

# 2019-20 Basketball Season Preview

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The GW  
**Hatchet**



ARIELLE BADER & DEAN WHITELAW | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHERS

## REVERSE THE COURSE:

# Wave of new players brings optimism to unsteady programs

EMILY MAISE  
SPORTS EDITOR

Coming off a season marred with disappointment, men's and women's basketball are armed with an influx of new players looking to rebound for the 2019-20 season.

Both teams hit historic lows last season, winning just 19 combined games – the lowest total in three decades. This season, the men's and women's teams will both rely on a combined crop of 15 new players and new offensive strategies to turn their programs around.

The women's squad ended last season with just 10 wins, its worst record since 2010-11. Injuries and NCAA transfer rules kept the Colonials' bench short, but seven of 13 members will see the court for the first time, and the team hopes its new pieces spark a return to its former glory.

"They understand that they underachieved, and I think everyone is on the same page on what they want to accomplish going forward," women's basketball head coach Jennifer Rizzotti said.

On the men's side, the team earned just nine wins during the 33-game season, resulting in former head coach Maurice Joseph's firing. The squad's .273 winning percentage is its lowest since the 2000-01 season. With new head coach Jamion Christian at the helm, along with overhauled offensive and defensive systems and eight new additions to the team's roster, the Colonials aim to flip their downward trajectory.

"It's going to come all down to how we connect though, because the connection gives you the ability to make plays that maybe you can't draw on the whiteboard," Christian said.

### Preparing new players for action

Across both programs, 15 players will see the court for the first time as Colonials. In offensive systems rampant with scoring woes, the new pieces will play a key role in generating scoring opportunities, Christian and Rizzotti said.

On the women's side, the offense continued to be a sore spot for the Colonials throughout last season, but the team is heading into the year with seven new faces ready for action on the court. Projected to finish seventh in the

Atlantic 10, the women's team will need to rely on its new players to increase production and remain competitive.

The men's team is slated to finish 12th in conference play, but Christian has eyed a complete transformation of its offense well before the poll was released last week. Players have focused on three-point shooting and pick-and-roll to create a scoring threat down low and on the perimeter.

The women's squad returns nine members of last season's roster. Among the returning players, junior forward Neila Luma leads the pack offensively, averaging 10.4 points per game last season. But the remaining roster averages less than a combined 20 points per game.

Rizzotti said the lack of a returning core is "scary" because the new members' adjustment to the pace of collegiate play is unknown, and her starting rotation is still up in the air. Three of last season's five starters graduated, leaving the team with holes to fill at the point guard position, from the three-point line and on defense.

"It's not perfect, but I don't think any team is at this point in the season," Rizzotti said. "The fact that they're accepting that there's room to grow is what's important to me."

On the men's side, nine players are returning, and eight players will wear a GW uniform for the first time. Junior guard Maceo Jack hit his stride down the stretch and leads all returning players with 11.5 points per game. The men's squad scraped together a combined average of 38 points per game among eight players last season.

Christian said he wants to weaponize each player's different background and skillset to outpace the team's competition this season, using last season's shortcomings as a learning experience.

"We come here armed with a staff of guys who are able to really come in here and evaluate the guys for what they do well," he said. "Not to be critical of them in the past, but to have the right mindset to help them learn from it."

### Women navigate uncharted waters

Rizzotti's first full 13-member roster comprised of her own recruits relies heavily on new pieces following the departure of three seniors. 2019-graduates guard Mei-Lyn Bautista, forward Kelsi Mahoney and guard Anna Savino were key fixtures for the Colonials last season.

Mahoney topped the team in three-point shooting, draining 63 from behind the arc and firing at a .360 clip. Savino was a walk-on turned starter for the Colonials last season who played a disruptive de-

fensive style. As a three-year starting point guard, Bautista was a vocal and experienced leader who guided the team on and off the court, leaving a void for this year's team to fill.

Rizzotti said a trio of guards – sophomore Maddie Loder, junior Sydney Zambrotta and redshirt freshman Tori Hyduke – are expected to handle the ball this season. Zambrotta and Hyduke are untested in A-10 play after missing last season because of NCAA transfer rules and an ACL injury, respectively. Loder holds the most experience at the point position with 770 minutes played last season.

Luma, a junior forward, said the new team members have brought a newfound and much needed energy to the roster.

"That's something that we need," Luma said. "We need motivation, helping our teammates out, just overall being inclusive to members of the program."

Rizzotti said she wants five players who can act as a cohesive unit. She said the starting five is not set in stone because she wants to play around with different lineups.

A duo of transfers and a pair of freshmen round out the Colonials' roster. Rizzotti said the level of competition has increased in practices, which makes her want to offer game time to players who push themselves in practice.

"If we don't have nine or 10 guys on the floor consistently early in the season, I'll be surprised because there's a lot of people who have earned the opportunity to play," Rizzotti said.

### Men look to rebuild program

Christian rebranded the program when he stepped in this year, introducing a new offense, defense and team culture.

The Colonials will play mayhem defense, an aggressive style focused on a full-court press and trapping. Christian said the team aims to propel its offense through its defense, forcing turnovers and making stops to give the squad more time in the offensive zone.

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## College Democrats silent amid slew of e-board resignations

LIZZIE MINTZ  
CONTRIBUTING NEWS EDITOR

Former and current leaders of GW College Democrats are remaining tight-lipped about details surrounding a slew of executive board resignations last week.

After seven e-board members announced their resignations Monday, remaining leaders held a town hall where they unveiled that several departed members omitted votes from a freshman representative election in September. But 12 current and former group leaders have declined or not returned requests for comment on the

election, while one member said he wants to be transparent with general body members about how they will work to regain student trust.

"Part of this rebuilding process is to re-ue Kahn, the group's campaigns manager, said. "A big part in doing that is being open to hearing their opinions on how we can make our elections more transparent, how we could act as a more transparent organization overall."

Lauren Bordeaux, Luke Briggs and Harita Iswara, the organization's former president, programming director and vice president of diversity and inclusion, respectively,

did not return multiple requests for comment. Former vice president of membership Elizabeth Gonzalez declined to comment.

Charlie Panfil, the group's former finance director, and Helena Russo-Delee, the group's former chief of staff, said they resigned for the reasons stated in the email sent Monday.

Panfil and Russo-Delee declined to say when they learned that students had removed votes from the election, whether they were involved with the event and which resigned members were involved.

Panfil and Russo-Delee declined to say how College Democrats should move for-

ward after the event and whether they were forced out of their positions.

Current e-board members Nathan Yohn, Nick Koehler, Amanda Msallem, Sarah Gregory, Maddie Goldstein – the organization's current Foggy Bottom freshman representative – and Jovawn McNeil did not return multiple requests for comment. John Hicks, who lost the Foggy Bottom freshman representative race after the incident, did not return multiple requests for comment.

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## Vern clinic will improve access to health care, students say

TIFFANY GARCIA  
REPORTER

Students said recent changes to the Colonial Health Center will increase accessibility, but some said officials should further expand operating hours to ensure students always have quick access to health care.

Officials opened a new health care clinic on the Mount Vernon Campus and added two extra weekend urgent care hours last week. More than 30 Vern residents said the changes will improve health care

efficiency and accessibility on the campus, but some students said the Vern's clinic should operate on Saturday and past 4 p.m. so Vern residents always have access to care.

"Everybody should have access to health care, but we're students, and having to spend a lot of time and effort and money trying to figure out how you can be seen by a doctor just seems like a waste of time and energy," freshman Brianna Hawley said.

Urgent care was previously available from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturdays at

the CHC, and the center was completely closed on Sundays. Students can now receive care from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturdays at the CHC and Sundays in Merriweather Hall on the Vern.

Hawley said infrequent Vern Express departures over the weekend inconvenience students who need to attend appointments at the center. She said the extended hours give students more time to see a health care professional without having to rush to the center before closing.

"Especially if there's going to be a long line at the CHC, you don't really want to

stay there for half a day when you're sick just to get seen," Hawley said. "If you have one right next door, it makes the process a lot easier, which is super beneficial."

Freshman Jane Wilde said sick students who used to take the Vex to Foggy Bottom for the CHC placed healthy riders at risk for catching their illnesses. She said the Vern's clinic prevents them from spreading their sicknesses to others on the Vex and in other public areas.

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# Colonials bond over the summer

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ZACH BRIEN | PHOTOGRAPHER

Freshman forward Chase Parr said the summer training allowed the team to analyze players' roles on the court through individual workouts.

### Summer training builds cohesion among men's team

**BELLE LONG**  
CONTRIBUTING SPORTS EDITOR

For men's basketball, an early end to summer was just what players needed to acclimate as a nearly brand new squad.

The squad arrived back on campus July 1 to train and bond with eight new players and a brand new coaching staff. Players said they spent the summer serving the D.C. community at food banks, getting together for team dinners and practicing to become a more cohesive unit before hitting the court.

"We're kind of like the only ones on campus at that point so we're with each other all the time, really getting to know each other and working hard," Paar said. "I think that's the best part of the summer."

Paar said the workouts gave them chances to run through plays and combinations to determine what worked well together. He said the team evaluated the roles each player would hold on the court through individual workouts.

"It's like honing in on your individual skills, and then honing in on those individual skills and then having those translate over to our team offense and defensive system," Paar said.

Off the court, Paar said the team volunteered at organizations like food banks and Habitat for Humanity. He said the service work deepened the relationships between players.

"On the court, we're connected, but it brought

us together in a deeper way, just off the court getting to know each other more," Paar said.

Some of the practices were tailored to the needs of individual positions. Senior guard Justin Williams said head coach Jamion Christian divided the team into "biggs, wings and guards" and instructed them to work on skills like shooting. Williams, who was sorted as the wing, said he primarily worked on perfecting his shot during the summer sessions.

He added that during team practices, the team would mainly focus on defensive drills geared toward its new "mayhem" defensive style. Under Christian, the squad has practiced a fast-paced, pressure-oriented defense with the goal of forcing turnovers. In past seasons, the Colonials focused on developing a fast-paced offense and protecting the rim.

Williams said individual practices are more common in the summer, and a typical week consisted of "three or four individual days," followed by a team day and lifting as a team. Individual practices emphasized offensive work like shooting and ball handling, he said.

Food was another bonding activity for the team. Every day, the players would pick a restaurant to eat at, like Tonic or Founding Farmers, Williams said.

Christian also hosted regular team dinners at his home in Mary-

land for players to enjoy a meal. Williams said these dinners were some of his favorite memories from the summer because they helped create a more united team.

"I really liked going to the coach's house," he said. "He's doing a great job building a team-oriented environment. So we do everything as a team, one unit. So we went to his house and had a barbecue to spend time with family."

Williams said this summer felt different than his previous three years because there are several new additions to the team, and he needed to take more time to get to know his teammates. But he said the team adjusted fast and created a tight connection.

"It was a little different because the team is so different," he said. "We have so many new pieces, but it was really easy to get to know the guys. We have a great group of guys, and the team chemistry."

Between drills and dinners, the Colonials spent most of the summer in one another's company. Ace Stallings, who transferred into the program this season, said the time spent together over the summer helped facilitate real friendships between players.

"We're already close with everybody," Stallings said. "But I think it started because we really tried to get vulnerable so we can get close with each other really fast early, I think that helped us bond early on."

### Summer training bolsters women's team dynamic

**ROHAN KANDESHWARATH**  
STAFF WRITER

While the rest of GW was away for the summer, women's basketball was using the extra campus space acclimating as a team and finding time to get to know one another.

Players said the team spent the summer bonding over movies, planning outings around D.C. and sharpening its individual and team skills in practice. As a relatively new squad – welcoming more than half of its players on the court for the first time – players said the free time was crucial for them to spark connections with one another.

"We have a lot of new pieces coming in, so it's really important for us to get that chemistry down and learn each other's tendencies so we can come together when it's time," graduate student guard Ariel Stephenson said.

Stephenson and fellow graduate student forward Alexandra Maund and freshmen guard Essence Brown and forward Faith Blethen joined the squad this season. Redshirt freshman Tori Hyduke and redshirt freshman forward Mayowa Taiwo will see their first minutes on the court after spending time on the bench last year with preseason injuries.

Redshirt junior guard Sydney Zambrotta also will hit the court for the first time as a Colonial this season after sitting out the 2018-19 season per NCAA transfer rules.

Stephenson, who transferred from Wake Forest, said she prioritized spending time with teammates and coaches to ensure

they built up a strong relationship heading into the season. The team spent time watching movies and sporting events like the WNBA finals.

"Just trying to build my reputation on the court so my teammates and coaches can learn to trust me on the court," Stephenson said. "Communication and trust are mutual when it comes to basketball."

Brown said the team also went out to eat, participated in a D.C.-wide scavenger hunt created by the program and walked to the monuments together. She added that she and Blethen leaned on each other to adjust to college life because the experience was new for them as freshmen, which made them closer friends and teammates.

"We've helped each other for sure," Brown said. "If there's something that I have a weakness at, she's there to help me and same for me for her. We push each other and we're competitive with each other to make each other better."

In addition to team bonding, players said the summer training focused on developing individual skills, like shooting and defensive footwork, learning the offense and defense systems and conditioning.

Brown said she worked in small groups within the team, but players broke off for one-on-one time with coaching staff to improve shooting capabilities off a screen. She added that assistant coach Ganiyat Adeuntan helped her firm up her shot.

"We did a lot of group stuff, but we also did small group things where it would just be two or three

of us," Brown said.

Stephenson said the team combined conditioning with offensive practice. She added that if the team did not finish what it wanted to accomplish in practice, the entire squad would hit the gym afterward and work until they hit their goals for the day.

"We just put everything into one," Stephenson said. "We learned mostly offenses over the summer and then we morphed conditioning into that too. We got a little bit of both."

Despite the attention to offense, Zambrotta said the Colonials also made sure to sharpen up their notorious hard-press defense through a specific block of practices called "Camp D Up," where they practiced all things defense over a three-day stretch.

She added that the team worked on taking charges, moving their feet, defensive slides and scrambling against one another.

"We had 'Camp D Up' in the beginning of the year, basically like three days of straight defense," Zambrotta said. "It was really fun."

Head coach Jennifer Rizzotti said because a portion of the team has played one or two seasons of college basketball, any blips down the road it could run into will clear up once the team gets into the swing of the season.

"We have a lot of maturity in our team and a lot of guys that are willing to take ownership," she said. "When you have guys that are invested in the team success, then some of those wrinkles will end up ironing themselves out as the games start."



ERIC LEE | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

The women's team said bonding activities over the summer helped foster connections between teammates and coaches.

### Men's basketball rises one spot in A-10 preseason poll

**EMILY MAISE**  
SPORTS EDITOR

Men's basketball is projected to finish 12th in a field of 14 Atlantic 10 teams, according to a preseason coaches' poll announced last week.

The prediction is an improvement from last season, when the team was chosen to finish 13th. The squad had been on a steady decline in the preseason rankings since 2015 when the team was picked to finish fourth. GW did not have a member selected to a preseason team.

