



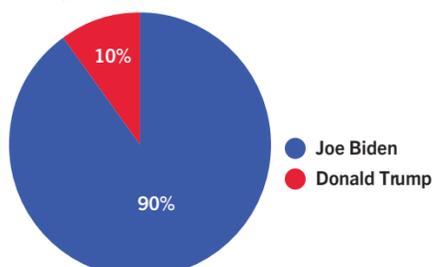
COURTESY OF TABREZ SYED | UNSPLASH

# ELECTION GUIDE

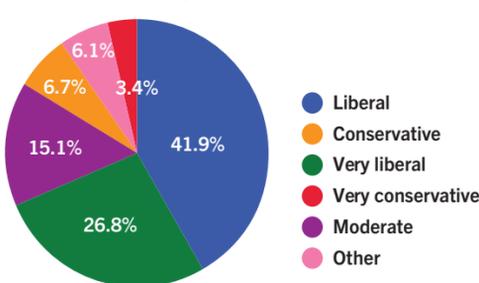
## OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF STUDENTS PREFER BIDEN OVER TRUMP AS PRESIDENT: HATCHET POLL

**BENJAMIN KANE**  
REPORTER

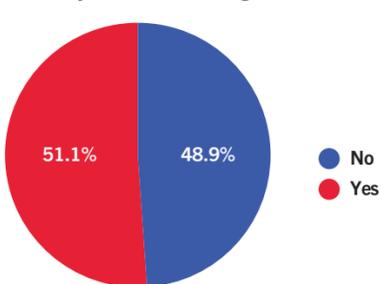
Which presidential candidate would you prefer in office?



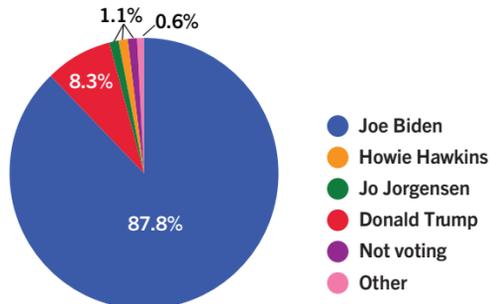
Do you identify as:



Is this your first time voting?



Who do you plan to vote for on Election Day?



SIDNEY LEE | GRAPHICS EDITOR

About 90 percent of students prefer Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden in office over President Donald Trump, according to a Hatchet survey of more than 180 students conducted last month.

More than 87 percent of students said they intend to cast their vote for Biden, while just more than 8 percent said they hope to reelect Trump, according to the poll. Students said the COVID-19 pandemic, racial justice movements and the worsening effects of climate change have motivated them to vote in hopes of removing Trump from office.

The Hatchet distributed the poll through multiple social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook and circulated it across several campus newsletters from groups like GW College Democrats, GW College Republicans, Sunrise GW and the Nashman Center for Civic Engagement and Public Service. Responses were accepted from Oct. 6 to Oct. 31.

The methodology of the poll does not meet the criteria for random sampling, and it is therefore impossible to determine a margin of error.

The survey included a question in which students could select which national issues they find most important in the election, including the COVID-19 pandemic, the economy, social justice, climate change, foreign policy and other issues they could add in an open response box.

Roughly 75 percent of respondents identified the pandemic and climate change as critical issues that influenced their decision-making for their preferred candidate. More than 70 percent of students stated they were passionate about social

justice, while the economy and foreign policy respectively drew about 46 and 43 percent of students' votes.

Students noted LGBTQ and women's rights and health care as other crucial national issues during the election cycle.

Four students said they plan to vote for either Libertarian Party nominee Jo Jorgensen or Green Party nominee Howie Hawkins, and two students said they don't intend to vote in the election.

Students were invited in the poll to leave their contact information if they were interested in speaking further about what was motivating them this election cycle.

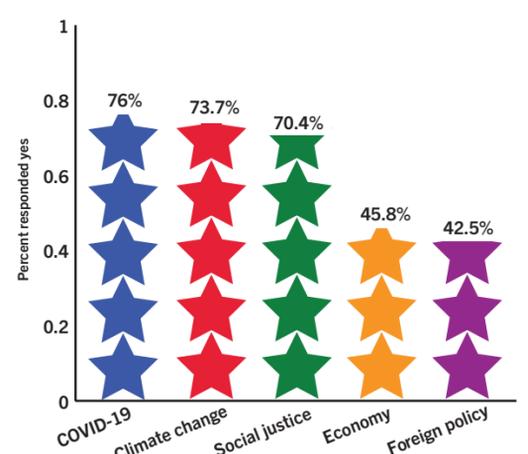
Sophomore Chloe Stemler – a political science major from Arcata, California – said she is voting for Biden because she believes he will be more effective than Trump in halting the climate crisis, an issue deeply personal to her due to the fires on the West Coast.

"The treatment of that situation by President Trump has been so disrespectful and demoralizing," Stemler said. "I think Joe Biden is much better suited to handle this and listen to the science."

Despite the direct impact of the wildfires on her personal life, Stemler said social justice has become the most crucial national issue for her. As racial justice protests have drawn tear gas from law enforcement and opposition from Trump, she said students need to recognize the dangers Trump's potential second term could have on American lives.

"There are plenty, millions of Americans, who are in danger if he does win again," Stemler said. "That's an important thing for people to realize, especially in

Which issues are most important to you in this election?



SIDNEY LEE | GRAPHICS EDITOR

the GW community, as they decide to vote."

South Carolina native and junior Catherine Morris, who studies political communication and noted the pandemic as the most serious issue in the election, said Trump's response to COVID-19 has been "less than adequate," while Biden would have been able to more properly handle the early stages of the pandemic.

"I think we really need a president who can lead by example during times like these and listen to the scientists," Morris said. "To not listen to the people hand-selected to give you that guidance is really not doing your job."

Morris said recent months have illuminated Trump's inability to handle issues like the pandemic, climate change and systemic racism, which she said he's handled with "Nixon-era law and order."

Majority support for the Democratic nominee is not a new occurrence on GW's

campus, but the extent of Biden's lead may be. In 2012, then-President Barack Obama rallied the support of 68 percent of students compared to 20 percent for the Republican nominee – former Massachusetts Gov. and current Utah Sen. Mitt Romney. In 2008, Obama led then-Senator John McCain 74 percent to 20 percent, according to a Hatchet poll.

Nearly 69 percent of respondents identified as either "liberal" or "very liberal," 15 percent identified as "moderate," 10 percent said they're either "conservative" or "very conservative" and 6 percent selected "other" for their political ideology.

Some students discounted Biden's overwhelming lead in the survey as representative of the total student population, but most said it was likely not far off from the reality of the student body. Morris said GW has a largely liberal student body.

See BIDEN Page 4

## 'OVERWHELMED': STUDENTS STRUGGLE TO FOCUS ON CLASSES AS NOV. 3 NEARS

**TARA SUTER**  
REPORTER

**TIFFANY GARCIA**  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

When senior Alejandro Arango realized his absentee ballot would not arrive in the mail on time, he bought the next plane ticket to McAllen, Texas, to vote in person on Nov. 3.

Arango, the vice president of membership for GW College Democrats and founder of GW for Bernie, said the off-chance that his absentee ballot would not count has hung over his head, driving him home and distracting him from his classes. He said he needed to ensure he had a voice in one of the most "dramatic" elections in recent years.

"If me and millions of other college students like me stand on the sidelines, not only are we implicitly supporting the president and implicitly supporting these conservative, antiquated policies, but we're also not pushing for the policies that we actually care about, like the Green New Deal or campaigns finance reform," Arango said.

Arango is one of more than 10 students who said they've felt "incredibly" anxious leading up to Nov. 3, causing them to frequently refresh social media for election updates and lack motivation in classes. Students said they hope professors are accommodating with assignments this week as they pour most of their

time into checking election forecasts.

Junior Jack King, the program director for Persist GW – formerly GW for Warren – said he has a short essay due Tuesday for one of his favorite classes, but he has struggled to make progress on it as he turns his attention to the election.

King said he has phone banked every Sunday since July on behalf of progressive U.S. Senate candidates like Jaime Harrison of South Carolina. He said he "can't look away" from his campaigning responsibilities and the national news he regularly keeps on TV because he wants to stay up to date.

See STUDENTS Page 4

## ANTICIPATING ELECTION DAY UNREST, SOME FOGGY BOTTOM RESTAURANTS BOARD UP

**CHLOE KEARIN WILLEFORD**  
STAFF WRITER

Despite city guidance, some restaurants surrounding the White House are preparing for potential unrest surrounding Election Day.

Multiple protests are planned for the week of Nov. 3, and the Metropolitan Police Department imposed emergency no-parking orders on streets in much of downtown D.C. from midnight on Tuesday to 11:59 p.m. on Wednesday, citing anticipated demonstrations. City officials do not recommend boarding up shops, but some Foggy Bottom restaurant owners said they are barricading themselves in case protests

turn violent.

"We're right here in Black Lives Matter Plaza area, and there's been a lot of protesting of all kinds," BLT Steak general manager Jesse Hiney said. "The majority of these protests have been very, very peaceful, and the most harm that they're causing is needing to come in and use the restroom, [but] this is going to be, I think, a larger portion of the population that's going to be involved if the wrong thing happens on Election Day."

MPD purchased more than \$100,000 worth of tear gas canisters and grenades, used over the summer to disperse BLM protesters, in preparation for protests, WUSA9 reported last week. MPD Chief Pe-

ter Newsham said last month that tear gas was purchased to prepare for post-election protests and potential riots.

"In law enforcement circles, it is widely believed there will be civil unrest after the November election regardless of who wins," Newsham said.

Hiney said BLT Steak, located a block east of Lafayette Square at 1625 I St. NW, will close on Election Day to allow staff to vote and shield employees from potential violence. Despite opening after Nov. 3, the restaurant's windows will be barricaded from Monday to Nov. 9 or longer, depending on the tone of the protests, he said.

See BUSINESSES Page 8

# D.C. COUNCIL, ANC RACES

## VACANCIES, NEW FACES TO MARK NEW ERA FOR ANC

**ANASTASIA CONLEY**  
REPORTER

**JARROD WARDWELL**  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Locals will see a slew of fresh faces on the Foggy Bottom and West End Advisory Neighborhood Commission as just three commissioners run for reelection and more than half of the body's eight seats remain up for grabs.

Vacancies on the commission have cropped up in recent months – two commissioners have resigned since July and three said they will not run for reelection. This leaves three commissioners hoping to return – one runs uncontested, another faces a new neighborhood challenger and the third launched a write-in campaign after the ballot's deadline passed.

Commissioner Trupti Patel, who is running for reelection against longtime Foggy Bottom resident John George, said constituents and fellow ANC members asked her to run a second time because they were happy with her service on the commission. She said she hopes to return to the ANC to maintain "stability" on the commission and in her district as a ma-

majority of commissioners step down.

"So many of the commissioners for personal, professional and private reasons have decided to not continue on, I thought it was even more important that I run for another term," Patel said. "I felt that the constituents of 2A03 deserved a little bit of stability in a time where there's a lot of instability."

Three out of the eight seats on the ANC still don't have a candidate, meaning only five seats are expected to be filled during the election, according to the ANC candidate list. At least five of the eight commissioners must be present to hold a quorum, the minimum number of members needed to hold a vote on resolutions, the commission's bylaws state.

If those seats remain vacant next term, the ANC will still move forward with each vacant district lacking a representative on the commission, Patel said. She said when there's a vacancy on the ANC, commissioners must jointly decide how to handle certain issues but may not be as effective as the sole commissioner of a district.

Patel said she thinks the length of ANC meetings,

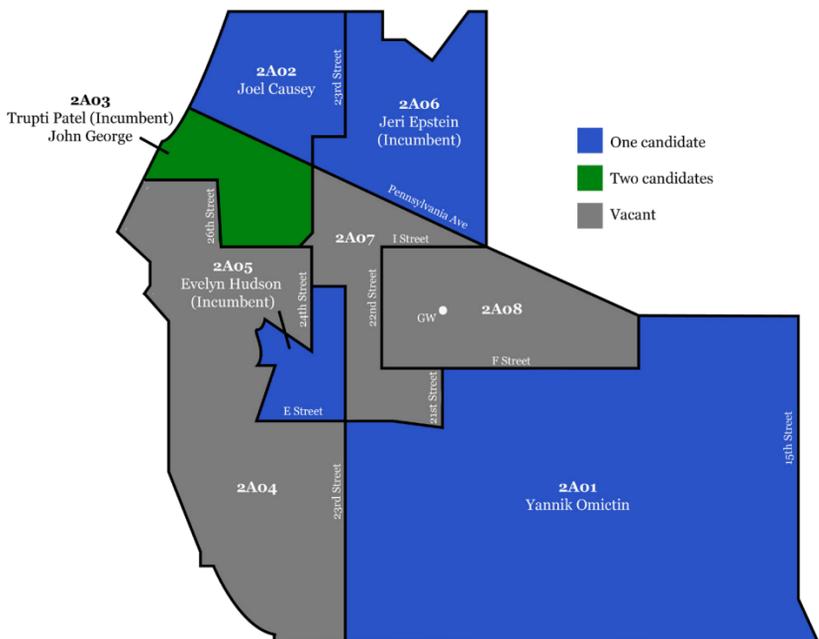
which can often run for more than three hours, can deter potential candidates from wanting to serve. She said the long meeting can "become exhausting," and if officials were to cut hours, more candidates may be compelled to launch campaigns.

