

The GW Hatchet

What's inside

Opinions
The editorial board lays out what the SA's new leaders should prioritize.
Page 5

Culture
Discover different sports communities to join outside of Foggy Bottom.
Page 6

Sports
The athletic department named the new women's basketball head coach last week.
Page 7



FILE PHOTO BY SOPHIA YOUNG | CONTRIBUTING PHOTO EDITOR
Mark Diaz, the chief financial officer, said that once administrators made decisions to introduce financial cuts as a result of the pandemic, their intent moving forward has been to reverse those decisions, financial conditions permitting.

Officials continue loosening budget restrictions

ZACH SCHONFELD
NEWS EDITOR

Officials are continuing to roll back budget cuts implemented last year to mitigate the COVID-19 pandemic's financial impacts.

Administrators announced last week that they will resume employee retirement matching contributions and merit salary increases in July and said they are "actively preparing" for a round of faculty hires later this semester, which were all suspended to curb GW's estimated \$180 million budget gap this fiscal year. University President Thomas LeBlanc, Chief Financial Officer Mark Diaz and Provost Brian Blake said they hope to continue "unwinding" additional cuts in the coming months as they continue planning for an in-person fall semester.

"As our financial situation becomes clearer and as we get closer to the start of the budget year — our fiscal year starts on July 1 — the first thing we wanted to do was to reverse the tempo-

rary measures that we had to take through the past difficult year," LeBlanc said in a joint interview with Diaz and Blake.

The cuts were implemented alongside a suspension of most capital projects, a pay cut for top administrators and nearly 400 staff layoffs. The reductions have at times inflamed tensions between faculty and administrators, with many citing the cuts in their calls for LeBlanc's resignation.

Officials reinstated GW's base retirement contributions in January, which also included retroactive payments for December.

LeBlanc said the decision to resume matching retirement contributions is a "positive step" toward returning to normal. But he added that officials have been cautious not to overpromise on the timeline for reversing the mitigation measures.

"We don't want to be on a roller coaster where we have good news and then we say, 'Oh, we didn't

think of that,' and then we have bad news, and so on," he said. "We're very careful to understand our future revenue and expenditures and to make sure that we could do this in a fiscally sustainable way."

LeBlanc said he sees light at the end of the tunnel, but GW's operations and finances will still take more time to return to normal as the pandemic's impacts persist.

"The coming fiscal year is still a transition year in terms of the budget because frankly, it's still a transition year in terms of the pandemic," he said. Diaz, the chief financial officer, said officials have tried to avoid across-the-board reductions but ultimately could not get around some major cutbacks because of revenue losses. Officials had considered implementing a salary cut last fall but eventually decided against the move after discussions with faculty.

He said officials are continuing to navigate a high degree of uncertainty

with GW's finances, even as they hope for students to return to campus this fall because of shifting markets and enrollments.

Diaz said officials plan to submit a budget proposal for the next fiscal year to the Board of Trustees in advance of their May meeting, when trustees typically vote on the budget. The Board delayed the vote last year amid the financial uncertainty at the start of the pandemic, later providing officials with provisional authority as the fiscal year began in July.

Blake, the provost, said administrators are assessing study abroad programs and employee travel this fall as they form next year's budget.

He added that officials are making "aggressive" efforts to meet GW's enrollment goals next year. Officials are seeking to enroll upward of 2,550 freshmen and 300 transfer students this fall.

Blake said he is working with deans and units across the University as officials develop the budget.

Locals say Asian Americans targets of hate crimes

ZACHARY BLACKBURN
STAFF WRITER

Local leaders said hate crimes against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in D.C. have made those community members feel targeted since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Metropolitan Police Department recorded 132 hate crimes in D.C. last year, about one-third of which were reported in MPD's second district, which encompasses Foggy Bottom. Local leaders said these incidents have caused emotional harm to the Asian American and Pacific Islander communities, and city officials need to take legislative action to combat hate crimes.

An MPD spokesperson said the department's Special Liaison Branch, a unit that partners with "historically underserved communities," has organized community meetings and daily visits to Asian-owned businesses following last month's shooting in Atlanta that killed eight people, six of whom were women of Asian descent.

The spokesperson said officers have worked with the Mayor's Office of Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs to engage in community walk-throughs and business check-ins to show "solidarity and support."

"In response to the horrific events in Georgia, the Special Liaison Branch has ensured continual daily visits to Asian-owned businesses to inform on general safety and remind community

members of reporting hate bias incidents and crimes," the spokesperson said in an email.

Officers recorded 29 hate crimes based on ethnicity and 32 based on race last year, according to MPD data. The department counted 38 hate crimes based on sexual orientation, 27 based on gender identity, six based on political affiliation and one based on religion.

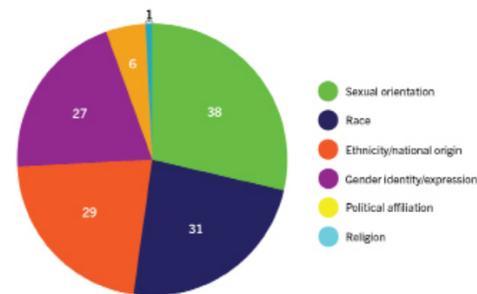
MPD's website states a hate crime is "motivated by prejudice," which could be based on race, religion, gender, age or several other statuses. Defendants of hate crimes face a 50 percent longer prison sentence than "the maximum term for the underlying crime" they committed, the website states.

The spokesperson said the department has taken steps to address a nationwide increase in hate crimes, working to raise awareness and increase reporting. They said all officers underwent training to better identify hate crimes in 2015 and said the training has heightened officers' awareness of potential incidents.

Reported hate crimes have surged in D.C. over the past several years, rising from 66 in 2015 to 203 in 2019 before dipping during the pandemic, according to the department's data. The spokesperson said officers are focused on making community members more comfortable with reporting crimes.

See LOCALS Page 4

Hate crimes by type in D.C. in 2020



SIDNEY LEE | GRAPHICS EDITOR

Source: Metropolitan Police Department

Students say social media leaves them 'exhausted'

LALITHA SHANMUGASUNDARAM
REPORTER

TIFFANY GARCIA
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

While quarantining last summer, now-freshman Dasia Bandy was spending almost "every hour" scrolling through Twitter to keep up with the stream of Black Lives Matter protest news.

But over time, Bandy said the constant desire to stay informed began to wear her down, taking up all of her energy. Eventually, she said she needed to adjust her social and news consumption habits to prevent feeling overwhelmed, giving herself scheduled times during the day where she allows herself to look through social media.

"I wanted to be on top of everything, and it was summertime," Bandy said. "So I was even more eager to be on top of things. But it doesn't mean I necessarily had the time or the energy to be on top of it, which is why I mentally was exhausted and drained."

Bandy is one of more than a dozen students who said they've felt "overwhelmed" balancing their online classes with social media consumption and activism in a year marked by rising hate crimes, the BLM movement and the COVID-19 pandemic. Experts in social media and mental health research said the pandemic has prompted students to be more in tune with current

events but isolated from peers, prompting a rise in mental health issues like depression and anxiety.

Compared to previous academic terms, college students were more anxious and depressed last fall because of the pandemic, according to a June study from the Journal of Medical Internet Research. The study also found that more media consumption of COVID-19 news was associated with increased phone usage and decreased physical activity and outings.

Junior Samantha Millar said she has stayed involved in activism through the pandemic as an executive board member for GW Voices for Choices, a reproductive justice student organization. Millar said she gets stressed learning about systemic issues, like the "bleak state" of reproductive justice, that are too complex to solve in a short period of time.

She said her online advocacy efforts can burn her out at the end of the day, but working and talking through her anxieties with peers in the organization keeps her from feeling alone. She said working with students who share concerns and passions about social justice has helped her stay motivated and inspired.

Millar, a political communications major, said logging off and taking care of herself is challenging when she spends her whole day online in classes. She said she feels "utterly powerless" when a new "injustice" is spread

on Twitter and other social media platforms.

"Between online school and ever-addictive social media, I often feel like I'm drowning in a constant flood of information," Millar said in an email. "I am not always successful in stepping away from my devices, but when I can, I feel the benefits immediately."

Young adults who spent more than five hours a day using social media were more likely to become depressed in six months compared to students who used social media for fewer than two hours, according to a December study from the American Journal of Preventive Medicine.

Senior Emma Sullivan, a political science and criminal justice major, said she uses social media like TikTok and Instagram to hear about current events in her downtime. She said she wants to be informed and "active" in supporting criminal justice movements like racial equity, but she sometimes deals with "mental wear" from hearing each story.

She said people are spending more time online and indoors during the pandemic, giving them endless access to information about heavy events like mass shootings.

"Social media is really powerful and really useful because it is a great way for any given person to bring attention to issues and help with mutual aid and GoFundMes, so in that way I think it's really powerful and useful," Sul-



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY SABRINA GODIN | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR
As activism moved online last year, students say the combination of a tumultuous year for social justice, remaining cooped up in their homes and balancing regular life was too much for many to handle.

livan said. "Individually, it's definitely very mentally draining."

Experts in social media and mental health research said students should schedule time away from their phones because of the harmful effects that staying online all day can have on their brains. They said students had more breaks from work in the past by meeting with peers, while the virtual learning environment keeps students plugged in and exposed to more information on a "24-hour" basis.

Bu Zhong, an associate professor of psychology at Pennsylvania State University, said he has been researching how students can "take back control" by working and managing

their mental health while staying informed. Zhong said students should take a break from social media to "re-energize" their minds.

He said students should designate set times to use and engage with social media and learn about current events.

