

## Opinions

The editorial board marks the bicentennial by looking back at GW's history.  
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Discover the best places near the DMV for a quick weekend getaway.  
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## Sports

Men's basketball gears up for the A-10 tournament after a drastically shortened season.  
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## Junior joins SA presidential race for second time

**CIARA REGAN**

CONTRIBUTING NEWS EDITOR

**MAKENA ROBERTS**

CONTRIBUTING NEWS EDITOR

A former candidate for Student Association president is again vying for the role on a platform to increase representation on campus for marginalized groups and create more avenues for the SA to build relationships with students.

Christian Zidouemba, a junior studying international business and international affairs, is centering his run this time around on adding internal roles, like SA director positions to support marginalized students, and pushing for professional development opportunities, like a mentorship program with alumni, he said. Zidouemba said since his last campaign, he has spent time learning the SA bylaws and speaking with top officials about his platform points.

He said his work with officials as an employee at the Lerner Health and Wellness Center, position on the Busi-

ness School's Dean's Council for Multicultural Recruitment facilitating events for students of "underprivileged backgrounds" and leadership role in First Generation United allows him to bring a "fresh" perspective to the presidential position.

"We have an opportunity when we get back to campus to reinvent what student leaders should look like and to reinvent what our campus should look like," he said. "I have dedicated my whole entire life fighting against inequity and injustice. And I have just done that in my time at GW."

Zidouemba, joining the race with current SA President Brandon Hill and SA Sen. Charles Aborisade, U-at-Large, is required to gather at least 250 signatures during the candidate registration period from Feb. 24 to March 3 and be approved as a candidate by the Joint Elections Commission.

When Zidouemba ran for president last year, he vowed to increase professional resources available to students and implement a first-year

class on networking and resume building. He said these policies are on his platform again this year.

He said he wants to create a mentorship program with the support of the SA and the GW Alumni Association to help groups on campus, like first-generation students, navigate professional resources and discuss potential career paths.

He said he has spoken with Patricia Carocci, the associate vice president of alumni relations and annual giving, about the program, which he said she supported. He said they also discussed possible fundraising efforts to create tuition scholarships for freshmen and first-generation students struggling to afford GW.

Zidouemba said if elected, he will also add a director of student-athletes to the executive branch to communicate with club and varsity sports teams to sponsor SA events for athletes and guide students who want to create new club teams.

Zidouemba said he will use his connections at Lerner,



KARIANN TAN LEE | PHOTOGRAPHER

Zidouemba's campaign focuses on fundraising, increasing student-athlete presence in the SA and highlighting the philanthropic efforts of Greek life members.

where he works as a student employee, to increase advertisements about mental health resources available to students. He said he will also facilitate, with the help of the senate, weekly events for all students on topics like men-

tal health hosted by the SA.

He said he would also work to advertise Greek philanthropy events and highlight the volunteer work of members of the Greek life community. He said he believes "there are genuinely

good people" within Greek life organizations and wants to remind students that these organizations are founded in philanthropy, which should be acknowledged.

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SKYLAR EPSTEIN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

GW's endowment growth remained positive this year, avoiding the drop in value experienced by some of the University's peers' endowments.

## GW's endowment growth for fiscal year 2020 on par with peer institutions

**RYAN ANASTASIO**

REPORTER

The University's endowment growth for fiscal year 2020 is consistent with its peer institutions but falls slightly below the national average.

GW's endowment increased in value by 1.35 percent in FY 2020, which ran from July 1, 2019, through June 30, 2020, ticking up from \$1.779 billion to \$1.803 billion. In an analysis of 705 institutions that included GW's peers, the National Association of College and University Business Officers found that the University's endowment return was slightly lower than the national average of 1.8

percent.

The report also states that most schools have targeted an annual increase of 7.5 percent on their endowments, and next year's data will shed light on how universities performed during most of the pandemic. During FY 2019, the national average increase was 5.3 percent, but GW's endowment value decreased by 1.13 percent that year.

"With data through mid-year 2020, the study captures the first several months of the higher education community's experiences with the global COVID-19 pandemic," Susan Wheeler Johnston, the president and CEO of the NACUBO,

said in a press release. "In next year's report, the fiscal year 2021 findings will help complete the picture of how institutions and their endowments coped."

Officials vowed to not tap into GW's endowment to weather a \$180 million annual budget gap this year, instead making cuts in areas like employee travel and hirings.

Of GW's 12 peer schools, the University saw more significant growth than New York, Northeastern, Syracuse, Tufts, Tulane and Wake Forest universities and the universities of Pittsburgh and Rochester.

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## Pandemic drove increased public health interest, experts say

**ISHA TRIVEDI**

ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

**NURIA DIAZ**

STAFF WRITER

Experts said the 20 percent rise in incoming undergraduates who are interested in public health compared to last year is likely the result of heightened interest in the subject during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Milken Institute School of Public Health spokesperson Stacey DiLorenzo said the pandemic has shown the world the influence of the field of public health. She said if the increased interest this year results in a larger incoming class of Milken students, officials will "adjust resources as necessary" to meet those students' needs.

She said officials have noticed a similar increase in applications to Milken's graduate programs for the upcoming year.

DiLorenzo said having a large group of "talented" public health students will support Milken's research capabilities and the school's ability to serve the community.

Prospective undergraduates interested in studying public health can apply to Milken while applying to GW. Students can also transfer into the exercise sci-

ence or nutrition majors with a minimum grade point average of 2.5 or transfer to the public health major with a minimum GPA of 2.75 after being admitted to GW.

Medical schools across the country have also noted an 18 percent increase in applications, according to the Association of American Medical Colleges.

David Rosner, a professor of sociomedical sciences at Columbia University, said the change this year could be the result of growing interest from younger generations in the way social issues like racism and climate change are tied to public health. Experts in public health and D.C. officials have said the pandemic is disproportionately impacting marginalized communities in the District.

Rosner said throughout the past 50 years, the public health field has evolved from a focus on technical issues like measurements of genetic change to its impact on "broad social issues" like climate change and gun control.

Gerald Keusch, a professor of medicine and international health at Boston University, said the change this year could be tied to increased attention on social issues like health equity during the pandemic.

"What we're seeing

now with COVID is just the progression of what we've seen over the last five or 10 years, this growing concern for the fact that we inhabit the same planet," Keusch said.

He said he hopes the trend will continue to develop the field of public health and allow underlying issues in health care to go unseen. He said the growth in interest could allow individuals from diverse backgrounds to enter the field.

He said the pandemic has allowed many individuals to see the field as a viable career path after the nationwide attention on many public health experts and the topic's effects during a global health crisis. He said the public health field has to maintain a visible presence and include diverse voices to continue drawing the interest of young people.

Lauren Christiansen-Lindquist, a research assistant professor of public health at Emory University, said the pandemic has allowed individuals to see the personal impact of decisions public health professionals make.

She added that public health schools should be more "nimble" and "creative" as they begin to look into the possibility of expanding their class size.

## 'I felt really helpless': Students in Texas navigated storm

**BRENNAN FISKE**

STAFF WRITER

**TIFFANY GARCIA**

ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

For a few days two weeks ago, senior Denice Rios could only hope her home in Texas would receive internet power to charge her laptop and complete assignments.

Below-freezing temperatures reached her hometown near Houston, causing power outages and a lack of clean water for four days while the state initiated rolling blackouts to conserve energy and prevent Texas' power grid from failing. Rios said she fell behind in classes during that time because she couldn't always charge her technology or connect to the internet for class.

Rios is one of five students currently taking classes remotely in Texas who said they went with-

out heat, power and water for multiple days as the state experienced unusually strong winter storms and widespread power outages. Students said their professors accommodated their situations by offering extensions and emotional support as students focused on staying safe and warm throughout the week.

Sophomore Anushka Hassan, an international affairs major taking classes in Houston, said the power in her house turned off and on for three days after Feb. 14. On the first day, she got power back within two hours, but it shut off soon after and did not turn back on for three days, she said.

She said her family went without heat, power and water, which left her drained and unable to stay on top of her work as her focus turned to staying warm.

Hassan said she had to keep her windows shut and huddle close to her gas

fireplace after her house dropped to 40 degrees. She said she emailed her professors to alert them she would be absent from class because of the power outages, but some asked if she could use her phone as a hotspot to log in.

She said she felt like her professors were understanding overall, but she would not have had the energy to attend class during the storm had she had power.

"It was really hard to stay warm because the fireplace is only so big and it's in the middle of our living room, so we just did our best shutting the windows," Hassan said. "My room was intolerable because it has a really big window and it's at the front of the house, so I just really didn't spend any time in my room."

Junior Lucas Miller, a Middle East studies major and Hatchet photographer taking classes from home



COURTESY OF BRIANA GONZALEZ

Snow blanketed areas across Texas following two weeks of a winter storm, leaving students without power and mentally and physically drained.

near Austin, Texas, said he was about to log into one of his classes on Feb. 11 when the power cut off. He said he

was still able to attend that class through his phone but had to keep it plugged into a portable charger because he

could not charge it through any outlet.

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# News

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## THIS WEEK'S EVENTS

**VIRTUAL PANEL: EUROPE'S GEOPOLITICAL AND ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE POST-BREXIT**

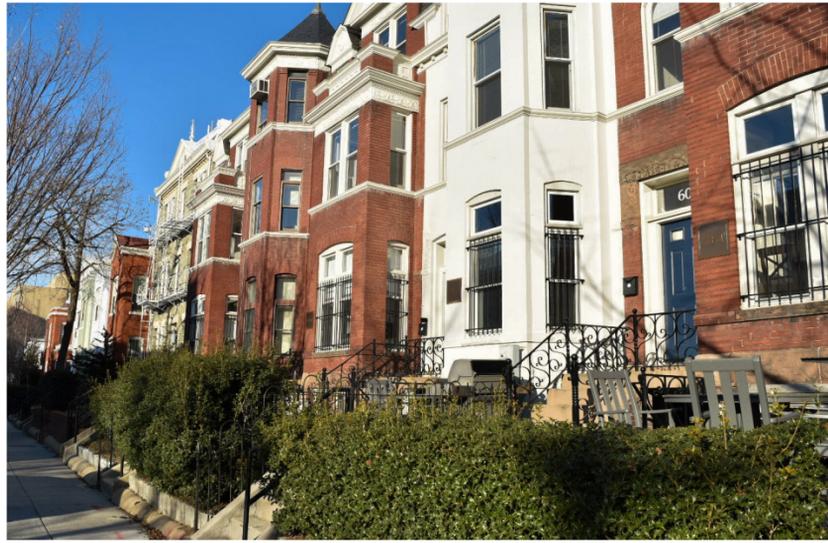
March 3 • 4 p.m. EST • Free  
Join a panel of high-level European politicians and policy analysts as they present their takes on Europe's economic outlook.

**"THE FAKE NEWS PANIC OF A CENTURY AGO": LEE HUEBNER BOOK TALK**

March 5 • Noon EST • Free  
SMPA professors Lee Huebner and Janet Steele will discuss the striking history of concerns about fake news described in Huebner's recent book.

**THIS WEEK IN HISTORY**  
March 4, 1981

Former SA Sen.-elect Oscar David and two other students admitted to fabricating a person named Morton Shapiro, who won a write-in campaign for an SA seat.



SOPHIA YOUNG | CONTRIBUTING PHOTO EDITOR

IFC President Jon Shemano said he expects recruitment numbers to bounce back once students return to campus.

## IFC recruitment continues decline during virtual formal recruitment

**LAUREN SFORZA**  
STAFF WRITER

The number of people participating in the Interfraternity Council's first virtual formal recruitment period last month dropped by more than 50 percent compared to last year, officials said.

Continuing a two-year decline, 83 fewer men participated in formal fraternity recruitment in 2021 compared to 2020, officials said. IFC leaders said the decrease in potential new members allowed existing members to focus on building stronger connections with participants through online formal recruitment events, like virtual pizza and poker nights.

