without having to destroy our apartments and disrupt our personal lives," Zaremba said.

But Zaremba said The Lemon Collective not only allowed her to build a network and support other artists, but it also showed her the freedom that comes along with owning a business.

"We are very open-minded and I love that about our space," Zaremba said. "Because it's just the three of us, we don't have anyone telling us that we can't program a class where women talk about sex or telling us that we can't offer a free workshop that helps people buy their first home."

In addition to inspiring local artists through The Lemon Collective, Zaremba runs a custom wallpaper company, the Kate Zaremba Company, where she sells her colorful wallpaper that features designs like avocados, sketches of eyes and

zebras, and helped deck out the walls of D.C. restaurants like Little Sesame.

Zaremba said it was not easy to make a place for herself in the art world, which made her want to empower other artists and promote entrepreneurship for creatives in the District.

"I would say successful artists — unless they happen to be scooped up by a savvy business persona and handled — they're the most fantastic business people because they have to be in order to dream it, to make, to produce it and to be able to make a living from that work," Zaremba said.



ISABELLA BRODT | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Robin Bell, a former Corcoran School of the Arts and Design professor of video editing and production, created projections for the exhibit that urge people to rethink the definition of the word "open."

Former professor known for insults projected on Trump's hotel to open exhibit in Corcoran

LINDSAY PAULEN
CULTURE EDITOR

Months after the election of President Donald Trump, protest messages joking about paying bribes to the president and calling his hotel situated blocks from campus a "shithole" were projected on buildings across the city.

Now, the Flagg Building's hollow first-floor exhibition space will be transformed by projections created by the same artist when "Open" makes its debut Thursday.

Robin Bell, a former Corcoran School of the Arts and Design professor, created projections for the exhibit that urge people to rethink the definition of the word "open." The exhibit will be open through March 31 with projections displayed on the walls and stairs of the Atrium Gallery from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, and 1 to 6 p.m. on weekends.

Bell said the exhibit will analyze transparency and accountability in politics — while also commenting on the Corcoran's choice to cancel a show, "The Perfect Moment" by Robert Mapplethorpe in 1989 — through his signature projections, lights and even televisions.

"Open" is a prelude to

another upcoming exhibit, "6.13.89," which will open later this year in the Corcoran and will build on Bell's references to the Mapplethorpe show that was canceled amid the AIDS crisis and political pressure from the "religious right" because of controversy surrounding Mapplethorpe's art.

"I think the cancellation of Robert Mapplethorpe's show is a stain on the institution," Bell said. "It was a stain on Corcoran because it failed in standing up for celebrated American genius, it failed to create a voice. It censored an American voice."

His exhibit focuses on the word "open" because he said the Corcoran — before it was absorbed by the University in 2014 — failed to be transparent by censoring the art exhibit and closing the building to the public.

"The issue of this building's history is that a lot of people will be coming back into it — there's a sense of it being closed. I think that's something that's good to examine," Bell said. "The only way we can examine it is by being physically here."

While examining what led to Corcoran's exhibit closure in 1989, Bell said he drew parallels between the political environment in the late 1980s and the

political environment today. He said during the AIDS epidemic, people involved in politics cared more about targeting an artist's work than about the thousands of people dying from AIDS, and the trend of leaders shifting focus from problems at hand still happens today.

"It's harder for people to be open because they have to think differently," Bell said. "When you have closure — when you have people that try to close borders or try to close ways of life or ignore people's lives — it's easier for them because they can just hide."

While Bell is now taking his political speech into the halls of GW, he is no stranger to political art. In addition to his projections on the Trump International Hotel, he recently displayed a bold text reading "#BelieveSurvivors" outside a D.C. courthouse during hearings to confirm Brett Kavanaugh to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Bell said that more than anything, he hopes his exhibit sparks conversation despite the "general atmosphere" of censorship in some communities.

"It's essential to create dialogue," he said. "A lot of time we need to question people who are scared of discussions — that's the challenge. I think that's what we're up against."

Students to craft solutions to fashion industry challenges at 'hackathon'

MOLLY KAISER
REPORTER

A new student-run "hackathon" will challenge students to create solutions for issues in the fashion industry this weekend.

The inaugural GW Fast Fashion Textile Tech Hackathon, which will be hosted by the GW Innovation Center, will have students participating in a 24-hour competition to develop sustainable solutions to issues like pollution and textile waste, the event's organizers said.

About 100 participants in groups of two to five individuals will be tasked with generating tangible solutions — like a product, website or app — and will present their idea to a panel of judges as part of the competition.

