

The GW Hatchet

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WRIGHTON TO ASSUME INTERIM LEADERSHIP

Students hope Wrighton will build administrative transparency



CAMILLE DESANTO | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR

Wrighton will take the helm of GW's administration after a period marked by rising tensions between officials and the student body.

ABBY KENNEDY
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

LAUREN SFORZA
CONTRIBUTING NEWS EDITOR

As the GW community prepares to welcome an interim president this January, students hope the change in leadership will lower some guardrails to communication and transparency from administrators.

In interviews, student leaders said they hope the transition between University President Thomas LeBlanc and Mark Wrighton, the newly appointed interim president who will replace LeBlanc on Jan. 1, will foster communication between students and administrators. After LeBlanc's tense four years in office and widespread calls for his resignation, students said Wrighton's administration should listen to their comments and concerns as he takes office.

Student Association Vice President Kate Carpenter said students should head into the new presidency with a positive attitude and break off from their tendency to look for the worst in situations at the University. She said she hopes the new administration will foster a productive environment to improve school spirit and implement new traditions she's sought to promote, like wearing GW apparel for "Raise High" Wednesdays.

"We again have this opportunity to really build GW from the ground up, and I think that's really

important that the student body and the Student Association go into this new presidency with an open mind, that we make sure we do everything we can to foster productive environments so we can enact reforms that we've always wanted to see," she said.

Carpenter said she will collaborate with Wrighton's administration to expand the SafeRide program and implement U-Pass, which would give students unlimited Metro rides through an added tuition cost. Senior PJ Johnson, the president of GW College Democrats, said LeBlanc's sooner-than-planned retirement will make the transition to a new permanent president easier as students' trust in LeBlanc began to diminish with the 20/30 Plan broadening GW's focus on STEM and a video capturing racially insensitive comments LeBlanc made last year. Johnson said he hopes Wrighton will listen to the concerns of students and regain their trust.

"I'm looking for someone who's more open or who listens more to the student body," he said. "That seems to be one of the bigger criticisms of President LeBlanc, was that he didn't seem to be as connected to the student body."

Johnson said the next permanent president should bring back fixed tuition, which officials eliminated for classes graduating after 2023, and make GWorld dining plans optional for students to make the University more accessible and affordable. Senior

Joe Markus, the actions and demonstrations leader at Sunrise GW, said he and other members of Sunrise are "concerned" about the selection of Wrighton because of comments he made defending WashU's decision to not divest from fossil fuel companies. Markus also said he was concerned about comments from Wrighton noting students' lack of power to change university policy. Members of Fossil Free WashU published an op-ed in Student Life, the university's independent student newspaper, in 2017 alleging Wrighton made clear in a private meeting that students have no power to influence WashU financial decisions.

"We, and myself in particular, and others are concerned that there's a similar undemocratic, anti-shared governance ideology shared by Wrighton that we hope that he does not carry with him into his time at GW that he leaves behind at Washington University," Markus said.

Black Student Union President Gianna Cook and Vice President Tony Peeler said in a statement they are delighted to welcome president Wrighton to campus. They said they hope the change in administration will welcome new and diverse ideas from members throughout the Black community and GW as a whole.

"We look forward to seeing how the new administration will be supportive and proactive with regards to the Black experience at GW," Peeler and Cook said.

Wrighton could repair fractured relations with administrators: faculty

ISHANI CHETTRI
CONTRIBUTING NEWS EDITOR

After a majority of faculty lost confidence in University President Thomas LeBlanc's leadership, faculty said they were surprised but pleased to hear Board of Trustees Chair Grace Speights announce Mark Wrighton would replace him as interim president.

In an address to the Faculty Senate earlier this month, Speights said trustees appointed Wrighton, the former chancellor of Washington University at St. Louis, to serve as interim president for up to 18 months starting in January. At least 10 faculty members said they hope Wrighton will work to repair administrators' relations with the GW community and strengthen shared governance as ties between faculty and officials have deteriorated in the buildup to LeBlanc's retirement announcement.

LeBlanc initially announced in May that he would step down at the end of the current academic year.

Wrighton said in an interview with The Hatchet earlier this month that he hopes to work with faculty toward a "common understanding" of shared governance in preparation for the arrival of the next permanent president.

"Our objective is to

prepare the institution for a new president by coming to both an understanding and implementing that understanding," he said.

Professors have previously expressed concerns about the lack of faculty input and involvement in the presidential search process and University decisions, like the 20/30 Plan and the Disney culture survey. Speights said at the senate meeting that officials will postpone the current presidential search until "early spring."

Salah Hassan, a professor of global marketing and brand management, said he commends the Board for its appointment of Wrighton as interim leader during this transitional time at the University. He said Wrighton, who he views as a "highly respected" scholar and leader, will respect GW's culture, involve the community in future planning and provide more stability to GW's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Hassan said Wrighton will bring a "fresh" perspective to the University because of his previous experience at WashU and other academic institutions like the Massachusetts and California Institutes of Technology. He said an interim president at GW will allow more time for the Board to select a permanent leader.

"This is certainly a turning point for George Washington University, and I think it is the right move from the Board of Trustees to proceed on that basis," he said.

Lawrence Cunningham, a professor of law, said the Board's decision to select Wrighton was "rational" because of the ongoing tension and lack of consensus around shared governance. He said Wrighton should try to unite the entire University, including staff and students, and contribute to the "cultural" debates about shared governance within the faculty during his short tenure.

He said the new interim president should encourage more research projects among faculty and a strong relationship across all University departments. Cunningham said Wrighton's accomplishments at WashU, like tripling undergraduate applications and adding about 300 chaired professorships, could not have occurred without fostering relations between faculty and administrators and uniting them behind a "shared vision."

"I would recognize that he appreciates the shared governance model," Cunningham said. "It's not a top-down university where the president calls the shots."

See **FACULTY** Page 4



CAMILLE DESANTO | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR

Faculty and officials have worked in recent months to improve shared governance at GW, and Wrighton said he wants to continue the initiative as interim president.

