

# The GW Hatchet

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## What's inside



SOPHIA YOUNG | PHOTOGRAPHER

Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Mark Diaz said his team completed 100 infrastructure improvements on campus in his first year.

## Executive Vice President Diaz restructured leadership, led strategic initiatives in first year

ZACH SCHONFELD  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

After noting several maintenance issues around campus – like the psychology department's sewage overflow in May and the Smith Center scoreboard falling last September – Mark Diaz sought to document problems apparent in nearly every GW building.

Diaz, the University's executive vice president and chief financial officer, embarked on a tour of the Foggy Bottom and Mount Vernon campuses, jotting down issues ranging from inadequate lighting on the Vern to faulty cooling systems.

That tour led to a \$10 million commitment this summer from the Board of Trustees to complete "urgent" improvements on campus, what Diaz called an ongoing commitment to make campus "better and safer."

Diaz said the initiative – his last major project as he closed out his first year at GW – led to 100 improvements across campus, from repainting railings to updating community spaces. He helped restructure the medical enterprise, spearhead efforts to im-

prove institutional culture and address campus safety issues in his first year, Diaz said.

"I think it's safe to say I didn't have much of a honeymoon period," he said. "I think on literally my first day, Aug. 1, we jumped into the deep end of the pool."

University President Thomas LeBlanc said Diaz brings a "broad skillset" and has worked to understand GW's resource base and improve its leadership structure. Diaz has brought "transformative" change to GW through his initiatives, LeBlanc said.

"I think it's remarkable how much impact he's been able to have done so quickly," he said.

### Rethinking the organization's structure

When Diaz arrived at GW, he inherited economic challenges like ongoing budget cuts. Diaz said he has worked to change the "paradigm" around financial planning so that officials are not constantly reacting to fiscal challenges.

He hired Jared Abramson as the inaugural vice president for financial planning and operations in July to oversee financial fore-

casting and analysis.

"He's coming right at the right time – at the beginning stages of the strategic planning process, as well as the budget cycle," Diaz said.

Diaz also hired a slate of new officials who directly report to him in the finance, tax and business divisions in January to "ensure greater coordination and collaboration" between top administrators. The hires included a new University controller to head GW's accounting efforts and a new associate vice president for total rewards to manage employee compensation.

Diaz also created a new position – a chief people officer – to oversee human resources and hired Dana Bradley to oversee a "major reorientation" of the department. He promoted the position in the hierarchy to report directly to him, which he said will elevate staff concerns to "upper levels of leadership."

Diaz established an Office of Ethics, Compliance and Privacy, led by Dorinda Tucker, in February to monitor the University's efforts on those fronts, oversee enterprise risk manage-

ment and manage GW's conflict of interest policies.

"The governance change made a difference as to how we value and view that part of the organization," Diaz said.

LeBlanc said Diaz has improved employee culture by empowering his teams while building accountability by holding other officials to deadlines.

"We want people to be empowered and accountable," LeBlanc said. "If you have an organization where nobody feels responsible and nobody feels accountable, then nothing gets done."

### Advancing strategic initiatives

Diaz has helped lead two of LeBlanc's five strategic initiatives – the medical enterprise and institutional culture – in his first year.

Diaz said he spent a "lion's share" of his first five months improving the University's medical enterprise, which includes the Medical Faculty Associates, School of Medicine and Health Sciences and the GW Hospital.

See **DIAZ** Page 2

## Brian Blake to bring 'data-driven' focus to role as new provost: colleagues

ALEC RICH &  
JARED GANS  
STAFF WRITERS

GW's academic enterprise will gain a "thoughtful" leader next month when Brian Blake joins the University as its next provost, former and future colleagues said.

Blake, who has worked as a professor, dean and provost at four higher education institutions over more than 20 years, will bring "warmth" and experience to the position when he becomes the next provost on Nov. 1, colleagues said. They said Blake's extensive experience will help him take part in the planning process for GW's next five-year strategic plan, which includes a cut in undergraduate enrollment and an increase in the proportion of STEM majors.

"I think in leadership, it's good to have nice human beings," University President Thomas LeBlanc said. "I think he exemplifies that and exemplifies that in his leadership style."

Blake was selected as the next provost after a monthlong search to succeed Provost Forrest Maltzman concluded last week. Maltzman announced in April his intention to resign as provost and take a sabbatical before returning to GW as a professor.

### Blake's career

Blake has previously worked at Drexel and Georgetown universities and the universities of Miami and Notre Dame throughout his career in academia, according to his LinkedIn profile.

Blake has served as provost and executive vice president for academic affairs of Drexel since 2015. Under his tenure, Drexel enrolled its largest freshman class and notched its highest retention rate and "research activity" in the history of the college, according to a University release.

Drexel President John Fry called Blake "critical" to his university's success in a letter to the school's faculty and staff Tuesday. He said Blake oversaw the recruitment of the "most academically qualified freshman class" in the school's history and hired more than 10 deans and 100 faculty

during his tenure.

"Our loss clearly will accrue to the benefit of George Washington," he said in the letter. "However, I am excited that Provost Blake will have a unique career opportunity in his new academic home."

Fry said Blake will leave a "rich" legacy of establishing several programs, like the Drexel Areas of Research Excellence program, which promotes interdisciplinary research, to incentivize community members to become involved in research at the university. Research is one of LeBlanc's five strategic initiatives and one of his four pillars of the University's next five-year strategic plan.

Fry said Blake helped to obtain more than \$65 million in donations from donors and to establish more than a dozen endowed scholarships for women and minorities in science, technology, engineering and math fields. LeBlanc announced plans to increase the ratio of STEM undergraduates at GW from about 19 percent to 30 percent last month.

"Brian has been a trusted colleague and wonderful partner, and I know that he will be missed," Fry said.

Patricia Whitely, the University of Miami's vice president for student affairs, said Blake did a "fantastic job" in his roles as vice provost and graduate school dean and demonstrated his dedication to student success. Blake was hired for the role by LeBlanc while he served as Miami's provost, LeBlanc said in an interview.

"He was always accessible and visible to the graduate students and accomplished numerous initiatives that improved graduate student life," Whitely said in an email. "He was a mentor for students and a great role model for the UM community."

Kevin Bowyer – a professor of engineering and computer science at Notre Dame who recruited Blake to the school in 2009 while serving as the chair of the department – said Blake was "thoughtful and astute" in his role as both a professor and as associate dean of engineering for research and graduate studies.

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## Chronic illnesses pose setbacks in social life and academics, students say

SHANNON MALLARD  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Sophomore Caroline Lloyd said that some days, her chronic joint and muscle pain is too severe for her to get out of bed.

Lloyd experiences five chronic illnesses: attention deficit hyperactivity disorder; migraines that cause hemiparesis, or partial-body paralysis; hypermobile Ehlers-Danlos syndrome, a connective tissue disorder that causes pain and joint dislocations; hyperadrenergic POTS, which disrupts nervous system regulating processes like blood flow and breathing; and mast cell activation syndrome, a condition that causes recurrent allergic reactions to food.

She said her symptoms – which include joint and muscle pain and fatigue when blood flow decreases – cause her to forget "basic words" like "door" and "table" and make learning new class material difficult. Lloyd said she turned to Disability Student Services to receive less rigid assignment deadlines and more flexible attendance requirements to avoid penalties for missing classes.

In interviews, 10 students with a chronic illness said their disability often hinders their class attendance,

ability to keep up with schoolwork and participation in student organization activities. Students said their academic and social experiences may differ from their peers, but they have found other ways to find community on campus.

The Centers for Disease Control defines chronic illnesses as conditions that require ongoing medical attention or limit daily activities for at least one year.

"This causes chronic fatigue and can leave me unable to do much of anything due to my symptoms," Lloyd said in an email.

### Accommodating student needs

Tracy Boswell, the director of administrative services at the Colonial Health Center, said DSS staff offer primary care services and collaborate with specialty health care providers to support students with chronic medical conditions.

Boswell said the center's staff members encourage incoming students with chronic medical conditions to submit medical records to the CHC prior to arriving on campus so the CHC is aware of their diagnoses. She added that extending specialty care services is "crucial" for students who receive diagnoses after starting school.



Junior Mackenzie Flynn experiences several chronic illnesses, which she said can present difficulties in maintaining a supportive social circle.

"In the CHC, students are treated according to the standards of practice and then referred for specialty care either to the Medical Faculty Associates or a myriad of other expert providers in the field," Boswell said in an email.

Junior Avery St. Onge said one week after being diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes last spring, she visited the GW Hospital because she was experiencing symptoms of diabetic ketoacidosis

– a life-threatening complication that causes the body to produce too much acid in the blood and burn fat for energy when insulin levels are low.

St. Onge said she reached out to DSS for approval to bring a blood sugar measuring device into class and exam rooms. She said many of her professors have strict anti-technology policies during class and exam times, and her device beeps loudly to warn her when her

blood sugar levels are decreasing.

St. Onge added that her diabetes does not substantially impact her daily life so long as her condition is well-managed, but she needs her device to track blood sugar levels.

"When I first got it, it was weird, because I didn't want to burden people with that news," she said. "But now, I'm a lot more comfortable with it and I don't mind telling people."

Sophomore Nicole Melnyk – who experiences fibromyalgia and connective tissue disorder, both of which cause chronic joint pain – said her DSS accommodations allow her to miss class without repercussions and take exams in a private room with extended time.

She said DSS staff should take a more active role in helping students determine what accommodations they need.

"For students with disabilities, the difficulty and stress of dealing with college while managing our illnesses is so much already, it would be very beneficial for the school to take some of this work off of our hands," Melnyk said in an email.

### Balancing health and social life

Sophomore Saramarie Puzanghera, who experiences chronic migraines and a connective tissue disorder, said she is an executive board member in student organizations like the Engineers' Council. But she said committing to student organizations can be difficult because meetings are usually held late at night, and she needs a sufficient amount of sleep to function during the day.