As commissioners hope to find a new class of candidates to fill this fall's vacancies, Patel said the ANC could turn in a "new direction" in the following term. She said a majority of new commissioners will bring with them "fresh new ideas" for the ANC.

"This is an opportunity for the ANC to grow and expand in different ways, in different directions that it hadn't had the opportunity that it's had in quite a few years," Patel said. "It shouldn't make people leery. It should excite people, actually."

One of the seats set for vacancy next term is 2A08, which represents most residence halls on campus. ANC Chair and senior James Harnett has held that seat for the past two years, but he plans to step down before graduating at the end of the fall semester because his district only includes housing for on-

2020 Candidates for Foggy Bottom and West End Advisory Neighborhood Commission



ILENA PENG | CONTRIBUTING WEB DEVELOPER

campus students.

Harnett said student representatives need to step down after graduating and leaving the area, limiting the amount of time they can serve. He said he has com-

municated with some students planning to launch write-in campaigns to represent on-campus students, but no one has publicly launched a bid for the seat.

"I think it's a lost opportunity in that we don't really have the opportunity to allow a young person, a student, to really develop in this role because you can only accomplish so much in a limited time," he said.

## CANDIDATES LOOK TO BUILD TRUST AFTER EVANS' TERM

**LIZZIE MINTZ**  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

After Ward 2 voters spent almost two years watching the fallout of investigations into former D.C. Council member Jack Evans, a dramatic resignation and a controversial short-term incumbent have set the stage for the general election.

Evans represented Ward 2, which includes Foggy Bottom, since 1991 as the longest-serving Council member in the District's history, but his tenure started to crumble when it was reported in June 2018 that officials were investigating whether he violated the Council's code of conduct. Evans eventually became the subject of four ethics investigations, which found he attempted to use his government position to garner business

deals.

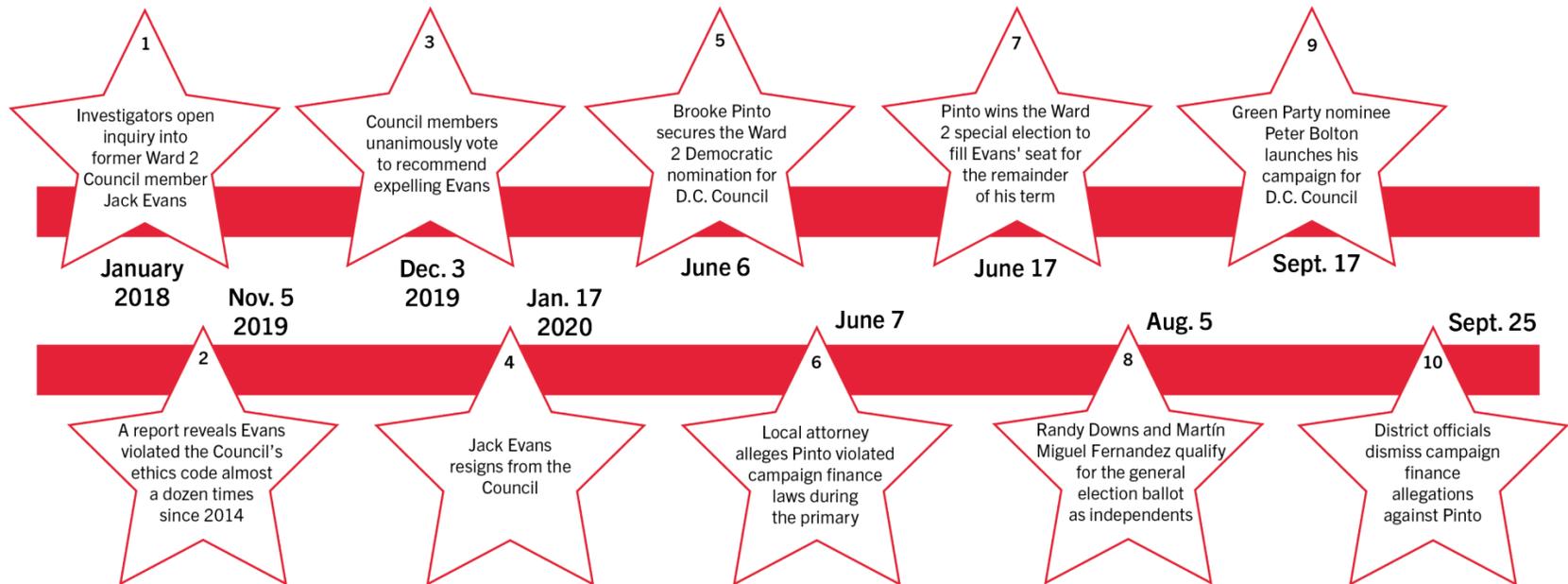
He resigned in January following a unanimous call from the body for his expulsion.

Evans' resignation left Ward 2 voters without formal representation for months, and now three candidates – all of whom entered the race after the primary election – are challenging short-term incumbent Brooke Pinto following allegations that she violated campaign finance laws.

Before casting your vote in the Nov. 3 election, take a look back at the past few years of Ward 2 politics:

### EMBATTLED SEAT

*The recent history of the Ward 2 D.C. Council seat*



SIDNEY LEE | GRAPHICS EDITOR

## TWO SENIORS SPEARHEAD CAMPAIGNS FOR LOCAL OFFICE

**LIZZIE MINTZ**  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

**YUTONG JIANG**  
REPORTER

As most students cast their ballots Tuesday, two seniors will stand outside D.C. polls making their pitch for local government.

Seniors James Harnett and Yannik Omictin launched bids to represent Ward 2 on the D.C. State Board of Education and the Foggy Bottom and West End Advisory Neighborhood Commission, respectively. The candidates said

they want to fight for access to equitable resources, like transportation, for their hopeful constituencies of D.C. Public Schools and the Foggy Bottom neighborhood.

Here's what you should know about the two candidates and their campaigns:

**Candidate: James Harnett**  
**Year: Senior**  
**Running for: D.C. State Board of Education**



FILE PHOTO BY OLIVIA ANDERSON

Harnett, who's served on the Foggy Bottom and West End ANC since his sophomore year, became the youngest person to lead an ANC in D.C. history when he was selected chair in July. He said he hopes the policy plans he pushed for on the ANC, like new crosswalks and bike lanes, will translate to similar initiatives on the state board.

"I've been pouring all my time into this, and so have many of the members of our team," Harnett said.

Harnett faces three opponents in the race, including Sarah Mehrotra, a data and policy analyst; Allister Chang, who works at a nonprofit incubator; and Christopher Etesse, who manages a cybersecurity company.

He said if elected, he hopes to improve technology and academic and financial resource distribution. Harnett said he'll be a "champion" for students in DCPS and ensure students' voices are heard by granting the state board's student representative voting power.

"It's time that we take that change to the other levels of government that for far too often and for far too long

haven't listened to student voices," he said.

He said many of the people helping with his campaign don't have full-time jobs, allowing the team to invest "every waking moment" into talking with voters. Harnett said the "biggest challenge" for his team – which includes parents, teachers, community leaders and students from DCPS and D.C. universities – is not being able to canvass door to door due to COVID-19 concerns, but Zoom events have offered an alternative.

"We've found other ways to connect directly with voters to listen to the priorities, but importantly, to share our vision and my values for what's important and to allow voters to weigh that as they consider who they want to elect in November," he said.

**Candidate: Yannik Omictin**  
**Year: Senior**  
**Running for: Foggy Bottom and West End ANC**



COURTESY OF TRINITY BELL

Senior Yannik Omictin – the Student Association's vice president for government relations who jump-started his write-in campaign for the ANC in September and is running unopposed – said campaigning as a student is "relatively easier to handle" during the pandemic because he has connected with voters via social media rather than through typical campaign events that can take more time.

But Omictin said campaigning online has challenged him with less in-person contact with voters, which he said feels less "genuine."

"I would really love to be able to chat with folks on the street and do fora in Thurston or something and really meet folks who might be writing my name in, and so the most challenging thing is I think that just the lack of face-to-face voter contact and outreach – that feels more genuine," he said.

Omictin said he's hung posters, handed out campaign postcards, posted on social media and connected with community members around Foggy Bottom to promote his campaign, but he's had to spearhead these efforts himself due to the limitations of the pandemic.

Omictin said since deciding to run for the ANC, he has researched policy positions he supports, like reducing the costs of public transportation and increasing funds for public housing.

As more than half of the Foggy Bottom ANC's districts represent student residence halls, Omictin said more students should run for the ANC and broaden representation with new perspectives in the neighborhood. Omictin said he was compelled to run for the commission after noticing the ANC's several vacancies, as five commissioners have either already resigned or intend to step down at the end of the term.

"We really do benefit tremendously from that representation," he said. "But the ANC also benefits tremendously from that representation because we bring new energy and new ideas."

# 2020 NATIONAL ELECTION

## REPUBLICAN STUDENTS SPLIT ON SUPPORT FOR TRUMP, DEBATING GOP'S DIRECTION

ABIGAIL OSBORNE  
REPORTER

Republican students voting this November say they're divided on support for President Donald Trump, with some defectors opting for a different choice on Election Day.

As Trump seeks reelection as the GOP nominee, a coalition of national organizations have assembled a wide base of Republicans who oppose Trump as part of the "Never Trump" movement born in 2016. Students said a similar split exists at GW, and some are deciding whether to endorse or oppose Trump based on issues like populism, foreign policy and immigration.

Junior Patrick Burland, the director of public relations for GW College Republicans, said despite the organization's endorsement of Trump and all Republican candidates "up and down the ballot," multiple members intend to vote for Biden in the election.

"As an organization, we're also a big tent party on campus," Burland said. "We have members who are voting for Joe Biden, President Trump, other candidates, and we welcome people of all views and backgrounds no matter their stance on the

presidential contest."

College Republicans held a mock platform committee similar to the Republican National Convention in September, during which Burland said members voted on policies they want the party to support. He said members voted on some issues that weren't mentioned in the 2016 or 2020 Republican platforms, like taking action against climate change.

Burland said he believes difference in opinion among members is "healthy for a political party," especially on matters of ideology. Despite members' personal views, he said the organization serves as "an arm of the GOP" that will continue to support the Republican Party.

But not all Republican organizations want fully to align with their party.

Senior John Olds, a former chair of College Republicans, said he currently serves as the political chair of Gen Z GOP – a national organization that has distanced itself from the election to create a new vision for the Republican Party. He said he views the future of the GOP as "up for grabs" no matter the outcome of the election, as the party's

top national issues and voter base eventually fall in the hands of younger Republicans.

Olds said Gen Z GOP isn't as focused on what happens with the election but more on what comes next, pointing to the group's hopes to diversify the party in terms of race, religion and sexual orientation. He said even if Trump is reelected, he wants Republicans to focus on reconsidering its values and diversity to create "an alternative for the left."

"We are becoming the party of old White people, and we can't be that," Olds said. "We need to look inward to see why we are not appealing to people of color, people who care about the environment, people who might not have gotten a fair shake economically."

Zev Siegfried, a self-identified Libertarian who is a member of College Republicans and Young Americans for Liberty, said he plans to vote for Trump and identified the split among Republicans as similar to one within the Democratic Party. He said he thinks debate among party members serves the country well when citizens can "engage and battle" on their views.

"Democrats have the



FILE PHOTO BY LILLIAN BAUTISTA | SENIOR PHOTO EDITOR  
Former College Republicans Chair John Olds helps lead a new organization called Gen Z GOP, which has distanced itself from President Donald Trump's Republican base.

same issue, say with the Bernie wing of the party and the Biden wing of the party," Siegfried said. "With any group of people this large you're bound to have divides based on a given candidate or ideological preferences."

Siegfried said his best friends, whom he met through College Republicans, are "pretty evenly split between the pro- and anti-Trump camps" through

open political conversations they've had.

Mark Schlager, who identifies as a "more moderate" Republican who's part of College Republicans and plans to vote for Biden, said he feels this division personally, as he's struggled with his political identity during the Trump presidency.