Wrighton poised to improve shared governance at GW, experts say

DANIEL PATRICK GALGANO
STAFF WRITER

Half a dozen experts in higher education administration said Mark Wrighton, the University's incoming interim president, could establish a long-term shared governance plan for GW even during his expected short tenure at the University.

Board of Trustees Chair Grace Speights announced at a Faculty Senate meeting earlier this month that officials will replace outgoing University President Thomas LeBlanc with Wrighton — the former chancellor of Washington University in St. Louis — effective Jan. 1. Experts said Wrighton is an experienced and qualified leader who can improve shared governance among faculty, staff and administrators while officials conduct a full presidential search.

Speights said officials were not in a position to conduct a search for LeBlanc's replacement before the end of his contract next summer because of a lack of talented long-term candidates, ongoing concerns over shared governance and distrust between faculty and University leaders.

"Maybe we'll be lucky, maybe the market will be better, maybe we can have somebody in the summer or for the fall," Speights said at the senate meeting. "I doubt that, but maybe."

At the meeting, faculty senators

also discussed a report some senators produced to outline ways to improve shared governance. Speights had announced in May that the Board would review the Faculty Code to determine "appropriate avenues" for faculty input.

Wrighton served as provost of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology for 5 years, starting in 1990 before assuming the role of chancellor of WashU in 1995 and stepped down to an emeritus position in 2019. As chancellor, Wrighton simultaneously held top roles at the American Association of Universities, Business-Higher Education Forum and the Consortium on Financing Higher Education.

During his chancellorship, the institution's endowment grew by nearly \$5 billion, and student applications increased by more than 200 percent.

Wrighton faced criticism in 2008 when WashU officials bestowed alumna Phyllis Schlafly, a conservative activist and outspoken opponent of abortion, same-sex marriage and the Equal Rights Amendment, with an honorary doctorate. He later released a statement saying he strongly disagrees with many of Schlafly's personal views.

Wrighton also drew criticism from students and faculty when he refused to divest the university's endowment from fossil fuel-based companies in April 2017. GW's Board of Trustees announced in June 2020 that officials would divest

the University's endowment from carbon-based stocks by 2025 after years of student activism.

Experts said Wrighton's prior experience in higher education sets him up to effectively lead the University as it emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic, but he'll likely focus on short-term projects and improvements instead of long-term goals.

Gary Rhoades, a professor of higher education at the University of Arizona, said given LeBlanc's tumultuous tenure, Wrighton will likely assist in working to "stabilize" the University.

"Part of the role of an interim president is to say 'OK, let's catch our breath here, this is a really hard time, let's focus on getting through this academic year' and give faculty and the Board an opportunity to start the search process that will lead to a permanent leader who will have more opportunity to succeed," Rhoades said.

He said interim university presidents generally do not try to reshape long-term policy or launch major fundraising campaigns while in office but usually work to keep the institution steady.

"It's less a function of that interim president's vision and more a function of their understanding and assessment of the condition of the institution and its trajectory," Rhoades said.

David Farris, the executive director of safety and emergency

management at George Mason University who has published a book on higher education governance, said Wrighton and other officials should use the interim presidential period to commit to "transparency and collaboration" as the Board looks to construct a more "inclusive" shared governance structure.

He said interim university presidents tend to be "more collaborative and inclusive" of their communities than longer-term leaders because they exist to maintain stability on campus for a limited period of time.

"An interim president often times might be in a position where they need to be a little bit more collaborative because they don't have the permanence that the long-term presidents can have," Farris said.

Aaron Benevot, a professor of global educational policy at the State University of New York at Albany, said a leader with a resume of long-term experience like Wrighton's could pursue more "innovative" policies given his expertise and credibility from previous positions.

"An interim president who obviously has a long and a fairly stellar academic and administrative history behind him — having served as chancellor at a very prestigious system — would be given a little bit more leeway and degrees of freedom to pursue and initiate some innovative programs," he said.

Spencer Niles, a professor of counselor education and a co-di-

rector of the THRIVE Research and Intervention Center at the College of William and Mary, said there have been a large number of retirements and departures from higher education institutions in the United States since the start of the pandemic, which has delayed administrative recruitment.

"It's been a real challenge, and a lot of people have decided 'Maybe I'll retire' or 'Maybe I'll go back to the faculty,'" he said.

Niles said administrators are "setting the stage" for University community members to discuss shared governance and administrative reforms during the interim presidency.

"It sounds like what's been in place has been more of a traditional type of leadership scenario, and perhaps the faculty have not felt as involved or engaged, and perhaps they feel their voices have not been asked for," Niles said.

José Luis Chávez, a clinical professor of education and the director of the higher education leadership program at Drexel University's School of Education, said Wrighton is "absolutely" qualified to lead GW through an interim period given his past experience.

"You want somebody that's been in that seat and that has been responsible for multiple initiatives at a university, that has a proven record, that has the experience and the skill set and knowledge and ability to operate," Chávez said.

News

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THIS WEEK'S EVENTS

RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT WEBINAR: DR. KAI SHU
Sept. 21 • 2 p.m. EDT • Free
Tune into the IDDP's Research Spotlight Webinar Series as Kai Shu discusses the detection, adaptation and explanation of disinformation in the context of social media.

2021 MID-AUTUMN FESTIVAL VIRTUAL CELEBRATION
Sept. 21 • Noon EDT • Free
Join the Sigur Center of Asian Studies for a virtual lunch break with tea and mooncakes as they celebrate the largest Asian holiday in the fall.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

Sept. 20, 1985

Officials inform student leaders that GW will seek South Africa-free investments following a student push against the South African policy of apartheid.



FILE PHOTO BY KATE CARPENTER

The University faced a positivity rate of 0.29 percent this past week, according to the COVID-19 testing dashboard.

Students struggle securing COVID tests as appointment demand grows

MICHELLE VASSILEV
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Sophomore Lydia Melka spent five days sleeping on her living room couch this month while her roommate, showing symptoms for COVID-19, waited to secure a testing appointment.