The team finished the season 9-24. The Colonials earned four wins in conference play and ended its A-10 schedule with a .222

#### Men's basketball 2019-20 A-10 preseason poll

1. VCU
2. Davidson (8)
3. Dayton (1)
4. Rhode Island
5. St. Bonaventure
6. Richmond
7. Saint Louis
8. Duquesne
9. George Mason
10. La Salle
11. Massachusetts
12. **George Washington**
13. Saint Joseph's
14. Fordham

GRAPHIC BY OLIVIA DUPREE

Men's basketball rank rose one spot in the 2019-2020 A-10 preseason poll, from third to seventh.

win percentage.

VCU is expected to win the conference. The Rams finished the season 25-8, including a 12-game win streak that left the team perfect in February. VCU last won the A-10 Championship in 2015 over the pre-

season No. 1 Dayton.

The Rams topped the Colonials twice last season by a 10-point margin Feb. 6 and by 28 points Feb. 23.

A panel of the league's head coaches and select media members chose the poll.

### Women's basketball falls four spots in A-10 preseason poll

#### Women's basketball 2019-20 A-10 preseason poll

1. VCU
2. Dayton (1)
3. Fordham (1)
4. Saint Louis (1)
5. Davidson
6. George Mason
7. **George Washington**
8. Massachusetts
9. Duquesne
10. Saint Joseph's
11. Richmond
12. Rhode Island
13. Saint Bonaventure
14. La Salle

GRAPHIC BY OLIVIA DUPREE

Women's basketball fell four spots in the A-10 preseason poll, from third to seventh.

**EMILY MAISE**  
SPORTS EDITOR

Women's basketball is slated to finish seventh in the Atlantic 10 this season, according to a preseason coaches' poll released Tuesday.

The prediction is a four-spot downgrade from last year's third-place projection. The Colonials' preseason ranking is its lowest in five years. The squad boasted first- and second-place finishes in 2015 and 2014, respectively, before falling to fourth in 2016

and sixth in 2017.

The team finished with a 10-20 record last season and ended its conference slate just shy of breaking even, notching a 7-9 A-10 record. The preseason ranking is the lowest in head coach Jennifer Rizzotti's four years with the program.

VCU is expected to win the A-10 Championship this season. The Rams finished the season 24-10 overall and 13-3 in conference play. They went on two seven-game win streaks throughout the season. The program is in pursuit of its first A-10 Championship.

The Colonials snapped VCU's first win streak Jan. 23 in a 57-48 upset win.

The conference's 14 head coaches chose the poll.

# Women's team searches for leadership

## 2019-20 Basketball Season Preview

### Lacking starting lineup, slate of players look for game time

**ROHAN KANDESHWARATH**  
STAFF WRITER

Last season, it was clear who would see game time for women's basketball.

Guard Mei-Lyn Bautista would run the point, forward Kelsi Mahoney would be a threat around the perimeter and guard Anna Savino would be a consistent defender. But these members of the squad have since graduated, and players are welcoming a slate of newcomers and players returning from injury to take the court this year.

The squad's two freshmen, guard Essence Brown and forward Faith Blethen, are looking to add offensive production to a team that struggled to put points on the board last season. The team's graduate students, guard Ariel Stephenson and forward Alexandra Maund, will provide experience, with four years each of collegiate basketball experience.

Redshirt freshman guard Tori Hyduke, redshirt freshman forward Mayowa Taiwo and redshirt junior Sydney Zambrotta will also see the court for the first time this season. Injury sidelined Hyduke and Taiwo last season,



Redshirt junior guard Sydney Zambrotta said having an unclear starting lineup means players are competing each practice to earn playing time.

while Zambrotta needed to sit out because of NCAA transfer rules.

Head coach Jennifer Rizzotti said she expects the freshmen to see time on the court early in the season as she plays around with lineups.

She added that with more than half the roster on the

bench last season, players are competing to grab a wide-open starting spot. Rizzotti tested multiple lineups and players in different positions at the Colonials' exhibition game last week.

Blethen displayed her offensive prowess at Boothbay Region High School, averaging 19.1 points, 11.2 rebounds

and 5.8 steals per game in her senior year.

Brown said Blethen, who is rostered as a forward, can provide versatility as a guard and cuts fast and hard throughout the Colonials' offensive system.

Brown also joined the 1,000 club as a senior at Galax High School. She dominated

the field her senior year, averaging 179 points, 7.5 rebounds, 3.0 assists and 3.6 steals per game.

Maund said she and her teammates reached out to the freshmen throughout the preseason to develop relationships with them.

"Having them view us as older sisters who are here to help them and will trust them to make decisions," Maund said.

Stephenson spent the latter half of the preseason rehabbing a foot injury, but both she and Maund have added a strong presence to the locker room. Rizzotti said the maturity and experience Stephenson and Maund bring will help guide a team that does not have a four-year senior.

"We don't have guys that have played here for three years going into their fourth season, so to have two fifth-year guys, even if they're coming from a different perspective, come in and add some leadership and maturity, it's been really helpful," Rizzotti said.

Maund was a key fixture for Yale, playing 18.3 minutes per game her senior year. Offensively, she shot at a .516

clip from the field.

Maund said coming into the program as an older player was different because she did not know the culture of the team. But as she's become more acclimated, Maund said she leads by example and from an experienced basketball perspective.

She added that she has developed a close relationship with the coaching staff, taking trips to their offices to ask about plays. She said their close relationship has facilitated communication between them for her to point out what she sees on the court.

Stephenson comes from Wake Forest where she excelled at scoring, becoming the 25th player in program history to score 1,000 points.

She said her three years at Wake Forest have given her game-time experience and allowed her to acclimate to off-the-court aspects of the game, like watching film.

"Now coming here, I'm able to take the knowledge that I've gained through the experience and help my teammates out and teach them some of what I learned," Stephenson said.

### Women's team starting five unclear as season begins

**BELLE LONG**  
CONTRIBUTING SPORTS  
EDITOR

For a fairly new women's basketball squad, it's going to take some time before finding a core starting five.

More than half of the team – seven of 13 players – did not see play last season, with some returning players bouncing back from injury and others arriving to GW for their first season with the Colonials. Head coach Jennifer Rizzotti said she will experiment with her starting five early in the season to strike the right balance.

Last season fell short of the lofty expectations pinned on the Colonials. The team won just 10 games last season, finishing with a .333 win percentage. In conference play, the squad nabbed a 7-9 record, struggling in conference play for the first time since the 2011-12 season when it won just four conference games.

Rizzotti said the squad has put the disappointing season in its rearview mirror and turned its attention to the season ahead.

She added that the squad's longer bench is an added bonus from previous seasons, but becoming a cohesive unit can prove challenging for the squad. The team will need a few more games under its belt to find its footing, she said.

"We're a very deep team, very talented team," Rizzotti said. "And we've been working really, really hard to find that cohesiveness that you need to have

with a lot of new pieces."

Rizzotti said that while players don't have "roles defined," she feels no pressure to hammer out a starting lineup early in the season.

Of last season's regular starting five, only two players – junior forward Neila Luma and sophomore guard Maddie Loder – remain on the roster. Luma is the Colonials' leading scorer and rebounder, and Rizzotti has pegged her as a leader for the team this season.

The team will be without three 2019 graduates, guards Anna Savino and Mei-Lyn Bautista and forward Kelsi Mahoney, who soaked up minutes on the court and provided leadership to a young roster.

Redshirt junior Sydney Zambrotta, who sat out last year per NCAA transfer rules, said the squad's starting five isn't set in stone, but players are competing every day in practice to earn minutes on the court.

"It's all up for grabs," Zambrotta said. "I feel like we've all had different rotations throughout practice to see who works best with each other, but I feel overall like the spots are open."

Two freshmen are set to embark on their first collegiate seasons, and two redshirt freshmen will see their first minutes on the floor. Forward Faith Blethen and guard Essence Brown provide scoring and the ability to play multiple positions for the Colonials.

Guard Tori Hyduke and forward Mayowa Taiwo, both redshirted last season after sustaining preseason injuries, are ready for com-

petition this year. Hyduke, a natural point guard, is poised to earn game minutes in the role.

Standing at 6 feet, Taiwo is expected to swipe lots of boards for GW. Averaging 34.4 rebounds per game, the Colonials ranked 12th in the Atlantic 10.

Rizzotti also added two graduate transfers this season. Guard Ariel Stephenson and forward Alexandra Maund each have four years of previous collegiate experience and will provide basketball experience to a relatively untested team.

Zambrotta is another transfer making her debut after sitting out last year per NCAA requirements. Like Brown and Stephenson, Zambrotta gives Rizzotti more flexibility at point and allows her to experiment with different combinations.

In the exhibition game, sophomore center Kayla Mokwuah, Maund, Zambrotta, Hyduke and Blethen started. Luma was missing from the lineup, but Rizzotti said she will be expected to start in the team's opening game at Villanova Tuesday. She said she wanted to see different combinations in the exhibition game.

Maund said the coaching staff placed a high premium on team bonding and protecting the team dynamic given the team's several new faces.

"It's helped us leaps and bounds over the past three weeks, just seeing the growth in our bond and our trust in each other to make the right play," Maund said.



Playing nearly every game last season, sophomore center Kayla Mokwuah is one of the most experienced players on the women's team this season.

### Women's squad navigates season with no seniors

**ROHAN KANDESHWARATH**  
STAFF WRITER

Women's basketball will be without a four-year senior for the first time in six years.

After guard Mei-Lyn Bautista and forward Kelsi Mahoney graduated, the Colonials must rely on younger leadership for the 2019-20 season. Players said head coach Jennifer Rizzotti expects each and every member of the team to step up and act like a leader.

Graduate student forward Alexandra Maund said Rizzotti wants every player on the team, including the incoming freshmen and graduate students, to lead, whether that is on or off the court, vocally or by example.

"Every day, Riz is saying, 'Who's going to step up and be a leader?'" Maund said. "She's emphasizing that she wants leadership from everybody."

Maund and fellow graduate student guard Ariel Stephenson joined the squad this season. Maund spent three seasons at Yale, where she gradually increased her points and rebounds per game, ending the 2018-19 season averaging 5.8 points and 4.2 rebounds per game.

Stephenson was sidelined her senior year at Wake Forest with a shoulder injury. She was a consistent scorer for the Demon Deacons, averaging 12.7 points as a freshman, 13.1 points as a sophomore and 8.9 points per game in her junior season.

Maund said Rizzotti wanted the pair – as the two most experienced players on the team – to bring and share

their older perspectives with the squad.

"She specifically wanted maturity from me and our other graduate Ariel," Maund said. "She told me that when I came in, so it's been a challenge that I have accepted."

Rizzotti and the team have emphasized a leadership-by-committee approach – keen on not relying on one person to lead the team. Rather than trying to fill the leadership role of three-year floor general Bautista with one person, all of the Colonials are focused on holding each other accountable.

"She was a great leader on our team and someone can't just step into that position," sophomore center Kayla Mokwuah said.

Rizzotti said she has called upon junior guard Neila Luma, Mokwuah, redshirt junior forward Sarah Overcash and sophomore guard Maddie Loder as veteran Colonials who have what it takes to help fill the leadership void left by Bautista's departure.

Luma tops the returning Colonials in minutes, points per game and rebounds per game. Overcash collected valuable minutes throughout the season, playing in all 30 games. She was most productive on the offensive glass, grabbing a team-leading 42 offensive boards.

Mokwuah played in nearly every game last season and shot 77-of-165 from the floor. Loder, who saw action running the point last year, shot at a .750 clip from the charity stripe, tying 2019-graduate Anna Savino

for the team lead.

Rizzotti said she advised the team to increase its level of leadership to fill the gaps left by last season's senior class. She said the team was at first "stressed out" about the lack of leadership, but she has continued to tell players to use the gap as a strength.

Starting leaders like Luma and redshirt junior forward Sarah Overcash are returning, but the Colonials are setting high expectations from their new teammates, especially the graduate transfers.

Rizzotti said she was impressed with the vocal and caring leadership abilities of Maund and Stephenson. She added that even though the pair are in their first year at GW, their three previous years playing collegiate basketball have provided them with maturity the younger players don't have.

"They really care about how their teammates are doing," Rizzotti said. "So that combination has been really, really helpful for us, because we don't have any seniors."

The freshmen, consisting of guard Essence Brown and forward Faith Blethen, both received significant minutes under their belt during the exhibition game against Mercyhurst Oct. 17, and Brown nabbed double-digit scoring. Luma said the two have fit right into the swing of college basketball.

"They're both very smart players, so that helps our team," Luma said. "They're all aware of coach's expectations. It's easier when you can steer the young guys in the right direction."



Women's basketball head coach Jennifer Rizzotti said graduate student forward Alexandra Maund will bring four years of collegiate basketball experience to the team.

# Players step up to fill roles

## 2019-20 Basketball Season Preview

### Junior forward looks for voice after breakout season

**BELLE LONG**

CONTRIBUTING SPORTS EDITOR

Last season, junior forward Neila Luma found her game on the court, but this season, she's expected to find her voice.

Luma was one of the team's offensive centerpieces as one of three Colonials to appear in all 30 games last season, scoring a team-high 10.4 points per game and pulling 6.1 rebounds off the glass. But now that then-senior guard Mei-Lyn Bautista and forward Kelsi Mahoney have departed, head coach Jennifer Rizzotti said Luma needs to take on a more vocal leadership role this season, advising the team as an upperclass mentor for players on and off the court.

"She's continued to improve on really starting to think about how other people fit into the equation and how she needs to include them in her level of competitiveness," Rizzotti said.

Rizzotti said Luma is poised to fill the void as the returning starter with the most minutes under her belt. She said Luma doesn't let the expectation to help fill the leadership roles left by last year's seniors pressure her, instead using their departures as motivation to improve.

Luma led the team in



ZACH BRIEN | PHOTOGRAPHER

Women's basketball head coach Jennifer Rizzotti said junior forward Neila Luma may take up the mantle from last year's seniors.

points per game and was the only Colonial to attempt more than 300 field goals, connecting on .390 of them.

Rizzotti said Luma, who is rostered as a forward, can guard every position and plays a large role in setting the aggressive pace on the

defensive press. But Rizzotti added that she wants Luma to also use her voice more frequently on the court.

"I think she's really embracing that role and getting more and more comfortable with it every day," she said.

Without a four-year se-

nior at GW, Rizzotti said Luma has taken on an active role in practice and helped the team's two freshmen adjust to collegiate basketball.

"I've been able to noticeably hear her be more vocal and more positive with some of the young guys, and she's

somebody that they can turn to," Rizzotti said.

Luma said she's transitioned into the challenging role of becoming a vocal leader well and has used her experiences from her freshman and sophomore seasons to help the new players on

the team adjust to Rizzotti's expectations and the pace of the Atlantic 10.

"I've been using my voice a lot and I've been using my experience playing for coach to let other players know what the expectation is, what it's like to play in this league, what it's like to play for coach and just using my knowledge of the game," Luma said.

Luma said her teammates' positive attitudes have helped the squad remain malleable to different offensive and defensive expectations.