"Social media and all these sort of digital media platforms are tools, just like a knife," he said. "A knife can be made to cut fruit, but also a knife can be used to kill people. It depends how you are going to use it."

Jordan Young, a research associate at the University of Pennsylvania, said research has confirmed that populations at large are experiencing "Zoom fatigue" from

working remotely. She said people are more likely to work longer hours now because mental exhaustion prevents them from working more efficiently.

She said staring at a screen for multiple hours a day and having constant access to current events is physically exhausting and overwhelming.

"The capabilities that we have now, that we have smartphones and all these different technologies to connect us with people around the world is incredible," Young said. "And it's very useful in a lot of circumstances. But living in a pandemic, with so many other things happening and just a lot of things on our mind, it definitely can be a reminder of all of that stress."

News

April 5, 2021 • Page 2

THIS WEEK'S EVENTS

A CONVERSATION WITH FORMER JORDANIAN PRIME MINISTER, DR. OMAR RAZZAZ
 April 7 • 4:30 p.m. EDT • Free
 Join the DPE sorority for a conversation with the former prime minister of Jordan to discuss his excellency's public service and Jordan's COVID-19 pandemic response.

WAR, IMMIGRANTS, AND BROKEN PROMISES: A CONVERSATION WITH FERNANDO PUJOL
 April 8 • 8 p.m. EDT • Free
 No Lost Generation GWU will host a conversation with Pujol, who worked on the front lines of the refugee crisis for years, about war and migrants.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

April 7, 1981

A series of underground explosions go off at the corner of 20th and F streets, evacuating Francis Scott Key Hall.



LILLIAN BAUTISTA | SENIOR PHOTO EDITOR

Student leaders representing race- or ethnicity-based student organizations have shouldered some of the burdens of ensuring students feel like a part of campus in spite of nearly three semesters away from D.C.

Multicultural student leaders bolster programming

NICHOLAS PASION
 STAFF WRITER

TIFFANY GARCIA
 ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Multicultural student organizations have spent the year hosting social events and celebrations to build community among students of color during GW's virtual semesters.

Students of color said they've struggled to feel like a part of the student body, leaning predominantly on student groups and the Multicultural Student Services Center to find their close friends and communities. But with the COVID-19 pandemic preventing in-person events, student leaders of multicultural organizations said they've upped their programming to include additional community-focused activities to curb feelings of isolation.

Senior Aarshi Kibria, the president of the South Asian Students Association, said smaller South Asian multicultural groups within the organization, like GW Raas, have built a community over shared cultural interests at events and weekly general body meetings. She said among the group's biggest accomplishments this year was transferring their two major dance competitions to

Zoom, so students could still engage in shared cultural celebrations, like in normal years.

She said the group has hosted a mix of discussions about members' cultural and political identities and social events, like a recipe-sharing event on Zoom so students can feel connected. She said students are burned out after a day of online classes, so the group updated its calendar with new events, like a Zoom Desi Cookoff with American University's chapter, for members to decompress over shared cultural interests.

Quiara Mosley, the vice president of speciality events and programming for the Black Student Union, said this year the group has focused on advocating for students and ensuring they feel like they are part of GW. She said the group starts all events with light conversation and icebreaker questions for students to meet and feel the same "energy" as they would in person.

She said BSU has organized events, both in person and online, for all members to feel connected even if they can not attend every event. She said freshmen have been more engaged than leaders expected because of the adapted programming.

The group organized multiple events inviting

BSU alumni to meet with undergrads to make them feel connected to the larger Black community on campus, Mosley said. She also said BSU hosted a socially distanced outing on the National Mall earlier this month and coordinated with chapters at Georgetown and American universities last fall to host a DMV-wide Black student mixer where attendees played games online.

Sophomore Alexander Lin, the social media and public relations chair for the Taiwanese Student Association, said helping Taiwanese students find a shared cultural community is needed at a predominantly White institution like GW because the community is so small. He said the group's annual events highlighting Taiwanese food and Taiwanese holidays like Lunar New Year were shifted to Zoom to keep students connected to Taiwanese culture and identity.

Lin said the executive board has shifted its focus this semester to "building a sense of belonging" among students at meetings through discussions about mental well-being and personal experiences being Taiwanese at GW. He said these events serve to remind members they have a base at the University.

Researchers compile vaccinator map

LIA DEGROOT
 NEWS EDITOR

A team of Milken Institute School of Public Health researchers compiled an interactive map late last month showing which health professionals in each state are allowed to administer COVID-19 vaccines.

The map reveals that 24 states have implemented emergency legislation to expand authorization to groups of professionals, like dentists and paramedics, who aren't typically responsible for dispensing vaccines. Julia Strasser, a senior research scientist at the public health school and the lead researcher on the project, said the map could inform public health leaders on neighboring states' policies to guide their own state's distribution guidelines and influence their rollout plans.

Strasser said she hopes the information presented in the map can inform state leaders about how expanding the number of vaccinators can reduce bottlenecks in distribution. She said about half of the states have implemented policies to increase the number of vaccinators in light of the pandemic.

The map allows users to click on a specific state to see the types of profes-

sionals who are authorized to administer the vaccine in that state. The map also links to the specifically approved legislation that authorized the respective groups of professionals to provide the vaccine.

Six Milken researchers — Patricia Pittman, Meg Ziemann, Noah Westfall, Rachel Banawa and Nicholas Chong — collaborated with Strasser to create the map, according to the map's website.

The map shows that 15 states, like California, Nevada and Colorado, have authorized dentists to administer vaccines. Thirteen states, like Nebraska and Ohio, have authorized other "skilled volunteers" to administer the vaccine, according to the map.

Strasser said some states have allowed students in health-related fields or retired health care professionals, who have completed a base level of training, to administer the shot. She said these steps can help speed up states' vaccine rollouts.

The PREP Act, which was passed last month, authorized the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to expand the number of individuals permitted to administer the vaccine.

Georgia, Virginia and California have struggled

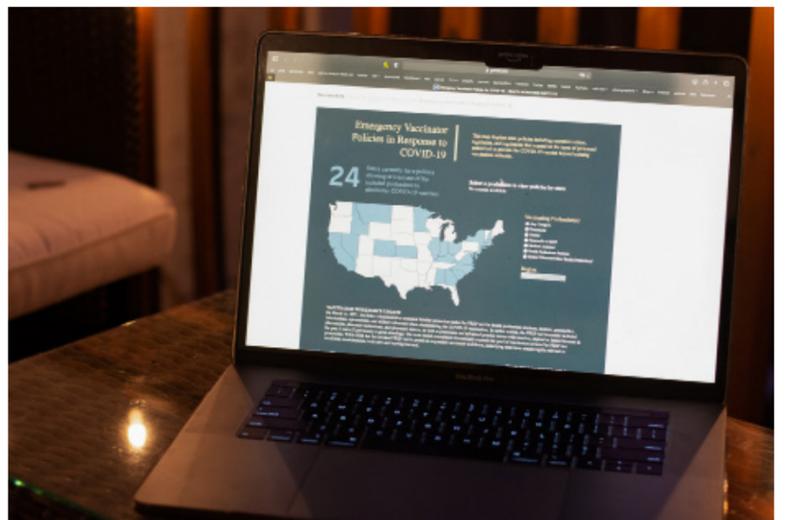
to distribute their COVID-19 vaccines after receiving shipments in January because of a lack of capacity to administer the shots, CBS News reported.

Experts in public health and medicine said expanding the authorized workforce could help speed up distribution, but the move should be paired with thorough training for professionals who haven't conducted vaccinations before.

Bruce Y. Lee, a professor of health policy and management at the City University of New York, said the map can be helpful for policymakers and public health workers who want to find ways to improve vaccine distribution. But he said expanding the workforce too broadly can decrease the quality of vaccine distribution, through contamination and other unsafe practices, if some are not properly trained.

Thomas Denny, the chief operating officer of the Duke Human Vaccine Institute at Duke University, said compiling state-specific information in a map format can help health leaders learn from other states' successes or failures in their vaccine rollouts.

He said vaccinators recruited from outside of the industry may need more time to reach proficiency.



SOPHIE MOTEN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

About half of states have, on a temporary or emergency basis, authorized professionals like dentists and paramedics to administer COVID-19 vaccines.

Medical faculty treat patients with long COVID-19 symptoms

LIA DEGROOT
 NEWS EDITOR

MICHELLE VASSILEV
 STAFF WRITER

Two professors of medicine have helped treat about 100 COVID-19 patients at a clinic in the Medical Faculty Associates to help those with symptoms lingering months after their initial infection.

The heads of the COVID-19 Recovery Clinic, which began operations in October, said they've found patients with initially mild cases of COVID-19 typically have had the most severe long-term symptoms. Hana Akselrod, the co-director of the clinic and an assistant professor of medicine, said she has seen patients with long-term effects ranging from cardiac damage and pneumonia to lung scarring and cognitive issues.

"What I think is a lesson learned over all this experience is there's no single long-COVID patient or single long-COVID experience," Akselrod said. "We see people who were hospitalized and had, some of them, critical care ICU stays or really long hospital stays, and we see people who were never hospitalized and never needed oxygen."

Akselrod said patients typically fill out an extensive questionnaire upon arrival at the clinic, specifically designed for those with lingering COVID-19 symptoms, asking about their past medical history and their experience with the virus. She said the patients then have a 30-minute session with a physician where they discuss the symptoms they're experiencing.

Patients are referred to the appropriate specialists with expertise in more narrow medical fields like neurology or cardiology, she added.

Akselrod said staff has put "deliberate thought" into making the clinic more equitable because the majority of patients are more socioeconomically privileged. She said the clinic has hired full-time administrative support in the last month and has also applied for grant funding to help with patient navigation, social work and reducing barriers to health care access.

