

The GW Hatchet



Spring break staycations

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FILE PHOTO BY DONNA ARMSTRONG | CONTRIBUTING PHOTO EDITOR

Cissy Petty, the dean of the student experience, said officials are conducting a review of peer institutions before launching a search for a permanent CHC director.

GW yet to launch search for permanent CHC head 18 months after leader's departure

JARED GANS
STAFF WRITER

More than a year and a half after the Colonial Health Center lost its first director, officials have not yet initiated a search for a permanent leader.

The center has seen three different leaders over the past 18 months after Glenn Egelman, the first head of the CHC, resigned abruptly in September 2017 after just six months in the role. Two student affairs officials have since switched off heading the center, and administrators said they have delayed a search to conduct a peer assessment and partner with a search firm.

Cissy Petty, the dean of the student experience, said officials have turned to their peer institutions to review "best practices among colleges and universities who offer an integrated model to student medical and mental health services" before launching a director search. She said officials have also visited colleagues

at "a few" universities.

She said officials are seeking a search firm to help them create a job description and officially begin a search. The University will discuss the process further with student leaders and other stakeholders "at the appropriate time during the process," she said.

"We will continue the search until we identify the most qualified candidate whose focus will be continuing an environment that promotes the health, safety and well-being of all of our students," Petty said in an email.

Petty said counseling, medical services and health education have been a part of her job responsibilities or offices she has supervised throughout her career in student affairs. She said her experience "aligns well" with her role overseeing the CHC.

Danielle Lico, the former associate dean of students for administrative services who also had a background in health services, took over the CHC after Egelman's departure, but her

position was eliminated last summer. While heading the center, Lico also kept administrative roles in several departments, like in the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities and the Office of Military and Veteran Student Services.

Petty also maintains administrative roles in the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities and the Center for Student Engagement, which includes student leadership programs, residential life, student organizations, fraternities and sororities and on-campus student programming.

Petty added that Isabel Goldenberg, the medical director, and Gillian Berry, the associate director of Mental Health Services, are both "highly capable, skilled professionals" who oversee the CHC's two main operations.

"Our entire team is dedicated to supporting students and are providing the assistance our students need to be successful," Petty said. "As we move into the

future, we will continue to look for opportunities where we can integrate our health and wellness models."

Petty declined to say when she expects to find a permanent director for the CHC. She also declined to say how the lack of a permanent director has affected the CHC and what challenges she has faced while acting as both the dean of the student experience and the interim head of the center.

Student leaders said that without a permanent director, student feedback and concerns about health care have been neglected.

Noah Wexler, the director of student health policy for the Student Association and a member of the Student Health Advisory Council, a group of students and administrators who discuss health care concerns, said the CHC needs a leader with expertise and training in medicine and mental health.

See CHC Page 2

Officials continue to push science agenda as STEM majors soar

LAUREN PELLER & LIZZIE MINTZ
STAFF WRITERS

More undergraduates are majoring in science, math, engineering and technology fields than ever before, but officials said GW is still lagging behind other top universities.

Undergraduate enrollment in science-related topics increased by nearly 9 percentage points over the past 11 years, hitting 19 percent last fall, officials said at a Faculty Senate meeting Friday. University President Thomas LeBlanc said the increase is welcome, but the University must further increase its share of STEM majors if it wants to compete with other selective research institutions.

LeBlanc said GW enrolls nearly the lowest proportion of STEM majors among roughly 30 private universities in the nation, second only to Georgetown University. He said at least 30 percent of the undergraduate population should major in STEM fields to compete with other "serious" universities.

"If we're talking about being a preeminent institution, we have to look at the comparative data and admit we're not going to get there unless we start to have a heavier focus on STEM both in our faculty, in our facilities and in our student enrollment," LeBlanc said.

More than 2,200 students pursued bachelor's degrees in STEM fields in 2018, up almost 400 from the year before and more than double the number of majors in 2008. The data includes students in all five residential colleges, the College of Professional Studies and the School of Medicine and Health Sciences, according to the presentation.

"I believe we can no longer aspire to preeminence with that small a fraction of our student body studying STEM subjects," LeBlanc said. "But I also think our social science students, our

international relations students need more access to those skillsets."

LeBlanc came to GW in 2017 with a background in computer science and has since spent much of his time at the University bolstering research and science endeavors. His focus on STEM has also bled into other areas of the University, including selecting Marcia McNutt, the president of the National Academy of Sciences, to speak at the University-wide Commencement last year.

When students complained about the speaker, LeBlanc was captured on a recording saying he could "live with" the criticism because "privileged" non-STEM students were the most upset.

Provost Forrest Maltzman said the enrollment increase correlates with the University's efforts to expand STEM majors and classes, like the 2014 launch of the biomedical engineering department, which he said is the "fastest-growing" major at GW.

Maltzman said officials are also "exploring" ways to incorporate data analytics into all majors across campus. Officials announced earlier this semester that the computer science department would expand the number of spots available for students to take Introduction to Programming with Python in the fall.

"I think it's very reasonable to expect a continued growth in the STEM field given the changes that we've been making," Maltzman said in an interview.

Laurie Koehler, the senior vice provost for enrollment and the student experience, said opening the Science and Engineering Hall in 2015 has likely attracted more students to enroll in STEM classes because of the new "cutting-edge" facilities, including advanced lab space.

Koehler also pointed to

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Four-year graduation rate continues to rise, approaches 80 percent

LAUREN PELLER & MADELEINE DEISEN
STAFF WRITERS

More students are graduating in four years than ever before.

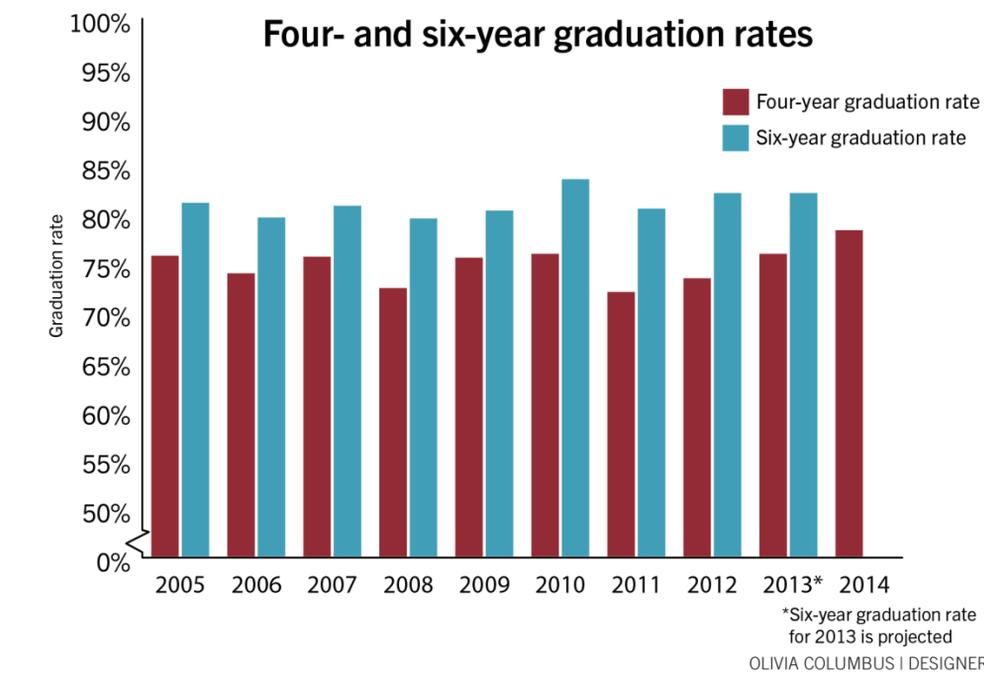
The four-year graduation rate hit an all-time high for the Class of 2018, clocking in at 78.3 percent last year, Provost Forrest Maltzman told the Faculty Senate Friday. Officials and experts said a long-term increase in graduation rates is reflective of institutional changes, like improvements to financial aid systems or dining plans, that have helped better student satisfaction.

Maltzman told the Faculty Senate that the University has made "unbelievable" progress toward improving the graduation rate even though officials would like the percentage to surpass 80 percent. He said officials have taken steps in recent years to improve different aspects of the student experience, including food insecurity and financial aid services.

He added that the creation of the Enrollment Retention Office in 2016 and the reconfiguration of the student affairs office in 2018 also helped produce "great" results and contributed to the improved graduation rate.

"We're not developing programs and saying, 'Let's aim for the Class of 2017 to get them to stay,'" he said. "We're saying, 'What can we do to enhance student experience? What can we do to make sure that students don't get frustrated when they try to take a program?'"

Maltzman said positive trends in four-year graduation rates are also reflected in six-year graduation rates. Last year, GW's six-year grad-



Source: Annual report on core indicators

uation rate reached 82 percent, and he said he anticipates an upward trajectory going forward.

But both GW's four- and six-year graduation rates have clocked in on the lower ends of its peer institutions. For the Class of 2017, the most recent year for which data is available from the National Center for Education Statistics, at least six of the University's 12 peers have had a higher four-year graduation rate, while eight have had better six-year data.

Laurie Koehler, the senior vice provost for enrollment and the stu-

dent experience, said officials have focused both on "the macro and the micro." She said administrators have honed efforts to reach out individually to students who are close to graduating and have also implemented long-term initiatives to improve student satisfaction.

Since University President Thomas LeBlanc arrived on campus, officials have merged the student affairs and enrollment offices into one department and overhauled the long-criticized student dining plan. Jennifer Steele, an associate pro-

fessor of education at American University, said many factors, including more academic support services and financial aid, could contribute to the four-year graduation rate increase. She said the jump in both areas should be "encouraging" for officials, but the four-year rate increase is the more "compelling" of the two numbers.

"That is what share of students make it through in the time that they probably anticipate when they start and for the budget that they probably anticipate when they start," she

said. She said the positive trend in GW's graduation rates over time shows this year's increase is not "just a one-year fluke."

"The longer the trend is established, the more that we can say it's a meaningful trend, but it's very exciting to hear the graduation rates moving in the direction that we would want," she said.

Tania LaViolet, the senior program manager of the College Excellence Program at the Aspen Institute, a nonprofit think tank, said four-year graduation rates affect "affordability and value" for students. She said a lack of access to financial aid can prevent students from graduating on time.