See **STUDENTS** Page 2

# News

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## CRIME LOG

### THREATS TO DO BODILY HARM

Marvin Center  
10/4/2019 – 2:21 p.m.  
Closed Case  
GW Police Department officers responded to the Marvin Center for a report that a male student threatened a male faculty member. Referred to the Office of Enrollment and the Student Experience

### THEFT I/FROM BUILDING

2000 Pennsylvania Ave. (CVS)  
10/4/2019 – 5:15 p.m.  
Open Case  
A female student reported that someone stole her cellphone after she left it unattended on a shelf at the store.  
Case open

### ROBBERY FORCE AND VIOLENCE, LIQUOR LAW VIOLATION

Marvin Center  
10/5/2019 – 1:23 a.m.  
Open Case  
GWPD officers responded to a report that an unknown man forcibly robbed a male student in the Marvin Center. GWPD officers canvassed the area but were unable to locate the subject. Metropolitan Police Department officers responded to the scene, issued a report and requested that D.C. Fire and Emergency Medical Services evaluate the student for intoxication. D.C. FEMS determined the student did not need further medical treatment.  
Case open

### SIMPLE ASSAULT

Lisner Auditorium  
10/5/2019 – 9:45 p.m.  
Closed Case  
A non-GW affiliated woman reported that a non-GW affiliated man sitting beside her in the auditorium touched her leg several times without her permission. MPD responded to the scene, arrested the male subject and transported him to the Second District police station for processing.  
Subject arrested

### THEFT I/FROM BUILDING

Duques Hall  
10/7/2019 – 4 p.m.  
Open Case  
A female student reported that someone stole her wallet from a study lounge in Duques Hall.  
Case open

### ROBBERY FORCE AND VIOLENCE

Mitchell Hall (7-Eleven)  
10/7/2019 – 4:30 p.m.  
Open Case  
A female 7-Eleven employee reported that a male customer forcibly grabbed her purse and removed cash from it. The subject left the store on a scooter. MPD responded to the scene and canvassed the area but were unable to locate the subject.  
Case open

### DISORDERLY CONDUCT

Burns Law Library  
10/9/2019 – 10:39 a.m.  
Closed Case  
A male staff member reported to GWPD that a woman was being disruptive in the Burns Law Library and refused to leave the building. Officers made contact with her after she left the building, told her to leave the area and issued her a bar notice.  
Subject barred

– Compiled by Kateryna Stepanenko

## Diaz to focus on campus safety, accessibility heading into second year

From Page 1

Diaz helped restructure the relationship between GW and the MFA in December, granting officials greater decision-making responsibilities while maintaining the MFA's independence. Diaz said the changes comport with LeBlanc's strategic initiative to "better" align the two groups and bring the MFA back "into the family."

"He really couldn't see attaining preeminence without a preeminent medical school," Diaz said. "We couldn't see a preeminent medical school without high performing physicians – an academic physician practice group."

Diaz also serves as the sponsor for LeBlanc's institutional culture strategic initiative. He leads the Culture Leadership Team – a group of faculty and administrators working on the initiative – which has developed an aspirational statement and values, overseen four work teams and created an ambassador team to lead in-person training sessions this fall.

Diaz said improving

culture is a "marathon" but added that his team has developed a common purpose statement and three service priorities – safety, care and efficiency – to set the framework for a less "transactional" culture.

"Faculty and staff – are they employees of GW or employees of the department of X?" he said. "Unfortunately, I think we have a little bit of the latter. And we're trying to see if we can get to the former."

### Improving safety and accessibility

Administrators have completed more than 100 infrastructure projects as a result of Diaz's summer campus walk. Officials announced last month that 250 projects were still in progress and more than 200 additional improvement areas have been identified.

Scott Burnotes, the new associate vice president for safety and security who Diaz hired in June, announced earlier this month that officials will provide electronic tap access to all residence halls and select academic spaces, which Diaz said will allow security staff to remotely lock down buildings.

"We're all thinking

about safety and security and what it can become, especially not only for the obvious reasons, but in terms of enhancing the student experience," Diaz said.

Provost Forrest Maltzman, who announced in April that he will step down from his role and take a sabbatical before returning to GW as a professor, said Diaz's initiatives have caused a "dramatic improvement" in campus safety. "You see it when you walk across the campus," Maltzman said. "Recently, they've been focusing on creating student space, which I think has been very helpful."

Board of Trustees Chair Grace Speights said the initial \$10 million in funding for Diaz's projects is just the beginning, and the board will likely approve funding for additional campus improvements during this academic year.

"The number we probably could have and would have approved was more, but there's a limited amount that can get done during the summer," Speights said. "So Mark came to us with the things that he thought were most urgent."

Diaz said he has also talked with Student Associ-

ation leadership on improving accessibility in University spaces.

"We want to make sure that as we act, we're serious about students and doing right by the students," he said.

SA President SJ Matthews said student leaders recently presented a report to Diaz with recommendations to improve classroom accessibility, which Diaz said coincides with his staff's work on accessibility.

"That's been really encouraging to see – that there is a large commitment from the administration to improving the student experience, not just for the first few years, but for all students," Matthews said.

She said her conversations with Diaz have been "great" because he has consistently met with student leaders and is "willing to work" to address their concerns.

"Our meetings are always a lot of fun, because we'll come up with these great ideas, and he'll just say, 'Alright, let's do it,'" Matthews said.

–Ilena Peng, Jared Gans and Parth Kotak contributed reporting.

## New provost is 'collegial' yet professional: colleagues

From Page 1

"Brian's classes were well-taught and popular with students," Bowyer said in an email. "Brian led a strong research effort in software engineering, and we were able to substantially grow our visibility in the software engineering research community as a result of Brian's leadership."

### Future challenges and opportunities

Administrators and Faculty Senate members said Blake will need to take time to adjust to GW as the University undergoes a transformation in its academic focus. They said Blake's experience in several roles – dean, provost and professor – will help him adapt to the responsibilities of his position.

LeBlanc said Blake's previous positions as provost at

Drexel and as vice provost at Miami have helped prepare him to take the provost position at GW. He said Blake can maintain strong relationships with coworkers through his "collegial" yet professional management style and pursue "data-driven" conclusions.

"He's able to make some hard decisions, and yet afterward he is able to communicate them in a way that people realize it's not personal – it's what needs to be done," LeBlanc said.

Maltzman, the provost, said he met Blake when he worked at Notre Dame about seven years ago and called him a "collaborative, warm person," which he said is "probably" the most important trait in a good provost. He said he hopes Blake will continue his focus on improving graduation and retention rates at GW.

"It's a measure of every-

thing we do for students," Maltzman said.

Faculty and staff noted Maltzman's emphasis on improving the student experience during his tenure as provost after Maltzman announced he would step down from his position last semester.

Sylvia Marotta-Walters, the chair of the Faculty Senate's executive committee and a professor of counseling and human development, said she hopes Blake "pays attention" to GW's history of shared governance as he attempts to "fill some very big shoes," referring to Blake's predecessors Maltzman and former Provost Steven Lerman, who stepped down in 2015.

She said Blake will arrive at GW during a transition period, as officials plan to cut undergraduate enrollment by 20 percent while increasing the ratio of STEM to non-STEM undergradu-

ates, a move that could cost GW at least \$64 million in revenue over four years.

"It's going to be interesting because he's trying to learn a place while the place is changing," Marotta-Walters said.

David Rain, a Faculty Senate member and an associate professor of geography and international affairs, said the experience Blake accrued at large peer institutions like Miami and Georgetown has prepared him to work at an institution like GW because he oversaw multiple schools with different needs.

He said he hopes Blake promotes cross-disciplinary work between different fields to tie STEM and non-STEM fields together as officials work to boost the ratio of STEM majors at GW.

"If anything, focusing on the interdisciplinary is really, really important to break down the walls," Rain said.

## Students cite struggles balancing illnesses, social life

From Page 1

"It's hard enough if you're healthy, but if you're not, that's not an easy thing to do," she said.

Sophomore Callie Ingwerson said she experiences hypermobility – weak ligament connections that cause chronic pain – and eosinophilic esophagitis, which causes recurrent allergic reactions.

Ingwerson said she spends a "significant" amount of time cooking her own food to avoid allergens

at local restaurants and going to the gym to combat her muscle weakness. She said that while the tasks take time away from studying and participating in student organizations, addressing her self-care needs helps her maintain a social life.

"Last year there were a lot of times where I chose to stay in for the night rather than risk hurting my back or getting sick," Ingwerson said in an email. "I opted out of extracurriculars because I knew I needed more time to rest."

Junior Mackenzie Flynn,

who experiences rheumatoid arthritis, fibromyalgia and undifferentiated connective tissue disease – which causes the immune system to mistakenly attack body tissues – said her illnesses sometimes keep her from going out with friends.

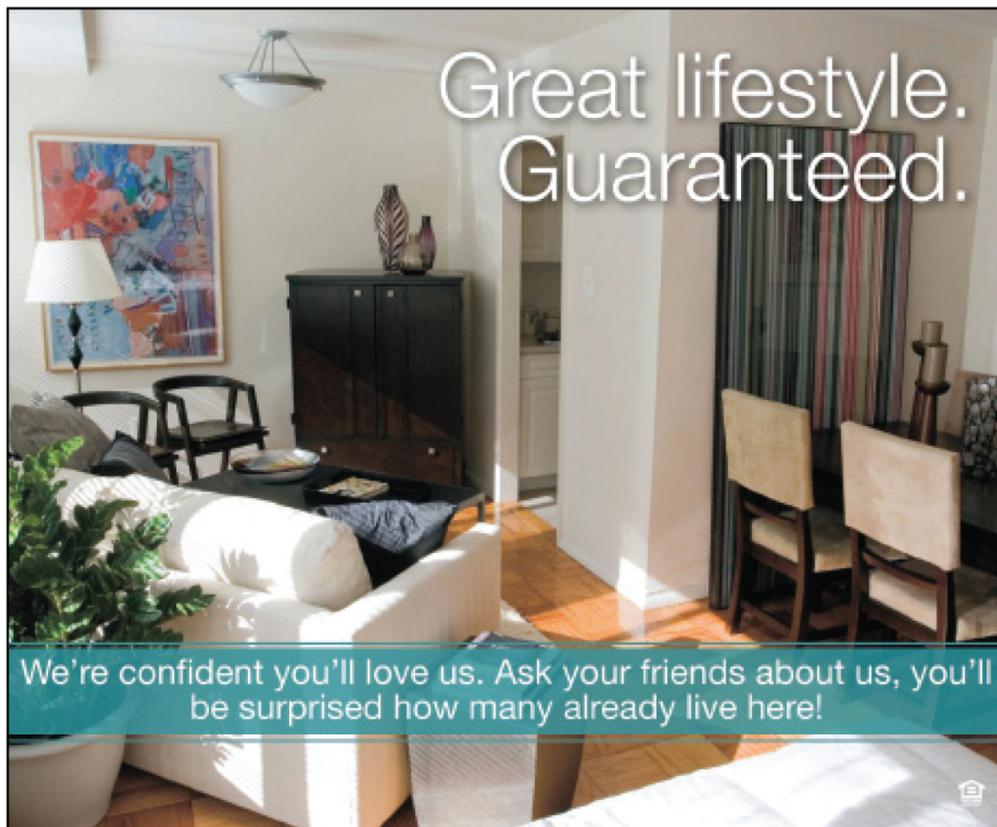
"Sometimes I don't have the energy to go out or I'm dealing with a flare up regarding my illness and it's just not in my best interest to go out because then I'll pay for it the next day," Flynn said.

