

# The GW Hatchet

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## Dozens of facilities, career center employees laid off amid pandemic

**ZACH SCHONFELD**  
 CONTRIBUTING NEWS EDITOR

As part of an ongoing effort to cut costs in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, administrators have eliminated at least 70 staff positions, including career coaches, facilities workers and internal consultants, according to University employees.

Administrators announced last week that “dozens” of employees had been laid off as officials aim to plug a \$220 million gap in GW’s budget, but administrators offered a vague timeline for the staff cuts and declined to specify the exact number of affected employees and positions. Eight staff members, who requested anonymity because they are not authorized to speak to the media, said all Continuous Improvement and Business Advisory Services

employees, eight Center for Career Services workers and 52 employees in Facilities Planning, Construction and Management have been dismissed.

University spokeswoman Crystal Nosal declined to answer all of The Hatchet’s questions about layoffs. Staffing levels in administrative units are currently being reviewed and are slated to wrap up by the end of the month, Nosal said.

She said officials can’t rule out the need for “further action” after these reorganizations because of the continued “unknowns” resulting from the pandemic.

“These efforts include very difficult decisions about position eliminations and layoffs that have become more urgent given the financial implications of our fall scenario,” Nosal said in an email, pointing to a Uni-

versity release published last week.

Chief People Officer Dana Bradley said in the release that the final impact of layoffs will “likely” fall in the “low hundreds” once administrative offices complete their restructuring efforts this month.

“Because these efforts are still in the discussion and planning stages in some cases, the full scope is yet to be determined,” she said in the release. “All administrative units are expected to have layoffs as part of this effort.”

Bradley said all laid-off employees are paid for two weeks following their notification date, followed by severance based on their employment length. Affected employees can contact GW’s well-being hotline to receive additional resources, she said.

Laid-off employees who are using tuition benefits will be able to receive them through the end of the spring 2021 semester, Bradley said in the release.

Affected employees in some departments have been able to apply for newly created positions developed as a part of the ongoing restructuring, including in the facilities division, according to documents obtained by The Hatchet.

As part of efforts to reduce expenses, administrators previously announced a suspension on most hirings and capital projects, a freeze on merit salary increases and a suspension of the University’s matching and base retirement contributions. Top administrators also accepted a temporary pay cut.

**Facilities**

Facilities leadership noti-

fied 52 employees across the division on July 28 that their positions would be terminated, according to an email obtained by The Hatchet. The property manager position and HVAC shop will also be “transitioned,” according to the email.

Nosal declined to confirm layoffs in the facilities division. She declined to say how many workers were employed in the division before the layoffs began.

David Dent, the associate vice president for facilities construction, planning and management, told facilities staff he has “gratitude” and “appreciation” for all employees affected by the layoffs in a separate email sent to facilities staff, which was obtained by The Hatchet.

“The loss of these positions is palpable,” Dent said. He added in the email that although the staffing

changes will “hopefully preempt” or reduce additional staff reductions, facilities leadership may still need to implement additional layoffs.

“While I wish I could definitively state that there will not be additional reductions of FPCM personnel, the fact is that we will not know for certain what additional actions we might have to take until we are through the COVID-19 crisis and understand the full impacts on our University’s financial health,” Dent said.

Following the internal announcement, Dent and facilities leadership held two virtual forums on July 30 and Aug. 6 for employees to ask questions about changes to the department, according to the emails obtained by The Hatchet.

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FILE PHOTO BY ARI GOLUB | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Local leaders say they're worried about off-campus students returning to D.C. as possible vectors of the coronavirus.

## Foggy Bottom residents brace for returning students as pandemic drags on

**DANIEL OKAY**  
 REPORTER

As some students return to residence halls and off-campus apartments this semester, Foggy Bottom residents are raising concerns about a potential uptick in COVID-19 cases in the months ahead.

University President Thomas Leblanc said at a Faculty Senate meeting earlier this month that officials expect about 500 students to live on campus this fall, but that does not include a wave of students moving into off-campus apartments dotted throughout the neighborhood. Local leaders said permanent residents are worried house parties and other large gatherings could be new spreaders of COVID-19 throughout the community, as the neigh-

borhood tries to communicate to students the need to enhance health and safety through social distancing.

Foggy Bottom Association President Marina Streznewski said she is concerned that students that are not properly socially distancing will threaten the lives of permanent elderly residents with pre-existing conditions that make the risk for infection relatively high.

“What we see is that the younger people are not wearing masks,” Streznewski said. “We see people having parties, and they seem to think ‘we’re just inviting people around our own age.’ They don’t understand the risk that poses to people who are older, and there’s an awful lot of them in Foggy Bottom.”

The World Health Organization found last week that young people have been the main drivers of spreading the virus in recent months. Several colleges like Notre Dame University and the University of North Carolina closed in-person classes in part because students gathering in large groups upon returning to campus led to an increase in cases.

Streznewski said returning students must act responsibly and be conscientiousness of the surrounding Foggy Bottom community. She said local leaders will possibly hold outdoor meetings in Washington Circle where residents and returning students can discuss safety precautions.

“It means giving up things that are enjoyable, that’s hard, but we got to do it,” she said. “We

as human beings and Americans are capable of doing this.”

Trupti Patel, a Foggy Bottom and West End Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner, said neighbors are worried that students returning to Foggy Bottom aren’t considering the community’s “very susceptible and most vulnerable members” during the pandemic.

“We have constituents that are in their 70s and 80s,” Patel said. “They are terrified of getting sick. I understand people want to socialize and gather. Their need for human interaction and human dynamics is vital, but this is a sacrifice that is being asked to be respectful of the neighbors.”

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## GWorld vendors lay off dozens, continue limited operations ahead of fall

**JARROD WARDWELL**  
 ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Typically thriving in a neighborhood buzzing with students and government officials, the clientele that GWorld vendors once took for granted seemed to all but disappear from Foggy Bottom in recent months.

GWorld restaurants that have enjoyed the support of these regulars for years saw their businesses upended as students and local workers fled the area amid the COVID-19 outbreak. With at least 15 percent of campus vendors still closed down and others starting their recovery from financial loss and public health scares, small restaurant personnel said they will see operations take on new norms as strict health precautions reshape dining and delivery.

GWorld owners and managers said customer dropoff and current health risks have contributed to revenue fallout, staff cuts and in-person service changes during the COVID-19 pandemic. While revenue and profit have long stood as top business priorities, owners and staff members said public health and safety will dictate how restaurants operate through adjusted staffing and dining operations moving forward.

Jeremy Pollok, the managing partner of Tonic, said his restaurant has shut down and reopened three times during the pandemic – first when the coronavirus broke out in March, then during anti-racism protests and citywide curfews in June and finally after two employees’ “significant others” tested positive for COVID-19 in late July. Pollok said he has laid off about 80 employees since the pandemic hit the District, now running with a “skeleton crew” of 20, with up to seven people working on a single day.

“It’s been a real challenge for everyone, and just trying to keep it together for everybody out there, the emotional toll, I would say it’s been difficult,” he said. “Other than that, you’re in survival mode. You’re just trying to make it day by day and stay open, and we’re trying to get through this.”

As layoffs and financial loss crippled businesses like Tonic, GWorld vendors turned to federal aid this spring but received little support from government programs because of an overload in applicants. Pollok launched a GoFundMe page for his laid-off and furloughed employees earlier this spring, hoping to support the workers he said he would rehire if he could.

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SOPHIA YOUNG | CONTRIBUTING PHOTO EDITOR

Tonic, a mainstay of GW’s campus, has seen its lunch service plummet from about 300 people per day to just about 25, its owner said.

## Students say they face heightened stress, anxiety as start of semester nears

**RACHEL ANNEX**  
 STAFF WRITER

After spending months in quarantine away from campus, students said they are experiencing heightened levels of stress and anxiety as they prepare to start the semester online.

In interviews, more than 10 students said they experienced waves of anxiety after officials’ move to continue online learning and restrict fall housing left their living and academic situations in flux. Students said they hope their professors are flexible with deadlines and understanding of mental health struggles exacerbated by the pandemic as they continue classes from home.

Jessica Parillo, the director of counseling and psychological services, said students can call CAPS to speak with a therapist at any time and can tune in to virtual workshops and discussions about addressing anxiety and stress.

She said CAPS launched this semester’s Mental Health Discussion series Wednesday that will feature weekly sessions with a counselor. Each session will cover a different mental health topic, like managing anxiety and staying motivated.

“The increase in students presenting with severe mental health concerns predates COVID-19 but is anticipated to be only

higher as students continue to cope with the challenges this pandemic has brought,” Parillo said in an email. “It is with all of this in the backdrop that we anticipate starting off the school year and that we’ve planned our response.”

She said forming habits like maintaining a routine, staying hydrated and designating a specific workspace can help students maintain their mental health from home.

“You should not expect to implement all of these recommendations at once nor should you expect to be perfect at creating these changes,” Parillo said. “Start small and evaluate which routines and habits work

best for you. Try incorporating one new habit per week to start. And remember, it’s OK to have off-days.”

Students said they worry about maintaining a social and school life balance while taking classes from home. They said they are finding mechanisms, like exercising and planning virtual social activities with friends, and hope that professors are cognizant of the mental health challenges students are facing and will be flexible with their schedules.

Sophia Salazar, an incoming freshman from Scarsdale, New York, said she had trouble staying organized when classes moved online because she

shared a cramped workspace with her parents and younger brother. She said she hopes professors will be forgiving of late assignments or missed deadlines and make an effort for students to connect with one another in virtual classes.

“I really hope for them to be more outgoing and to create a comfortable space for everyone to speak up and to be a little more lenient, considering that I have many friends who have poor family lives, and it was extremely hard for them to do work online – some of them didn’t even have WiFi,” Salazar said.

Wreston Schiller, an incoming freshman from the suburbs of Chicago who

is living off campus with a roommate, said he is most anxious about the social aspect of online learning and plans to visit his D.C.-based friends occasionally if it’s safe to do so.

“I feel like I’m a caged animal locked up – if you have a dog and put it in a cage and never let it out, that dog is not going to be that happy of a dog,” Schiller said.

Schiller said he is nervous to take his classes online while staying in one location and is planning to take “screen breaks” and walks in between classes to maintain his mental health.

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# News

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## THIS WEEK'S EVENTS

### INFORMATION LITERACY IN THE HOMELAND SECURITY ENVIRONMENT

August 25 • 6 p.m. EDT • Free  
The College of Professional Studies will hold a webinar on the strategies local, state and federal homeland security organizations can take to uphold the rule of law and protect individual liberty.

### STAYING POWER - WHAT HISTORY TELLS US ABOUT THE RACE FOR RE-ELECTION

August 28 • Noon EDT • Free  
The Graduate School of Political Management will host a discussion on the challenges and advantages facing incumbents seeking reelection.

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

August 30, 2001

Then-University President Stephen Joel Trachtenberg celebrates the opening of the Health and Wellness Center by offering a free membership to then-President George W. Bush.

# International students weigh return to campus ahead of fall semester

TARA SUTER  
REPORTER

In light of the University's move online this fall, international students needed to weigh living on campus or adjusting their course loads abroad to accommodate time differences.

Administrators announced last month that on-campus housing would be offered this fall to about 500 students facing "extenuating circumstances," like those involved in programs with in-person learning and students beginning the semester from outside the United States. In interviews, some international students said they decided to live in residence halls this fall to avoid a 12-hour time difference, while others said they will stay home and adapt their schedules to Eastern Daylight Time by taking classes in early mornings or evenings.

Incoming freshman John Yang has attended high school in the United States for the last two years and was unable to return home to Beijing, China, in March when the COVID-19 pandemic prompted the closure of schools and many international flights. With his host family in Michigan unable to accommodate his extended stay and the possibility of flying back home slim, Yang said he emailed the Office of Undergraduate Admissions explaining his circumstances.

"It is impossible for me to get an international ticket," Yang said. "First of all, be-

cause of the pandemic they cut all the general international airlines, so there are only about two or three flights every week from the U.S. to Beijing or to cities in China."