"When students experience delays in graduating, it can be costly — either because they are paying tuition for courses they didn't necessarily need to graduate and because they are deferring wages in a labor market that values bachelor's degrees," she said in an email.

Paul Marthers, the vice provost for enrollment management and the interim vice president of campus life at Emory University, said his university has improved academic advising and restructured its student affairs office to help boost graduation rates.

"People recognize that the graduation rate is an indicator of the quality of the institution," he said. "Certainly, parents and students who are going to pay 70-plus thousand dollars a year to send their son or daughter to college care deeply about what that university or college will do to help their student be successful all the way through those four years."

CRIME LOG

SEXUAL ASSAULT, STALKING

Off Campus
Multiple – Multiple
Closed Case
A female student reported to the GW Police Department that a man unaffiliated with the University stalked her on multiple occasions and sexually assaulted her at an off-campus location.
Off-campus incident

ROBBERY/FEAR

Off Campus
2/8/2019 – 1:30 a.m.
Closed Case
Two female students reported to local authorities in Florence, Italy that they were victims of a robbery while enrolled in a GW study abroad program. Florence police are investigating the incident and contacted GWPD to notify the University.
Off-campus incident

FONDLING, SIMPLE ASSAULT, DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY/VANDALISM

Public Property on Campus (600 Block of 22nd Street NW)
2/13/2019 – Unknown
Closed Case
The victim did not file a police report but reported an incident of fondling to a campus security authority. There is limited information about the event.
No further action

HARASSMENT (VERBAL OR WRITTEN)

Public Property on Campus (2100 Block of H Street NW)
2/16/2019 – 4:01 p.m.
Closed Case
A female student reported to GWPD that she was verbally harassed by a man unaffiliated with the University while standing outside of District House.
No identifiable suspect

ROBBERY PICK POCKET/LARCENY, CREDIT CARD FRAUD

2200 Pennsylvania Ave. NW (Sweetgreen)
2/22/2019 – 1:15 to 2 p.m.
Closed Case
A female student reported to GWPD that her wallet was taken from her purse while left unattended. She later noticed that three unauthorized purchases of \$125 each were made with her credit card.
No suspect or witnesses

SIMPLE ASSAULT (DATING VIOLENCE)

Lafayette Hall
2/24/2019 – 7:45 p.m.
Closed Case
A female student reported that she was assaulted by her ex-boyfriend. There is limited information about the nature of the assault.
Referred to the Office of Enrollment and the Student Experience

ATTEMPTED FRAUD

West Hall
Unknown – Unknown
Closed Case
A male student reported that he was the victim of fraud. The student received a phone call from an unknown subject in China who tried to get him to transfer money, but the student did not pay. The student also notified local police in China.
No suspect or witnesses

— Compiled by Valerie Yurk

Ward 2 boasts high household income, education and employment rates

ILENA PENG
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Ward 2 is among the District's most affluent wards, according to data from the recently created D.C. State Data Center Visualization Portal.

The ward, which encompasses Foggy Bottom, has some of the lowest unemployment rates and highest income and education levels in the District. Sociology experts said relatively recent shifts in the demographics of the ward – mostly onset by gentrification – have made Ward 2 more wealthy and educated.

Ward 2 has the second-highest median household income, level of education and employment rate in D.C., second only to Ward 3, which encompasses neighborhoods like Tenleytown and Chevy Chase. At the same time, Ward 2 also has the fourth-highest poverty rate citywide at 14.3 percent.

Michael Bader, an associate professor of sociology at American University, said gentrification in Ward 2 that began in Dupont Circle has since "radiated out" into places like Logan Circle, making the area more attractive to middle- and upper-class residents who enjoy the central location and access to transportation.

"The first waves of gentrification were centered in Ward 2," Bader said in an email. "Dupont Circle was one of the prototypical examples of gentrification nationwide, not just in D.C."

Ward 2's education level is also the second-highest in D.C. More than 80 percent of Ward 2 residents have a bachelor's degree, which is more than 20 percent higher than the citywide average. Bader said the high education levels correlate with high incomes and can be attributed to new private sector jobs in D.C.

"The growth of the D.C. economy and its diversification away from exclusively government-based business has led to jobs requiring higher education and paying higher taxes," Bader said in an email.

Median household incomes in Ward 2 are nearly \$30,000 higher than the median household income citywide. Ward 2's median household income of more than \$101,000 is higher than incomes in all other wards except for Ward 3.

Jack Goldstone, a professor of public policy at George Mason University, said wards 2 and 3 are similar in all demographics except age. He said Ward 3's residents are more commonly "families and successful professionals," while Ward 2 is "more urban" and has "high-education millennials" in CityCenter as well as some older professionals in Georgetown and the West End.

"Ward 3 is stable, wealthy and older; Ward 2 is very dynamic, much younger and more diverse but full of very successful up-and-comers," Goldstone said in an email.

"That is why they both have similar proportions of high-income earners."

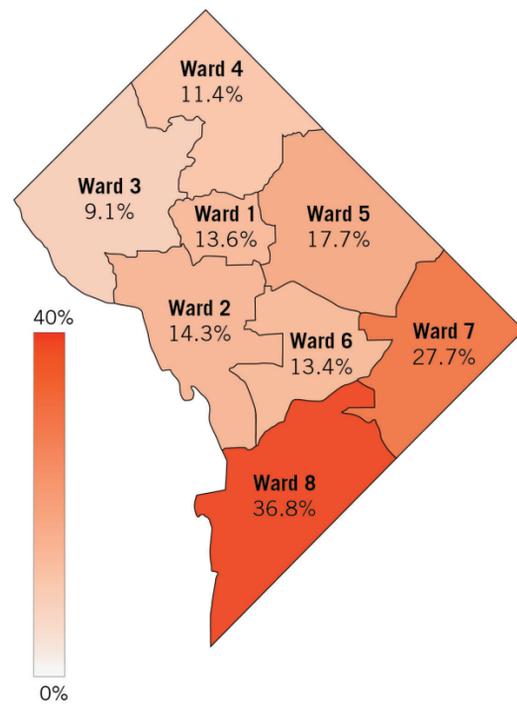
Ward 2 has the second-lowest unemployment rate in D.C. with 2.8 percent, while Ward 3 has a slightly lower rate of 2.4 percent. Ward 8 has the highest unemployment rate in the city at about 12 percent.

Elena Vesselinov, an associate professor of sociology at Queens College, said racial and income-

based residential segregation, where certain racial groups or income levels are "unequally concentrated" in neighborhoods, contributes to the varying unemployment rates in D.C.

"These entrenched neighborhood divisions between affluent and poor neighborhoods are responsible for the high levels of inequality in American cities," Vesselinov said in an email.

Poverty rates in D.C.



ZACH SLOTKIN | SENIOR STAFF DESIGNER
Source: D.C. State Data Center Visualization Portal

CHC needs permanent leader, students say

From Page 1

The council went on a hiatus after the resignation of Egelman, the former associate dean of the CHC, in fall 2017.

"The CHC is more than just another student experience aspect and something that is truly, deeply involved directly and inherently in the lives of students," Wexler said.

Peak Sen Chua, the former president of the SA and a former member of SHAC, said it is "essential" to have a permanent leader of the CHC because they can advocate for more funding from the

University, clarify issues with quality of care, adequately staff the health center and ensure that student feedback is "proactively" collected and implemented.

"These issues are all very real – students have been voicing these concerns for years, and while the SA has done a lot to improve the CHC, there's no mistake on the part of students when SA candidates prioritize CHC-related issues every spring," Chua said in an email.

Egelman, the former director of the CHC, said the University needs a permanent director of the center to fully integrate all aspects of

health care on campus, including physical and mental health.

"I think the question really comes down to what is the University's intent regarding the provision of health care for its students on campus," Egelman said.

Egelman said it is difficult for the center to fix its long-term problems, like a "toxic" employee culture and transparency issues, without a sole director who can focus their attention on those concerns.

He said managing the daily tasks within the center is a full-time job in itself, making the job more difficult for someone who also holds

other administrative responsibilities.

He added that a permanent dean could focus on enacting long-term changes in the center, like establishing a uniform digital platform and simplifying the process for making appointments. Those initiatives were part of Egelman's two-year plan to improve the CHC, but the plan was not enacted, he said.

"It's a great challenge to pull yourself out from the day-to-day to manage the strategic direction and to address all that's needed to create a high-functioning integrated health care system," he said.

GW should grow STEM offerings, officials say

From Page 1

the University's recent decision to launch a Bachelor of Science in international affairs, which officials said will make it easier for students to double major in both international studies and science.

"To be able to have students double major

in computer science and something else, we've eliminated administrative barriers for students studying across schools, which is really important," Koehler said.

Harald Greishhammer, an associate professor of physics and a member of the Faculty Senate, said it is no surprise that GW is "lagging seriously" behind its

peers in STEM enrollment.

"That is the manifestation that GW always thought, 'We are big in law, we are big in media and public affairs, we are big in journalism,' but it hasn't perceived itself really as a STEM school," Grieshammer said.

He said that because GW is not "recognized nationally" for STEM pro-

grams, prospective students who may not know what they want to major in but are interested in science may choose other schools.

"GW has huge growth potential in the STEM field, and strength in STEM should not come at the expense of strengths in other areas," Greishhammer said.

—Parth Kotak
contributed reporting.

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Graphic design program bolsters class offerings, adds professor

ALEC RICH & LAUREN PELLER
STAFF WRITERS

The graphic design program in the Corcoran School of the Arts and Design is adding a handful of courses and an extra faculty member this fall as student interest rises.

About 45 students are currently majoring, minor-ing or taking courses in graphic design – the highest number since the Corcoran merged with the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences in 2014, officials said. Faculty and officials said the uptick in student interest, which prompted the school to hire an additional professor for this fall and add four additional courses, will allow students to receive more individualized attention and expand graphic design offerings.

Thirty-two students were majoring in graphic design at the beginning of this academic year, compared to 27 in both 2017 and 2016, according to institutional data.

Sanjit Sethi, the director of the Corcoran, said the increased demand for graphic design courses prompted the school to launch a search



FILE PHOTO BY JACK FONSECA | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Sanjit Sethi, the director of the Corcoran School of the Arts and Design, said increased student interest in graphic design pushed officials to hire a new professor and offer new courses this fall.

this semester to hire a new full-time assistant professor of graphic design, the school's eighth faculty member in the program.