She added that student organizations like RARE GW – a community sup-

port group for students with rare diseases in which Flynn serves as the co-policy director – and the Disabled Students Collective provide students opportunities to discuss their challenges with other students who experience some form of chronic illness.

"Finding a social group on campus that you can connect with and that understands everything that you're going through has been so pivotal in my college experience," Flynn said.

–Lia DeGroot and Paige Morse contributed reporting.



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# Student experience deans launch series of informal chats with students

**ILENA PENG**  
CONTRIBUTING NEWS EDITOR

Two student experience officials kicked off a biweekly series of informal discussions with students Wednesday.

Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Students Cissy Petty and Associate Dean of Students Colette Coleman spent an hour and a half on the first floor of the Marvin Center speaking with students passing by about topics like food and housing affordability. Petty and Coleman said they hope the “Chat with the Deans” events, held every other Wednesday this semester, will make students feel comfortable approaching them to talk about issues facing college students.

“The informality of being able to sit down and have coffee together makes it easy to say the hard things,” Petty said.

Petty, who made several weeklong stays in residence halls last year, said she considers herself a “very relational dean” who is interested in connecting with students. She said the chats allow the two officials to keep consistent lines of communication with the student body, referencing “Fierce Leadership” author Susan Scott’s idea that productive relationships require constant conversation.



DEAN WHITELAW | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER  
Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Students Cissy Petty talked with students at the first biweekly “Chat with the Deans” Wednesday alongside Colette Coleman, the associate dean of students.

“I want that to epitomize how I move through the world – being a dean is to stay in the conversation,” Petty said. “When it’s hard, let’s stay in the conversation. Let’s stay in the conversation when it’s fun and we’re laughing. Let’s stay in the conversation so that we can get to the place of really understanding each other.”

Petty said she discussed topics like EMeRG, the Student Association and housing plans with students. She added that she wants future chats to be located even closer

to the main walkway in Marvin – next to Panera Bread – to make it more convenient for students to stop by.

Officials expanded Petty’s role and responsibilities this semester to give her oversight of areas like the Mount Vernon Campus and the Lerner Health and Wellness Center and allow her to report directly to University President Thomas LeBlanc. Administrators said the change gives students more say in the University’s upper-level departments and decision-making processes.

Coleman, the associate dean of students, said Petty drummed up the idea for the “Chat with the Deans” initiative last spring as a way to increase their visibility and make themselves more accessible to students.

“A lot of times when we’re doing things, we’re either going into particular groups or particular communities that are already established,” she said. “This levels the playing field and allows us to meet students from all walks.”

Coleman said she heard feedback from freshmen at

the chat who identified food as the one thing they miss most about home. She said the sentiment echoed comments she has heard from students in the past, so officials are working to deliver dining improvements this year.

“When they think of home, they think about the food and the meals that they had at home and the community that they had,” Coleman said. “That’s something that we’re trying to create here.”

Officials have responded to concerns of food insecurity with year-over-year increases to dining dollars, a discounted Meal Deals program and a student-run food pantry. Student leaders launched a food insecurity task force last fall and found that 79 percent of students would use a dining hall on the Foggy Bottom Campus if it were an option.

Coleman added that officials will promote the chats through social media and GW Engage.

Students who participated in the event said the location and informal setting in a heavily trafficked student space demonstrate that the deans value student feedback.

Senior Ian Kavanaugh, a resident adviser in District House, said he has previously met with Petty to discuss his experience at GW

but added that the new chats make it easier for students who would find personally reaching out to the deans to be “really intimidating.”

He said he spoke with Petty at the event about the impacts of new changes to RA responsibilities, like conducting rounds in residence halls.

Hallie Koch, a senior majoring in political science, said she attended the event because she often talks about issues she faces with other students and thought sharing her input with “people who can actually do something about it” would be helpful. She said the chats are a forum from which officials can collect feedback about the student experience that they might not otherwise hear.

Aidan Lang, a freshman majoring in physics and mathematics, said Petty asked him at the event if he thought anything at GW needed to be improved, which he appreciated. He said he told Petty he liked the open dining plan and discussed the potential to open a dining hall in the renovated Thurston Hall.

“These are the higher-ups, I guess,” he said. “They make decisions or at least are involved in making the decisions, so I think it’s important that they talk to students so they know what we think and what we want.”



HATCHET FILE PHOTO  
Nineteen universities, including GW and its peers Georgetown and NYU, filed an amicus brief in support of re-instituting the government program DACA.

## GW joins group of universities to support re-implementation of DACA

**MAKENA ROBERTS**  
REPORTER

GW is one of 19 universities across the United States backing the continuation of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program.

Nineteen universities, including peer schools Georgetown and New York universities, filed an amicus brief to the Supreme Court on Oct. 3 claiming that students who come to the United States under the DACA program benefit their institutions. Officials said GW’s participation in the brief expands on the University’s previous commitments to support the program.

“Like their classmates, these young people were valedictorians, student government leaders, varsity athletes, inventors, academic award winners, accomplished artists and role models for younger children in their communities,” the brief states.

Former President Barack Obama enacted DACA in 2012 to provide work permits and relief from deportation for immigrants who were brought to the United States while they were under the age of 16. President Donald Trump rescinded DACA in 2017, claiming that the program oversteps the Constitution.

The federal government stopped accepting DACA applications in September 2017. More than 16,200 immigrants have lost their work permits since 2017, according to FWD, an organization that advocates for immigrants’ rights.

“While DACA does not provide our students and alumni a path to citizenship, it does offer them a measure of security and access to opportunities for educational and professional development,” the brief states.

The brief states that in-

dividuals under the DACA program come to the United States hopeful for their futures and determined to work hard to build lives for themselves. DACA allows “dreamer” students to study in universities and legally work in the United States, according to the brief.

“Through the opportunities provided by American institutions of higher education all over this country, including amici’s, these young people now have the skills to give back – in ways big and small – to the country that raised them,” the brief states.

University spokeswoman Crystal Nosal said GW’s participation in the brief is a “continuation” of the amicus brief GW signed onto with the same universities in 2017 to support litigation against the Department of Homeland Security that would have rescinded the DACA program.

“GW values the contribution that all of our students bring to our campus community,” Nosal said in an email. “As soon as the Supreme Court announced in June 2019 that it would hear the DACA case, GW anticipated signing onto an amicus brief.”

DACA has allowed about 800,000 undocumented individuals to stay in the United States to work, according to FactCheck, a website run by the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania.

Students urged officials in 2016 to establish GW as a “sanctuary campus,” which would implement policies that would make the campus safe for immigrants, students of color and undocumented students. Students who came to the United States under DACA voiced concerns about deportation when Trump announced plans to roll back the program in 2017.

Spokespeople from 15 of the other universities in-

cluded with the brief did not return multiple requests for comment. Spokespeople for Columbia and Harvard universities and Washington University in St. Louis declined to comment.

Arelis Palacios, the associate director for undocumented student services at Georgetown University, said Georgetown President John J. DeGioia has provided legal services and advising for students who came to the United States under DACA.

“Whether it be free legal services through our partnership with Catholic Charities Immigration Legal Services or on-campus advising, we remain fully dedicated to supporting our undocumented students and the unique challenges they face,” Palacios said in an email.

Drew Amstutz, the vice president of communications for GW College Democrats, said he is proud the University has taken a stand to call for the federal government to reinstate the DACA program.

“By having the DACA program, it allows us to reach out into communities that might not feel that they have access to education,” he said. “Whenever we extend education to more students, the student body as a whole benefits.”

John Olds, the chair of GW College Republicans, said the organization supports the University’s efforts to re-instate the DACA program.

“DACA has allowed some of the best and brightest among us to go to school without living in fear,” Olds said in an email. “We applaud the University’s decision to help students further their education regardless of their immigration status. We hope that Congress can come to a permanent legislative solution in the near future.”

—Lia DeGroot contributed reporting.

## Disabled Students Collective pushes for ‘quiet spaces’ at campus events

**SHANNON MALLARD & TIFFANY GARCIA**  
REPORTERS

A student-led organization that advocates for students with disabilities is pushing for more classroom and event accessibility and enhanced digital communication.

Members of the Disabled Students Collective are advocating for quiet spaces at all career networking events and improved communications accessibility, like adding alternative text captions to videos on University websites and in classrooms. Student leaders said instituting the changes will make campus more accessible for all students, which will help disabled students feel more included on campus.

AJ Link, the vice president of the Disabled Students Collective, said quiet spaces – rooms students can visit to “cool down” before returning to the main event – are a useful resource for atypical and neurotypical people alike.

“If you make the space open for everyone, then you’re going to bring more people into the space,” Link said. “It’s going to be more enjoyable.”

Link said he hopes to also institute quiet spaces at social events like Colonials Weekend, orientations, galas and sporting events.

“Hopefully we can expand that beyond just networking events to all social events or any kind of event where people could get overstimulated – there’s noise stimulation, light stimulation – just to have a place where atypical people can go to decompress,” Link said. “It’s good for neurotypical people who just want a quiet space for a second to cool down if they feel overwhelmed.”

Link said he has been in contact with officials in

the Center for Career Services to create quiet spaces, but student leaders have “struggled” to implement the rooms across campus because career centers at each school are in charge of their own networking events.

He added that increasing communications accessibility on campus, like encouraging professors to use large font sizes and strong color contrast for slideshows, will help some students with disabilities feel more “comfortable” in the classroom.

“It’s a good recruitment tool – it shows you making steps to actually work on diversity,” Link said. “It’s not just a buzzword or catchphrase.”

Gabriela Rossner, the president of the Disabled Students Collective, said the group has worked with administrators in the Division of Operations, Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and the Division of Safety and Security to fix “small things that will make big differences.” She said the group is taking steps to increase online accessibility, like adding alternative text and captions to all images featured on administrative websites.

The Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights launched a federal probe into alleged disability discrimination at GW in April 2017. The department found that several GW web pages lack accommodations, like photo captions and strong color contrast, for deaf, hard of hearing and visually impaired individuals.

Officials said last January that monitoring digital accessibility issues like tab navigation, video captioning and photo captions is difficult because University websites and technology update frequently.

Rossner said some offices like the Office of Un-

dergraduate Admissions have already taken steps to make their websites more accessible, like adding audio descriptions of the images posted on their website. She said the group is meeting with individual offices and departments on campus to make their websites accessible to all students.

Rossner said the group is also working to grant more student organizations access services on CART – a translational app that adds captions to real-time conversations. She said student organizations must secure funding to provide CART services to members with disabilities.