Akselrod said she is worried that people of color, those with underlying medical conditions and those who are most affected economically by social determinants of health can't get into clinics due to the high costs of medical care. "We need to be thoughtful about who we prioritize and how we help patients from the communities that are disproportionately hit by COVID," Akselrod said.

Akselrod said members of the clinic have worked with four other long COVID-19 clinics to create hypotheses about what kind of "patterns of disease" occur in those types of patients. She said their hypotheses suggest long COVID-19 can affect the lungs, heart and immune system.

She said the clinic is housed at an academic medical institution, so it also has to collect new data and offer opportunities for research. She said many patients have donated blood samples and nasal swabs for the clinic to store and share with other researchers studying the immune system's reaction to the virus.

Akselrod said an advisory group of physicians and researchers help members identify "strong projects" for the clinic to share samples. She said this process connects researchers with patients who are interested in contributing to medical studies.

"The idea is that by connecting patients who want to donate their blood to research with researchers



DANIELLE TOWERS | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Members of GW's clinic have worked with other clinics around D.C. to gather information and form hypotheses about the "patterns of disease" that occur as a result of COVID-19.

who are trying to understand how the immune system reacts to COVID and why it does so differently in different people, we can be that bridge," Akselrod said.

Akselrod said the clinic's membership consists of three codirectors, three adult general internists and about five residents who work at the clinic based on their availability. While members spend their evenings helping treat the patients at the clinic, Akselrod said she hopes the clinic will expand to offer more daytime hours in the future.

Aileen Chang, the co-director of the clinic and an assistant professor of medicine, said the most

common symptoms she's observed in patients who receive treatment at the clinic include fatigue, brain fog and increased heart rate. She said patients have experienced symptoms for anywhere from three months to one year.

"Frankly, it breaks my heart," Chang said in an email. "We have so many very debilitated young and older patients whose lives have been crippled by this chronic disease such that they can't work or take care of their families."

Patients from around the country who experience lingering COVID-19 symptoms have reported respiratory issues, nausea and discolored extremities. Preliminary

research has shown patients' remaining symptoms tend to recede after they receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

Chang added that many patients have expressed gratitude to the clinic for providing individualized treatment while their primary health care providers have struggled to treat their long-term symptoms.

"Little is known about how to treat long COVID, so many patients have encountered health care systems that don't know what to do with them," she said. "This is why we have tried to create a medical home to provide patient-centered care to guide their recovery."

Speakers to discuss technology in medical field at summit

MATTHEW DONNELL
REPORTER

GW's medical enterprise will host its inaugural Digital Health Summit later this month to discuss how technological advancements in digital health can be applied to health care.

The summit, which will take place from April 14 to 16, will feature experts in public and digital health and will focus on topics like how current technology outside the medical field can be applied to health and medical education. Pamela Jeffries, the dean of the School of Nursing, said the COVID-19 pandemic has increased the need for digital health solutions as new technologies raise the quality and safety of health care delivery.

"This rapid growth and reliance on health care technologies caused me to reflect and ask myself critical questions – questions about education and professional development, safe practice, equity, digital literacy among the communities we are serving and more," Jeffries said in an email.

She said the planning committee for this summit includes representatives from five schools, including the School of Medicine and Health Sciences and

the School of Engineering and Applied Science. She said MedStar, a non-profit health care organization that is also one of GW's health care partners, helped plan the summit.

Jeffries said officials used external marketing and all forms of social media, digital marketing and professional listservs to advertise the event.

She said faculty, staff and students can register for free for all three days of the summit. She said each day of the summit has a different theme, like health care in academic institutions, innovation in the corporate sector and evidence-based research, in hopes of attracting a wide-ranging audience.

"The summit is targeted for a diverse audience interested in digital health for health professions," Jeffries said. "Participants will include academics, clinicians, health care leaders, entrepreneurs getting started in the health care space and others interested to learn more about where we are globally now and in the future in digital health."

The summit will feature Karen DeSalvo, the chief health officer of Google Health; Heather Cox, the chief digital health and analytics officer of Humana; and Michael O'Neil, the founder of GetWell-

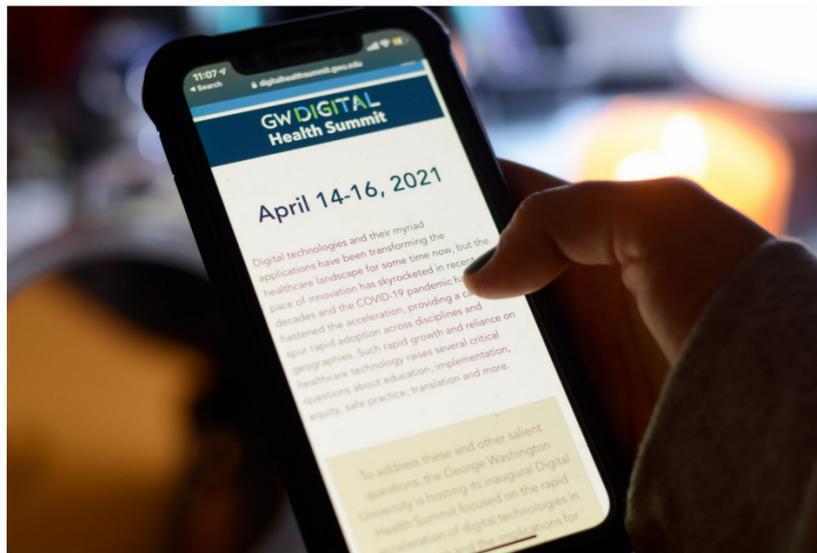
Network. The summit will raise "several critical questions" about issues like education and equity in health care fields, according to the event's website.

The first day will focus on educating participants about technology's current involvement in health and medicine, the website states. The second day will feature a discussion on advancements in non-medical technology that could have an impact on health-related fields.

The summit will conclude on the third day with a discussion on technology currently being used in education, practice and research, according to the website.

Experts in public health said the summit should include a diverse set of speakers who are of different ages, backgrounds and professions for the summit to reach a diverse audience that includes both students and community members.

Paul Beninger, an associate professor of public health and community medicine at Tufts University, said GW's digital health summit can help bridge the divide between local community members and college-area students. He said the summit's facilitators should use print and electronic media when advertising to effectively eliminate the divide.



SOPHIE MOTEN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
The summit will feature the chief health officer of Google Health and other executives and founders of health care-related companies.

"It gets new information into the mix so that more people hear it that might not otherwise hear it," Beninger said. "It helps identify gaps and opportunities so they're along the same line of introducing new concepts and vocabulary. It gives people an insight into where new things are happening."

Beninger said event organizers should ensure the summit is "cross-cultural" and panels consist of speakers of different ages and experiences to speak

to a diverse audience.

"I would say you need diverse participants, you need diverse perspectives and you need a broad range of experience," Beninger said. "So one way you can translate that is young and old. You can't just focus on those that have their phones tied to their hip."

Elizabeth Salerno Valdez, a postdoctoral pathways fellow and lecturer at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, said the summit should include

community organizations that could explain to health care providers what kinds of structural barriers health care community members face. She said community organizations would expose members of the summit to the needs of the community that they wouldn't normally consider, like transportation access.

"They have their finger on the pulse of what the community needs," Valdez said. "Oftentimes they can serve as a liaison."

Crime in Foggy Bottom plunges during COVID-19 pandemic

YUTONG JIANG
REPORTER

Since the initial outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic last March, the number of crimes near campus has dropped by half.

GW Police Department Chief James Tate said officers have responded to fewer than 400 crimes since last March, compared to more than 1,000 crimes reported to the department in each of the two years before the pandemic. Local leaders said the decline in incidents has coincided with the reduction of public activity over the past year.

The District recorded 359 crimes in Foggy Bottom and the West End since Mayor Muriel Bowser issued a stay-at-home order last March.

That number marks a 48 percent drop from the 685 crimes committed in 2019, according to Metropolitan Police Department data. Foggy Bottom and the West End witnessed between 600 to 700 crimes annually in the four years preceding the pandemic, according to MPD data.

MPD Lt. Bredet Williams said at a Foggy Bottom As-

sociation meeting late last month that local violent crime has "tremendously" decreased compared to last year at this time. But she said the entire city has faced more thefts at crime hotspots like CVS locations across D.C. because of a lack of on-site security.

Ward 2, which includes Foggy Bottom and the West End, has accumulated more than 3,700 crimes during the pandemic – the third most of any ward in the city – but the majority of incidents occurred near downtown D.C. or Logan Circle.

Williams said ANC 2A saw 20 fewer incidents in March compared to the same month last year, with 58 crimes in the area last month. She said 40 thefts and 18 assaults with dangerous weapons occurred last month, she said.

MPD launched a task force in February to combat carjackings and auto thefts following a boom in those crimes across the city.

Carjackings in D.C. surged last year, shooting up from 178 incidents last March to a peak of 364 in September, according to MPD data. Since the task

force's creation, carjackings have remained slightly above 200 incidents in February and March.

FBA President John George said he's pleased with the declining crime rate, which suggests that both the "good guys" and "bad guys" were following COVID-19 public health guidelines. George said the west side of Foggy Bottom is typically one of the quieter parts of the neighborhood, but the recent uptick in vehicle break-ins is "very distressing."

He said leaving valuable items in a car is an "invitation" for theft to happen and said these types of crime are inevitable in a city. He said drivers should keep belongings concealed in their cars to prevent auto thefts.

But George said he thinks residents feel safer living in Foggy Bottom now than before the pandemic because the community is "vigilant" against potential crime. He said residents look out for each other and report crimes to emergency services in a timely manner.