Melka's roommate tried scheduling a test for symptomatic students after experiencing increased congestion that week, but after an influx of students started booking appointments, the two roommates faced extended scheduling delays for testing. Melka, who was also concerned her roommate could transmit the coronavirus, couldn't secure an appointment scheduled for sooner than ten days away.

Hoping to attend her student organization meetings for the upcoming week, she paid \$20 to receive a test from Georgetown's Same Day Testing clinic before testing negative for the virus.

"It was a little bit of a difficult situation because my roommate was getting really sick," Melka said. "She was struggling to figure out whether she was congested or whether she had lost her smell. We were very concerned."

Melka is one of more than ten GW community members who said they've struggled with testing delays lasting for more than a week after the University doubled the required testing frequency to twice a month earlier in September. Ray Lucas, the University's COVID-19 coordinator, said officials recently increased the number of Foggy Bottom appointments to 2,600 tests per day to accommodate for the new biweekly testing requirement.

Lucas said officials have also doubled the number

of onsite testing days in the University's Alexandria, Arlington and Rockville centers.

"We think that with the increased number of testing slots, that community members will have an easier time finding an open appointment moving forward," Lucas said in an email.

As part of the new policy, officials said they will require testing for vaccinated students, faculty and staff twice a month, increasing frequency from their previous monthly testing requirement.

Lucas said the number of coronavirus testing appointments available per five-minute window varies based on the time of day. He said there are eight appointments available every five minutes in "less busy and desired" hours of the day like 6 a.m. and between 23 and 25 appointments every five minutes at times like 11 a.m.

He said officials understand that students have faced difficulties scheduling testing recently, and the University is "finalizing details" about access to increased testing.

He said many students have booked two or three appointments a day each time they log in to schedule a test, hoping that they will be available for one of the time slots. He said officials record "no shows" at more than 100 appointments a day.

"These behaviors effectively block out other community members in getting an appointment," Lucas said.

Lucas declined to say how additional coronavirus tests will affect staffing levels at testing centers.

In a followup, officials were not immediately available to comment about students who have bought their

own tests after facing testing delays.

Sophomore Matt Kaplan said he tried to schedule a coronavirus test on the Wednesday after the University's update about testing frequency, but he couldn't find an available slot until Monday.

"I was definitely frustrated," Kaplan said. "Testings are the key to our safety, so why do I have to wait until Monday?"

Kiran Sharma, a sophomore studying international affairs, said he tried to schedule a coronavirus testing appointment last Tuesday, but no tests were available for a week.

Sharma said he also tried to schedule a test on the first Friday of this month when he lost his taste and smell. He said he eventually tested negative after buying a take-home coronavirus test from CVS Pharmacy after not being able to secure an appointment until Tuesday or Wednesday.

Prices of take-home coronavirus tests at CVS Pharmacy range between \$24 and \$125.

"They definitely can't manage that because the tests are a week delayed, and at that point, if you're going out and you can still go to classes and everything, I don't really see a point," Sharma said.

Mark Ralkowski, an associate professor of honors and philosophy, said he tried to schedule a coronavirus test last week but couldn't find an available test until five or six days out. He said he thinks he won't be able to meet his testing deadline to receive campus clearance, which would remove his tap access from campus buildings.

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Right-wing demonstrators gather near Capitol to protest Jan. 6 arrests

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More than 100 protesters gathered outside the U.S. Capitol complex Saturday to denounce the imprisonment of the insurrectionists who mobbed Capitol Hill on Jan. 6.

The U.S. Capitol Police tweeted that approximately 400 to 450 people assembled at Union Square for the Justice For J6 rally, but journalists and law enforcement officers outnumbered protesters, who demonstrated from noon to about 1:30 p.m. Protesters gathered to listen to speakers who compared the indictment of Jan. 6 rioters to the treatment of Jewish people in Nazi Germany and called for the prosecution of the police officer who shot and killed Ashli Babbitt, one of the Jan. 6 rioters.

More than 600 people have been arrested in the months following the riot, and five people, including Babbitt, have died in connection to the event. Officials activated the National Guard to prevent additional violence around the District in January, and troops occupied Foggy Bottom through President Joe Biden's inauguration.

Matt Braynard, a GW alumnus and former Trump aide who organized the rally Saturday, said the protest was not meant to support the violence in January but sought to defend the "nonviolent" insurrectionists whom he called "political prisoners." Seventy-one of more than 600

alleged Capitol rioters remain in jail, many of whom were charged with crimes like assault or conspiring to assault the Capitol, according to BuzzFeed News.

"This is about the many people who were there that day who have not been charged with violence, have not been accused of assaulting a police officer or destroying property and the disparate treatment they've received," Braynard said during his speech. "This is about equal treatment under the law."

USCP arrested four people before and during the rally Saturday, including two on weapons charges, according to NBC Washington. City officials installed temporary fencing around the Capitol and Supreme Court buildings in preparation for the event, and GW Police Department Chief James Tate said he would increase the number of officers and security personnel stationed on campus Saturday during the rally.

A Metropolitan Police Department spokesperson said MPD officers did not make any arrests and declined to say how many officers were assigned to monitor the rally. A USCP spokesperson did not immediately return a request for comment.

John Drechsel, a protester from Chillicothe, Mo., said he traveled to D.C. for the first time last week to be with other "like-minded" conservatives and advocate for rioters who are still being held without bail.

"I'm sure nothing's really going to change, but hopefully a lot more people will become aware of what's really going on, with these people rotting in

jail with basically trespassing charges," he said.

Lori Smith, a demonstrator from Atlanta, said she didn't support the storming of the Capitol, but those who are still incarcerated for their participation in the riot are "political prisoners."

Meanwhile, at Freedom Plaza, nearly 100 demonstrators gathered for a counter-protest against the Capitol rally. Protesters sported signs or clothing with messages like "J6 Insurrectionists Are Criminals" and "Black Lives Matter" and danced to music around the plaza.