“We know they struggle to pay for access to technology that meets all of their student’s needs,” Rossner said.

A senior student and member of the Disabled Students Collective, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because he did not wish to reveal that he has a disability, said instituting quiet spaces at career events will create a more “inclusive” environment for students with disabilities.

“It’s important to have quiet spaces as an overall policy because you never know who is disabled, because anyone can have an invisible disability,” he said in an email. “Career fairs, especially at GW, are always a hot mess, and it’s good to have a place to chill and relax.”

He added that normalizing communications accessibility policies can benefit disabled students who might feel uncomfortable disclosing their disability to their professors to receive necessary classroom accommodations.

“Professors are usually good with accommodating some disabilities, but only if you proactively identify yourself,” he said.



ALEXANDER WELLING | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR  
Gabriela Rossner, the president of the Disabled Students Collective, said the organization is pushing officials to institute quiet spaces at campus events like networking sessions.

# Faculty Senate members question LeBlanc, Speights about upcoming goals

JARED GANS  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Faculty Senate members voiced concerns about a planned undergraduate enrollment cut, the push to boost the STEM ratio and declining rankings at the body's October meeting Friday.

Grace Speights, the recently appointed chair of the Board of Trustees, gave an introductory presentation at the senate meeting to share what she has been working on since becoming chair, like assisting with the University's provost search. Faculty questioned Speights and University President Thomas LeBlanc about the University's goals, including the enrollment decrease and STEM push, and about how the pair plans to implement these goals in the next few years.

Speights said in her presentation that she has met with several members of the community, like Faculty Senate Executive Committee Chair Sylvia Marotta-Walters and Student Association President SJ Matthews, as part of her "many months of in-depth training" after taking the board chair position.

"We have to make decisions that we believe are in the best interest of the University," Speights said. "That is the role of a governing Board of Trustees. As to how those policies are then implemented, that's where we include the other constituents of the University."

## Undergraduate population cut

At the meeting, LeBlanc clarified that officials project a cut in revenue of about \$64 million over four years resulting from the roughly 20 percent drop in undergraduate enrollment officials plan to implement over the next five years. Arthur Wilson, an associate professor of finance, asked LeBlanc where officials plan to allocate the cuts, but LeBlanc did not address Wilson's question.

Wilson also voiced an issue on behalf of Philip Wirtz, a professor of decision sciences and psychology, about LeBlanc's plan to contract the undergraduate population, which he said will reduce the pool of available financial aid. Wirtz, in his statement, asked Speights for the board's assurance that the enrollment decrease will not cause a return to "the days of old, when GW was known primarily as a rich white kids school."

Wirtz said in an email that he resigned from his position on the Faculty Senate's executive committee. He did not return a request for comment about why he resigned.

Faculty have previously raised concerns that an increase in the number of science, technology, engineering and math majors could reduce the amount of scholarship money available for underrepresented minorities.

Speights said diversity will remain "at the top of our list" while officials look to

cut the undergraduate population, which was the most diverse in at least a decade last fall.

"It's even in our framework in terms of the strategic plan, and I, as chair of the board, will tell you that we will not impact diversity as a result," she said.

Wilson also asked LeBlanc to clarify his definition of STEM in light of his push to boost STEM enrollment to 30 percent of the undergraduate student body.

LeBlanc said the committee on undergraduate education for the strategic planning process is working to develop a concrete definition of STEM to measure the University's progress on the target.

LeBlanc said there are five "natural" ways to achieve his goal of growing STEM, which include "moderately" growing the number of engineering majors, gradually expanding "basic sciences" in the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences and increasing the number of students double majoring in one non-STEM field and one STEM subject.

He said he expects the members of the committee to make additional recommendations for defining STEM.

"Some combination of those five things, each done in moderation, would easily reach the goal that we're talking about," LeBlanc said.

## Dip in national rankings

GW dropped seven spots in U.S. News and World Re-



JACK FONSECA | CONTRIBUTING PHOTO EDITOR  
Faculty pushed back against LeBlanc's plan to increase the proportion of undergraduate STEM majors.

port's ranking of the best colleges in the country last month. Sarah Wagner, an associate professor of anthropology, said two major causes for GW's drop according to the news magazine's methodology are inadequate financial aid for students and a lack of faculty resources.

She said LeBlanc's plan to reduce undergraduate enrollment and increase the "per-unit cost of education" by increasing the ratio of students who major in STEM could increase GW's "reliance" on students who can pay the full amount of tuition as the University's financial aid pool shrinks. Wagner said that change could re-

duce GW's socioeconomic diversity and lower its ranking more in the future.

LeBlanc said GW fell in the rankings because U.S. News changed its formula for determining college rankings, not because the University made a change. He said the report now accounts for the percentage of students at an institution eligible for Pell Grants which naturally skews the rankings toward public universities that tend to enroll more Pell recipients.

"The minute you announce them, you don't have to do the math," LeBlanc said. "The minute you announce them, I guarantee you 10 publics are going this

way and 10 privates are going this way."

He added that other areas where the University has traditionally done well, like its "strong" relationships with high school guidance counselors, were not considered at all in this year's rankings.

LeBlanc said that moving forward, officials will consider whether they should target a specific ranking or instead target underlying factors contributing to the rankings that they consider intrinsically "valuable," like the six-year graduation rate.

"Part of the discussion needs to be about what are our values," he said. "What do we care about?"

# RHA expands cooking classes to all freshman residence halls

RYAN NORRIS &  
TAYLOR ROWE  
REPORTERS

Students can now attend monthly cooking classes in any freshman residence hall on the Foggy Bottom and Mount Vernon campuses.

After piloting a cooking class in Thurston Hall last academic year, the Residence Hall Association partnered with the Campus Living and Residential Engagement team and GW Dining to bring the program to all freshman residence halls. RHA President Trinity Diaz said the classes, which are open to all students, will encourage students to make healthy and sustainable meals during their transition to college dining.

"The whole goal is to just make cooking seem more accessible in residence halls because we find, for first-years, it's intimidating to go to your community kitchen and cook," Diaz said.

During each class, she said students watch and aid with food preparation while representatives from the RHA, campus living team and GW Dining prepare the meals. Diaz said she offers class participants a recipe card to take home with them so they can try cooking the dishes after the class.

Diaz said she talked with John Ralls, the director of communications and outreach for the Division of Operations, over the summer about expanding the program to all freshman residence halls because of the large turnout at last year's classes.

She said each class will focus on different recipes, like mac and cheese,

chili, sliders and a special Thanksgiving-themed class in Thurston.

"It's not the same food," Diaz said. "That's something that's very fun about it, that every time it's different people showcasing recipes."

Next week's class will be held in Potomac House at 6:30 p.m., and the RHA will post updates to its Facebook page about upcoming classes, Diaz said. She said the RHA is brainstorming ways to hold a class in Fulbright Hall, where students have in-unit kitchens instead of a community kitchen.

"No matter what the size of the kitchen is, no matter where it is, we're going to make sure we go to all the freshman buildings," Diaz said.

Abigail Borin, an RHA hall council adviser, said the RHA scheduled this year's classes on Sundays to coincide with Supermarket Sundays, a GW Dining program through which students receive a \$10 discount when they spend \$40 worth of groceries at Whole Foods and Safeway.

"Last year, we only had cooking classes in a few of the residence halls, and now we've expanded to every first-year residence hall because it saves them GWorld, it's a more sustainable way to cook and eat food and it's all around healthier," Borin said.

She said each recipe takes less than 20 minutes to make, and students can either watch the cooking process or aid the representatives in the demonstration during the class.

"We're going to try to make it as interactive as possible, but it really depends on who's teaching and what their teaching style is, and also what ev-

erybody's learning style is," she said. "If they don't want to get involved as heavily, they don't have to, that's totally up to them."

She said the RHA strives to host at least 15 students each class, which was the average attendance at the classes the RHA held last year. She said the RHA will promote the classes by advertising with GW Dining.

"We're hoping that it really does accelerate and that we get a higher turnout than last year," she said.

Ana Little-Saña, a resident adviser in Thurston, said she planned to teach the first class of the semester in Thurston last week with recipes for mac and cheese and a harvest salad. But Little-Saña said she only reviewed the cooking steps for spaghetti squash and oatmeal that she had prepared in advance because the kitchen lacked clean supplies.

The RHA added pots and pans to each residence hall's community kitchen last year to encourage students to use common spaces to prepare meals.

"Facility issues, kitchen not being cleaned regularly, residents leaving dirty dishes in the sink, odor issues, et cetera, are actually a bigger impediment to first years' cooking than lack of knowledge," Little-Saña said.

Little-Saña added that she'd like to see additional resources directed to kitchen maintenance so that students feel more comfortable using the space to prepare meals.

"While there is some level of personal responsibility that residents need to take, one kitchen for 1,100-plus residents in a common space doesn't set students up for success," she said.



JENNA BANKS | PHOTOGRAPHER  
Eco-rep Colin Medwick, an intern for Campaign GW, said student-led committees are encouraging students to shop at thrift stores and participate in waterfront cleanups.

# Campaign GW works to increase sustainable practices District-wide

ILENA PENG &  
SHANNON MALLARD  
CONTRIBUTING NEWS EDITORS

One year after debuting three new sustainability-focused student committees, student leaders are working to boost involvement in District-wide environmental projects.

Members of Campaign GW, a student organization that advocates for environmentally friendly living, created the committees last year to educate students about minimizing their environmental footprints through habits like composting. Student leaders said the committees have bolstered the organization's on-campus and District-wide presence with residence hall tabling, thrift shopping trips and service projects around D.C.

Junior Colin Medwick, an eco-rep – a student representative assigned to residence halls who works to increase sustainability – and a Campaign GW intern, said he and other eco-reps head the three committees, which focus on sustainable service, sustainable consumption and education and outreach.

Medwick said Campaign GW's education and outreach committee will focus on drawing students not involved in sustainability into the organization. He said Campaign GW currently tables at events, posts on social media platforms and hosts eco-rep residence hall events to encourage students to become more sustainable.

"Tightly make a large part of our carbon footprint, or you know, just our impact

on the planet – it's essential that we get them involved to make a difference," Medwick said.

The sustainable service committee works to grow student involvement with sustainability projects in other areas of D.C., like cleaning up the Potomac and Anacostia rivers, Medwick said. He said increasing students' involvement in sustainability efforts can maximize the impact students have on the District overall.

He added that the sustainable consumption committee encourages students to cut down on product purchases by shopping in places like thrift stores.

"Students are super busy," he said. "Everyone seems to be really passionate about everything, which is a great thing but also a challenge when you want to plan things. So I think letting students dive deeper into certain areas they care about has been a useful way to increase engagement."