George said hygiene product thefts around convenience stores like 7-Eleven



LILLIAN BAUTISTA | SENIOR PHOTO EDITOR
While violent crimes are down over the past several months, thefts in stores and vehicle break-ins are up, which local leaders attribute to reduced foot traffic and security.

and CVS and graffiti around the Whitehurst Freeway near 26th Street have also become more frequent crimes during the pandemic.

Commissioner Jeri Epstein, the chair of the ANC, said the drop in crime within the community "mirrors" public life during the pan-

demic, with fewer people out on the streets. She said "crimes of opportunity," like property theft and carjackings, have been the "biggest" forms of local crime.

Epstein said the ANC has launched the West End Watch, a private email chain that connects all businesses

and residential buildings with GWPD to report crime in real time with the support of CCTV footage. She said if a crime is committed, West End Watch will send out a message saying "Be on the Lookout," notifying businesses in the area to be aware of their surroundings.

Sustainable urban planning program marks 10 years

GREYSON WEBB
REPORTER

Since its founding 10 years ago, the sustainable urban planning studies master of professional studies program has doubled its enrollment and earned accreditation.

The program, housed in the College of Professional Studies, covers topics in urban development, sustainable city designs and transportation, preparing students to have careers at consulting groups, federal and regional governments and non-governmental organizations. Faculty and alumni of the program said the program's accreditation cemented its status among the urban planning academic and professional communities.

Officials also created an honorary website highlighting alumni achievements from the program and are holding a symposium series throughout the spring to celebrate its anniversary. One symposium event from February covered how to support diversity within the sustainable urban planning education community, according to the program's website.

Sandra Whitehead, the director of the program, said most of the students at the program's start were working professionals in the middle of career changes

who were interested in urban planning. But she said recent undergraduates have composed a greater portion of the student population in the past two years, rising from 10 percent to about 35 percent.

"Our ideal candidates, the people who are attracted to our program, are interested in equity, are interested in promoting more green spaces and more economically viable cities for everyone," she said.

Whitehead said part of the program's growing appeal and success stems from its small class size of no more than 15 per course and the diversity of the enrolled students in age, educational background and work experience. She said the small class size has fostered intimate relationships between students, as they have a common goal to help local communities address urban planning challenges like environmental justice.

"The common thread really is the people coming to our program are really coming to make a big change in the world," she said. "They want to make a difference."

Whitehead said she has worked to promote more community-based learning opportunities, like ongoing partnerships with the Arlington County's Department of Community Planning, Housing and Development, since becoming the

program's director in 2019. She said the partnerships help train students to work with real-world clients in group settings to create professional urban planning projects.

"This is really important for students, especially as planners because this is what we do – we work with communities – we have to figure out how to talk to them about what's important to them and listen to what they need," she said.

Whitehead said the program's greatest achievement is its alumni, who hold positions at local, federal and international organizations, like the World Bank, Asian Development Bank and the District's Department of Transportation.

"Our impact on the communities that we serve, I hope, is the biggest legacy of our 10 years," Whitehead said.

Negin Askarzadeh, an adjunct faculty member in the program and a 2016 alumna, said the program's enrollment has shot up from 15 to 20 students in 2014 to 52 students currently.

She said the program's accreditation in 2019 is one of its greatest accomplishments because it functions with fewer full-time faculty than "traditional" planning programs.

"Being in that situation, getting that accreditation was a really great achieve-



HATCHET FILE PHOTO
Over the past couple of years, the program has attracted a greater share of recent undergraduates interested in studying sustainable city infrastructure and services.

ment for the program," she said.

Students who complete a sustainable urban planning program with accreditation may require less time to become certified through the American Institute of Certified Planners, according to the program's website.

Askarzadeh said the program's faculty members are working professionals in urban planning who have real-world expertise that they can provide to students.

Elizabeth Gearin, an adjunct faculty member in the program, said her time with the program has been

"rewarding" because of her students' passion for the topic. She said her students have appreciated her expertise – from serving on the Arlington County Planning Commission to the classroom.

Gearin said she is studying some of the topics she teaches in class as part of her work with the commission.

"I remind these students a lot that they are future leaders," she said. "They are the policymakers and planners of today and tomorrow. So, I believe that's what we're doing. We're helping shape our next generation of

public leaders."

Gearin said she has had difficulty teaching through virtual instruction because the "welcoming" environment of in-person learning has been hard to replicate. But she said her students have appreciated the effort that faculty have put into converting their classes into a virtual format.

"I really love these students," Gearin said. "They're smart and engaged and passionate, and they're taking these classes because they really want to be there. They're also working to show up at the end of a long day and to participate."

CRIME LOG

SIMPLE ASSAULT, DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY/VANDALISM

Tonic At Quigley's
3/26/2021 – 6:26 p.m.
Closed

GW Police Department officers responded to Tonic At Quigley's for a report of a non-GW affiliated man destroying flower pots, knocking over tables, removing signs and breaking dishes on the outdoor patio. The subject was not a guest of the establishment. GWPD officers barred the subject and arrested him. Metropolitan Police Department officers arrived on scene and transported the man to the Second District police station.

Subject arrested.

BURGLARY I/FORCIBLE

District House
3/27/2021 – 1:31 a.m.
Closed Case

GWPD officers responded to a report of an unknown man stealing clothes and earrings in a resident's room. Officers made contact with the subject and placed him under arrest. MPD officers arrived on scene and transported the subject to the Second District police station for processing. GWPD officers are investigating surveillance videos to see how the subject entered the building.

Subject arrested.

THREATS TO DO BODILY HARM

Public Property on Campus (700 block of 22nd Street)
3/29/2021 – 11:12 p.m.
Open Case

GWPD officers responded to a report of threats to do bodily harm. Upon arrival, officers made contact with a female student who reported that an unknown male subject said he would enjoy shooting the complainant. GWPD officers canvassed the area with negative findings.

Case open.

STALKING, THREATS TO DO BODILY HARM

1922 F St.
Multiple – Multiple
Open Case

A female student reported being a victim of stalking and death threats by a former male therapy client. The victim filed a police report with her local jurisdiction at the Fairfax Police Department and with MPD.

Case open.

UNLAWFUL ENTRY

Ross Hall
3/30/2021 – 6:30 p.m.
Closed Case

During a routine patrol, GWPD officers noticed a previously barred subject near Ross Hall. Officers made contact with the subject and updated his bar notice.

Subject barred.

—Compiled by Kateryna Stepanenko

Elliott students launch consortium to study women in national security

ISHANI CHETTRI
STAFF WRITER

Students in the Elliott School of International Affairs launched a consortium early last month to promote women in the study of national security through collaborative research efforts and educational events.

The D.C. Student Consortium on Women, Peace and Security is made up of 18 universities within the DMV partnering with a non-partisan working group studying women in peacebuilding, and is seeking to share expertise on women and gender issues in security and foreign policy. Students said the consortium is focusing on writing policy briefs to study subject areas and identity groups that are often overlooked within security and foreign policy like the LGBTQ community to submit to "key decision makers" for these issues like members of congress.

Shirley Graham, the founder and faculty mentor of the consortium and an associate professor of practice in international affairs, said the consortium aims to encourage innovative thinking within the U.S. Civil Society Working Group's women, peace and security agenda, a United Nations Security Council resolution which calls for increased participation of women in peacebuilding efforts.

"One of the key objectives that we came up with was to address structural barriers that prohibits the meaningful implementation of the women, peace and security agenda," Graham said. "We decided that within that particular objective we wanted to target outreach to youth peace and security groups and other coalitions working in this space."

Graham said the consortium is working to promote a "gendered approach" for security and feminist foreign policies, by studying how women, men, non-binary people and "gender and sexual minorities" are affected by conflicts or wars.

Graham said Graham reached out to potentially interested students to join the consortium like the LGBTQ community and male allies to address barriers that limit the discussion of topics like LGBTQ issues and feminist foreign policy. The barriers prohibit "meaningful" implementation of the CSWG's women, peace and security agenda, Graham said.

"I already was very aware that I had a very strong and



LILLIAN BAUTISTA | SENIOR PHOTO EDITOR

The consortium will study how war uniquely affects gender minorities and promote a "gendered approach" to foreign policy.

interested movement of students within the school who were conducting research in this area and were looking for ways of promoting, sharing and publicizing their research," Graham said.

Graham said about 10 students, many of whom are master's students, responded to her initial call to join the consortium. Students contacted universities and created collaborative events like a panel discussion with the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, a group that promotes women's rights and shapes global standards on gender equality and female empowerment, Graham said.

"By bringing in students who have the time and the energy and the focus on feminist research and feminist IR theory and could bring creative ideas to our discussions, it was very exciting to me and to the members of the Civil Society Working Group," Graham said.

Graham said it was a "win-win opportunity" to connect her students working on the consortium with the CSWG since the working group would get new perspectives from a younger generation of thinkers and leaders. Graham said at the same time, students can benefit by building their career networks and receive mentorship from experts in the field.

"We can be part of this process that is educating and informing the U.S. administration and Congress," Graham said. "That is really where this kind of synergistically all came together."

Students said they hope an increase in student and faculty interest in GW's chap-

ter of the consortium will help them become a formal student organization.

Nick Zuroski, a second-year graduate student pursuing a master's degree in international affairs, said a "healthy" number of students come to the consortium's weekly meetings. He said students recently established nine student leadership positions and developed its constitution to formalize the group and qualify for funding possibly next fall.

"It has been a lot of work because when you have this type of organization, it sits in a weird place because you're in academia, but you're working alongside civil society, and you're trying to bridge these relationships, not just the GW but with other universities in D.C. Consortium," Zuroski said. "It's essentially all volunteerism, which can be incredibly hard to sustain, so you have to have a very strategic and coordinated approach when you're doing that."