"Other players, they've stepped in by bringing in energy every day," Luma said. "That's something that we need. We need motivation, helping our teammates out, just overall being inclusive to members of the program."

While Luma continues to make waves on the court, sophomore center Kayla Mokwuah said she solidifies and nurtures relationships with her teammates off the court. She added that Luma is one of her "best friends" and the underclassmen's go-to for advice on basketball or off-the-court matters.

"She's kind of like the mom of the group," Mokwuah said. "I think she takes a lot of responsibility when it comes to team dynamics. So I think a lot of the girls go to her as the upperclassmen if they need guidance."

### Women's basketball looks to expand offensive production

**EMILY MAISE & ROMAN BOBEK**  
STAFF WRITERS

After a futile year on the offensive end, women's basketball is looking to seven new faces on the court to revamp scoring opportunities.

The Colonials mustered just 51.3 points per game last season, its lowest team average in more than 38 years. With an extended bench and fresh faces, head coach Jennifer Rizzotti said she wants to let go of the shortfalls of last season and maximize the team's scoring capabilities this year by turning defensive stops into offensive momentum.

"We had experiences that were really good for us to learn from last year, but we have to use a little bit of that disappointment to fuel our hunger going into this season," Rizzotti said.

Seven Colonials will see the court for the first time this season, opening new scoring avenues. Freshmen guard Essence Brown and forward Faith Blethen, graduate students guard Ariel Stephenson and forward Alexandra Maund, redshirt junior guard Sydney Zambrotta and redshirt freshman guard Tori Hyduke and forward Mayowa Taiwo will add to the selection of players who can test out offensive play.

The squad lost two of its top three scorers to graduation. Former players guard Mei-Lyn Bautista and for-

ward Kelsi Mahoney averaged 9.3 and 8.3 points per game, respectively.

But the team still retains junior forward Neila Luma, who led the Colonials' offense last season with an average of 10.4 points per game. Sophomore center Kayla Mokwuah will also come back after ranking fourth with 6.5 points per game last year.

Rizzotti said the squad lacked scoring depth last season, which caused the team to overuse players like Luma and Mokwuah. Brown, Blethen, Stephenson, Mound, Zambrotta, Hyduke and Taiwo give the team new looks both on the perimeter and in the paint, she said.

At the point guard position, the Colonials have added depth, with Hyduke, Zambrotta and sophomore guard Maddie Loder healthy and eligible this season. Zambrotta and Hyduke split the point responsibilities in the exhibition game, gaining the duo off-the-ball experience as well.

Rizzotti said the added depth allows the squad to open up more scoring opportunities at the point guard position.

She added that the squad has several solid three-point shooters but will need to replace its top three from behind the arc after losing them to graduation last year. Mahoney led the pack, shooting at a .360 clip. Guard Anna Savino, who will stay with the team as a graduate as-

sistant, sank 18-for-56 from behind the arc, making her good for second on the team last season. Bautista rounded out the top three with a .313 percentage.

Rizzotti said the team had to play slower and safer last season to protect the ball on the offensive. But she added that she can use the team's defense to create offensive opportunities this year by causing turnovers and tacking on extra possessions.

"We will be able to do more things where we force more turnovers within our half-court and full-court defense," Rizzotti said. "This year, we'll be able to play faster, more aggressively."

Last year, the Colonials' defense ranked fourth in the Atlantic 10 in points allowed, only giving up 57.4 points per game. But the squad's defense caused just 13.2 turnovers per game, second to last in the A-10.

Zambrotta said the Colonials have worked on penetrating inside from the point position and connecting with the forwards in the paint.

Luma said the added depth helps address the team's scoring woes by spreading the ball around the court and relieving the team from relying on one or two people.

"This year we have a lot of players that can score, we have a lot of versatility," Luma said. "We're just working really hard together, it should be a lot easier to put more points up."



ERIC LEE & DEAN WHITELAW | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHERS

Redshirt freshman guard Tori Hyduke, sophomore guard Maddie Loder and redshirt junior guard Sydney Zambrotta are slated to fill the shoes of former star point guard Mei-Lyn Bautista.

### Depth gives women's basketball more point options

**EMILY MAISE**

SPORTS EDITOR

For three years, women's basketball could rely on former floor general Mei-Lyn Bautista to handle the ball. But the team is heading into the season with three different options at the point.

Sophomore Maddie Loder filled the role as 2019-graduate Bautista's understudy, but point guard options were still scant, with redshirt freshman Tori Hyduke relegated to the sidelines with an ACL injury and redshirt junior Sydney Zambrotta forced to sit out per NCAA transfer rules. Head coach Jennifer Rizzotti said all three players are now healthy and eligible this season, providing the team with depth at the position.

"Between the three of them, I feel that we have a lot more versatility in our point guard options," Rizzotti said.

Bautista assumed the point guard job full-time in her sophomore season, running the floor for each season afterward.

She started all 28 games she played in, missing two games down the stretch after suffering a concussion. Bautista demonstrated versatility on both sides of the ball, ranking second on the team with 9.3 points per game and earning All-Defensive Team honors during her senior season.

Assists were Bautista's bread and butter, dishing out 39 helpers per game to notch third in the Atlantic 10 last season.

She cemented herself in

program history, racking up 404 assists to rank seventh all-time. Firing at a .320 clip in her four years as a Colonial, Bautista also sits at No. 7 all-time in three-point field goals made.

Rizzotti said filling Bautista's shoes will take time because Hyduke and Zambrotta have not yet experienced real-game scenarios, but the added depth will bolster the squad's scoring opportunities.

"I don't have someone in the program that just all of a sudden becomes a three-year starter," Rizzotti said. "It's got to be something that we do by committee."

Loder returns with the most experience handling the ball, ranking fourth on the team with 770 minutes and starting 14 of the team's 30 contests. She secured six points per game and dished out 49 assists on the year.

She struggled to keep the ball under control, with 57 turnovers on the season and an average of two turnovers per game. Rizzotti said Loder's growing pains from the unexpected shift into the point guard position will pay dividends for this season.

"I slid Maddie Loder into that backup point guard role, which wasn't what she was expecting," Rizzotti said. "So now this year, she's more ready to take on ball handling responsibilities."

In her first taste of competition as a Colonial, Zambrotta posted 13 points in the squad's exhibition game against Mercyhurst last week. Zambrotta recorded two steals and three

assists, but she turned the ball over twice while sharing the point responsibilities with Hyduke.

Junior guard Lexus Levy said Hyduke was the No. 1 point guard on the squad during preseason practices.

"She knows the plays," Levy said. "She's been prepared. She studied them while she was out. So coming back, being able to know them and get right into it, I feel like she's our No. 1 point guard right now."

Sophomore center Kayla Mokwuah said Bautista will be hard to replace, but Hyduke's natural point guard tendencies — passing, shooting and vision of the floor — will help set the Colonials up for a strong season.

"There are definitely some people who are looking to inherit some of the roles that she had on the court," Mokwuah said. "Tori Hyduke is the first person that comes to mind."

Hyduke, who earned a starting spot in the squad's exhibition game, grabbed six points. She added two helpers and one turnover to her performance last week in her role at the point and off the ball.

As a center, Mokwuah said her relationship with the point guard is special because the point guard is someone who can see the layout of the court and hit the center when she's open.

"In the past, I've always been the closest with point guards on my team, it's the center-point guard connection," Mokwuah said.



DEAN WHITELAW | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Sophomore guard Maddie Loder could help the women's team add much-needed points to its season as point guard.

# Christian takes over program

## 2019-20 Basketball Season Preview

### Men's basketball's new defense technique: 'mayhem' style

**BELLE LONG**

CONTRIBUTING SPORTS EDITOR

Head coach Jamion Christian is switching up men's basketball's defense, introducing a strategy focused on pace and aggression.

The team is shifting from its previous defensive techniques of man-to-man and zone to a "mayhem" style, a fast-paced technique centered on aggressive pressure and trapping. Christian said the style is designed to produce turnovers and steals, bolstering the team's offense and giving the squad a few extra possessions.

"Mayhem is all about us being connected on the floor for 40 minutes, pressing and trapping, forcing you to spot someone somewhere you don't have the ball at and giving our offense a jumpstart off the defense on the floor," Christian said.

An offensive push is just what the Colonials needed last season. The team ranked last in the Atlantic 10 in points scored, averaging just 63.8 per game. The squad also took the lowest number of shots from the field of all confer-

ence teams and managed to only make 40.6 percent of its field goal attempts.

Christian spent last season at the helm of Siena's team perfecting his defensive strategies, which he also used at his previous school, Mount St. Mary's. Under his direction, the Saints showcased an iron-clad defense that proved instrumental in securing one of their best seasons in recent years.

In the 2018-19 season, Siena allowed 66.8 points per game, ranking second in the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference. Off the glass, the Saints carried a plus turnover margin and garnered the highest assist-turnover ratio in the MAAC.

Last season, GW posted a -0.8 turnover margin and allowed an average of 71.7 points per game, No. 10 in the A-10 Conference. The team had more turnovers on the season (412) than assists (375), compared to Siena's 322 turnovers and 415 assists.

Junior forward Ace Stallings, who played under Christian for one year at Mount St. Mary's, said the mayhem defensive style is "organized chaos."



ARIELLE BADER | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR

Junior guard Maceo Jack said adapting to a new defensive style has been relatively easy because of the supportive atmosphere created by head coach Jamion Christian.

He added that communication between players is necessary to be able to coordinate traps and movement into passing lanes.

Stallings said the dynamic nature of mayhem defense allows the team to spend less time defending and more time taking shots by causing turnovers, deflections and steals.

"We get a lot of fast-paced offense from it be-

cause even if we don't get the ball on press, we have opportunities where the opponent keeps the ball over the 20-second shot clock, which gives us time to guard one or two, as opposed to three or four," Stallings said.

Assistant coach Ryan Devlin, who coached under Christian at Siena and now serves as GW's defensive coordinator, said may-

hem defense will not only rile up GW players but will excite the crowd and create an energized atmosphere.

"The version of mayhem that I had with coach Christian is this: How we play it is going to create mayhem in the stands," Devlin said. "That's the kind of effect we want people to have. We want to have the people going nuts because they love the

products we have on this court."

The switch in defensive style posed a significant adjustment for the Colonials, some of whom had little to no experience with mayhem defense, junior guard Maceo Jack said. But Jack added that the supportive, learning atmosphere Christian and his coaching staff fostered in the preseason has allowed the team to embrace the challenge.

"There's always some kinks when learning a new offense, learning a new style, defense in this case," Jack said. "But I think we've definitely taken it in stride. We're definitely learning. Coach has created an environment where it's a learning environment, where he's there to help us with any questions we have."

Jack said the team will take a proactive approach on defense and prevent the opposing team from waltzing up the court easily.

"Mayhem is a mentality," Jack said. "It's definitely something coach has instilled in us since he's got here, and we're definitely going to implement that."

### Christian leans on past coaching success ahead of first season

**BELLE LONG**

CONTRIBUTING SPORTS EDITOR

After enduring one of its worst seasons in recent history – and multiple seasons plagued with turnover and scandal – men's basketball was in need of more than just a new coach. GW needed someone who could reverse the fortunes of its entire franchise.

That's when Jamion Christian stepped in as the new head coach, carrying with him past coaching success at Mount St. Mary's and most recently at Siena. In one season, Christian transformed Siena from a second-to-last-place conference finish to a regular season runner-up, and players and coaches said he has the ability to create the same kind of transformation at GW to lead the Colonials to greater heights.

"I've worked for some great guys as well, so I've been very fortunate," Christian said. "My entire journey has shaped what we're able to do here."

The 2018-19 Colonials and the 2017-18 Siena squad showed striking similarities prior to Christian's arrival. In 2017, the Saints went 8-24, one game worse than the Colonials' 9-24 record last year. The Saints averaged 67.7 points per game, a mere four points more than GW's scoring average last season.

But unlike the Colonials, the Saints made strides in almost every area during Christian's season as head coach, improving to a 17-16 record.

Now, Christian again finds himself at the helm of a team in desperate need of improvement. The Colonials ranked dead last in the Atlantic 10 Conference in points scored per game.

Christian said both Siena and GW had trouble living up to their potential and fully realizing the talent of their rosters.

Along with Christian, freshman guard Shawn Walker Jr. de-committed from Siena to join the Colonials, and sophomore Sloan Seymour transferred to GW after one year with the Saints. Christian said he was "fortunate" to inherit the returning players at Siena and GW.

"I've walked into programs where guys can play, and you just redirect them a bit," Christian said. "I think these situations are very, very similar."

Players like junior guard Maceo Jack and senior forward Arnaldo Toro fit Christian's description of "underutilized" pieces. Despite improving in the final stretch of the season, Jack started the season averaging 4.3 points per game. Toro missed the majority of last year because of a hip injury but is now healthy and ready for competition.

Prior to coaching Siena, Chris-

tian headed Mount St. Mary's from 2012 to 2018. He led the Mount to two NCAA appearances during his tenure.

In his six seasons with the Mount, the team dipped below .500 just twice. The squad excelled against conference competition under Christian, winning 63.1 percent of its contests against Northeast conference foes.

The squad's three-point shooting increased from 33.8 percent in Christian's first year to 37.9 percent in his final year at the helm. The team's assists also increased.



ARIELLE BADER | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR

Head coach Jamion Christian's colleagues said he aims to foster a family-like team environment.

Junior forward Ace Stallings, who was a freshman when Christian coached at Mount St. Mary's, said playing for Christian in the past has given him more confidence in the upcoming season.

"While we do look at how he's had success in the first year at Mount, first year at Siena, it's definitely given us some optimism," Stallings said.

Assistant coach Graham Bousley, who worked with Christian both at Mount St. Mary's and Siena, said Christian has firmed up his philosophies around offense, defense and pressing throughout his years as a head coach.

He added that Christian's experience allows him to assess players on the court quickly, and each year, he betters his offensive and defensive strategies.

"Every year you're a head coach, you refine it a little more or learn a little more and hone in on your style, on your message," Bousley said.

**EMILY MAISE**

SPORTS EDITOR

Coaching was in Jamion Christian's blood at an early age.

He spent his formative years in New Kent, Va., living on the same street as his extended family. As the oldest of the bunch, Christian said the responsibility fell on him to teach his younger family members how to play games like basketball and baseball.

Christian said he always favored basketball growing up, pointing to childhood memories

become a coach during a rough patch in his junior year. He said his head coach benched him, but he was still determined to get better and see time on the floor.

"When I was working that summer, I worked at some basketball camps and did some things, and I realized I enjoyed the process of improving – that's what coaching is."

He said Kirk Sonny, one of Christian's coaches at Mount St. Mary's, took him under his wing and showed him how to watch and analyze film. Sonny acted as a mentor for Christian, guiding

Christian spent six years with the squad before moving to Siena for the 2018-19 season. The Saints finished the year with a winning record and second in the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference.

Now, Christian is joining a team with a recent history of disappointment. At GW, Christian said he is trying to foster a culture of support and emphasizing education, which aligns with his coaching philosophy of demonstrating "love" over "tough love" for the team to ensure players are not discouraged by setbacks.