Abby Drucis, a senior and co-founder of the hackathon, said she is a public health major, but an experience on campus sparked her interest in fast fashion. She said she created the event in response to the concept that people are buying clothing "as if it's disposable."

"When I was living in Ivory during move out a few years ago, I saw a pair of Gucci jeans with tags on them in the pile of trash," Drucis said. "That says something about our campus."

Drucis said she hopes the event will inspire students to gravitate toward the "future of fashion."

"When we talk about the future of fashion, we're talking about slow fashion, making really targeted choices about shopping, knowing where

your clothes came from," Drucis said. "Were they ethically made? How much water did it take to make that t-shirt?"

Teams will have access to a variety of tools including sewing machines, 3D printers, fabric, markers and poster board during the competition. Participants will also be allowed to use laptops and cell-phones to innovate an app or website to convey their solution.

"When we talk about the future of fashion, we're talking about slow fashion, making really targeted choices about shopping."

ABBY DRUCIS
SENIOR, CO-FOUNDER OF THE HACKATHON

After more than eight and a half hours to solve the fashion-industry problem they were presented with, teams will share their idea to a group of judges comprised of unannounced GW faculty and professionals from the fashion and sustainability communities, and prizes will be issued to the first-, second- and third-place winners.

She said the style of the event is unique because instead of just discussing solutions — it pushes participants to make solutions that can make a difference in the real world.

"It's time to do something," Drucis said. "People aren't just sitting around thinking, they're actually creating something and sharing their ideas."

The event, which will take place in the Science and Engineering Hall, will also have various hourlong workshops, including an introduction to coding and a presentation

on how to effectively pitch an idea. Additionally, Abbas Haider — the CEO of a men's clothing brand, Aspetto, and a Forbes 30 Under 30 recipient — will be the keynote speaker.

The hackathon is a precursor to an exhibition that will open at the Textile Museum in July called "Fast Fashion / Slow Art" that will focus on the drawbacks of fast fashion.

Co-founder Alana Gross, a senior majoring in accounting, said that the fast pace of the industry and emphasis on low prices are also some of the downfalls that the hackathon hopes to address.

"Think of H&M, Zara and Forever 21, these stores that you see changing their line of clothing almost every month — it's because they are making really cheap clothing that is bad for the environment," Gross said.

Sarah Shavin, a senior majoring in business and an Innovation Center fellow, said the events the center puts on are not exclusive to one type of person or major.

"Fashion is such an interdisciplinary issue — it ranges from international affairs, to design, engineering, business, communications, but I think it often gets this reputation that it's only clothing and what you read in magazines about fashion," Shavin said. "I think it's an interesting opportunity to destigmatize people who don't necessarily think they're interested or fit into the conversation around fashion to reconsider it from a new angle."

GAMES OF THE WEEK



MEN'S BASKETBALL
vs. VCU
7 p.m. • Wednesday
The Colonials host VCU at the Smith Center after snapping a three-game losing streak with a win over Fordham Wednesday.



MEN'S AND WOMEN'S SQUASH
vs. Drexel
2 p.m. • Saturday
The Colonials will honor three players on Senior Day to close out the regular season against the Dragons.

NUMBER CRUNCH

194.19

Average team score for gymnastics through GW's first four meets, down from 195.21 through the same span last year

Tough nonconference slate pays off in A-10 for women's basketball

AGAM MITTAL
STAFF WRITER

Women's basketball won just two games in the first half of the 2018-19 season. But now after nine conference games, GW has found itself in the top half of the Atlantic 10 standings.

Even as women's basketball started the season winning two of its first 10 nonconference games, head coach Jennifer Rizzotti insisted that tough losses were part of her game plan to prepare the team to face off against conference competition. Now halfway through conference play, Rizzotti's gamble has begun to pay dividends.

The Colonials responded with a 6-3 record in January, quadrupling their win total and bringing GW's overall record on the season to 8-14. Players said the difficult nonconference schedule prepared them mentally and physically for A-10 play, and the Colonials have been a tough team to beat because they are working together as a unit.

Senior guard Mei-Lyn Bautista said her team's return to success "started with confidence" in both the team's abilities and in the coaching staff.

"The nonconference schedule was really tough for us and then it got to a point where everyone on the team



FILE PHOTO BY OLIVIA ANDERSON | PHOTO EDITOR
Head coach Jennifer Rizzotti said the team's early-season losses were part of her game plan to compete against difficult competition in nonconference play.

was like, 'How are we going to come out of this hole?'" Bautista said. "But we stuck to it, we're invested."

The Colonials kicked off conference play with a 12-point loss on their own turf to Fordham on Jan. 5 in which they scored just 38 points. But after the shaky start, the team responded with a stretch of five wins over the next six games, including victories over VCU, Dayton and Duquesne — all teams that were picked to

finish in the top half of the A-10 in the league's pre-season poll.