He said he hopes more undergraduate students take leadership positions since they would be able to participate for the four years they are at GW compared to graduate students who mostly stay for two years.

Zuroski said the consortium has sought to establish stronger working relationships with other universities' faculty and students through a newsletter they launched recently to keep those involved "informed," which currently has nearly 300 subscribers.

"What we're really trying to do is create this network of faculty that are really brought into the consortium and believe in the work and

pull their students into the operations of the consortium and have their students research and publish," he said.

Noelle Cohn, a first-year graduate student pursuing a master's degree in international affairs, said three of the 18 universities involved have already started developing their own chapters of the consortium. She said the consortium is meeting and working with faculty from the other universities involved like the University of the District of Columbia and the Northern Virginia Community College.

She said the consortium also held a launch event in March which garnered interest for potential collaborations with organizations outside of the academic sphere like the Geneva Center for Security Studies and the Women of Color Advancing Peace and Security HBCU Connection.

"We've been able to meet so many different students, and that was kind of how it started in that we took the initiative to reach out, but it really didn't take a lot of effort on our part because there are so many people so passionate about the WPS agenda," Cohn said.

Cohn said she hopes students who are interested in women, peace and security in foreign policy join the consortium because "gendered" analyses of security policy are often ignored.

"At the end of the day, the reason why this hasn't really been acknowledged is because even in terms of academia, which is more progressive, it often gets left out," she said.

—Alexandra Kicior contributed to reporting.

Career outcomes for Class of 2020 remain stable

ZACH SCHONFELD
NEWS EDITOR

More than nine in 10 graduates from the Class of 2020 have secured post-graduation plans despite the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, officials said.

Rachel Brown, the associate vice provost for University Career Services, said although job markets have shifted during the pandemic, roughly the same proportion of graduates have secured employment or other post-graduation plans. The percentage of students in full-time or part-time employment decreased slightly from 66 percent to 60 percent this year, she said.

"It speaks to the quality of GW students, the marketability of GW students and also, I think, GW students' resiliency and being able to adapt," Brown said. "That is a huge shoutout to the Class of 2020."

Officials received responses from 77 percent of last year's graduates on GW's First Destination Survey, which officials used to create the report, she said.

Brown said the percentage of students enrolled or planning to enroll in further edu-

cation jumped from 22 percent to 30 percent. Graduate schools nationwide have seen a jump in applications during the pandemic.

"We think that reflects the job market," Brown said. "It's very typical when the job market is tight to see an increase in students pursuing or individuals pursuing graduate school."

She said the amount of students pursuing a law degree dropped by about half, from 19 percent to 9 percent of those continuing their education. The drop might be a result of increased competitiveness at law schools nationwide, Brown said.

"We really can't fully, definitively explain that because we want to see what happens next year before we make any grand pronouncements of trends happening," she said. "But we do know there's a couple of things that we think are at play."

Nicole Kolt, the associate director for industry coaching in the Center for Career Services, said staff has worked to meet students' needs during the pandemic by expanding career coaching appointment availability, providing additional online resources for remote jobs

and providing support for virtual interview preparation.

"Being in the virtual space, we realized that this was a good time to expand our virtual resources, so we expanded a lot of the articles and resources that we had," Kolt said.

She said career center staff has also been able to engage more alumni and employers for virtual events during the pandemic, connecting students to additional employment resources. The career center reported upticks in the number of employers engaged and the number of alumni connected in the GW Alumni Association LinkedIn group.

Kolt added that staff members have seen student satisfaction, which is tracked through feedback forms after events and appointments, with career center resources remain the same or increase even as programming has moved virtually.

"We've actually seen that student satisfaction has stayed the same or increased when it comes to the different resources or services, whether it's one-on-one coaching or the different virtual workshops we've been offering," she said.

Locals push for legislation

From Page 1

Trupti Patel, a member of the Foggy Bottom and West End Advisory Neighborhood Commission, said a recent influx in first- and second-generation Americans from immigrant families has driven up hate crimes around the local neighborhood.

"We should not make fellow residents feel like they do not have a vested interest in how this community prospers and engages in the city, and I say this because this is not a battle long-term residents will win, continuing to treat many of the residents as if they do not have a stake in this community," Patel said.

Patel said the spike in reported hate crimes against people of Asian American and Pacific Islander descent has contributed to a growing sense of anxiety among local community members. She said the rise in hate crimes since the pandemic started has been "painful," and neighbors should check on community members who may be suffering "in silence."

"I still have close friends who do not feel safe walking outside of their homes because they feel like they're going to become targeted if they leave just due to the fact that they happen to be Asian American," Patel said.

A female student of Asian heritage reported she was the victim of racially insensitive insults while on campus last month.

"As an AAPI woman that stands in solitary with her Chinese American brothers and sisters, it's been really hard when people feel targeted due to their ethnicity, their heritage, their background, their traditions," Patel said. "This is very hurtful to all of us who are of AAPI heritage."

Patel said incidents like last month's shooting in Georgia indicate the "magnitude" of anti-Asian sentiment in the country since the beginning of the pandemic. Atlanta police have said it's too early to determine a motive for the shooting, but bias has not been ruled out.

A study of 16 American cities, including D.C., showed that anti-Asian American and Pacific Islander hate crimes increased by 149 percent from 2019 to 2020.

"Many in the community had felt that they had been ringing the alarm for well

over a year that there will be someone who will be murdered as a result of their ethnicity," Patel said.

She said D.C. community members need to collaborate through "local community engagement" to protect people of Asian American and Pacific Islander heritage from potential acts of hatred and to report hateful incidents they witness. She added that the D.C. Council needs to "beef up" hate crime legislation in the District, calling for stricter penalties if someone targets "anyone of minority status."

"Safety starts with all of us," Patel said. "It's not being the silent bystander and witnessing someone who is of AAPI heritage get insulted or picked on."

Senior and ANC Commissioner Yannik Omictin said some of his constituents have told him they have been victims of recent hate-based incidents. He said the pandemic's origins in China has fueled hate crimes against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

"The increased China bashing has essentially become extrapolated into hate against Chinese Americans and then anyone who looks remotely East Asian," Omictin said. "Because people hear all of this stuff about China, they have found it to be OK to be violent against Asians."

He said locals should support Asian-owned businesses and advocate for more equitable health care resources to protect others from hatred, noting how GW contains a large Chinese, Asian American and Pacific Islander population.

Nearly 3,000 students enrolled this academic year are of Asian descent, according to institutional research data.

"We have to step it up as a community to make sure that our Asian siblings are being protected," Omictin said.

He said city and local officials need to look beyond traditional methods of fighting crime, like heavy policing, to combat hate crimes.

"It just can't be police, police, police," he said. "Combating hate crimes is about making sure that the state sends a very clear message that it supports people of color, that it's going to provide the resources that we need to survive the next day."

Op-Ed: Student workers should revive efforts to unionize

What do Meghan Markle, Amazon employees and student workers at GW have in common?

They have all suffered because they do not have a labor union to stand up for them.

This shared struggle highlights why unions are so important and why every worker deserves the chance to unionize.

In her bombshell interview with Oprah Winfrey and her husband Prince Harry, which aired last month, Markle, the Duchess of Sussex, opened up about experiencing suicidal thoughts and her unsuccessful attempts to seek help from the royal family. During the interview, Markle mentioned that in her previous work as an actress, she had the protection of a union when she needed help. But within the royal family apparatus, no one was willing to perform a similar function.

Coincidentally, Markle and Harry's interview aired about a month after Alabama Amazon

Mark McKibbin
Alumnus

workers began the process of voting on whether they wanted to unionize. Despite a starting salary of \$15 an hour, Amazon workers are pushing to unionize due to demonstrably substandard working conditions at their workplace. Amazon executives have fiercely opposed this effort. In January 2021, Amazon appealed to the National Labor Relations Board to delay the election. The NLRB denied Amazon's appeal, the election took place and the NLRB is currently in the process of tallying the votes.

Resident advisers and graduate student workers have also sought to unionize in past



Cartoon by Hannah Thacker

years due to unfair working conditions. Similar to Amazon executives, administrators actively opposed student unionization efforts in both instances.

But with President Joe's Biden's newly appointed NLRB withdrawing this Trump-era rule, student workers' attempts

to unionize have a better chance of being successful. Now is an opportune time for student workers at GW to renew their push for unionization. Student workers should take advantage of this opportunity and move forward with seeking union recognition from the NLRB.

Opponents to unionization

often portray efforts to unionize as a money-grab – they do this to decrease support for those attempting to unionize, hoping to paint them as being greedy rather than having legitimate grievances about their working conditions.

For student workers, the fight for unionization is about

far more than wages – it is also about power. Administrators may claim they provide student workers with internal avenues to provide feedback to officials. But under this kind of system, officials can withdraw established mechanisms for feedback at any time and hold no obligation to incorporate feedback from student workers into subsequent policy decisions. Without a union, student workers have very little tangible power and almost no codified protection against unfair practices and working conditions.

Administrators will likely resist any future unionization efforts by student workers, as they have in the past, because they are terrified of giving up their power. They want to have authority over when, where and how they accede to the requests of student workers. Negotiating with unions would eliminate GW's ability to exclude student voices from the rooms where decisions are made. For many administrators, the idea that they might have less control over who can enter this room frightens them.

But this asymmetry of power between officials and student workers is exactly why student workers need a union. Unionization would provide student workers with power, protection and dignity in their on-campus jobs, leading them to be more productive employees and have a better quality of life during their time at GW. In the 2021-22 academic year, student workers should begin mobilizing in favor of unionization.