"If we do a good job of loving them up, then that's going to allow them the platform to be able to fail time and time again and know that they can recover to be even better the next time," Christian said.

Graham Bousley, an assistant coach in charge of GW's offense, has been on Christian's staff since 2016, when he served as an assistant coach at Mount St. Mary's.

Bousley said Christian's philosophy as a coach is connection driven, adding that he wants to develop a bond that resembles family ties. Christian invited the team to his house over the summer as a way to get to know players on a personal level, he said.

"He's a relationship-based coach," Bousley said. "He's a mentor and I think that's the biggest part of his philosophy."

Bousley added that Christian keeps an open-door policy where coaches and players can pop into his office anytime they want to talk to him or hear his honesty about their performance.

Assistant coach Ryan Devlin, who leads the defense and post plays, also has a long history with Christian. The two have known each other since they were teenagers, Devlin said.

The two had mutual friends, as Devlin's high school friends were basketball managers while Christian played at Mount St. Mary's. Devlin said the two would play pickup games at the Mount over the summer and built a strong relationship throughout the years.

Devlin said Christian has immense emotional intelligence and is willing to go the extra mile for his players, realizing when they need help and doing everything in his power to assist them.

"He just has a good level of understanding of where people are, what their needs are and then instead of saying, 'Hey can I help you out?' – he actually does go out of his way," Devlin said.

of watching college basketball games and using the advanced level of play as motivation to improve his game. Over the years, he developed and refined his coaching skills, later taking on more formal roles on teams like at his alma mater Mount St. Mary's and Siena before stopping at GW for his first season.

"I've kind of been coaching forever," Christian said. "I've been coaching since I was like, 4 years old or something, just trying to get everybody up to speed and be able to play games."

In high school, Christian ran the point on New Kent High School's undefeated Group A state championship team in 2000, according to the Daily Press.

He played collegiately at the Mount from 2000 to 2004, seeing time in 90 games and averaging 6.5 points per game. Christian said he realized his aspirations to

him while he navigated high-level play, he said.

Christian said he progressively became more involved in the coaching realm while still playing at Mount St. Mary's, speaking up in scouting reports and offering insight that helped his team win.

After graduating, he took on his first coaching gig at Division III Emory and Henry College as an assistant. With two years under his belt, he transitioned to Division I basketball, becoming the director of basketball operations at Bucknell and then an assistant at William and Mary.

He worked as an assistant at VCU for a season before finally landing his first head coaching position back with Mount St. Mary's in 2012. Under his leadership, the Mount won two Northeast conference championships and made two NCAA tournament appearances.

# New faces enhance men's offense

## 2019-20 Basketball Season Preview



Freshman guard Jameer Nelson Jr. said he wants to improve his long-range shot.

### Eight new pieces fit seamlessly into program under Christian

ROMAN BOBEK  
STAFF WRITER

On the largest men's basketball team in more than 15 years, new faces comprise nearly half of the roster.

Five freshmen and a trio of transfers make up the Colonials' eight new additions. Head coach Jamion Christian said all players have a chance to earn minutes on the floor, which will be a competitive battle for a spot in his rotation.

Guards Shawn Walker Jr. and Jameer Nelson Jr. and forwards Chase Paar, Miles Gally and Jamison Battle compose the incoming freshman class. The three transfers consist of junior forward Ace Stallings, sophomore guard Amir Harris and sophomore forward Sloan Seymour.

Christian said the freshmen have acclimated well to the program and are lucky to have a group of seven experienced returners to guide them. He said he and his coaching staff have worked to foster a positive environment in practice to avoid unhealthy competition between younger and older players.

"We've tried to build a system of love and accountability where the upperclassmen don't feel threatened by the younger guys," Christian said.

Christian added that he is willing to give freshmen minutes on the floor, which

he has also offered at his previous schools and still earned a 118-111 win record.

"Sometimes there's an understanding that you get your young kids in and you're going to benefit from it later, but I think if you do a great job, we'll benefit from it now and later," Christian said.

Nelson Jr., the son of former NBA All-Star Jameer Nelson, saw time at the point guard position in practice. He said his ability to score on his own distinguishes his play from his father's, but he wants to improve his shot from long range – a key facet of GW's offense.

"I want to be a knock-down three-point shooter, and I feel like I just need to finish better," Nelson Jr. said.

Christian coached Stallings in his freshman year at Mount St. Mary's. Christian was in his sixth and final year with the program, and the culture of support he aimed to build was thriving, which Stallings has helped to pass down to his new teammates, Christian said.

"He's doing a great job helping these guys understand me, understand the intensity I have and the passion I have for them, understanding that it's real and that it's not going to waver," Christian said.

Stallings, who made the move to GW from Mount St. Mary's, said the transition onto the team was seamless.

"A lot of us are buddies already and it's only been four months," Stallings said. "It feels like it's been four years already. We're all really close."

At Mount St. Mary's, Stallings grabbed 17 boards in 16 games and averaged one point per game.

He said his enthusiasm on the court and the bench will allow him to energize the team both on the court. He said Harris, the sophomore guard who transferred into the program from Nebraska, brings a well-rounded skillset to Foggy Bottom.

"Amir is a freak athlete," Stallings said. "He's a guy who can do everything on the floor. He's long, he's athletic, he's fast."

Injury plagued Harris' time as a Husker. Mono coupled with a meniscus tear benched him for 13 games during the 2018-19 season. Per NCAA transfer rules, Harris will need to sit out a year, but officials said the team requested that the NCAA waive the restriction.

Stallings added that sophomore forward Sloan Seymour, who came with Christian from Siena, brings a consistent shot, which will be an asset in the team's new offense focused on three-point shooting.

"He made 94 threes last year as a freshman, which is incredible," Stallings said. "He's a guy who can shoot the lights out for sure."

### Players from the DMV flood men's basketball's roster

EMILY MAISE  
SPORTS EDITOR

Men's basketball harbors its largest number of DMV recruits in at least a decade.

With six of its 17 members hailing from Maryland, D.C. and Virginia, the team has the second highest number of regional recruits in the past decade. Head coach Jamion Christian, who was raised in Virginia, said regional similarities – like rooting for the Nationals or eating crab and shrimp – can connect the teammates and foster a family-like environment.

"Being able to know someone on a different level, I do think it's important, and the geographical stuff gives an opportunity to be able to do that," Christian said.

Six Colonials hail from the DMV. Freshman forwards Chase Paar and Miles Gally, sophomore guard Amir Harris, sophomore forward Mezie Offurum and senior guard Justin Williams are from Maryland. Junior forward Ace Stallings calls D.C. home.

A majority of the remaining players are from Northeast states, like Rhode Island, New York and Pennsylvania. Two members are from North Carolina, and a sole player comes from Minnesota. GW rosters two international students – junior Javier Langarica from Spain

and senior forward Arnaldo Toro from Puerto Rico.

When recruiting, Christian said he draws from the DMV area because of its solid recruiting base. Christian added that local players were knowledgeable about GW, giving them an edge on how to make a difference in the program.

Over the past 10 years, players from the DMV have comprised less than 25 percent of the total team. In 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2019-20, the number of local recruits eclipsed more than a quarter of the total team.

When choosing schools, Williams said he wanted to focus on a competitive level of play, and the close proximity of GW to his home was the cherry on top.

"It's always been a dream of mine to play at the highest level possible," Williams said. "Also the proximity to where I live – I am from Maryland, so that was a bonus."

Williams spent the summer taking classes and preparing for the upcoming year. He said because Harris and Offurum were in the area, the trio bonded and spent time inside and outside the gym together.

Paar said he decided to join GW because of its location in the District and to stay close to his family in Mount Airy, Md.

"That was a huge fac-

tor, staying close," Paar said. "And obviously, D.C. is great and you're right in the city. So I think a mix of those two is kind of why I chose GW."

Paar added that he recognized the other Maryland players from the AAU circuit. After years of competition, he called the opportunity to be on the same side of the court "pretty special."

Stallings went to Sidwell Friends School where he became acquainted with Offurum, who attended Georgetown Prep. The two never competed, but Stallings said the two played for the same AAU program, giving them a connection as teammates.

The two grew closer as they shared mutual friends, Stallings said. He added that his relationship with Harris, a Frederick, Md., native, developed in the same way.

After playing two seasons at Mount St. Mary's, Stallings made the decision to transfer to GW to finish out his collegiate career with the Colonials. He said his previous relationship with Christian at Mount St. Mary's, coupled with the idea of moving home, drew him back to the District.

"He was like a mentor to me," Stallings said. "We even stayed close last year. And when I looked to transfer, it was pretty much a no-brainer to come back home."



Senior guard Justin Williams is one of six Colonials from D.C., Maryland or Virginia.

### Three-point shooting dominates men's basketball's offense

ROMAN BOBEK  
STAFF WRITER

In the offensive zone, the Colonials can be found firing from behind the arc or kicking it inside on the pick-and-roll.

When head coach Jamion Christian joined the program in March, he brought with him an offensive style focused on three-point shooting, clean passing and points in the paint – three areas the team struggled with last season. With a new crop of freshmen and transfers and senior forward Arnaldo Toro back from injury, Christian said the Colonials are positioned to turn a new offensive leaf.

Among players with at least 100 three-point shots taken, junior guard Maceo Jack leads the group of returners, shooting at a .344 clip from behind the arc. Junior guard Terry Nolan Jr. led the Colonials last season with a .349 three-point shooting percentage on 146 attempts, but he transferred out of the program in March.

The Colonials ranked No. 11 of 14 in the Atlantic 10 in three-point shooting percentage, only connecting on 196 of 631 attempts. Christian

said the team has focused parts of practice on shooting, which could give players an advantage in a conference that does not attempt many three-pointers.

"If we're able to take a few more threes, like we've done at every stop I've been at, my highlights and top skills of being able to kick and spray the ball a little bit will really help us," he said.

Christian added that the team will earn dividends on the offensive side by acting as a threat on the outside.

"It's going to open up the floor for us, allow us to play a little bit faster, give us a lot of quick strike ability," Christian said. "We'll be able to go on quick runs, so that means we'll never be out of the game."

Last year, the Colonials only earned 588 points from behind the arc during the season, accounting for 28 percent of their total offense. At Christian's last stop at Siena, the Saints earned 864 points from the three-point line, accounting for 40.5 percent of their total points.

Christian said passing and three-point shooting are connected because a team cannot be dangerous from



Junior guard Maceo Jack leads returning players with at least 100 three-point shots taken.

beyond the arc if its passes are not crisp and frequent.

"If you're going to be a great three-point shooting team, you've got to be able to pass the ball really well," Christian said.

The squad averaged 11.4 assists per game, ranking them No. 13 in the A-10. Junior guard Justin Mazzulla dished out the most helpers

last season, recording 117 assists. Redshirt senior Arnel Potter ranked second on the team with 57 fewer assists than Mazzulla.

Assistant coach Graham Bousley, who is in charge of leading the team's offense, said the Colonials will mimic a "pro-style" offense, heavily using pick-and-roll and ball screens alongside big-man

development.

"We're going to ball screen 65 times a night," Bousley said. "We're going to be the No. 1 in hitting the big man on the pick-and-roll because we really like to develop our bigs."

The team is looking toward Jack and sophomore forward Sloan Seymour, who transferred from Siena,

to sink balls outside the arc. Jack said the team's offense will work in tandem with its mayhem-style defense to put points on the board.

"It goes hand-in-hand with our mayhem-style defense," Jack said. "We're going to press you up. We're going to press a lot."

Sophomore forward Mezie Offurum, junior forward Javier Langarica and Toro are the returning big men for the Colonials. Toro missed the remainder of the 2018-19 season with a hip injury. He nearly averaged double-digits in his seven games, averaging 10.1 points and 9.3 rebounds per game.

Offurum and Langarica tallied a combined 237 points and 202 rebounds, accounting for 11 percent of the team's overall points and 18.1 percent of the team's total rebounding.

Mazzulla said the team has placed a heavy focus on offense during practices, running plays and shooting from different spots on the floor.

"We have our guards focus on what reads we're supposed to be making, what shots we're supposed to be taking and just letting it flow from there," Jack said.

### Men's squad looks to shift mentality, utilize new pieces

From Page 1

Among the nine returning players is senior forward Arnaldo Toro. He started the first seven games of last season but was quickly sidelined with a hip injury

after averaging 10.1 points and 9.3 rebounds per game. He will be back on the court this year for his final season with the team.

Four players transferred out of the program after Christian signed on

as head coach. Sophomore guard Shandon Brown, junior guard Terry Nolan Jr., sophomore forward Marcus Littles and senior guard DJ Williams announced their intentions to leave the program.

After Christian joined the staff, Jack, the junior guard, said a shift toward a positive mentality was the biggest change to the team.

"We've definitely been asked to look at things in

a very positive manner, and everything is a learning experience," Jack said. "I think that's the biggest thing coach has brought to the table, was that they're going to love us and we're going to love them."

The women's team will open the season on the road against Villanova Wednesday at 7 p.m. The men's team will travel to Towson to kick off the 2019-20 season Tuesday at 7 p.m.

# Mental health is not an excuse to cover up College Democrats scandal

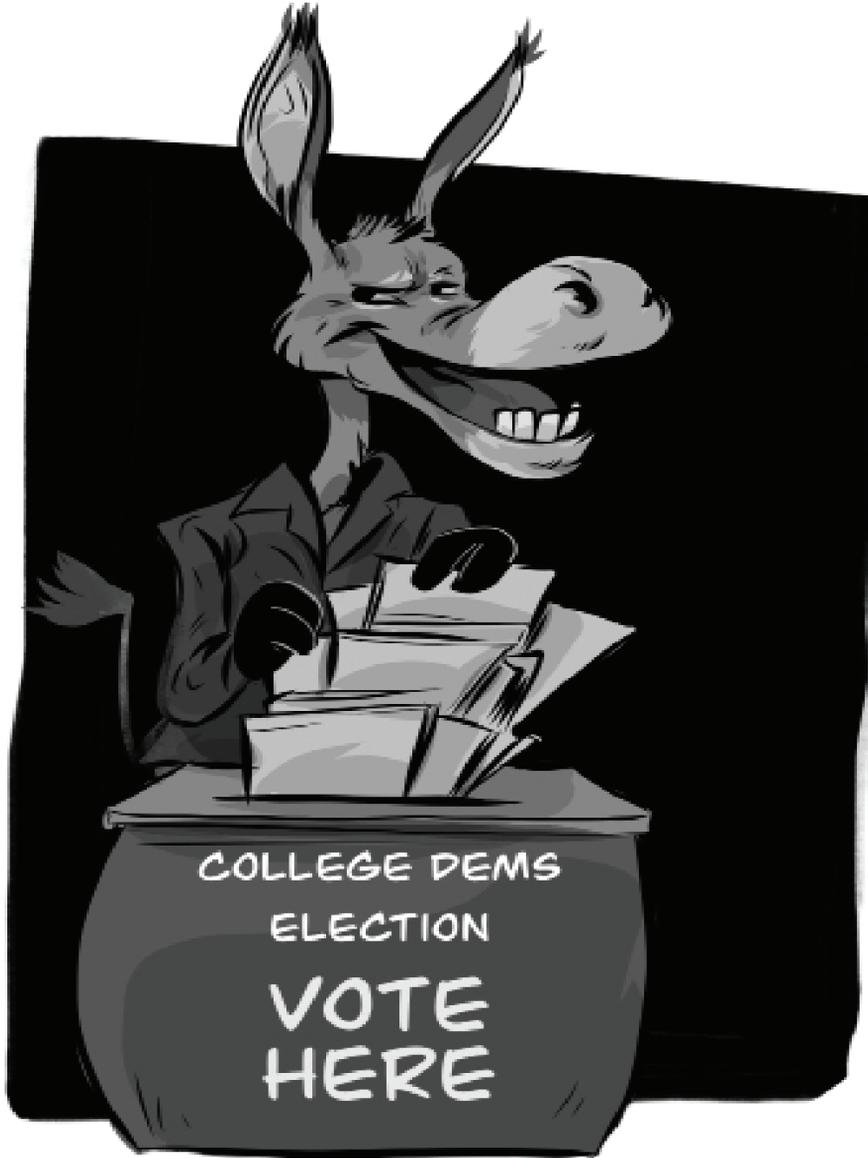
Half of the GW College Democrats' executive board members quit their positions last week after rigging a freshman representative election. But in a statement released by those resigning, former GW College Democrats President Lauren Bordeaux, Vice President of Membership Elizabeth Gonzalez and Vice President of Diversity and Inclusion Harita Iswara all claimed that they were resigning to focus on their mental health.