Colette Coleman, the senior associate dean of students, said 107 students participated in this year's IFC formal recruitment, compared to 190 last year. She said the Office of Student Life supported chapters developing fully virtual recruitment plans by providing research gathered from peer institutions that were leading virtual recruitment processes and "guiding local chapter advisers."

Seven chapter leaders did not return multiple requests for comment.

IFC President and junior

Jon Shemano said about 70 students accepted bids from fraternities at the end of the recruitment process. He said at least six fraternities will conduct informal recruitment this semester for students who are interested in joining that individual fraternity.

He said although recruitment numbers are down, he expects numbers to "bounce back" if most students are allowed to return to campus in the fall.

Junior Krupal Sharma, the president of Beta Theta Pi, said the chapter accepted 28 new members last month, the largest pledge class of IFC spring recruitment, through a mix of formal and informal recruitment. He said this year's pledge class was above the chapter's average class of 20 members.

He said planning virtual events was difficult, prompting the chapter to rely less on rush events like virtual game nights and more on learning about members in Zoom breakout rooms. He said the group focused on "just talking" with potential new members to learn about their passions and goals, which benefited both potential recruits and chapter members.

Sharma said the chapter hosted five events – three

open and two invite-only – before accepting formal recruitment pledges. He said the chapter prioritized recruitment through its Instagram page, having members repost chapter events throughout this academic year, which he said many other fraternities did not do.

Junior Chris Osborne, the president of Tau Kappa Epsilon, said the fraternity recruited 15 new members during spring recruitment, triple what he expected for this semester's recruitment. He said with fewer people rushing, he and other members focused more on learning about each recruit in small groups on Zoom.

Osborne said his chapter completed two online training sessions hosted by TKE national headquarters to prepare for the virtual recruitment process, including a five-hour online module and a meeting with a TKE recruitment specialist. He said these online sessions guided chapters through their recruitment plans by recommending questions to ask recruits and virtual events like a virtual game night on Zoom.

He said since TKE returned to campus only about three years ago, recruitment is a vital part of raising the chapter's profile and numbers.

## SA leadership team to prioritize mental health support

**SAMANTHA SERAFIN**  
STAFF WRITER

The Student Association's newly set top two leaders said they plan to spend the remainder of the term working to increase students' awareness of mental health resources.

SA President Brandon Hill, who assumed the role in January, and SA Executive Vice President Catherine Morris, who was confirmed to the role last month, said they hope to add more positions to SA programs that aid students' mental health, like GW Listens and the Student Advocacy and Support Corps. The duo said they want to use the remainder of the term to ensure students are aware of programs in the Colonial Health Center and through the SA that can help them weather the mental health impact of the pandemic.

Hill stepped into the position during a turbulent time – former SA President Howard Brookins resigned in late January after sexual misconduct allegations came to light and dozens of student leaders called for him to leave.

Hill said moving forward, he hopes to implement projects he started as executive vice president, like creating a financial aid advisory council and up-

dating the syllabus bank. He said in ascending to his role, he realized the past SA president "poorly supported" programs like GW Listens, the Student Advocacy Corps and People for Periods – a program that provides menstrual products in campus bathrooms.

He added that he wants to add more positions in internal SA programs – like GW Listens, a student-run mental health hotline that he said has seen a more than 90 percent decrease in use since the pandemic began – to expand their resources and attention. He said he is communicating with officials in the Office of Advocacy & Support to provide mental health training for students who work on the hotline and increase the number of students working for the program.

He said he plans to spend time toward the end of the semester "reimagining" the Student Advocacy and Support Corps, an SA program that offers guidance to students who have violated the Code of Student Conduct. He said he plans to implement a "big push" in May and June to hire new students and provide academic integrity training for those in the program.

Morris said since she began her role as executive

vice president last month, she and Hill have met with Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Mark Diaz to discuss expanding students' access to the CHC's physical and mental health resources, like increasing women's services at the center. She said she plans to work with officials to research options to provide students free access to birth control and STD testing.

Morris added that "trust issues" that arose in the SA recently after Brookins' resignation are improving and said there has been a "mending process" in recent weeks between senators who had disagreements throughout the semester. She said tensions around the executive vice president nomination of SA Sen. Kate Carpenter, U-at-Large, also caused rifts between groups within the SA.

She said she has been trying to make herself "open and available" and have "candid conversations" with members of the senate who want to discuss any concerns within the SA. Morris said having open conversations with members in different branches can help avoid members being pinned against one another on potentially controversial topics.



GRACE HRONIN AND SOPHIA YOUNG | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR

The Student Association's top two leaders say increasing the student presence in SA and University resources like GW Listens is a major priority moving forward.

## Sophomores struggle to stay connected to GW after abrupt end to first year

**ABRIGAIL WILLIAMS**  
REPORTER

**MICHELE WRIGHT**  
REPORTER

Then-freshman Sasha Hinckley felt like she had finally formed a friend group at GW when the COVID-19 pandemic cut her first year short.

Suddenly, Hinckley found herself isolated from her peers and back in her childhood bedroom in Newport, Rhode Island, where she struggled to remain connected with the friends she had made her first year. Hinckley said she lacked time to establish roots at the University, and as remote learning began, she struggled to connect with peers online and make up for the time she lost on campus.

"A lot of college students across the country are feeling distanced from their school and separated," Hinckley said. "I don't think that it was a bad decision to go virtual. It's a decision that's made by what's happening in our world. But it definitely is difficult for college students."

In interviews, about half a dozen sophomores said staying connected with their established friend groups and student organizations has been "difficult" because they had less time to establish firm roots with their peers as freshmen. Students said they've had to put more effort into maintaining the relationships they built during their first year without having formed a firm group, making them feel less a part of the GW community.

"Earlier today, I was asking a professor to write a recommendation letter for me," Hinckley said. "And I was thinking about how I'd only known this professor over Zoom and then was thinking about how disconnected I felt from professors. It's definitely a different

experience."

Zhana Murataj, an accounting major, said studying from Washington Township, New Jersey, last semester felt like she was "back to a high school kind of life," after a year of being independent in D.C. last year. She said at some points last semester, she forgot what college was like because she lacked time to make memories on campus.

"I almost forgot what college was all about and how it was, so it definitely made me more distant," Murataj said. "At some point, I felt like I didn't even go to GW. I was just doing these manual classes online and just getting A's or the best I could get."

She said she has had trouble staying in contact with friends she made freshman year who are all juggling their own lives outside of GW and relate less to her life now. She said as a more introverted person, she has struggled to meet new friends online, despite being almost halfway through her college experience.

Murataj said after the University announced online instruction would continue for the spring semester, she decided to apply for on-campus housing and is currently living in Shenkman Hall. She said she had convinced herself returning to campus would be a "return to normalcy" but has yet to make any new friends or go on the "D.C. adventures" she had dreamed about to limit exposure to COVID-19.

"I feel everyone can relate to this – the friends you make freshman year aren't really going to be your friends forever," Murataj said. "You go through people because you just grow out of it, or maybe they don't represent you as well as you would hope. It's been like losing friends and also really hard to make friends."

Madison Dorsey, an interna-



PHEBE GROSSER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

For the Class of 2023, remote learning meant losing ties to friendships forged during freshman year.

tional affairs major, said her in-person freshman year was "fantastic" living in Hensley Hall on the Mount Vernon Campus. She said living in the 30-person residence hall helped her build a strong community among her peers and memorable experiences, like having daily dinners at Pelham Commons.

But she said since beginning her sophomore year, she has felt disconnected from student groups she formed her first year. Having her friends from the Vern to text with daily has helped with easing her isolation, she said.

"We would go to dinner every night and talk about our days, talk about our classes, just anything," she said. "I just miss having a sense

of community. Mostly now I just feel like it's me versus the computer. There's nothing there."

Chris Wright, a finance and international business major, said he has been studying in Keyport, New Jersey, for the last 11 months. He said he spent his first year getting used to GW and joining organizations and had hoped to make more friends his sophomore year when he was fully comfortable on campus.

Wright said he mostly misses being able to hang out with his friends and have the possibility of meeting a wide range of people.

"I definitely miss hanging out with them, going to the monuments at night and doing fun

things, like going to Pentagon City mall," Wright said.

He said that he stays connected with the student organizations he joined like the Real Estate & Finance Alliance and the GW Black Men's Initiative, but he has been less active than if he would have been a part of the group for more than a year. He said he took a year off from GW Mock Trial, which he had joined and was looking forward to participating in as a sophomore.

"The courtroom presence and things like that are just not available through Zoom," Wright said. "For me, it was a big deal breaker to not actually do these cases in an actual room against other schools."

# Public health school officials to launch two new doctoral programs this fall

CARLY NEILSON  
STAFF WRITER

ETHAN SCHWARTZ  
REPORTER

The Milken Institute School of Public Health has begun accepting applications for two new doctoral programs in global public health sciences and health and biomedical data science.

Faculty in the public health school said the programs will educate the next generation of leaders in these fields and prepare them for jobs in government agencies or in academia. They said the programs offer an interdisciplinary approach to global public health sciences and health and biomedical data science, which will help attract candidates.

The program in health and biomedical data science will be the first doctoral program offered by the Department of Biostatistics and Bioinformatics, which formed in July 2019. The global public health program will be the second doctoral program that the Department of Global Health offers.

Global public health sciences

James Tielsch, the chair of the global health department and a professor in the global public health program, said there is a market for this type of doctoral program as no other school in the District has a similar program.

"We have consistently had people asking us about this over the past couple years, so we thought it was the right time to put it all together," Tielsch said.

Tielsch said the global public health program includes three "specialization areas" for students – population health science, global infectious disease and health systems.

The program includes courses like Advanced Epidemiologic Methods and Global Vaccinology, and students must complete at least 48 credits to receive the degree.

"People who are interested in those specific areas will be assigned the appropriate kind of faculty mentors and will have a custom curriculum designed specially for them," Tielsch said.

Tielsch said he expects applicants to the program to be well trained in quantitative science as well as other areas in the health field, although he said applicants can come from a "fairly broad" range of public health interests. He said he estimates about 30 to 40 prospective students have applied to the program so far.

"This program just reflects the growth of our department and school of public health in general," Tielsch said.

Adam Richards, an associate professor of global health, said global public health has received "tremendous growth and interest" for more than a decade, and the COVID-19 pandemic may further increase that pattern. He said the pandemic will further emphasize how the "health of people anywhere impacts the health of people everywhere."

Officials saw a 20 percent increase in the number

of students interested in studying public health this academic year, which experts said is likely due to the growing national interest in epidemiology and public health during the pandemic.

"Global health applies all the same tools as public health but does so in a way that emphasizes that interconnectivity and that collective action that is necessary to solve problems that are uniquely global in scope," Richards said.

He said he hopes the program can recruit students outside the United States to give them tools to help their own countries with public health issues.

"I would hope that the program remains available and accessible to folks from other countries and it can serve as a tool to improve the capacity to exponentially increase the local capacity of previously lower-resourced settings," Richards said.

Biomedical data science Milken spokesperson Stacey DiLorenzo said the doctoral program in health and biomedical data science will provide "rigorous" training in the fundamentals of health and biomedical science for doctoral students. She said they will have opportunities at research centers directed by Milken faculty members like the Computational Biology Institute and the Biostatistics Center.

She said the biostatistics and bioinformatics department consists of faculty members who have "considerable sponsored research funding," which allows



FILE PHOTO BY ARIELLE BADER | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR

A public health school spokesperson said the programs will meet increased national demand for certain types of public health research.

them to provide their students with funding and research opportunities.

The program includes courses on topics like programming languages and within the two concentrations of applied biostatistics or applied bioinformatics, for a total of 72 credits.

"Strong academic programs from this seminal department will play a key role in the opportunities at GWSPH and the continued climb in national prominence," she said in an email.

DiLorenzo said the country has seen a nationwide demand for more of these types of academic programs, adding that the National Institutes of Health has been the "largest public funder"

of biomedical research, providing about \$32 billion per year.