Alumnus Mark McKibbin, Class of 2020, served as a three-year resident adviser and is currently completing a master's in comparative social policy at the University of Oxford.

What the new SA administration needs to focus on next year

STAFF EDITORIAL

The Class of 2025 has not even seen campus. Many students dropped school for the academic year. And all students returning to a hopefully in-person fall semester have had much of their college experience ripped out from under them.

The Student Association has a major responsibility to reintegrate students into campus life, but as it stands, a lot of people understandably don't trust the organization, and many others feel excluded from it.

If the University returns fully in person this fall, the newly elected SA leaders must prioritize welcoming students back from the minute they start their roles.

Students voted in current Student Association President Brandon Hill and SA Sen. Kate Carpenter, U-at-Large, to serve as SA president and vice president, respectively, last week. As the candidates prepare for their new positions and responsibilities, they should consider what problems on their platforms to focus on, which ones to drop and which new problems they need to address. Carpenter wants to emphasize sexual education and improve the distribution of menstrual hygiene products, while Hill wants to improve the financial aid system. But the one issue they both need to take on is organizing events that will help students feel like actual students again after more than a year of remote learning. That needs to headline the start of their tenures.

Hill and Carpenter need to narrow down their platforms and focus on the reintegration of students back onto campus, restoring trust and transparency within the SA and advocating for student inclusion and representation. The newly elected candidates also need to drop buzzwords like "reform" and take actual action on items like financial aid, safety and security and create real change. Certain areas of their platforms, like Hill's focus on parking and Carpenter's focus on sports culture, can be altered or reduced in significance, and they can instead focus on more pressing issues students will face recovering from a year of online class.

The primary focus of both incoming student leaders should be reintegrating students back to the GW community to diminish students' feelings of being disconnected from campus life. The candidates must work to create programming for the freshman and sophomore classes, so they have as many opportunities as possible to socialize and meet people in person.

Another hurdle facing both candidates is how to restore trust and transparency in the SA after a whirlwind year for the organization.

After allegations of mismanagement and sexual misconduct and the subsequent resignation of former SA president Howard Brookins, students are wary of the organization and its insular culture. The new leaders need to focus on creating an environment where other students see the SA as a helping body instead of a governing body. Students need to see that the organization didn't just kick the former president out but that they have addressed any cultural and organizational problems that led to his appointment and allegations in the first place. This could be facilitated through internal trainings that encompass sexual assault and workplace aggression and increased transparency with the student body through clear and consistent communication via email and social media.

The SA has a reputation of being a toxic body that gets dunked on all the time and even has had calls for its abolition, but it should instead be seen as helpful. Take former SA Sen. George Glass, U-at-Large, who promoted mutual aid by interacting with large quantities of students over social media. Students want to see change that impacts them the most, but they don't always see what the SA works on from day to day. To remedy this, individual senators and the incoming leaders need to publicize what they are doing so students know who is working for them and what they are doing for them. This could take the form of an online tracker that spells out each leader's wishes and the status of their goals.

But connecting with the student body and publicizing their work can carry with it the temptation to distill complex and important topics to nothing but buzzwords. Graduate student advocacy, financial aid, LGBTQ inclusion and more all sound good on a policy platform or look sharp on a Canva graphic, but the reality of making progress on these issues is more complicated. It seems that year after year, SA leaders focus on style and not substance. Hill and Carpenter have the opportunity to break that mold this year and achieve goals that will benefit students.

The past year has been difficult, to say the least. The stresses of the pandemic and virtual learning have introduced new challenges for students to confront, but also new opportunities for the GW community to come back stronger. If Hill and Carpenter focus on implementing specific policies and reconnecting with the student body, they could go on to be legitimately transformative SA leaders.

We need to fight against anti-Asian hatred

The story of the Atlanta spa shootings last month may have come as a shock to many people, but anti-Asian hate is nothing new.

With the COVID-19 pandemic, America is reaching its most intense racial hostility against Asian Americans, but anti-Asian hate is not a pandemic-related issue. The same hatred against Asian Americans was prevalent in the past, galvanized by xenophobia and "Yellow Peril," or the idea that Asian immigrants posed a threat to western values. We cannot ignore the history of hatred in U.S. history because it informs the current state of the country.

Yeji Chung
Writer

Upon the very first arrival of Asian immigrants in the 1850s, Americans expressed an unprecedented level of xenophobia toward Asian immigrants. The term "Yellow Peril" was created to define the social upheaval at the time. Asian Americans were treated as an infectious disease that would rend American — Western — values. Still to this day, many Americans dislike Asian Americans and view them as a threat to U.S. culture. Although there has been enough time for European immigrants who came in the 1850s to

become "Americans," Asian Americans are still unfortunately viewed as "foreigners." Students and the GW community need to see the cyclical nature of that antagonism against Asians in this country. These issues have happened before and will continue to happen until we recognize xenophobia in this country and actively work to fight it.

Interestingly, "Yellow Peril" is not a concept only governed by White supremacy. As the Asian American community started being stereotyped as a "model minority" — which is the belief that Asians are unlike other minorities because they are successful in the country's capitalistic state — it has been facing discrimination and racially motivated attacks from non-White offenders. This means that Asian Americans are not being accepted as "fellow Americans," even within the minority communities.

Chris Kwok, a board member of the Asian American Bar Association of New York, told Voice of America in March that Americans are not opening enough of a dialogue into the perpetrators of hate crimes. He is right. We are talking about the fact that hate crimes are happening against Asian Americans, but we are not talking enough about the root cause. We know eight women of Asian

descent are victims of the more recent horrific act of hate, but where is the dialogue about the person behind the crime? That conversation is more difficult than recognizing the Asian Americans who have been attacked, but it is necessary to understand this hatred in the United States.

Despite the recent activism of the Black Lives Matter movement, the Asian community received a wave of violence, just like in years past. Although Asian Americans have been residents of the United States as much as other American immigrants, they are still not accepted as fellow Americans to this day. This is an inevitable outcome laid by indiscreet stereotyping that only serves to heighten the friction between different minority groups.

History repeats itself. From the Civil Rights movement, Japanese American internment and the 1992 Los Angeles riots to the BLM movement and Atlanta spa shootings, racial hostility has always recurred. This cycle has to stop, and the first step is to recognize all Americans as the same Americans and to not look through a lens of "Asian" Americans, "White" Americans, "African" Americans or "Latino" Americans.

Yeji Chung is an opinions writer.

Culture

April 5, 2021 • Page 6

THE SCENE

POEMS FOR THE PANDEMIC
April 7 • Free • Online Registration
Join Planet Word Museum for a night of poems that have inspired people throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

DUPONT CIRCLE SHOPPING POP-UP
April 10 • Free • Dupont Circle
Browse jewelry, candles and other crafts from more than 50 street vendors.

RELEASED THIS WEEK:

“OH NO” BY XIU XIU

GW students gain millions of views on TikTok

MOLLY KAISER

CONTRIBUTING CULTURE EDITOR

Chances are you've seen a TikTok posted to the "Overheard at GW" Facebook page where the user prompts "Tell me you've never touched a woman without telling me you've never touched a woman."

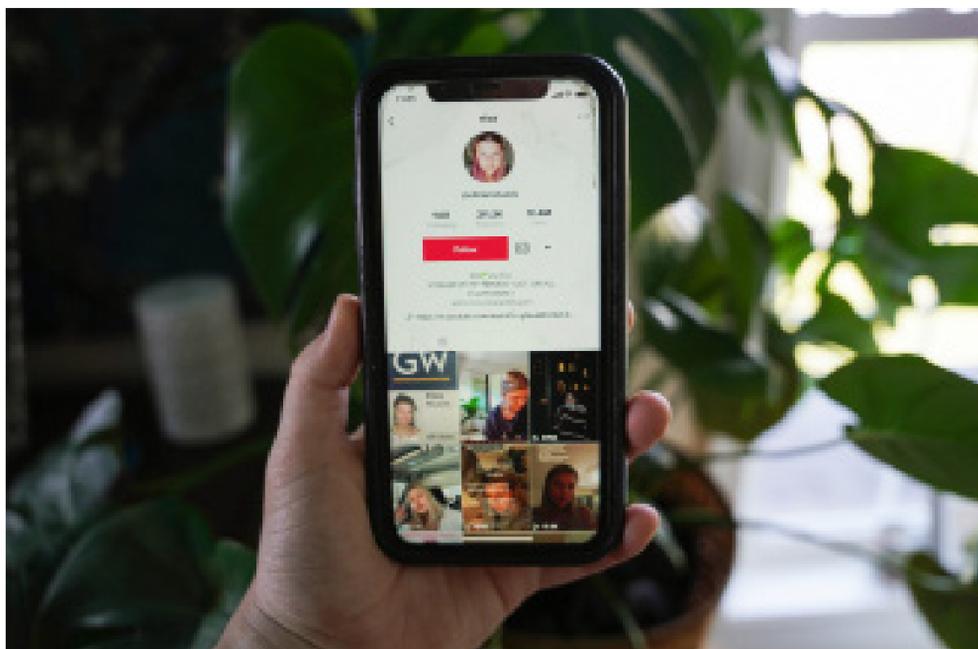
Kamau Louis (@realkamau), a junior studying international affairs, sarcastically replies "I'm a junior at George Washington University and I'm majoring in international affairs." The TikTok amassed nearly 20,000 likes on the app and more than 170,000 views.

Louis, who uses the platform to showcase his comedy skills, is one of a handful of students who are gaining notoriety on TikTok for their accounts known for social commentary, impersonations, self-love and music. Four students who have gained large followings on TikTok said they originally used the app to pass time or showcase their hobbies but now have a responsibility to keep in touch with their followers through daily content.