Campaign GW helped roll out a composting program in Kogan Plaza last January and partnered last year with the University's Green Move-Out program, which collected a record-high number of donations.

The group will continue to table in residence halls and hold environmental documentary screenings to educate students about how their habits impact the environment, he said.

Medwick said Campaign GW will continue to run eco-challenges, during which halls compete to reduce their water and electricity usage. He added that the group will incorporate

compost collection into the eco-challenge this academic year, and residence halls will hold events like cooking workshops and classes on how to make "DIY toothpaste."

"We let the groups within their hall cater their own programming," he said. "So we've seen that come to fruition in really creative ways."

Erin Powell, a former eco-rep and a junior majoring in international affairs, said sustainability can be as simple as turning off lights when leaving a room and ensuring faucets aren't leaking. She said green living seems more feasible to students when they know others who have adopted the same habits.

"Being sustainable can feel really daunting to people – and not even necessarily in a foreboding way where it's like, 'Oh, I'm not capable of this,' but just like, 'I don't know how to do this, I'm not welcome doing this, therefore, I shouldn't try,'" she said.

Powell said the on-campus sustainability community, which includes student organizations like Campaign GW and the University's Sustainable GW team, needs more student involvement to continue the climate movement's momentum.

Members of Green GW and other student organizations on campus participated in the second-ever Global Climate Strike.

"Climate change is a current problem and sustainability is a fun, really exciting part of the century and of our generation," she said.



GABRIELLE RHOADS | PHOTOGRAPHER  
Freshmen can learn how to meal prep in their residence halls at RHA-led cooking classes.

# Students form organization to promote ocean conservation

**DYLAN SAPIENZA & LIZZIE MINTZ**  
REPORTERS

A group of students is growing its organization to protect and preserve oceans and beaches.

The Surfrider Foundation Club at GW – a chapter of the Surfrider Foundation, a national nonprofit environmental organization that works to safeguard oceans and beaches – registered as a student organization in December but is kicking off with events this fall. Student organization leaders will participate in water cleanups near campus and encourage students and residents to follow sustainable practices, like eliminating single-use plastics.

Sophomore Kalista Pepper, the chair of the group, said she wanted to start a chapter at GW because some of the University's environmental groups, like GW Trails, lacked a focus in ocean conservation. Pepper said she wanted to connect with students who share her love of the ocean and the environment.

"There's Trails, there's Alternative Breaks, but they go out and hike," she said. "You don't have the people who just lounge on the beach all day and then want to pick up trash afterward or want to do something more for it. It was finding that community of people who cared."

Pepper said about 200 people have signed up for the organization's email list since the beginning of the semester. She said about 20 people, including the six-member executive board, participated



Kalista Pepper and Chandler McDowell, two members of the Surfrider executive board, said the group will focus on ocean conservation.

in Surfrider's first cleanup at the Georgetown waterfront last month.

Pepper said she grew interested in protecting the environment and ocean while spending time on the Outer Banks – barrier islands off the coast of North Carolina – for the last three years.

"I've always loved the ocean, but I missed it coming to D.C.," she said. "D.C. is landlocked, it's hard when you don't have sand and seagulls and stars, and I miss it."

This fall, members have participated in cleanups at the Georgetown waterfront

and met with Rep. Greg Murphy, R-N.C., last month to discuss the effects of offshore drilling, she said.

"You see all of these people come to do something to be more than themselves and be better people, it's incredible," she said. "That's continued to happen consistently with every one of our cleanups."

Pepper said she hopes to work with Take Back the Tap – a nationwide initiative on college campuses that encourages students to ban bottled water use – to encourage the GW community to get more involved in the

program.

"Both of our missions include ending single-use plastic usage on the GW campus," Pepper said.

Sophomore Claire Hoffman, the group's treasurer, said chapter members visit D.C. restaurants to discuss sustainable practices, like reducing single-use takeout utensils and only providing straws to customers upon request.

Pepper, the group's chair, said members have spoken with restaurants like Duke's Grocery, Bluestone Lane and Circa.

Hoffman said members

of the group, like other Surfrider chapters, tell employees at local restaurants about Surfrider's program to help businesses meet the foundation's "ocean friendly" criteria of only using reusable foodware onsite and eliminating styrofoam use.

"A lot of restaurants are moving toward being more environmentally friendly and conscious about that, especially in Foggy Bottom," she said. "It's a really great thing to have going for you but a lot of restaurants have been really open to it."

Hoffman said she believes grassroots works are

important for environmental advocacy and hopes the group can make a positive impact on the environment by being involved in the legislative process. She said having grassroots groups like Surfrider involved in the legislative process is important because it "streamlines the connection from the public to those in places of power."

She said members of Surfrider stay up to date with environmental policy and advocacy efforts in Congress and run social media campaigns.

"Change starts at the bottom, but we have to get the people at the top involved," she said. "That goes hand-in-hand with getting a good group of people who are really passionate about it because I think grassroots efforts make change at the top."

Sophomore Chandler McDowell, the chapter's secretary, said the group is working with Timothy Kane, the associate director for inclusion initiatives, to plan a presentation for the University's annual Diversity Summit, which will take place next month. She said the chapter met Kane at the fall organization fair last month.

McDowell said Kane asked the group's board members to participate in the summit after he explained that officials were looking for a student environmental group to participate in the event.

She said the group will speak with summit participants about topics like using sustainable toothpastes, like tooth "tabs," chewable toothpaste alternatives that Lush Cosmetics offers.

## IN BRIEF

### Bret Stephens backs out of event at GW days before officials planned to send invites

Conservative New York Times columnist Bret Stephens will no longer come to campus to discuss civil discourse with the professor who called him a bedbug.

School of Media and Public Affairs Associate Director David Karpf, whose series of tweets calling Stephens a bedbug and documenting Stephens' reaction went viral in August, said Stephens backed out of the event – previously scheduled for Oct. 28 – two days before invitations were scheduled to be sent out. Karpf said Stephens requested that the event be closed to the media and open only to GW students but withdrew from the event after Karpf disagreed.

Stephens responded to Karpf's initial tweet by emailing Karpf – copying Provost Forrest Maltzman – to call his comments a "new low" for online discourse. Maltzman responded to Stephens affirming GW's commitment to academic free speech and invited Stephens to speak at GW about civil discourse in the digital era, which Stephens accepted in late August.

Karpf said the event should be open for anyone to attend given the "public" nature of their "altercation" on Twitter. He said no one "explicitly" told Stephens the event would be open to the public.

"That seemed to me like he was trying to either get the event canceled or trying to narrow it in a way that seemed inappropriate to me," he said. "This had been a very public interaction led almost entirely by him and I think after you use your column in The New York Times to effectively compare me to a Nazi propagandist, I don't think you then get to turn around and say, 'If we're going to discuss this anymore, it needs to be in private.'"

Days after Karpf tweeted his joke, Stephens wrote an opinion piece in The Times comparing hate speech on Twitter to "political fury" channeled over the radio in Nazi Germany. Stephens, a Jewish writer, did not mention Karpf, a Jewish professor, by name, but he included a quote by a Polish anti-Semite likening Jews to burning bedbugs in the article.

Karpf said he "wished" he could have asked Stephens whether he thought he made a mistake in publishing his Times column about Nazi Germany. He added that he would have used the event to outline how Stephens could have phrased his objections in a way that indicated the criticism was given in good faith.

Karpf said he would have "actually engaged" in a conversation with Stephens about civil discourse online if he had not copied Maltzman, a move that indicated that Stephens' comments did not come from a "genuine place."

"I think he either would have gotten really defensive – which would have shown that I'm clearly right – or he would have pointed out something that I haven't thought of before, and it would have been nice to learn something," Karpf said of Stephens. "So we're losing out on an opportunity."

—Lizzie Mintz and Shannon Mallard



Paleoecology experts said the professor's research on past extinctions could inform how species loss could impact current ecosystems.

## Anthropology research compares prehistoric ecosystems to current biodiversity crisis

**SHANNON MALLARD & UZMA RENTIA**  
REPORTERS

A professor co-authored a paper that compared how current worldwide decreases in ecosystem biodiversity mirror similar trends in prehistoric ecosystems.

Andrew Barr, a visiting assistant professor of anthropology, examined how the loss of large animals like woolly mammoths and saber-toothed tigers during the last ice age influenced species interactions, according to a GW Today release earlier this month. Paleoecology experts said observing how prehistoric species responded to large animal extinctions can baseline research on how biodiversity loss will affect present ecosystem interactions.

"We have this modern-day biodiversity and climate crisis that we know is having profound impacts and can feel sometimes that we don't really know what's happening because it's a new problem," Barr said. "If we study the past, we actually have a record of how mammal communities have reacted."

The research team examined 93 species spanning from the Pleistocene era – the last ice age – to the present day to understand how mass extinctions of keystone species, or organisms on which other species in an ecosystem depend, can alter species abundance within ecosystems. The team found that re-

moving predators at the top of the food chain, like the woolly mammoth, caused species to inhabit certain areas based on abiotic instead of biotic factors.

Barr said the paper was part of the Smithsonian Institution's Evolution of Terrestrial Ecosystems working group, a research program that studies how terrestrial land ecosystems have evolved, which provided the research team with funding.

He said eliminating keystone predator species leads to a rapid increase in "common species," like rats, and biodiversity loss. He said human activities, like clearing land for agricultural use, has contributed to biodiversity loss and biotic homogenization – when separate communities of organisms become more similar.

Factors like climate change and pollution have led to decreases in biodiversity worldwide, according to a United Nations report released in May. The average abundance of native species in most major land-based habitats has fallen by at least 20 percent since 1900, according to the report.

"We know a really common pattern that's been shown in a lot of different studies is that the species that are very common in different sites become even more common," Barr said. "Things like raccoons or opossums do really well in sort of these human modified ecosystems that we have today."

Biodiversity loss weakens ecosystem productivity, according to a release from Conservation International. Decreasing species diversity reduces ecosystems' capacity to store excess carbon and act as water and food sources, the release states.

Paleoecology experts said examining how prehistoric ecosystems changed in response to large animal extinctions can serve as a guideline for how modern ecosystems will respond to the current biodiversity crisis.

Emily Lindsey – an assistant curator and excavation site director at the La Brea Tar Pits and Museum, which is a collection of tar pits in California that contain fossil remains – said human activity can hinder species' ability to survive climate change. She said animal biodiversity would decrease more slowly if humans did not intercede in natural habitats, like how endangered animal populations can be confined in national parks.

Lindsey added that biodiversity loss has taken place over millions of years, but recent human impacts on the environment have expedited mass species extinctions.

"It's only very recently – just in the last few tens of thousands of years – that really dramatically changed," she said. "The second thing that's important to recognize is that event very likely represents the beginning pulse of the extinction crisis that we're in today."