Schlager said the election has more to do with gaining "our sense of decency back," emphasizing bipartisanship

for the good of the country after the election.

"I hope we realize that it's country over party always, and if Trump loses, we get the old party of the McCains and the Abraham Lincolns back, where politics is all about respect, and it's all about compromise, and it's all about working across the aisle to get stuff done because you're representing the people," Schlager said.

## STUDENTS SAY PANDEMIC, RACIAL JUSTICE PUSHED THEM TO POLLS

RIO MATSUMOTO  
REPORTER

Pushed by issues of college debt and LG-BTQ rights, freshman Emily Linder requested a mail-in ballot weeks before Election Day to cast her first vote in a presidential election.

Linder, who is from Pittsburgh, said she opted to vote by mail this year to avoid catching and spreading COVID-19 to older, high-risk family members. Unlike her peers who received a ballot within a week, Linder said she waited three weeks for an envelope – an issue delaying ballots across dozens of states.

She's one of more than 10 students across nearly a dozen states who said issues like the pandemic and racial justice have motivated them to turn out to the polls in a presidential race that has charged student voter participation to new highs. Students said they've either filled out mail-in ballots or voted at a local polling center to help curb the spread of the virus on Election Day.

Linder said she lives with parents who are considered "high-risk" and often work with elderly individuals, so she decided to avoid the polls, where the coronavirus could spread, and instead voted by mail to protect those prone to infection.

"My parents are on the older side and my parents work with the elderly popula-

tion, so if they were to contract it, even if they were OK, it could be really detrimental to the people that they work with," Linder said.

Marwa Hameed, a freshman from Centerville, Virginia, said she also voted by mail because she wanted to avoid risking COVID-19 infection at long lines that congested early voting sites in September. She said the voting process was "straightforward," and she was able to easily request her ballot.

Despite concerns about when state officials set mail-in ballot deadlines, Hameed said she felt compelled to cast her vote early because of national issues like the pandemic. "I think there's always an urge to vote, but this election is completely different because of the circumstances that we're in with COVID and what's been happening – there's just a lot of factors," she said. "I definitely think I was more motivated."

Sophomore Annelisa Skinner from Fairfield, Connecticut, said she voted by mail because she's currently living in New York, but she'd do the same at home because she'd be living with an immunocompromised family member amid the pandemic. Skinner said her mail-in ballot application from August wasn't processed until October, but state officials were still able to send her the ballot with enough time to vote.

"I always vote because I think it's everyone's civic duty, and if you have the right, you absolutely should for the people who don't," she said. "That's especially important for a big election."

Skinner said Connecticut's online voting system allowed her to search her name, check her registration and make sure her ballot was counted.

She added that her state offers mail-in ballot drop boxes and drive-up voting stations where people can cast their ballots from their car as an added COVID-19 safety precaution.

Madelyn Bedard, a freshman from Worcester County, Massachusetts, said she decided to vote in person because she didn't want to risk her ballot being either received or mailed in too late. She said social media campaigns urging young voters to go to the polls have helped college students prioritize voting.

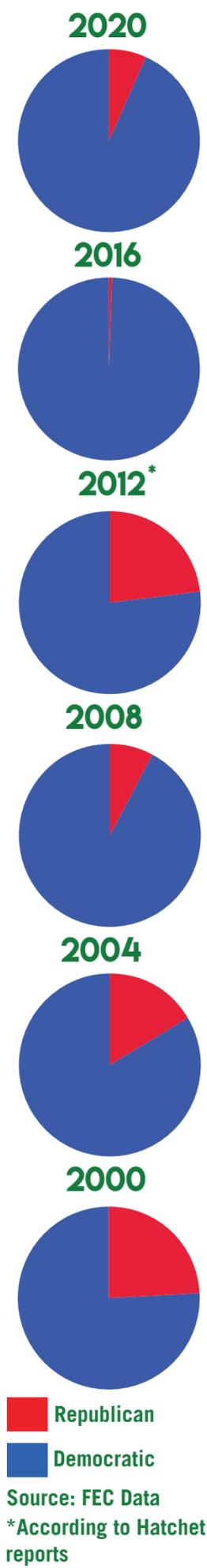
"I think each side has more of a fire under them to get out and vote, especially with so many of the current generation, like my age group, being so aware of what's happening in politics," Bedard said.

Sophomore Macy McClintock from Tampa, Florida, who voted early and in person, said officials have laid out local safety measures around polls but haven't enforced them well enough. McClintock, who used to volunteer at a local polling center, said poll workers were encouraged to refrain from correcting voters who were not wearing masks, adding that people from Florida don't care much about curbing the spread of COVID-19.

"I worked at the primary election so I was a poll worker then, and the safety measures were there but weren't great," McClintock said. "We were given a mask, and they said that they would have partitions everywhere, but they didn't."

McClintock said voters should stay sanitized and wear masks in hopes of protecting local election advisers and election committees who work to keep polling centers safe and functional.

"Value the people working and value the people around you, and do everything that you can to stay safe," she said.



## GW DONORS FLOCK TO BIDEN BUT TRUMP'S SHARE GROWS

FRANCISCO CAMACHO  
REPORTER

VITA FELLIG  
STAFF WRITER

Joe Biden reeled in 14 times the funding President Donald Trump received from University employees during the 2020 election cycle, according to a Hatchet analysis of Federal Election Commission data.

GW employees donated \$128,165 to Biden and \$9,210 to Trump ahead of the November election, according to FEC data as of Nov. 1. University donors raised more than 65 percent of the \$13,785 in Trump donations among all D.C. universities while contributing more than 20 percent of the more than \$600,000 raised for Biden in the District, the data states.

While these figures are a four-fold jump for Trump from 2016, when he received \$2,128 from GW employees, they reveal a decline for the Democratic candidate. In 2016, Hillary Clinton raised \$195,900 from University employees – more than 1.5 times that of Biden.

Lisa Bowleg, a professor of applied social psychology, donated \$518 to ActBlue – an online fundraising platform for Democratic candidates – as a way to "enact" her values during the election cycle. Bowleg said her busy workload as a faculty member prevents her from contributing to an election campaign through traditional methods like volunteering for mail campaigning or phone banking, so she decided to donate instead.

"I don't have the time to phone bank or stuff envelopes," she said. "So donating money is one way where I feel I can be making a contribution to candidates and causes I believe in."

Total donors portray an even greater discrepancy between Democratic and Republican support among employees, as 167 donated to Biden and 10 donated to Trump during the 2020 election cycle, FEC records show. The average Trump donor contributed \$921, outpacing the roughly \$767 Biden receives from the average donating GW employee.

The disparities in employee donations are similarly pronounced among other D.C. universities, where the average institu-

tion can account for roughly 22 Biden donors for every Trump donor.

Bowleg said political contributions from university employees are no different than those from any other profession because such political involvement is motivated by personal values as opposed to those of an institution.

"The prospect of millions of Americans losing access to health insurance is something we are really concerned about," she said. "Here, we are doing research trying to find out how to promote healthy behaviors, so we have a vested interest in supporting a candidate who supports access to health care."

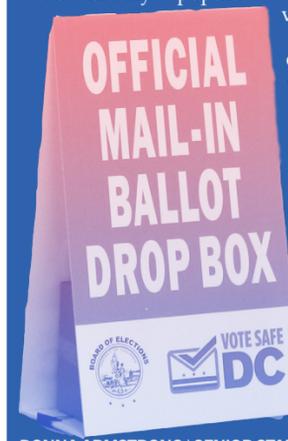
Joachim Knop, GW's director of institutional research and planning, contributed more than \$1500 to Trump's campaign, according to FEC data. He said his value for the economy and Trump's success in lowering the corporate tax rate motivated him to donate to Trump's campaign.

As Republican donors represent a small portion of the GW community, Knop said he isn't surprised Biden's funding superseded Trump's at GW and the other universities across the District. Despite the partisan divide, he said he feels University employees of all political views are "tolerated and taken seriously."

"In my experience, there are relatively few Republican-leaning or conservative supporters working in higher education in general," Knop said in an email. "It is no surprise to me that the overwhelming support of the GW community trends toward Joe Biden for president."

Knop said Trump's rhetoric might detract GW donors, but he thinks "policies and outcomes" should take on more of a focus for American voters. Knop also noted a lack of small-dollar donations and the pandemic's effect on campaign events as reasons for Biden's relative lack of GW funding compared to other Democratic nominees in previous election years.

"Biden has not done as much campaigning as Hillary did, and the pandemic has taken away a lot of excitement and traction that a candidate can gather," he said.



DONNA ARMSTRONG | SENIOR STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

OLIVIA COLUMBUS | DESIGN EDITOR

# News

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## THIS WEEK'S EVENTS

### A CONVERSATION WITH THE IRAQI AMBASSADOR

Nov. 2 • Noon EST • Free  
Amb. Fareed Yasseen will join the Middle East Policy Forum for a conversation on U.S.-Iraqi relations and current events in the region.

### THE ROAD AHEAD: WHAT WE LEARNED FROM THE 2020 ELECTION

Nov. 5 • Noon EST • Free  
Join a round table conversation to analyze the events of this unprecedented election, and look ahead at what the nation may look like under either a Biden or a Trump administration.

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

Nov. 5, 2008

Hundreds of GW students took to the White House in the early hours of the morning after Election Day to celebrate the historic election of presidential candidate Barack Obama.

# Students press for more flexibility on exams during remote semester

LAUREN SFORZA  
STAFF WRITER

More than 2,000 students responded to a survey sent to students earlier this semester about midterms and general exams during the remote semester, officials said.

Students are being asked to complete a "check-in" survey about the online semester, which administrators said has received more than 2,300 comments related to completing virtual exams. Officials said students suggested implementing policies to help them take exams, like providing a 72-hour window to complete tests or offering exams asynchronously if a student lives in a different time zone.

Dean of Libraries and Academic Innovation Geneva Henry said since March, the Instructional Technology Lab has hosted more than 20 live workshops for instructors and teaching assistants on developing, administering and grading tests in Blackboard. She said ITL

has also offered individual consultations for instructors who need extra assistance.

"The Instructional Core continues to monitor feedback and requests from instructors and are regularly adding new synchronous and asynchronous resources to respond to their needs," Henry said in an email.

Cheryl Beil, the associate provost of academic planning and assessment, said concern over the Nov. 6 Pass/No Pass deadline for undergraduates generated the most comments from students who thought the deadline should be later in the semester. She said other issues, like taking exams in inconvenient time zones, garnered "five or fewer" comments in the check-in survey.

As the fall semester's midterms season comes to end, 10 students said remote learning disrupted their previous study habits like attending office hours during midterm seasons, making it harder to focus and succeed on their ex-

ams.

Sophomore Alejandra Puentes, a journalism and mass communication major, said her professors have been more understanding of students' personal lives and mental health, which made midterms feel less stressful online. She said most of her professors have been "extremely generous" with exam and lecture schedules, providing large windows of time to take open-book exams or canceling classes during the week of the presidential election.

"I think COVID and the pandemic and its severity that caused us to come back home changed the perspective for a lot of professors and made them realize that some of us really do have some adversity at home," Puentes said. "Some of us have actual errands, chores, siblings to take care of that actually consume more time than what they actually know."

Freshman Nadia Souleymanou, a political science major, said her anthropology professor as-

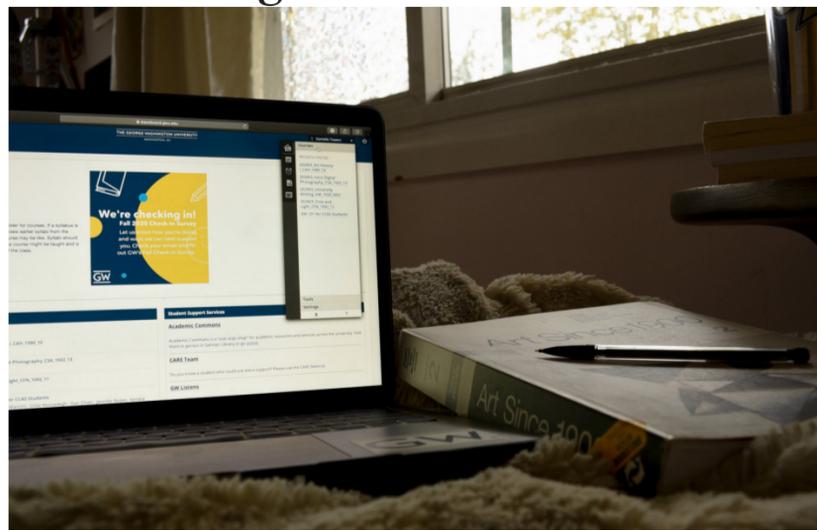


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY DANIELLE TOWERS | PHOTOGRAPHER

In online check-in surveys sent to students, the issue that generated the most comments was the Nov. 6 deadline for Pass/No Pass, administrators said.

signed the class two essays to write within 45 minutes for their midterm exam. She said she wishes students were allowed more time for their online exam so they could "ease" into it, especially because some freshmen haven't taken a college course before.