Yang, who is majoring in applied science and technology and now living on campus this fall, said the virtual learning semester would have been "very inconvenient" had he returned to China and taken classes at home. He said he wanted to experience American culture and college even if he was taking online school, which would have been more difficult given the 12-hour time difference between China and DC.

"The whole time zone is upside down," Yang said. "So it's very inconvenient. That's the first reason, other one's that I feel it's not a very good experience for me to do the whole online school instead of on campus. The purpose I came here is not only for on-line school, but I just want to meet people and experience American culture."

Sophomore Shwe Einthe, an international student from Myanmar staying in on-campus housing for the semester, said she had reservations about traveling during the pandemic because of health risks but ultimately decided to apply to return to campus.

Einthe said her visa expired in June at the same time the U.S. embassy in Myanmar was shuttered to slow the spread of the virus. Had the embassies not begun operating remotely and renewed her visa, she would have been

unable to return to campus, Einthe said.

"I originally was not planning on returning to campus just because I didn't think that I could," Einthe said. "One of my biggest obstacles for me with my country, and I'm from Myanmar, was that my visa had expired. And I didn't think that the U.S. was going to issue a new visa because the U.S. actually closed all of its embassies for a period of time."

Einthe said the University communicated clearly with international students to assure anyone seeking housing would be able to, but she added that she needed to follow up on information about returning to campus and the required quarantining period.

She said the International Services Office has been helpful in answering questions when she reaches out, but officials have not offered any general information for students who will remain outside of the country about ensuring asynchronous lectures or community engagement.

"You kind of have to do your own research and ask questions based on, 'This is my issue, how are we going to solve it?'" Einthe said. "We haven't heard anything in terms of time zones. How can we get textbooks? What about if you're from another country where maybe some websites are restricted or blocked?"

The ISO is currently hosting virtual academic counseling meetings with students needing advice in



FILE PHOTO BY ERIC LEE  
For many international students, the severe restrictions on travel during the pandemic have left them stranded either in their home country or in the United States.

their courses, according to its website. The ISO also provides updates about the federal government's restrictions on traveling or entry into the country with an explanation if they affect students or not.

Some international students said they are planning to complete their studies abroad due to financial and travel limitations and plan to manage their course loads and lectures in different time zones using tips they picked up last semester, like scheduling classes at night.

Ajay Uppalari, a sophomore majoring in political science, had been in San Fran-

cisco since March when the University first announced remote learning for the spring. He said he originally planned to return to campus this fall, but he decided he would go back to Hyderabad, India to complete the semester to minimize the cost of classes.

Uppalari said he has reservations about taking courses from India but feels more comfortable about the situation because most of his classes would be with professors he already has relationships with. He said he'll likely stay awake between all of his classes, which will begin at 5:30 p.m. his time and take

place through the evening.

He added that he wished the University had communicated with students earlier about the remote semester so he could have focused on finding flights to India instead of preparing for his return to campus.

"Considering that we're moving completely online, the entire idea of the cost of college and return on investment for college has changed dramatically," Uppalari said. "So now I'm trying to minimize cost as much as I can because the return on investment that I'm expecting is now uncertain."

## Officials to hold town halls amid financial aid concerns

ZACH SCHONFELD  
CONTRIBUTING NEWS EDITOR

Officials scheduled two virtual town halls for this week to address student concerns about their repackaged financial aid.

The town halls, scheduled for Monday and Wednesday at 7 p.m. EDT, come after dozens of students said their newly recalculated financial aid package for the remote fall semester indicates they will now pay more out of pocket to attend GW virtually than if they were living on campus. University spokeswoman Crystal Nosal said GW has a "commitment" to keep students' cost of attendance equal to or less than their original billing estimate.

"Our monitoring reports indicate all repackaged students' after-aid cost of attendance is now equal to or lower than the cost included on July bills," Nosal said in an email. "If someone believes their direct cost has increased, they are asked to please contact the Student Financial Assistance office for a review."

Officials announced last month that classes will remain online this fall amid the COVID-19 pandemic, and students who do not return to campus will receive a 10 percent tuition reduction.

Nosal said the financial aid office recalculated more than 4,700 undergraduate students' aid packages.

Dozens of students shared on social media that their out-of-pocket cost for the fall was raised following the recalculations. The Student Association

released a statement Thursday stating that administrators confirmed "many" students' new financial aid packages were recalculated incorrectly.

"The overall cost of attendance for the fall semester was reduced considerably for a number of undergraduate students," Nosal said. "To stay compliant with federal student aid and loan regulations, in addition to GW's institutional aid awarding rules, the University was required to adjust student aid packages to reflect the actual cost of attendance."

Nosal said merit-based scholarships have not been adjusted following the fall semester changes, but students must remain in full-time academic status to receive those awards.

Jay Goff, the vice provost for enrollment and student success, said the town halls are open to all students and will provide a general overview of how the virtual fall semester has impacted admissions, registration, financial aid and student success. Students must register for the town halls, which are capped at 1,000 attendees, and a recording of the event will be posted online afterward.

"Given the fall semester cost of attendance changes, we plan to focus much of the program time on the latest financial aid processes and timelines," Goff said in an email to students Friday. "In addition, we will share new ways we can work with you to address specific questions and individual circumstances through the Office of Student Financial Assistance."

## Entire office, career center employees affected by mass layoffs

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Affected employees could apply for 12 open positions in the division, including the four new zone manager positions, according to the document.

### Career center

The career center eliminated eight positions, according to three employees familiar with the matter. Seven of the affected employees were notified on Friday, and the eighth employee was notified Monday.

The reductions comprised four career coaching positions – an industry career coach, two career exploration coaches and a managing director of career learning and experience – and four administrative positions – including a

student employer manager, an administrator of communications and outreach and an operations coordinator – the employees said.

Rachel Brown, the associate vice provost for University Career Services, held a virtual meeting with career center staff Monday to discuss the reductions, according to an email obtained by The Hatchet.

Ben Cerny, the career coach for arts, media, design, communications and public relations, wrote on his LinkedIn profile early this week that his position was also eliminated.

### CIBAS

Officials have also eliminated the CIBAS office, an internal management consulting group at the University, according to two employees familiar with the is-

sue. The office also supported the rollout of University President Thomas LeBlanc's five strategic initiatives and the strategic planning process, which was paused in April in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The CIBAS website was taken offline in recent weeks.

One employee said the layoffs eliminated roughly 10 positions. The office listed 11 employees in April, according to an archived version of the CIBAS website.

At least two CIBAS employees were offered temporary positions, according to another source. Koren Bedeau, the senior associate provost for special projects who arrived at GW in April, will manage the responsibilities formerly overseen by Pam Promisel, a CIBAS senior associate, the source said.

## Criminal justice organization seeks to attract students interested in major, advocacy

TIFFANY GARCIA  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

A group of students majoring in criminal justice established a student organization earlier this month working to educate students interested in or studying the major.

The Criminal Justice Student Association, which officially registered during the first week of August, will offer resources like academic support, information about criminal reform advocacy and educational panels about topics like police reform for students interested in criminal justice, its leaders said. Junior Camille Germinal, the organization's president, said the group aims to create a space for any student studying criminal justice, interested in the major or looking for information about how to get involved in criminal justice advocacy.

"We definitely think this isn't just a club for criminal justice majors," Germinal said. "This is open to anyone that wants to have a conversation or are open to learning more or wanting to know what to do because even us as students, we're looking to see ways that we can make sure these conversations are being had or how to take action when it comes to criminal justice."

She said more than 100 students have signed up through the organization's student interest

form to receive emails since the group launched its Instagram account at the beginning of July.

Germinal said she had tried out various majors before finding the right fit in criminal justice and wants CJSA to help students in similar positions. She said the group plans to hold virtual panel discussions with the six executive board members on the requirements of being a criminal justice major, courses that interested students can enroll in and issues related to the topic, like the role of race in the justice system.

CJSA also plans to connect with freshmen and transfer students majoring in or taking introductory criminal justice classes like Intro to Sociology to form virtual study groups, Germinal added. She said she's been in contact with professors teaching intro-level criminal justice courses about notifying students of the organization and connecting them with CJSA study groups or upperclassmen in the major.

Germinal said while the organization doesn't currently have plans to take part in criminal justice advocacy, the executive board plans to involve CJSA in community service around the D.C. area and hold a career fair for members who want to explore career options in criminal justice field once students return to campus.

She said the group's current goal is to provide academic and

social support for its members in light of the virtual learning semester. She said once GW returns to campus, its members plan to bond through in-person study sessions and movie nights.

Keyla Ruiz, CJSA's director of programming and the president of the Latino affinity GW Casa Blanca, said CJSA members plan to host online community-bonding events, like criminal justice-themed game nights. She said one of the group's main events for the fall will be a panel featuring student organization leaders involved in social justice and possibly criminal justice professors to educate students on police reform and terminology used in discussing it, like the prison industrial complex.

Junior Emma Elliott, the group's director of communications, said the organization is different from other political student groups like GW College Democrats because while College Democrats hold occasional discussions on criminal justice reform, CJSA's main focus will be on breaking down criminal justice reform for everyone to understand.

She said the organization plans to incorporate activism in its programming like sharing petitions on criminal justice issues and creating a resource guide on people's rights in the criminal justice system and law enforcement encounters.



HATCHET FILE PHOTO

A University spokeswoman said the financial aid office needed to adjust student aid packages to "stay compliant with federal student aid and loan regulations."

# Student leaders launch collective to provide aid during the pandemic

**TIFFANY GARCIA**  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

About a dozen students are banding together to provide resources and financial support to peer impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Then-Student Association Executive Vice President Amy Martin and Yanik Omictin, then-SA vice president for governmental relations, launched the GW Mutual Aid Network, a student-led collective that works to connect students with the means to stay afloat during the pandemic. The collective will maintain a spreadsheet created in the spring where students can share resources for housing, transportation or school supplies, and members are raising money for a student emergency fund.

"With everything that we've been seeing over the last few months, I think that everyone can agree that it's time to prioritize the community," Martin said. "It's time to prioritize the collective, and it's time to recognize the role that we all have to play in that in terms of things like wealth redistribution."

The network is gathering money for a student donation-reliant emergency fund that has surpassed its initial goal of \$1,250. Students

seeking financial assistance can fill out an emergency aid request form asking them to list their contact information and reason for receiving aid.

Martin said the original spreadsheet launched in the spring had been set aside once students moved off campus, but it was re-launched last month as students reconfigured their housing plans and finances in preparation for a remote semester. She said she and Omictin decided to form the collective, which operates independently from the University, rather than a student organization because they did not want to appoint a president and create an executive board.

"We support all the ideas that people are coming forward with, and we encourage people to go after them and run," Martin said. "We're an unaffiliated group of students, we're not a student org, and so, therefore, we have a little bit more freedom to act more as a collective and as a coalition than anything else."

Martin said the network has grown to more than 10 student volunteers helping with fundraising and brainstorming new ideas for support, like providing online wellness exercises and alumni career panels. She said student volunteers

also work privately with students requesting aid to facilitate donations.

The mutual aid spreadsheet originally contained tabs for students to list details like storage, transportation, donations and their contact information. New to the spreadsheet is a page listing a mutual aid microgrant fund the group will oversee and fundraise for from students directly.

Martin said the fund has relied on student and community donations via Venmo and CashApp, and the group's members are prioritizing students that are housing and food insecure before fulfilling additional student requests, like course materials costs.

"We're not the first, we won't be the last to do this, but the idea of wealth redistribution is also not a new idea," Martin said.

Omictin, a senior majoring in geography and political science, said the mutual aid network is "critical" for students facing stressors, like loss of employment and housing. He said students who have lived financially well-off have a responsibility to ensure their wealth is being used to assist their peers.