Lindsey said ecosystem conservation can mitigate the effects of human activity and climate change on species abundance.

"The most important thing that we can do is protect large swaths of land," she said. "That includes corridors, or significant say, elevational or longitudinal gradients where the animals will be able to migrate and track the ecosystems that they rely on."

Lindsey said challenges like climate change that animal species face today are also affecting humans. She said humans now face more difficulty extracting necessary resources, like food and water, from the environment.

"Human populations are also being stressed exorbitantly by climate changes, like major weather events, drought, crop die off and ocean die off are impacting communities that rely on resources from the sea," Lindsey said.

Warren Douglas Allmon, a professor of paleontology at Cornell University, said removing any species from an ecosystem disrupts the food chain, which can "radically" transform interspecies interactions, which he said negatively affects ecosystem productivity.

"If you get rid of species in any ecosystem or you get rid of large-bodied species, then you are going to change the dynamics within the ecosystem because you've removed an energy processor," Allmon said.

# Officials should not leave students' health care complaints unaddressed

STAFF EDITORIAL

Feeling ill is unpleasant, and the Colonial Health Center sometimes does not make the experience any better.

More than a dozen students alleged frustrations last week with their CHC visits, saying the center lacks sufficient mental and physical resources. The health center's rocky history of administrative turnover and unlicensed professionals does not make the allegations any less valid, but students should still not feel like their go-to for health care is unreliable.

We already know the center needs a permanent leader, but officials need to hold themselves accountable for student complaints against the CHC. The University must solicit in-person feedback and institute long-lasting leadership to ensure students are comfortable visiting the health center.

Students alleged that they are often left feeling like CHC staff do not care about their medical concerns or address their complaints because the staff conducts themselves unprofessionally. Students who are feeling ill deserve to be taken seriously, but the CHC falls short. On top of students' allegations, officials could implement some fixes that may alleviate at least some of the issues.

The CHC currently charges students for therapy sessions past six visits. Although officials were right to free up some sessions during an overhaul two years ago, charging students to pay for any number of sessions could discourage students from seeking help. Students who are repeatedly seeking mental health therapy should not be told to pay up, because the expense could be unaffordable for someone who needs long-lasting care.

The CHC also operates under relatively limited hours. The center



Cartoon by Jekko Syquia

is open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Wednesday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturday for urgent medical care from 9 a.m. to noon. The hours are not conducive to students' busy schedules, especially because students have classes and work during

business hours. Off-campus urgent care options, like MedStar Prompt-Care – open until 8 p.m. – are available later than the CHC, and the University should match the hours of other local clinics. In emergency situations, students should know the CHC is always a resource.

The center's history of turnover also plagues the CHC. There is no permanent director, and students alleged they wait too long for care and do not receive adequate responses to complaints. The lack of consistent leadership could make students feel that there is no ac-

countability for handling student complaints. Although we have known for some time that the health center needs a new director, students should know in the meantime that their complaints are being adequately addressed.

Students currently fill out a short survey at the checkout line to provide feedback at the health center. But the survey is ineffective because students may not feel comfortable writing down confidential issues in the waiting area immediately after their appointment. Students also said they do not hear back about their complaints, which could lead students to feel unheard. Instead of providing a survey in the health center, officials could send an email follow-up that students can fill out in the comfort of their room.

GW could also consider hiring a patient advocate that would act as a liaison between students and officials, similar to a patient advocate used at New York University. The hire could directly speak with students about their concerns and report back to officials about specific issues experienced during appointments.

The CHC needs to ensure that students get the level of care they need. Although there is no permanent leader at the moment, the CHC could and should take steps to ensure students' allegations are being handled. Expanding the center's hours and implementing effective means of providing feedback would help students at least feel that their concerns are being heard.

The health center's current state is not tied to one specific issue – it is a widespread problem that must be addressed one step at a time to provide students with the health care they deserve.

## Expanding STEM would put GW ahead of its D.C. peers

University President Thomas LeBlanc introduced plans this summer to expand the number of science, technology, engineering and mathematics students while dropping total undergraduate enrollment by 20 percent. Critics have argued that expanding the School of Engineering and Applied Science would weaken GW's prestigious liberal arts programs, but expanding SEAS could actually do more good than bad.

Semon Makar Zekry  
Writer

Growing the number of STEM students could allow the University to enhance its reputation as a research institution by expanding its research endeavors in humanities, social sciences and STEM. The University could also grow to become a more well-rounded institution, with strong departments in both the humanities and sciences.

LeBlanc said increasing the percentage of STEM students will help GW catch up to other universities – and it will also place GW ahead of other colleges in the District. American and Georgetown universities do not have engineering majors but instead offer combined engineering degree programs through Columbia University. Combined degree programs do not demonstrate strong science departments, because the schools are leaning on other institutions to educate STEM students.

Paying more attention to the STEM department could make GW more marketable compared with other D.C. schools. Students could be attracted to colleges in the District because of their city location and proximity to national politics, but a wider range of students with different academic interests – including sciences and social sciences – may be attracted to study at GW instead of Georgetown or American.

Expanding SEAS could also grow

the University's global diversity. Officials aim to increase the undergraduate international student population from 12 to 15 percent by 2022, and admitting more STEM students could help them achieve that goal. SEAS is one of the most globally diverse schools at GW, with international students making up more than 30 percent of the school's population, according to institutional data. The University could grow its international reputation by allowing more STEM students into the department.

By continuing to build a reputation as the best STEM program in D.C., GW can expand its national reputation. GW is in a premier location for students interested in government, and one of the University's biggest attractions is the exceptional internship opportunities available with government agencies and non-profit organizations.

But there are also several opportunities for STEM majors to gain experience in the District. Federal agencies and private companies like Amazon need STEM students, and GW should lead the charge in welcoming more STEM students into the District to pursue careers and internships in an expanding field. The demand for STEM majors in the job market is also higher than the demand for those in humanities and social sciences, and admitting more STEM students brings a greater likelihood that their graduates will land jobs after graduation.

The University's goal to grow its focus on the science departments can help GW boost its prestige in the District and grow the proportion of international students. We may think we need diplomats and politicians to save the day, but we also need an adequate number of scientists and engineers. LeBlanc's decision to expand SEAS will benefit the GW community by increasing global diversity and advancing the University in its graduates' job prospects and reputation.

– Semon Makar Zekry, a freshman majoring in international affairs and economics, is an opinions writer.

## GW YAF should have known better than to bring Knowles to campus

A week after GW hosted youth climate activist Greta Thunberg, GW's chapter of Young America's Foundation brought the right-wing provocateur who called her a "mentally ill Swedish child" to campus.

Andrew Sugrue  
Columnist

GW YAF has claimed to be a "targeted group" on campus, saying members aim to foster productive instead of combative conversation. But hosting Michael Knowles, a conservative podcast host who has made a career out of targeting groups with hateful rhetoric, takes the organization's intentions back a step. Giving him a platform not only allows him to offend people but crowds out real political debate and discussion meant to advance YAF's goals of fostering productive dialogue.

If YAF wants to be taken seriously, it should know better than to bring Knowles to campus.

Knowles has a history of incendiary comments. His speaking tour is called "Men Are Not Women, And Other Uncomfortable Truths" – an unambiguous attempt to disregard the existence of transgender people. He recently received condemnation for deriding Thunberg on Fox News as "a mentally ill Swedish child." His attack on Thunberg, who is diagnosed with Asperger's syndrome, was a barb against those with mental disabilities. The comments were so of-

fensive that Fox News apologized to Thunberg and indefinitely banned Knowles from the network. To give hate speech a platform, as YAF did, is to condone and propagate it.

During the event on campus, Knowles mocked students who are offended by the Colonials moniker and said protestors should not make a case for changing the nickname while occupying previously Native American land. Knowles' rhetoric is not a genuine attempt to foster good-faith debate but merely offends people and takes away any chance at productive debate. Speakers whose rhetoric obstructs actual dialogue have no place at a YAF event, especially as the organization tries to foster productive conversation from all political perspectives.

YAF has not shied away from inflammatory rhetoric in the past. They have hosted conservative talk-show host Ben Shapiro and attorney and conservative commentator Phyllis Schlafly. After the event with Knowles, members of YAF captioned a video of the protesters at the event with, "Hey Alexa, what does it look like to be raised in a household with no consequences?" Several more mocking tweets followed.

But at the same time, YAF members themselves have said they felt targeted and offended by events on campus. Any organization that strives to be taken seriously and enact a political agenda – a stated goal of YAF – should avoid descending to that same level of mudslinging that they say bothers them. It is both

wrong and counterproductive.

Any political organization purporting to convince people of a set of beliefs should balk at Knowles. While YAF may seem to only provoke, it's not the centerpiece of everything they do – its website advertises that YAF and the GW College Republicans are co-hosting an upcoming "Pizza and Policy" discussion with John Tamny, an influential conservative economist. Productive policy discussions encourage real dialogue. Deliberately outrageous people does not.

YAF seems torn between efforts to broaden its coalition through dialogue and efforts to provoke fellow students. On one hand, YAF is collaborating with the College Republicans on policy discussions. On the other hand, there are in-your-face provocations like hosting Knowles on campus. The conflicting events call into question whether or not YAF would truly rather engage in real dialogue than intentionally bring someone to campus who sparks outrage.

Ideological debate is important to a healthy democracy and public discourse, but it cannot exist when participants prioritize eliciting anger over engaging in good faith. YAF's decision to elevate and amplify the voice of Knowles both condones his intolerant rhetoric and damages the prospect of actual debate. If constructive dialogue is what YAF truly wants, then the organization should know better.

– Andrew Sugrue, a sophomore majoring in political science, is a columnist.

# Culture

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## THE SCENE

### THE BLACK KEYS

The Anthem  
Oct. 16 • \$125  
The rock duo will perform their recent album "Let's Rock" Wednesday.

### BON IVER

The Anthem  
Oct. 17 • \$68  
Indie folk band Bon Iver will jam out to its new album "i, i."

### THE CHAINSMOKERS

Capital One Arena  
Oct. 18 • \$30  
The DJ duo known for their hit "Closer" feat. Halsey will perform Friday.

## RELEASED THIS WEEK:

### 'LIGHTS UP,' A SINGLE BY HARRY STYLES

## KANYE WEST, INDIE ARTISTS PERFORM ACROSS D.C.



ARIELLE BADER | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR



ARIELLE BADER | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR

### Indie-pop artists take the stage at All Things Go Fall Classic

MOLLY KAISER & SIDNEY LEE

CONTRIBUTING CULTURE EDITORS

A lineup up of indie pop artists performed at the sixth annual All Things Go Fall Classic music festival at Union Market this weekend.