"There has been an increased demand for graphic design courses among incoming students," he said. "We believe this is because graphic design graduates can work in diverse fields

from branding to motion design to package and publication design, which are in demand."

Sethi said students increasingly desire technical skills in a digital world that needs visual "problem solvers" across multiple media platforms, including print, web, motion and mobile devices.

"With the design disciplines at the Corcoran, including graphic design, GW is poised to be a key driver in the role that design plays in transforming the world around us," Sethi said. "Students from engineering to journalism to public health are keenly interested in seeing how design pedagogy can more profoundly sup-

port the work they are doing."

Johan Severson, the program head of design in Corcoran and the school's only full-time graphic design professor, said that when the Corcoran merged with CCAS in 2014, the number of graphic design students dipped, but the program has since rebounded.

"We've been down to as many as a half a dozen students in a graduating class so about 45 now, that's a big jump," he said.

Severson said the "massive" increase in students has allowed for flexibility to bring back two courses in environmental design and packaging design this fall. Two new courses – Publication Design and Information Design – will also be added, he said.

"I think it will be very exciting for our students to have a new full-time faculty member because adjuncts are great, and we hire a lot of the best professionals in the area, but they can't commit the kind of time a full-time person can to building the program," Severson said.

The program has five adjuncts who primarily teach the graphic design courses, according to the program's

website.

Severson said officials may also use the increased student demand to explore an expansion of the program as a whole.

Steph Hooton, a professional lecturer of design, said the increased number of non-Corcoran students interested in graphic design courses will add both "richness" and "diversity" to the classroom.

"I find that to be a really extraordinary bonus for design students and pretty much the entire fine arts community because you have the ability to cross-pollinate between the different disciplines and get feedback from a wide variety of sources," she said.

Hooton said the demand for workers with a "diverse" skillset will only continue to increase since students increasingly want technical design skills.

"When you go out into the workforce, the business community is now looking for whole brain thinkers that are creative and can bring innovation to the table, and when you're taking creative classes, that is helping build creative strategies and methods for ideation," she said.

GW ahead of peers in requiring online diversity training

SARAH ROACH
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Incoming students are now required to complete a diversity training that none of GW's peer schools offer freshmen.

Officials debuted an online module Thursday that runs through scenarios showing student actors playing out incidents of discrimination or hate in college and asking incoming students how they would handle the situation. Diversity experts said that unlike in-person diversity training held during orientation sessions, the module helps students better understand what situations they may encounter on campus and how to tackle them from the get-go.

"The intention is for students from GW to feel that not only it's relatable but also that it requires them to think a little bit about what they would do if they were in a certain circumstance," Jordan West, the diversity and inclusion education director, said.

Everfi, a company that creates educational training modules, partnered with GW to launch the module. Incoming students are already required to participate in a mandatory sexual assault prevention training through Everfi.

The University's 12 peer institutions do not offer online diversity training for their incoming students, but some of the universities, like Tufts University and the University of Southern California, have used Everfi to create mandatory sexual assault prevention training.

The training, which will be required for the Class of 2022 and every subsequent class before they enter campus in the fall, also includes a tab for students to leaf through definitions of terms like discrimination or ageism. The module was in the works for months after officials responded to a

racist Snapchat incident last year with a series of diversity initiatives.

The Class of 2022 was also the first to participate in an in-person diversity training during Colonial Inauguration last summer.

West said students' backgrounds and experiences before coming to college are not synonymous, and the training presents scenarios with which students may not be familiar.

In one video, a person named Jose is shown interacting with someone named Jeff, who said he was expecting Jose to look more "south of the border." The video pauses, and students are asked what they would do in the situation: tell Jeff that his comments are racist and that he should leave, discuss Jeff's comments or tell Jose to share his thoughts.

"This scenario allows us to have not only our students be exposed to a story that's familiar or different but decide how they would interact as a friend or a peer," West said.

Caroline Laguerre-Brown, the vice provost for diversity, equity and community engagement, said she is trying to move past "surface concepts" on diversity and inclusion and offer students a tool where they will not passively watch incidents of discrimination.

"We hadn't had a mandatory training campaign in this area before, and we thought beginning with incoming students would probably be a good way to test the waters, gauge how students react to this training," she said.

Erin McClintock, the director of impact and education at Everfi, said the training is not a substitute for other diversity and inclusion efforts around campus. The module will complement already-implemented programs on campus be-

cause "one course is not going to completely change the paradigm at an institution," she said.

"It's really about having a course in relation with other ongoing efforts," she said. "Depending on what a student is learning in their first-year experience, for instance, or their orientation, this is meant to bolster that knowledge."

Ray Plaza, the director of diversity and inclusion at Santa Clara University, said incoming students typically undergo diversity training during orientation, but officials often do not offer a mandatory online course. Plaza said GW "elevates the importance" of diversity initiatives by mandating the course for all of its incoming students.

"As someone goes through the video modules and they have to click through, they're at least paying attention," he said. "It's the message that it sends that this is an important value for our community."

Monroe France, the associate vice president for student affairs and diversity initiatives at New York University, said NYU does not mandate diversity training for its students. He said GW may be ahead of its peer schools in implementing the module because officials were responding to the racist Snapchat incident last year.

France added that Everfi likely made a "huge assessment" of the University's needs, and other institutions could follow suit in using a similar module if officials found that students learned from the training.

"If it's created in a way that's inclusive and helps to create learning and people feel like they're taking something away from it, then I can't imagine why other institutions would not want to take advantage of institutionalizing the platform," he said.



LEFT & CENTER: HATCHET FILE PHOTOS, RIGHT: MARGARET WROBLEWSKI | PHOTOGRAPHER
John Banzhaf, a professor of public interest law; and Frank Sesno, the director of the School of Media and Public Affairs; and Roberto Izurieta, the director of Latin American projects for the Graduate School of Political Management, have all offered their views to journalists who turn to them as experts on President Donald Trump.

Two years of Trump: Reporters turn to GW professors for expertise

AMY LIU
REPORTER

Since President Donald Trump stepped into office two years ago, professor John Banzhaf's phone has barely stopped ringing.

Sometimes, the calls are from Reuters reporters asking for his expertise on Trump's border separation policy. Other times, TIME reporters want to know the implications of Trump's comments about gun rights and due process.

Banzhaf, a professor of public interest law, said he is contacted several times a week and sometimes two or three times a day by news organizations. He said he tries not to take positions on Trump's policies but often provides an impartial analysis to help readers understand the implications of the president's actions.

"When the media contacts me, they mostly ask about Trump and all of his various manifestations," Banzhaf said. "He does things which are unprecedented, which are controversial and which challenges people's assumptions of things they're used to."

More than two years after Trump took office, the president's actions make up the bulk of conversations for many people in the District – including GW faculty. In interviews, more than 10 professors said journalists have turned to them for their expertise on international affairs, politics, science and more – mostly because of their close proximity to one of the most unprecedented administrations in the history of the country.

Richard Pierce, a professor of law, said journalists have more often asked for his expertise because the Trump administration "skirts along the edges of the law" more frequently than past presidents. He said reporters may be more interested in GW

professors in the Trump era because of the "disproportionate number" of faculty who are recognized in the fields of politics and law.

Pierce has been quoted in articles recently discussing the legal considerations behind a possible Trump call to fire Special Counsel Robert Mueller, who is investigating Russia's interference in the 2016 presidential election.

"The press and academic institutions are, understandably, very interested in trying to figure out which things Trump is doing are legal and which are not," Pierce said.

James Lebovic, a professor of political science and international affairs, said he receives several media requests per month from both domestic and international reporters who assume his proximity to the White House and the U.S. Capitol give him better insight into the Trump administration. He said he spends a couple of hours on the phone each week with journalists.

But he said walking through detailed analysis of presidential pets and diplomacy in Buenos Aires is worth the time on the phone because his expertise has been used in a way that serves the public good.

"I think the Trump administration is a national tragedy, an assault on everything this country has stood for," he said. "It's frankly important for people who have something to offer to take a stand."

Frank Sesno, the director of the School of Media and Public Affairs, said that because the public increasingly distrusts the media and Trump has characterized journalists as the "enemy of the people," he has often been quoted in stories defending the need for a free press. Sesno said he often rebuts Trump's criticisms of the media by offering expertise on anonymous sources and

correction processes.

Sesno was quoted in The New York Times earlier this month offering context about CNN's decision to hire a former Trump staffer.

"I hope I'm adding some value on how journalism does its job in an era when it's under siege and under attack and often doubted simply because it's under attack," he said.

Dave Karpf, the associate director of SMPA, said media organizations like The Washington Post and The New York Times often contact him about Trump's behavior on social media – one of his research specialties. Trump has been more active on social media than past presidents, making Karpf's expertise on virtual political advocacy and movements more relevant, he said.

"While there's always something new to report on in past administrations, we are especially not in normal times right now and that leads to more public attention and media coverage on politics, in particular politics with a technological or communication background," Karpf said.

Karpf was quoted in the Washington Examiner earlier this month and Wired late last year about the way Trump used social media to win the election.

Roberto Izurieta, the director of Latin American projects for the Graduate School of Political Management, said that since Trump became president, he has accepted double the number of interviews for CNN en Español and most often discusses the economy and immigration.

"We have to be part of the debate, we have to be relevant, we have to be visible," Izurieta said. "A great deal of the interest and benefits of the students who choose GW in a great deal because of where we are and what we are."



FILE PHOTO BY OLIVIA ANDERSON | PHOTO EDITOR
Caroline Laguerre-Brown, the vice provost for diversity, equity and community engagement, said the online module could help students understand the University's values before they step foot on campus.

Vern residents say they are left out of student organization events

NIA LARTEY
STAFF WRITER

When freshman Harrison Kidd had Student Theatre Council rehearsals on the Foggy Bottom Campus last September, his commute back to the Mount Vernon Campus late at night often took close to 45 minutes.

The Vern Express operates on a 30-minute schedule later in the night, and by the time he got back to his residence hall, Kidd said it was too late to start studying. By October, his trek to and from practice became time-consuming and negatively impacted his academics, so he moved to Thurston Hall where he said his ability to get involved in campus life was “20 times better.”