Souleymanou said her asynchronous classes seem impersonal because she can't ask her professor questions during class and feels "anxious" attending virtual office hours. She said it's been more difficult to study because she hasn't been able to connect with

her professors enough to ask questions.

"My problem with me feeling scared to go to office hours is because then it's one-on-one with the professor," Souleymanou said. "And it's going to be awkward since it's online. So it's a different vibe."

# Biden is a 'consensus builder,' students say

From Page 1

"I definitely think that in a poll of the entire student population, Biden would win, and by a significant majority, but I don't know if it would be quite that high," she said. "I'm definitely not surprised it is an overwhelming majority."

Freshman Eyad Sleem, who's studying international affairs and political science from New York, said foreign policy and the judiciary have motivated him to vote for Trump during the election. He said Trump has handled terrorism in the Middle East in "the best way any president can."

Sleem said he doesn't think American life has been damaged by Trump's presidency, noting how his own quality of life has progressed in the last four years through an increased feeling of security in finding a job before the pandemic began.

"I thought that this election was made out to be a referendum on his four-year term as president, but I really thought that everything I was listening to that can be done in four years to harm Americans hasn't happened," he said. "I feel like my life is better than it was

**"I think a lot of people at GW know that Joe Biden, no matter whether you have problems with him, is eons above where Trump is, so that doesn't shock me at all."**

CONNOR LEARY  
POLITICAL COMMUNICATION MAJOR

four years ago."

Junior Connor Leary, a political communication major from New York, said although the student body has a significant liberal skew, Biden has been able to build a coalition across party lines. Leary said the survey's results displaying nearly 90 percent of student support for Biden don't surprise him amid an election he said is more about leadership than

partisan politics.

"I don't think this is necessarily an election about whether you're liberal or conservative," he said. "I think a lot of people at GW know that Joe Biden, no matter whether you have problems with him, is eons above where Trump is, so that doesn't shock me at all."

Leary said he voted for Biden and hopes the election will help guide the country toward a recovery from Trump's term in of-

fice.

"I just think that Trump is a trainwreck," Leary said. "I knew that I wasn't going to support him if he won, but since 2016 he's somehow gotten even worse, which I didn't even know was possible, but here we are. So I think Biden is a consensus builder and that he will actually get stuff done, which is why I am hopeful that he will be elected."

# Students take action as election nears

From Page 1

"I've just been so overwhelmed," King said. "And it's hard to focus on anything else."

King said he is excited that officials are giving students Election Day off, but he's also nervous not to have a distraction while ballots are counted. He said after GW's announcement, Persist GW planned a phone bank all day on Tuesday for students to campaign for candidates and stay in touch with one another as projections are made.

"It's incredibly, incredibly anxiety-ridden," King said. "And one of the things that makes it worse, personally for me, I feel like if I'm not text banking or phone banking every single day, I'm not doing all I can."

Student Association Sen. Cordelia Scales, SEAS-U, said she's been "diligently" following polls in states with tight senate races like Georgia and North Carolina to try to quell her anxieties not knowing who will win. Scales, who is currently in her hometown of Brookline, New Hampshire, said she's studied the

proposals and candidate races down her ballot to guarantee she is informed on her state's races.

Scales, a sophomore and biomedical engineering major, said she's felt stressed following each race and the FiveThirtyEight election outcome forecast. She said she's spent time volunteering for a local candidate to ensure she can do her part as election season comes to an end.

"I'm an engineering major," Scales said. "So numbers make me very happy. And watching the polls go up for a candidate that you support and love is a lot of fun. And then when the poll numbers go down, that means you jump into action and phone bank for that candidate or get productive in another way to support them."

Junior Louie Kahn, the president of GW College Democrats, said he has invested much of his time and energy into campaigning for various Democratic candidates with College Democrats. He said the group hosted phone banks four times a week leading up to the election for members to assist with various senate

races and the presidential campaign.

Kahn said because he's been so concentrated on campaigning and imagining the various scenarios that could unfold on Election Night, like anticipated protests in D.C., his work habits have changed "for the worse." He said thinking about anything other than the election is "strange" considering how invested students have been while following each race.

The University's Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities sent an email to students last week telling them to prepare for potential disruptions on or near campus during election week. Shops around the White House are also boarding up to avoid damage in case demonstrations take place.

"This is GW – we are all very politically involved," Kahn said. "We all have a lot invested in this election, as people who live in D.C., live in the nation's capital and are very politically active, very passionate about a lot of issues. So, yes, it has been hard to focus, and school is definitely not at the forefront of many people's minds."

# CCAS officials 'vetting' Asian American studies minor

CARLY NELSON  
STAFF WRITER

Officials said they are undergoing a "vetting process" for an Asian American studies minor in light of ongoing calls to implement the program.

Faculty submitted a proposal for the minor to Columbian College of Arts and Sciences officials earlier this fall, and students launched a petition last month calling for administrators to implement the minor, which has garnered more than 2,500 signatures as of last Monday. Rachel Riedner, the associate dean of undergraduate studies for CCAS, said the program is undergoing the same review process as all majors and minors, and officials are reviewing it in terms of "curricular offerings and resource allocation."

Riedner said officials did not consider "tabling" the minor, despite claims from social media posts.

She said it usually takes one year from a minor's submission to officials for it to be implemented into the curriculum. She said racism against Asians in light of the COVID-19 pandemic is an "important consideration" as officials consider implementing the minor.

Student leaders said they launched the petition to demonstrate student support for the minor to CCAS officials, but students have pressed officials for the program for a few years.

In 2017, then-Asian American Student Association President Jeremy Lee approached Patty Chu, a professor of English, about creating a minor in Asian American studies. Over the past three years, students and faculty have been working to develop the minor, Chu said.

Chu said if it is imple-

mented, the minor will be housed in the English department and explore Asian American identity and history. Students who declare the minor will be able to take classes from different departments, like Asian American Experience through Movement and Sociology of Immigration, she said.

She said GW is "falling behind" its peer schools, four of which offer an Asian American studies major or minor.

Chu said it's still possible for GW to implement the minor despite the hiring freeze officials implemented in March to mitigate the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, since it would require little additional hires or spending. She said officials should implement the minor in light of recent protests against racial injustice and increased xenophobia against Asians due to the pandemic.

She said students need the tools to understand the "place" of Asians in the United States, which she said students can learn through the minor.

"GW should counter such a situation by educating the next generation of leaders and citizens," Chu said. "Public awareness of other Asian American issues pertaining to the pandemic is uneven."

Dana Tai Soon Burgess, a professor of dance who helped develop the minor's proposal, said the minor would teach the historical components of the Asian American diaspora in addition to the modern experiences of the diaspora.

Burgess said if the minor is implemented, he will teach a course called Asian American Experience through Movement, which covers Asian American history through movement and performance.

"Many of the issues that

Asians and Asian Americans deal with have to do with the body itself, like how it's been exoticized or feminized or emasculated," Burgess said. "That's really exciting to also have that with the minor."

Fredrick Flores, a senior studying neuroscience and the vice president of the Philippine Cultural Society, said he is part of an informal group of members of various Asian American student organizations that have been pushing to implement the minor.

"Asian American identity and experience is a very unique thing," Flores said. "I think a lot of students would benefit from learning that, not just Asian American students, but all kinds of students of all kinds of backgrounds."

He said the petition, which he helped launch, gained a "whole wide range of support" from students, family members, alumni and professionals in the field of Asian American studies within a day of its release.

Student Association Sen. Gabriel Young, CCAS-U and the chair of the SA's Asian Pacific Islander Desi Caucus, said officials told students who were pushing to implement the minor that CCAS officials were considering tabling its deliberation "indefinitely."

The SA Senate passed a resolution last week backing the minor.

He said the GW community can help break down stereotypes and discrimination against Asians through the minor while also "clarifying and finding the truth" about Asian American identity.

"It is more of a reclamation of identity and truth to the Asian American identity and promoting the voices of those voices that have been oppressed throughout history," Young said.

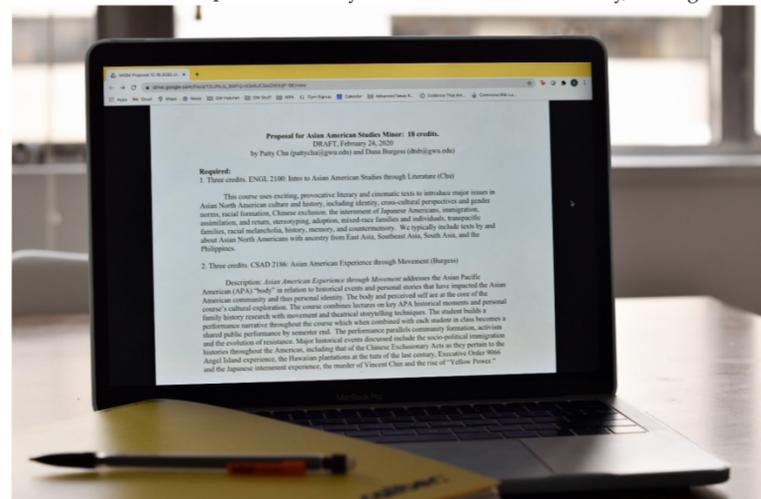


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY SOPHIA YOUNG | CONTRIBUTING PHOTO EDITOR

If approved, the Asian American studies minor will be housed in the English department and explore the history and identity of that demographic.

# Wahlbeck seeks to expand STEM, increase offerings as CCAS dean

ISHA TRIVEDI

ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

When Paul Wahlbeck was serving as the chair of the political science department in the early 2010s, he would take faculty candidates for the department past a hole in the ground that would become the Science and Engineering Hall every morning.

He called the hole the “most important development on campus” for the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences, adding that bolstering the school’s sciences would move GW “comprehensively in a stronger direction.”

Since the hall’s creation in 2015, Wahlbeck has become the school’s permanent dean and said he hopes to ramp up efforts to strengthen GW’s STEM offerings and diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives in his role for the school. He said though the COVID-19 pandemic has shifted his initial goals as dean, he is still working to strengthen CCAS’ educational and course offerings.

## Time as interim dean

Officials announced in July that Wahlbeck would take over as permanent head of CCAS after he held the position in interim for two years. As interim dean, he oversaw the development of a new major in data science in 2015, short-term study abroad opportunities and “collaborative team teaching” between STEM and other faculty.

Wahlbeck said Ben Vinson, the former CCAS leader who stepped down in 2018, established “visionary leadership” in the school, and Wahlbeck wanted to focus his time as interim dean on maintaining the progress that Vinson had set for the college.

“But I think that more specifically, that’s a caretaker role, and that’s not necessarily the kind of thing that really is what one would aspire to as an interim dean,” Wahlbeck said.

He said his goals as interim dean were in line with University President Thomas LeBlanc’s goals to improve the undergraduate experience, enhance GW’s research and scholarship, engage with alumni and strengthen philanthropic outreach and improve GW’s institutional culture.

Wahlbeck said he was also interested in building on Vinson’s vision of the “engaged liberal arts,” by pushing students to apply knowledge gained in the classroom to real-world experiences through short-term study abroad programs.

“I think that those are fascinating opportunities to take our knowledge and to push it further than what we’ve been able to do in the classroom and simultaneously push our students out of their cultural comfort zones at the same time,” Wahlbeck said.

He said he also wanted to increase rankings for various doctoral programs in CCAS and created “bulletins” — where officials could publicize the accomplishments and successes of students and faculty to faculty at other universities, which would develop a “stronger reputation and stronger rankings” for the school’s programs over time.

Wahlbeck said as chair of the political science department and later the vice dean for programs and research of CCAS, he had the opportunity to work with several faculty members

and listened to the perspectives and insights of faculty, staff and students in CCAS.

“I could see their commitment to their students and to their programs, and it was clear that it was a real privilege to be surrounded by so many caring and committed faculty members, staff members and students all pushing in the same direction,” Wahlbeck said.

## The COVID-19 pandemic

Wahlbeck said the pandemic has caused him to “shift course” for his plans as the permanent dean and change the focus of his broader goals like those relating to diversity and inclusion. He said officials paused the process of hiring the school’s first director of diversity, equity and inclusion after officials implemented a hiring freeze in March.

Wahlbeck said officials are still pursuing the advancement of diversity, equity and inclusion in CCAS through workshops and roundtable discussions about racism and inequality and partnerships with the Office for Diversity, Equity and Community Engagement to teach faculty about how to create more inclusive classrooms and course curriculums.