She added that the program is "novel" in that it combines the subjects of biostatistics, bioinformatics, data science, computing and public health.

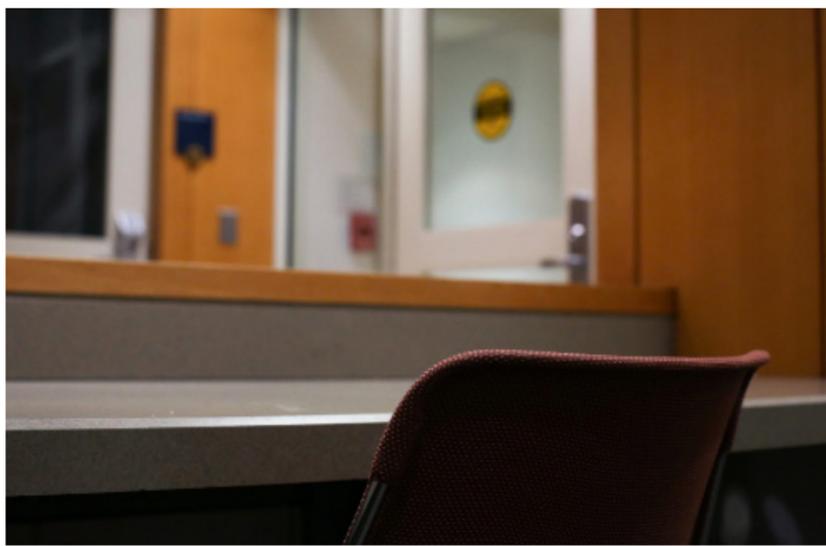
"The mission of the Ph.D. in health and biomedical data science is to train the next generation of leaders in the quantitative aspects of public health and medicine," she said.

DiLorenzo said the program is intended for students who have a previous background in data science, including those enrolled in GW's undergraduate data science program or graduate programs in biostatistics and

medicine. She said graduates of the program will be prepared for careers in academia, government agencies like the NIH and Food and Drug Administration and industries like pharmaceuticals and biotechnology companies.

She said officials have yet to "properly advertise" the program, but they are "extremely pleased" with the interest they have received in the program so far, with 20 completed applications and "40 more or so" currently in progress.

"This is a testament to the reputation of the faculty in the Department of Biostatistics and Bioinformatics and the Milken Institute School of Public Health," she said.



FILE PHOTO BY OLIVIA ANDERSON  
The security downsizing has left many residence halls without a presence at the front desk often during the day, students say.

## Officials downsize security in residence halls after move-in period

CHOW PAUEKSAKON  
REPORTER

Administrators are reducing security levels in residence halls after monitoring lobby activity 24/7 through the first week after move-in.

GW Police Department Chief James Tate said officials contracted Allied Universal Security to assign officers to monitor building access while the student access monitor positions remain inactive during the pandemic. He said officials tightened security around the move-in period, when citywide security concerns near the presidential inauguration also shut down campus, but the officers will now rotate between halls and assist others as needed.

Tate said the front desk officers are typically responsible for controlling building access, verifying GWorld carriers and preventing potentially dangerous people from entering the building.

Tate said officials also use the GWorld system, which requires students to tap into three checkpoints before accessing a room for added security, while GWorld officers monitor closed-circuit television footage of common area space to operate "virtual patrols" in residence halls.

Tate added that members of the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities enforce GW's no-guest policy rather than front desk security, but students should continue to follow the rule to maintain campus safety during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Community members should be aware of their surroundings and avoid providing access to anyone

without appropriate permissions," he said.

But under the assumption that front desk security would enforce the no-guest policy, students said the relaxed security policy is a way for residents to sneak in guests from off campus. Students said they wish the officers would enforce the rule themselves, but they still feel safe with the current level of building security.

Freshman Alex Rainey, who lives in Shenkman Hall, said they noticed the drop in security when officers were absent from the front desk for about a week last month. They said they weren't notified that security would decrease, but they wish officials would keep the same security levels as during the move-in period.

"The University really wants to take it seriously, so the fact that there aren't regular security officers makes it seem like they are not taking it seriously," they said.

Rainey said they noticed a drop in security at night despite normally seeing officers during the daytime, adding that safety could be enhanced if officers were stationed more consistently.

Without enforcing the no-guest policy, Rainey said a lighter police presence means there is more opportunity for students to bring guests into their rooms. They said they hope security stops people without GWorld cards from entering the building.

Maureen Rafter, a freshman living in Shenkman Hall, said she's "not terribly bothered" by the security levels but wishes for a more consistent presence of of-

ficers whom students could approach with issues instead of contacting an area coordinator. Rafter said she expected the security officers to enforce the no-guest policy, which she said would be "the easiest way" to ensure students follow COVID-19 guidelines.

She added that the lack of security might make it easier for students to bring in restricted guests, and she hopes an officer would stop a student or guest who walks into the building without GWorld access.

"It's just nice to have somebody reliable to make sure that we're safe and that guidelines are being followed," Rafter said.

Preston Schiller, a freshman living in South Hall, said front desk officers are in his building's lobby "two out of three times," and he feels safe with the level of security in the building. He said he also thought officers would enforce the no-guest policy and said students might be more willing to exploit the lack of security when officers are absent.

"It's going to be pretty hard to get in, but of course if there's no one there, you can get someone in," Schiller said. "If there's a security guard there, you're not going to be able to get someone in."

Because the security personnel have been consistent in South Hall, he said restricted guests entering the building would most likely remain uncommon.

"It's sporadic and you don't know when the security guards are going to be there, [so] you kind of police yourself in a way," Schiller said. "I feel safe."

## IT officials update Banweb system with new functionalities

DANIEL PATRICK  
GALGANO  
REPORTER

Officials are no longer considering phasing out the Banweb administrative system, instead making gradual updates to improve the existing sites.

Officials announced in January 2018 that GW would move away from Banweb after its vendor, Ellucian Banner, retired the version, but that summer, GW Information Technology adopted the Banner 9 Administrative Pages, an updated version of the system. Jared Johnson, the interim chief technology officer, said officials' focus is now on modernizing Banweb's functions.

Administrators previously said last January they were reviewing the Banner roadmap with "campus partners" to consider future functionality for implementation.

Johnson said the first most visible improvements came last summer when the IT department released "a completely new course registration experience for students." Later that year, the division revealed a new employee dashboard, he said.

He said technology officials announced an updated version of DegreeMAP last fall that included "enhanced planning tools" for students and academic advisers.

DegreeMAP launched at GW in 2011 in a deal with the software developer DegreeWorks, operated by the California-based Sungard Bi-Tech Inc.

Officials rolled out a

chain of updates to the system in December, including a mobile-friendly "look and feel" and improved planning to assist advisers in mapping out degree completion requirements. The updates also featured new functionalities to support concentrations and view the status of students' graduation applications.

IT department officials also announced a new "report format" that added the ability to conduct a "historic audit" and a "what-if" report and other tools geared toward helping students and advisers in the registration process, according to the Office of the Registrar.

The "historic audit" shows students a "snapshot" of how close they are to graduating from a particular program. The "what-if report" feature allows for students to visualize the path to complete different degrees and concentrations and the course loads involved in them.

Students said they have had mixed experiences with the changes to Banweb and DegreeMAP. While some said the website works faster and is easier to navigate, others found that some functionalities have been replaced with tools that are difficult to use.

Sophomore Ananya Sampath, an international affairs student, said the performance of Banweb and the registration systems have been "subpar."

Sampath said she had not noticed many updates, and information like academic transcripts and earned credits remain dif-

icult to find, as students have to go through a few different web pages within Banweb to view them. But she said registration has become "smoother" and the general system seems to work faster.

Sophomore Christian Williams, a psychology and political science major, said the upgraded version of Banweb is somewhat easier to maneuver, as some pages and tools can be located more intuitively. But he said the system instructs him to exit his internet browser if he is signed on for too long – which he said did not happen with the older version.

Vishva Bhatt, a junior majoring in international affairs, said Banweb and the registration process have become easier to navigate over time. She said she found some parts of the site's reorganization, like the upgrades to the academic auditing services and website design released in December, made Banweb more "user-friendly" to navigate.

She said the newly updated DegreeMAP, with its "new mobile-friendly look and feel," is much easier to use. But she added that the new academic planning tools can be confusing to use, and it is often simpler to plan out what future classes and credits she will need independently or with an academic adviser.

As the COVID-19 pandemic has forced GW into a virtual setting, students have had to register for classes from home, with most support from the IT department taking place via video calls.

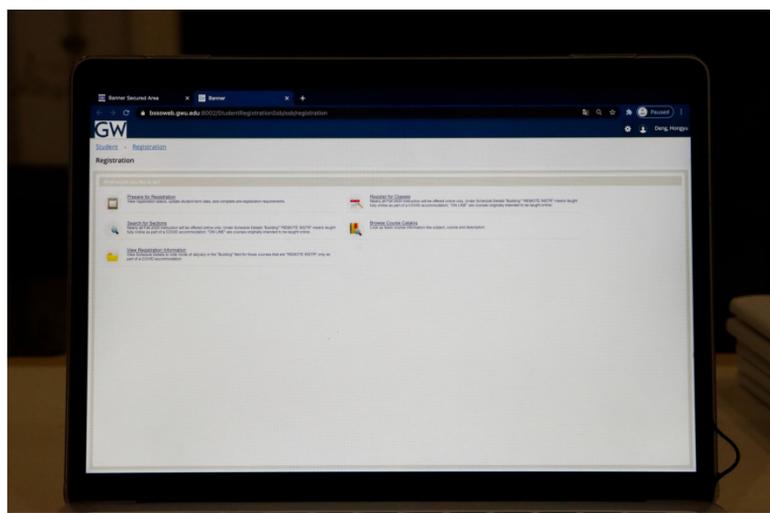


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY HENRY DENG | PHOTOGRAPHER  
Administrators will retain an updated version of Banweb for student services, breaking from a prior decision to retire the system.

# Housing prices, vacant units surge in Foggy Bottom and the West End

CIARA REGAN  
CONTRIBUTING NEWS EDITOR

Off-campus housing prices have climbed since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, creating fewer sales and more vacancies in Foggy Bottom and the West End, according to a report by real estate company Long and Foster last month.

The median sale price of condominiums and cooperative housing, legal entities owning real estate, in the Foggy Bottom and West End neighborhoods spiked from about \$470,000 last January to nearly \$600,000, while vacancies jumped by 61 percent as of last month, the report found. Real estate experts said the trend reflects a nationwide exodus of residents from more expensive urban areas across the country during the pandemic.

Carla Labat, a managing broker for Long and Foster in Georgetown, said the dropoff in condominium sales – the most common type of unit near campus – was a result of the in-person closure of local institutions like GW, the U.S. State Department and International Monetary Fund because fewer students, federal government employees and

members of the international business community are living in D.C. She said these market trends are temporary and will “rebound” once schools and businesses reopen more fully.

The report also found “relatively few” sales in the past year, with only 21 units sold in the two neighborhoods this January after peaking at 56 sold during the height of the pandemic in May. Condominium sales across D.C. also peaked in May with 501 sales, according to another Long and Foster report on the entire District.

But the reports on D.C. at large and Foggy Bottom and the West End indicate that vacancies might start to bounce back with drops of more than 30 percent across D.C. and more than 20 percent near campus. The city-wide report also found that median sale prices across the city have shot up by 9 percent, while prices near campus rose 15 percent.

Although sales in the neighborhoods were down, the price increase indicates that buyers see value in the area, Labat said.

A February report by Yardi Matrix, a real estate tracker, analyzed GW’s off-campus housing market, finding that the area

near campus saw one of the sharpest drops in rent among all campus neighborhoods in the United States since in-person instruction was canceled last year. But the study predicted those trends would reverse ahead of the fall semester with expanded vaccinations and a possible return to some form of in-person learning.

University President Thomas LeBlanc said officials are planning to reopen to the “fullest extent possible” this fall, and vaccination speeds will ultimately influence the level of in-person activity.