**Hannah Thacker**  
Contributing Opinions  
Editor

When I read that three members of the e-board had stepped down for their mental health, I initially felt concern for these students who experienced so much stress that they needed to quit. As a full-time student who struggles with a mental illness, I thought of my own leadership experiences and about the stresses those positions have placed on me.

When I later heard that former College Democrats leaders were resigning because of unethical actions and not mental health, I was outraged and offended. Student mental health is a serious issue, and using it as an excuse to mask wrongdoing dismisses the mental health struggles many students face.

I constantly need to work twice as hard to take care of my mental health as I juggle academics, several leadership positions and an internship. I have never needed to resign from leadership spots because my mental health got in the way, but I have cut down on work hours and decreased involvement with student organizations to prioritize myself and my well-being.



Cartoon by Jekko Syquia

Three out of 10 college students struggle with depression and one in four deal with anxiety, and the country recently

recorded the highest national suicide rate since World War II. Students have also shared their own concerns about health on

campus, with some alleging that officials do not do enough to care for the mental health of students. College students are con-

stantly under stress to stay competitive with peers, meet family members' expectations to perform well, pay for school and finally find a job post-college. It is not a surprise that many students struggle with mental health problems like anxiety and depression, which explains why the e-board resignations were taken so seriously at first.

Mental health struggles are more than just headaches that come and go, and the resigned e-board members' actions dismiss the constant issues that those who struggle with mental illness experience. Using mental illness as a cover-up encourages the idea that focusing on mental health is just an excuse young people can use — and get away with — to back out of commitments or hide behind poor choices.

Even with increased attention on mental health in students, there is still a serious stigma attached to those who choose to prioritize their mental health or struggle with their mental health. Those who choose to step down from leadership positions, drop classes or quit work are seen as lazy and just giving excuses.

Using mental health as an excuse now could lead to a slippery slope that ends with people not believing others' legitimate mental health needs. Taking care of your mental health is a form of self-care, but using mental health as your false reason to step down is foolish and shortsighted.

It is clear that these former board members had to resign because of their unethical actions, not their mental health. These former members should be ashamed of their behavior and the insensitivity paid to those with actual mental health struggles.

*Hannah Thacker, a sophomore majoring in political communication, is The Hatchet's contributing opinions editor.*

## The Crimson was right to contact ICE for comment

STAFF EDITORIAL

When a relevant figure or organization is involved with a story, reporters always reach out for comment.

The story would be unfair without balanced reporting. But Harvard University students didn't get the common journalistic memo late last month when they condemned The Crimson for asking Immigration and Customs Enforcement to comment on a protest calling on the organization to dissolve. Students are taking a stand for all the wrong reasons.

ICE did not respond, and The Crimson wrote in the story what journalists typically do when someone does not respond: "ICE did not immediately respond to a request for comment Thursday night." But the fact that reporters reached out at all prompted students to circulate a petition to boycott the newspaper. Critics of The Crimson alleged that reaching out to ICE was dangerous because some of the students involved could have been at risk of deportation.

The Crimson made all the right moves, adhering to standard ethics code in reporting on a sensitive topic, and students still think the paper is in the wrong. The back and forth between The Crimson and students is more than a scuffle — it shows a broader issue of communities misunderstanding the actions and decisions made by the journalists who serve them.

The Crimson's editors

released a statement on their decision, saying they reached out to multiple organizations before asking ICE to comment. The Crimson should not have needed to explain itself in the first place, but its reasons for contacting ICE were valid because journalism requires covering every side of the story.

People perceive the media as just trying to get the story, not as public servants following ethical rules to tell both sides of heated problems. Some students may have only wanted The Crimson to ask the protesters for comment and avoid the organization — ICE — they so openly condemn. But stories are not supposed to be told from one side, and communities should understand that it was OK to contact the federal agency, as long as reporters are careful and protect their sources.

There may have also been a misunderstanding about what The Crimson's inquiry actually included. The Crimson's outreach did not put anyone in harm's way — it called for comment after students had cleared out of the protest, and it only reached out to ICE's public relations office. The Crimson asked ICE for comment on the protest and did not name any of the protesters or their immigration statuses. Students were not put in danger because of The Crimson.

Journalists go to great lengths to protect their

sources from authorities, including the federal government. Although students felt that The Crimson had put them in harm's way, journalists protect those who cannot be named for whatever reason. Sources can be kept anonymous, and details about a person's identity can be withheld from the story to protect the person. Some students could also have been concerned about photographs taken at the rally and the possibility for ICE to identify them from their photographs. But The Crimson did not name the people in the photos, so it is difficult for ICE to actually know who they are.

These basic journalistic practices are so commonly known among reporters, but students might not get the gist right away. Initial discomfort about The Crimson's choice to contact ICE is valid, but there are also details about the paper's inquiry and reporting that people should understand before they criticize.

Students assumed that reporters aimed to harm rather than help the community, but newspapers have every responsibility to tell both sides of a story fairly and appropriately. The community likely saw The Crimson's inquiry into ICE as revealing its community members who are undocumented immigrants and betraying the trust of the community. Newspapers do the exact opposite.

## Program on Extremism should catalogue domestic terror

University research should be honest. GW's research institutes and think tanks publish cutting-edge scholarship about everything from food policy to violent extremism. But not all GW research is entirely fair and balanced.

**Jack Murphy**  
Writer

GW's Program on Extremism has cast doubt on the University's expectations of academic freedom. Hassan Hassan, a former employee of the program, published a series of tweets asserting that the program was subject to wealthy and powerful interests in Middle Eastern countries. Universities should not use their influence as research institutions to uphold the agendas of other countries, and Hassan's accusation brings to light possible issues with the program's work.

Since its formation a few years ago, the program has published studies on ISIS in America, ISIS Online, Terrorism Financing, American Jihadists in Syria and Iraq and a collection of captured ISIS internal files. Hassan's concerns are especially important because they highlight a flaw in the program's research — it almost exclusively researches Islamic extremism. The program ignores domestic extremist threats and wrongfully hyper-focuses on Islam. Researchers must expand their breadth of work to include more than Islamic terror.

Domestic terror, not foreign or Islamic terror, is far more common in the United States. Between the 2016 election season and August 2017, domestic terror has been on the rise, with 62 attacks being classified as far-right fueled and only 23 attacks being classified as Islamic-extremism fueled. Hate crimes con-

ducted by far-right extremists in the United States have also increased in recent years. But the Program on Extremism does not pay attention to violence happening closer to home, misdirecting people who follow these pressing issues to think there is less of a domestic threat.

By solely studying ISIS, the program leads people to believe that Islamic extremism, not far-right terror, is a pressing threat. This propagates Islamophobic beliefs, creating an irrational fear that may push people to believe we should be doing more to protect ourselves from threats across the globe than issues in our own backyard. Using U.S. intervention to expel terrorists is difficult and never as simple as it seems. But the program is over-reporting on outside extremism and overlooking grave domestic violence issues.

The program should demonstrate academic freedom and rigor by conducting desperately needed investigations into domestic terror. The federal government has ignored these acts of violence, and GW has a chance to pick up the slack. Expanding the scope of the Program on Extremism's work would not only make us all a little safer, but it would also propel the University to a new level of cutting-edge social research.

Regardless of what the program does or does not do, students and the general public should be aware of concerning allegations made against the program and of the real facts about violent extremism in this country. Information that only tells half the story, especially if it is promoted by a foreign interest, threatens not only the academic freedom and integrity of our institution but the health of our national democracy.

*Jack Murphy, a sophomore majoring in philosophy, is a columnist.*

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*Submit to opinions@gwhatchet.com*

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# News

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## CRIME LOG

### UNLAWFUL ENTRY, URINATING IN PUBLIC

Stockton Hall (Law School)

10/23/2019 – 11:43 a.m.

Closed Case

GW Police Department officers responded to a report of a female who urinated on the first floor of the GW Law School and refused to leave. GWPD officers arrested the subject and issued her a bar notice. Metropolitan Police Department officers responded to the scene and transported the subject to the Second District police station.

**Subject arrested**

### TRAFFIC ACCIDENT: HIT AND RUN

Public Property on Campus (2200 Block of I Street)

10/24/2019 – 8:32 a.m.

Closed Case

A male staff member reported that he observed damage done to the rear bumper of his vehicle, which was parked on the street. The staff member did not report the incident to MPD.

**No further action**

### THEFT I/FROM BUILDING

Mitchell Hall (7-Eleven Store)

10/26/2019 – 5:02 a.m.

Closed Case

GWPD responded to a report of a man stealing two bars of Dove soap. The responding officers located and identified the subject. The soap was returned to the store, and GWPD barred the subject.

**Subject barred**

### SIMPLE ASSAULT (DOMESTIC VIOLENCE)

Thurston Hall

10/25/2019 – 11:49 a.m.

Closed Case

GWPD responded to Thurston Hall for a report that two male roommates were involved in a physical altercation. The students were arguing, and one of the students pushed the other in the "thoracic region," according to an MPD report. MPD officers responded to the scene, arrested Kareem Al Ali and Joseph Gursky and transported them to the Second District police station for processing. Gursky declined to comment, and Al Ali did not return a request for comment.

**Referred to the Office of Enrollment and the Student Experience**

### HARASSMENT: EMAIL AND ELECTRONIC MEDIA

Thurston Hall

Multiple – Multiple

Open Case

A female student reported to GWPD that she received several unwanted text messages.

**Case open**

### ATTEMPTED FRAUD, THEFT I/FROM BUILDING

Marvin Center

10/27/2019 – Unknown

Closed Case

A female student reported to GWPD that someone stole her wallet and that several fraudulent charges were attempted on her credit card.

**No suspects or witnesses**

### SIMPLE ASSAULT, THREATS TO DO BODILY HARM

Public Property On Campus (2100 Block of G Street)

10/30/2019 – 2:05 a.m.

Closed Case

GWPD responded to a report that a male suspect was threatening and cursing at a male staff member and a male contractor on the sidewalk. The man bumped into the staff member. GWPD officers made contact with the suspect. MPD officers arrested the subject and transported him to the Second District police station for processing.

**Subject arrested**

### SEXUAL ASSAULT, ATTEMPTED MANUFACTURING OF DRUGS, SIMPLE ASSAULT (DOMESTIC VIOLENCE), LIQUOR LAW VIOLATION

Thurston Hall

10/31/2019 – 2:44 a.m.

Closed Case

GWPD responded to Thurston Hall for a report that two male roommates were involved in a domestic and sexual assault against each other. One of the students admitted to using prohibited items to attempt to manufacture drugs. Housing officials conducted an administrative search, during which they found a bottle of alcohol. The evidence was transported to the Academic Center for processing, and the alcohol was disposed of on scene.

**Referred to the Title IX Office**

– Compiled by Kateryna Stepanenko

## Members to hold e-board election before finals

From Page 1

Kahn, the campaigns manager, said College Democrats is working with Natalie Hershberger, the assistant director for experiential learning and leadership who advises the group, to chart out its goals for increasing transparency within the group.

He said the organization is exploring how to increase transparency and fairness during elections, like establishing an independent group to oversee elections or using GW Engage to implement ranked-choice voting. He said the group has not decided on what changes will be made.

"There have been many people who think that every student organization's elections should be run on Engage because now we have the ability to do ranked-choice voting, which eliminates the need for run-offs," he said. "I don't know if we're going to be doing that as an organization, but these are just all things that we're exploring in the future."

Kahn said the group will hold elections to fill vacant positions before final exams begin, but the organization

has not yet set a date. He said he does not plan to run for the presidential position.

He said the group will continue activities, like attending a "Get Out The Vote" trip to Virginia last weekend, to show members that the values and goals of the group have not changed and to rebuild trust within the group.

Kahn said he and Yohn, the organization's interim president, met with D.C. College Democrats – which oversees college chapters – Friday about how the group can move forward. He said D.C. College Democrats pledged to support GW College Democrats' upcoming events for the 2020 election.

"Amid everything that's happened in the last week, we need to show that we are continuing our commitment toward electing Democrats," he said.

Kahn declined to say if the group plans to disclose information about how the votes were omitted during this year's e-board elections or which members were directly involved in omitting votes, saying they were advised by Center for Student Engagement members to not disclose

specific names.

"We agree with the CSE that nothing positive will come of naming names, and that we are choosing to move forward with our organization's mission to elect Democrats and advocate for progressive values," he said.

He declined to say how he found out last Wednesday that former members rigged the election, but he said the person who informed him about the incident is still an e-board member. Kahn declined to say if any current leaders have expressed interest in running for president.

Drew Amstutz, the organization's former vice president of communications who resigned, said the current e-board's decision to hold a town hall "speaks" to the group's goal of promoting transparency within the organization.

Amstutz said Monday that he found out about the incident Sunday evening and chose to resign because the organization was "not heading in a direction I could support."

"It is worth noting that the members that have stayed have been working tirelessly

to try to make things right," he said. "These members that I've spoken with have gone two or three hours a night of sleep since this news broke, not to be covering things up, but ultimately to be making things right."

He said College Democrats should either institute an independent group that the e-board selects or use the GW Joint Elections Commission – the body that oversees Student Association elections – to supervise the group's future elections.

Amstutz said that all student organizations should evaluate how their groups conduct elections to ensure that elections are "100 percent fair." He said groups should take advantage of the fall semester to consider their election processes because many organizations do not hold elections until the spring.

"It is my recommendation, having served on the executive board who apparently had this issue, that all student organizations self-evaluate and think that's how they could implement a system like this into their own election," he said.