“In this moment in our nation’s history with the unrest that exists around race and racial politics, this is a priority for the college, and we will make progress on it despite the pandemic,” he said.

Wahlbeck said when he moved into his role as interim dean, he was surprised by how much he enjoyed interacting with alumni and discussing their experiences at GW and their life after college.



COURTESY OF GW TODAY

Wahlbeck said the pandemic threw a wrench into his plans as dean, like pausing the process of hiring the school’s first director of diversity, equity and inclusion.

He said despite the pandemic, officials continue to hold virtual speaker events where alumni discuss their careers, like a September event in which two alumni who work as reporters discussed their insights on the 2020 election.

He said although the pandemic has caused alumni events to be held virtually, event attendance has increased and officials have been able to engage with more alumni than in the past.

“From my vantage point, that’s a real win,” he said.

Wahlbeck said the economic impact of the pandemic has affected some alumni negatively who haven’t been able to donate as much as they used to but added that officials have encouraged alumni to volunteer their time through virtual mentoring events for students.

“There are so many ways that we can engage

with alumni,” he said. “Fundraising is one piece of it, but we can actually double down on other forms of engagement during a time of economic downturn where some people aren’t able to contribute financially to the University.”

## Plans for the future

Wahlbeck said his role as dean is to “think strategically” about the future of CCAS, and the pandemic has highlighted questions for him about the future of higher education, the role of virtual learning among graduate programs and future course and program offerings for GW.

He said although GW’s strategic planning process is on hold, he wants to improve the school’s STEM offerings.

Officials paused the strategic planning process in April amid rising concerns surrounding the pandemic’s financial im-

pact on the University. It included plans to reduce undergraduate enrollment by 20 percent and increase the proportion of STEM students to 30 percent.

“This is a time for thinking about how to build the sciences in Columbian College so they’re really positioned to contribute to our preeminence as a comprehensive global research university,” he said.

Wahlbeck said as dean, he values hearing about student perspectives on issues like the Pass/No Pass policy and the push for Election Day to be declared a University holiday.

“I think the thing that going forward that’s going to be very valuable for us to hear, especially now that we’ve had a full semester of being in a virtual learning experience, is what challenges are students facing, and what can we do to help students navigate those challenges?” Wahlbeck said.

# STEM students struggle to grasp content from online labs

ISHANTI CHETTRI

REPORTER

Sophomore Jin Haugland said the lab simulation she’s taking online this fall as a result of the pandemic is nothing compared to the real deal.

Haugland, who is majoring in cognitive neuroscience, said she’s concerned about missing out on “valuable skills” students learn through hands-on labs, adding that she feels she’s falling behind compared to her peers at other universities taking their courses in person.

“The irony is not lost on me of somebody in a bio class demanding to be back in person during a pandemic,” she said. “It’s certainly very disappointing, and I really don’t feel like I’m getting the same value out of it.”

Like Haugland, students across the University’s STEM departments said they feel like online classes have left them disconnected from their peers and inadequately instructed in class material, giving them stress about their future career prospects. STEM faculty said they have been holding labs virtually to simulate hands-on experience students would have in person, but the labs fall short teaching students the skills needed to adapt when an experiment fails.

Alex Rainey, a freshman

majoring in exercise science, said their online anatomy lab is like an extra session of class where teaching assistants give students extra worksheets, and students can talk through material not covered in class instead of running experiments like lab usually involves.

“Normally in an anatomy lab, we would have a skeleton, bones that we could look at and touch, diagrams of muscles and models that we can actually see and feel because that’s so important for anatomy,” Rainey said.

Rainey said STEM students face a dilemma as long as GW remains online: On the one hand, students can sign up for online labs, but the limited material they learn from virtual coursework could impact their odds in the job market. On the other hand, students deferring labs until future semesters may not be able to graduate on time.

While the low cap on lab enrollment traditionally allows students to get to know each other, Rainey added that no one socializes, and they don’t know anyone in their class, because of the virtual divide.

“Overall, I feel like online learning is not a good plan and that the University could have figured out a plan to do some sort of a hybrid,” they said.

Lindsey Kalamasz, a se-

nior majoring in nutrition science, said that after officials moved classes online last semester, students could continue to receive credit for an EMT lab she took. But she said her instructors stopped holding online sessions and instead left it up to students to teach themselves the practical skills they typically learn in a lab.

“I ended up withdrawing from the lab because of that,” Kalamasz said. “I don’t have the correct number of labs, and it was annoying to have to tell graduate schools the reason why I have a W in my transcript.”

For Kalamasz and others like her, the modified lab offerings during virtual semesters could drastically impact their future plans. Kalamasz said she is not taking any labs with her courses this academic year because officials canceled them in courses she needs to apply to graduate school, like molecular biology.

She said that if she is unable to take a course with a lab for microbiology at another college this spring, she may be unable to graduate by May.

“I think the University thinks that it’s an acceptable answer to tell their students to delay their plans for another year or even more than that, and it is just not an acceptable answer, and they need to do better,” she said.



FILE PHOTO BY SOPHIA YOUNG | CONTRIBUTING PHOTO EDITOR

Chief Financial Officer Mark Diaz said the positive rating affirms GW’s “financial strength and sustainability.”

# Moody’s affirms GW’s stable outlook with A1 rating

DANIEL PATRICK GALGANO

REPORTER

NICHOLAS PASION

REPORTER

Officials said a recent affirmation of GW’s credit rating demonstrates the University’s financial strength amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mark Diaz, the executive vice president and chief financial officer, said GW’s affirmed A1 rating with a stable outlook, which was announced by Moody’s Investors Service on Oct. 14, puts GW in a place of “financial strength and sustainability” through enabling access to capital and debt at a low cost. Diaz said the rating enables GW to contract debt more easily and at a lower cost.

“Moody’s affirmation should make our faculty and staff feel confident in GW’s current financial position and about GW’s positive future,” Diaz said. “It truly is a testament to the collective efforts of the GW community, especially during these unprecedented times, that we find ourselves in such a fortunate position relative to our industry and our peers.”

The rating reflects an “independent validation” of GW’s finances as officials weather the COVID-19 pandemic, he said.

Moody’s determines their credit ratings by examining financial records, long-term planning, leadership effectiveness and overall assets. A high credit rating, like an A1 allows for GW to issue bonds to investors at a relatively lower cost.

“The fact that Moody’s did affirm our A1 rating — which is a high investment grade rating to begin with — that’s telling to the investor or the lender that GW is worth that investment,” Diaz said. “They have confidence in GW the institution. They’re worth your loan. They’re worth their investment.”

GW’s “A” rating reflects Moody’s assessment that the University’s bonds and other debt are considered an “upper-medium grade” and are relatively low risk, while the “1” represents the University’s ability to fulfill short-term obligations, according to Moody’s guidelines.

GW has about \$1.87 billion in outstanding bonds, most of which will reach maturity in 2048, Moody’s reported.

“They gave us a stable outlook,” Diaz said. “That’s another thing that I don’t think can be underestimated.”

Moody’s downgraded the higher education industry as a whole to a negative outlook in March near the start of

the pandemic. The higher education workforce has shrunk by at least 7 percent since the start of the pandemic, The Chronicle of Higher Education reported last month.

Moody’s examined GW’s roughly \$1.7 billion operating budget and \$3 billion in investments and cash reserves. The report states GW’s graduate and undergraduate programs as well as the University’s “still attractive urban location” helped lead to the positive rating.

“George Washington University is a large, comprehensive, urban university that continues to leverage its location in the nation’s capital to draw a healthy mix of undergraduate and graduate students,” the report states.

The Moody’s report was compiled before officials announced plans to extend virtual instruction into the spring semester, which is driving a roughly \$180 million annual budget gap.

“The stable outlook reflects our expectations that management will continue to take prudent and aggressive actions to adjust to near term operational and financial challenges posed by the coronavirus pandemic and position the University toward long-term fiscal sustainability,” the report states.



ARIELLE BADER | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR

Students studying the sciences said they’re concerned the skills they’re picking up in online labs won’t be up to par in the job and graduate school markets.

# Officials say Eco-Equity Challenge has raised local climate awareness

ABBY KENNEDY  
REPORTER

Five years after officials launched the University's sustainability competition, participants have helped bring awareness about climate change and environmental issues to underserved areas of the city.

The Eco-Equity Challenge, which debuted in 2015, gives students the opportunity to spearhead sustainability service projects to help underserved residents in D.C. by seeking solutions to environmental issues. Sustainability experts said programs like the Eco-Equity Challenge both boosts the University's sustainability initiatives and improves the community outside campus.

Meghan Chapple, the director of the Office of Sustainability, said officials provide about \$5,000 per project to students each year. She said a panel of staff from the sustainability office and the Nashman Center for Civic Engagement and Public Service reviews project proposals and determines which students to award financial support.

"The program links students to the broader community, helping build their understanding of challenges in an urban environment – and how to solve them – and shar-

ing what they learn with others at the University," Chapple said in an email.

Chapple said in the first year officials held the challenge, several participants worked alongside Higher Achievement, a nonprofit that works with middle schools in the D.C. area, to develop mapping and geography education for students in an underserved area of the D.C.

She said the number of students who participate each year varies, but officials typically award funding to one or two projects each year.

She said Logan Malik, a 2018 graduate who participated in the program as a student, focused his project on monitoring greenhouse gas emissions in underserved communities in D.C.

The website states other projects have included teaching local students how to use mapping technology to find green spaces around their neighborhoods.

"By engaging the students in the construction of the sensors and showing them a practical use of engineering, computer science and chemistry, Logan helped to bridge the gap between scientific research and local community members," she said.

The Nashman Center partnered with the sustainability office and Siemens Industry Inc., a

technology company, in 2015 to jointly start the challenge, according to the sustainability office's website.

The students who are accepted to the program receive funds, training and mentoring from the Nashman Center to carry out their project, according to the website.

Malik said he completed and led a project that collected data on the amount of greenhouse emissions surrounding high schools in low-income regions of the District.

"Getting the opportunity to interact with students and talk about climate change and then bring this technology to places that were not having these conversations, that was really cool," he said.

He said students who have an idea for the challenge first must find a faculty member to partner with them and discuss what goals are attainable and realistic. He said he enjoyed that the program allowed him to merge scientific research with community engagement.

Malik added that he developed a curriculum to teach high schoolers in low-income areas about climate change and its impact on communities similar to theirs. He said students could also learn how to use his carbon dioxide sensors that mea-

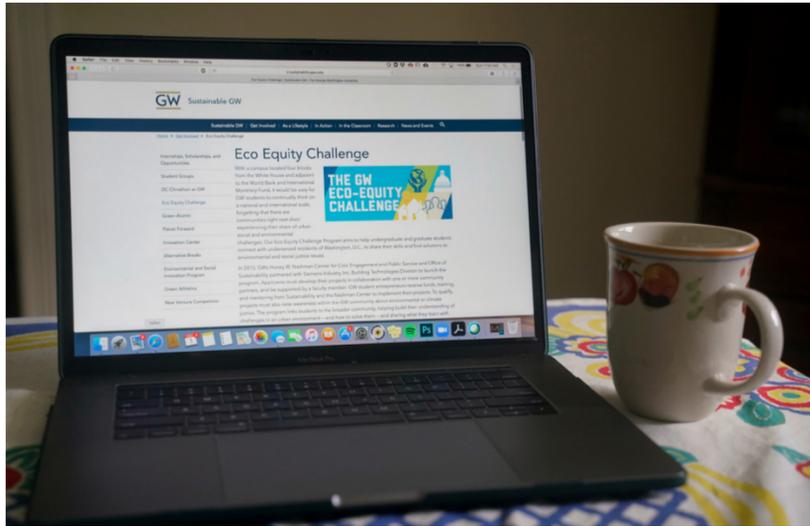


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY SYDNEY WALSH | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

The challenge offers students an outlet to solve problems in the field of sustainability and serve the community.

sure greenhouse gases and employ it in the classroom to learn about engineering and chemistry.

"I focused my project on low-income areas that were predominantly Black communities, and it was just an awesome experience," Malik said. "The kids were so fun and really intrigued in what we had to offer, and we got a chance to do experiments with them, which was a lot of fun."

Experts in sustainability said programs like the Eco-Equity Challenge encourage students to engage with their communities while bringing about

awareness to environmental and climate justice issues.

Michael Kornitas, the director of sustainability and energy at Rutgers University, said the program helps foster sustainability practices among college students and within the local community outside the university.

"When a university is able to foster sustainable practices among its students, it not only enhances efforts at the university but teaches new skills to the students who in turn as they move on utilize these skills wherever they may go," he said in an

email.