Sarah Douglass, a counter-protester who was adorned in American-flag themed apparel holding posters with images of the January insurrection, said the jailed rioters are not political prisoners, but criminals.

"This is patriotism," Douglass said, pointing to her outfit. "This is not," she said motioning to her poster.

She said the Jan. 6 insurrectionists subverted the democratic process to certify the presidential election results, and those who defend the arrested rioters aim to suppress all voters opposing Trump's election. Douglass said she dressed in American colors to represent patriotism and progressivism because the Capitol protesters were trying to portray diversity and progressive ideals as anti-American.

Sean Micheal Love, a demonstrator at the event at Freedom Plaza, said the counter-protest was a community-led effort promoted by D.C.-based community organizations like Good Trouble Collective, ShutDownDC and Remora House DC.



DANIELLE TOWERS | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR

The GW Police Department had ramped up its security presence on campus in light of the planned demonstrations.

GWIT support requests surge during first week of in-person classes

ISHA TRIVEDI
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NICHOLAS PASION
STAFF WRITER

GW Information Technology staff faced a surge in support requests during the first week of classes this fall as the office kicks off its first semester back on campus after dozens of IT staff were laid off amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

GWIT received 751 support requests from faculty during the first week of classes, more than double the 317 requests received during the first week of virtual classes in spring 2021, according to University data. Five professors said IT staff were not adequately equipped to handle support requests at the start of the semester, which they credit to the University's switch to a shared services model for IT.

Officials consolidated GW's technology departments into a centralized, shared services model last summer to reduce costs and mitigate the financial impact of the pandemic. Officials laid off dozens of technology staff and asked them to reapply for a smaller number of positions under the new structure.

Interim Chief Technology Officer Jared Johnson said the data on the number of IT support requests

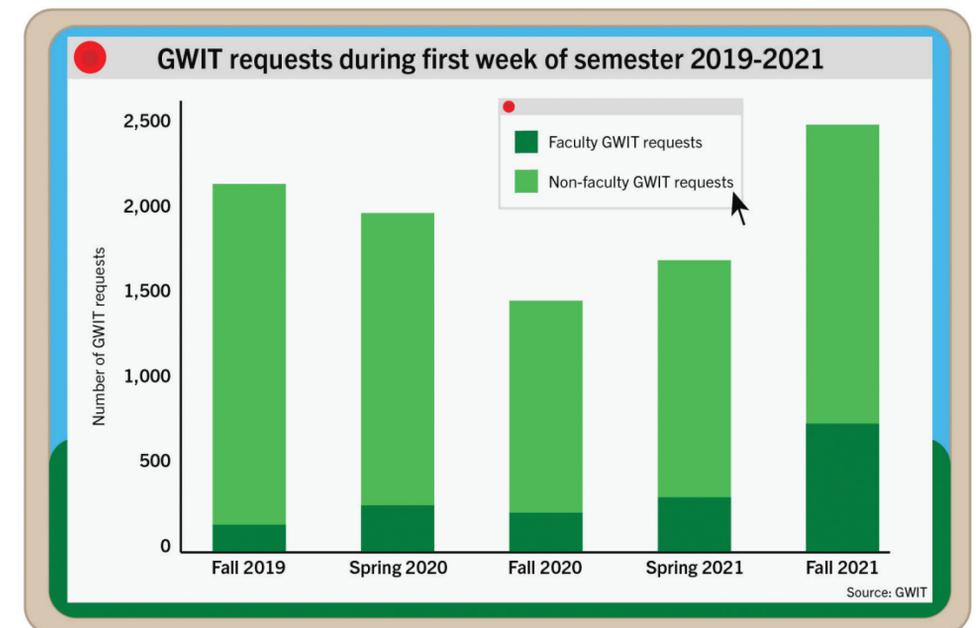
before this past spring does not include requests filed under the new shared services model, and faculty support requests before that semester were routed by individual school IT units.

"We are excited to welcome everyone back to campus, and after such a long absence, we are experiencing an increased number of IT support tickets," Johnson said in an email. "We are flexing team members across the IT shared services unit to get issues triaged, identified and if needed, escalated to the proper teams to resolve customer issues as quickly as possible."

Johnson said IT staff received 2,511 total support requests during the first week of the fall semester, an approximately 46 percent increase compared to the first week of the spring semester.

Faculty said the new shared services model is to blame for what they call "overworked" and overloaded IT employees.

Joe Cordes, a professor of economics and the co-chair of the Faculty Senate's fiscal planning and budgeting committee, said former Provost Brian Blake, who implemented the IT shared services model, never offered "much, if any evidence" that the new model would maintain the same level of IT support while reducing costs. He said



NICHOLAS ANASTACIO | GRAPHICS EDITOR

while officials were able to reduce costs, it may have led to longer IT support times.

"To be sure, less is being spent on IT support because of employee layoffs and consolidation, but the

jury is still out whether IT support services are available at the same level than before," he said in an email.

Harald Griesshammer, an associate professor of physics and a fac-

ulty senator, said he has noticed that IT staff have been working "more than overtime" in recent weeks to address the surge in IT support requests. He said he's not surprised that IT staff are overworked.

Mount Vernon Campus dining plan allows for easy budgeting, students say

HENRY HUVOS
REPORTER

LAUREN SFORZA
CONTRIBUTING NEWS EDITOR

Students living on the Mount Vernon Campus are getting the first glimpse at GW's new "unlimited" dining system with meal swipe access this fall, but they said limited hours have impeded the transition during their first month on campus.

About 690 students living on the Vern this year are required to partake in the Pelham Plan, which grants students 112 meal swipes to access all-you-can-eat meals at The Eatery at Pelham Commons – the Vern's dining hall – in addition to about \$1,620 in dining dollars for other GWorld vendors each semester. More than ten freshmen living on the Vern said limited hours at Pelham and a lack of restaurants near campus have made dining inaccessible for campus residents.