He said the fund is designed to meet housing and food needs and general

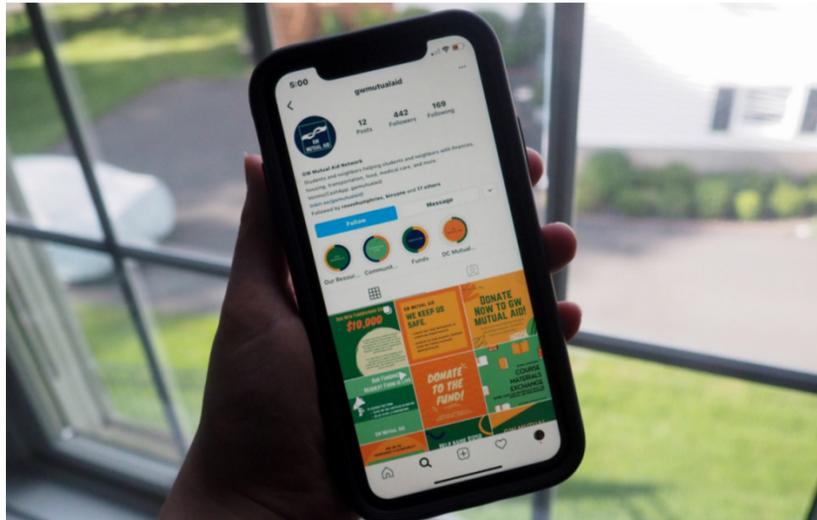


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY GRACE HROMIN | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR

The organizers of the mutual aid fund say their new fundraising goal is \$10,000, which will help less fortunate students pay for medical care and other basic needs.

living expenses including medical care.

Omictin said the group is also intending to expand the support they offer during the remote semester to include programming, like wellness and mental health events and political education about collectivism. He said he wants those involved to feel they are part of a strong campus community and to understand how their work is "distinctly" different from the "overwhelmingly capitalist" idea of charity by

emphasizing collective mutual aid.

"We know we're very fragile as a community," Omictin said. "And so we know we need that automatic safety valve to be there. And so we intend to maintain that."

Metaxenia Evangeloulis, a sophomore majoring in psychology and statistics, said she first heard about the network through Instagram and listed her textbooks on the mutual aid spreadsheet for students to request. She

said the network allows students to connect with each other and help with whatever supplies they have to give away, whether that be money or extra textbooks.

"Textbooks are kind of unreasonably priced and especially now that we're working remotely, it's probably harder for kids to access textbooks because you can't really get a physical one that you read from the library," Evangeloulis said. "So I just wanted to help if anyone needed it."



FILE PHOTO BY ARI GOLUB | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Senior and ANC Chair James Harnett said DDOT has not approved the ANC's request for sidewalks on campus to be widened.

## Sidewalk extensions remain uninstalled as semester begins

**JARROD WARDWELL**  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Calls to extend campus sidewalks for better social distancing remain unanswered as 500 students prepare to move back to campus this fall.

The Foggy Bottom and West End Advisory Neighborhood Commission passed a resolution last month calling on the D.C. Department of Transportation to extend campus sidewalks ahead of the fall semester. Senior and ANC Chair James Harnett said that request still remains under city review, raising concerns about campus safety amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

He said a decision may come this week, and he hopes city officials will follow through on the ANC's calls. A DDOT spokesperson declined to comment.

A map posted online earlier this year by alumnus Matthew Holden indicated that most walkways on campus are too narrow to enable social distancing in the area.

Holden said city officials have taken too long to install sidewalk extensions throughout the District. He said the city's plan in June to designate Slow Streets with speeds of 15 miles per hour or less did not expand beyond a single stretch of S Street in Ward 2, located more than a mile away from campus.

"The speed at which DDOT has been installing things like the Slow Streets and expanded sidewalks has not been great," he said. "I like that they've finally started to do some things besides the initial expansion near some grocery stores, but the agency seems to have a lack of urgency."

The commission's vote last month pressured DDOT officials to install sidewalk extensions and "parklets," restaurant seating that occupies parking spaces, at several on-campus locations. At that meeting, commissioners highlighted seven streets that should receive sidewalk ex-

tensions and two areas needing parklets, touching up 14 blocks across the Foggy Bottom Campus.

Harnett said streets and sidewalks without these extensions on campus are not ready for a rise in pedestrian traffic this fall. As he awaits the city's plan, Harnett said the widths of existing sidewalks will heighten pedestrians' risk of transmitting the coronavirus to one another.

"We need to be doing everything we can to keep people safe," Harnett said. "And the best way to do that is to keep people physically apart. And we need to be looking at all the public policy options on the table."

Harnett said he hopes the sidewalk extensions will take the shape of yellow and orange plastic barriers that will be visible and easy to install and remove, unlike the concrete barriers that line the entrance to the U.S. State Department and plastic bollards, short posts, that protect bike lanes. He said the question still remains whether DDOT and the University have the supply of plastic barriers needed to execute the ANC's full proposals.

"I'm more concerned about their ability to have the resources to deploy these safety measures," Harnett said. "And it's my job as an advocate and as somebody who is fighting for what students need and what our community members need to be able to move that forward and to make sure that DDOT has the resources they need to keep people safe."

While the sidewalk extensions are awaiting government approval, plans will move forward to install a parklet in front of Duke's Grocery at The Shops at 2000 Penn, Harnett said. Although there is no current timetable for the renovation, Harnett said city workers will clear out parking spaces in front of the facility on I Street for added restaurant seating to be used by businesses housed in the

shopping center.

"We are moving forward expeditiously to make sure that our local and small businesses have the space that they need to operate," he said.

The commission may also request the entire street to be shut down on weekends or select times, like evening hours, for restaurants to free up additional street space when there might be more pedestrian activity in the area, he added. Mayor Muriel Bowser lowered speed limits across the District as part of the Safe Streets initiative in June to ensure cars slow down where there is more foot traffic.

Harnett said installing one parklet is "insufficient" in meeting the campus' needs to expand public space for social distancing. But following the University's decision to move classes online and restrict building access this fall, the city could roll back plans to install every extension because fewer students are returning to campus, Harnett said.

"Because we moved this plan back when the University was planning on bringing back six to seven thousand students instead of about 1,000, we might not need as much as we thought we would," he said.

Harnett said the city could refrain from adding extensions in front of buildings that students will no longer need to use, like proposed installations on E Street that would have widened sidewalk space in front of the Elliott School of International Affairs and 1959 E St. But he added that street space should still be wide enough for the few hundred returning students.

"At the end of the day, these sidewalks are still too narrow," he said.

As the Foggy Bottom neighborhood awaits DDOT's decision to execute the ANC's proposals, Harnett said the chances of the new sidewalk extensions rest on the commission's ability to uphold strong relationships with Foggy Bottom and the D.C. government.

## Alumni take stage at Democratic National Convention

**ZACH SCHONFELD**  
CONTRIBUTING NEWS EDITOR

Five speakers with ties to GW took the virtual stage at last week's Democratic National Convention.

The DNC, which was held virtually amid the COVID-19 pandemic, featured four former students: Michigan State Rep. Mari Manoogian, Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., Sen. Tammy Duckworth, D-Ill., and actress Kerry Washington. The speakers — which also included Rep. Brendan Boyle, D-Pa., a former School of Media and Public Affairs Terker Distinguished Fellow — joined dozens of politicians and celebrities who spoke in support of Democratic presidential and vice presidential nominees Joe Biden and Kamala Harris, respectively.

On the second night of the convention, Manoogian — who earned a Bachelor of Arts in international relations and security policy in 2014 and a Master of Arts in global communication and international organizations in 2017 — spoke as one of 17 "rising stars" identified by the party as soon-to-be prominent politicians in a keynote address.

"Joe knows we can never let hard times turn us against each other," she said.

Manoogian also discussed Biden's role in bailing out the auto industry as vice president, adding that he will fight for "the people who built this country."

Boyle, who served as one of SMPA's Terker distinguished fellows, during the 2017-18 academic year, also participated in the rising star address Tuesday night. He said

Democrats must fight against a lawsuit brought on by the Trump administration to overturn the Affordable Care Act.

He added that Biden knows what it's like to work for "everything you've got."

"You deserve health care you can afford, a job that pays you fairly," Boyle said. "You deserve childcare and paid sick leave while you work, and when you pay into Social Security and Medicare, you deserve to know it will be there when you retire."

The next night, alumna Kerry Washington moderated a two-hour speaker lineup culminating in an acceptance speech by Harris.

"No one is perfect — nothing is — but it is striving toward justice, equality and truth that distinguishes us," Washington, who earned a Bachelor of Arts in anthropology and sociology in 1998, said at the convention. "We fight for a more perfect union because we are fighting for the soul of this country and for our lives. And right now, that fight is real."

Warren, who attended classes at GW from 1966 to 1968, delivered an address Wednesday during the convention, calling America's economic system "rigged" to give bailouts to billionaires and "kick dirt in the face" of everyone else.

She said Biden would make high-quality childcare affordable and raise the wages of childcare workers.

"I love a good plan, and Joe Biden has some really good plans," Warren said.

She also condemned Trump's leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic, saying he was

unfit to manage the country's response.

"Donald Trump's ignorance and incompetence have always been a danger to our country," Warren said. "COVID-19 was Trump's biggest test — he failed miserably."

On the final night of the convention, Warren spoke alongside six fellow 2020 Democratic presidential primary candidates in support of their former opponent. Warren said she saw Biden's character the "clearest" when he came to Boston for the one-year anniversary of the Boston Marathon bombing.

Duckworth, who graduated with a Master of Arts in international affairs in 1992, called Trump a "coward-in-chief," adding that Biden "understands" the sacrifices made by military families in a reference to his late son Beau Biden, who was deployed to Iraq in 2008.

"Unlike Trump, Joe Biden has common decency," she said at the convention Thursday night. "He has common sense. He can command from both experience and from strength."

Duckworth, an Army veteran, also condemned Trump's relationship with the military, including a June photo-op in front of St. John's Church, located blocks away from GW's campus.

At least two speakers with ties to GW will take the stage at this week's Republican National Convention. Sen. Rand Paul, R-Ky., who taught a class on dystopian visions in fall 2017, will speak Tuesday, and Kellyanne Conway, who earned a Juris Doctor from GW Law in 1992, will speak Wednesday, according to a Trump campaign release.



GRACE HROMIN | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR

Actress Kerry Washington, who delivered a Commencement address in 2013, was among the speakers at this year's virtual Democratic National Convention.

## CRIME LOG

### THEFT II/ FROM BUILDING, UNLAWFUL ENTRY

Mitchell Hall (7-Eleven)

8/10/2020 – 5:55 a.m.

Closed Case

GW Police Department officers responded to a report of a man previously barred from 7-Eleven entering the store and stealing Gatorade. The man had already fled the scene upon the arrival of GWPD officers.

No further action.

### DISORDERLY CONDUCT

Enterprise Hall (Virginia Science and Technology Campus)

8/11/2020 – 8:00 a.m.

Closed Case

GWPD received a report from a male staff member that a male worker did not complete his task of installing an appliance. When the supervisor questioned the worker about the uncompleted work, the employee became argumentative and cursed at the supervisor.

Referred to the department.

### DISORDERLY CONDUCT

Public Property on Campus (500 Block of 19th Street)

8/11/2020 – 1:01 p.m.

Closed Case

GWPD responded to a report from a 7-Eleven male employee that a man was yelling and asking for money at the side of the store. The responding officers asked the individual to leave and he complied.

No further action.

### THEFT II/ FROM BUILDING, UNLAWFUL ENTRY

Mitchell Hall (7-Eleven)

8/12/2020 – 12:30 a.m.

Closed Case

GWPD responded to a report of the previously barred man who stole Gatorade two days earlier entering the 7-Eleven and stealing milk. Upon officers' arrival, the man had already fled the scene.

No further action.

### HARASSMENT: E-MAIL AND ELECTRONIC MEDIA

Student Support Building

8/13/2020 – 2:09 p.m.

Open Case

A male staff member reported being the victim of harassing text messages from an unknown sender.

Case open.