Kidd is one of more than 30 students who said their student organizations are not accommodating to students who live on the Vern and sometimes take hours out of their day to travel to and from meetings. Vern residents said they want to become more involved in campus life but are sometimes left out of meetings or events because they are held on a campus a car ride away.

“I try to be involved in as much stuff as possible that I’m interested in,” Kidd said. “I just found myself unable to do that with the Vern.”

Freshman Alexandra Lay, who lives in Clark Hall, said she is a member of the fencing team and the Alpha Delta Phi Society. She said that while Alpha Delta Phi hosts about half of its recruitment events on the Vern, getting to events hosted in Foggy Bottom requires more time and effort than what is required for those who live on the campus.

While a student living in Foggy Bottom could take a five-minute walk to their residence hall at 2 a.m.,



Freshman Harrison Kidd is one of more than 30 students who said their student organizations are not accommodating to students who live on the Vern and that they sometimes take hours out of their day to travel to and from meetings.

Lay typically takes an Uber back to the Vern once her night has ended, which typically costs about \$10, she said.

“I’d rather pay to get a ride directly back to where I’m from than wait a half hour in a dark Vex,” Lay said. “When you’re the only one going back, it’s significantly more uncomfortable.”

Lauren Babinetz, who lives in Merriweather Hall and is a member of GW TRAILS, said student organizations often do not come to the Vern and do not advertise their

events with fliers like they do in Foggy Bottom residence halls. She said student groups should host a student organization fair on the Vern in addition to the two offered in Foggy Bottom every year.

“I feel like a lot of the time when you’re trying to join an org, it’s a lot about the people you know or the people you’ve come across that are in the org, and that personal connection makes you want to join,” she said.

Dahlia Haddad, a freshman living in West Hall, is currently

the public relations and marketing director for club sports and participates in the Improv Sketch Comedy Group and club soccer team. Haddad said that while traveling to Foggy Bottom can be “annoying,” asking student organizations to host meetings on the Vern is unreasonable because the majority of students live on the main campus.

“It’s a catch 22,” Haddad said. “It’s like going to the suburbs to host a music festival because all the music festivals are in the city and all

the suburban people have to commute in.”

Student leaders said that it can be difficult to host events on the Vern because there are few rooms to hold meetings, but student organizations could better market their activities on the side campus.

Bridget Anzano, the president of GW College Democrats, said that while the group does not table or hold events on the campus, members tried to expand their reach to the campus by using their freshman representative for the Mount Vernon Campus to communicate with Vern residents.

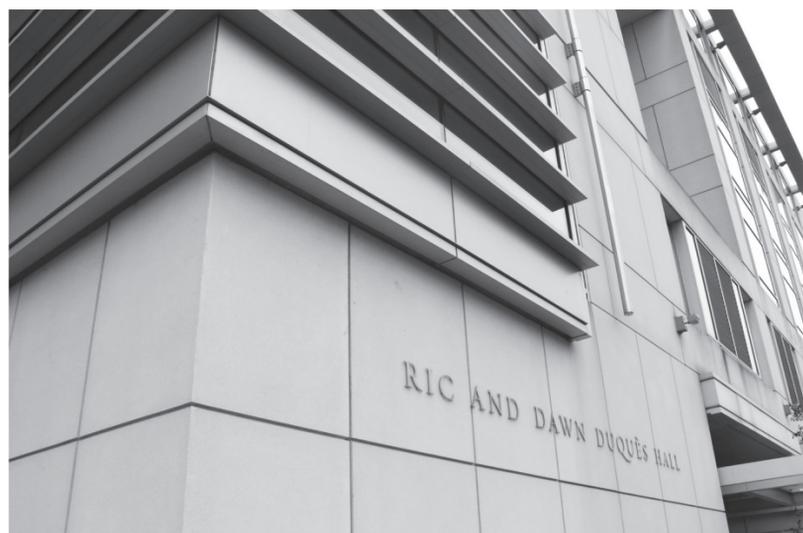
“That’s to make sure there really is a voice from the Vern represented,” she said. “Since more of the board is all older and don’t live on the Vern, we make sure that we have at least one voice.”

Anzano said many students who hold leadership positions are upperclassmen and may have forgotten about their experience on the campus. Still, she said the organization can engage more students by tabling and hosting more events on the Vern.

Brian Toscano, the president of GW’s March for Our Lives chapter, said his organization schedules meetings in between typical class times so Vern residents do not have to travel back to Foggy Bottom after classes end for the day. The club has 30 members, about one-third of whom live on the Vern, he said.

He added that while the organization held a voter drive on the Vern last fall, it is difficult to host more events on the campus because meeting rooms are not widely available.

“Logistically, all of our resources are on Foggy,” he said. “We have so many rooms available in the Marvin Center that it just makes it easy to schedule any room in there and go into it to have the meetings.”



FILE PHOTO BY DONNA ARMSTRONG | CONTRIBUTING PHOTO EDITOR
The School of Business will offer an abbreviated Master of Business Administration program.

New accelerated MBA format will target working professionals

MEREDITH ROATEN
NEWS EDITOR

In its latest bid to attract graduate students, the School of Business will offer an abbreviated Master of Business Administration program.

Officials said students will be able to earn the accelerated MBA degree starting this fall with as few as 48 credit hours, cutting down on required courses and shifting classes from every day of the week to Wednesday evenings and Saturdays. Officials said the new format will draw in students who need more flexibility and allow the school to compete with similar condensed programs at other universities.

Liesl Riddle, the associate dean of graduate programs, said officials are currently accepting applications for the fall semester, but it is too early in the recruiting process to tell how many students will be accepted in the inaugural cohort.

Riddle said many of the business school’s competitors offer the “rapid” program to supply demand from working professionals who cannot take classes at traditional times. A fall survey of current MBA students found students preferred Saturday courses and “compressed” formats, she said.

While Riddle did not name universities that are competitors, five of GW’s peer institutions, including the University of Miami – the former employer of School of Business Dean Anuj Mehrotra – and Tulane University, have accelerated MBA programs in

their business schools.

Riddle said core classes will be completed in five weeks on Tuesdays and Saturdays in the first year, and electives will be earned through 14-week courses either on campus or online.

“Many courses will include significant multimedia learning material online, creating ‘flipped classroom’ learning experiences,” she said in an email.

Ahmad Jarrah, the faculty director for the master’s degree in business analytics, said officials are cutting down the requirements by about seven credit hours. He said the dean’s plan for fewer credit hours will not affect the quality of the education because the nixed classes are taken from the 24 to 27 credit hours of electives currently required.

Electives are four credit hours and can include courses that are required for graduate certificates in areas like urban real estate development or marketing.

Completing one of the MBA degrees offered at the school typically takes 55.5 credit hours over two years, and classes can be taken any day of the week. The professional MBA part-time program is estimated to take two to five years to complete, according to the business school’s website.

“[Mehrotra is] trying to make it more palatable by making it shorter but at the same time maintaining the core,” Jarrah said.

He said students are often applying for the program after spending a few years as a professional and would prefer to finish the degree as quickly as possible

to get back to their career.

Pravallika Yemba, a student in the first of her two years in the MBA program and the president of the Asian MBA Association, said the required 18 credits per semester can be challenging to keep up with in combination with internships and student organizations.

“You don’t feel good that you’re not able to give your 100 percent for your academics or anything that you took up, so that’s one thing that would be beneficial,” she said.

Abbos-Ali Mirkanov, a first-year graduate student and the president of the Business Analytics MBA Club, said the accelerated MBA would help students learn and still focus on finding a career. He said he would like to spend between five and 10 hours a week networking in addition to his courses, but his heavy course load and unpaid job make it difficult to balance his responsibilities.

He said that although he is invested in learning full-time, the networking and unpaid job are also preparing him for the job market, so an accelerated option would allow him to give those parts of his education more attention. He said cutting down on course requirements may help the students who need more flexibility for their schedules.

“I think it will be interesting for international students who want to study full-time but not the 55 credits, which will be very demanding for them at the same time to work on employment,” he said.

Outside consultant to head community review of LeBlanc

MEREDITH ROATEN
NEWS EDITOR

An outside consultant is helping officials oversee the first review of University President Thomas LeBlanc’s performance this spring.

Nelson Carbonell, the chairman of the Board of Trustees, said in an email sent to the campus community last week that the review will include individual and group interviews with trustees, faculty, students, administrators and staff as well as a series of open forums. While the structure of the open forums and additional details about the review will be announced in the coming weeks, Carbonell said officials sought out the help of a third party to gauge the president’s strengths and weaknesses.

“Among the objectives of the assessment process are to examine the effectiveness of the president and to obtain feedback from key constituents on the progress of the president in achieving institutional priorities,” Carbonell said in the email to the community.

Carbonell said the University is hiring Sally Mason, a senior fellow at the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges – an organization that counsels and helps search for higher education administrators – to assist the board in the review by conducting interviews with the campus community later this month.

Mason previously served as the 20th president of the University of Iowa from 2007 to 2015 and is a former professor of biology, according to her biography. She is currently listed as

a member of the Board of Trustees at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University.

“Dr. Mason will gather information and engage members of the University community to share their perspectives,” Carbonell said.

Carbonell added that Mason’s findings will be provided to the Board’s compensation committee, and a summary will be shared with the campus community. He said that when the process concludes, the feedback will be shared with the president.

Carbonell said the schedule of interviews is still being developed, but people who have worked directly with the president will be interviewed about his progress on institutional goals. The schedule and structures for the open forums will be announced in the following weeks, he said.

He declined to say how much the partnership with AGB will cost. He also declined to say how long he expects the assessment process to last or how many interviews will take place.

Higher education experts said hiring a third party to assess the performance of the University president will ensure the process is objective.

University of San Francisco Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs Donald Heller said performance reviews of university presidents are a “very good practice” and should involve key stakeholders, including officials who directly report to the president, leaders of the student government, Board members, alumni and donors.

“People often say that university boards have two most important roles: one is to hire the president and the second is to fire a president,” Heller said. “When a board hires a president, I think it is important that they do a check-in and see how the individual is doing on the job.”

Jennifer deCoste, the vice president for leadership strategies at Credo, a higher education consulting firm, said utilizing an outside consultant allows objectivity in the review process because the community can provide feedback confidentially and anonymously to someone that is not entrenched in the University’s daily operations.