## Vern clinic should operate longer hours: students

From Page 1

"It's really important to emphasize student care so that we don't spread whatever illnesses happen in this very crowded space we're all living in," Wilde said. "It'd be really good to skip going on the Vex at all and to be able to just stay on the Vern until you're better."

First-year student Sofia Campo said the lack of health services on the Vern has concerned her in the past because she cannot quickly access emergency care. She said the Vern clinic eliminates lengthy commutes to the CHC, which operates on a separate campus.

"If anything happens here on the Vern, the closest thing would have been to take a 15-minute Vex and then walk to the Marvin

Center or the GW Hospital," Campo said. "It's just so much more accessible and much needed."

Last year, more than 10 current and former Vern residents said they lacked quick access to health care services.

Some students said establishing a health clinic on the Vern is a good "first step" to increasing access to health services for Vern residents, but medical and mental health services should operate more frequently.

Junior Tyler Kusma, a resident adviser on the Vern, said most of his friends who live on the Vern are unlikely to travel to Foggy Bottom on the weekends because of the long commute. He said the extra open hours are a "positive first step" to better student health care, because Vern residents who are sick

should be resting instead of spending energy traveling to Foggy Bottom for medical attention.

"You've got to start somewhere, and having one day a week of that urgent care is better than no days," Kusma said. "I definitely hope that they start to expand it out and have more than just one day."

Students said that extended urgent care hours offered in the afternoon rather than in the morning give students more flexibility to attend the clinic, because sick students won't want to wake up early or may begin to feel ill after the clinic closes.

First-year student Metakenia Evangoulis said her eye once swelled during an allergic reaction, but the CHC was closed at the time. Evangoulis said she walked

to the CVS MinuteClinic close to the Vern, which was inconvenient because she felt too weak to walk.

"You can't choose when you get sick, so if you're sick at a time the clinic is closed, that's not helpful at all," Evangoulis said.

First-year student Simone Saraiya said the extended CHC hours and Vern clinic will benefit students seeking mental health care assistance. She said properly attending to students' mental health needs will create a better environment for students who live on an "isolated" campus like the Vern.

"Mental health especially is a big deal now," she said. "Especially as students, we're constantly working, we need to have that access, we're not going to want to run to the hospital 24/7."

## D.C. faces some of the highest food insecurity rates in United States: report

MAKENA ROBERTS

REPORTER

GW sits in an area of the United States facing some of the highest food insecurity and housing rates in the country, according to a nationwide study the Urban Institute released late last month.

Nearly 12 percent of the District's population struggles with food insecurity, meaning an individual lacks sufficient access to nutritious and affordable food, according to the study. Community members who work to combat food insecurity in the District said D.C.'s soaring housing costs hinder low-income residents' ability to pay for food.

Marina Streznewski, the president of the Foggy Bottom Association, said low-income individuals often need to prioritize housing costs over grocery costs because residents have to meet rent deadlines, not food deadlines.

"When you are insecure in one area of your life, you try tightening up your expenses in all other areas of your life, including food," Streznewski said.

The study found that 38 percent of D.C.'s population is housing cost burdened – 4 percent higher than its peer group, a selection of urban areas like Boone County, Mo., and Providence County, R.I. Almost 16 percent of D.C.'s population is considered "extremely housing cost burdened," about 5 percent higher than the average of the District's peer group, according to the report.

The report states that housing instability – defined in the report as the inability to keep permanent housing for financial reasons – is a risk factor for food instability. The District is one of the most expensive cities in the United States to move to, according to a study released in July.

Senior citizens in Foggy Bottom face the brunt of food insecurity in the community because aging individuals are not as likely to



Miriam's Kitchen is an organization that feeds people experiencing food insecurity, which is nearly 12 percent of the District, according to a recent report from the Urban Institute.

cook for themselves because they are not as strong or may have a tremor, which makes their movements shaky, Streznewski said.

The Foggy Bottom Association partnered with the GW Hospital last year to give senior citizens a 50 percent discount on food in the GW Hospital cafeteria, which includes a Starbucks and a Subway, Streznewski said. She said the program has helped senior citizens who struggle to find affordable food in Foggy Bottom.

"I get stopped so many times by people who said, 'Thank you so much, this really helps a lot,'" Streznewski said.

Students with a Foggy Bottom Association membership, which costs \$10 a year, can also receive a 25 percent discount in the GW Hospital cafeteria, Streznewski said.

A report released last December found that nearly 40 percent of students faced low or very low levels of food insecurity. The Hatchet reported that students often skipped meals so that they didn't run out of food.

"Everything is expensive, especially housing, and that has a trickle-down effect on the ability to afford food,"

she said.

Cheryl Bell, the executive chef for Miriam's Kitchen, said her organization works with other community groups, like Western Presbyterian Church and GW Hillel, to provide meals and shelter for the population of people experiencing homelessness in Foggy Bottom.

Bell said companies that come into D.C. with tax incentives increase the property costs in a given area.

The highest levels of food insecurity in the District are in Wards 7 and 8, which are home to a high concentration of low-income residents.

Miriam's Kitchen partners with the GroW Garden to provide fresh produce for meals that Miriam's Kitchen prepares, Bell said.

"Starting in 2017, we worked with the former managers Elizabeth Ferrante 'Lizzie' and Isabelle 'Izzy' Moody to expand our use of the garden to grow for our Permanent Supportive Housing residents," she said.

Melissa Jensen, an anti-hunger program associate for D.C. Hunger Solutions, said the nonprofit strengthens federal nutrition programs and provides meals for children who are not in school

over the summer.

Almost 36 percent of residents in Ward 7 and 27 percent of residents in Ward 8 live below the poverty line – which the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services defines as an income of \$25,750 a year for a family of four. An average of 17 percent of the D.C. population lives below the poverty line, according to Census Reporter, a website that tracks U.S. demographic data.

"That being said, food insecurity is something that occurs everywhere, and people don't realize it and we have people in need all over the District," Jensen said.

The highest percentage of D.C.'s SNAP recipients, 23 percent, are from Ward 7, she said.

Jensen said the dichotomy between the high- and low-income residences in D.C. leads people to ignore the District's food insecurity problems because the topic is uncomfortable for community members to acknowledge.

"No one wants to talk about the fact that we're the capital of the richest nation in the history of the world and one in seven D.C. residents can't afford enough food to eat," she said.

# Student leaders proposed changes to building naming policy last spring

ZACHARY SCHONFELD  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Student Association leaders presented recommendations to amend GW's building naming policies to officials last spring.

The proposed guidelines state that officials should revoke any building name if the individual after whom the building was renamed has engaged in behavior "inconsistent" with GW's values that "jeopardizes the University's reputation and public trust," according to the document obtained by The Hatchet. The suggested rules come months after SA leaders revived a task force to evaluate controversial building names on campus, like the Marvin Center.

University spokeswoman Crystal Nosal did not return a request for comment about what the University's policy is on changing the name of a building named for a donor. She did not return a request for comment about whether it is possible to change the names of buildings renamed after donors or where that procedure is codified if one exists.

She said a task force to examine renaming buildings is in "development." "The specifics of the



Former Student Association President Ashley Le said she did not personally present guidelines about renaming University buildings to officials.

task force, its charge and membership will be announced in the coming days," Nosal said in an email.

When naming a building after an honoree, student leaders recommend

ed that officials should consider the honoree's "commitment" to GW's academic mission and upholding the University's reputation as a "preeminent" research institution, according to the docu-

ment.

The guidelines propose that the honoree should demonstrate "notable achievement" in at least two of three areas: distinction in their professional, scholarly, intel-

lectual or creative field; service or contributions to the University and commitment to social responsibility, measured through actions like public service or advocacy for civil rights.

"Before entering into an agreement to name a building or space after an individual, the George Washington University will carefully consider the prospective honoree's strength of character as demonstrated by his or her integrity, dignity and work ethic," the document states.

Former Student Association President Ashley Le said she is not aware of any current University policy about building naming or renaming.

Le said she did not personally present the recommendations to officials, but University President Thomas LeBlanc told her that he would take the proposed guidelines under "advisement" after student leaders presented them to him in the spring at the board meeting.

Le added that she is "encouraged" by officials' efforts to create a task force focused on building renaming, as the issue is important to many students.

"Sometimes it can be a very symbolic gesture, and it doesn't affect the student experience directly in any way," Le said about building namings. "But I think that what we call them matters a lot to students, especially when the name carries with it such a lot of meaning."

## Officials work to revive student health council

SHANNON MALLARD  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Officials are working to revive a student council that advocates for on-campus health care issues after all three official members graduated in the spring.

The Student Association initiated the Student Health Advisory Council in 2017 to provide a forum for students to voice concerns about the quality and safety of campus health care. Cissy Petty, the vice president for student affairs and the dean of students, said officials are working to change the group's operation to become "more collaborative" to amplify voices of students advocating for student health.

"That gives me an opportunity to just start a student advisory council that has people who are interested in health and wellness, people who are interested in campus life, in general safety and care," Petty said in an interview late last month.

She said no "transition" took place to fill the vacancies. The Colonial Health Center, the dean's office and "interested" students will determine how students are appointed to the next council, Petty said.

She added that officials will work with the new members to decide on the exact structure, format and number of council meetings, as well as what issues the council will prioritize going forward. Petty said she wants to regularly meet with members over meals to discuss health care issues at the University.

"Once a month or every third week, I could have a group of students for lunch or dinner and then we can sit down and talk through policies," she said. "We could talk through problems. We could talk through the hiccups – the pain points."

Alumnus Noah Wexler, a former member of the Student Health Advisory Council and former SA director of student health policy, said the council did not accomplish much last year.

The council announced plans last December to host town halls focused on student health care issues in an effort to expand student participation in the council. Wexler said the town halls were postponed because the CHC

did not find the meetings "appropriate" at the time council members proposed them to officials.

Wexler said directly requesting that the University make changes to the health care system was "easier" than working through committees.

"The upper administration primarily used the SA exclusively to gauge student opinion, and any proposed deviation from that ended up falling flat because they were so used to one method of outreach," Wexler said.

The council was involved with the University's decision to mandate that all students have health insurance in 2018 and the CHC's switch to an electronic record-keeping system in 2018.

"That fact can help explain why the University responded so quickly to change health insurance and electronic health records policy back in 2018 but dragged its feet on cementing student involvement last academic year," Wexler said.

Wexler said officials adopted changes to GW's health insurance policy and electronic record-keeping system based off recommendations in a student report released in 2018. The report recommended that the University subsidize premiums for lower-income students based on information from financial aid documents.

Wexler said Egelman and former SA leaders pushed for officials to adopt the report's recommendations. But he said he "battered heads" with Danielle Lico, former associate dean of students for administrative service who oversaw the CHC, because the University did not commit to using financial aid to subsidize premiums for students who did not waive the student health insurance.

Former SA President and former council member Ashley Le said the group spent much of last year observing how changes like the electronic record-keeping system and student health insurance went into effect and deciding what to prioritize based on the group's past progress.

She said the council should consider sending members to the CHC to garner feedback from students leaving ap-

pointments about the center's quality of care and length of appointment wait times.

"If I could go back and do it all again, I would actually have someone go to the Colonial Health Center and just sit there and observe what it's like for a day," Le said.

She said involving more students from health-focused organizations, like Students Against Sexual Assault, in discussions about health care issues will ensure that many students' viewpoints are considered and that the council's actions represent all students' health care needs.

"Partnering with them and including them in the Student Health Advisory Council would be a very good way to expand the scope of what we can do, the feedback that you get and maybe even getting more ideas and more creative innovations to pursue," Le said.

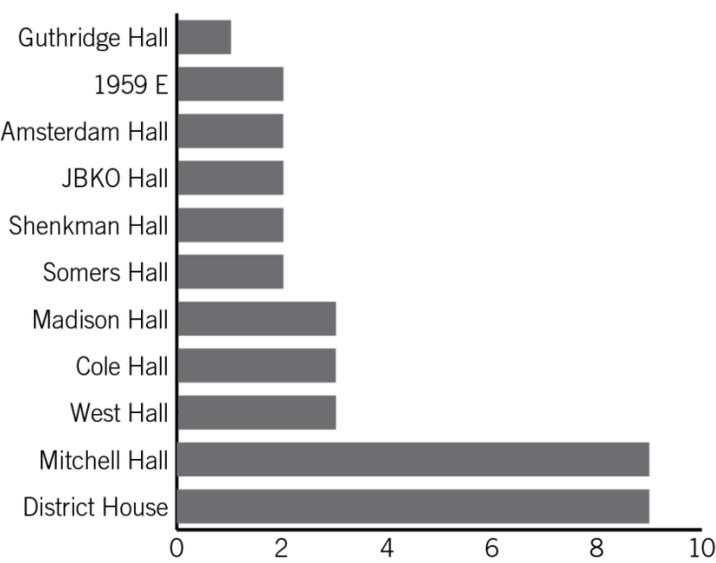
Le said the council should focus on improving the quality of medical and mental health care, which she said is an issue students and officials still need to combat together. Students alleged earlier this semester that the CHC lacks administrative organization and a sufficient number of trained staff to adequately accommodate students' health care needs.

"At the end of the day, you go to a health center to make sure that you are taken care of, and oftentimes, I keep hearing about how students go to the health center but they don't receive the highest quality of care," Le said. "That is concerning, especially because students want to get better, not worse."

Alumnus Reed Elman, a former council member and the former SA co-director of student health services, said the council provided a "critical" forum for students to provide input on health care issues at the University.

"In just months after its launch, SHAC was able to secure systemic changes to the mental health offerings and student health insurance program at the University," Elman said. "But more work needs to be done, and critical to that effort is the work of the Student Health Advisory Council."

## Number of fire alarm activations since start of semester



GRAPHIC BY ALYSSA ILARIA

Mitchell Hall and District House have experienced nine fire alarm activations since the beginning of the semester.

## District, Mitchell alarms activated more often than other halls

RYAN NORRIS  
REPORTER

Mitchell Hall and District House have experienced four and a half times more fire alarm activations than other residence halls, according to data from the Division of Safety and Security.

The two halls have each experienced nine fire alarm activations – five more than the average of about two activations for residence halls not including District and Mitchell – since the beginning of the academic year, the data show. In interviews with more than 30 District and Mitchell residents, more than half said the fire alarms have made them late for class and interrupted everyday activities like showering and napping.

Kathleen Fox, the associate vice president of health and safety, said cooking malfunctions and dust – which activate accidental fire alarms – prompted the majority of residence hall evacuations so far this semester.

Eight of District's nine alarm activations were set off by cooking malfunctions, and one was set off by dust. Seven of Mitchell's nine activations sounded because of cooking malfunctions, and two were caused by contractors, according to the data.

Fox said a total of 38 fire alarm activations – 30 in Foggy Bottom and eight on the Mount Vernon Campus – have occurred since the beginning of the academic year. Guthridge Hall had just one activation, the lowest number of all residence halls, she said.

"GW is working with residential life to develop messaging about safe cooking and using exhaust fans to try to prevent the incidents that cause the alarms," Fox said in an email.