### TRAFFIC ACCIDENT: HIT AND RUN

Medical Faculty Associates/ Academic Center Garage

8/18/2020 – 8:45-9:45 a.m.

Open Case

GWPD received a report from a female staff member that the front of her parked car was severely damaged in a hit and run incident.

Case open.

—Compiled by Kateryna Stepanenko



FILE PHOTO BY ERIC LEE

Certain lab spaces were opened in June at 25 percent capacity for researchers at the University.

## Faculty members using research labs say they feel secure with virus safety precautions

LIA DEGROOT  
NEWS EDITOR

Medical faculty are keeping a distance from other researchers, increasing handwashing and recording contact tracing information to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in lab space.

Officials opened up some labs in campus buildings like the Science and Engineering Hall for limited use over the summer and plan to gradually reopen lab space if COVID-19 cases decrease. Professors who have used the labs to teach and conduct research said most of their work is now done in a hybrid model, but wearing masks and conducting work virtually has hindered their ability to effectively communicate with their students and colleagues.

Officials announced in June that certain lab space was available for faculty use at 25 percent capacity with personal protective equipment and social distancing guidelines in place. Officials said at the time that they would prioritize granting research space to graduate and postdoctoral students who were close to completing their degrees.

Marcia Firmani, the chair of the biomedical laboratory sciences department in the School of Medicine and

Health Sciences, said the lab courses taught at the Virginia Science and Technology Campus during the summer were split into virtual and in-person sessions. She said the department already offers many online programs, which lessened the impact that the University's transition to remote operations had on the department.

"Teaching a lab course online is challenging since students cannot perform all of the hands-on techniques as they normally would in an in-person lab course," Firmani said in an email. "To provide students with as similar an experience as they would have had in the lab as we could in an online format, we modified our courses with videos and virtual simulations."

She said lab research was halted in the spring semester due to COVID-19, and she currently is working on a research project with a graduate student and was able to get approval from the Institutional Review Board to use the space.

Firmani said students are not permitted to enter the lab space if they have any symptoms of COVID-19, are required to wear masks and must maintain distance using stickers, which are placed on the floor to indicate how to safely move around the

lab.

She added that wearing a mask to classes can be uncomfortable for some students and can make communication more difficult than normal, but overall her ability to teach and conduct research has not been impacted.

"We have not had any issues with conducting research and teaching students in the labs and are thrilled that we have been able to get back to the labs effectively and safely," Firmani said.

Brett Shook, an assistant professor of biochemistry and molecular medicine in the medical school, said he has been able to intermittently use his lab space in Ross Hall while the University was shut down because he requested to be designated as an "essential" researcher, allowing two lab members to work in the lab at a time.

He said he uses the lab space to conduct research about the communication between immune cells and various tissue-resident cells, immune cells that occupy tissues without recirculation into the bloodstream, during wound healing. He said he has limited his lab use to only when he cannot conduct work virtually and has staggered shifts of people in

the lab so fewer people are in contact at the same time.

Shook said communication between him and his colleagues has been slower while working remotely because he deals with complex topics that are best discussed face to face.

"Both rapid and clear communication is really a vital part to research as science relies on ideas and creativity, and it's not something that is always very easily communicated," he said.

He said the precautions in the lab, like wearing masks, maintaining distance and ensuring no one entering has symptoms of COVID-19, has made him feel "incredibly" safe conducting research in person. He added that people entering the lab will sign in each time for contact tracing if someone who used the lab had tested positive for COVID-19.

"To me it's really clear that the SMHS leadership were very thoughtful in developing a prudent reopening plan," he said. "One thing I've seen is that the leaders will adapt protocols to adjust to different institutional or local changes in policy, and also they've been doing a great job of incorporating and staying up with the latest scientific data that the clinicians are able to gather."

## Vendors lean on tourists, locals for business

From Page 1

Pollok said revenue has fallen 80 percent since the pandemic hit, as the majority of the restaurant regulars have vanished from Foggy Bottom. The restaurant has now gone from serving an average of 300 people per day just for lunch before the pandemic to now just about 25 people, Pollok said.

Since the District has eased into reopening stages, Pollok said the restaurant now offers 80 seats outdoors and 40 indoors in addition to takeout and delivery services. He said masks, gloves and temperature checks have been routine for Tonic employ-

ees, as customers are required to wear masks and fill out contact tracing paperwork in case someone who eats at the restaurant tests positive for the virus.

As Tonic heads into the fall months of the pandemic, Pollok said returning students and workers will help enliven both the neighborhood and his business, as he remains "very hopeful" for the fall.

"Is it going to be normal? No," Pollok said. "But is it going to be a little bit more than we've seen? I hope so."

Murat Siyam, the managing partner of Homeslyce Pizza Bar, said his restaurant is about 30 percent down in revenue from pre-

pandemic business levels – a sign of improvement after it fell to a 60 percent revenue drop at the height of the pandemic earlier this year. Siyam said Homeslyce has found new ways to attract customers after the pandemic struck and sit-down dining reopened, like an outdoor seating area on its patio, which has drawn in a new crowd of locals and tourists.

Siyam said he hopes better advertising and word of mouth from customers will help boost business.

Jason Lin, a manager at Toryumon Japanese House, said the restaurant has seen its 25 employees drop to seven and now only processes

about 40 orders per day, compared to 200 to 300 prior to the pandemic. Lin said the restaurant currently only offers carryout and delivery orders as a result of the decline.

Yet a positive sign has been the hours – after Toryumon was only open for "half days" during the last two months, the restaurant switched to its regular 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. hours earlier this month after customers requested lunch become available again, Lin said.

"We keep the good quality of the food, keep our service, and I believe after COVID-19 when the people are back, we'll be good," he said.

## Virtual video calls can better health: experts

From Page 1

"As time goes on, I think it is going to be pretty hard to stay motivated because it is going to be very draining to be in the same place and going on the computer all day," Schiller said.

April Mihalovich, a senior from Cape Cod, Massachusetts, said she had originally planned to live off campus in D.C. this fall but instead decided to sublet her apartment and stay at home to save money. She said she's concerned about losing touch with her friends at GW and

plans to schedule frequent calls with them to keep her relationships intact.

"Sometimes it can feel like a lot of work to set up calls with friends instead of just crashing in my bed and watching Netflix, but it is important to push myself to maintain a social lifestyle," Mihalovich said.

Mental health experts said planning digital get-togethers with friends, exercising and spending time with family can help curb feelings of anxiety and burnout throughout the semester.

Steven Siegel, the

chair of the department of psychiatry and behavioral sciences at the University of Southern California, said scheduling virtual social activities like Zoom calls instead of connecting with people only through social media will help students feel less isolated from their friends.

Siegel said students should keep in mind that faculty are still present to help students achieve their goals even though they are not in person.

Todd Weinman – the director of the University Counseling Center

at Vanderbilt University said administrators will provide on-campus and virtual resources to help students throughout the semester. He said many of his students feel disconnected from their school communities and are choosing to return to campus despite COVID-19 restrictions.

"We have tried to design our mental health services for optimal flexibility and accessibility given the challenges of so many students being in different places and will continue to evolve our services over time," Weinman said in an email.

## Students say peers returning to campus are unlikely to distance

From Page 1

She said her district includes 10 apartment buildings, four of which are popular among students: 2400 Pennsylvania Avenue Apartments, The Claridge House Condos, The 925 Apartments and The Bader Condominium. Patel said students across the country neglecting public health precautions during the pandemic have stirred concern that the same will occur in Foggy Bottom.

Patel said permanent residents and students need to communicate with each other to keep the community from splitting between differing public health standards that could influence the caseload in Foggy Bottom. She said even as the health of elderly citizens remains a top priority, students' needs are also critical to uphold in her district.

"There are neighborhood organizations, groups that want to make sure their voices are heard to the students," Patel said. "And the students have a right to express what their expectations are."

As the neighborhood fears returning students will contribute to a rise in virus cases, students living off-campus said they are looking to find a glimmer of the college experience they once had, even during the pandemic.

Tucker Hamilton, a junior living in an I Street apartment in the fall, said he doesn't plan to self-isolate in Foggy Bottom unless he contracts the virus. He said he and his friends will continue to go out but will also wear masks, sanitize and follow public health guidelines outlined by the District's health department and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"When I go out, I'm always going to be contributing to as well as

accepting some risk of contracting or spreading coronavirus," Hamilton said. "However, because the infection rate is so high anyways, it's basically a moot point to consider myself to be something so special."

Alaina Shuman, a junior who returned to D.C. from San Francisco last week, is living at Varsity on K, located just off of Washington Circle. She said the need for college students to socialize with one another means students returning to the area "definitely" won't social distance.

"It's so hard to be 20 years old, near your friends, but be told to stay in your apartment or stay in your room," Shuman said. "I have very little faith in GW students to be quite honest because there's just so many temptations to go out with your friends and party. It's putting everyone at risk."

She said students may struggle to manage self-isolation and social distancing "for mental health reasons," but students must party less and spend more time alone to contain the virus' spread in Foggy Bottom. She said she will keep interactions with her friends and family and limit socialization in large gatherings to ensure at-risk elderly neighbors remain safe.

"I will be spending a lot of time on my own – way more than a normal semester," Shuman said. "That's just something I have to adjust to."

Despite the risks that students carry into the Foggy Bottom neighborhood, Shuman said she hopes to balance safety with a return to the college neighborhood during the pandemic.

"I chose to return to D.C. because I couldn't put my life on hold anymore," Shuman said. "And if I could do it in a safe way, it felt like it was the right thing for me to do."

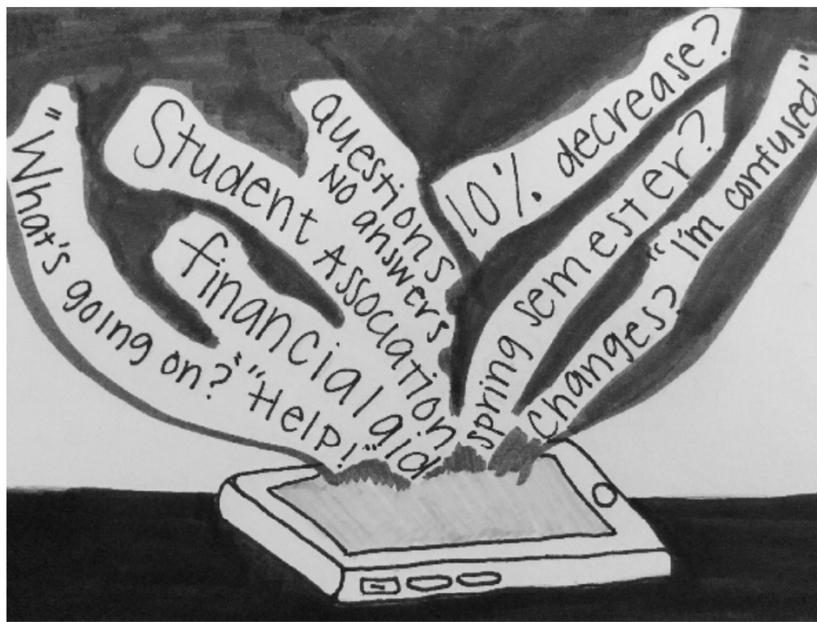
## GW must use social media to address student confusion while remote

### STAFF EDITORIAL

Students should not learn about new University policies that affect them financially, academically and socially through social media – nor should they be left guessing about what some vague public statement means for them. They should learn about it from the officials themselves.

Turn to the Facebook page "Overheard at GW" and you'll find several students wondering what happened to their financial aid packages over the past couple of weeks. They wrote to officials that they had lost aid following the University's decision to move online this fall. At the time, no student knew that nearly 5,000 packages were being recalculated in light of that decision, and "many" students' new packages were determined incorrectly.