“I believe an effective assessment includes an oversight committee to run the process, a clearly documented process, enough time to be thorough, a self-assessment by the president, confidential interviews with critical groups and individuals, an evaluation by the board, a report synthesizing all this information and is preferably run by an outside consultant,” deCoste said.

Britt Brockman, the chair of the Board of Trustees at the University of Kentucky, said his university often hires an outside consultant during a presidential review to interview members of the community. An objective leader can make broad recommendations that aren’t influenced by any administration, Brockman said.

“They come in with a great deal of knowledge and they know the questions,” he said. “They come in without bias, without a preconceived opinion.”



FILE PHOTO BY DONNA ARMSTRONG | CONTRIBUTING PHOTO EDITOR
An outside consultant is helping officials oversee the first review of University President Thomas LeBlanc’s performance this spring.

Kappa Alpha Theta to move into Strong Hall this fall

NIA LARTEY
STAFF WRITER

Strong Hall will soon house a new sorority.

Members of Kappa Alpha Theta will move into the second floor of Strong Hall this fall, a residence hall currently shared by Chi Omega and Pi Beta Phi. The move comes after several months of conversations with members of the sororities who were concerned about filling beds, officials said.

"Both chapters have had a high occupancy obligation to fulfill for its chapter housing relative to their active membership base," Ethan Stubbs, the assistant director of fraternity and sorority life, said in an email. "Thus, meeting their occupancy requirements has historically been a challenge for both groups."

Stubbs said officials worked with the chapters' national organizations and local advisers of other Panhellenic Association chapters after members of Chi Omega and Pi Beta Phi said they were "open to exploring" the option of adding a new sorority. He said officials drafted an agreement with Kappa Alpha Theta to join Strong Hall this fall.

He declined to say when Pi Beta Phi and Chi Omega reached the agreement and when discussions to add the third sorority first began.

Stubbs said renova-



Members of Kappa Alpha Theta will move into the second floor of Strong Hall this fall, a residence hall currently shared by Chi Omega and Pi Beta Phi.

tions to Strong Hall's lower level last summer added a third community space with a kitchen, allowing the building to accommodate another group. He said adding a chapter will reduce the number of members Pi Beta Phi and Chi Omega are required to house in Strong Hall while also providing a new housing option for another sorority "in our growing com-

munity."

"From a residential life perspective, adding a third chapter to the hall would place all three organizations that reside within the hall on a more equal occupancy level to those across campus in other [fraternity and sorority life] properties," Stubbs said.

Rachel Brzozowski, Pi Beta Phi's vice president of housing, said in an email to members of

Pi Beta Phi last month that sorority leaders have faced difficulty filling rooms in Strong Hall, and both sororities voluntarily gave up their halves of the floor they previously shared, she said.

"This decision is one we thought long and hard about," Brzozowski wrote in the email, which was obtained by The Hatchet. "In the long run, this is best for Pi Beta Phi, as

we struggle to fill these rooms every semester."

Strong Hall began housing members of Chi Omega and Pi Beta Phi in the fall of 2010 after the building received renovations, including a backyard plaza and more community spaces.

In the fall, Pi Beta Phi will occupy the third and fourth floors and Chi Omega will have floors five and six, the email

states. Brzozowski said the new sorority will move into the second floor, which can fit roughly 19 members, according to GW Housing.

Brzozowski said in the email that the incoming sorority will have a new common space in the residence hall's basement, and Pi Beta Phi will keep its current common space on the first floor. Chi Omega will also maintain its common space on the seventh floor, and Pi Beta Phi will also gain roof access, which the chapter did not previously have.

She said in the email that the timing of the proposal was not "ideal" because the arrangement was confirmed after applications for off-campus and senior on-campus housing were due.

Brzozowski and Pi Beta Phi President Erica Visovich did not return multiple requests for comment. Kappa Alpha Theta President Ruth Harnett also did not return multiple requests for comment.

Chi Omega President Kerri Corcoran, who is also a Hatchet staff writer, declined to comment. Dozens of members of Chi Omega, including some that lived in Strong Hall, were kicked out by the sorority's national chapter in September for hosting an unauthorized mixer earlier that year.

Panhellenic Association President Izzy Griffith also declined to comment.

Officials offer incentives for students to thank donors

MEREDITH ROATEN
NEWS EDITOR

Officials are trying to convince more students to thank donors for their scholarships by offering them gift cards and free pizza.

The Office of Development and Alumni Relations began providing students with incentives last month to encourage more students who receive donor-funded scholarships to fill out a survey about themselves. More student participation will ensure that donors know their gifts are appreciated and encourage them to give more money to GW, officials said.

Donna Arbide, the vice president for development and alumni relations, said about 22 percent of students who receive scholarships have filled out profiles highlighting how their financial aid has "made a difference in their GW experience." About 59 percent of scholarship recipients filled out the profiles last academic year, she said.

"Communicating to donors about how their gifts have been used and who the recipients of their scholarships are is an extremely important part of how we acknowledge and thank our donors," she said in an email. "Good stewardship is a critical part of DAR's commitment to our donors and often influences whether a donor chooses to give again."

Arbide said the profiles are

a "core" section of the way the development office reports to donors and will continue to be an "essential" way to thank them even as the office's new scholarship management system, AcademicWorks, begins to offer donors more information about scholarship recipients.

She declined to say how many events the development office hosts each semester to encourage students to fill out donor profiles.

"Communicating to donors about how their gifts have been used and who the recipients of their scholarships are is an extremely important part of how we acknowledge and thank our donors."

DONNA ARBIDE

VICE PRESIDENT FOR DEVELOPMENT AND ALUMNI RELATIONS

An email sent to scholarship recipients last month said students could receive free pizza or win gift cards to Sweetgreen, Peet's Coffee and Starbucks if they completed the profile.

"The profile takes less than 10 minutes to complete and will serve as a powerful 'thank you' to your donor," the email, which was obtained by The Hatchet, states.

Officials have increasingly focused on donor stewardship in the past year. In the fall, Arbide announced that staff were catching up on writing thank-you notes from the \$1 billion campaign that wrapped up in 2017.

Donor relations experts said it can be difficult to encourage busy students to take

time to thank donors, but educating students about the significance of donations can increase participation and improve donor relations.

Rachel Humphrey, a donor relations specialist at the University of California, Berkeley, said the development office at her institution sends emails to students asking them to fill out a profile, but officials have had more success using Google Voice to send text messages. She said students do not expect to get text messages from the office, so the extra effort can be "jarring" enough that it prompts students to complete the surveys.

She said the profiles "keep our donor base happy and keep them at Berkeley."

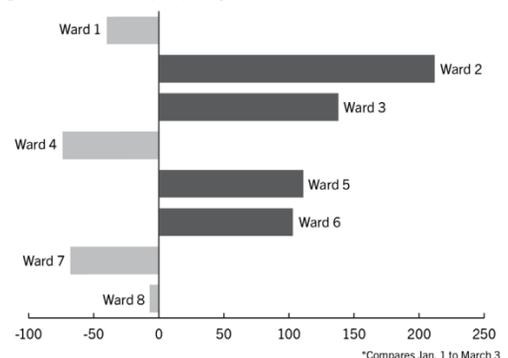
"They can see the student who is benefiting from their fund, and a lot of donors respond to that by adding money to their fund or creating another fund," she said.

Keiko Weil, the director of donor relations at the University of Nevada, said staff should encourage students to write thank-you notes instead of filling out profiles.

She said students typically do not need incentives to thank donors, but approaching them during exam season could hurt response rates. Telling students the name of their donor and giving them the opportunity to show their gratitude is usually sufficient, Weil said.

"Students are generally, I would say, good-hearted and appreciative if they are given the correct forum," she said.

Change in number of property crimes between 2018 and 2019*



EMILY RECKO | DESIGN EDITOR

Source: Metropolitan Police Department data

Uptick in property crimes highest in Ward 2

LIA DEGROOT &
ZOYA WAZIR
REPORTERS

Property crimes in Ward 2 have increased more than 25 percent since last year.

More than 1,000 property crimes have occurred in Ward 2 since the beginning of 2019 — outpacing the roughly 800 that took place over the same time period last year. Ward 2 has seen the largest number of property crimes this year and the biggest increase compared to last year, according to Metropolitan Police Department data.

Property crimes include burglary, theft and arson. The number of crimes recorded so far this year is the second-highest number recorded at least over the past decade in Ward 2, second only to the 1,060 property crimes recorded over the first three months of 2016, according to MPD data.

Since 2010, property crimes in Ward 2 have increased about 85 percent. Wards 3, 5 and 6 have also seen more property crimes since the beginning of the year, with increases of 138, 111 and 103, respectively. Wards 1, 4, 7 and 8 saw dips in property crime rates, according to MPD data.

Overall, thefts and arsons have gone up about 9 percent citywide this year.

MPD spokeswoman Brianna Jordan said the department has recently launched a campaign to encourage drivers to take steps to prevent the chance of thefts occurring, like taking their keys out of vehicles and securing their belongings. She added that MPD urges victims of theft to "immediately" contact police and file a report.

Thefts from cars in Ward 2 have soared about 53 percent over the past year, accounting for the majority of the increase.

"MPD is committed to educating the public about the importance of preventing theft from autos," Jordan said in an email. "In fact, MPD recently

rolled out a theft-from-auto campaign, which is intended to remind all drivers to remove their valuables from their vehicles prior to exiting out of their cars."

She declined to say what factors may have caused an increase in property crimes in Ward 2 and across the District.

Marina Streznewski, the president of the Foggy Bottom Association, said residents "have the power" to prevent property crimes but are not being "careful" enough to make sure their cars are locked and belongings are not visible. She said people need to ensure that they are not "totally oblivious" of their surroundings.

"I think that what the police can do is not as significant as what the residents of Ward 2 can do to bring that rate down," Streznewski said. "Honestly, I'm not sure that the police can do very much to prevent property crime if people aren't careful with their property."

William Carbone, the executive director of the Tow Youth Justice Institute and a senior lecturer at the University of New Haven, said an increase in valuable items in affluent areas, like new technology, may contribute to a jump in property crimes. He said people may look in cars for money or smaller valuables like GPS technology that can be "easily" sold.

"I think there's a belief that if you're going to find things of value, you're more likely to find them in more affluent areas," he said.

Carbone said community members can help reduce property crimes by taking measures to secure their homes and cars, like keeping their cars locked and in garages and installing home security systems.