Max Weiner, who lives in West Hall, said he enjoys the food served at Pelham, including options like soups, salads, burgers and pizza, but the dining hall's limited hours make it unreliable. He said he wished students received more dining cash to purchase food in Foggy Bottom where he attends class, instead of additional swipes at Pelham.

Pelham closes between its lunch and dinner hours – a system that Weiner said makes daytime meals more difficult, especially when his classes tend to overlap with lunch service at the dining hall. He said he often has to rely on the Vex's transportation to Foggy Bottom to get food when Pelham is closed.

"The main problem with Pelham is it's not open enough during the day, so I constantly just have to get food, scramble for food, on Foggy," Weiner said.

The Eatery is open for lunch between 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. and for dinner between 5:30 and 7:30 p.m. Monday through Saturday. The dining hall is open between 7:30 and 11:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday and is closed on Sundays, according to the GW Dining website.

The Eatery includes pizza, grill and homestyle food counters, a salad and sandwich bar and a "chef-attended" cooking station, according to the website.

Officials updated the Pelham Plan last week, converting the weekly limit of eight swipes to a 112-swipe balance for the rest of the semester, according to an Instagram post from GW Dining. The University also announced extended hours starting Sept. 20 to offer students extra flexibility, adding a breakfast option from 8:00 to 10:30 a.m.

Ken Baeza, who lives in Hensley Hall, said the Pelham Plan is affordable – costing \$8 for lunch, \$10 for dinner and \$12 for brunch – and makes budgeting easier and more convenient for students who spend most of their time on the Vern.

"The dining plan is amazing," Baeza said. "I think it's much easier to survive if you're on a budget with Vern's dining plan than Foggy's."

Liz Paul, an organizational sciences major, said although she wishes The Eatery offered more fresh produce, she enjoys the Pelham Plan and is excited about the University's expansion of available meal swipes. She said before the



LYDIA EMBRY | PHOTOGRAPHER

Officials updated the Pelham Plan last week by converting the eight-swipe weekly limit to a 112-swipe balance for the rest of the semester.

plan was updated, she would miss out on cashing in each of her eight weekly meal swipes while purchasing meals on Foggy Bottom.

"I like the Pelham Plan for the most part, especially with the revisions that they made starting next week – that's really helpful," she said. "I think my biggest concern originally was that it's hard to use eight meals within one week when I'm usually on Foggy during lunch. And so that was difficult, but I think their new plan is really helpful."

She said the added breakfast hours will also broaden her dining options, after Higher Grounds Cafe served as the Vern's only other breakfast option. She said she can only visit the Higher Grounds Cafe in Ames Hall three times a week, as students are only allotted three swipes a week at Higher Grounds Cafe or Pelham Late Night.

"I'm also glad that they're adding breakfast so that eating here at Ames isn't my only option because I can only do that three times a

week," Paul said.

Jasmine Lizano, a freshman majoring in political science, said she enjoys the Pelham Commons dining plan because she can rely on an all-you-can-eat dinner throughout the week. She said she uses all of her dining swipes each week, even when she occasionally purchases lunch on Foggy Bottom.

"I actually like the Vern's dining plan just because it gives us the flexibility of being able to rely on dinner," she said.



DANIELLE TOWERS | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR

The Hindu Student Association will host its first welcome event, themed "A Night in Bombay," on Sunday in the University Student Center.

Student leaders resume in-person events following GW's reopening

ABBY KENNEDY
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LAUREN SFORZA
CONTRIBUTING NEWS EDITOR

In-person meetings and events are back in full swing for student organizations across campus after the COVID-19 pandemic uprooted community building and member engagement strategies for more than a year.

Leaders from half a dozen student organizations said they will host events and general body meetings in person this fall so students can socialize more easily, while still implementing safety measures like mask mandates and limited capacities to keep students safe. After students spent the pandemic tuning into online meetings from isolated rooms, organization leaders said they hope in-person programming will ramp up engagement among their members who are back on campus as a result of GW's reopening this fall.

Julian Milan, the communications director for GW Transfers, an organization that works to welcome transfer students to the University, said members will spend the fall semester hosting in-person events and trips across the District for transfers, like a Nationals game that 20 students attended together.

"I felt a lot of people are kind of over doing things through Zoom and stuff like that," he said. "Doing things in-person kind of would

get a lot more people to come out and kind of interact with each other," he said.

He said GW Transfers rented a large space in the University Student Center to hold a meeting introducing members to the new e-board this week. He said now that events are in person, the organization's attendance at meetings has increased from about 10 to roughly 30 or 40 students.

"I'm a junior, and this was my first time on campus because I transferred last year," he said. "So a lot of people are kind of in the same boat. So just trying to get to know each other and kind of make connections."

He said the organization has tried to keep events outdoors this semester so students can space out, and members must distance and wear masks during indoor meetings. He said transfer students should make the most of their years at GW as they experience campus for a shorter period of time.

Kiera Rudden-Flanagan, a senior studying mechanical engineering and the membership director of the GW Shakespeare Company, said the organization will host two in-person performances planned this semester. They said the organization also planned in-person cast parties for the fall, but e-board members will meet in a hybrid format throughout the semester.

"Pretty much everyone wanted to do in-person stuff as much

as possible," they said. "Our board meetings are hybrid, so some people Zoom in every week and some people go in person."

Nikhila Archakam, the president of the Hindu Students Association, said HSA will hold a mix of in-person and virtual meetings for its approximately 50 members. She said in-person programming is necessary because members will be able to enjoy religious events more so when they're together.

Archakam said the organization will host their first Welcome Event Sunday, themed "A Night in Bombay" in the Continental Ballroom.

"We plan on being 100 percent safe, adhering to the mask mandate and all other regulations, and we feel religious events would not be enjoyed unless you are with loved ones in person," she said.

Noah Henriksen – the president of GW Roundnet, a spikeball club on campus – said the organization of about 30 members hosts practice and pickup games every Saturday, and is currently planning tournaments for the year. He said aside from information sessions, the organization depends on the return to in-person operations so members can gather together and play some games on the weekends.