Aurora Sharrard, the director of sustainability at University of Pittsburgh, said the Eco-Equity Challenge engages multiple aspects of sustainability, like equity and the economy, that are necessary to making progress in sustainability.

"As communities and institutions around the United States and world have looked inward in 2020, it's been wonderful to see many governments, corporations, nonprofits and higher education entities embrace the full spectrum of sustainability," Sharrard said in an email.



COURTESY OF ALBERTO BOSQUE-PARDOS

Assistant professor of microbiology Alberto Bosque-Pardos' research addresses a problem in the field of HIV research that could be instrumental to beating the virus.

## SMHS receives \$1.6 million NIH grant to study hormones' effects on HIV cells

MICHELLE VASSILEV  
REPORTER

The National Institutes of Health awarded a \$1.6 million grant to the School of Medicine and Health Sciences to study the effects of sex hormones on inactive HIV cells, according to a press release late last month.

Alberto Bosque-Pardos, an assistant professor of microbiology who has been leading the research initiative since last June, said eliminating cells that contain HIV genetic material but don't replicate can be the key to curing HIV. Experts in HIV research said eliminating these cells, holding "latent reservoirs" of the material, is one of the major goals in the field because understanding how these types of cells function could aid in developing a cure for HIV.

Bosque said he and his team are experimenting with the sex hormones estradiol, progesterone and testosterone to test how biological factors influence HIV latency. He said other researchers have looked into the influences of estradiol on the latent reservoir, but no research exists on how progesterone and testosterone affect HIV-related processes, like the establishment or reactivation of the reservoir.

"I'm not looking about whether or not sex hormones will be a possible solution," he said. "It's whether or not sex hormones have an impact on some of these processes. Because if we know that high levels of testosterone or high levels of estradiol can influence some of these strategies or cure approaches, then different clinical trials will have to take into account hormonal levels."

Bosque said his team's model uses human cells that

are infected with HIV. He said they first take the cells from people who are HIV-negative and then infect the cells with the virus in the lab. He said the method allows his team to manipulate the systems to learn what variables contribute to the reactivation of the HIV cells.

"That allows us to be able to manipulate these in vitro systems to study what variables and factors will be contributing to the establishment or the reactivation of this latent reservoir," he said.

Bosque said most clinical trials studying interventions for the HIV latent reservoir have used a predominantly male experimental group, constricting results to the biological and hormonal factors associated with males. His team is considering how the various factors found among diverse populations of people can affect the reservoir, he said.

"We are trying to model what will happen when some of these approaches that are being pursued will encounter diversity, and we do that in a test tube, which is in a controlled environment," he said. "Because obviously when we are talking about women or transgender, it's not only the biological factors but also hormonal factors, and there is a lot of confounding factors that can come into studies."

Experts in HIV research said latent HIV cells are a significant obstacle in both curing and treating HIV because although they don't replicate, they contain the virus's genetic material.

Ruth Serra-Moreno, an associate professor of microbiology and immunology at the University of Rochester, said latent HIV cells can support the replication of HIV cells once they are reactivated.

ated.

"Although these latently infected cells may seem harmless since they do not support active HIV replication, they still harbor the HIV genetic material," she said in an email. "In addition, these cells do not respond to the antiretroviral therapies that affected individuals normally take."

Serra-Moreno said sex hormones can activate or deactivate specific genes in a cell. She said the hormones include a gene that reprograms regular immune cells into memory immune cells, which are responsible for attacking pathogens that the body has previously been exposed to or vaccinated against.

"Since HIV infects immune cells, it is very likely that during infection, the virus ends up infecting cells that will be reprogrammed into memory," she said. "Under these circumstances, the virus is unable to take advantage of the cell for its own propagation and establishes a latent infection."

Renee Heffron, an associate professor of global health and epidemiology at the University of Washington, said researchers have seen varying degrees of HIV infection susceptibility at different points of a female's menstrual cycle, a period typically characterized by abnormal and varying levels of sex hormones.

"The data are very hard to interpret so we don't have a clear picture, but we do think that there is maybe some influence of these sex hormones on susceptibility to HIV," she said. "I think that you can draw from that there would be an interest or reason to see whether this has an impact on latency or effectiveness on a cure."

## Study abroad student organization looks to create mentorship program

TIFFANY GARCIA  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Students are hoping to provide their peers with updates and information about study abroad in a new student organization.

GW Students for Study Abroad, which registered on GW Engage two weeks ago, aims to provide students with tips for traveling outside the United States, like the best transportation apps and tourist destinations in their university's area. Students who launched the organization said they will work to channel information from the Office for Study Abroad to its members to educate students about trips and study abroad applications.

"I realized there wasn't really a centralized student voice for study abroad, which is crazy considering that half of GW students, if not more, will study abroad over the course of their college career," said junior Indigo Stegner, the president of the organization.

Stegner said she worked to create the group this summer after she hosted a town hall between officials and students who planned to study abroad this year about the status of their trips. All study abroad trips are halted for the academic year in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Stegner said the organization is surveying students on their preferred method of communicating grievances and concerns they have about study abroad being canceled in the spring to establish a "direct line" of communication with officials. She said in the

meantime, members will also assemble resources like a peer mentoring program for those looking to study abroad.

She said the group will use their connections with the program managers for the study abroad office to connect students who need additional logistical help with their abroad applications or are struggling to connect with officials directly. She said officials have recommended students rely on peer support for questions in the past.

"Having a way to all come together as a group in order to communicate effectively is very powerful," Stegner said.

Stegner said one of the group's goals once study abroad programs reopen is to connect with exchange students studying at GW and host networking events for students to feel welcomed. She said when she traveled abroad to Ireland last year, she felt comfortable because of the integration program at Queen's University Belfast and wants to provide the same support for the hundreds of GW students who study abroad.

Junior Demi Smith, the group's secretary, said connecting students looking to travel outside the United States with people who already studied abroad can help give them insight on each of the programs. She said members will create a centralized database for prospective students to read about experiences and tips specific to an abroad spot.

Smith said the group will also offer academic resources like study halls next academic year for students who return from

abroad for them to lean on each other as they reintegrate back into campus life. She said since the group's GW Engage and Instagram pages launched two weeks ago, about 30 students have joined.

"I think that the OSA doesn't really provide a lot of resources for how to adapt back to life at GW and life here because I went from a very lax, fun semester in Belfast to coming back to crazy workloads at GW," Smith said. "And it was really difficult for me to readapt to the environment."

Junior Carmella Saia, the public relations director of SFSA, said the group has begun to connect with students and alumni who have studied abroad to join the organization as peer mentors.

She said the group plans to promote study abroad applications in March on their Instagram account when they open and organize a peer network for students who need additional support applying. Saia said she was initially hesitant to apply to the Global Bachelor's program her freshman year because of its cost, but she learned how to make it affordable in talks with other students who traveled.

"Sometimes you just have more informal or personal questions or things that aren't really related to the academic part of it, and you don't feel comfortable asking faculty or staff about those questions," Saia said. "We want to be able to provide those resources where people can feel comfortable asking whatever they want."



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY GRACE HROMIN | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR

The new student organization aims to ease the transition for GW students moving abroad and for foreign students coming to study at GW.

## WARD 2 VOTERS, ELECT RANDY DOWNS TO THE D.C. COUNCIL

### STAFF EDITORIAL

This week, Ward 2 voters have the opportunity to turn a new leaf. They can continue a saga of corruption in Brooke Pinto, or they can choose a D.C. Council member who will fight for their interests. Fueled by passion and informed by experience, Randy Downs fits that bill.

Downs, who serves on the Advisory Neighborhood Commission, has racked up hands-on governmental experience that will allow him to start making progressive change on day one. He played a logistical role in setting up pandemic-era measures, like outdoor dining, in his constituency, and he released plans for scaling up COVID-19 testing and tracing for all D.C. residents. In a city mired by the health crisis, forming a plan to stop the spread of the virus is a good starting point — but that's hardly his only plan to better the lives of residents in Foggy Bottom, Georgetown and DuPont Circle. His platform is uniquely strong on the issues of education, LGBTQ equality and voting rights.

The commissioner plans to make education a priority if elected, pledging to push for a new middle school for the underserved eastern half of Ward 2. He would also focus on bridging the digital divide — a phenomenon exacerbated by virtual learning — by pushing the Council to fund computers for students who need them. Education is one of

the most important factors in ensuring success later in life — and reducing inequities within D.C. schooling will meaningfully improve so many students' lives.

Downs' plans for LGBTQ equality is another area that sets him apart from his competitors. D.C. has one of the highest LGBTQ populations in the country — and as a gay man, Downs would bring his lived experience to the table. His plans go beyond lip service and tackle issues that affect LGBTQ people. For example, he has laid out a plan to improve housing with a focus on LGBTQ people, who are impacted in disproportionate numbers by homelessness and substandard housing. This plan would include building more low-income housing, expanding emergency rental aid and revamping the high property taxes imposed on low- and middle-income residents of Ward 2.

He is also interested in improving several aspects of daily life around the District that directly impact students at GW. His goals to improve transportation and make Metro fares free not only aid students in their needs to get off campus for activities like jobs and internships, but they help improve equality in transportation for those all across D.C. Downs would be in the position to execute the Metro policies that students have been pushing



Cartoon by Hannah Thacker

for for years. He is also interested in improving and expanding affordable housing in the District, a priority needed in a city where far too many people experience homelessness.

Although Downs is the best choice, it is important to note that Downs and fellow candidate Martín Miguel Fernández are not very far apart in their ideas, and Downs has

something to learn from his opponent.

If Downs were to be elected, he should consider incorporating some of Fernández's plans, like his policing and public

safety measures. Fernández's campaign emphasized racial equity and equality in the District, highlighting a comprehensive 14-point plan that focuses on defunding the police and reallocating the funds to various city-run organizations that will aid residents. Downs could easily incorporate aspects of the plan that result in the reallocation of funds to city organizations that decrease police necessity.

Other candidates running for the seat don't bring the lived experience as a D.C. leader to the table. Pinto, the current Council member, has only been in office for several months, and she's already been the subject of an investigation. Ward 2 residents should not need to raise their eyebrows again at their direct leader — they should trust that they can get the job done without personal interests getting in the way. Peter Bolton, a journalist running as a Green Party candidate, hopes to improve issues of affordable housing and climate change through creating a D.C. version of the Green New Deal, but many of these ideas are just that — ideas.

Locals have a chance to choose someone who will fight for their interests. Former Ward 2 Council member Jack Evans was not that person, and Pinto has already proved she is not either. We need someone who will fight for us wholeheartedly — and Downs is that candidate.

## STUDENTS MUST RECOGNIZE THE PRIVILEGE IN WORKING ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL

It's not uncommon to come across a GW student urging their peers to phone bank, volunteer their time for a campaign or canvass in any of the hundreds of races across the United States. In fact, it's encouraged to get the word out about ways students can help out with their local campaigns. But before we pressure our peers to join the campaign trail, we need to recognize that some people just don't have that kind of time or resources.

Hannah Thacker  
Opinions Editor

I recently got into an argument with a friend who equated not participating in a campaign or phone banking to condemning the state of democracy. His words stuck with me — in his attempt to guilt a number of people into phone banking, he said we would have to tell our children that we were "too busy to save democracy" if we did not help out a campaign.

But I'm a full-time student with three part-time jobs. I'd love to help out with a campaign, but I will not spread myself thin.

My tiff with a friend may seem like an isolated incident, but I have seen dozens of other social media posts attempting to guilt students into volunteering their time and energy. It's great to encourage others to get involved in politics, but we need to remember that not everyone can. To be frank, it's a privilege to be able to set hours aside for phone banking, and

we should not look down on those who cannot set aside the time needed to promote a campaign.

Some students hold jobs, internships or other obligations that limit their free time. Some of those students' jobs or internships may be helping to keep their family financially afloat, especially as the COVID-19 pandemic strains families' budgets. They might want to help out with a campaign, but it's not that easy. Like many others, I am a full-time student and work. Time is money that we cannot afford to lose. Work should take precedence if that is my main responsibility, and guilting me or other people into spending time they don't have is inconsiderate.

GW is known for its politically active student body. Heck, we even threw a fit when we were knocked off the list of most politically active schools. With political student organizations like GW College Democrats being the largest in the country and GW College Republicans being highly active, it is difficult to detach yourself from GW's political culture. But being a politically engaged school does not mean that every single student has the means to hold campaign signs or phone bank for a candidate. Students asking for assistance in campaigns must take a moment to look outside the GW political bubble and their own lives and recognize that many students attend the same university but don't have the means to get GW on the list of politically active schools again.

If you have the time, the passion and the ability to volunteer for a campaign you

are passionate about, do it. But do not place yourself on a pedestal and look down from your moral high ground on students who do not have the same privilege to spend volunteering.