"There are all kinds of preventive measures that citizens can take to reduce property crimes," he said. "They call these crimes of routine activities because the victim, in fact, can be the enabler on the crime by not taking proper precau-



DAVIE LORIA | PHOTOGRAPHER

The Office of Development and Alumni Relations began providing students with incentives last month to encourage more students who

FROM GWHATCHET.COM/OPINIONS

"Students' tuition dollars are being wasted on snow days or other canceled classes, but the setback also leads to lower quality education because professors are required to teach material faster."

—RUBY LUNSFORD, WRITER published Feb. 28

Increasing dining dollars does not solve the problem of food insecurity on campus

In an attempt to curb the financial challenges of eating at D.C.'s high-priced restaurants on the University's meal plan, GW increased the number of dining dollars students receive for the third consecutive year.

The move is meant to improve student life on campus, but what students actually need is cheaper food options and a more flexible meal plan — they don't need a boosted up meal plan that requires them to spend more money at the start of each semester.

Zachary Nosanchuk
Writer

The University's decision to increase GWorld dining dollars for the third year seems like a helpful means to reduce food insecurity on campus, but it really just adds a cost for students. In accordance with GW's meal plan, \$1,400 a year is currently allotted for students with a kitchen and \$2,300 is allotted for those housed in residence halls without a kitchen. This cost is charged to students' accounts alongside tuition and other fees, and upping the amount in students' meal plans can place a significant strain on students and their families.

GW's open dining plan also

adds to the economic stress students face. GW scrapped J Street, the University's traditional dining hall, in 2016 and students were left without a low-cost option to eat at. This move has differentiated GW from its peer institutions and while it may attract some students because of the variety of restaurant options available, it means that the main food sources

for students are high-priced D.C. establishments.

Attending GW is expensive enough as it is. The cost of attendance at GW will surpass \$70,000 next year, and while students are locked in at their tuition rate for five years, that promise does not include other fees like room and board, which is the category students' meal plans fall under.

A Student Association report released last year found that GW is more expensive than its peer universities in nearly every category of regular expense, from transcript fees to health care. With an expensive education, pricey charges and lofty costs of living in an urban area, students already must dole out a lot of money to attend GW and increasing the cost of man-

datory meal plans does not help students.

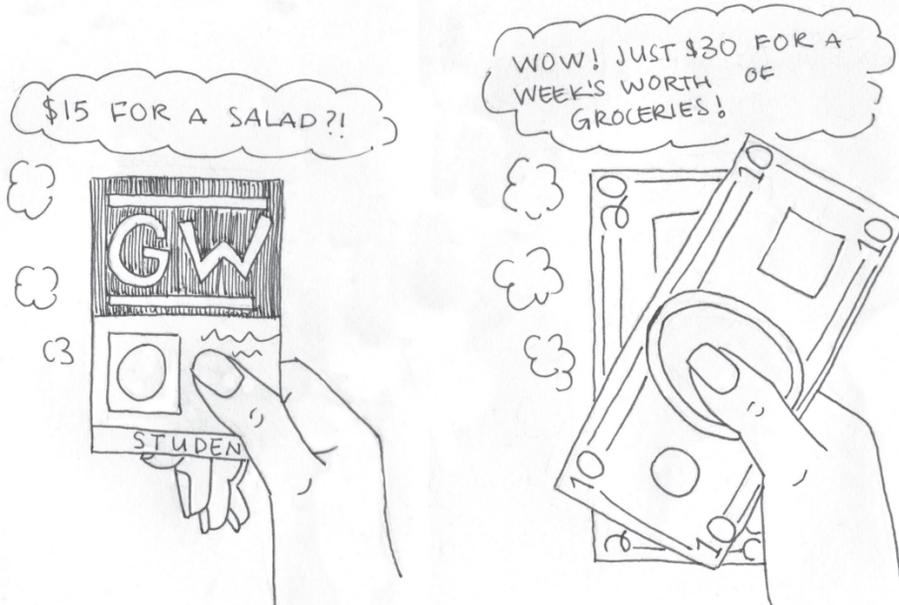
By continuing to raise the amount students must pay for meal plans, the University is assuming that students have unlimited funds and simply adding to the amount they pay to have in their meal plan will fix the problem of the lack of affordable food on campus. In doing this, the University is inadvertently increasing socioeconomic inequality among students and exposing further divisions within the student body.

If the University really wants to help students with these issues, it should invest in programs that actually work to tackle food insecurity on campus. The Store, a food pantry on campus, helps students without additional costs, and GW could support students by making contributions to this program.

What students really need is flexibility. If meal plans stayed the same, they could spend their money where they want — whether that is at an upscale restaurant or a cheaper grocery store.

Although increasing the amount of money students have to spend on food may seem like a worthy investment in student life, it fails to do so effectively and only hurts the students it seeks to help.

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



Cartoon by Tara Peckham

STAFF EDITORIAL

GW should support student push for opt-in unlimited Metro pass

The University touts its location near Capitol Hill, the National Mall and world-renowned museums. But most of these attractions are not within a convenient walking distance from campus.

While many students travel off campus for internships or to explore the city every day, the cost of transportation can quickly add up.

Students enrolled at all D.C. colleges must utilize public transportation at some point during their college years, but some students don't face as large of a financial burden because of the University Pass program. The option gives students access to the Metro for \$1 a day on the condition that the pass is purchased by the entire student body. Students at GW advocated for GW to join the program for years, and recently reactivated the efforts by asking for an opt-in version of the program.

In the past, students have pushed for a blanket University Pass system that would result in each student paying an additional \$250 on top of their tuition regardless of if they wanted or would use the University Pass Metro cards. But the opt-in method that is currently being discussed is the best plan for students because if they believe that they won't use Metro services that often, it is unfair to make them pay for it.

When GW initially shot

down joining the University Pass program, officials said they were not comfortable tacking on costs to tuition for a program not all students will utilize. But now that students are asking for an opt-in program, it solves that problem by allowing students to decide whether they pay for the service, and the University should support students in their efforts.

Students will likely face challenges while advocating for this program because the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

When GW initially shot down joining the University Pass program, officials said they were not comfortable tacking on fees to tuition for a program not all students will utilize. But now that students are asking for an opt-in program, it solves that problem by allowing students to decide whether they pay for the service, and the University should support students in their efforts.

stated that the option is not ideal for them. WMATA officials said the program is not beneficial for the organization because the only way it can make money off the steep discount is to apply it to a mass number of students, but this doesn't mean that students or the University should give up on this conversation.

The University has purchasing power in this decision and if officials stand behind students who are pushing for an opt-in program, they could have more sway in convincing WMATA to establish an opt-in program.

An unlimited Metro pass for students would have

numerous benefits for students and the University as a whole. GW has pushed for years to become more environmentally friendly — working to become carbon neutral and cut water consumption — and giving students a free, unlimited Metro pass would help the University achieve its goals because public transportation reduces greenhouse gas emissions and improves overall air quality.

In addition to the environmental benefits, the program would also provide significant benefits to the student body. Many students take unpaid internships or opt to volunteer around the District during their time at GW, but transportation costs can make taking an unpaid job even more of a financial burden for students. By giving students a free way to get to these obligations, the University would enrich the student experience at GW and allow all students — regardless of financial situation — to capitalize on the opportunities that make GW so attractive to incoming students in the first place.

Implementing the University Pass at GW is something that students have said they want. GW should listen to its students and now that they have suggested an option that mitigates the University's concerns, GW should use its power to lobby for students and get them a program that would provide numerous benefits.

Renovations to Thurston Hall will improve the student experience

The University announced last month that plans for a new residence hall on 20th and H streets will be paused to concentrate on renovating Thurston Hall.

For years, students have panned Thurston Hall as an inadequate, mold-infested and frankly dilapidated first-year residence hall. Thurston Hall houses more than 1,100 first-year students, which constitutes about 40 percent of the freshman class — which means masses of students have had to deal with these poor conditions for years.

Galen Ekimov
Writer

But by focusing on renovating Thurston Hall rather than building a new residence hall, University President Thomas LeBlanc is following through on his campaign to improve the student experience.

It is the right decision to prioritize Thurston Hall for renovations, and the University should be lauded for not only providing students with updated rooms and working amenities — but also for committing to create suitable spaces where students can get together to participate in their community.

The TV lounge, the piano room and

the basement serve as Thurston Hall's primary community spaces. But these rooms have outdated furniture, poor lighting and do not lend themselves to student activity. The small rooms on the first floor and awkward layout in the basement feel like an afterthought and make students not want to spend their time in the common areas.

But having common space where students can gather and get to know one another is vital to offering a positive student experience.

Students have criticized the University for lacking community and said it is difficult to meet people on GW's urban campus, so creating space where students can gather in the University's largest residence hall is a positive step forward.

This update falls in line with other projects administrators have recently tackled to create more community space for students. The University renovated the first floor of the Marvin Center in 2017 to create a living room for students. Now students have benefited from extra space in the building and can hang out and study with friends without fear of making too much noise or bothering their roommates.

Officials also debuted a few outdoor common spaces this fall, and Dean of the

Student Experience Cissy Petty spent time living in residence halls last semester and saw firsthand the need for more shared spaces for students to spend time with each other outside their residence hall rooms.

The student experience is inherently better when students have somewhere to gather outside of their rooms. Freshmen are thrust into an unfamiliar environment and forced to make new friends, and they need spaces that allow them to meet new people. First-year students face homesickness and can feel like they don't belong as they adjust to life on campus, but these feelings could be eased if students had places to hang out outside of their residence hall rooms.

Students need significant additional space to get together outside of their rooms and create the community that some feel the University lacks. Interacting with other students and making memories is at the core of the student experience.

The University is right to prioritize renovating Thurston Hall in accordance with its campaign to improve the student experience, and its commitment to creating meaningful non-academic community spaces should be celebrated.

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

Liz Provencher, editor in chief

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A BOOGIE WIT DA HOODIE
Filmore Silver Spring
March 5 • \$35
A Boogie Wit Da Hoodie explores different personas in songs from his album "Hoodie SZN."

JAMES BAY
The Anthem
March 8 • \$45
Noah Kahan opens for alternative artist James Bay on tour for his album "Electric Light."

SABRINA CARPENTER
9:30 Club
March 10 • \$35
Sabrina Carpenter sings dance-pop songs, giving her a confident young vibe.