"Our club is all about playing the sport of roundnet and building community through that, which is difficult to do when you can't play together," he said.

Students return to Lerner with reinforced masking, cleaning protocols

DAVID BROTHERS
REPORTER

Thousands of students are returning to the Lerner Health and Wellness Center after more than a year of limited reservations because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

University spokesperson Crystal Nosal said nearly 4,500 students have tapped into Lerner as of Friday for more than 15,000 visits since Aug. 23, after reservations and shorter workout sessions limited faculty operations last year while the campus population remained low during the COVID-19 pandemic. She said officials are focusing on maintaining the cleanliness of the facility to soothe the concerns of people who may be hesitant to exercise indoors due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nosal said nearly 1,000 students tap into Lerner every weekday, lower than pre-pandemic averages but significantly higher than earlier this year while reduced service restricted student access to the gym. She said more than 400 students tap into Lerner per day on the weekend, but they expect the rate of visitors to fall as exams and coursework increase students' workloads.

"The center is busy with activity, and returning students have been eager to get back to a place they once often visited, and our students who are new to campus are figuring out what their semester routine will look like as they incorporate fitness into their schedules," Nosal said in an email.

Nosal declined to say how many people visited Lerner daily before and during the pandemic.

She said D.C.'s coronavirus guidelines required Lerner to close from March 2020 until the fall semester of 2020, when officials started to allow on-campus students to schedule

hourly workout blocks at the facility.

Nosal said Lerner and Housekeeping staff regularly clean and disinfect all surfaces in the gym, including fitness equipment, to maintain the building's sanitation. She said officials provide disinfectant spray, cleaning wipes and paper towels to visitors and ask that people clean the equipment after every use.

"The cleanliness of the entire facility remains a very high priority for the Lerner team, so we continue to work closely with our Housekeeping team to do regular cleaning and disinfecting of all surfaces throughout the facility including the fitness equipment," she said.

Nosal said Lerner workers regularly move through each floor of the building to enforce the masking policy and refer policy violations to Student Rights and Responsibilities.

She said officials are aiming to hire and train additional work-study students, who she said are necessary for the gym to fully operate, but Lerner is still several weeks away from reaching "optimal" student staffing levels.

Nosal said Lerner will continue to provide some online fitness courses, like virtual yoga and Zumba, and students can purchase a semester pass to weekly fitness courses for \$79.

"While we know that many are excited to work out indoors at the gym, we do realize that some members of our community may still be hesitant about exercising indoors," she said. "For that reason, we are providing a hybrid fitness schedule this fall with both in-person and virtual offerings, and the schedule can be found online."

In interviews, 10 students said officials are effectively enforcing the mask mandate through floor checks, but social distancing restrictions and

equipment sanitation can be sometimes overlooked.

Freshman Vivian Ealy, who uses the gym three times a week, said she mostly feels safe working out at Lerner because students are required to be vaccinated and show their COVID-19 clearance status before they enter the building. But she worries that some people don't clean the weightlifting equipment after each use, which she said can cause hygienic or COVID-19 issues.

She also said the "small" size of the weightlifting room can make it difficult to fully respect the social distancing requirements.

"The weightlifting room is pretty small," she said. "So when it's really crowded everyone is packed in and breathing heavily and sweating, so that's a little unsafe."

Senior Katherine Phillips goes to Lerner several days a week, but she said the recent spike of COVID-19 cases in the past two weeks concerns her, especially when the gym can become crowded. She said she was surprised the University didn't continue requiring reservations for gym use like last year to help control potential crowding.

The University's daily COVID-19 caseload and positivity rate reached all-time highs earlier this month, with 45 cases and a 2.91 percent positivity rate, according to GW's COVID-19 testing dashboard.

Junior Taylor Barr said he feels safe working out in Lerner because staff enforce the mask mandate more strictly than in most classrooms as they patrol each floor and immediately tell students to wear their masks when someone takes it off.

"It's probably better than a classroom honestly," Barr said. "Because in some classes people have their mask below their nose, but there they have signs to specifically put your mask above your nose."



GRACE HRONIN | SENIOR PHOTO EDITOR

Students said officials are effectively enforcing the mask mandate through floor checks, but equipment cleaning has sometimes been overlooked.

Global Women's Institute set to launch program on gender-based violence

NOUSHA FLORE
REPORTER

YANKUN ZHAO
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

The Global Women's Institute is publicly launching a research program focused on gender-based violence this month, after securing funding last fall.

GWI officials and researchers said the program, titled "Building GBV Evidence in Conflict and Refugee Settings," will offer the three components to allow humanitarian aid workers to research and compile data on gender-based violence in situations like armed conflicts and refugee camps worldwide. The program's participants said generating and collecting more GBV research and data, like gender inequalities and power imbalances, will lead to a greater understanding of an understudied and underfunded field.

Maureen Murphy, a research scientist at the GWI, said the program's three segments – a course, a research portal and a grant – aim to provide humanitarian aid workers with the necessary education, expertise and funding to study and collect data on real-world GBV experiences.

"The idea is really working hand in hand with humanitarian aid workers to identify what the most important research topics are and support them to be able to do ethical, safe and rigorous research around gender-based violence in humanitarian settings," she said.

Murphy said the program connects field workers and researchers with GBV academics and experts through its free technical assistance portal and offers a free online course that serves as an educational track for people interested in studying GBV. She said officials selected two non-profit organizations on gender equality – Jago

Nari Unnayan Sangstha and Right to Play International – as grantees last year to research and generate ethical and safe data and tools on GBV, like gender equity and equal access, in Bangladesh, Lebanon and Uganda.

GBV is an "overarching" term that encompasses all types of violence caused by inequitable power dynamics, Murphy said. She said GBV most often applies to violence that women and girls face from men and boys but can also include groups like the LGBTQ+ community.