Comedytok

He said his most popular videos address GW, D.C. and internship culture, like this one captioned "I worked 60 plus hours at my unpaid internship," and looped with music that repeats the word "victim," and this video calling American University the "band kid school" of D.C. in a comedic slideshow.

But the app hasn't just served



JUNIOR ELIZA MCLAMB STARTED GAINING A LARGE FOLLOWING LAST SPRING AFTER POSTING VIDEOS OF HERSELF SINGING ORIGINAL SONGS. CAMILLE DESANTO | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR

as a destination for self-expression. Louis said he met his now-girlfriend on the platform after she commented on one of his videos.

"I looked at her comment and was like, 'Oh yeah, this is pretty funny,'" Louis said. "Then, you know, one thing led to another and we've been dating for the past two months."

Sam Andrews (@samueljeffer-

sonandrews), a freshman studying political communication, said he likes using the app to make people laugh. Andrews said he has been a creator on YouTube since eighth grade and started using TikTok for fun in fall 2019.

But after a TikTok he made impersonating "White girls on a tropical vacation" blew up, he began to gain a large following. Now, he

boasts 2.1 million followers and more than 120 million likes across all of his videos on the app.

Andrews said TikTok has an instantaneous nature, in contrast to his work on YouTube.

Andrews said some of the most meaningful milestones he's reached on the platform were when he reached 100,000 followers and designed a line of merchandise based

on his TikTok persona, like a sweatshirt with an outline of his face that reads "POV King."

Jump-starting a music career

For junior Eliza McLamb (@elizamclamb), TikTok has been instrumental in launching her career as a singer-songwriter. She said the app has helped her focus on her music and distribute it to the public.

McLamb started gaining a mass following last spring after posting herself singing original songs and taking requests from followers for personalized songs. She said she had more time to write while she was traveling cross country during the pandemic and working at farms in Kansas and North Carolina.

More than 300,000 people now follow McLamb on the app, and she released an EP in December that has racked up more than 1 million streams. McLamb said she worked short hours while in Kansas and was able to dedicate most of her time to songwriting and creating TikTok content.

McLamb also posts social commentary about feminism, the Black Lives Matter movement and casual videos about her life experiences. One video, in which McLamb discusses how the porn industry traumatizes young women, was reposted by activist and former porn star Mia Khalifa on her Instagram. Another one of her TikToks, which discusses 1950s housewife culture, was reposted on the Instagram account @girlboss.



PHEBE GROSSER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

The District has several amateur rowing clubs that offer memberships for everyone from experts to interested beginners.

Amateur sports leagues around D.C. to join

DIEGO MENDOZA

CONTRIBUTING CULTURE EDITOR

With most of GW's club teams on hold for the time being, consider joining one of D.C.'s many amateur sports communities.

Sports communities around the city would allow you to build camaraderie, establish friendships outside of Foggy Bottom and get active outdoors. While D.C. regulations currently limit organized sporting events, many clubs and leagues are still recruiting for future seasons starting in the summer and fall.

Here's a rundown of different groups you can check out if you're interested in soccer, basketball, rowing or running.

For soccer lovers:

Washington Area Women's Soccer League

Since 1982, Washington Area Women's Soccer League has sought to promote women's fitness and well-being through an international favorite. It is the only amateur women's league in the area, and its teams are open to players of all athletic abilities. While there are currently no activities, trainings or tournaments scheduled, you can take part in some socially distanced events to get to know other players.

Teams negotiate fees for a nine- to 10-game season, which has not yet been determined because of the pandemic. Around \$60 to join a tournament as a

free agent per event.

DC Premiere League

With nearly 8,000 players training at places like St. Albans School and Gallaudet University, you're bound to find new friends at the Premier League. The association is also prominent in community efforts, raising more than \$75,000 for D.C. youth sports programs in 2019. Spring registration is closed, but you can still sign up online as a new player interested in future seasons.

Teams negotiate fees, usually between \$100 and \$150 for a seven-game season.

For basketball fanatics:

DC CityBall

Whether you're looking for women's, men's or co-ed competitive groups, DC CityBall offers various opportunities throughout the spring and winter seasons. If basketball isn't your calling, the club also offers flag football, softball and volleyball leagues and competitions to join. All spring events are currently on hold, but you can still register online as a prospective player. Teams consist of a maximum of 30 players, and the total number of teams depends on how many players are interested each season.

Teams negotiate fees per season, between \$95 and \$125 for a nine- to 10-game season.

For rowing geeks:

Capital Rowing Club

Take advantage of the

Potomac and Anacostia rivers with the Capital Rowing Club, which offers both men's, women's and co-ed competitive and recreational groups. If you're a newbie, the club also has beginner's classes to get you up and going. Up to four people can simultaneously use the club's indoor rowing machines at the Anacostia Community Boathouse, and outdoor team training is available for up to 12 people at a time, according to the club's website.

Annual membership fee set at \$100 for students.

Rock Creek Rowing

This adult amateur group also has classes for beginners, and it offers special rates for coxswains – or boat leaders – if you are an experienced rower. For the time being, you can also enjoy virtual Zoom training with the club's coaches.

Annual membership fee set at \$275 but is lowered to \$150 for coxswains. Additional fees apply for those who join competitions.

DC Strokes Rowing

One of only five official LGBTQ rowing associations in the world, DC Stroke Rowing's goal is to "empower" queer athletes, regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation. The club also offers sculling and sweeping specific training programs, and you can register for private classes with the group's coaches.

Annual membership fee set at \$40. Additional costs apply for those who join competitions or private classes.

Inside the District's skateboarding scene

ABRIGAIL WILLIAMS

REPORTER

The District is generally known for its art and history, but some locals say its skating scene is the city's hidden gem.

Students and local skateboarders said the sport is more than just an activity or a means of transportation but represents a diverse and lively community. They said they've gotten involved with the sport as a hobby or a mode of transportation, but they have stayed in the skateboarding community to maintain friendships and network with other skateboarders.

"It's about having fun with your friends and the community that you can get from skating," senior Annaliese Keller said. "It can really expand and introduce you to so many amazing people."

Getting into the skating scene

Skateboarders said they joined the skating community to pick up a new hobby, but they kept with it because it gave them a community of people to network with and build friendships.

Senior Brianna Pearson said she started skating over the summer because she was bored. She said since joining the skateboarding community, she has formed closer relationships with other students who skateboard and people from around the DMV who

share the "instant" love of skating.

"You get to meet new types of people," Pearson said. "I became pretty close friends with one of the best skaters who was so kind and so are all the other skate skaters I've met."

Skate groups like @Flo.dmv use their Instagram page to schedule group skates, and other local skate groups like the @Shaw_boyz and The Wolf Pack formed over years of skating at The Shaw Skate Park.

Some novice skaters like senior Kaycee Beardeaux said she started skating to get around the city. She said the activity helps her take her mind off of work or school by practicing tricks or riding around the city for fun.

"It's a nice escape from work or school or whatever you have," she said. "At the end of the day, it's just a piece of wood on wheels, and you're just riding around doing tricks, but it means so much more than that."

Even though the pandemic has impacted almost every aspect of our lives, skate culture is one of the few activities that remains virtually untouched because it is almost always practiced at outdoor skate parks. Beardeaux said she's met other skaters since picking up the hobby, even if it only involves a "head nod" to a fellow skater.

Finding skate parks

JT, a 23-year-old D.C. skater and skate instructor

who declined to provide his full name, has been skating in the city for 12 years. He said the skating scene has a rich history of community and networking. He said Freedom Plaza has been a hub for the city's skateboarding scene for years, and the marble that makes up the area is marked up from skateboarders over the years.

JT said that people from the surrounding areas of Virginia and Maryland and tourists typically congregate at Freedom Plaza as an unofficial urban skate park.

For those who are looking to "vert skate," which involves skating on vertically inclined surfaces like ramps, the Malcolm X Park has great beginner ramps to practice, skateboarders said. Bigger parks like the Shaw Skate Park are temporarily closed due to renovations, and the Shaw Skate Park is scheduled to open this August.

Keller, the senior who skates around the city, said Freedom Plaza is generally known as a place where skateboarders can practice tricks, network and meet other skaters.

Keller added that skateboarders who like to practice tricks in a more low-key spot could head to the Kennedy Center, where the space is relatively flat and there are fewer ramps and inclinations to speed down. She said skateboarders could also head to The Reach, an addition to the Kennedy Center, for inclined surfaces.



SKYLAR EPSTEIN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Skateboarders said local residents from the DMV and tourists typically gather at Freedom Plaza as an unofficial skate park.

GAMES OF THE WEEK



BASEBALL
vs. VCU
April 9 | 3 p.m.
Baseball will kick off a four-game homestand against the Rams.



SOFTBALL
vs. Dayton
April 11 | 2 p.m.
The Colonials will cap a four-game battle with the Flyers.

NUMBER CRUNCH

52

The number of saves women's soccer recorded this season through 10 games, up from an average of 46 saves over the past five seasons.

Former Stony Brook head coach to helm women's basketball program

EMILY MAISE
SPORTS EDITOR

The former head coach at Stony Brook will take over the women's basketball program, Athletic Director Tanya Vogel announced in a release Friday.

Caroline McCombs brings 22 years of coaching experience to Foggy Bottom and a 130-76 overall record as a head coach. Her hiring comes less than three weeks after former head coach Jennifer Rizzotti and her staff were fired.

"In all of my conversations, it was evident that my values would fit seamlessly with the established culture at GW," McCombs said in the release. "Furthermore, I'd like to thank Shawn Heilbron for the opportunity to become a head coach and the position he put me in to lead the Stony Brook program."