She said GW Police Department officers scan the department's fire annunciator panel, which shows the location of fire alarm activations on campus, and head to the noted location whenever an alarm is activated. She said officers sweep the floor where the alarm was activated, and other officers supervise the evacuated students.

D.C. fire code requires GW to execute four scheduled fire drills each academic year, and Fox said the drills cannot be replaced by unplanned activations. Fox said the health and safety team has conducted one drill so far this academic year and plans to initiate one more later this month.

Students said they don't respond urgently to the fire alarm activations because the alarms have sounded frequently after no serious incidents occurred.

Katie Capristo, a seventh-floor resident of Mitchell Hall, said she doesn't respond to the alarms anymore because the activations are frequent, and none have resulted in a severe fire.

"One time, I was in the shower and took the time to collect my things," Capristo said. "The other time, I changed to go to the gym before evacuating just because I knew I had the time and it wasn't a real hazard. This, I feel, is very dangerous."

A Mitchell resident, who spoke anonymously because her on-campus job prevents her from speaking to the media, said GWPD promptly responded to the hall's first few fire alarm activations, but the officers have taken about 20 minutes to respond during the most recent activations. She said one fire alarm made her late for a class because she left textbooks in her room when residents were evacuating and needed to wait until the evacuation was over to retrieve her books.

"A full evacuation has been required every time, there have been several students who were in the middle of showering or napping," she said.

Gus Robertson, a fourth-floor District House resident, said he has usually been in class when the fire alarms have gone off, but he has received emails from officials encouraging safe practices for cooking in residence hall rooms.

Twelfth-floor District resident Grey Harral said he wishes GWPD would evacuate one floor at a time to make the evacuation process more orderly. He said officers' response time to District is usually quick, but he thinks officers could arrive faster given that the department is located less than one block away from District.

"The alarms going off pretty constantly force me to leave without being prepared, or on some occasions have prevented me from being able to grab something necessary from my room," he said.

# Growth in career center engagement levels out

**ILENA PENG**  
CONTRIBUTING NEWS EDITOR

The rise in student and alumni engagement with the Center for Career Services has leveled out after a large spike in growth from 2013 to 2016, officials said.

Student engagement with the center rose 3 percent from the 2015-16 academic year to the 2018-19 academic year, a far smaller jump than the nearly 50 percent growth in engagement the center experienced from academic years 2013-14 to 2015-16. Officials said the growth in student use is attributable to a shift in focus on “fewer, higher-quality programs,” but center staff continue to struggle with students who fail to attend events they register for.

Rachel Brown, the associate vice provost of University career services, said the center changed its focus after receiving feedback from students who said they felt “over-programmed.”

“We are working with student organizations to better understand student needs and partner on programs and also encourage more collaboration to reduce over-programming for students,” she said in an email.

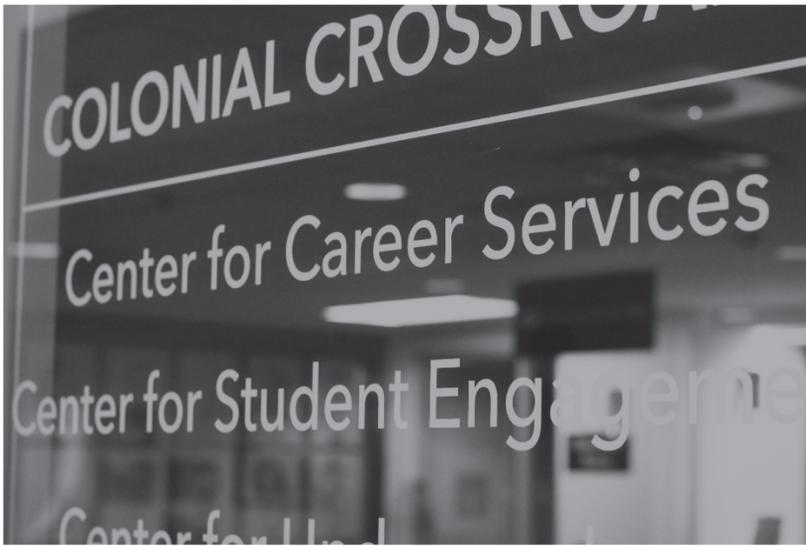
Brown said officials have also boosted student involvement by embedding the resources offered into academic

courses. Last fall, staff from the Elliott School of International Affairs’ Academic Advising Office and the center launched a first-year experience course that includes a professional development component.

Brown said employer engagement with the career services center, which includes participation in job fairs and recruiting events, rose 18 percent from 2015 to 2019, during which officials switched from an old job search platform to Handshake.

She added that the “strong job market” has prompted career center staff to launch “new and different ways” for employers to recruit GW students, like last week’s Media, Journalism and Public Affairs Networking Fair held with Georgetown University and an inaugural STEM + Health Career Connections Fair next spring.

Brown said career center employees now offer several opportunities for students to polish skills related to applying for a job. Officials introduced summer webinars offering resources like resume advice for federal working students and hosted an open house during this year’s New Student Orientation that gave students further opportunities to have their resumes reviewed and practice interviewing skills.



Officials said career center student participation has risen slowly over the years as the center shifted to “fewer, more high quality programs.”

But many students still do not attend networking and career events they sign up for on Handshake, Brown said.

She said 42 percent of registrants for events did not show up to the events during the first month and a half of the school year, an “improvement over past years.” Brown added that she expects that figure to rise as students become busier during the academic year.

In 2017, 50 to 70 percent of students did not attend employer events they had signed up for. Brown said the center updated its RSVP cancellation policy earlier this

summer to continue educating students on “proper cancellation etiquette.”

The policy requires that students cancel event RSVPs 24 hours prior to the event and cancel coaching appointments 48 hours in advance on Handshake. Students who fail to meet the requirements receive a “professional reminder message,” and their Handshake accounts are blocked, according to the career services website.

“We also plan regular outreach to students who are missing too many professional and career-related events so they can make adjustments before

it starts to negatively impact their career opportunities,” Brown said.

Career services experts said universities can boost student involvement in career services by encouraging engagement soon after a student arrives on campus and integrating career development into academic courses, a practice the center currently follows.

Jacob Jedamus-Denu, an employer development specialist at the University of Colorado Boulder, said career services are most helpful to students who take advantage of resources earlier in their college experience.

rience.

As more commentators predict a recession in the coming years, students who begin interacting early with career services will be better equipped to thrive in spite of the recession’s impact on the job market since career services centers monitor trends like which jobs and skills are in the highest demand, he said.

“Recessions will affect everyone,” he said. “However, students who have considered their future careers from day one of their campus experience will be much better positioned to enter the world of work than those who have not.”

Mariaton Tate, a career adviser at Illinois State University, said universities can encourage student involvement with career services by integrating them into academic programs, like the Elliott School’s first-year experience program. She added that officials can emphasize career services as part of the University’s “overall language and culture.”

“In this way, career planning and development is always a thread through the course curriculum and the student experience, so that students are thinking about their intended career paths from the time they get to campus and throughout,” Tate said in an email.

## Nearly half of underclassmen fill out student experience survey

**CATE BURGEN**  
REPORTER

Nearly half of freshmen and sophomores provided feedback to officials about lacking school spirit and their time adjusting to college in a survey sent to students last month.

Officials said about 49 percent of freshmen and 41 percent of sophomores completed the Student Temperature Survey, open to all first- and second-year students from Oct. 1 to Oct. 22 to check in on their experience, classes and personal health. Students who filled out the survey said they are enjoying their time at GW in general but hope officials can boost the sense of school spirit on campus.

Georgette Edmondson-Wright, the associate vice provost for student success whose office administered the survey, said the survey will be used as a “primary tool” to identify priorities for supporting students.

“First we use this data to identify students who may require additional support from advisers, residential life staff and the Office for Student Success team, as student responses indicate,” she said in an email.

The survey included eight questions that asked students to rate how they feel about their courses, to describe their friendships and to evaluate their personal health and well-being. The survey was sent to students through email.

Edmondson-Wright said her office is “al-

ready” working on releasing the information to administrators so they can better serve students with the needs they have indicated.

University spokeswoman Crystal Nosal said the survey asked questions about “critical factors” impacting the student experience, including feelings of “connection,” “engagement” and academic satisfaction.

She said Office for Student Success employees and other “campus stakeholders” will use the information to guide efforts to support “students of concern.”

“Research indicates that first- and second-year students experience similar challenges academically and socially and that these first two years are the most critical in ensuring a successful college experience,” Nosal said in an email.

More than 10 students who responded to the survey said they hope officials use their feedback in their decision-making to enhance a sense of school spirit.

Isabella Baugher, a freshman studying political science, said she is glad officials created the survey and thinks it will help officials better understand the needs of current and future students because it allows students to give direct feedback about their experience.

“If we don’t tell them, how are they supposed to know?” she said.

Baugher said she told officials in the survey that her overall

experience as a student at GW has been good, but it has taken a while for her to feel at home in the new city atmosphere.

“So far, it’s been a good experience, but I am still adjusting,” she said. “Adjusting has taken longer than I expected it to.”

Baugher said her feedback in the survey is straightforward, so it should not be difficult for officials to identify student concerns.

Some students said they told officials that students tend not to have the pride in their school that one might find at another college or university.

Julia Arnsberger, a freshman in the School of Engineering and Applied Science, said her first three months at GW have been “so nice” but added that she can feel a strong school spirit is missing from her overall experience.

“I would have to agree that the school spirit is lacking,” she said.

Nica Albertson, a freshman in the School of Engineering and Applied Science, said she told officials that GW feels “unconventional,” and she feels more like a resident of the District than a student at the University, which she says both empowers her but makes her wish for a traditional college experience at times.

“We are lacking school spirit, and I don’t really feel like I’m at a university,” Albertson said. “It’s more real here, which has its pros and cons.”



FILE PHOTO BY EMMA CAAMANO | PHOTOGRAPHER  
Hundreds of people showed up to four public forums to comment on the University’s upcoming strategic plan.

## Hundreds turn out to provide input for strategic plan committees in first forums

**ZACH SCHONFELD**  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Hundreds of faculty, staff and students turned out to four open forums last month to provide feedback to officials leading the University’s next strategic plan.

Officials held two-hour-long public forums for each of the four pillars – distinguished and distinctive graduate education, high-quality undergraduate education, world-class faculty and high-impact research – guiding GW’s next strategic plan. Committee chairs who hosted the forums said the feedback will frame their discussions moving forward as they synthesize their final recommendations for administrators.

“We’ve tried to structure it to encourage the committees to do outreach at the grassroots level as much as possible, but maintain a focus,” University President Thomas LeBlanc said about the strategic planning process in an interview earlier this month.

LeBlanc established the committees, led by faculty chairs, for each of the pillars in September to receive feedback from the GW community and develop recommendations for the Board of Trustees by February. The board will subsequently approve the final strategic plan in May.

Alan Greenberg, the chair of the high-impact research committee and the epidemiology and biostatistics department chair, said his committee is meeting this week to consolidate the information it has received so far.

Attendees at the research forum, held Oct. 10, expressed concerns about defining “high-impact research” and about how officials plan to distribute research resources moving forward.

“We have a lot of different

ways of collecting information,” he said. “In November, we’re going to dig down into a lot of more strategic issues.”

Greenberg said he has tried to keep the planning process “inclusive” and “transparent” by encouraging as much input as possible from faculty, staff and students. Sonali Bahl and Danielle Gilmore, student representatives on the committee, are developing a survey to gauge feedback about research from the University community, and the committee will likely hold additional town halls, he said.

“We’re hoping that by the time we get to the end of this process, what we’re recommending won’t be a surprise to anyone,” Greenberg said.

Scott Kieff, the chair of the faculty committee and a law professor, said his committee has received a “lot” of feedback from the GW community at the town hall and online about differing views on how to develop world-class faculty.

“We are delighted that we’ve been spending a lot of time together – as a committee and individually as committee members – reaching out to speak with, listen to and gather input from all corners of our campus community,” he said.

Kieff added that the feedback will help the committee gain new perspectives and develop a “focal point” as it meets over the next few months to form its report to administrators.

Carol Sigelman, the chair of the graduate education committee and a professor of psychology, said the committee met this week to discuss the importance of diversity and the need for more competitive graduate student support packages – issues that committee members heard during the forum.

Sigelman said the input on these topics was “very construc-

ive” and “very helpful” to the committee as it seeks input from the community about how to develop a distinguished graduate education program.

Attendees at her committee’s forum, which was held on Oct. 24, questioned how officials plan to evaluate graduate programs. Some faculty expressed concerns that officials have a “set of internal criteria” for evaluating programs that are not “driven by faculty” input.

Gayle Wald, the chair of the undergraduate education committee and the American studies department chair, said forum attendees expressed concerns about how officials will fund undergraduate academic initiatives that they will roll out in the next few months, like increasing the proportion of science, technology, engineering and math students from 19 percent to 30 percent.

She added that attendees expressed a desire to prioritize diversity “broadly speaking.” Faculty have previously raised concerns about how the planned cut in enrollment by nearly 20 percent over five years will affect the diversity of the student body.

“It is clear that there is a desire for more experiential learning opportunities and fewer barriers to students’ pursuit of their goals,” Wald said.

Wald said students attended the forum this month, but she hopes they will also attend the committee’s additional forums, which are intended specifically for undergraduates, on Tuesday and Wednesday from 6:30 to 8 p.m. in Fungler Hall.

“I was really pleased with the turnout at the town hall and impressed by the passionate commitment to a distinctive GW education expressed by so many in the room,” Wald said in an email.

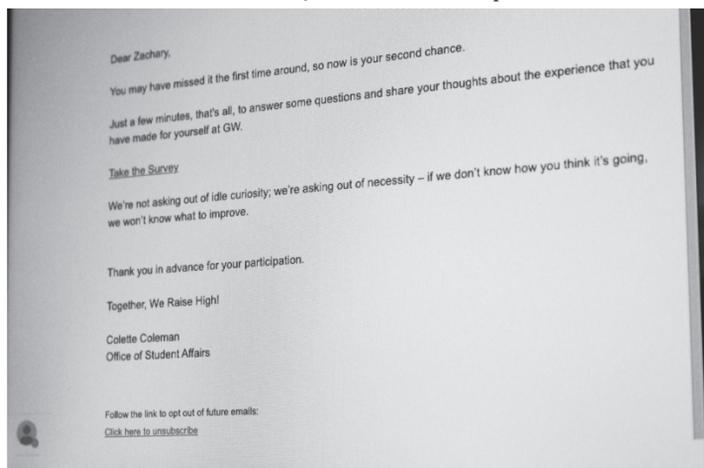


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY JACK FONSECA | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR  
Officials said 41 percent of sophomore and 49 percent of freshmen completed the survey.

# Nearly half of GW community does not receive emergency text alerts

**ALLIE COHEN & KATERYNA STEPANENKO**  
REPORTERS

Nearly half of students, faculty and staff do not receive emergency text alerts, officials said.

GW uses an opt-in policy for text alerts, requiring those who wish to receive alerts about crimes and emergencies on campus to manually register on their phone for the service, Scott Burnotes, the associate vice president of safety and security, said. Officials are working to switch to a model that allows students to opt out of the system to boost the number of people who receive emergency text alerts, he said.