Had officials been in tune with their students on a large Facebook page like Overheard, they would have been able to pinpoint similar sources of confusion and clarify what happened to students' aid before they were left guessing, using social media as a way to find some speculative answers. Students used hearsay to figure out how they were going to pay for the fall semester because GW didn't properly communicate. No student should be left in the dark



Cartoon by Hannah Thacker

heading into a remote semester – officials must provide students with up-to-date information to prevent confusion and misinformation as soon as they see it on social media.

Students should not need to make last-minute financial or academic decisions on information they hear from their peers rather than administrators, especially

while we're a week out from the start of classes. When the University first planned for a mix of online and in-person classes, officials should have told students how their aid would be affected had they chosen to take in-person or virtual classes. When GW later announced its move online, officials should have immediately notified students that their financial aid pack-

ages would be recalculated. Students would have had more time to financially prepare for the fall, whether that means getting another job or taking a gap semester to save money. Officials could have easily addressed the confusion if they had been monitoring the comments and posts from students on Facebook and Twitter.

These recent events, while

stressful on their own, are part of an even larger issue: the University has not been communicating enough with students. This leaves room for speculation and confusion, as spaces like the student-run "Overheard at GW" Facebook page and Twitter become venues for sharing information and frantically speculating about what new policies mean.

These online spaces have been phenomenal resources for students to hear about each other's experiences, and those who share crucial information with their peers are doing a genuine service for the student body. But confusion lends itself to misinformation. It should not be students' jobs to parse vague statements from administrators, a problematic new hire or try and make a best guess about why their financial aid packages seemed to have been cut. As we approach a radically abnormal semester, GW needs to step up their game to prevent confusion from making students' lives even more stressful.

One way the University can improve on their communication with students is to actually engage with these spaces where students are voicing their thoughts and feelings. If administrators scrolled through the Overheard page, they would

almost certainly get a better sense of what areas need clarification than if they just relied on intuition. Officials actually responding in an ad hoc way to individual concerns could be counterproductive, as two officials giving two different responses to the same issue could heighten confusion instead of alleviating it. But paying more attention to what students are actually saying is an important way for administrators to get a sense of where they need to clarify certain policies or announcements. They do not need to respond to each individual concern on social media, but if many students are asking each other the same question or speculating about the same thing, that should at the very least prompt officials to release a statement or send out an email.

Clarity from administrators is always important, but given the online status of the fall semester and the uncertain status of the spring semester, it is even more crucial that students be well-informed. The pandemic means students are making agonizing decisions that will have a real impact on their future – and the least the University can do is provide us with the timely and accurate information that we need to make those calls.

## Eliminate the filibuster, a threat to democracy

When we think about threats to American democracy, we often conjure images of tanks in the streets, the delegitimization of our elections and the enduring scourge of bigotry. What we don't usually call to mind is an arcane piece of Senate procedure. But the filibuster needs to be eliminated in order for the United States to have a functioning democracy. Issues like D.C. statehood and action on climate change need to be addressed, and allowing the filibuster to stand in the way of ac-

American democratic process. Former President Barack Obama is the most notable recent convert to the cause – recently backing calls to eliminate the filibuster as a means to combat racial injustice, citing D.C. statehood as an example. Even if Democrats – who are largely pro-statehood – retake the Senate this fall, it is exceedingly unlikely that they will command a 60-vote supermajority. Republicans have already signaled fierce opposition to statehood, so any vote on the issue would almost certainly fall along party lines. A handful of Republicans would, as a result, have the power to single-handedly block a bill granting representation to 700,000 American citizens. That is not how democracy is supposed to function, and people suffer because of it.

Those who want to keep the filibuster often reminisce about a halcyon era of compromise, gentility and bipartisan cooperation in the Senate. To be fair, it is true that bipartisanship has declined in recent years. But even half a century ago, segregationist senators put up a fight against the Civil Rights Act of 1957 using the filibuster, delaying for weeks legislation that would give basic rights to Black Americans. And even if we ignore the filibuster's dark past, the political polarization of the present still makes a strong case for its elimination. No modern party is likely to reach a 60-vote majority on its own, and banking on senators crossing the aisle to support hot-button issues is a fool's errand.

The power that the minority of senators can wield over the legislative process is even more garish when you consider that the Senate is un-

der-representative of the American population. The 21 least-populous states – which between them elect 41 senators, enough to sink any bill because of the filibuster – represent only 11 percent of the U.S. population. Any legislative procedure that would allow such a slim minority of the electorate to block the will of the vast majority has no place in a modern democracy.

Momentum for the filibuster's abolition may finally be growing – Obama's call to eliminate it took place when he was publicly eulogizing civil rights hero John Lewis, lending huge credence to the filibuster's opponents. Groups that promote statehood for D.C., such as 51 for 51, have laid out how the next Democratic Senate majority could do away with the filibuster with only 51 votes. Prominent national Democrats seem to be hearing these calls, and some who were initially hesitant to abolish the filibuster have warmed to the idea. Sens. Chuck Schumer, D-Ny, and Bernie Sanders, I-Vt, and Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden have all signaled newfound openness to changing the rule, provided the party wins the Senate and the White House. This is a step that must be taken.

At a time of national upheaval over racial injustice, a cascading climate crisis and historic malaise about the direction the country is headed, obstacles to basic legislative function are obstacles to progress. The filibuster – a tool of segregationists, obstructionists and cynics – is a chief offender. It is long past time for its elimination.

—Andrew Sugrue, a junior majoring in political communication, is the contributing opinions editor.

## Op-ed: GW should not rename buildings that honor American history

Our country is at a critical point in its history. People are expressing grievances that have long been neglected, including the long-fractured relationship between Black Americans and law enforcement. These problems demand to be addressed, and the best thing to do is to listen to the aggrieved and work toward meaningful solutions.

### GW Young America's Foundation Executive Board

With so many people feeling left out in our system and discarded, it is important to appeal to a common history and symbols that can unite us in the future to come. But there are some who would seek to dismantle rather than create. For example, students have called to rename buildings that honor historical figures like James Madison, James Monroe and Francis Scott Key. Not only is this counterproductive to how we should work to unite as a campus and a country, but it demonstrates a disconnect between the truths of America's foundation and our unifying national identity that they helped create. The attacks against Madison and Monroe are specifically problematic, as it shows our community's failure to understand that despite their flaws, they helped establish the foundational ideals of freedom, justice and equality.

Human beings are flawed. No one can honestly claim to be perfect, yet at the same time we are holding those who came before us to a standard of today that is completely irrational. Personal flaws should not and cannot discredit the contributions they made to our country.

The overt public shift in how America is viewed is new, but it has been bubbling under the surface for years. Our education system and popular culture have utterly failed in actively presenting the side of America we can

all be proud of. A Fox News poll shows that 37 percent of Americans are unwilling to call our Founding Fathers "heroes," with one-fourth of millennials even inclined to call them villains. Beliefs like these are unsustainable. America experienced failures in delivering its foundational promises, but at the same time it produced an unprecedented surplus of human advancement, prosperity and freedom. All students should admit the fact that America is an imperfect country. But they should also understand that these figures helped to produce the freest and most liberating model of government in history. America's founding ideals are the same that were used to free slaves, grant women the right to vote and advance equality in the 20th century.

The call to rename Madison and Monroe halls shows that we need to recalibrate. We should remember the people who died never fully experiencing the promises of America. At the same time, we should celebrate those who established our ideals and advanced our country forward.

The founders of our country, including Madison and Monroe, aimed to steer us away from the dark ages and toward enlightenment. Madison famously wrote both the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights, while Monroe declared the Americas closed to further European colonialism after many countries gained independence. Our founding principles became a beacon to advance toward – the Declaration of Independence, Constitution and Bill of Rights were models for universal human rights and freedom.

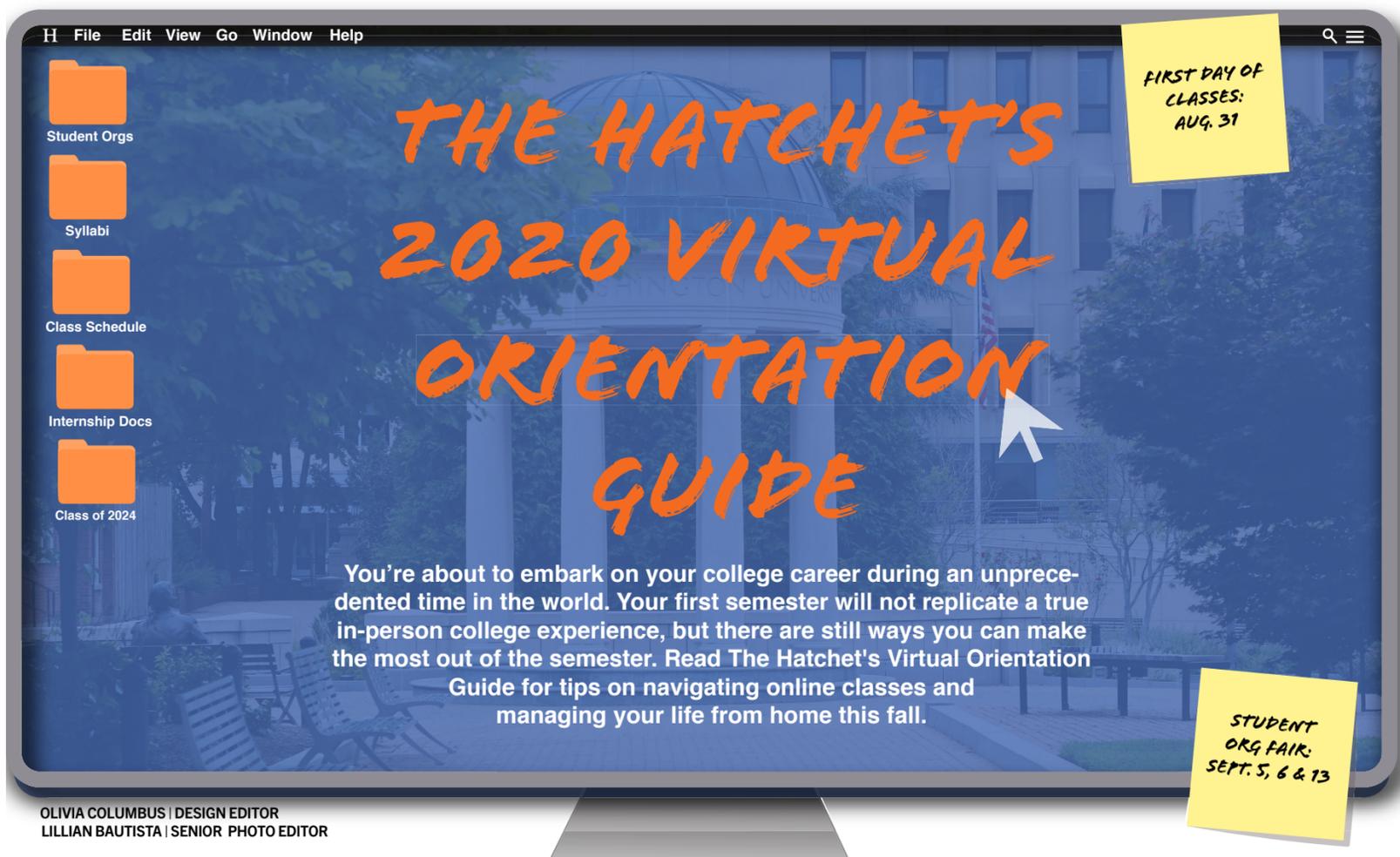
In American history, we must acknowledge that slavery was rampant, women had no say in how they were governed, leaders in power worked to disenfranchise people from their rights because of their race and people were wrongfully killed and driven off of their native land. But our founding ideals still remained. Men and women like

Frederick Douglass, Susan B. Anthony and Martin Luther King, Jr. regularly appealed to our principles in writing and speeches time and time again in order to correct our country's course, and these principles are still appealed to today. That journey is part of the story. That journey is why America is uniquely great. America's foundation and our initial demand that humanity deserves something greater than tyranny is so worth cherishing because it began a steady progression to a fuller freedom for all Americans, the likes of which the world had never seen before. The only reason our country has come so far is because of our groundbreaking foundation – our assertion that everyone is born with unalienable rights that were not given to us by a king or a government. These ideas were created by men like Madison and Monroe, who, despite their hypocrisies, set the foundation that led to a better future. Honoring them does not legitimize their faults.