Headliners Chvrches and Melanie Martinez took the stage Saturday and Sunday, respectively, along with 14 other bands – including LANY, Coin, MUNA, Betty Who, Léon and Olivia O'Brien – during the two-day event.

Previous music festival headliners include Billie Eilish, Maggie Rogers and Carly Rae Jepsen in 2018 and Galantis, Young Thug and Bleachers in 2017.

Alumnus Zach Friendly, co-founded

the music festival in 2014 as a spinoff of his music blog by the same name.

The festival was expected to draw a crowd of 10,000 people, but All Things Go staff said about 5,000 people attended the festival.

The single-stage venue was propped up in between two warehouses in Union Market with lights strung above the audience. One of the warehouses was open to attendees and housed a photo station, bar and merchandise.

Vendors like Swizzler, Bun'd Up, Shake Shack, Rocklands, Arepa Zone and &Pizza fed the crowds. Multiple bars set up during the venue also served drinks like the event's signature "All Things Pig," which combined WhistlePig Rye whiskey, cider, cardamom bitters and apple.

### Kanye West talks religion, upcoming album at campus visit

DANI GRACE

SENIOR NEWS EDITOR

Nearly 1,500 people packed into Lisner Auditorium Saturday afternoon to hear Kanye West speak about his Christian faith and play drafts of songs from his upcoming album.

Officials announced free tickets to West's impromptu visit at midnight Saturday, posting on Twitter and Instagram. During the event, West played samples of music from his next album "Jesus is King," discussed his "recent" religious awakening and screened an IMAX film depicting footage of West and the choir he regularly performs with.

"I'm not here for your entertainment this afternoon," West said. "We're here to spread the Gospel."

West said his next track could drop as

early as Oct. 25.

West's IMAX documentary detailed how architect James Turrell worked with West to construct the Roden Crater – a cone-like structure in the middle of an extinct volcano in Arizona's Painted Desert – where he appeared to have worked on his album.

His next album's songs reflect religious themes, quoting verses and expanding on stories from biblical books, like the Gospel according to Matthew. Robust choral harmonies meld with beats reminiscent of his earlier albums to back the lyrics, he said.

Attendees sang, danced and clapped along to the tracks, even prompting West to freestyle to a chorus of "ahs" the audience created after one of the samples ended.

"This is no longer my house," West said. "This is God's house."



CAMILLE DESANTO | PHOTOGRAPHER

GW Fashion Club members said they are curating outfits based on the style of main characters in HBO's "Euphoria."

### GW Fashion Club teams up with HBO to host fashion show

SHREYA SATAGOPAN

REPORTER

GW Fashion Club is teaming up with HBO later this month to host a fashion show highlighting the fashion styles of a TV show.

HBO campus ambassadors are working with the student organization to debut a fashion show on Oct. 28 in the Elliott School of International Affairs' City View Room that shows off the clothing worn by characters on the HBO show "Euphoria." GW Fashion Club leaders said they will sell the materials used to curate "Euphoria's" wardrobe, which is typically vintage and thrifty, during a flea market the day after the event.

"Euphoria" premiered in June, illustrating the lives of teenagers as they navigate friendships, drugs, love and trauma. Borrowing pieces from vintage fashion, the styles of "Euphoria" integrate bright colors and glitter.

GW Fashion Club President Andrew Evans said members of the group will put their own spin on the "Euphoria" characters' looks. While the fashion show will feature clothes inspired by characters' outfits, members of the student organization will design the outfits using items from thrift stores.

"It's mainly going to focus on some of the looks from the characters – obviously, we're not going to take the looks verbatim," Evans said. "We're taking the looks and putting our own spin on them."

The student organization

formed in fall 2018, kicking off its events with flea markets across campus to generate sales, Evans said.

Evans said before the show, audience members can take polaroid photos, get their makeup done at makeup stations and snack on small bites. Evans said he wants attendees to interact with the fashion presented at the show instead of only watching people walk down a runway.

"We're trying to get the decor, food, mocktails, some sort of photo aspect so people can feel engaged," Evans said. "People will start filtering in, we'll give things to them to keep them waiting and satisfied before the show."

Evans said the student organization is looking for students to model the outfits. Members of the group posted a model form on their Instagram and hosted in-person model auditions open to any student over the past two weeks. Auditions were moderated by Evans and GW Fashion Club Vice President and Financial Officer Sarah Choe.

HBO hires on-campus ambassadors to promote some shows through college events, Evans said. GW Fashion Club members are working one-on-one with HBO campus ambassadors to promote "Euphoria."

Members of the group purchased the clothes for the show from local and online thrift stores, members said. Compared with organizing and promoting the fashion show, Evans said finding items that match the outfits worn by "Euphoria" characters was "a learning process."

"It's a one-on-one thing," Evans said. "For example, we have to buy clothes particularly for the models. So, there's a little bit more that comes with it, and that's a little more than we thought."

Evans said GW Fashion Club will host a sales rack on Oct. 29 – the day after the fashion show – in Kogan Plaza with a look for each character's style, like Zendaya's character Rue's grunge style. The rack will be part of a semesterly-held flea market open to all GW students after the show that includes the outfits modeled at the show.

Choe, the student organization's financial officer, said HBO's partnership with GW Fashion Club helps the student organization receive more publicity on and off campus. The HBO Campus Brand ambassadors, Felicity Zhang and Kendall Carter, are helping organize the logistics for the day of the show and will provide some HBO merchandise for the show, Choe said.

"It's easy to collaborate with them and ideas flow freely," Choe said. "Both of us thought the style fit with the show best."

Zhang said HBO is contributing to the decoration, food and drinks for the fashion show. She said she reached out to GW Fashion Club because she thought they would be a "good creative club to collaborate" with.

"At first we didn't know if we wanted a fashion show or pop up event, but as we kept collaborating we saw the opportunity of the Euphoria fashion show in the Elliott city view room come up," Zhang said.

### SMPA students, faculty reflect on Newseum closing

MOLLY KAISER

CONTRIBUTING CULTURE EDITOR

As the Newseum prepares to close its doors later this year, School of Media and Public Affairs students said they will remember the institute as inspiration for their prospective careers in media.

After two decades of existence, Newseum spokespersons announced earlier this month that the institution will shut down at the end of December, citing financial difficulties. The Newseum sold the property in January to Johns Hopkins University for about \$373 million.

Students and professors involved with SMPA said the Newseum's departure comes during a time of distrust toward news media, and its absence could cause people to forget the value of journalism.

Peyton Wilson, a sophomore studying political communication, said the museum inspired her to become a journalist when she visited D.C. on a school field trip in ninth grade.

"Going to the Newseum was definitely what drove me to want to be a journalist and where my love for journalism started," Wilson said.

Wilson recalls walking by the "Today's Front Pages" exhibit outside of the building and seeing a newspaper from her home state, The Atlanta-Journal Constitution, on display. She said the experience helped her understand the power of being a journalist and spreading information from several outlets in cities across the United States.

"People don't realize how the media can be used for so much good," Wilson said.

Wilson said she worries that closing the Newseum takes away one of the only museums dedicated to recounting the history of fair storytelling.

"It's like an encyclopedia for journalism, it's a historical place for where journalism's been, where it's going and where we are now," Wilson said. "(...) I'm concerned if there is an organization or other museum that would take its place, it may not be as neutral as the Newseum."

After the closing, the Newseum plans to maintain its artifacts in a "state-of-the-art support center." The materials can be borrowed for educational programs, according to the Newseum's website.

Alison Schafer, an adjunct lecturer in SMPA, said she wasn't surprised that the Newseum is closing because maintaining the building and its contents is expensive, and it is competing with free Smithsonian museums. She said the museum's shutdown coincides with an overall decrease in funding in the news industry.

"It would really surprise me if something were to replace it, I think it's too bad, it would be great, we need

it, but I don't see it," Schafer said. "It's not a business that's got money to be building monuments to itself."

Sophomore and former Hatchet reporter Izzy Hardy said her memories of the Newseum, which include viewing the 9/11 exhibit, motivated her to stick with her journalism and mass communication major. She said the exhibit reminded her of how journalism serves as the first rough draft of history – stated first by former Washington Post publisher Phil Graham – even during tragic events like the 9/11 attacks.

"Every time I walk by it, I look at it and I'm like, 'Wow, that's what I aspire to do when I'm older,'" Hardy said. "For me, that's the drive to continue studying journalism when I'm doubtful."

A class housed in SMPA called Media History was taught at the Newseum by professor Michael Freedman, the former vice president of the University and a longtime broadcast journalist.

Freedman, who has taught the course for the past 10 years, said the class served as an "only at GW" experience for students.

"The Newseum has provided the most comprehensive learning laboratory for journalism and media history ever," Freedman said in an email. "At the Newseum you learn right in the midst of the history you are studying."

He said he hopes to continue teaching the course by utilizing digital educational programs, like live programs, created by the Newseum's parent organization Freedom Forum.

Jessica Nix, a sophomore studying political communication, said taking Freedman's class at the Newseum elevated her studies because she could explore a new aspect of journalism history during every class.

On 9/11, the class started by viewing the exhibit at the museum devoted to the tragedy – which features hundreds of newspapers' front pages on the days following the attacks and the upper section of the antenna that fell from the World Trade Center's North Tower – followed by a class discussion.

"We can talk about media history all day but to see it in an exhibit and to hold artifacts makes it mean so much more," Nix said.

Jennifer Cuyuch, a sophomore studying political communication, said the museum has served as a platform for aspiring journalists to learn about the impact of media.

"If anything, it should inspire people to continue working in these types of things," Cuyuch said. "I think it's sad people who are going into SMPA in the future aren't going to be able to actually experience that, and for me, that was really monumental."

—Sarah Sachs contributed reporting.

## GAMES OF THE WEEK



**MEN'S SOCCER**  
vs. Howard  
Tuesday 12 p.m.  
The Colonials host the Bisons for their final nonconference matchup of the season.



**VOLLEYBALL**  
vs. La Salle  
Friday 7 p.m.  
After suffering two losses volleyball looks to capture its second victory over the Explorers.

## NUMBER CRUNCH

1.6

The number of service aces volleyball averages per set – its highest total in five years.

# Back-to-back losses temper volleyball's hot start to A-10 play

**EMILY MAISE & ROHAN KANDESHWARATH**  
STAFF WRITERS

During its weekend homestand, volleyball dropped two matchups in three sets to Saint Louis and Dayton Friday and Saturday, respectively.

The Colonials (9-9, 3-2 A-10) lost their first game to the Billikens (10-8, 4-1 A-10) 3-0 Friday and repeated the loss against the Flyers (12-6, 5-0 A-10) Saturday. The squad's two losses snap its three-game win streak in Atlantic 10 Conference play.