Many students feel as if democracy is on the line this election, and others may be feeling a certain pressure to get as many of their peers involved in campaigns as possible. But it is imperative that the fervor students have for a campaign or cause does not blind them to the needs of those around them. We are all a part of the GW community, and this toxic culture of looking down on those who do not have time to volunteer must end.

Students like me can still help promote a campaign or cause we are passionate about. Those who do not have the time to volunteer or phone bank could spread the word about candidates and issues to people we know, ensure that our vote gets counted, engage in conversations with those around us and if they have the ability to, donate to a campaign. The little things matter, and regardless of our workload, we can take a second to share a post that might educate someone on politics.

Students are in a unique position to be able to help campaigns this year, especially as the COVID-19 pandemic has brought us home for the academic year. It's crucial that we all stay politically aware in some way, but suggesting that students are not doing enough to sway the outcome of the election is ineffective.

—Hannah Thacker, a junior majoring in political communication, is the opinions editor.

## OP-ED: WHY I SUPPORT RANDY DOWNS FOR D.C. COUNCIL

On Tuesday, Ward 2 voters will have the opportunity to elect a new Council member who will represent many GW students during their four years at the University. I am urging you to support independent candidate Randy Downs for that seat.

Thomas Falcigno  
Student Association  
Senator & Pro Tempore

I have known Downs for quite a while now. We both play on the same LGBTQ-friendly Stone-wall Kickball team. In getting to know Downs, I have seen firsthand his dedication to his community, commitment to public service and tireless advocacy work, all of which will make him incredibly effective at representing the interests of Ward 2 residents on the D.C. Council.

For the past four years, Downs has served on the Advisory Neighborhood Commission, representing the residents of Dupont Circle. Randy has been a strong advocate for transgender rights, affordable housing and increased accessibility. When the

pandemic hit, Downs walked the streets, working with the District and businesses along 17th Street to help keep their doors open. If you walk down 17th Street, you will immediately notice its vibrancy, with patrons eating along the street in multicolored booths at almost every restaurant. If it wasn't for Downs' quick action to create these "streeteries," many of the businesses along 17th Street would have likely had to shut their doors, putting hundreds out of work.

One issue that students frequently discuss is transportation. How do we affordably and efficiently get to internships and jobs while at school? Downs is the only candidate with a detailed plan on how to fix transportation for Ward 2 residents and us students. Downs proposes expanding the protected bike lane network by 20 miles, following through on a K Street Transit and lowering Metrorail and bus fares — all of which are substantive ideas that could tangibly benefit students for years to come.

Downs' candidacy offers a progressive vision for Ward 2, unlike his opponent, Democratic candidate Brooke Pinto, whose

short-lived stint in the District and lack of understanding of how our District government functions proves she cannot adequately represent the interests of her new neighbors on the D.C. Council. Her financial supporters, which include anti-choice and anti-LGBTQ Trump allies, like former Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuette, show us that her values do not align with the values of Ward 2 residents, let alone the citizens of D.C. Ward 2 would be smart to resoundingly reject Pinto and her dark monied interests from the Ward 2 Council seat.

For too long, Ward 2 has been represented by crooks and cronies that only seek to enrich themselves and advance the interests of their own ego. Ward 2 residents and students deserve to have someone in their back corner who will fight to make our District a more ethical, progressive and inclusive place. Downs exceeds that criteria for the Ward 2 Council seat. I implore locals and students who can vote in Ward 2 to support Downs and learn more about him here.

—Thomas Falcigno is a graduate student serving as a senator and pro tempore of the Student Association Senate.

# Culture

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## THE SCENE

**ELECTION WATCH PARTY**  
Nov. 3 • Food purchase required • Church Hall  
Enjoy an all-night food and drink happy hour as you watch the election results come in.

**14TH ANNUAL PARADE OF TRABANTIS**  
Nov. 7 • Free • Spy Museum  
Celebrate the anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall with everyone's favorite Cold War car.

## RELEASED THIS WEEK:

"LOVE GOES" AN ALBUM BY SAM SMITH

## DRINKING GAMES TO GET THROUGH ELECTION NIGHT

HANA HANCOCK  
REPORTER

All Americans can probably agree that we're going to need a drink to get through Nov. 3.

If nothing else, quarantine has taught us how to up the ante when it comes to our tolerance for drinking, so keep yourself entertained and sane this week by knocking back a few with the help of a few drinking games. From booze to bets, here are all of the essentials

you'll need for election night if you're 21 years or older:

### Red or Blue

This one is pretty straightforward and can sustain you with a steady buzz throughout the night. Print out or queue up a map of all 50 states on your computer screen and pick which candidate you're rooting, or drinking, for. Keep your eyes on the election results throughout the night, and every time your preferred presidential

candidate wins a state, take a sip.

### The epic Spinoff election night drinking game

You're three shots deep and you're having trouble seeing straight, much less deciphering poll numbers as they roll in. Friend, this is the drinking game for you. If you thought you had heard enough of the phrase "these unpredictable times," gird your loins for the amount of election night buzzwords every news an-

chor is guaranteed to rattle off this Tuesday. You'll be hearing a lot of "neck and neck" and "too close to call" thrown around – when you do, have your drink at the ready. Choose a couple of common phrases, like "knife edge" and "the COVID election," and drink whenever you hear them.

### Your Election Night Drinking Guide

For our friends who have the mental capacity to navigate an in-

tricate web of politics infused with booze, check out this choose-your-own-adventure election guide. This guide gauges your feelings toward the election and takes into account where you are, who you are with and what stage of the night you're in. Depending on how you answer each question, you'll be recommended a specific drink. If you're having a little trouble deciding what drink you want to accompany the night's chaos, this infographic is your best friend.



COURTESY OF ALISA KINGSBURY

Sophomore Alisa Kingsbury, a former Hatchet reporter, is taking a gap semester to work full-time on the campaign of a Democratic challenger for city council in her hometown.

## STUDENTS PITCH IN ON LOCAL, NATIONAL CAMPAIGNS

ANNA BOONE  
CULTURE EDITOR

CLARA DUHON  
STAFF WRITER

In eighth grade, senior Tyler Kusma served as the data director for his hometown's Obama campaign team – and he hasn't left the campaign trail since.

Kusma is currently the president of the University's chapter of GW for Biden, where he spends his time in between classes to organize text or phone banking sessions and other campaign events. He said he's wanted to stay involved in politics because the choices students make at the polls will affect him throughout the rest of his life.

"The issues and the candidates who we're voting for will have some of the greatest impact on us as a generation, because we'll be living with these effects, whether it's the local, state or federal for the next several decades," Kusma said.

Kusma is one of six students who said they have turned to their political student organizations or local campaigns to get active in the presidential race. Students said they wanted to get active in the upcoming election to find their footing in politics and help sway what they called one of the most important elections of college-aged students' "lifetime."

Catherine Morris, a junior interning on the Florida Democratic coordinated campaign, said all of her volunteer work for the campaign is virtual, so she finds herself "always" on the computer. She racks up roughly 15 hours online per day between completing school assign-

ments, phone banking and recruiting volunteers.

Morris said she got involved with the campaign because she saw a "need" for change in elected officials in light of the pandemic. She said she became more interested in politics and shifted her political ideology from a Republican to independent after the 2016 presidential election and eventually Democrat as she transitioned into college.

"Around the presidential election last time, I was just starting to get interested in politics," she said. "I grew up in South Carolina and I was like, 'Oh, I'm a Republican,' and then I realized, 'Oh no, I'm not.'"

Noah Rothstein, a junior working on a campaign for Rep. Lee Zeldin, R-N.Y., said he spends his time talking with constituents on the phone about things like Zeldin's platform and community issues he wants to address. He said he joined the representative's team because he felt this election was one of the most important of his life and he wants to build a foundation in politics.

When administrators first decided to send students home in March, then-sophomore Alisa Kingsbury, a former Hatchet reporter, joined a campaign in her hometown of Simi Valley, California, to help Democratic challenger Phil Loos elected to the city council. After GW eventually announced classes would be online in the fall, Kingsbury said she opted to take a gap semester and work full time with the campaign.

"I was on track to graduate a semester early anyway," she said. "When they announced that we were going to be online in the fall, it just kind of made sense."

Kingsbury said she executes literature drops, which includes

distributing pamphlets describing Loo's campaign around town. She said volunteers staple a piece of paper with his main platform points to an empty bag with a list of organizations people can donate to help those affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Junior Patrick Burland, who works as the campaign manager for Mike Southworth in Connecticut's 14th Senate district, said he spends anywhere from 20 to 40 hours per week working full time for the campaign on top of his classes.

"It can be very hectic at times because you'll be in the middle of a Zoom class, and then you get a call because something happened [with the campaign] and you have to manage that while also being in class at the same time," he said.

Burland, who also serves as the director of public relations for GW College Republicans, said he manages the campaign's public relations by posting content on the campaign Instagram and Facebook pages and emailing press releases to campaign subscribers. He said he also drops off cards around his district with the candidate's name, race and other biographical information.

Sophomore Lauren Guzowski said she works as the deputy director of campaigns for GW College Democrats organizing five phone banking events per week for campaigns chosen weekly.

"We have members of our committee look at polling and we try to go for the competitive races where it could be really close, there's a razor thin margin," she said. "And we've also been trying to look into progressive candidates, because that's something that I know a lot of people in College Dems want to see."

## MEDITATE, JOURNAL, EXERCISE: COMBATING ANXIETY AROUND ELECTION DAY

SIDNEY LEE  
STAFF WRITER

With millions of ballots already cast and Election Day just around the corner, it's OK to feel your blood pressure rising.

The months leading up to the 2020 election were full of anxiety and anticipation amid the pandemic and the contentious presidential race, but unlike previous elections, Americans will likely not know the results of the election on the night of Nov. 3 as millions of voters mail in their ballots. Here are some techniques to help you cope with your stress and anxiety as you await election results:

### Exercising

If sitting still isn't your thing, exercise is also proven to act as a stress reliever. Whether you like to jog, practice yoga or do a YouTube HIIT workout, any form of exercise can boost the production of endorphins.

Exercise provides stress relief while also imitating the effects of stress, according to the Mayo Clinic. While working out, your body pushes through the flight or fight response brought on by stress. This can help protect your body from the harmful effects of stress, like a weakened immune system, body pain and fatigue.

If you don't have time to pencil in an hourlong workout, exercising in short bursts is also beneficial for mitigating stress. When you can't seem to take your mind off the polls, go for a walk or try 50 jumping jacks to clear your mind.

### Guided imagery

Guided imagery is a technique in which you conjure up soothing scenes or experiences in your mind to help you relax,

according to a Harvard Health article. Make sure you choose a scene or image that has personal significance, like your garden or the path you always walk on with your dog. Focus your mind on this scene and all of its details to push out any other thoughts.

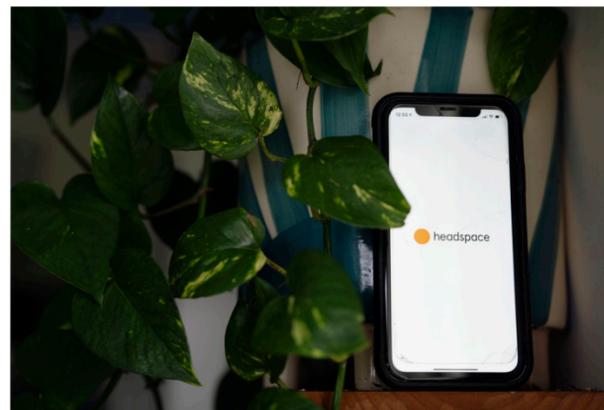
Similarly, guided meditation involves sitting comfortably while focusing on your breathing and bringing your attention to the present. Research suggests that meditation may be helpful for people with anxiety.

Both of these techniques can be done independently, but there are several apps and YouTube videos that can guide you through the process. Download apps like Insight Timer, Headspace, Simply Being and Calm, which allow you to choose the length of your guided session. Plug in your headphones, find a comfortable spot and try to take your mind off of the election for as long as your mind allows.

### Talking it out

Talking it out  
One great way to get your anxieties off your mind and prevent rumination is by talking with a therapist. They are there to listen and help you reflect on your feelings. If you don't have a therapist, a friend or someone close to you who is willing to listen can be a good outlet for your emotions.

Ask someone close to you if you can set aside 10 or 15 minutes and take turns airing your grievances and explaining your worries. Getting your thoughts out in the open and feeling heard may help you feel less alone. Once you talk it through, you may be better equipped to focus on responsibilities outside of the election, like your classes or job.



CAMILLE DESANTO | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR

This year, mail-in ballots could extend your feelings of election anxiety. Consider these tips to mitigate the worst of it.