We all decided to attend a school named The George Washington University, whose namesake – despite his flaws – was America's greatest founding father. He too is not immune to criticism on the sins of the past. But he devoted his life to enshrining the ideals that "all men are created equal." Hypocrites or not, these men recognized a truth that weathers the test of time. Instead of renaming buildings, we should have a discussion. We should talk about how Monroe and Madison were complicit in the original sins of our country while recognizing how they resolved to set us on course for freedom.

We cannot let ourselves be drowned in the blatant anti-Americanism we too often see on campus. Instead, we ought to cherish our past successes in order to secure the providence of tomorrow.

—GW Young America's Foundation is a conservative student group that advocates for its vision of traditional values and individual freedom.



OLIVIA COLUMBUS | DESIGN EDITOR  
LILLIAN BAUTISTA | SENIOR PHOTO EDITOR

## STAY ENGAGED WITH STUDENT ACTIVITIES FROM A DISTANCE

ZENIYA COOLEY  
STAFF WRITER

### EXPLORE GW ENGAGE

GW Engage – a website that lists registered student organizations and details student affairs announcements and events – is your go-to space for finding your niche.

Among other services, Engage allows students to discover and join new student groups, learn about upcoming events, document their organization memberships and pay certain groups' membership fees. You can also find an organization's leadership contact information if you want to set up a virtual coffee date and learn more about the group.

### ATTEND THE VIRTUAL STUDENT ORG FAIR

You can bounce around to virtual tables at the student organization fair, which will be held on Engage this year from 4 to 6 p.m. on Sept. 5 and 6 and from 3 to 5 p.m. on Sept. 13.

Each student organization will sign up for a time slot and sit in an online meeting or chatbox, according to the event description. You can message in the chatbox or tune into their meeting to learn more about each organization and what they're planning for the fall. Sororities and fraternities are following the same format at a similar event on Sept. 13.

### FOLLOW SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

Most student organizations are hyperactive on social media to keep in touch with their members and post a lot of forms and events on their accounts. A simple scroll, swipe or tap on your phone will grant you access to executive board applications and prestigious alumni networks.

If you're looking to generally keep up to date with student life, follow the Instagram page @studentlifeatgw, which posts information about how organizations can operate during the pandemic and lets you know about online events.

### ATTEND VIRTUAL MEETINGS

It may feel awkward at first, but you should tune in to virtual meetings to get to know members of the organizations you're interested in joining. You might like a group at face value, but you'll never know if you click with the organization until you meet them.

Before joining a potential Zoom session, it would be helpful for students to prepare questions to ask the person presiding over the meeting. These inquiries might address anything from remote responsibilities to pandemic-proof festivities. That way, members can better engage with each other.

## HOW TO SUCCEED IN ONLINE CLASSES

CHLOE KEARIN WILLEFORD  
REPORTER

Online classes may seem daunting, but that doesn't mean there is no way to be a star student.

Take some time to connect with professors, practice a self-care routine and stay in touch with classmates to alleviate some worries heading into an uncertain semester. Here are some ways you can breeze through your one and – hopefully – only online semester.

### GETTING WORK DONE AT HOME

When you're not meeting with professors and classmates twice a week, it's easy to forget about assignments.

To help you stay on track, purchase a paper planner, write lists on your phone or use an app like MyStudyLife to keep track of assignments and due dates. You could also use your phone calendar to remind yourself when it's homework time and

when it's not.

Pulling out your phone and browsing social media during class is now easier than ever before. And while this may seem tempting during a lecture, it's not going to help you learn the material. Instead, put your phone on silent mode and take notes in a paper notebook to reduce distractions. Use a method like time-management guru Francesco Cirillo's Pomodoro Technique – work for 25 minutes, then take a five-minute break – to stay focused.

### CONNECTING WITH YOUR PROFESSORS

Staying in touch with your professors can help you stay plugged into class and feel motivated to get assignments done on time. Plus, if the professor knows you, they are more likely to help you out with assignments and write letters of recommendation.

One good way to stay on your professor's radar

is by participating in class. Turn on your camera, and stay engaged with the material. If your class has an opportunity for discussion, try to share something at least once in each class. It sounds intuitive, but you'd be surprised by how many blank monitors you see during lectures.

Attending your professor's online office hours will also help them to remember you. Use the opportunity to ask questions about anything from class that you didn't understand or want to know more about. Office hours are also a great time to run ideas for an upcoming paper, exam or project by your professor before your work is finalized and graded.

Your school's academic adviser can also help you navigate your degree requirements and career options. If your program doesn't already require you to set up a one-on-one meeting with them, you might want to do so in case any academic issues arise during the semester.



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY LILLIAN BAUTISTA | SENIOR PHOTO EDITOR  
Follow these accounts to stay up to date on the latest news and newest opportunities available to students.

## SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS TO FOLLOW

VALERIA SOFIA FERNANDEZ LEON  
REPORTER

As we navigate classes from all parts of the globe, social media is a sure-fire way to connect with officials, students and faculty.

Here's a rundown of GW-affiliated social media accounts to follow for a news fix, sports, important announcements and school-specific resources.

### FOR GW NEWS ANNOUNCEMENTS:

**@GWTWEETS** is the University's official Twitter account, keeping students and faculty up to date with information about campus news with daily tweets. The account sometimes responds to student tweets, so you can "at" them if you have a question.

**@GWSSTUDENTS** is the Student Association's Instagram and Twitter handles. The SA posts about everything from funding, health and academic resources to advocacy projects they're involved with.

**@GWHATCHET** is the Twitter and Instagram handle for the University's independent student news-

paper, which you're reading right now. You can expect in-depth news coverage, breaking news and opinions pieces written by your peers. We post content from all of our sections on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook daily.

**OVERHEARD AT GW** isn't necessarily a news source, but you should follow the Facebook page to connect with peers and stay in touch with the on-campus conversation. The account is used as a place to air grievances, spread petitions and hear about resources provided to students.

### FOR D.C. NEWS:

**@EATER\_DC** is the best Twitter handle for foodies, dishing out tips on the best restaurants to visit around the District. It often highlights restaurant openings or closings and serves as a good source to figure out where to eat.

**DCIST** is a newspaper that covers D.C. news, curiosities and culture. If you follow DCist, you can expect news about the general D.C. area, including information about the D.C. Council, Kennedy Center events and openings or closings.

### FOR ALL THINGS SPORTS:

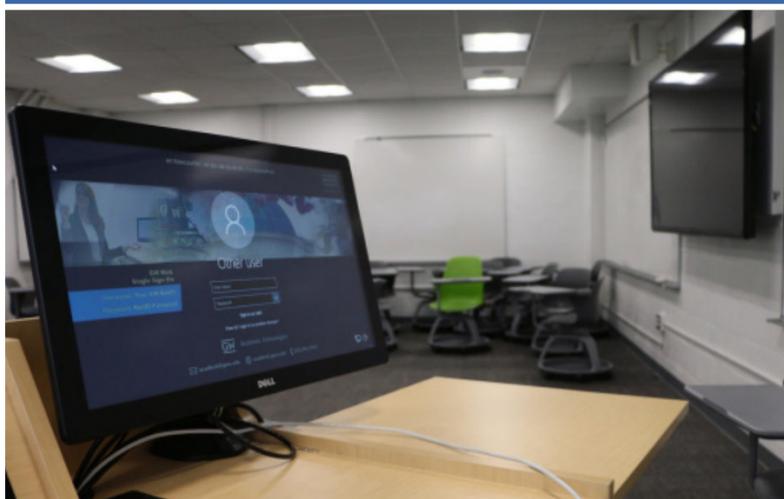
**@GWSPORTS** manages news and updates from all 27 sports teams. Through social media, it maintains contact with other teams by interacting with other collegiate athletic posts and promoting athletes.

### FOR HUMOR:

**@THE\_GW\_HATCHET** offers a satire of The Hatchet. Its graphics and color scheme are similar to that of The Hatchet, and the content pokes fun at the administration and policies with fake headlines like "University announces full divestment by 2025" and "Sunrise members cry in joy & sadness that they now need a new personality trait."

### 'GW MEMES FOR JOIN WITHOUT VIDEO TEENS'

'GW Memes for join without video teens' is a public Facebook group where students can share humorous content related to GW. You need to be in tune with University issues and happenings to understand the jokes, so scroll through the group to get a sense of what students post before considering your own meme.



HATCHET FILE PHOTO  
In large freshman classes, online office hours can help you stand out and establish a relationship with your professor.

# D.C. BUCKET LIST: WHAT TO LOOK FORWARD TO ONCE YOU'RE IN TOWN

**RHYMA ASIM**  
REPORTER

You might not get a full campus feel this fall, but there's a laundry list of places to look forward to visiting once you're living in the District.

On campus, get excited for 2 a.m. trips to a creperia or study breaks on the National Mall. On weekends, jot down these Georgetown shops and Dupont Circle restaurants to visit.

## CREPEAWAY

This seemingly ordinary crepe shop is a freshman hot spot after a late night on the town.

While the sweet and savory crepes are delectable, people usually venture to Crepeaway to dance on tables late at night and meet up with peers you lost at some point throughout the evening. Whether you're craving a crepe for lunch or need something sweet to end a night out with friends, Crepeaway has you covered.

2001 L St. NW, Sunday through Wednesday 11:30 to 12 a.m., 11:30 a.m. to 3 a.m. Friday and Saturday 11:30 a.m. to 4 a.m.

## THE NATIONAL MALL

One of the highlights of living on campus is your proximity to the monuments. The Mall is just a 20-minute walk from the heart of the Foggy Bottom campus.

Consider picking up a bike or electric scooter to roam around the monuments, or go for a walk or

run with friends. If you run down the Reflecting Pool and around the Tidal Basin across the street, you're guaranteed a solid four-mile loop. You could also head to the Mall with friends for an evening picnic, or wake up early to see the sunrise over Capitol Hill.

20-minute walk from campus.

## SMITHSONIAN MUSEUMS

Ranging from the National Museum of Natural History to the National Museum of African American History and Culture, you can get a whole other education outside your classes.

These free museums are one of the more touristy spots in D.C., but you can still find students roaming around the National Mall on weekends.

National Mall, take the Metro to Smithsonian station.

## FRESHMAN NIGHTLIFE: ULTRA AND DECADES

If there are any two clubs to choose from when you arrive as a freshman, it should be Ultra and Decades.

Ultra plays a mixed variety of music, like EDM, while Decades is a retro-themed club that plays music from the '80s, '90s, and the early 2000s. Students 18 years or older can get into Decades on Thursdays, while you can get into Ultrabar Thursday through Saturday as an 18-year-old.

Ultrabar, 911 F St. NW. Take the Metro to Metro Center station, and walk five minutes to the club.

Decades, 1219 Connecticut Ave. NW. Take the Metro to Farragut West station and walk eight minutes to the club.

## GW DELICATESSEN

As a freshman, you may have trouble figuring out where to spend your GWorld, but the GW Deli should be a go to spot for breakfast and lunch sandwiches.

The deli is conveniently located next to Funger Hall and behind Gelman Library, so you can grab a bite to eat in between studying and class. Some of its most popular eats include the bacon and egg sandwich (\$4.50), the chicken salad sandwich (\$6.95) and the BLT (\$5.95).

2133 G St. NW, Monday through Friday, 6:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Saturday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

## 18TH STREET IN ADAMS MORGAN

For a range of restaurants, cafés, bakeries and bars, add 18th Street in Adams Morgan to your bucket list.