“GW promotes the text alert system via new student, faculty and staff orientations and other promotional platforms like GW Today, safety fairs, emergency trainings and social media,” Burnotes said in an email. “Staff repeatedly recommend that all ‘opt in’ for text alerts.”

He said 49 percent of students, faculty and staff receive text alerts, and 100 percent of the population receives alerts through email notifications from the Division of Safety and Security. Burnotes said the department collects data on the volume of people who receive GW Alerts through the system’s re-

porting tool.

Students can register up to two email addresses and three phone numbers to receive notifications about crimes, weather and other emergencies through the Division of Safety and Security’s website using a NetID, according to the division’s website.

Students said emergency text alerts inform them of which areas of campus to steer clear of when crimes have occurred.

Sophomore Drew Spero said the University should advertise all of the options for receiving emergency alerts, like texts and emails, so stu-

**“GW promotes the text alert system via new student, faculty and staff orientations and other promotional platforms like GW Today, safety fairs, emergency trainings and social media.”**

**SCOTT BURNOTES**  
ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT, SAFETY AND SECURITY

dents are alerted through the communication system they are most likely to check.

“There are more options than just email to get the notifications, because I think not everyone checks their emails that quickly,” he said.

Freshman Katherine Grubbs said the information included in the alert notifications is “limited” because the messages only provide a few sentences about the situation and a picture of the suspect in a crime. She said

officials should add a sentence in the alerts that say which areas of campus to avoid after a crime and when they can return to the area.

“Give more information, like are we allowed to go in the area?” she said. “Is the area safe? Like OK, ‘He has left the area,’ but what area?”

Freshman John Hicks said GWPD should send students pictures of the location of crimes so students know what to keep an eye out for. He said adding a map of campus to the alert that shows where crimes have occurred would more clearly direct students in the wake of a crime.

He added that the text alerts he receives only include the name of the crime that occurred, not the specifics of the situa-

tion. “Having it on the map, ‘We have increased security presence because of X,Y,Z’ – I think things like that could be helpful, I guess just for students,” he said.

Freshman Amanda Levy said the emergency text alerts are efficient because students receive them at about the same time.

“I think it’s helpful in the sense that it is fast,” she said. “I don’t know how quickly we get those text messages, but everyone gets them at the same time.”



MAANSI SRIVASTAVA | PHOTOGRAPHER  
Junior Caroline Fenyo, the founder of the “GW Students for Pete” Twitter page, said the group has already held two watch parties and will promote the candidate’s platform points.

# Students rally behind 2020 presidential hopefuls

**LILLIAN BAUTISTA**  
STAFF WRITER

Celebrities, politicians and public figures are throwing their weight behind presidential candidates, and students want in too.

At least five students are forming student groups to host debate watch parties and participate in canvassing events for presidential candidates like Andrew Yang and Sen. Kamala Harris, D-Calif. Students spearheading the groups said the organizations will foster community among people with similar political interests and help spread candidates’ campaign messages.

Junior Caroline Fenyo created the Twitter page “GW Students for Pete” in August and applied for the group to become a student organization with the Center for Student Engagement in October. Fenyo said she supports Buttigieg because of the representation for LGBTQ individuals he will bring to office.

“As a queer person, I like the visibility of having someone who’s gay and running for president just for the future of LGBTQ kids that want to run for office,” she said.

Fenyo said nearly 100 students have signed up on the group’s email list. Members of the organization send out information about debate watch parties and campaign discussions for students who want to learn about Buttigieg’s “moderate” and “progressive” values, like his climate plan that advocates for a national insurance program for natural disasters.

She said Buttigieg can directly relate to younger supporters like college students because he is one of the only candidates whose young age of 37 years old ensures that policies he plans to put into place will person-

ally affect him. Buttigieg has relied on his young age to draw in young voters since he announced his bid.

“His climate policy, it’s very comprehensive, but also if it doesn’t work, he’s going to have to come up with another one because he’s going to be alive in 30 or 40 years when we reach that point of no return,” she said.

Sophomore Adam Friedman said he founded “GW for Kamala,” an informal student group, last month to rally for the presidential hopeful. He said the group – a five-member executive board and about 30 interested participants – has started the student organization registration process with the CSE.

Friedman said many great Democratic candidates are running for president, but Harris’ policies – like her plan to increase affordable housing and wages for teachers – appear to be more feasible than some of her opponents’ plans.

He said Harris’ time serving in the U.S. Senate has taught the presidential hopeful how to tackle different initiatives, like ending gun violence.

“She’s doing incredible work on issues that we all care about, sexual violence prevention, gun violence prevention and being a real advocate for not only teachers, but also working class people across the board,” he said.

Friedman said the group will table in Kogan Plaza Friday to spread awareness about Harris’ policies, recruit members and register students to vote. He said the group will canvass for Harris, speak to the public about her campaign ideas and call potential voters.

“The reality is, not everyone has the bandwidth to volunteer for a campaign to do campus organizing,” he said. “We just want to make sure that people are educated and informed on the candidates and

that people vote, first and foremost.”

Senior Haynes Young, the co-founder of The George Washington Yang Gang, which launched in September to support entrepreneur and candidate Andrew Yang, said the group is currently working with the CSE to become a recognized student organization. About 15 people have indicated they are interested in joining the group, Young said.

He said he supports Yang because of the candidate’s focus on topics like mental health and environmentalism and how companies “measure” success.

Young said the group will host a debate watch party later this month to discuss Yang’s policies and performance, like a focus on growing U.S. businesses. The group will work with Yang’s campaign to phone bank, he said.

“As a Yang supporter and someone that comes from very traditional political-like circles, I feel like an outcast,” he said.

Joey Rodriguez, the director of public relations for GW College Republicans, said the organization is partnering with the Republican National Committee to coordinate campaigns and canvassing events – like door-knocking in D.C., Virginia and Maryland – to advocate for a second term for President Donald Trump.

He said the group will also campaign for the candidate on social media leading up to the election.

“We are really excited about 2020,” Rodriguez said. “It’s presented a lot of opportunities for our young members to get involved with politics. You don’t have to support President Donald Trump to be a Republican or to be a right-leaning person, we just want everyone to get involved if they want to.”

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# Culture

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## THE SCENE

### KING PRINCESS

9:30 Club  
Nov. 7 • \$35  
Pop singer known for her LGBTQ advocacy will perform Thursday.

### LOUIS THE CHILD

The Anthem  
Nov. 8 • \$46-\$76  
This DJ duo will perform Friday alongside León and Sebastian Paul.

### DANCE YOURSELF CLEAN

Black Cat  
Nov. 8 • \$12  
This indie dance party featuring lasers and fog will take place Friday.

## RELEASED THIS WEEK:

'IN MY ROOM,' AN ALBUM BY FRANK OCEAN

# STUDENTS PACK MALL TO CELEBRATE NATIONALS' WORLD SERIES WIN



ARIELLE BADER | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR



JACK BOROWIAK | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER



SKYLAR EPSTEIN | PHOTOGRAPHER

ELIZABETH POWER  
REPORTER

The color red coated Constitution Avenue sidewalks as fans cheered on the Nationals – the reigning World Series champions – Saturday.

People lined the streets to cheer and blow air horns while players drove by in double-decker buses. Students who attended the parade said that while they are not primarily loyal to the Nationals, they enthusiastically joined D.C. residents in the celebration anyway because of the team's historic win.

The Nationals defeated the Houston Astros in game

seven of the 115th World Series Wednesday, marking the first championship for a D.C. baseball team since the Washington Senators won in 1924.

Freshmen Emma Johnson, Sydney Graves and Vivian Martin said they struggled to find a hole in the crowd so they could have a better view of the parade. Graves said she was hoping to catch a glimpse of Nationals pitcher Max Scherzer drive by.

"I think he's really cute," she said. "He's the only one I really know."

Sophomores Adam Darwich, Sophie Van Gilder, Ka-

tie Kunkel and Liam Kapples said they are not true Nationals fans, but they wanted to come to the parade to have a good time.

"I watched most of the games, and we all watched the last game together," Darwich said. "It was crazy. After the game, we all ran to the White House."

Most in the group said they were attending the parade for the first time, but Kapples said he has been to about six in Boston to celebrate the Red Sox's previous championships. Kapples said the Boston parades are "a little more rowdy" than Saturday's celebration was, but the

Nationals' parade was "cute."

Freshman Justin Myali said he is a true Nationals fan and was excited for the team to finally bring home a championship, especially for one of his favorite players, first baseman Ryan Zimmerman.

"I've been a Nats fan since they moved here in 2005," he said. "I'm from the DMV, and so it's been a long time waiting."

Fans laughed and took photos as giant foam caricatures of George Washington, Abraham Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt rode bikes in circles along the parade route. They were trailed by the Geico Gecko on a Lyft

scooter.

Another crowd favorite was Jeff Adams, the now-famous Nationals fan who was hit by a home run ball in game five while holding a Bud Light in each hand.

While the actual parade began at 2 p.m., people gathered at about 4 p.m. for a rally on the National Mall, where jumbotrons along Pennsylvania and Constitution avenues displayed the festivities to fans who couldn't get close enough to the stage.

Players got emotional as they gave heartfelt speeches to the densely packed crowd.

Junior Josie Teat called herself "a total bandwagon

fan" but noted the "unified" atmosphere of the parade. In a city known for its divisions, the World Series was a moment of unity as original Nationals fans and D.C. transplants alike rallied around the team.

"It's not often that the team of the city you're in wins the World Series," Teat said. "We're only at GW for four years, and I'd love to stay in D.C. after that, but I don't know where life is going to take me. So it's just that once in a lifetime opportunity that you can't really miss out on."

—Yankun Zhao contributed reporting.

## Fans hype up teams off the court

### 2019-20 Basketball Season Preview

## GEORGE'S ARMY KICKS OFF BASKETBALL SEASON

SIDNEY LEE  
CULTURE EDITOR

The newly branded George's Army is kicking off basketball season in the bleachers with more than just a new name.

George's Army President George Glass said the organization is leaving the Colonial Army name in the past in hopes of revamping the student fan section and increasing participation in games. Now on game days, Glass said George's Army members can enjoy perks like a 20 percent discount at GW Deli and free merchandise.

He said members of George's Army are also working to incentivize students to attend more games by charging them a yearly \$10 fee to officially join the organization. Previously, Glass said anyone could join the organization, and nearly 1,000 students signed up but "only two of them actually cared about anything."

"We actually tried to make it more exclusive so that people could engage and feel that they have stakes in being in the org and have stakes in being involved with the athletics department and the basketball teams," he said.

Glass said non-dues-paying members can still stand with George's Army during games and cheer in the student section, but they won't have access to the same benefits as registered members.

Students involved with the group will also receive a free t-shirt and invitations to exclusive events like the basketball season kick-off held last week at the Smith Center Champions Club. Glass said about 40 students attended the event, which featured pizza and speeches from people in the athletics department like Kate Southall, the director of marketing, strategy and fan engagement.

"I wanted to make an organization that could have something available for people regardless of how well the team was doing," Glass said. "You can come in and still have a pizza party, you can still come in to the Smith Center and feel involved and invested regardless of how well the team is doing."

Glass said he wants to grow the organization to at least 100 dues-paying members by the end of the academic year. George's Army currently tallies 60 members, and Glass said "that's only going to increase as the year goes by."

George's Army Vice President Laurel Braaten said the name change will ensure George's Army is "inclusive" to those who want to be part of a school spirit organization, pointing to the ongoing Colonials moniker controversy.

"It is not a political organization in that sense," she said. "It's just we love basketball, and I think that George's Army is a name which encompasses that without any of the other things that could be going with 'Colonials' or name changes that could be going on in the future."

Braaten added that the e-board aims to continue increasing participation throughout the year. She said athletes and coaches like men's basketball head coach Jamion Christian have expressed appreciation for the group, and she wants the group to continue making an impact on the teams.

"It is also just a great community to be a part of," Braaten said. "More than anything, I just want more students to feel comfortable coming to these events and want to have these events, and hopefully in the long run, raise some GW pride."

—Stephanie Cheung and Rika Kaneshige contributed reporting.



ARIELLE BADER | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR

The cheer team's new leadership said they are working to ready the squad for high-energy games.

## TWO ALUMNI STEP UP TO CO-COACH CHEER TEAM

JACLYN SERSLAND  
REPORTER

Two former GW cheerleaders are stepping up to co-coach the team just one week before the season begins.

After former cheer head coach Robert Bell left his position late last month, alumni and former cheer members Tiffany Jones and Josh Cohen will both fill the role. Cohen and Jones said that they have regularly kept in touch with the team by attending practices and games after they graduated in 2016, and they want to use the leadership opportunity to boost audience engagement and game attendance.

"While we've only been around for a short time, we're very impressed by their individual talent as well as their cohesion and ability to play off each other and build off each other," Cohen said.

In the days leading up to the first games, Cohen and Jones said they've primarily worked with the team on skills like two-base and coed stunts to prepare them for game days and the men's opener Saturday. Two-base stunts consist of two people each holding one of the flyer's feet, while coed stunts include one person holding up the flyer.

"Our drill is to have each of our flyers rotating through a succession of groups to get

them to increase their ability to adapt to different groups' styles," Cohen said.

The team has focused on getting comfortable with the high energy of games by completing cardio workouts to increase its endurance for the first games of the season, which began last week.

"A lot of it is just getting comfortable with the pace and performance level of basketball games for the team since it's really hard to explain it before you've actually lived it, so that's where we're at right now," Cohen said.

For the upcoming season, the coaches said they want the team to "feel comfortable out on the court" and engage with those who come to the basketball games. Jones and Cohen said they want to prioritize increasing the team's presence on the court and exciting spectators by perfecting and performing difficult stunts.

"One of our big priorities is engagement," Cohen said. "Cheerleading is meant to pump up the crowd and cheer on the players, yes, but also ensuring the crowd is excited as part of the entire game day experience so that they can cheer on the team, get excited and actually come to games."

Jones said she started cheerleading at just 7 years old. She started off as a dancer in kindergarten but switched

to cheerleading because she said it looked more fun.

"In any other sport, you're trying to get better individually. With cheerleading, there are individual things you can do, but at the end of the day, there's another person standing on top of you," Jones said. "It's genuinely the most team sport I've ever done."

Jones said she wants to sharpen the image of the team and present it as a pivotal part of the athletics program and for improving game days.

"Just trying to hone in on what we want the brand for the team to look like and what the image we want to put out there is," Jones said. "Not only for the cheerleading team, but for becoming an asset to the athletics program more generally and improving game day experience."

Jones said despite stepping into the position late in the semester, she is looking forward to seeing the team's skills improve.

"I think they have so much potential," Jones said. "I think there's a lot of raw talent there that just needs to be organized a little bit better. They have such great and interpersonal dynamics, and you can tell they already get along really well and they're a really good family which is really impressive to see, so I think we're off to a really great year."



SOPHIE MOTEN | PHOTOGRAPHER

George's Army members can enjoy a 20 percent discount at GW Deli this season.