Elaine Worzala, the chair of GW’s Center for Real Estate and Urban Analysis, said the best way to analyze real estate trends in a market is to look at micro markets, smaller neighborhood markets like Foggy Bottom. She said the trends in Long and Foster’s study are common in metropolitan areas amid the pandemic with more people moving out of the city.

“Foggy Bottom is dense,” Worzala said. “Because of COVID-19, people are starting to move out, so they are putting their houses on the market.”

Due to the pandemic, nationwide trends indicate that people are more likely

## Housing market trends in Foggy Bottom and the West End



Source: Long and Foster report

SIDNEY LEE | GRAPHICS EDITOR

to list their houses in urban areas and relocate to more rural locations with more space, bigger homes and backyards, Worzala said.

“In these big cities, they are moving out, and that would increase the supply,” she said. “Normally, you increase the supply, and what happens with prices? They should go down.”

Itzhak Ben-David, a professor of finance at The Ohio State University and the director of the OSU Center for Real Estate, said nationwide

demand has surged for suburban homes and dropped for urban homes. National housing prices have also ticked up by 10 percent because of the pandemic, he said.

“This is very simple demand and supply,” Ben-David said. “It seems that in urban areas, before this pandemic, urban areas with restaurants and theaters and activity were suitable for young professionals, for raising families. Once there was a pandemic, many of

these areas crumbled in their appeal.”

Ben-David said the market may compel many people to put their homes up for sale because they can ask for a “very high price,” hoping people will buy it. The units that are sold are therefore more costly, which inflates prices.

“Many sellers are just sitting on the sidelines,” he said. “Many of them don’t need to move. If they manage to sell for a high enough price, they would.”



FILE PHOTO BY ALEXANDER WELLING | SENIOR STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Administrators will break down the campaign against single-use plastics into four phases aimed at University operations, vendors and students.

## GW becomes first D.C. university to plan single-use plastics elimination: officials

MICHELLE VASSILEV  
STAFF WRITER

Officials said GW is the only university in the District to commit to eliminating single-use plastics on its campus.

University President Thomas LeBlanc said he hopes GW will send a positive message to other D.C.-area schools about the possibilities for environmental change on campus. He said plastics contribute to a large amount of trash on campus streets, and he hopes to provide students with accessible, reusable alternatives to single-use plastics over the next couple of years.

LeBlanc said he hopes to collaborate with GW’s vendors and encourage them to eliminate disposable plastics. He said while GW will cooperate with its partners, the University will be unwilling to purchase products from vendors that aren’t made from

the appropriate materials.

He said he hopes to provide students with reusable dining ware to divert them from using single-use plastic packaging from GWorld vendors.

LeBlanc said Take Back the Tap, a student organization that works to educate the GW community on the dangers of plastic pollution, played a role in “sensitizing our whole community” to the issue of single-use plastics and introduced the idea of encouraging students to use reusable water bottles.

The United States produced 292 million tons of plastic waste in 2018, according to the Environmental Protection Agency.

The Class of 2023 received reusable water bottles and a barcode tag tracking the number of plastic water bottles that students were saving at the start of their New Student Orientation in 2019.

Meghan Chapple,

the director of the Office of Sustainability, said administrators are planning to implement the University’s plan in four scopes. She said the first scope involves reducing disposable plastics on campus, which the University has direct control over, and the second scope will address single-use plastic use at the University’s vendors.

She said the third scope includes adapting GW community member lifestyles to exclude plastics, and the fourth includes dialogue and engagement in the community about the ban. She added that the scopes will occur simultaneously.

Junior Jennifer Cuyuch, the co-president of Take Back the Tap, said the organization has been pushing officials to implement refill stations on campus and take plastic water bottles out of vending machines since 2018. She said students can take

steps, like using a water filter and reusable water bottle, to reduce their plastic waste, but administrators should aid students in accessing the necessary reusable materials.

Cuyuch added that the group is pushing for administrators to commit to a date by which GW will have phased out these plastics and said their plan for eliminating them was “very ambiguous.”

Experts in sustainability on university campuses said eliminating disposable plastics on campus helps create a more sustainable world and the move should be paired with a committee to hold the University accountable to its goal.

Joseph Gardella, a professor of chemistry at the University of Buffalo, said these plastics are leading to “extraordinary impacts” on the environment and, eliminating them is just one step in the right direction.

## Zidouemba plans to add CCAS one-credit courses

From Page 1

Zidouemba added that he will work with officials to waive campus residency requirements after the pandemic to allow students to live off campus. He said many students have utilized off-campus housing to live in the District while taking remote classes, and officials should permit them to stay in those apartments, instead of requiring students to live on campus.

Officials require freshmen, sophomores and juniors to live on campus, but students can apply for exceptions to live off campus.

As an international student, he said he will work with officials and members of the International Student Association to “institutionalize and expand” the airport pick-up program for international students to help those students to “make GW home.”

Students, faculty and staff in the program have greeted international students arriving at GW each semester at Dulles International Airport.

Zidouemba added that he wants to implement a one-credit class within the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences to introduce freshmen and transfer students to college and provide them with educational and professional “tools” to succeed in their classes. These courses are currently offered by the School of Engineering and Applied Science, the School of Business and the Elliott School of International Affairs.

He said he has spoken with Rachel Riedner, the associate dean of undergraduate studies for CCAS, regarding the topic, who “confirmed” officials are working to create one-credit courses on topics like resume building and learning to navigate D.C.

## Students adjust after storm

From Page 1

Miller said the next few days were “stressful” between communicating his absences to professors during the “infrequent” periods he could get service.

“It was pretty difficult just trying to make sure that the email actually went through,” Miller said. “I couldn’t access Blackboard or do any coursework really that needed internet access.”

Miller said before the snowstorm, his family had never turned on their fireplace, but his entire family huddled around it for three days and “rarely” left the living room.

“I was nervous, just because we’re not used to having freezes that last more than a day or so,” Miller said. “So I was just completely unaccustomed to anything like that. And I was also just thinking about people who don’t have homes, and things like that, that live around here.”

Sophomore Sofia Packer, who takes classes in Woodland, Texas, said she had been in the middle of a Student Association diversity and inclusion committee meeting when her power suddenly shut off. All power lines were shut off in her neighborhood, leaving her disconnected

from her peers and the rest of Texas for 14 hours, she said.

She said Woodland is separate from the Texas power grid, located on the eastern power grid, meaning her family did not experience the same rolling outages as other cities. She said she spent the rest of the week concerned that another power outage would happen at any time.

Packer said by last Sunday, Woodland was returning to its normal warm temperatures.

“The timeline was the snow really started hitting Monday – it stuck through Tuesday,” Packer said. “And then it started going away on Wednesday because we had a rain that was just above freezing. And then by Friday, it was completely gone.”

She said all of her professors were “fully understanding” of her situation and offered to waive any potential absences after she warned them of the power outage. She said she did not have to miss any classes but had “nothing but praise” for how her professors handled the situation.

“The temperature drop was rather dramatic,” Packer said. “It first started getting cold over the weekend, before all of the power outages and all that. And then it really plummeted down to some of the coldest temperatures I think we’ve ever had.”

## Endowment growth amid pandemic a positive sign: experts

From Page 1

The University of Miami and Boston University had the best performance with increases of 5.3 percent. Other peer institutions like Pitt and Wake Forest saw their endowments decrease by 3.2 percent and 1.8 percent, respectively.

John Longo, a professor of finance at Rutgers University and the chief investment officer at the wealth management firm

Beacon Trust, said universities’ endowment growth may be explained by factors like a strong governmental fiscal and monetary response to the pandemic as well as speedy vaccine development that happened toward the end of the fiscal year.

Robert Kelchen, an associate professor of higher education at Seton Hall University, said he was not surprised that most universities saw their endowments grow given recent

market trends. He said the stock market’s strong performance last year helped many universities see an increase in their endowments.

“If a college mostly invested in the stock market, they did better than if they were invested in hedge funds that were in areas that went down,” Kelchen said.

Universities paid out about 4.5 percent of their endowment value in FY 2020 on average, a slight

increase from 4.4 percent in FY 2019. Officials took a payout from the endowment of \$90.2 million – or 5 percent – during the past fiscal year.

“Right now is a good reason to spend more than normally,” Kelchen said. “Because the pandemic has a fairly clear end date at this point. It was different than last year when we didn’t know how long this would last and colleges had to save their resources. Now spending a little bit more

is OK because you have a sense of when things will get back to normal.”

Ken Redd, the director of research and policy analysis at the National Association of College and University Business Officers, said most universities seeing an increase in their endowments shows their true purpose of providing long-term financial stability and support.

“Endowments are long-term assets that are designed to protect universi-

ties and to provide support for students in good times and bad times,” Redd said.

Redd said endowments are just one part of university finances, but universities’ other funding sources can change their financial picture.

“Their ranking on a list doesn’t necessarily equate to quality or value of service,” Redd said. “It’s just a ranking. University finances are much more complex than what one would see in any of our tables.”

## CRIME LOG

### HARASSING TELEPHONE CALLS

Various Locations  
2/17/2021 – 10:15 a.m.-3:02 p.m.

Open Case

Two male staff members reported being victims of two harassing phone calls pertaining to GW housekeeping rules from an unknown source.

Case open.

### THEFT/FROM MOTOR VEHICLE, DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY LESS THAN \$1,000

Whole Foods Market  
2/20/2021 – 11:20-11:30 a.m.

Open Case

A female victim reported she was going to take her break and noticed that her front passenger window was broken and her purse was gone, according to a Metropolitan Police Department report. An unknown suspect stole a pink purse, wallet, medication, four credit cards and \$80 in cash.

Case open.

### BURGLARY II/NON-FORCIBLE

Webb Building (Mount Vernon Campus)  
Unknown – Unknown

Open Case

GW Police Department officers responded to a report of burglary. Upon arrival, officers made contact with a male staff member who reported that several antiques were stolen from his office. MPD officers responded to the scene and filed a report.

Case open.

### UNLAWFUL ENTRY, DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY/VANDALISM

Webb Building  
Unknown – Unknown

Open Case

GWPD and MPD officers responded to a report of destruction of property. Upon arrival, officers made contact with a male staff member who reported marks from a pry bar on a closet and office door. The office was previously secured due to a report of burglary. MPD officers issued a report.

Case open.

### UNLAWFUL ENTRY

Duques Hall  
2/24/2021 – 5:32 a.m.

Closed Case

GWPD officers responded to a report of an unknown male subject refusing to leave the building. Officers arrived on scene and made contact with the subject who had a recent bar notice. The subject was issued an updated bar notice, and GWPD officers escorted him from the campus.

Subject barred.

### HARASSING TELEPHONE CALLS

Academic Center  
2/25/2021 – 7:59 a.m.

Open Case

A male faculty member reported being a recipient of a harassing voicemail from an unknown caller.

Case open.

—Compiled by Kateryna Stepanenko



Members of the GW medical community are volunteering to disseminate information about the effectiveness and safety of receiving a COVID-19 vaccine amid a sea of misinformation.

ANTHONY PELTIER | PHOTOGRAPHER

## Medical school launches ambassador program to increase confidence in COVID-19 vaccine

MATHEW DONNELL  
REPORTER

GW Hospital health care workers debuted a program last month aimed at increasing the D.C. community's confidence in the COVID-19 vaccine.

The Vaccine Ambassador Initiative requires health care workers to wear a tag on their identification badges denoting their vaccinated status and carrying basic information about the vaccine, like its potential side effects. School of Medicine and Health Sciences spokesperson Anne Banner said the program encourages community members who are more skeptical of the vaccine to start conversations with vaccinated health care workers and potentially ease their nerves about receiving the vaccine.

Banner said more than 200 health care workers from GW Hospital, the Medical Faculty Associates and the medical school have signed up to participate in the ambassador program. She said many of the participants have attended trainings on how to effectively communicate with patients about the vaccines and attended town halls to share information about the vaccine with the community.