RELEASED THIS WEEK:

"SUCKER," A SINGLE BY THE JONAS BROTHERS

Staycation options for every type of spring break



ERIC LEE | PHOTOGRAPHER

The Line Hotel offers 24-hour room service and in-room cocktail making.

CAT ORIEL
REPORTER

You don't have to travel far from D.C. to have a memorable spring break.

Students often cannot take advantage of all that D.C. has to offer because of their hectic schedules, but spring break is the perfect excuse to have a staycation and explore your own city.

From treating yourself to a relaxing spa treatment to eating at some of D.C.'s best restaurants, check out these options for students staying in D.C. over spring break:



GRAEME SLOAN | CONTRIBUTING PHOTO EDITOR

The Heurich House Museum is a mansion in Dupont Circle.

A staycation away from the city

If you want to use your spring break to get away from the city for a while, stay in the DMV area and hop on the Metro and travel to Alexandria, Va.

The newly renovated Kimpton Lorien Hotel and Spa is a boutique hotel located near Old Town Alexandria at 1600 King St. For about \$172 a night, you can stay in one of the hotel's sleek rooms and take advantage of the in-house spa offerings. If you bring two or more friends, you can snag 20 percent off spa treatments like a 50-minute rose quartz massage (\$125) or a 25-minute instant glow facial (\$65) with cleansing and moisturizing.

After a relaxing day, you'll be ready to hit the pavement and can delve into Alexandria's food scene on a D.C. Metro Food Tour. For \$65, you will take a three-hour walking tour with food and drinks provided along the way.

D.C. has plenty of museums, but if you've racked up visits to all the Smithsonians, you can head to the Torpedo Factory Art Center – located at 105 N. Union St. – to enjoy exhibits by local artists.

A luxurious staycation

If you want a relaxing spring break without leaving the comfort of your home, you can turn it up a notch and stay at The Line Hotel, located in Adams Morgan at 1770 Euclid St. NW.

While renting a room is a little pricey at about more than \$200 a night, you can split the room with friends to make the stay more affordable. With 24-hour room service from the lobby restaurant Brothers and Sisters and in-room cocktail making, you won't even have to leave the comfort of your room during this luxurious spring break staycation.

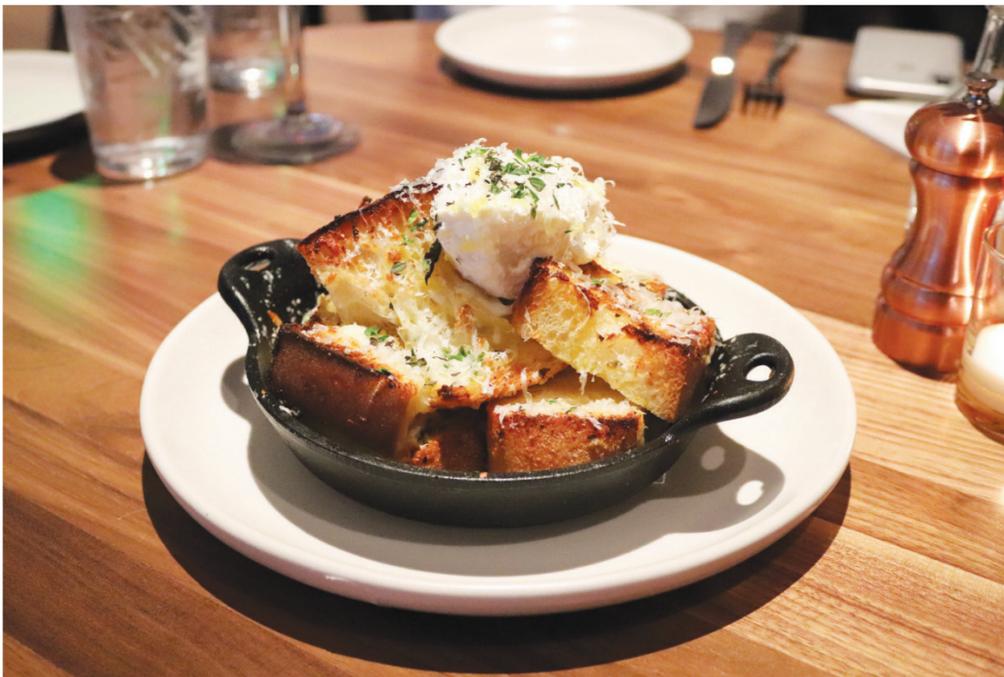
The Line Hotel is in one of D.C.'s most happening neighborhoods so you'll be in close proximity to popular bars. But if you want to make this week off all about rest, you can stay in and explore the hotel's three restaurants, two bars and coffee shop.

A true staycation

While staying at a hotel is a way to make your vacation feel more real, you can still have a staycation while remaining in your residence hall or apartment.

Be a tourist in your own city and sign up for a City Segway Tour. The company is steps from campus and offers ways to explore D.C. on Segways and bikes. You may struggle to find an excuse to do this on a normal week or be embarrassed at the thought of rolling by Thurston Hall on a Segway, but when students desert campus, you can learn more about your home on a Segway tour (\$75) or view the monuments at night on a night bike tour (\$44).

The party scene may slow down for spring break as students spread across the country to visit home or go on vacations, but if you stay in the District, you can still have a few brews. Just a 10-minute walk from campus, the Heurich House Museum is a mansion in Dupont Circle that was built in the late 1890s by German immigrant and brewer Christian Heurich. Visitors can take an hourlong guided brewmaster tour for \$30 and sample three local craft beers in the former brewmaster's home after the tour.



LINDSAY PAULEN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

North Italia offers white truffle garlic bread for \$13.50.

North Italia offers upscale chain dining

LINDSAY PAULEN
CULTURE EDITOR

Chain restaurants have a bad reputation of being mediocre and unmemorable, but North Italia breaks the stereotype.

Before sitting down for dinner at the restaurant, I was skeptical of North Italia simply because it is a chain with 17 locations nationwide. But as I finished up my meal at the restaurant, which opened at 2112 Pennsylvania Ave. NW on Wednesday, I was pleasantly surprised.

The restaurant has an airy interior with high ceilings, wooden tables adorned with a candle and delicate flowers, and glass windows that allow customers to peek into the kitchen.

The menu was split into small plates, salads, pizza, pastas and entrees, and it was difficult to order with so many delicious-sounding options. After some deliberation, I finally ordered some white truffle garlic bread (\$13.50) and arancini (\$12.50) – fried risotto balls – for the table.

The truffle bread was otherworldly and consisted of 10 slices of bread stacked in a miniature skillet and topped with a creamy homemade ricotta, mozzarella and grana padano cheese truffle oil.

Each bite of bread was crispy on the outside and fluffy on the inside, and the flavor of the truffle complemented the garlic without overpowering it. Bits of cheese crisped up on the skillet and the ricotta cheese practically melted into the warm bread. Although the \$13.50 price was hefty for bread, it was definitely worth trying and I would return to North Italia for this dish alone.

It was clear that the new restaurant was working out kinks as

we never received the arancini we ordered and were brought another table's soup at one point, but the server was apologetic and we were not charged for the dish.

For our main courses, my friend and I split the seasonal salad (\$13), which started on a bed of kale with butternut squash, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, pecorino cheese, farro, pistachio and dates doused in a white balsamic vinaigrette, and the chicken pesto pasta (\$18.50).

The salad was fresh and featured nearly all of my favorite vegetables, so it was hard not to love. It also had the ideal amount of dressing, allowing the kale to remain crunchy while still adding flavor. The pecorino cheese and farro were surprisingly some of my favorite parts of the salad, but I wished there had been more pistachios and a more juicy fruit, like a pear or apple, in the mix rather than dates.

I originally could not decide which pasta dish to get, but my server convinced me to order the chicken pesto, which ended up being my favorite dish of the night. The chicken pesto began with gigli pasta – small cylindrical pieces of pasta with ruffled edges – and was topped off with a bright, creamy pesto sauce, grilled chicken and toasted pine nuts.

The pasta itself, which was a shape I had never eaten before, was a nice change from more traditional shapes like penne, spaghetti or rigatoni. Plus, it allowed some of the pesto sauce to seep into the al dente pasta's crevices.

At first glance, I thought there was too much pesto sauce – but once I dug in, I found it was not overbearing. The sauce was packed with garlic, basil and toasted pine nut flavor and made for a rich flavor that I wanted

more of.

While we were disappointed we never received our arancini, we were relieved we did not get a second appetizer when we chose to order two desserts – the hazelnut torta (\$9) and tiramisu (\$9).

The hazelnut torta consisted of a chocolate cake, which was topped with Nutella cream and a heap of salted caramel gelato. On its own, the cake was rich and had a strong chocolate flavor, but I thought it was a little dry. Luckily, the scoop of gelato helped ease the dryness of the cake so it could be overlooked.

Although the cake and gelato were delicious, my favorite element of the dish was the hazelnut toffee that was sprinkled around the cake. Each hazelnut, which was slightly caramelized, was the perfect combination of salty and sweet and added a satisfying crunch to the torta.

The tiramisu – a classic Italian dessert – was carefully layered into a glass jar and topped with small, crunchy chocolate balls. Each bite of the tiramisu consisted of a decadent mascarpone mousse, espresso-soaked ladyfingers and a thin layer of cocoa powder, which was slightly too sweet for my liking. While both desserts were tasty, I preferred the rich, chocolatey flavor of the hazelnut torta.

If you're looking for an above average Italian meal just a short walking distance from campus, North Italia will definitely satisfy. Although the menu is on the pricier side for dishes like bread, pasta and salad, North Italia's fresh ingredients and delicious food are not only worth the splurge, but also serve as a much-needed change from the typical Foggy Bottom grab-and-go restaurants.

How to celebrate Mardi Gras in D.C.

YUTING WU
REPORTER

The District is more than a thousand miles from New Orleans, but there are still plenty of opportunities to celebrate Mardi Gras on Fat Tuesday in D.C.

Fat Tuesday celebrates the last day of indulgence before the ritual of Lent – a 40-day period of repentance in the Christian faith. Mardi Gras celebrations typically include extravagant costumes, parades and liberal amounts of unhealthy food.

Escape from mid-semester stress by participating in one of the world's biggest parties while indulging in soul food, strong drinks and jazz music at Mardi Gras events around the District.