During her seven-year stint at Stony Brook, McCombs led her squad to the 2021 NCAA Tournament for the first time in school history as a No. 14 seed. Her squad finished the year with a 15-6 record and an American East Championship banner.

The program had the opportunity to make the 2020 NCAA Tournament, but the COVID-19 pandemic canceled the Seawolves' conference championship and prompted the cancellation of the NCAA Tournament. The program nabbed 22 consecutive wins and the American East regular season crown that year.

Prior to taking the reins at Stony Brook, McCombs served as an assistant coach and recruiting coordinator at Auburn from 2012-14. She helped the Tigers to consecutive WNIT berths.

She was an assistant coach under former women's basketball coach, GW Athletics Hall-of-Famer and most winningest coach in program history Joe McKeown at Northwestern from 2010-12.

"GW has a storied tradition," McCombs said in the release. "Having worked under Joe McKeown at Northwestern, I was able to learn what a special place GW is. I look forward to helping restore this program as contenders in the Atlantic 10 and across the country."

She also spent five years as an assistant coach at Pittsburgh from 2005-10. With the Panthers, McCombs helped the program reach the postseason five consecutive times, including a trio of NCAA Tournament appearances and back-to-back Sweet 16 appearances.

Her first assistant coaching gig came at Valparaiso. McCombs served as an assistant coach and recruiting coordinator for five seasons before being promoted to an associate head coach for her final year with the program. With the Crusaders, she helped the squad nab back-to-back conference crowns and NCAA Tournament appearances in 2003 and 2004.

McCombs played her collegiate days at Youngstown State. She was a four-year starter, earning a



COURTESY OF GW ATHLETICS

While serving as Stony Brook head coach, Caroline McCombs's squad reached the 2021 NCAA Tournament for the first time in school history as a No. 14 seed.

spot in the starting five in all but three of her 115 games. The 2008 Youngstown State University Athletics Hall of Fame-inductee netted 1,577 points, dished 493 assists, ripped 473 boards and picked 236 steals in her collegiate career.

After obtaining her degree in dietetics, she competed in the Czech Basketball Federation and European Cup in 1998.

McCombs is inheriting a depleted program that saw three players enter the transfer portal after Rizzotti and her coaching

staff were let go. The team also hasn't seen a winning season since 2017-18, when the squad won its seventh Atlantic 10 Championship. But Vogel said in the release she was "thrilled" to have McCombs put the program back on a winning track.

Tight defense keeps men's soccer without a loss

ROMAN BOBEK
STAFF WRITER

After waiting more than a year to get back on the pitch, men's soccer has recorded just one loss in six games.

The Colonials (3-1-2, 2-0-2 A-10) have ridden their stout defense to remain undefeated at home and in Atlantic 10 play. Players said after a 1-0 win over VCU last week, the team's backline and goaltending – which has allowed just two goals in six games – have anchored the team and provided it time to strengthen its offense.

"As we were trying to kind of figure things out offensively, we were very strong defensively," sophomore goalkeeper Justin Grady said. "So it wouldn't necessarily hurt us even though we weren't necessarily scoring as much as maybe we would've liked to."

Grady has taken on the team's goaltending responsibilities, starting and playing every minute of each game. His .913 save percentage places him atop the A-10 rankings and No. 10 among all NCAA Division I netminders. His .328 goals against percentage also leads the conference and lands him in the top-10 of all NCAA Division I goalkeepers.

Between the pipes, he has snatched 21 saves so far this season. Grady has recorded four clean sheets, tying him for the most in the A-10 with VCU senior goalkeeper Mario Sequeira and Saint Louis sophomore goalkeeper Patrick Schulte.

He notched a season-high four saves against VCU,

making a crucial stop in the final minute to retain the lead for the Colonials. Grady also went on to make yet another crucial game-deciding save in the final 15 seconds of the Colonial victory over George Mason Saturday.

"Justin has been unbelievable in goal," senior forward Oscar Haynes Brown said. "Our defense has been so solid. We got two new centerbacks, but they've both been outstanding."

The Colonials' backline has been boosted by a pair of new defensive additions in freshman center back Aaron Kronenberg and graduate student center back Hrólfur Sveinsson. The duo rank top-five in minutes played on the squad, tallying 494 and 600 minutes, respectively, with starts in each game they've played in.

The team's roster has dealt with turnover coming into this year. Seven seniors and three graduate students graduated last year, while six new freshmen, three walk-ons and three transfers have joined the squad.

"It was definitely a new dynamic with a lot of new faces coming in, but I feel like the team was able to gel pretty quickly and create a great culture within the team, not even just on the field, but off the field as well," Grady said. "I feel like everybody really trusts each other. We have a tight knit group and that really translates to our play on the field."

The Colonials opened the season with four consecutive double overtime finishes in which they went 1-1-2. The last time the Colonials played four consecutive overtime games was during

the 1984 season.

Haynes Brown said the team's victory over VCU has given the team a confidence boost going into the final games of the regular season. As a senior this year, Haynes Brown has seen the Colonials fall to the Rams in the last two seasons. He scored the lone goal of the win off a pass from freshman midfielder Tobias Williams.

"I've been there for a few losses so that's why I'm saying that we've finally been able to go over the line, get a result against them, which is a big deal," Haynes Brown said.

The Colonials are currently the top-seeded team in their conference pod, the central pod, just ahead of second place VCU. Head Coach Craig Jones said his team is improving with each game but is still working to put together a full 90-minute blitz.

The Colonials have outshot their opponents on a per game average of 11.7 to nine, but trail their opponents in shots on goal percentage by a slim margin of .414 to .426. While GW has held opponents to just two goals on the year, the squad has only netted four goals all year, ranking No. 11 of 13 teams in the conference.

He added that the team needs to be prepared for their second matchup against VCU Wednesday. Only one team can emerge from their pod to move on to the A-10 Tournament, and the GW is hunting for its first postseason appearance since 2017.

The Colonials hit the road Wednesday for a 7 p.m. contest at VCU. Kickoff is slated for 7 p.m.



FILE PHOTO BY ARIELLE BADER | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR

Graduate student midfielder Sandro Weber scored the game's lone goal, sealing the win for the Colonials.

Men's soccer nabs second straight win

ROMAN BOBEK
STAFF WRITER

In the 35th minute of play, sophomore midfielder Tom Cooklin flipped the ball past the Patriots' lone center back to graduate student midfielder Sandro Weber. Weber slotted it past the goalkeeper low and to the right to give the Colonials a 1-0 advantage.

The lone goal would be all the Colonials (3-1-2, 2-0-2 A-10) needed to beat the Patriots (0-5-3, 0-2-3 A-10) Saturday. GW is undefeated at home this season with three wins and a draw, while George Mason remains winless in both Atlantic 10 and nonconference play.

"It was a tough game, and we couldn't find the insurance goals, that second or third goal, to maybe kill the game off," head coach Craig Jones said. "But again, we just showed the character of the group and the grit and determination to see out this one-nil win."

In their last meeting, the Colonials played the Patriots to a scoreless draw through two overtime periods. Both teams had three shots on goal, but neither side could break the stalemate.

GW bombarded the net with 14 shots, six of which were on goal. George Mason tallied nine shots and forced sophomore goalkeeper Justin Grady to make three saves to protect his clean sheet.

The Colonials had plenty of chances in the first half. In the sixth

minute of play, Weber played in a low cross to Cooklin, who shot it low and wide to the left.

Just six minutes later, sophomore midfielder Elias Norris played in a cross to the middle of the Patriots' box. Senior forward Oscar Haynes Brown fired at the center of the net, forcing a save by freshman goalkeeper Jackson Lee, who deflected it up against the crossbar before collecting the ball.

Weber hit a free kick over the bar earlier in the half before scoring the lone goal of the contest and his second of the season in the 35th minute.

"We have created chances in the last few games," Weber said. "But we need to finish our chances a little more often. But there's a great mentality in the team right now. Everybody is fighting for each other, and that's probably the reason why we create so many chances. We have a lot of good quality players on the offense. The only thing is finishing chances eventually."

The Colonials tried to add to their lead in the 39th minute when sophomore defender Ryan Cedeno took a shot from outside the 18-yard box, but the ball was batted down by Lee.

GW outshot George Mason 6-3 in the first half, placing two on goal. Grady wasn't tested much in the first half, but he showed up in the 41st minute when a foul by freshman defender Aaron Kronenberg gave

the Patriots a set piece near the corner flag. The cross settled at the feet of a Patriot attacker, forcing Grady to make a sliding kick save to clear the ball.

The Colonials had a brief scare when Patriot freshman forward Peter Kim made a move past Kronenberg, leaving graduate student defender Hrólfur Sveinsson alone in the back. Sveinsson collided with Kim, stopping the attack, but he earned a yellow card in the process. Kim was injured on the play and subbed off.

The Colonials kept up the pressure in the second half, outshooting the Patriots yet again 8-6. George Mason came at GW in the 58th minute when freshman midfielder Christopher Schray broke free at the top of the box. Grady made a diving save to snatch the ball from the air and preserve the Colonial lead.

Cooklin nearly sealed the game for the Colonials with a long-range try in the 65th minute, forcing Lee to make a diving save and concede a corner kick.

As the clock wound down, the Patriots hit a volley from the top of the box in the final 15 seconds. Grady made a leaping save, and the Colonials left the field unscathed.

The Colonials return to the field Wednesday at VCU for their second matchup of the season against the Rams. Kickoff is set for 7 p.m.



HATCHET FILE PHOTO

Senior forward Oscar Haynes Brown said the team's victory over VCU gave the team a confidence boost going into the final games of the regular season.