"Peer-reviewed research shows that dialogue-based interventions are among

the most effective methods for addressing vaccine hesitancy," she said in an email. "There is also rampant misinformation about the COVID-19 vaccines available."

She said health care workers have heard from patients and community members that they're worried about the potential side effects of the vaccine, although the benefits of being vaccinated significantly outweigh the side effects.

"There are many myths and misconceptions about the COVID-19 vaccines available, even though the science is clear that the vaccines are safe and effective," Banner said. "Many stem from fears about side effects of the COVID-19 vaccines."

Public health experts said programs like GW's will help build confidence among populations, like the Black community, that may be reluctant to receive the vaccine.

Paul Beninger, an associate professor of public health and community medicine at Tufts University, said rising distrust of the polio vaccine in the 1960s and studies published in the 1990s falsely linking vaccinations to autism have contributed to some Americans' hesitations in the COVID-19 vaccine.

An Associated Press poll released last month revealed that younger people ages 18 to 29 and Black Americans

across all ages are among the most likely to have skepticism about the vaccine. Data from the D.C. Department of Health reveals that the majority of vaccines have been distributed in White-majority areas of the city, where COVID-19 is less prevalent.

Beninger said historic medical miscues, like the highly criticized Tuskegee Study during which the federal government infected Black men with syphilis without their knowledge and did not provide them with adequate treatment, have contributed to mistrust in the medical community among some Black Americans.

"We do know that the Black community in general has a lower interest in getting vaccinated," he said. "Now, it's not really low, but it's a lot lower than the White population, any of the other populations. So those are the important back stories."

Beninger, who worked in vaccination development at the pharmaceutical company Merck & Co. for 11 years before beginning at Tufts, said access to health care is directly related to people's confidence in taking the new vaccine. He said minority communities who are reluctant to access health care can lead to the development of diseases without proper care.

"The vaccine is just the latest of the larger picture of

all the components of health care," he said. "It affects their reluctance to health care. And so they get there later in the development of their diseases, and it goes on and on and on."

Beninger said ambassador programs have become popular recently across the country following success in similar initiatives at schools like Cornell and Temple universities.

"It's all about sharing key messages and helping educate one another," he said. "Helping to educate, encouraging leaders to be champions, and lastly, celebrating your achievements afterward."

Kathleen Carey, a professor of public health at Boston University, said including an adequately diverse representation of participating health care workers is key to increasing trust among hesitant community members.

"It's part of a larger mistrust that we have been seeing grow in the last five years or so," Carey said. "There are myths to be dispelled. What GW Hospital is doing is great because it is boosting trust. The goal is to boost trust."

Kelly Klein – an alumna and senior research analyst at The Lewin Group, a health care consulting firm in D.C. – said misinformation contributes to people's hesitancy to receive the vaccine.

## Milken participates in national study on COVID-19 protocol adherence

SEJAL GOVINDARAO  
REPORTER

Milken Institute School of Public Health students are tracking mask-wearing and social distancing adherence in communities throughout the East Coast to determine COVID-19 prevention strategies.

The research is part of a nationwide study, led by health care organizations Kaiser Permanente and the RAND Corporation, to follow compliance with COVID-19 prevention protocols in communities nationwide. Deborah Cohen, a science research assistant at Kaiser Permanente's Department of Research & Evaluation, said the project seeks to determine how communities differ in abiding by COVID-19 recommendations, like wearing a mask and avoiding crowds.

Cohen said the research is being conducted at nine universities, and more than 100 students are partaking in the data collection. She said she hopes the data will be used to inform local authorities on intervention strategies with low-adherence communities.

"The goal is to conduct them not just at universities but also in diverse local communities," Cohen said. "We are asking all sites that are collecting the data to share their findings as widely as possible and to work with local health departments to make best use of the data. Knowing where there may be gaps in adherence can inform interventions."

Monica Ruiz, an associate professor of prevention and community health, said the project relies on observational data collection from "citizen scientists," who take notes on mask-wearing and social distancing twice a week from their respective communities or wherever they take remote classes.

"We have folks who will hopefully be on the GW campus, we have folks who are in Northern Virginia, in D.C., Bethesda, in Georgia, in Illinois," Ruiz said. "They can be anywhere and they are able to access places just because it's part of their neighborhood and their community, so we are getting little snapshots of communities by the people who live there."

Ruiz said local leaders can use the data to adjust messaging on COVID-19 protocols for communities that are less compliant with mask-wearing or social distancing measures.

Amita Vyas, the director of the GW Center of Excellence in Maternal and Child Health in the public health school, said students have sat in public places in their cars or in indoor spaces during the winter to observe COVID-19 adherence measures.

"It really can help us design and develop more targeted messaging to certain groups of people in hopes that that would resonate more clearly with them, but before we can do that, we need to understand, 'Who are the folks who are more adherent to mask wearing

versus others?'" she said.

Vyas said health officials can target low-adherence community groups through pinpointed messaging, guided by the data the citizen scientists collect.

"If there's one thing that we've learned is that generic messaging isn't always the most effective," she said. "The hope of this research is that it's going to guide more targeted and specific messaging to people in hopes that they will adopt more mask adherence in terms of the behavior."

The next steps for the research team is to analyze trends in the data that they have observed over several months and produce data-driven reports throughout the spring and summer, Vyas said.

"We'll start that analysis of data and all of the students are going to be involved," she said. "We'll be training them on that analysis. All of the students are going to look at different aspects of the data. Some people are looking more focused on a specific region or population."

She said even as vaccines continue to roll out, this data collection and analysis will remain relevant because the virus will still be prevalent the rest of the year and into 2022.

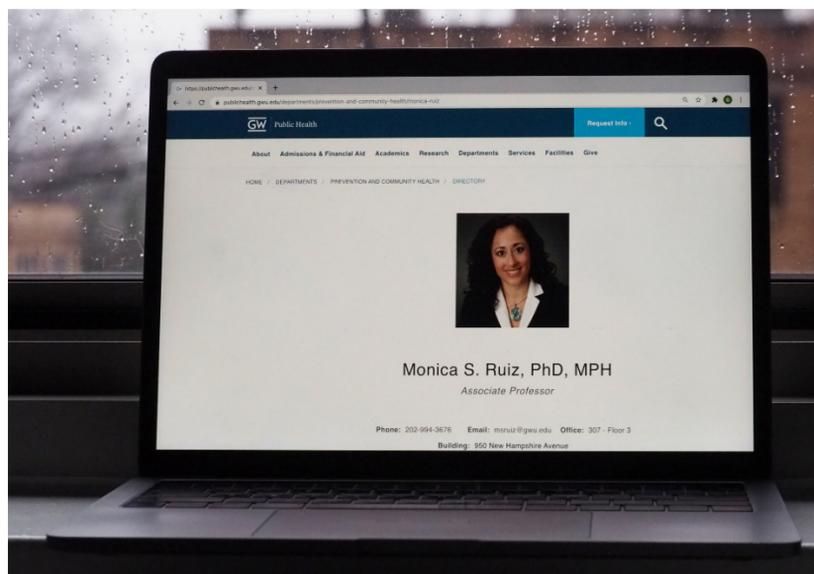


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY GRACE HROMIN | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR  
Monica Ruiz, an associate professor of prevention and community health, said the project will rely on "citizen scientists" observing and collecting data on mask usage in their communities.

ants," she said.

Jaqueline Carlton, a first-year graduate student in the physician assistant and public health programs in the School of Medicine and Health Sciences and the public health school, said she wanted to get involved with the project after becoming infected with the virus while working at the D.C. Veterans Affairs Medical Center in the hospice unit.

"I firsthand saw how it affected families and affected the community in a broader sense," Carlton said. "It just became something I was really passionate about, especially when you see peers and col-

leagues not taking it quite as seriously as others."

She said a personal benefit of working as a citizen scientist is developing her observational research skills through data collection and collaboration with others during weekly meetings. She said she hopes the data can inform health officials on the number of people that aren't adhering to COVID-19 prevention protocols.

"If someone on the team is looking at a specific variable, whether that's physical activity or have an interest in children, you may take note of specific observations on one of your data collection times for them," she

said.

She said citizen scientists have more influence with their respective communities than government researchers because they are active members of their own communities.

"When you have community stakeholders who are getting involved, citizen scientists who look like you and me, who look like normal people, it's a little bit easier to take the advice that they're giving you and recognize, 'OK, this isn't just coming from some faceless society,'" Carlton said. "It doesn't feel quite as government-controlled and threatening, perhaps, to some people."

## Best and worst of GW's 200-year history

### STAFF EDITORIAL

Congrats, GW – you've made it 200 years strong.

Since your establishment two centuries ago, you've changed nicknames, altered admissions practices and participated in tons of protests. In commemoration of this milestone, the editorial board deliberated GW's best and worst moments. Opinions editor Hannah Thacker looks into the history of the Colonials moniker; contributing opinions editor Andrew Sugrue lays out the evolution of GW's tuition costs; culture editor Anna Boone comments on campus expansion; managing editor Parth Kotak breaks down the racial history of GW; managing director Kiran Hoeffner-Shah talks about student activism and design editor Olivia Columbus weighs in on gender equality.

From each member of the editorial board, here's a look at some of the University's highs and lows over the years, as well as what we can learn from these events moving forward:

#### Hannah Thacker, opinions editor

In 1926, GW rebranded itself as the Colonials amid dissatisfaction from students over the former name, the "Hatcheteers." Since the change, the University has pretty much altered everything around campus, from sports jerseys to store apparel. In hindsight, switching to a new nickname was good – it demonstrated that officials were listening to students. But as we reflect on GW's history and look to prosper, we need to look into

another change.

The Colonials moniker has had its fair share of criticism, and the editorial board has joined several student organizations in calls for it to be removed. The concerns are valid – the Colonials moniker is divisive and harmful to several student groups. It's been time for the University to adopt a more respectful nickname, and officials should use this period of reflection to ditch it once and for all.

#### Andrew Sugrue, contributing opinions editor

GW spent its early decades as a commuter school. Low tuition and the D.C. location made it an ideal choice for students looking to split time between college and building their careers. Notable alumni like former Sen. Harry Reid, D-Nev., and Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., were among the many up-and-coming professionals who got a quality education on the cheap. But things changed a bit in the '90s – GW reinvented itself as the more traditional campus we know today. Tuition began to soar, with the University's yearly cost becoming the highest in the nation at one point.

Now, GW has a reputation as a pricey institution. Its career-building bona fides remain incredibly strong – GW is the internship capital of the American higher education system, and programs like the Elliott School of International Affairs and the School of Media and Public Affairs are

top-notch feeders into the professional world. But the skyrocketing tuition prices that began a few decades ago helped blaze the trail for the exorbitant cost of attendance that hallmarks American higher education today.

#### Anna Boone, culture editor

During his time as University president, from 1965 to 1988, Lloyd Elliot oversaw the building of three libraries and the creation of the Academic Center, Fungler Hall, The Smith Center and the Marvin Student Center.

While athletes and introverted nature fiends might disagree, the affiliation of the Mount Vernon Campus to the University, which was established in 1999, is inefficient and confusing. For some, the Vern is quiet and relaxing, and for other students it is infuriating and a waste of time. GW has a chance to invest more in the campus or nix it, especially while it's cleared out during the pandemic.

#### Parth Kotak, managing editor

Over the course of its two centuries of existence, GW, a predominately White institution, has had a fraught relationship with racial minorities on campus, including a particularly thorny history involving Black students. An infamous letter penned by racist then-University President Cloyd Marvin barred a Black applicant from consideration and laid bare that GW was a school for Whites only, an attitude

that attracted controversy when the school barred Black theatergoers from viewing Lisner Auditorium's first commercial production in 1946.

Ultimately, administrators were forced to integrate the school in 1954 following the Supreme Court's decision in Brown v. Board of Education. In the years since, the institution has tried to become a more welcoming place for Black and other minority students. Although GW is celebrating its 200th anniversary this year, for hundreds of students on campus, GW's gates were closed to them until about 67 years ago – and every member of the GW community should endeavor to ensure that those students who until recently were barred feel like full citizens of GW's campus.