This street is typically bustling with activity. You can head to Songbyrd, a music house and café, and enjoy live music with an appetizer. Right next door, lounge on a sofa with friends at the coffeehouse Tryst. Down the street, you can check out the bar Town Tavern, which dou-

bles as a comedy club on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

18th Street NW from Florida Avenue NW to Columbia Road NW, 10 minute Uber from campus or take the Metro from Foggy Bottom to Woodley Park and walk five minutes to 18th Street

## GEORGETOWN

The historic Georgetown area is home to clothing stores, restaurants, dessert shops and gyms.

M Street, at the heart of Georgetown, is lined with clothing stores like Urban Outfitters, Anthropologie and Lululemon. After doing some shopping, you can choose from Italian cuisine to

Spanish tapas at restaurants like il Canale, Filomena and Bodega. Afterward, head to the infamous Thomas Sweet, an ice cream shop frequented by former President Barack Obama.

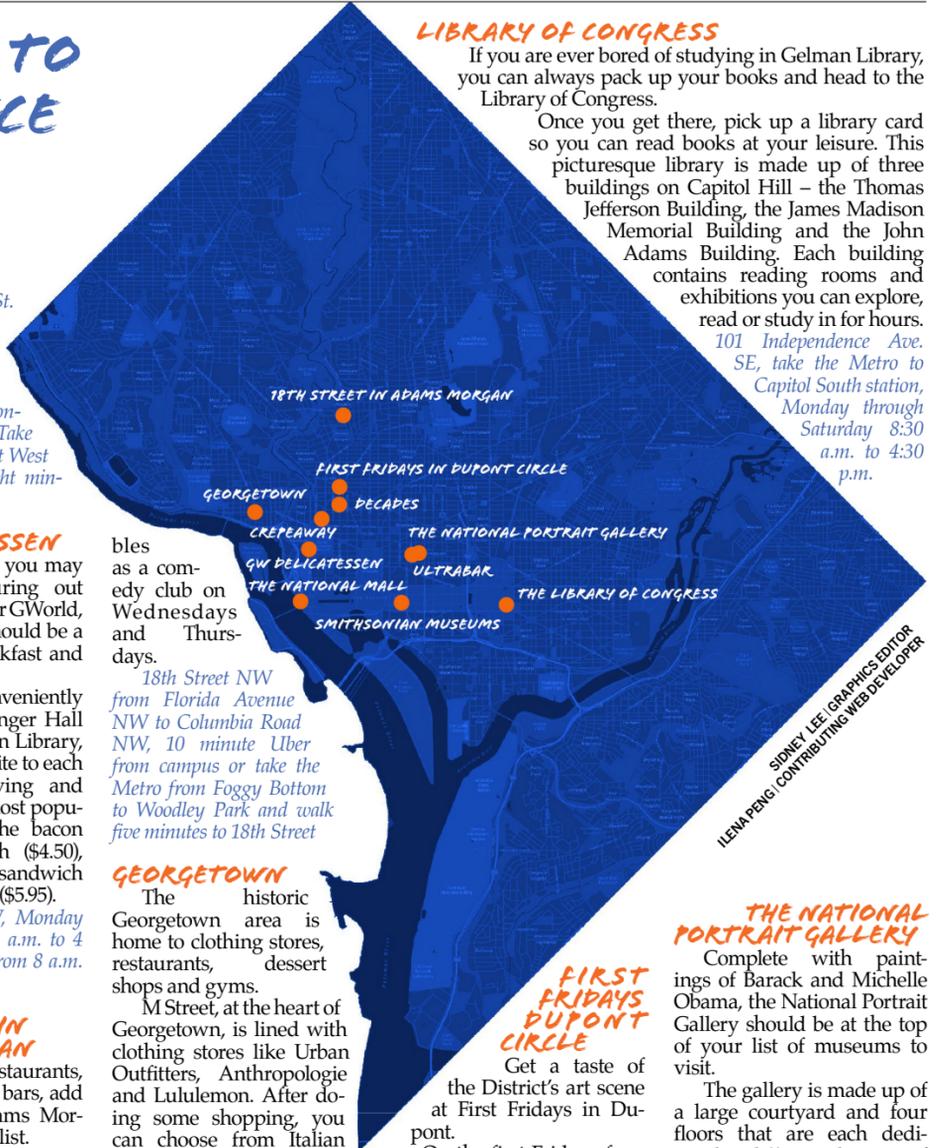
Seven-minute walk from campus.

## LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

If you are ever bored of studying in Gelman Library, you can always pack up your books and head to the Library of Congress.

Once you get there, pick up a library card so you can read books at your leisure. This picturesque library is made up of three buildings on Capitol Hill – the Thomas Jefferson Building, the James Madison Memorial Building and the John Adams Building. Each building contains reading rooms and exhibitions you can explore, read or study in for hours.

101 Independence Ave. SE, take the Metro to Capitol South station, Monday through Saturday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.



## THE NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY

Complete with paintings of Barack and Michelle Obama, the National Portrait Gallery should be at the top of your list of museums to visit.

The gallery is made up of a large courtyard and four floors that are each dedicated to different elements of American history. In addition to perusing the portraits, you can spend hours in its courtyard studying or grabbing a bite to eat.

8th Street NW & F Street NW, take the Metro to Metro Center station and walk three minutes to reach the gallery, free.

## FIRST FRIDAYS DUPONT CIRCLE

Get a taste of the District's art scene at First Fridays in Dupont.

On the first Friday of every month, dozens of art galleries around Dupont open up to the public and allow everyone – not just collectors – to talk to the artists and experience their work.

Take the Metro to Dupont Circle station or walk 12 minutes from campus.

# RESOURCES TO TAKE CARE OF YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

**DIEGO MENDOZA**  
CONTRIBUTING CULTURE EDITOR

## COUNSELING SESSIONS

The first office you should know about is Colonial Health Center Counseling and Psychological Services, or CAPS, GW's center for mental health treatment.

If you're having a particularly difficult day and need a same-day, one-time counseling appointment, you can call CAPS during business hours to schedule a teletherapy session with a certified counselor from CAPS. The center will assist you in finding adequate providers within your insurance plan.

CAPS also offers "diversity" phone consultation days so students can access clinicians who have "specific and relevant expertise" in counseling specific demographics, including LGBTQ or Black students.

## ANXIETY, DEPRESSION WORKSHOPS

Consider signing up for digital workshops to help you combat any feelings of anxiety and depression. The "Anxiety Toolbox" and "Getting Unstuck: Depression Workshop" include three sessions each and both aim to help you recognize signs of anxiety or depression and manage those feelings.

CAPS has not yet released the schedule for workshops but has indicated on its website that it will continue to offer these digital meetings for the fall semester.

## CAPS' SELF-HELP PORTAL

In light of the pandemic, CAPS has also created a COVID-19 specific self-help portal and toolkit for tips on how to have a successful semester.

The portal is centered around different demographics, so there are tips and specific resources listed for international or first-generation students. The toolkit includes several clips and links to well-being plans and exercises, like building a productive schedule or learning about mindfulness.

## REGULAR AND FREQUENT COUNSELING SERVICES

Outside of CAPS, you can visit your own peers for mental health services.

Consider registering with the Graduate School of Education and Human Development's Community Counseling Services Center or the Department of Psychological and Brain Science's Meltzer Center if you're searching for a regular counselor or psychotherapist. Both centers employ GW masters and doctoral candidates who are training to become licensed professionals.

The cost of services from both locations depends on factors like the extent of counseling and personal income, according to the centers' webpages.

## KEEPING YOUR BODY HEALTHY

Don't forget that keeping a healthy body is paramount for a healthy mind.

Although most Lifestyle, Sports and Physical Activity classes have been canceled, there are some courses that remain open for digital instruction, including meditation (LSPA 1014), yoga (LSPA 1029) and matt pilates (LSPA 1041).

## PEER REPORTS AND LIFE-THREATENING EMERGENCIES

Even if you are not personally suffering from a mental illness, you can help those that are by actively seeking out signs of mental health issues.

You can always file an anonymous CARE report for someone who you think is struggling with academic, social or home pressures.

Between Sunday and Wednesday from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m., you can also call, text or chat online with a member of the Student Association's GW Listens program, an anonymous hotline (202-902-8255) designed for you to call your peers about any frustrations or issues you're facing in life.

# GET UP TO SPEED ON STUDENT ACTIVISM

**CLARA DUHON**  
STAFF WRITER

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, you'll be happy to know that student advocacy is alive and well.

Students have taken advantage of social media and letter-writing campaigns to lobby for issues that have picked up steam over the past couple of academic years, including police reform and fossil fuel divestment. Here's a rundown of issues students have pushed officials to change that you can get involved with as a new student.

## RESISTING EMPLOYEE LAYOFFS

Students and faculty have pushed back on dozens of layoffs that have taken place this summer to offset GW's \$220 million budget gap. Administrators said layoffs were "unavoidable" earlier this summer, but they've declined to say how many layoffs have occurred.

The Student Association launched a letter-writing campaign earlier this month for alumni, faculty, staff and students to stop the layoffs, and more than 100 students signed a petition asking for "an end to unnecessary firings of staff."

## PUSHING FOR FOSSIL FUEL DIVESTMENT

Students have been calling on officials to cut ties with the fossil fuel industry for years. But that movement dramatically ramped up in February, when University President Thomas LeBlanc revealed GW's fossil fuel holdings for the first time, sparking a week's worth of protests.

Since then, the Board of Trustees' Environmental, Social and Governance Responsibility Task Force – which formed days after the protests – voted in June to completely divest from fossil fuel companies. Officials said the task force, which includes students, will continue meeting to review the University's social and governance responsibility.

## REFORMING THE GW POLICE DEPARTMENT

As the Black Lives Matter movement gained traction following the death of George Floyd and other Black citizens, the Black Student Union published a letter containing a number of demands for GWPD to protect Black lives at

the University, like decreasing its dependence on Metropolitan Police Department officers and involving Black University leaders in diversity trainings.

GWPD Chief James Tate said in June that he's not currently satisfied with officer de-escalation training, and he's built a training unit for officers to learn de-escalation techniques and hold implicit bias trainings in the department. Officers are also now required to carry body-worn cameras.

## NIXING CAMPUS BUILDING NAMES, COLONIALS MONIKER

Talk of renaming the Colonials moniker and several campus buildings is far from new. Last month, five student organizations picked up those efforts and launched the Reconsider the Names campaign, which urges GW to ditch the moniker and the names of six campus buildings named after historical GW figures who favored segregation and other racist policies.

Soon after the campaign took off, officials established two committees headed by professors to examine the Colonials and the Marvin Center building name. The committees will use a Board-approved framework to consider renaming buildings and the Colonials moniker, weighing the extent of the figure's connection to GW and the "depth and breadth" of racial offenses.

Students are also now able to directly petition to change the name of any GW building, memorial or institution to the University president's office. Any petition that reaches more than 500 signatures will be sent for LeBlanc to review.

## ALTERING THE GRADING SCALE

As the country struggles to maintain the COVID-19 pandemic, the SA is pushing for the continuation of the Pass/No Pass grading scale that GW adopted last spring. The SA conducted a survey last month in which 93 percent of the respondents said the policy should be implemented again this semester.

The SA also passed a resolution last month urging officials to extend the policy to the fall, citing academic and personal challenges students may face while navigating school from home. Officials have not announced if the Pass/No Pass grading option will be available this fall.

## GAMES OF THE PAST



**MEN'S SOCCER**  
vs. American  
August 27, 2018  
The Colonials defeated the Eagles in a 6-0 shut out.



**VOLLEYBALL**  
vs. Wofford  
August 25, 2017  
Volleyball fought back from a 2-0 deficit to top Wofford at the UT Invitational.

## NUMBER CRUNCH

**36.4**

The percentage of then-sophomore Oscar Haynes Brown's team-leading 11 total goals for the 2018 season he scored against American.

# Delays, cancellations and cuts: What the Colonials were up to this summer

**EMILY MAISE**  
SPORTS EDITOR

While college sports remained paused this summer, the Colonials still kept busy without competition.