Part of the Colonials' resurgence has come from the uptick in offensive production by the team's backcourt. After a nine-game stretch in which Bautista shot a combined 16-for-67, she found her stride in back-to-back wins over VCU and Duquesne in which she scored a combined 41 points and knocked down 12 three-pointers.

Bautista's 2.2 steals per game places her second in conference standings while ranking third with 4.0 assists per game. Her strong defensive efforts have helped to anchor an elite Colonials defense that has won games even despite offensive struggles that have persisted through the entire season.

Even considering the team's wins over some of the conference's top teams, women's basketball has struggled to maintain con-

sistency and put together 40 minutes of basketball.

"We don't really have one consistent offensive player," Rizzotti said after the game against Saint Louis Sunday. "We need everybody to get a little more consistent but also find ways to make sure that we have, whether it's inside or outside, we have a little bit better balance."

GW led by as many as 24 points late in the third quarter against Duquesne before escaping with a one-point victory after allowing the Dukes to rack up 25 points in the final 10 minutes of play. The Colonials were blown out by Davidson 62-42 Thursday and slipped up in a 16-point loss against Saint Louis on the road Sunday.

"Now it's a hump, where we have to ask ourselves, 'How do we play all 40 minutes, how do we want it more than the other team every single game and not just every other game?'" Bautista said.

Emblematic of their inconsistencies is the up-and-down play of sophomore forward Neila Luma, the team's scoring leader at 10.6 points per game.

But even as Luma racked up 20 points or more in three games, on three other occasions she found herself playing less than 20 minutes because she was not "playing hard enough," Rizzotti said after the team's game against

Davidson.

While Luma and Bautista have had inconsistencies on the season, freshman guard Maddie Loder has been added to the team's scoring repertoire since she was thrust into a starting role against Memphis on Jan. 1.

The 5-foot-11-inch combo guard has grown more confident with her jump shot and with her drives to the rim after struggling with poor shot selection and turnovers early in the season, she said. Loder credited her improvement to guidance from Bautista, who urged her to continue to drive the ball, she said.

"She pulled me aside and she was like, 'Keep driving to the basket, that's what we need you to do, that is what you're good at,'" Loder said.

Rizzotti said these scenarios have helped her young roster build confidence that will propel them to wins down the line. Tough recent matches are another test of the team's ability that will help them moving forward, she said, just as they were tested at the beginning of the season.

"We just want to take one day at a time," Rizzotti said after the game against Davidson. "I don't think that today was a step backward, I just think it was eye-opening for our guys to understand how much you can control a game with your effort."

Men's tennis back in action after nearly three months without matches

WILL MARGERUM
CONTRIBUTING SPORTS EDITOR

For the first time in nearly two decades, men's tennis did not compete in a single match in the month of January.

Entering the spring season with a young roster, recently appointed head coach and extra time without competition, the Colonials are looking to turn their early-season lull into an advantage by compensating with more time on the practice courts.

GW last competed in November at the Navy Gold Invitational where four players, including three freshmen, posted perfect 3-0 records in pool play. Nearly three months have passed since their strong start and the team said they have had ample time to focus on fitness and match practice to prepare for the upcoming spring schedule.

"We've just been working a lot as a team together," freshman Ryan Navarro said. "We've been training almost every day of the week focusing on fitness as well, trying to get in as good a shape as possible."

Navarro was one of the players to go undefeated in pool play at the Navy Gold Invitational and topped it off by claiming victory over Columbia sophomore Rian Pandole in the B Flight Singles Final by default.

Navarro paired up with fellow freshman Hanyu Liu for doubles play where the duo lost in the A Flight Final, but even after a long break since his success Navarro said he is still riding the high from a strong fall slare.

"It was actually a really nice way to end the fall season," Navarro said. "Just good knowing that I can go into the spring season confident knowing I can take down some of the better guys that are playing."

Head coach Rob Castille, who took charge of the program in the middle of the team's fall slate, said the winter break has been his first opportunity to spend time instructing players without the interruption of competitive play. The team has been focusing on getting their fitness levels up while getting back into the groove of official practices.

"I was actually pretty excited about that because that gave us time to really get guys back, really work with them," Castille said. "I came in the middle of the season and it's been a good opportunity for me to put my stamp on the team."

January competition typically consists of nonconference matches, and the decision to take off play in January was made by former head coach David Macpherson, who created the schedule for the year before departing from the program.

After spending the first few days of practice easing the team back into play and shaking off the cobwebs, Castille said he has been simulating game-day matches in practices by having players face off against each other and creating a competitive environment for the team in lieu of official competition.