She said the program received a three-year grant from the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Populations, Migration and Refugees last fall, and GWI has spent the past year developing the GBV course, compiling a list of experts in the GBV field for the portal and identifying and selecting the two grantees to create the program.

She said the program is officially launching the course and technical assistance portal this month, and the grantees are now beginning to start their research.

"Now the course is launched, now we're ready to accept requests for technical assistance and now our grantees are going to be starting their research projects," she said. "So now that's kind of where we are in the process under this funding cycle."

Murphy said the program will eventually work directly with humanitarian agencies and incorporate graduate students in the Milken Institute School of Public Health and the Elliott School of International Affairs in opportunities like research and collaborations for their capstone project. She said students can assist agencies with background research and GBV tool development to gain real-world experience through



DANIELLE TOWERS | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR
The program will eventually work directly with humanitarian agencies and incorporate graduate students, GWI staff said.

the program.

"One of the really great things about situating a program like this at GW is that we have a great student base," she said.

Mary Ellsberg, the founder and executive director of GWI said the idea for the program came from previous GBV research at the GWI in South Sudan, Lebanon and Northern Uganda refugee settings. She said participants there found a "real scarcity" of knowledge that exists about GBV in conflict settings and its implication for additional conflict.

"The idea is to help local researchers and local practitioners understand the basic tools of research, and especially we want to demystify the research process," she said.

Jessie Weber, a graduate stu-

dent studying public health who has worked at the GWI since last year, said she helped write the GWI manual on research gaps within the GBV field, which the program's course will follow. She said she is working with her supervisors to translate the manual into other languages, like French, Spanish and Arabic, to make it more accessible to individuals interested in the field.

"If people are looking to conduct any kind of GBV evidence data collection, the course can be really helpful to people who don't have a background in working in GBV," she said. "It walks you through some considerations that you need to have, like ethical considerations, general logistical considerations and different techniques that you can use for different forms

of support."

She said the program will increase knowledge and produce evidence on GBV through its "multi-pronged" approach, which will lead to more effective GBV intervention and treatment tools to address gender inequalities and violence against certain groups. She said anyone who wants to work in the humanitarian field needs to know about GBV because it can affect any group of people and existing knowledge about it remains lacking.

"Gender-based violence is unfortunately prevalent throughout the world, throughout all kinds of populations," she said. "You don't really need to have any discernible external vulnerabilities that people can pick up on in order for you to potentially be susceptible to it."

SA executive office files complaint with Student Court on first-year senate seats

LAUREN SFORZA
CONTRIBUTING NEWS EDITOR

The Student Association Office of the Legislator General filed a complaint with the Student Court Friday, aiming to prevent a referendum that could bring back first-year seats to the SA Senate.

SA Legislator General Holden Fitzgerald and assistant legislator generals Juan Carlos Mora and Andrew Harding filed the complaint opposing the First-Year Senators Act, a special resolution the senate passed Monday to propose students establish first-year senator elections via a referendum. The complaint states that the special resolution violates SA governing documents by granting freshmen, first-year graduate students and first-year transfer students more representation than other students.

If approved, the referendum would have students vote in elections for first-year senators each fall. SA President Brandon Hill said at the meeting that he opposed the

resolution and was prepared to seek the Student Court's opinion.

The complaint states that the resolution violates the "essential representational equality" requirement in the University's Statement on Student Rights and Responsibilities. The plaintiffs argue that the special resolution lets the senate to grant more representation to any "political group" it wishes, allowing first-year students to be represented by both class-specific seats and school-specific seats.

"The Special Resolution amendment gives first-year students double representation by the proposed First-Year At-Large Senators and School Senators, while non-first-year students will be denied class-year representation," the complaint reads. "It is imperative that this referendum not go forward due to this flagrant violation of the SSR." "

The SA's previous constitution, which was nullified in May when the body's updated constitution went into effect, provided for the senate to appoint first-year undergraduate and graduate senators.

These senate seats were converted to at-large seats after the senators served a full semester in the SA.

The court struck down all first-year undergraduate and graduate seats last year, stating that the appointing of first-year students to the seats violates the "essential representational equality" requirement of the student rights and responsibilities statement. The judgement did not rule out future apportionment methods using class year but said the senate "exceeded its authority" by appointing first-year students without an election.

The complaint states that the defendants attempted to address the issue of first-year overrepresentation by including a clause in the resolution explicitly stating that non-first-year senators do not represent first-year students and first-year senators do not represent non-first-year students. The plaintiffs allege that this statement fails to address the constitutional issue because students are automatically assigned to a school upon entering GW.

Harding, one of assistant legislator generals, said in a statement on behalf of the legislator general office that they "thoroughly" reviewed the first-year resolution before deciding to move forward with legal proceedings. He said the plaintiffs want to ensure "equal" and "fair" representation for all students through the complaint.

"Any effort to correct injustices of inequitable representation must be well warranted and within governing doctrines to ensure prospective questions of legality are mitigated," the statement reads. "The OLG is committed to continuing its advocacy for equal representation."

The complaint names SA Vice President Kate Carpenter, Sen. Cordelia Scales, SEAS-U and senate chairperson pro-tempore, and Sen. Chris Pino, CCAS-U and the sponsor of the special resolution, as defendants of the complaint.

Carpenter and Pino did not immediately return requests for comment. Scales declined to comment.

The plaintiffs also filed a motion to stop the SA from forming

a special elections commission to set a date for the referendum and from sending the referendum to students. The plaintiffs urged the court to accept their injunction and expedite their request given the urgency of the potential fall election schedule.

The complaint also contends that if the court were to invalidate the first-year resolution, justices should review the validity of the Proportional Representation Act and the Fall Senate Elections Act, which the senate also passed Monday.

The proportional representation resolution would send a referendum to students on the question of creating separate at-large undergraduate and graduate senate positions for the Milken Institute School of Public Health, School of Nursing, School of Medicine and Health Sciences and the College of Professional Studies. The senate elections act would update the SA's bylaws to be in compliance with the first-year senators act if the student body approves that referendum.