## BUSINESSES UNCERTAIN ABOUT ODDS OF VIOLENCE

From Page 1

"There are lots of buildings around us, and they all have boards up, so if we're the one that doesn't, it's going to be worse for us, because [looters] will definitely target us," he said.

He said he is nervous that protests might turn violent after Election Day, potentially causing damage to his restaurant. He cited BLM demonstrations across D.C. this summer, which were largely peaceful but included some protesters who looted businesses.

BLT Steak's exterior was boarded up during

height of BLM demonstrations, but Hiney said protesters smashed the windows of nearby restaurants like Panera Bread and Teasim, which were not covered.

Caleb Fisher, the manager of Luke's Lobster, one block west of Lafayette Square at 800 17th St. NW, said he is keeping an eye on the area around his restaurant but holding off on boarding up or closing until he has a better idea of where the majority of protests will be located.

"We'd just be making sure we'd stay knowledgeable about where the potential traffic is going to be and then we would go from there," Fisher said. "As far

as other preparation, maybe either closing, closing early, coming in later, something like that."

Fisher added that he is ready to board up the restaurant's windows, if necessary.

"It depends on how unruly it gets," Fisher said. "We've boarded up before the protests once before in May. We hope not to board up again, but if something unforeseeable happens that means we have to board, then we will."

Jonathan Langel, the general manager of Bobby Van's Steakhouse, located a block east of Lafayette Square at 809 15th St. NW, said his restaurant's windows were

shattered during protests this summer, and the property was so damaged that management had to close the restaurant for six weeks to recover.

Langel said restaurant management has not yet decided whether to board up for Election Day, adding that the results typically don't come in until late at night or early the next morning.

"We haven't completely decided how we're going to handle it," Langel said. "Election results usually don't come out until much later at night, or not until the next morning, so we might stay open and protect ourselves as much as we can in

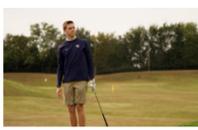
advance, or there is a chance that we will just board up for the day and close."

Langel said Bobby Van's plans to prepare for potential unrest are based on information he's heard from neighbors and building management.

Jeremy Pollok, the owner of Tonic at Quigley's at 2036 G St. NW, four blocks west of Lafayette Square, said protesters may not make it to his neck of Foggy Bottom given the restaurant's relative distance to the White House. But he added that he will move outside furnishings like chairs and heaters indoors so they can't be used to destroy property.

He said he is prepared to close for a few days if demonstrations progress, similar to what the restaurant did over the summer. Pollok said he wants to ensure both his staff and the restaurant property are safe during the protests.

"Once we saw what was happening [this summer], we were basically shut down," Pollok said. "We brought everything inside, and we were shut down for probably two or three days just to be on the safe side. So if Tuesday rolls around and things are looking a little sticky, then we'll just plan on not opening on Wednesday or until it is safe to open."



**GOLF**  
at the Hawaii Ka'anapali Classic Collegiate Invitational Nov. 1-3, 2019 | All day  
The Colonials closed out their fall season in Hawaii.



**MEN'S SQUASH**  
vs. Georgetown  
Nov. 4, 2015 | 7 p.m.  
Men's squash opened its season with an 8-1 win over the Hoyas.

**NUMBER CRUNCH** 8.2

The average number of hits baseball collected per game through its first 16 contests in 2020, down from 2019's average of 11.4 in the same timeframe.

## TEAMS LOG 100 PERCENT VOTER REGISTRATION, HOLD LETTER-WRITING CAMPAIGNS AHEAD OF ELECTION

**NURIA DIAZ**  
REPORTER

**TARA JENNINGS**  
STAFF WRITER

Before GW made Election Day a University holiday, the NCAA suspended all athletic activities Nov. 3 to give athletes and coaching staffs the ability to vote and engage politically.

But GW student-athletes and the athletic department have been gearing up for the 2020 election since the summer. The department rolled out the #OnlyatGW Voting Initiative in July to help student-athletes register to vote and learn more about issues related to the election through a database of resources, and several other teams participated in a letter-writing campaign last month to encourage voting.

Here is how the athletic department has been preparing for the upcoming election:

### Voter registration program

Since debuting the initiative in July, at least five programs have publicly announced 100 percent voter registration.

Created by a team of student-athletes, coaches and staff, #OnlyatGW provided resources for voter registration and hosted a speaker series featuring former School of Media and Public Affairs Director Frank Sesno and former athletes who now work in politics.

Maddie Loder, a junior on the women's basketball team, was one of three student-athletes leading the program's creation. She was joined alongside junior gymnast Olivia Raymond and Student-Athlete Advisory Committee President and junior women's rower Lauren Bennett.

"We're trying to make sure that not only are we educating people on who they can vote for, but we want to give people a safe

space where they can learn and understand figure out on their own what their views are and who they think is the best person to carry on those views in their local, state and national elections," Loder said in the initial press release.

Since July, programs have highlighted the initiative on social media. In a pinned video posted Aug. 25 on its Twitter account, men's basketball pledged its commitment to 100 percent voter registration. The squad challenged Georgetown, Virginia, American, George Mason and VCU to also actively participate in the upcoming election cycle.

Women's rowing tweeted Oct. 5 that 100 percent of its team had registered to vote. Women's basketball also reported 100 percent voter registration Oct. 8. Two days later, men's rowing tweeted that everyone on its roster, which includes representation from five countries, was registered to vote in their native country. Volleyball announced Oct. 20 that the program logged 100 percent voter registration.

Other GW programs – golf, softball, gymnastics, men's and women's soccer, sailing, men's and women's swimming and diving, men's and women's tennis and men's and women's cross country and track and field – promoted the program on Twitter but did not announce their own registration rate.

The athletic department also posted quotes from 10 student-athletes regarding the importance of voter participation.

"Voting for me is just a statement that my opinion matters," said Beth Ellinport, a junior midfielder on the women's soccer team. "Voting, although a subtle act, is almost a weapon against political indifference."

### Letter-writing campaign

Student-athletes from four



The athletic department conducted a voter registration drive and letter-writing campaign ahead of this week's election. FILE PHOTO BY DEAN WHITELAW

programs – women's basketball, men's and women's rowing and gymnastics – participated in a letter-writing campaign Oct. 17, according to a press release.

The campaign, dubbed the "Hour of Action," involved writing letters to elected officials and potential voters. Women's basketball forward and sophomore Faith Blethen orchestrated the event after her team met with Gabby Williams, a WNBA forward and social justice advocate.

"With the letter writing that we did, a lot of that idea came from her," Blethen said in the release. "She said, 'You can use your voice to start communicating with people who are in positions of power.'"

The squads penned about 1,000

letters to potential voters and political officials, like home-state senators. Vote Forward provided each student-athlete a template and list of names to address voters, the release states.

The effort was a collaboration with Vote Forward, a nonprofit that seeks to increase voter turnout for underrepresented communities. Members of the organization call on volunteers to inform registered voters on the election process and encourage them to vote, its website states.

Programs at GW have also gotten involved in fighting for social justice. The athletic department and more than a dozen teams spoke out against racial injustice in the wake of George Floyd's murder. Women's

basketball players, the men's basketball program and head coaches from both teams have also formed coalitions, joined organizations and used their platform to combat social injustice.

Students-athletes who participated in the event distanced in the Smith Center in accordance with COVID-19 safety measures. The gymnastics program participated remotely, the release states.

"It was very cool to see fellow teams getting together and doing the exact same thing to use our collective voice," sophomore rower Aidan Rowland said in the release. "It proves that even though we're limited in certain ways, we can still find ways to try and affect meaningful changes."

## Seven men's rowing recruits leave team amid program cut

**EMILY MAISE**  
SPORTS EDITOR

Two athletes from the initial nine-member Class of 2024 remain in the men's rowing program.

Athletic department officials said this summer that seven programs, including men's rowing, would be cut at the conclusion of the 2020-21 season and that the team could register with GW as a club. In three interviews, rowers who would have been freshmen this season said they left GW because they want to compete at a higher level than a club team and are looking to join a program at another university.

Athletic department spokesperson Brian Sereno declined to confirm which freshmen are no longer with the program and if any freshmen planned to transfer to another school.

GW announced May 1 that nine freshmen would join the men's rowing program in a release that is no longer available on the GW Sports website. Freshman rower Braeden Arthur confirmed GW's initial freshman class of nine rowers, saying at least five of them transferred to schools like Syracuse or Oregon State, while some deferred enrollment.

"There was a group chat of all the recruits – there's nine of us," Arthur said. "And I just remember, one by one, 'Bye guys. I'm sorry. I'm unenrolling. This guy's unenrolled. I'm leaving. I'm transferring.'"

On the morning of July 31, Arthur said the team was told to join a "super important" meeting. The team and multiple other programs joined the call, where they said athletic director Tanya Vogel looked "visibly upset" and informed them that men's rowing and six other teams would be eliminated.

During Arthur's recruiting process, he listed GW as No. 1 or No. 2 in terms of rowing and academics. He said the decision to cut the program "stung" because he had worked hard to get recruited by the University, but he added that he'll stick with the team and participate on the club level.

Baringer Lovaas, a former recruit who joined the program with his twin brother Grigsby, said he wanted to compete at the "highest level" possible, which pushed him to find a new team. The Lovaas twins transferred to Boston University but need to defer enrollment a year before claiming their spot on the roster.

"I love GW's team to death, but the club status of them would hinder our development as athletes, and we felt that the best plan would be to find a new school and find a new program," he said.

The twins were considering GW after their friend, current junior coxswain and fellow Boston College High School alum Luke Ames, committed to the program. Former head coach Mark Davis recruited the Lovaas's, and they committed to row under current head coach Eric Gehrke.

Before the Lovaas twins joined the program, the Colonials' Varsity Eight boat was coming off a No. 13 finish at the Intercollegiate Rowing Association finals in 2019 and a canceled 2020 spring season amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Baringer Lovaas said he was "ecstatic" to make an immediate impact on a rising program.

"It's really great to see the energy within the whole community and the amount of trust they had in each other and the amount of camaraderie that the team had," Lovaas said. "I really like the campus and the school itself, and the ability to know that I can make an impact on a team on the rise, kind of shocking the world."



Fans of GW's basketball teams can pay to have a cardboard cutout take their place in the Smith Center in an effort to reimagine the fan experience during the pandemic. FILE PHOTO BY ERIC LEE

## GW unveils virtual fan experience ahead of basketball season

**BELLE LONG**  
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Without access to courtside seats this season, the athletic department is rolling out an online fan experience that includes perks like game day shoutouts and GW merchandise, according to a press release Thursday.

"The Suite Life" is part of an effort to boost fan engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic when fans might not be able to attend games in person. Fans will receive GW merchandise, access to an exclusive GW sports Facebook group, virtual practices and "meet the team" events, the release states.

"Our Engagement Unit was charged with conceptualizing new ways to secure revenue and resources to support our student-athletes, while simultaneously engaging our strong fanbase to continue to provide joy and school spirit to our community," Athletic Director Tanya Vogel said in the release. "The Suite Life is the marriage of those efforts and I personally can hardly wait

to enjoy it when I can't be with one of our teams."

Athletics Operations Associate Aaron Jones led the program, the release states. GW sports enthusiasts can choose among several Suite Life packages with various perks, ranging from \$125 to \$250.

The cheapest package includes access to the Facebook group, entitled the "Tricorner." The Facebook group will host virtual events, behind the scenes content with the basketball programs and in-game activities, the release states.

Enrolled fans will also earn a special birthday or anniversary shoutout during a team's ESPN+ stream and gameday eats, an offshoot of the Tricorner that serves as a one-stop shop for recipes and promotion codes for game day food. Purchasers will also receive a "Gameday Box" that will include a GW-branded koozie, wine stopper, flag, coaster set and chip and dip party tray.

For the mid-range, \$200 package, fans will receive access to the Tri-

corner, a shoutout during ESPN+ streams and gameday eats. But instead of the "Gameday Box," fans will get a "Swag Box" that includes a GW-branded winter hat, Adidas backpack, scarf, socks and mask.

With the most expensive package, fans will receive everything the former two tiers include, as well as a three-month long subscription to ESPN+ and chalk talks with coaches before each game.

As of late September, Vogel said D.C. is not allowing fans to attend sporting events. Fans who purchase the most expensive package will have the opportunity to fill Smith Center stands with a cardboard cutout until they can return in person.

The gameday box is set to ship to participating fans in November, and fans can expect the swag box to be shipped in late January, the initiative's website states.

Some proceeds from the Suite Life will support the athletic department's and student-athletes' "future," the release states.



Three-quarters of the Class of 2024's cohort on the men's rowing team have left the program following GW's decision to cut the sport at the end of the 2020-21 season. HATCHET FILE PHOTO