"I was pleased with the competitiveness," Castille said. "There were some dis-

putes, on line calls here and there, spiciness, fist pumping and that's good to see because you get the match started."

Out of nine rostered players, six are freshmen, making this squad the youngest since the 2014-15 team that also featured six first-years. They will play a significant amount of matches in the spring, giving them experience early in their collegiate careers, Castille said.

"It's a learning process and we're going to have four or five freshmen, first-years, playing in the top-six so there is going to be somewhat of a learning curve," Castille said. "We as coaches have to remind ourselves of that too, but we also have to strive to do our best to get them over that."

GW's first test of the work put in over the winter came on Sunday in a match against A-10 competition, La Salle. The Colonials downed the Explorers 6-1 and were paced by a strong showing from Navarro and sophomore Dennis Afanasev's 6-0 doubles performance.

"There's obviously no substitute for the real thing but you know we do the best we can to kind of make competitive situations," Castille said. "While it is your teammate, they want to win, competitive nature takes over and we let them do that and that will help prepare them for the matches."

The Colonials continue their spring schedule Friday with a match against Georgetown in College Park, Md. First serve is scheduled for 9 a.m.



FILE PHOTO BY DEAN WHITELAW | PHOTOGRAPHER
Senior Halley Brown runs during a team practice in January.

Women's indoor track and field set for strong end to season

BARBARA ALBERTS
SPORTS EDITOR

Head coach Terry Weir kicked off the indoor track season last month ready for a "team breakthrough" on the women's side.

With three meets under the team's belt and two left before the Atlantic 10 Indoor Track and Field Championships, Weir said the Colonials are "on track" for a strong showing in the back half of the season.

After a monthlong break following the first indoor track meet of the season in December, the Colonials had solid showings at the Keydet Invitational Jan. 19 — the team's first meet of the new year — and the Patriot Games Jan. 26. Between the two meets, the Colonials improved nine personal records but Weir said the team has yet to have its strongest meet.

"Everyone looks really on track and is doing really well," Weir said. "I still think we're going to have those breakthrough meets and season for them."

Weir said going forward he wants to get his runners into faster heats in their events and will be looking to see which events give the Colonials the biggest shot at success at the championship meet on Feb. 23.

"Time-wise, to get into those faster heats, that's what we're looking at now," Weir said. "That's how we line up certain girls in there to make sure we get those times so we

can be in those fast heats so we have an opportunity or position to score by the time A-10s come."

At the team's most recent meet on Jan. 26, six Colonials set personal records in their respective events and GW had four runners in the top-six finishers in the mile race. The runners were competing in "off races" at the Patriot Games. Runners like senior Madison Yerke and junior Suzanne Dannheim, who will most likely be running the 3,000-meter race at the championship meet, Weir said, were instead competing in the mile at George Mason.

"Our second meet at Mason, I thought we had a very good meet getting back in the swing of things," he said.

Across the team, the Colonials have set 12 personal records through three meets this season, picking up half of them at the Patriot Games.

"This past meet at George Mason, we're finally seeing what we want to see coming together," senior long-distance runner Kelli Stetson said. "We're not there yet and I think we can definitely do better but I think we're on the right trajectory."

Stetson added to the team's personal record count at the Patriot Games finishing the 5,000-meter race with a split of 17:56.58, 24 seconds faster than her previous mark.

"With the two meets we have left, it's enough time to get everything

down and ready to go for A-10s," Stetson said.

Seniors Yerke and Halley Brown, along with Dannheim, have all finished first in their respective events once this season in the team's three meets so far. Yerke and Dannheim most recently took first and second, respectively, in the mile at the Patriot Games despite usually running longer distances on the track.

At the Cappy Anderson Invitational in December and the Patriot Games, the Colonials flooded the top-six finishers in the mile races, with at least four Colonials grabbing a top-six finish in the event.

GW will revisit the Virginia Military Institute for the second time this season while some Colonials will travel to Boston for the David Hemery Valentine Invitational this weekend.

The Colonials do not have an indoor track to call their own, but the recurring meets they have at George Mason between the indoor and outdoor track and field seasons has made the away venue feel like the team's "home track," Stetson said.

"I definitely think it's to our advantage to have a meet at Mason and to be able to be back there for the championship because we're so comfortable in that environment," she said.

The Colonials return to action Friday at the VMI Winter Relays in Lexington, Va. and the David Hemery Valentine Invitational in Boston.



FILE PHOTO BY JACK BOROWIAK | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Junior Jakub Behun prepares to return a ball during a men's tennis practice in the fall.