#### Kiran Hoeffner-Shah, managing director

For 200 years, students have used their prime location in the District to protest wars, policies and injustices. At the height of the Vietnam War, students used Thurston Hall to mobilize protests and wash down demonstrators who had been stung by tear gas. Later, students continued their opposition to war – protesting against the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Students protested a speaking engagement with former Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos, joined Black Lives Matter protesters in the District and marched to the White House to object to former President



Cartoon by Hannah Thacker

Donald Trump's election.

For several of those years, GW was considered among the most politically active schools in the country. Everyone has experienced the Hilltern who sees themselves as the future president or the security policy concentration future warmonger. But sometimes GW's political activity leaks into student government. Three times in the Student Association's history, a candidate has attempted to abolish it. Political activity on campus can be good, but it can also be detrimental to a healthy campus life. Sometimes, students take it too far.

#### Olivia Columbus, design editor

While most people associate her name with GW's famed freshman residence hall, Mabel Thurston was the first woman admitted to GW as an undergraduate student

in 1888. One year later, the University opened admission to 11 women, paving the way for the admission of women throughout the years. GW was by no means a pioneer in admitting women to the University, but the admission of women was an important and significant step for the University to become more equitable.

While the University began regularly admitting White undergraduate women in 1891, not all women were afforded that opportunity. Any woman seeking a higher degree in the legal or medical fields were not admitted until 1913 and 1911, respectively, and women of color were not admitted at all until the school desegregated in 1954. We can learn from our unequal history that these events were not so long ago and are still impacting women around the world today.

## GW must set a 2025 deadline for plastics ban

Earlier this month, the University committed to phasing out single-use plastics at its Sustainability Summit. The policy would prohibit GW-affiliated groups from selling single use plastics, according to the announcement. But the release failed to answer a key question: By when will the University phase out single-use plastics?

#### Karina Ochoa Berkley, SA VP for Sustainability

Following the announcement, several student leaders and groups, including myself as the Student Association vice president for sustainability, Take Back the Tap GW, Sunrise GW, Campaign GW, Green GW, GW Black Defiance Green G.R.E.E.N., the SA Committee on Sustainability and others, signed a letter sent to administrators urging the University to commit to a 2025 deadline for phasing out of single-use plastics. The letter argues that with 2030 as the deadline by which the damage of climate change will become irreversible, the University must commit to phasing out single-use plastics by 2025.

Committing to a sustainable future is the most pressing issue facing this generation. The University must commit to this deadline and follow through on plans to use reusable containers in implementing this policy.

While GW might have been one of the first universities in the country to commit to phasing out single-use plastics, it will surely be one of the last to materialize its implementation without committing to a deadline. Institutions like those of the University of California system have already announced deadlines as early as this calendar year – signaling a serious commitment to rectifying a long overdue issue. This stands out from developments I have witnessed at GW. In my capacity in the SA, I've sat in on several meetings during which officials have described plans for the University extending five and even 10 years into the future – other plans, like those for building remodeling or dining operations, extend even farther out. Several, if not all of these

plans, foresee the dependence on, sale of and use of single-use plastics. Not committing to a 2025 deadline will almost certainly guarantee that by the time the University eventually phases out single-use plastics, it will be too late.

In addition to committing to a 2025 deadline, the University must explicitly commit to favoring reusable container systems over single-use disposables as it develops plans to implement its promise. According to its waste report in 2016, nearly 90 percent of the University's waste, making up 3,500 tons, consisted of single-use disposables. Of the 3,500 tons of waste from single use disposables, 1000 tons of this was made up of single-use plastics. So while phasing out single-use plastics is certainly important, the University must also address the rest of its waste problem – the 2,500 tons of trash it produces that isn't plastic.

As I have previously argued, it is crucial to also consider the environmentally deleterious production process that single-use disposables, not just single-use plastics, are predicated on. Compostable single-use disposables, for example, while they theoretically don't create post-consumption waste, do require constant resource extraction to produce – this is less so for reusable products that have a longer use-life. To implement the University's "zero waste and circularity" commitment, the University must not divert to other single-use disposables to replace plastic, but rather implement reusable container systems.

The University must implement these demands in order to build faith in the student community about the seriousness of their commitment to creating a more sustainable campus. Since the letter was sent, we have been in several meetings with officials pressing for the University to commit to this deadline, but we need the help of the student body. They are very close to committing, and we need collective support to push them over the edge. Please support our effort to phase out the use of single-use plastics by 2025.

*-Karina Ochoa Berkley, a sophomore majoring in political science and philosophy, is the Student Association's vice president for sustainability.*

## Op-ed: The Regulatory Studies Center is perpetuating climate denial

For the seemingly millionth time, our nation is witnessing a catastrophic climate event before our eyes. Last month, severe winter weather left more than 2.6 million people without power in Texas. Americans are freezing to death in their homes as extreme weather, brought on by the ever-worsening climate crisis, grips the nation. It has never been more clear that we are running out of time to save our planet.

#### Victoria Freire, Sophomore

In times like these, of emergency and chaos, we tend to – and should – reflect inward. Are we doing all that we can to provide aid to others and prevent the destruction of our planet? Maybe we are trying, but an issue like climate change is so existential and overwhelming that our individual actions feel futile. But the University's actions are not futile, and officials have a huge responsibility to do their part in curbing climate change.

While fossil fuel divestment and the recent announcement of a ban on single-use plastics seem promising, sinister actors remain. I am talking, of course, about the Regulatory Studies Center, the academic research center housed inside the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences. Earlier this month, the RSC published a statement asserting "no one in the Regulatory Studies Center questions climate science." But this could not be further from the truth.

Julian Morris, a discredited economist who has published under the auspices of the RSC and GW name, is a known climate denier. In his public interest comment for the RSC, he argued in favor of rolling back an Obama-era fuel economy

rule, which would increase air pollution during an already dire and ongoing pandemic and climate crisis. In 2018, he claimed "the effects of climate change are unknown – but the benefits may well be greater than the costs for the foreseeable future." Similarly, Morris has accused scientists, governments and environmentalists of propagating the "myth" of climate change for their self-interests.

Morris later went on to found the International Policy Network, a United Kingdom think tank that disputes climate science. Unsurprisingly, the mission of the IPN was to combat "biased and alarmist claims about human-induced climate change." The think tank has argued various unsubstantiated and unsubstantiated claims, including that climate change "would benefit humans by increasing fish stocks" and that sea levels are not rising. Most disturbingly, Morris has stated that climate science is "far from settled," in addition to casting serious doubt about the climate crisis.

While Morris' personal beliefs and published work are particularly outrageous, they are just the tip of the iceberg. Richard Belzer, an independent consultant on regulatory economics, has been twice published by the RSC and shares a history of climate denial similar to that of Morris. Belzer has worked for conservative think tanks like the Competitive Enterprise Institute and R Street Institute, and his clients include Exxon Mobil, the American Chemistry Council – a fossil fuel interest group – and Fitzgerald Glider Kits. The FGK, in particular, has a history of pressuring the Environmental Protection Agency to roll back air pollution protections on heavy trucks, which found success under the Trump ad-

ministration. Belzer has also encouraged the Trump administration to rescind the EPA's endangerment finding, a law that establishes the overwhelming scientific evidence that greenhouse gases threaten the public health and well-being of current and future generations. Most alarmingly, at a climate change conference hosted by the Heartland Institute in 2019, Belzer admitted: "The goal here is not to change the policy but to correct the science." To be clear, his suggestion that climate science is flawed and needs correcting is nothing short of climate denial.

It is abundantly clear through the researchers, scholars and directors involved with the RSC, that their claims of "unbiased" research lack truth. Why would they go to such great lengths to deny climate science, then reject their denial? To me and likely many others, the RSC looks like it has something to hide, that it has an agenda set by Exxon Mobil and the Koch Network, which have poured millions into the RSC's deregulatory work. But make no mistake, an agenda in favor of big oil and climate denial has no place in academia, much less a prestigious university in our nation's capital.

Time is running out. We are already witnessing catastrophic climate events across our nation where millions have become vulnerable to starvation and hypothermia. We know the crisis will only get worse, and soon, irreversible. We cannot continue to allow climate deniers to publish deregulatory work under GW's name.

It is past time to wake up and abolish the Koch-funded RSC. Lives depend on it.

*-Victoria Freire is a sophomore studying international affairs and history.*

# Culture

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## THE SCENE

**BOSTON MASSACRE: A FAMILY HISTORY**  
March 4 • Free • Online registration  
Tune in to a discussion with historian  
Serena Zabin about the key figures in the  
Boston Massacre.

**THE TEA: BLACK ALLEY**  
Mach. 5 • Free • Online registration  
Watch a virtual concert by Black  
Alley, a DMV band.

## RELEASED THIS WEEK:

**"DETROIT STORIES" AN ALBUM BY ALICE COOPER**

## Instagrammable picnic spots around D.C.

**ANNA BOONE**  
CULTURE EDITOR

We may have just gotten some snow, but warm weather is on its way.

Take advantage of the upcoming sunny days by planning a picnic around the District. The city has plenty of picnic spots, but when everyone is trying to catch some time outdoors, the areas might get crowded.

Here are a few off-the-beaten-path spots where you can lay out a blanket and share a meal with friends:

### Gravelly Point Park

Just a few hundred feet away from Ronald Reagan National Washington Airport, Gravelly Point Park is a popular spot to watch airplanes take off. This massive grassy patch of land is about the size of two high school soccer fields and borders the Potomac River. There's plenty of room to toss around a frisbee or spread out your picnic blanket while keeping your distance from other groups. At the park, you can enjoy the sound of airplanes jetting off, lounge in the grass, stay for sunset or get a few photos with planes overhead.

*George Washington Memorial Parkway. Open sunrise to sunset. Free.*

### Back side of the Lincoln Memorial

The monuments are obvious choices for a nice picnic, but you might not know all the best spots to set up. An overlooked hidden treasure of the monuments is the backside of the Lincoln Memorial. This side of the memorial overlooks the Arlington Memorial Bridge and Potomac River, where you can also get a view of the sunset. Be wary of

bringing open alcohol containers on this federal property – you could get stopped by a park ranger.

*2 Lincoln Memorial Circle. Open 24 hours. Free.*

### Yard of the National Cathedral

The National Cathedral is surrounded by beautifully landscaped grounds. And since the church isn't currently hosting in-person services, the area doesn't attract too much foot traffic. Head to the outside of the cathedral for a serene mid-day picnic with friends that feels like you're sitting near a European cathedral. There's a grocery store within walking distance from the cathedral if you want to pick up your picnic goods on the way.