Officials announced seven sports would be eliminated at the conclusion of this season, the Atlantic 10 postponed fall sports until the spring and teams used their platforms to advocate for social justice. Here are the highlights of what you missed this summer:

## GW cuts seven programs

Officials announced July 31 that seven programs would be axed at the conclusion of the 2020-21 season due to "growing financial concerns." Men's and women's squash, women's water polo, men's indoor track and field, men's rowing, men's tennis and sailing will be demoted from the varsity level.

Alumni said they were disappointed with the announcement and some have taken measures to push back against the decision. Men's and women's squash alumni wrote an open letter to officials calling for more transparency on the decision and launched a petition to keep squash at the varsity level.

Junior rower Patrick George launched a petition calling on the NCAA and

the Intercollegiate Rowing Association to merge to maintain varsity status and receive financial support. The petition has garnered more than 2,800 signatures as of Sunday.

## Sports postponed

The A-10 delayed fall sports until the spring semester due to the pandemic. The postponement affects 11 teams – volleyball, men's and women's soccer, men's and women's tennis, women's rowing, men's and women's swimming and diving, golf and men's and women's cross country.

The Mid-Atlantic Water Polo Conference, which houses men's water polo, canceled its fall season. Men's rowing and sailing, which are governed by the Intercollegiate Rowing Association and the Mid-Atlantic Intercollegiate Sailing Association, respectively, will also not compete in the fall, according to athletic department spokeswoman Lauren Shear.

Men's and women's swimming and diving, a winter sport, will not train this fall. Men's and women's squash, another winter sport governed by the College Squash Association, will postpone the majority of its matches to after Jan. 1.

## Teams speak out against racism

After the murder of George Floyd, athletic

department coaches and officials used social media as a means to express their outrage and support for the Black Lives Matter movement.

The men's basketball squad and head coach Jamion Christian have been active participants in the push for social justice, releasing a video and statement, respectively. The squad also urged followers in a tweet to attend a virtual March on Washington protest Aug. 27 and 28.

Volleyball created a weekly series dubbed Talking Tuesdays, which allows a player to use the team's social media platforms to highlight issues like police brutality or the appropriation of Black culture.

## Men's and women's basketball bolster Class of 2025 rosters

Between the two programs, men's and women's basketball added five Class of 2025 commits over the summer.

The men's squad picked up commitments from forward Tafara Gapare and guard Brayon Freeman. Gapare, who hails from New Zealand, is Christian's first international recruit and holds a four-star rating from 247Sports. Freeman is listed as a three-star recruit by 247Sports and a top-30 point guard in his graduating class.

The women's program nabbed commitments from



FILE PHOTO BY SABRINA GODIN | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR  
GW's men's and women's basketball teams have added five recruits from the Class of 2025 this summer.

guard Leila Patel and a pair of forwards in Michelle Ojo and Sophie Haydon. Patel averaged 13.1 points, 3.1 rebounds, 1.9 assists and 1.3 steals per game last season. Ojo battled with a foot injury last year but holds a three-star overall ranking and a top-15 position ranking from ESPN. Haydon averaged 11.4 points, 9.1 rebounds, 1.5 assists and 1.9 steals per game as a junior.

## Changing coaching staffs

Men's basketball will be without two familiar faces on the coaching staff this upcoming season. Director

of Scouting and Analytics AJ Register and Director of Basketball Operations and Recruiting Coordinator Austin Kelley are no longer with the program, athletic department spokesperson Brian Sereno confirmed.

Register announced in a tweet that he accepted an assistant coaching position at Maryland Eastern Shore. Register did not respond to a request for comment, and Kelley could not be reached for comment.

Head lacrosse coach Jennifer Uehla is currently rebuilding her coaching staff after her sole assistant coach, Haley Hicklen,

departed for Pittsburgh. Hicklen served as the team's defensive coordinator and goalie coach.

Women's tennis added Dzina Milovanovic as an assistant coach Aug. 13. She will replace graduate assistant Gussie O'Sullivan, who departed at the conclusion of the 2019-20 season. Milovanovic played at Pepperdine, where she helped her team to three appearances at the NCAA Team Championship Quarterfinal. She ranked as high as No. 44 in the Oracle/ITA singles rankings and No. 39 in the doubles rankings while playing collegiately.

# Top moments in GW sports: Women's basketball dances to Elite Eight

**EMILY MAISE**  
SPORTS EDITOR

In lieu of fall sports, we're dusting off the history books and taking a look back on 10 of the best GW sports moments, ever. Here's to hoping some old-fashioned nostalgia can keep us going until the restart.

No. 1: Women's basketball charges into 1997 Elite Eight

The 1996-97 women's basketball team not only cemented itself in GW history with the deep tournament run but continues to be one of the top-performing teams in the Atlantic 10's 45-year history.

Helmed by legendary head coach Joe McKeown and led by a trio of top-scoring seniors, the season

culminated in the deepest run in the NCAA tournament by any GW basketball team. The Colonials were the first of the current A-10 teams to reach the Elite Eight and, along with the 2014-15 Dayton Flyers, GW was one of two teams to achieve the feat.

Despite the historic run, the season started off rocky for the Colonials. Opening with a 70-44 loss against Old Dominion, the team quickly slid to a 1-3 start. While they finished out nonconference play on a 4-1 run, the squad shined against A-10 competition.

The Colonials posted a perfect 16-0 conference record with a slew of dominating wins. They tallied nine 30-plus point

victories against conference competition. To celebrate the unprecedented run, the team buzzed "16-0" into McKeown's hair.

With a regular-season crown and momentum on its side, GW decimated Temple in its first game of the A-10 Tournament by more than 40 points. The Colonials steamrolled Massachusetts in the second game by 41 points. But the squad met its match in the championship game, dropping a tightly-contested 59-56 matchup with Saint Joseph's.

The Hawks, which were the only other A-10 team to receive an NCAA bid that season, were knocked out in the second round by Alabama.

Selection Sunday

rewarded the Colonials' efforts, and the team entered the NCAA tournament as a No. 5 seed. The squad went right to work, earning back-to-back 10-plus point wins over No. 12 Northwestern and No. 4 Tulane. The upset over the Green Wave propelled the team to the Sweet 16.

The Sweet 16 was as far as GW was expected to go as the Colonials were set to face the top-seeded TarHeels in the next round. Tajama Abraham Ngongba, who graduated in 1997, told The Hatchet in an April interview that the squad knew they were the underdog in the matchup, but McKeown instilled confidence in the team to pull out the win.

"It wasn't like we felt we

were the underdog going in," Ngongba said. "Coach McKeown did a great job. He's such a good player's coach. He did a great job of getting us to believe that we were equal anytime we stepped on the floor. That's what we believed."

North Carolina held a one-point lead with five minutes left, but the Colonials went on a 10-0 tear to grab the win and punch their ticket to the Elite Eight.

The historic run ended in Columbia, South Carolina, with a 62-52 loss to Notre Dame. The Fighting Irish were 30-6 heading into the matchup and suffered just one loss in their 18-game Big East schedule en route to its first Final Four appearance in program history.

In 1998, Coach McKeown told The Hatchet that losing out on the final round was a game that haunted him even a year later.

"We were so close to getting into the 'Final Four' that they could taste it," McKeown said. "Losing to Notre Dame was our hardest loss – I still have nightmares about that."

The squad spent five weeks within the Associated Press's top-25 teams in the country. The Colonials hopped on the list Feb. 10 at No. 24 and worked up to No. 18 March 3 before falling back to No. 22 March 10.

## GWHATCHET.COM

For more of the team's historic NCAA run.

# Former student-athletes grapple with program cuts, reconsider donations

**WILL MARGERUM**  
STAFF WRITER

Before he became the first African American man to win the elite Diamond Sculls race at the Henley Royal Regatta and to row for Team USA at the 2004 Athens Olympics, Aquil Abdullah spent four years crewing in the Potomac for GW.

The men's rowing program granted Abdullah, who graduated in 1996, a scholarship to attend the University, where he said he learned the discipline and dedication it took to qualify for Athens eight years after graduating.

But when Abdullah heard GW's decision late last month to eliminate men's rowing and six other programs, he and other alumni called the announcement "heartbreaking," adding that the cuts will take away opportunities for athletes to grow their programs down the line.

"I felt the sense of loss, and not only for myself, but for the current athletes that are there," Abdullah said. "It's always tough to make these transitions because athletes make a decision to come there for their sport."

The University will cut men's rowing – along with sailing, men's and women's squash, men's indoor track and field, men's tennis and women's water polo – at the conclusion of the 2020-21 season. Former athletes said they are processing the "disappointing" news, reevaluating their involvement with GW and

extending support to current student-athletes.

Athletic department spokesman Brian Sereno declined to facilitate interviews with current student-athletes and head coaches involved in affected programs, saying the department is going to focus on "what's ahead rather than the decision made that wasn't theirs to make."

## Alumni react to cuts

Alumni said they were "shocked," "disappointed" and "frustrated" with the University's decision to eliminate seven programs. They said they were made aware of the cuts shortly before GW's announcement to the University community through an email.

Abdullah said he understands the athletic department's financial setbacks were exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, but he felt like GW was being disloyal to its student-athletes by taking away a part of his and current athletes' college experience.

"I don't know if 'funny' is the right word, but I received a giving envelope in the mail the other day that said, 'Stay loyal, thank you for being loyal to GW' and all of this stuff," Abdullah said. "I felt as though in some ways the University wasn't being loyal to me."

Men's and women's squash alumni penned a letter to officials calling for greater transparency in the decision-making process and started a petition to save the programs. Athletic department officials declined to comment on the

letter and petition.

Catherine Ehrlich, a 2014 graduate, said she will no longer "have a relationship" with GW until the squash program is reinstated, adding that squash alumni donated to the school and attended games to show support.

Jose Calderon, a 2012 graduate, added that the teams' eliminations were "a slap in the face" to current student-athletes and alumni who gave their all for the program.

Alana Ponce, a 2020 graduate and the first women's water polo player to be named an All-American, said she felt "betrayed" by the athletic department. Ponce said while the team struggled to keep numbers on the roster and hadn't had a winning record in 16 years, the squad played hard and with heart.

"It kind of seemed like GW didn't really want to give us another chance to prove ourselves anymore," Ponce said. "They kind of just gave up on us, and that was pretty disappointing. Them not telling us was just a complete different story."

## Alumni rally for affected student-athletes

Alumni are stepping up to comfort athletes and begin the planning process for a transition to the club level.

Maggie Ball, a 2018 graduate, said the women's water polo alumni network is working to plan the team's best steps moving forward, brainstorming ways to provide financial and emotional support to athletes. "How do we support the



FILE PHOTO BY GRAEME SLOAN  
Several former student-athletes said they would reconsider recommending or making donations to the University in the aftermath of the decision.

girls, how do we support the program, either to get this decision reversed or to support them as they move to club status whether that be financially, emotionally, all of the above?" Ball said.

## Alumni reconsider relationship with GW

At least 13 former student-athletes said they will reconsider recommending or making donations to the University and the athletic department.

"They had very poor communication with parents and athletes, so just that in itself is going to deter people from wanting to support the athletic facilities and whatever else," Ponce said.

"As alumni groups, if you don't see your sports there at that school anymore, then why would you donate, right?"

Adriana Calderon, a 2014 graduate and women's squash alumna, said she was caught off guard by GW's decision to cut the team and is now second guessing her involvement with the athletic department, adding that she has recommended GW sports to prospective athletes.

"It is very disappointing as squash was one of the main reasons I chose GW, and though I love the University, supporting and recommending the athletic department to future students will be hard, as I don't share

the decisions recently taken," Calderon said.

Noah Duell, a 2018 graduate, said men's indoor track and field, which is approaching its sixth year at GW, didn't have the chance to get off the ground before it was defunded. He added that the program was second to last in the A-10 in terms of scholarships and relied on walk-ons to fill the roster, and the elimination felt like GW was "kicking them while they're down."

Despite the loss of an indoor track and field team, student-athletes on the team can still compete during the cross country and outdoor track and field seasons at the varsity level.