MARDI GRAS EXTRAVAGANZA 2019

Start off your Fat Tuesday at the third annual Mardi Gras Extravaganza at The Showroom in downtown D.C.

David Guas, a native of New Orleans and the chef at Bayou, will join several other D.C. chefs from restaurants like Chiko, The Salt Line, District Doughnut and Puddin' to serve up an all-you-can-eat-and-drink feast.

Lagniappe, a Cincinnati-based band that is known for its New Orleans blues and jazz music, will play throughout the night as attendees compete in a costume contest. If you would rather leave your green, gold and purple at home, attendees can also compete in a bartending competition for the best hurricane – a classic New Orleans sweet, fruity cocktail made with rum, passion fruit syrup and fruit juices, like lemon and orange.

The Showroom, 1099 14th St. NW. 6 to 10 p.m. \$55. 21+.

THE CRAWDADDIES AT PEARL STREET WAREHOUSE

The Crawdaddies, a band named for the New Orleans staple seafood, will play a free concert at Pearl Street Warehouse on Fat Tuesday.

The band will play a mix of rock with Cajun flare and blues that is sure to transport you straight to Bourbon Street. The band members, who mostly hail from the DMV area, have toured at festivals across the country like the Maryland Wine Festival and the Barbecue Festival in North Carolina.

While the event is free, seating is limited and first come, first served so make

sure to head to Pearl Street Warehouse early to ensure you'll be able to get a taste of New Orleans music on Fat Tuesday.

Pearl Street Warehouse, 33 Pearl St. SW. Doors at 7 p.m. Free. 21+.

KING CAKE AT BAYOU BAKERY

One of the best parts of Mardi Gras is the delicious foods that appear in bakeries, but you don't need a flight to New Orleans to taste authentic Mardi Gras delicacies.

Bayou Bakery in Arlington, Va. – just a quick Metro ride away – bakes a plethora of New Orleans-inspired treats like king cake, pralines and beignets. For Mardi Gras, the bakery takes orders for king cakes (\$39.95) 48 hours in advance. King cake is a Mardi Gras specialty with brioche-like dough filled with cream and topped with frosting – which is colorfully dusted with purple, green and yellow sugar. A tiny plastic baby is hidden inside the cake and whoever finds the baby becomes "king" for the day.

The bakery will also offer a limited supply of king cake slices leading up to Mardi Gras along with colorful purple, gold and green scones and praline boxes (\$10) in flavors like chocolate and cafe au lait. For the slices, be sure to call ahead and check Bayou Bakery's inventory before traveling to Arlington.

Bayou Bakery, 1515 N. Courthouse Road, Arlington, Va.

DUE SOUTH MARDI GRAS 2019

Due South will host its Mardi Gras celebration Tuesday with live music from two bands, beer and an all-you-can-eat buffet of New Orleans classics.

Jazz music from D.C.'s Crush Funk Brass band and Cajun-inspired country music from Zachary Smith and the Dixie Power Trio will set the soundtrack for the night. The buffet will feature special New Orleans-inspired fare like shrimp and chicken jambalaya, Cajun fried chicken and barbecue spare ribs, giving guests a sampling of New Orleans dishes.

If you can't make it to the restaurant on Fat Tuesday, you can bring the party to your residence hall with catering options like squash hush puppies, fried green tomatoes, pimento cheese dip and gumbo.

Due South, 301 Water St. SE. 4 p.m. \$30.

GAMES OF THE WEEK



SOFTBALL
vs. Howard
Noon & 2 p.m. • Tuesday
The Colonials will host Howard in a doubleheader at the Vern after going 4-1 at the Carolina Classic over the weekend.



BASEBALL
vs. UMass-Lowell
Friday-Sunday
Baseball will return to Tucker Field to host the River Hawks in a three-game series after a quick mid-week trip to Delaware State.

NUMBER CRUNCH

32

Number of innings pitched by sophomore utility player Sierra Lange out of the 38 total innings softball played in its five-game series over the weekend

'Relentless' gymnast dominates in fifth year after battling injury

BARBARA ALBERTS
SPORTS EDITOR

Alex Zois had just finished second in the all-around competition with a then-career-high 39.400 score last March when her 2018 season was rapidly cut to an end.

A screw in her knee from surgery three years prior had become infected with a "spontaneous" staph infection, causing painful swelling and requiring immediate surgery to remove the screw and flush out the area.

"People lose their limbs when that happens," head coach Margie Foster-Cunningham said. "And she fought back."

Zois missed the team's final meet of the regular season and their third-place finish at the East Atlantic Gymnastics League Championships. She did not get to compete with her team at the NCAA Championship.

Now nearly one year since her unexpected setback, fifth-year Zois capped off her Senior Day performance with a career-high 39.425 showing in the all-around competition Friday.

Zois did not begin training at full capacity for the 2019 season until September, but she has since notched seven first-place finishes in all-around competition, and her first-place finish Friday night marked the third meet in a row Zois has topped the field in the event.

"You're never going to see that kid say she's tired," Foster-Cunning-



Fifth-year captain Alex Zois capped off her Senior Day performance with a career-high 39.425 showing in the all-around competition Friday.

ham said. "She is relentless and that is what you're seeing here, the benefits of that type of approach to her sport."

To keep up with the competition and make sure she was ready to hit the ground running, Zois completed hours of physical therapy in the offseason and relied on her teammates to help her push through the mental blocks that come with returning to competition after injury.

"I did probably more

than I was told because I wanted to get that strength back," Zois said.

At the team's season-opening meet, the Lindsey Ferris Invitational on Jan. 13, Zois captured the all-around title with a score of 39.050 in her first meet since March of last year.

"Getting back into the sport mentally and physically was a little bit challenging," Zois said. "But I had my family, coaches and the girls right behind me the entire way and when things

get hard, they pushed me no matter what."

Zois has battled through two injuries in the five years she has been with the program, starting her freshman year when her college career was put on hold before it could even begin after a knee injury sidelined her for the 2015 season.

Zois came back into competition her sophomore year and tied for first at the 2016 EAGL Un-even Bars Championship with a score of 9.85 and

a place on the All-EAGL First Team in the event.

"Four years in this sport, it's a lot of wear and tear," senior and fellow team captain Julia McLaughlin said. "So to do a fifth year, and to do better and to keep getting better is incredible."

Zois wrapped up her junior season with placements on the All-EAGL Second Team in the uneven bars and the balance beam before moving into all-around competition her senior season, where

she earned All-EAGL First Team honors in the event.

Even with a shortened season, Zois finished seventh in the EAGL in the all-around with a regional qualifying score of 39.180 in 2018.

McLaughlin said watching Zois battle through her injuries and come back successful has been a real-life lesson in resilience.

"Zois has had more challenges than other people on the team throughout her five years here," McLaughlin said.

Zois said her goal this season was to match her level of competition from last season, and her success has been unexpected.

"I just wanted to do the best that I could do and I wanted to work as hard as I could and I wanted to translate what I've been practicing in the gym to the meet," Zois said. "And it's been extremely rewarding."

The Colonials have three more meets before the EAGL Championships March 23 to wrap the team's guaranteed slate of competition this season. For Zois, that means an end to her time competing as one of gymnastics' top-performers and leaders.

"These girls are very blessed to have been around her for four years," Foster-Cunningham said. "Some her classmates, the freshmen, just to grab her for one year, are better people to have known her for one year. She's left quite a legacy here."

—Agam Mittal
contributed reporting.

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Columbian College of Arts & Sciences

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY



Freshman center Kayla Mokwuah drives to the basket in a game against Duquesne last week.

Women's basketball heads into A-10 Championship play as ninth seed

WILL MARGERUM
STAFF WRITER

Women's basketball has reached the end of a regular season marred by inconsistency and is gearing up to defend its Atlantic 10 Championship title this week.

In the first round of play, No. 9 GW (10-19, 7-9 A-10) will travel to No. 8 Saint Joseph's (11-18, 7-9 A-10) Tuesday for a 3 p.m. tip in a rematch of last year's title match.

The Hawks won their contest against GW this season 41-38 on Feb. 10 in what proved to be a pivotal matchup for A-10 seeding. The teams' identical 7-9 conference records meant Saint Joseph's win over GW earlier in the season served as the tiebreaker and gave the squad home-court advantage Tuesday.

"We're going to be ready no matter what," Rizzotti said. "We have to play well no matter what. It doesn't matter who we play or where we play."

Both teams arrive at Tuesday's game on a two-game skid. GW dropped a 64-53 decision to Duquesne on Feb. 27 and lost to Richmond 56-48 on Saturday. The Hawks

fell 68-59 to George Mason and 51-41 to Fordham last week.

The last time the two teams met, the Colonials mustered just four points in the first quarter and turned the ball over 19 times in the game. They managed to rebound the Hawks 40-28 and held them to 25.0 percent shooting from three-point range.

Saint Joseph's senior guard Alyssa Monaghan has been a dominant force in conference play for the Hawks. She averages 16.3 points per game in A-10 contests, the second-highest in the league. Monaghan is also the league's best three-point shooter in conference games, knocking down 47.4 of her shots from deep.

GW's three-point defense is the third-best in the A-10 this year with opponents shooting 27.2 percent from beyond the arc against the Colonials, giving them the chance to shut Monaghan down Tuesday. She was held to eight points in the meeting earlier this year.

"I definitely need to be focused and to know the scout, to be patient on offense, to run the offense the right way," sophomore forward Neila Luma said after the loss to Richmond.

Should the Colonials win in the first round, they will head to Duquesne, the host site for the championship, to face off against No. 1 VCU (21-8, 13-3 A-10) Friday at 11 a.m. The Rams are the top seed in the conference but were defeated by GW 57-48 on Jan. 23.

Eight GW players scored in the game and GW held VCU to 30.2 percent shooting from the field. Senior guard Mei-Lyn Bautista led all scorers with 21 points while adding five assists.

Sophomore guard Tera Reed, who leads the Rams in scoring with 12.3 points per game on 42.5 percent shooting, was limited to seven points and went 2-for-10 from the floor against the Colonials.

VCU is one of the most dangerous teams in the conference but the Colonials have shown they have the potential to compete with anyone and would certainly have a chance to cause an upset if they make it to Friday's game. VCU, No. 4 Dayton and No. 3 Duquesne all fell at the hands of the Colonials earlier this year.

GWHATCHET.COM

for more on women's basketball's postseason.