*3101 Wisconsin Ave. NW. Open 8 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. Free.*

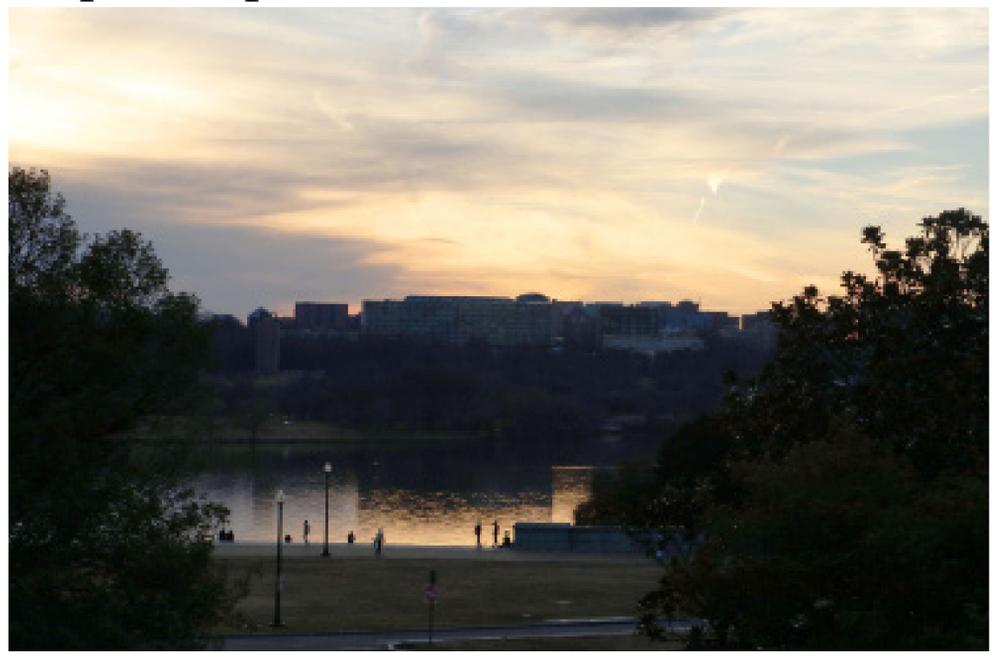
### Graffiti cliff above Key Bridge boathouse

Upperclassmen – you may know this spot from Vern Express rides to Mount Vernon Campus classes. If you're leaving the Georgetown shops on M Street, walk west on K Street to find this tucked away treasure. You'll find an old stone staircase just off Water Street that will take you to a ledge above the old Key Bridge Boathouse. The spot attracts locals for the years of graffiti that cover it and its view of the Potomac River. If you want to add a little adventure to a picnic date, check out this hidden gem.

*Alexandria Aqueduct Ruins. No official hours. Free.*

### Steps of the Georgetown waterfront

If you're looking for a more vanilla spot to enjoy a picnic in Georgetown, set up your meal on the large cement steps at the edge



The back of the Lincoln Memorial overlooks Arlington Memorial Bridge and the Potomac River, a fantastic spot to snap some pictures at sunset.

of the Georgetown Waterfront Park, just past the complex of restaurants. Beforehand, you can stop by Baked & Wired and grab a few sweet treats and some iced coffee to spruce up your picnic basket. Then, walk down to these steps that give you an up-close view of the river and all its wildlife. You'll almost always get a chance to pet a few dogs in this higher foot-trafficked area.

*3303 Water St. NW. Open 24 hours. Free.*

### Hillwood Estate, Museum and Gardens

This European-style estate with 13 acres of gardens may seem out

of place in D.C. The estate, which is opening to the public March 2, sits just north of the Smithsonian Zoo in the Forest Hills neighborhood of D.C. With five gardens including the lunar lawn and French parterre, you can choose from a view of outdoor picnic spots. Pack an indulgent basket of snacks like chocolate covered strawberries, meats and cheeses for this fancy picnic getaway.

*155 Linnean Ave NW. Open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tickets \$10 with student ID, \$18 general admission.*

### Enid A. Haupt garden at the Smithsonian Castle

The National Mall is another

obvious choice for picnics when the weather warms up, but it can get uncomfortably crowded. If you venture just behind the Smithsonian Castle on the National Mall, you'll find a garden with access from Independence Avenue. In the background of the red brick castle, this garden, which is a part of the castle grounds, gives off major dark academia vibes. Dress in your most dark academia aesthetic, pack a bottle of red wine, bring a book to enjoy and pretend like you're studying abroad at the University of Cambridge.

*1050 Independence Ave SW. Open 24 hours. Free.*



PHEBE GROSSER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Brookside Gardens, a 50-acre display garden in Wheaton, Maryland, is about a 20-minute walk from the Glenmont Metro station.

## Hikes, beaches, gardens: Outdoor day trips for warmer weather

**CHLOE KEARIN WILLEFORD**  
STAFF WRITER

If you're feeling cooped up in your apartment, escape for a day trip or weekend in the DMV.

Most people are traveling close to home to stay safe during the pandemic, and there are plenty of activities around the District to feel like you're away from home. Whether by Metro, Zipcar or Amtrak, a trip to a few nearby spots around the DMV is quick.

Here are six places in D.C., Maryland and Virginia that you could plan for a day trip or weekend getaway as the days get longer and warmer:

### Gunpowder Falls State Park – Central Area

Gunpowder Falls State Park covers more than 18,000 acres in Harford and Baltimore counties and is broken into six non-contiguous areas. Central Area, the oldest area of the park, offers trails for hiking, horseback riding and mountain biking. It also encompasses Jerusalem Mill Village, an 18th-century town made up of a mill and its workers' housing and businesses. If you want to stay the night, check out these nearby hotels.

*Kingsville, Maryland, 75-minute drive from D.C. Admission is \$3 for Maryland residents and \$5 for non-Maryland residents.*

### Colonial Beach

Escape the city feel of D.C. by heading to Colonial Beach and its surrounding, eponymous town. You can explore outdoor activities like kayaking, paddle boarding and mini golf, or you can check out the town's many shops and restaurants that are clustered in its downtown area. Most activities are open and following social distancing and other COVID-19 prevention guidelines. If you'd like to stay the night, check out the Riverview Inn or the Colonial Beach Plaza Bed & Breakfast.

*Colonial Beach, Virginia, 95-minute drive from D.C. Find more information on its website.*

### Shenandoah National Park

This park covers more than 200,000 acres of protected lands. Venture to Skyline Drive, which runs from one end of the park to the other and showcases its mountainous views and nature. You can also walk on some of the park's 500 miles of trails. While the park's interior facilities are closed due to COVID-19 and the winter weather, its outdoors are all open to visitors. If you're outdoorsy, check out the park's campgrounds and backcountry camping guidelines.

*US-211, Luray, Virginia, 75-minute drive from D.C. Admission is \$30 per vehicle.*

### Colonial Williamsburg

If you're a history buff,

visit Colonial Williamsburg and explore spots like the Governor's Palace, home to seven royal governors and the first two elected Virginia governors. Operating sites like the Art Museums of Colonial Williamsburg, the Colonial Garden and demonstrations of early colonial trades are also included. While most of the site is open to visitors, some experiences like the Rockefeller Library are closed due to COVID-19.

*301 S. Nassau St., Williamsburg, Virginia, 2 1/2-hour drive from D.C. Most sites are open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. \$30.99 admission per person. Find more information on its website.*

### Bluestone Vineyard

If you're over 21 years old, escape to the vineyard for the day. At Bluestone Vineyard in the wine region of Loudoun County, Virginia, you can sip wine by the glass while looking over the Allegheny Mountains. If you get hungry, the vineyard offers a small bites menu of a selection of meats and cheeses. The vineyard isn't currently offering wine tastings because of the pandemic, but flights of 50 mL bottles are available, as are full-size bottles and growlers. Be sure to call to make a reservation before you visit.

*4828 Spring Creek Road, Bridgewater, Virginia, about a 2 1/2-hour drive from D.C. Open Monday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday 1 to 6 p.m. Bottles from \$15.50.*

## Events to celebrate Women's History Month for every day of March

**ANNA BOONE**  
CULTURE EDITOR

Mark your calendars with a slew of online events recognizing Women's History Month.

As the pandemic continues, you can sign up for a virtual event for every day of March and learn about the female progress through the decades. From book talks to film discussions, here's a rundown of ways you can celebrate Women's History Month every day of March.

### March 1 | National Women's History Month discussion series

Listen to journalist Julie Scelfo during a discussion series on remarkable American women of the 19th century. This episode covers the life of Native American doctor Susan La Flesche Picotte.

### March 2 | "In A League of Their Own": A History of the AAGPBL

Engage in a presentation on the history of the All American Girls Professional Baseball League.

### March 3 | Women's Filmmaker Festival, part one

Tune in to a film festival hosted by the Smithsonian American Art Museum. This first virtual live event

focuses on Cecilia Vicuña's short films "Semiya" and "Un nudo vivo."

### March 4 | Virtual Salon: In Her Honor

Hosted by A Tour of her Own, a women tourism association, participate in an interactive virtual event that allows women to share stories about important women in their lives.

### March 5 | Living History: Celebrating Women's History Month

National Churchill Leadership Center Director Justin Reash will chat with GW professors Hope M. Harrison and Jisoo Kim about how the study of history has changed over time for women scholars.

### March 6 | HERSTORY art exhibit

Examine a Zenith Gallery exhibit featuring the work of more than 25 women artists.

### March 7 | Bad B\*tch Medallions

Join a craft workshop hosted by CraftJam that guides participants through painting their favorite women figures on medallions.

### March 8 | International Women's Day Chamber Music Concert

Listen to a livestreamed concert by Sands Films

Music Room featuring the music of late women composers Alma Mahler, Amy Beach and Irene Poldowski.

### March 9 | The DC Student Consortium on Women, Peace and Security launch event

Sign up for a launch event for a GW student-led organization that works to educate people about the importance of integrating women and gender into security and foreign policy analysis.

### March 10 | Women's Filmmaker Festival, part two

Take part in a film festival hosted by the Smithsonian American Art Museum. This second virtual live event focuses on artist and writer Coco Fusco and her 2004 film "a/k/a Mrs. George Gilbert."

### March 11 | Women in Leadership Author Panel

Join a discussion with Laurie Ruettimann, the author of "Betting on You" and Christina Reynolds and Stephanie Schriock, the co-authors of "Run to Win: Lessons in Leadership for Women Changing the World."

## GW HATCHET.COM

for the rest of our Women's History Month events.

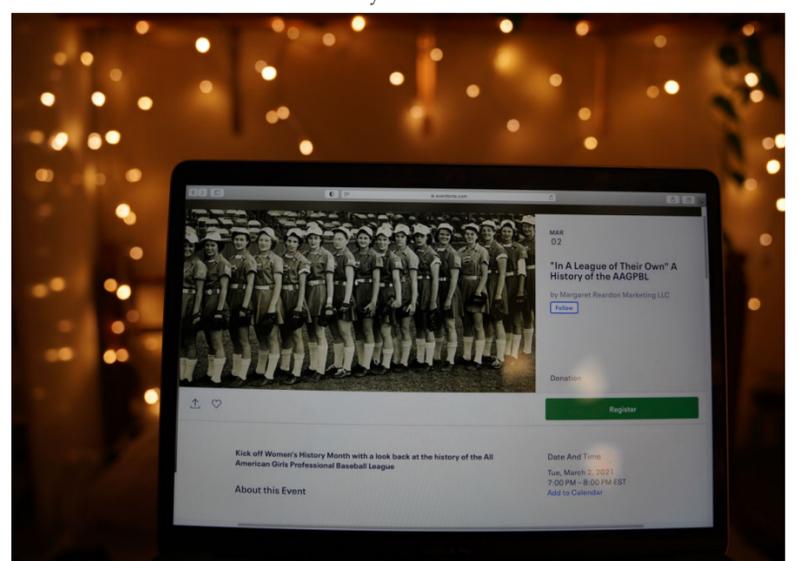


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY CAMILLE DESANTO | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR  
Celebrate Women's History Month by watching women-made films, painting famous female figures on medallions and learning about pivotal women in history.

## GAMES OF THE WEEK



**BASEBALL**  
at UVA  
March 2 | 3 p.m.  
Baseball is set to make its season debut against the Cavaliers.



**MEN AND WOMEN'S CROSS COUNTRY**  
at A-10 Championships  
March 5 | 1 p.m. and 10 a.m.  
After a shortened season, the Colonials will race for the conference crowns.

**NUMBER CRUNCH**

**30.4**

The percentage of volleyball's total digs (137) recorded by senior libero Bella Bowman, who ranks second in the A-10 and surpassed 1,000 career digs.

## Men's basketball readies for tournament after shortened season

**EMILY MAISE**  
SPORTS EDITOR

**ALEC RICH**  
STAFF WRITER

With just eight Atlantic 10 games under its belt, men's basketball will now turn its attention to the A-10 tournament, where one loss ends the season.