Head coach Sarah Bernson said the team played a "lackluster" game against Saint Louis but showed more energy and enthusiasm heading into its matchup with Dayton.

"We didn't play emotionally engaged as much as we have in the previous games, and I felt like we turned that around today," Bernson said. "If we played last night like we played tonight, it would have been a different outcome. That was a good lesson for us."

The team recorded 32 and 33 kills Friday and Saturday, respectively, clocking in just under the squad's season average of about 39 kills and its average of about 50 kills during its three-game confer-



The Colonials lost their first game of the season to the Billikens Saturday.

ZACH BRIEN | PHOTOGRAPHER

ence win streak.

The Colonials beat George Mason 3-2 at home Sept. 28 before collecting two clean sweeps on the road against Duquesne and La Salle on Oct. 4 and 6, respectively.

### Friday

Saint Louis routed GW 3-0, with the Colonials losing each set by an average of 5.67 points and ending their win streak.

The Billikens hit the ball

at a .250 clip, topping the Colonials' hitting percentage two-and-a-half times over. Senior hitter Skylar Iott said the squad does not have overarching structural problems, but players need to tweak minor skills, like servers' path and direction.

"There are small margins that we lose by and it's small things that affect our team," Iott said. "We don't have to work on our entire blocking scheme."

In the first set, the Colonials kept up with the Billikens point-for-point until the game was deadlocked at 13 apiece. Saint Louis broke away and kept the lead for the rest of the set, topping the Colonials 25-19.

The second set was marked by four lead changes, but the Billikens came out on top again with another 25-19 result. Iott notched four kills in the set to add to her team-leading 12 kills on

the night.

With their backs against the wall, the Colonials opened the third set 7-3, but a five-point run by Saint Louis gave the Billikens the lead that carried them for the rest of the game. The Colonials ended the night with a 3-0 loss.

### Saturday

The Colonials dropped their second matchup of the weekend 3-0 to Dayton.

In the first set, the Colonials slugged it out at the net. The lead changed six times throughout the matchup, but Dayton went on a four-point run to narrowly take the set 26-24.

Bernson said the team fought to the last point, but the Flyers executed at a higher level than the Colonials.

"They executed well on their swings and threaded the needle through our block better than we did, and I think something we need to continue to work on is our execution," Bernson said.

The Colonials were hammered 25-15 in the second set because of their inability to break Dayton's serving streak. The Flyers went on two three-point streaks and ended the game on a four-point service streak. The Flyers nabbed six service aces on the night.

"That's the hardest part about the game, when your opponent goes on a run, it's very hard to come back to anything that's more than three points," sophomore middle blocker Melody Williams said.

The Flyers put the match away through another hard fought set in which they narrowly triumphed 25-21. Williams said the squad struggled to pick up tips in its matches against Saint Louis and Dayton. She added that the squad can work to make the serve receive more difficult for its competitors.

"It's picking up tips," Williams said. "I think we didn't do that today or yesterday."

Bernson said the team needs to improve its execution on the first and second contacts, receive the serve and set the offense to win close sets.

"We spent a lot of time on first contact early in the season, and now we're focused on the third contact and how we put balls away," Bernson said. "We know we can get better, it's really empowering. The team has a very positive mindset on how they're going to get better."

The Colonials are back in action Friday for a rematch against La Salle at 7 p.m. The squad topped the Explorers 3-0 Oct. 6.

# Men's water polo, East Region squads see elevated level of play

**BELLE LONG**  
CONTRIBUTING SPORTS EDITOR

Men's water polo nabbed its second consecutive conference championship and earned its winningest season last year, but the squad is not the only one in the conference climbing the ranks.

After the Collegiate Water Polo Association split into two smaller conferences in 2016, players and coaches said GW and its Mid-Atlantic-East competitors have leveled out the playing field and heightened themselves in competition. The Mid-Atlantic-East's seven teams – GW, Navy, Bucknell, La Salle, Johns Hopkins, Wagner and Fordham – have continuously tightened the margin of victory in the conference, players said.

The former 18-team CWPA restructured into two distinct conferences two years ago with separate pathways to earn an NCAA bid, splitting into the Mid-Atlantic-East and the Northeast Region.

Harvard, Princeton, St. Francis Brooklyn College, Brown, MIT and Iona were grouped into the Northeast Water Polo Conference. GW, Navy, Bucknell, La Salle, Johns Hopkins, Wagner and Fordham comprise the Mid-Atlantic-East.

Head coach Barry King said the restructuring gave teams a better chance at a championship berth because it evened the distribution of power in the conferences. Teams that lack historical success, like Bucknell and Fordham, have more opportunities to advance in a smaller field and are more attractive to potential recruits because they can shine in competition, he said.

King said he focuses on recruiting and wants the Colonials (13-4) to be competitive against West Coast schools, which have dominated NCAA championships for more than a decade. Seven members of GW's 18-man team hail from California this season.

"We want to be in the mix for people who aren't just considering coming to the East," King said. "We want to be in the mix for qualified student-athletes and recruit against UC San Diego and Davis and Santa Barbara, Irvine. And if we are, then we're go-

ing to be doing nothing but getting better."

Since the split, GW's overall winning percentage jumped from .267 in 2015 to .577 in 2016, the first year under the new system. The Colonials have posted a better record each year since then and are currently riding their best winning percentage in more than 20 years.

Every Mid-Atlantic Water Polo Conference East team, with the exception of La Salle and Johns Hopkins, has experienced a general increase in its overall winning percentage since the conferences divided in 2016.

Navy head coach Luis Nicolao said more international recruits have joined the team and bring their experiences playing abroad to the Mid-Atlantic-East, which increases the diversity of talent in the conference. GW's squad includes five international players – more than a quarter of the team.

Nicolao added that recruits typically play water polo year-round, a recent development in the sport that he said elevates the skillsets of incoming players.

"Kids we recruit now are all playing year-round polo," Nicolao said in an email. "That was not the case 20 years ago."

Fordham co-head coach Brian Bacharach said some recruits are drawn to Mid-Atlantic-East schools because they may see more action than in West or Northeast programs.

"There are a lot of athletes that want to continue playing at the next level and playing for an East Coast program in a league with high level team seems like a fun opportunity versus possibly sitting on a bench in California," Bacharach said in an email.

Graduate student goalkeeper Matt Taylor said the increased quality of competition raises the stakes of every game. He said the team's opponents have consistently pushed players to train harder and placed a greater emphasis on "refueling, stretching and getting treatments" to be ready for a must-win game.

"Day to day, you have to treat your season more professionally," Taylor said. "It's not just six or seven games in the year we have to prepare for, there's 20 to 25 games."



HATCHET FILE PHOTO

California's Fair Pay to Play Act allows student-athletes to profit from their name, image and likeness.

# Bill allowing student-athlete pay could disadvantage A-10 schools: experts

**EMILY MAISE**  
SPORTS EDITOR

After California's governor signed a bill into law last month allowing student-athletes to be compensated for their name and image, he called the bill "the beginning of a national movement."

Since the California bill, at least nine other states – including New York and Pennsylvania, which house five Atlantic 10 schools – have proposed similar legislation. Sports law experts said the bill was intended to benefit student-athletes, but the law sparks concern that conference schools, like GW, that are not in states with similar legislation could be at a disadvantage.

The "Fair Pay to Play Act," first enacted on Sept. 30 in California, allows student-athletes to profit from their name, image and likeness and to hire agents to manage endorsements or sponsorships. The legislation prohibits conferences and athletic associations, like the National Collegiate Athletic Association, from interfering in a student-athlete's pay.

Tanya Vogel, the director of athletics and recreation, declined to comment.

Michael Rueda, a partner and head of U.S. sports and entertainment practice at the international law firm Withers, said student-athletes may need to negotiate contracts, sign with agents and work with lawyers – a tall order for a young person who is competing collegiately.

He said the responsibility of providing resources, like vetting agents and student-athlete advisers who can help students understand deals and negotiations, could fall on the NCAA or individual athletic departments.

"If we're going to give student-athletes the opportunity to monetize their name and like-

ness, we also have to be prepared to help give them enough information so that they can do that in a thoughtful manner and protect themselves," Rueda said.

Rueda added that gymnasts and swimmers in particular can see an increased benefit because competitors' prime age to compete is in college.

Gymnastics, which competes in the East Atlantic Gymnastics League, won two conference titles in the past five years and made a run in the NCAA tournament last season. Men's swimming and diving is looking for its fourth A-10 Championship in as many years and the women's program hopes to continue its upward trajectory and notch its first A-10 crown.

"After college, their careers may not be at the same stage," Rueda said. "Someone who can compete in the Olympics who's in college, but can't really leverage the success that they've developed as an athlete."

The law – which passed in California – applies to all universities in the state and says that NCAA conferences cannot ban schools from intercollegiate competition. The NCAA responded to the enacted law late last month, saying the bill will create confusion for both student-athletes and administrators and give athletes an unfair advantage.

Current NCAA statutes call for the loss of eligibility for student-athletes who earn profits from their name, image or likeness, which also jeopardizes the team's ability to compete in NCAA championships.

Helen Drew, a professor of practice in sports law at the University at Buffalo School of Law, said the difference between current NCAA statutes and the new law's requirements adds uncertainty about student-athlete

pay, which teams could remain in NCAA conferences and the future of the NCAA's role in college athletics.

"Uncertainty isn't good for anybody," Drew said. "That's a challenge for coaches, for students, for athletes, for deans of schools."

Drew added that the laws could pose unfair recruiting benefits for schools that allow student-athletes to be paid. Prospective student-athletes may seek out schools in a state that allows its players to be compensated, she said.

But Drew said other prospective players may not want to lose their ability to play for an NCAA Championship and apply to other A-10 schools that do not allow their athletes to be compensated.

"There's also a risk that you won't be able to play for an NCAA Championship, and I think maybe that risk will heighten if you're in a smaller conference, because it's maybe one thing to have a championship in the Pac-12 and another thing to have one in the A-10," Drew said.

St. Bonaventure, Fordham, La Salle, Saint Joseph's and Duquesne – more than one-third of the A-10 – would be affected by the proposed legislation.

Gil Fried, a professor and the chair of the sports management department at the University of New Haven, said some schools, like the University of Wisconsin-Madison, will not schedule games in states with the legislation, which could alter a team's conference schedules.

"There's going to be a great divide because it truly does not represent a fair and level playing field, which is, I think, the key element that everyone wants to see in collegiate athletics," Fried said.



HATCHET FILE PHOTO

Competitors in the East Region of the Collegiate Water Polo Association, including GW, have tightened the margin of victory since parting from historically dominant schools like Harvard University.