The Colonials (4-11, 3-5 A-10) will enter the tournament as either the No. 11 or No. 12 seed, and they will face either Saint Joseph's or Fordham. After experiencing a 35-day COVID-19 pause, an ever-changing roster and 10 canceled games, head coach Jamion Christian said his team has earned the opportunity to close out the season on its own terms.

The last time the squad entered the tournament at the No. 12 spot was during the 2018-19 season. That year's team won just eight games, including four in conference play. Last season, the squad was seeded No. 11 and bowed out in the first round after a loss to Fordham. The tournament was canceled prior to completion as the COVID-19 pandemic reached the United States.

This season, the Colonials have played just a handful of their 13 league opponents – Fordham, Duquesne, VCU, Dayton, Rhode Island, George Mason and St. Bonaventure. In the squad's conference opener, GW routed Fordham 71-47. But the team has yet to meet with Saint Joseph's, who holds a 2-11 A-10 record and 3-14 overall record.

GW also saw members of the team leave midseason, and COVID-19 disruptions led to 10 canceled games. After an abysmal 1-6 nonconference slate, the team's roster shrunk from 16

to 13 as senior guard Maceo Jack, senior forward Ace Stallings and sophomore guard Jameer Nelson Jr. left the team in December. Later in the season, Christian said junior forward Sloan Seymour opted out.

"He's not going to be joining us for the rest of the year," Christian said. "We wish him the very best, hoping that he's doing well, and we know he's watching and supporting us, but we won't see him for the remainder of the season."

Seymour played in 12 games without a start. He shot at a .368 clip from three-point range and averaged 12.3 minutes and 4.3 points per game.

The challenges didn't let up in the new year. After kicking off conference play with wins over Fordham and Duquesne, men's basketball was rolling into its league slate near the top of the A-10 standings. But a District-wide curfew after the insurrection at the U.S. Capitol and a positive test among a staff member in the team's traveling party sidelined the Colonials for two straight games.

The squad came back a day after the positive test, now armed with junior forward Ricky Lindo Jr., who originally decided to sit out the 2020-21 season but opted to suit up to help his team. Lindo Jr. has since recorded three double-doubles and averages 11 points and 9.4 rebounds per contest.

The Colonials returned to play Jan. 13 for two games but hit another roadblock shortly after when Christian announced he had tested positive for the virus. From there, the team went on a 35-day hiatus, postponing multiple games along the way.

Finally returning to action Feb. 21, the squad notched a



FILE PHOTO BY ZACH BRIEN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Men's basketball will limp into the A-10 tournament with a dismal record and reduced roster.

win against Rhode Island, but it dropped its subsequent two matchups against George Mason and St. Bonaventure. Christian said his team will take a few days to "refresh" and get ready for the emotional control needed to succeed in the tournament.

The A-10 tournament, which is scheduled to begin Wednesday, was originally set to start a week later. But COVID-19 disruptions prompted the league to edit its start dates, opting to play the first round through semifinals March 3 through March 6 and the championship game March

14. All games will be played at Richmond and VCU, and Dayton will host the championship.

The adjusted timeline left no room for the Colonials to reschedule its 10 postponed games, leaving the team with just eight conference matchups – the lowest number among all A-10 teams.

Despite the challenges and setbacks, Christian said the tournament opens a clean slate for the team to regroup and get back on track to end the season on the right note.

"Everyone is going to be a

little tired, that's sort of part of it, but you're going to be playing with adrenaline," he said. "That's part of the tournament. That's the best part of the year. It's the time of year when magical things happen. It's a chance for everybody to get their collective energy together in one place and give us the opportunity to win."

The Colonials will return to action Wednesday to take on either Fordham or Saint Joseph's. Tipoff is still to be determined, but the squad will open tournament action at VCU's home court in the Siegel Center.

## Women's tennis, men's water polo earn first wins of the season

**EMILY MAISE**  
SPORTS EDITOR

With fall and spring sports playing during the spring semester amid the COVID-19 pandemic, keep up to date with weekly recaps of home and away games.

### Tuesday Men's soccer

The Colonials (1-1) hit the road for the first time this season, taking UMBC (1-0) to the wire in a 0-1 double overtime loss. GW outshot the Retrievers 14-12 and launched four more balls on frame. Senior forward Oscar Haynes Brown and graduate student midfielder Sandro Weber pelted three shots apiece, but freshman goalkeeper Quantrell Jones made nine saves to keep a clean sheet.

In the 105th minute, freshman forward Taylor Calheira squeaked a ball by sophomore goalkeeper Justin Grady, who played the full game between the pipes for GW.

The squad will be back in action Saturday to take on James Madison at 7 p.m.

### Friday Women's tennis

The squad (1-1) bounced back from a season-opening loss to dominate Coppin State (0-3) 7-0. Sophomores Luciana Kunkel and Sarah Bodewes, playing in the No. 2 doubles pairing, dominated their match, winning by a clear 6-0 decision.

Freshman Stella Wiesemann and graduate student Alexis Nelson nabbed the other doubles victory at the No. 1 spot, giving the Colonials the early lead heading into singles matches. All six spots emerged victorious, with Wiesemann, Kunkel and Bodewes winning in straight sets.

The Colonials will be back in action March 7 at Delaware after their Sunday matchup with James Madison was postponed.

### Saturday Men's water polo

In the first two of three games this weekend, men's water polo (1-3, 0-3 MAWPC) dropped a doubleheader to No. 9 Navy (6-1, 3-1 MAWPC) and

Bucknell (3-1, 3-1 MAWPC). In the first game against the Midshipmen, the Colonials were narrowly defeated 16-12. The squad led after the first frame, but offensive bursts in the second and fourth quarters gave Navy the advantage. Senior utility player Andras Levai led the team with four goals.

In the second game of the day, one goal was the difference in an 8-7 matchup with Bucknell. Senior center Gabriele Simonti notched three goals and a team-high four blocks, and freshman goalkeeper Luca Castorina tabbed 17 saves in the effort.

The squad faced another matchup Sunday.

### Lacrosse

Navy (3-1) trounced the Colonials (0-1) in its season-opener 22-2. The Midshipmen scored early and often, notching 14 unanswered goals in the first half. The squad almost averaged a goal every two minutes. GW got on the board within the first two minutes of the second half after senior attacker Ionna Mantzouratos found the back of the net.

Navy responded with a five-goal streak, and junior attacker Sophia Watkinson tacked on GW's final goal with 13 minutes to play. Three more scores from the Midshipmen buried the Colonials further. GW was only able to get six shots, three of which were on goal, while Navy threw 46 shots, 36 of which were on goal, at GW's goaltenders.

The squad will play again Saturday at Old Dominion at 1 p.m.

### Volleyball

The Colonials (1-7, 0-5 A-10) dropped its third straight game to Rhode Island (3-4, 2-1 A-10) in straight sets. The squad swung at a .138 clip, recording 24 kills on the road. But the Rams' offense dominated the matchup as they notched 48 kills on a 34.3 attacking percentage. Junior outside hitter Paz Dozie-Nnamah paced the squad with six kills and senior middle blocker Callie Fauntleroy followed up with five of her own.

The squad narrowly lost the first set by a slim 25-20 margin. But the

Rams turned up the heat in the second and third sets, winning them by nine and 10 points, respectively.

GW will be back in action Saturday to take on Fordham in the Smith Center. First serve is slated for 1 p.m.

### Men's swimming and diving

Two divers – sophomore Spencer Bystrom and senior Nick Tomczyk – competed at the James Madison Duke Dog Invitational. Bystrom led the field for the men's 3M, earning a 303.15 and the victory. He also took second in the men's 1M, and Tomczyk finished right behind him at No. 3 with a score of 269.85. Tomczyk also nabbed No. 4 in the 3M competition.

### Women's swimming and diving

Sophomore Caitlin Inall and junior Carolina Stocchi represented GW at the James Madison Duke Dog Invitational on the women's side. Inall paced the Colonials on the 1M and 3M, earning No. 9 and No. 10 finishes. Stocchi followed behind with No. 13 and No. 16 finishes, respectively, in the same events.

### Softball

The Colonials (0-3) fell to Virginia (4-5, 2-3 ACC) and James Madison (2-0) in its doubleheader to kick off the season. Against the Cavaliers, redshirt junior utility player Sierra Lange singled in the fourth and scored on a fielder's choice to give GW the early lead. Virginia found the scoresheet in the bottom of the sixth, batting in two runs from a triple and scoring a runner on an error. The squad recorded one more run in the seventh but couldn't make up the deficit.

Graduate student utility player Faith Weber singled up the middle to give GW the edge in the bottom of the second and a Lange single in the bottom of the fifth pushed the lead to 3-1. Graduate student utility player Jessica Linquist brought another run in with one inning to play. But the Dukes scored seven unanswered runs in the seventh inning to walk away with the comeback victory.



COURTESY OF THE GW ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

The women's basketball team is slated to play Fordham in the last game of the regular season Thursday.

## Women's basketball closes out conference play with fourth win

**NURIA DIAZ**  
STAFF WRITER

In the final minutes of the fourth quarter, graduate student guard Jasmine Whitney sprinted down the court, dishing a pass to redshirt junior guard Gabby Nikitinaite. Nikitinaite nailed her third three-pointer of the game, sending her on her way to a season-high 22 points.

The Colonials (8-12, 5-9 A-10) overwhelmed the Patriots (3-18, 0-14 A-10) Sunday, building a 29-point lead that assured their fourth consecutive win 68-39. GW matched its season-high of nine triples, five of which came from the hands of Nikitinaite.

GW shot 38.9 percent from the floor, including a 40.9 percent clip from the three-point line. George Mason hit 31.9 percent of its shots, netting 15 attempts. But the Patriots went just 2-of-15 from long range.

The Colonials turned the ball over just eight times, while the Patriots committed 24 turnovers that resulted in 26 GW points – 20 more points than George Mason mustered. The team forced 15 turnovers as eight different players tallied a steal.

Sophomore forward Vita Stam hit a layup to start the scoring off. Redshirt junior forward Mayowa Taiwo ripped an offensive board and was fouled on the way back up to the rim. She nailed one

free throw to get GW on the board. Brigham and junior guard Maddie Loder combined for five points to give the Colonials a four-point advantage.

George Mason responded with a five-point tilt of its own to retake the lead, but GW went on a 14-point spin that included two triples from Nikitinaite to give the squad a 20-7 lead. A jumper by Jameson and a layup by Doster brought George Mason within three possessions at the end of the first frame.

The Patriots faced a three-minute scoring drought in the top half of the second quarter as the Colonials broadened their lead to 13 points. Sophomore guard Essence Brown, Brigham, Taiwo and Whitney all hit jumpers to grow the 33-14 advantage. The Colonials defense held a tight grip as the Patriots were only able to score three times in the quarter for a total of four points.

The Colonials charged ahead in the third quarter, netting nine straight points as the Patriots were ultimately unable to score until three minutes in. Whitney nabbed a steal during the run and missed her initial shot. But an offensive rebound revived the play and she didn't miss the second time, raining down a three-point bucket.

The Colonials nabbed 18 offensive boards, which

turned into 15 points.

After the media timeout, freshman forward Vanessa Laumbach broke the dry spell from the field for the Patriots with a layup. George Mason held GW scoreless for the remainder of the frame, chipping the lead down to 20 points.

Both teams got their offenses going in the fourth quarter, as both squads shot more than 50 percent from the field, scoring a combined 43 points. George Mason opened the quarter on a 9-5 tilt, but Nikitinaite responded with 14 consecutive points, including three triples.

Graduate student guard Sydney Zambrotta joined in on the fun, swishing another triple to boost the lead to 30. Freshmen guard Aurea Gingras and forward Caranda Perea ended the scoring for the Colonials with a jumper and layup, respectively.

The Colonials held an eight-point edge in the paint, and a 21-point edge from beyond the arc. Combining the sharpshooting with shutdown defense, the squad walked away with a 68-39 and a season sweep of George Mason after beating the Patriots on the road last month.

The Colonials are back in action Thursday for a nonconference game against Fordham. Tipoff for the last regular season game of the year is set for 5 p.m.