IN BRIEF

Former U.S. ambassador discusses political perspectives on power

A former U.S. ambassador led an in-person talk on how rising professionals and leaders can change their attitudes about power and cooperation at the Elliott School of International Affairs Wednesday.

Matthew Barzun, a former U.S. ambassador to Sweden and the United Kingdom explained how leaders should promote mutual cooperation to stand out and attain power as part of the discussion that 10 to 15 people attended. The Elliott School's Leadership, Ethics and Practice Initiative hosted the event as a review of Barzun's book, "The Power of Giving Away Power: How the Best Leaders Learn to Let Go," and Emma Beach, a senior in the Elliott School, moderated the discussion.

Barzun said it was strange for him to use "power" twice in the title of his book because he has spent his whole career — which has included work with CNET, political fundraising and diplomacy — trying to avoid the word.

"I just kind of avoided it because I found that it was so loaded," he said. "It could be amazingly powerful, but it also could have a lot of baggage sometimes."

Barzun said he focused on power in his book because it's a struggle that everyone shares. He said he has witnessed and learned about several leaders who enhanced his perspective on power, which they viewed as a product of collaboration instead of a scarce resource.

"You can make as much of it as you want if you bring the right mindset to it," Barzun said.

He said hierarchical structures often poorly enforce their power because they give demands instead of permitting equal cooperation to create new and innovative ideas. He urged students entering their careers to acknowledge their space within hierarchical structures so they can challenge these establishments.

Barzun said instead of looking to win or lose, people should try to bring a spirit of cooperation to every situation — they key to successful collaboration.

"The only reason we should gather is to co-create, to actually make something together," he said.

Barzun said while it can be helpful for people to understand where they fit into an organization, staying in one mindset for too long and focusing on a specific hierarchy can prevent someone from tapping into any potential skills.

"If you stare at the road and only at the road ahead, that'll kill you," he said. "It's called tunnel vision. Just look around. Being wide awake and paying attention is the best antidote."

— Katrina Hauser

Faculty hope for more decision-making input under Wrighton

From Page 1

Cunningham said the Board's appointment of Wrighton and postponement of the presidential search will help them identify a more talented presidential candidate in the future than if officials moved forward with the search this fall. Speights, the Board chair, said at the senate meeting that officials were "concerned" about finding a presidential candidate because of recent negative media attention and a limited applicant pool caused by presidential searches at other universities.

"I think it's a perfectly wise decision of the Board of Trustees, and I think it carries a lot of promise," Cunningham said.

Hugo Junghenn, a professor of mathematics, said he hopes Wrighton will work with and listen to faculty to enhance shared governance and "elevate" GW's standing in national higher edu-

cation rankings, especially considering his distinguished career at other institutions. He said Wrighton is "very qualified" and hopes that he will accept faculty's input about the University's future instead of sidelining them in ways similar to LeBlanc's leadership.

"Maybe there'll be this issue of shared governance, bringing in the faculty more, and I believe that the Board of Trustees finally sees that as an important aspect of choosing the new president," Junghenn said.

Speights and faculty senators outlined and discussed their expectations about shared governance among trustees, faculty and administrators at the senate meeting. In an email sent to faculty in May, Speights said she was "troubled" by some professors who contributed more to discord than to civil dialogue within the University.

Junghenn said Wrighton won't be able to make many "substantive" decisions in

18 months because interim presidents often defer long-term decision-making to the next permanent president.

"The next president is going to have to do whatever he or she can do to elevate our standing among not just local universities but all universities," he said.

Erin Chapman — a professor of English and the president of the Faculty Association, which has been vocal in its disapproval of LeBlanc and the Board — said she expects Speights' intention to revise the parameters of shared governance will "greatly" reduce the senate's "minimal" power in the University's decisions. She said the decision to select an interim president without faculty consultation casts "doubt" on the Board's commitment to shared governance at the University instead.

"This bodes ill for employee and student satisfaction and for the ongoing effort to make GW an excellent and equitable university," she said in an email.

CRIME LOG

HARASSING TELEPHONE CALLS, HARASSMENT (VERBAL OR WRITTEN)

Stuart Hall
9/13/2021 – Multiple
Open Case
GW Police Department officers responded to a report of a subject harassing GW community members. Upon arrival, GWPD officers made contact with a male faculty member, who reported that an unknown female subject had called and harassed him over the phone. Units swept the area but did not find the subject.
Case open.

HARASSMENT (VERBAL OR WRITTEN)

Mitchell Hall
9/14/2021 – 2:01 a.m.
Open Case
A male student reported being harassed by a female student after they had an argument about a relationship.
Case open.

THEFT II/FROM BUILDING

West Hall (Pelham Commons)
9/14/2021 – Unknown
Open Case
A student reported her tote bag stolen after leaving it unattended in the dining hall. The bag contained IDs, money and a wallet.
Case open.

URINATING OR DEFECATING IN PUBLIC

University Mall
9/15/2021 – 1:09 a.m.
Closed Case
While on routine patrol, GWPD officers observed an unknown female subject urinating in public. Officers issued the subject a bar notice and escorted her off GW property.
Subject barred.

THREATS TO DO BODILY HARM

Public Property On Campus (2200 Block of H Street NW)
9/15/2021 – 7:30 a.m.
Open Case
GWPD officers responded to a report of suspicious activity. Upon arrival, officers made contact with a female non-GW affiliated complainant who stated that an unknown male subject had threatened her. Officers canvassed the area but did not find the subject.
Case open.

THEFT II/BICYCLES

Public Property On Campus (2200 Block of I Street, NW)
9/15/2021 – 5:15 to 7:20 p.m.
Open Case
A student reported his bike stolen.
Case open.

—Compiled by Carly Neilson



GRACE HROMIN | SENIOR PHOTO EDITOR

Common areas in the basement of JBKO Hall were covered in about an inch of water after Thursday afternoon's storm.

Storm causes flooding in several campus buildings Thursday

ZACHARY BLACKBURN
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Floodwater poured into basements and elevators after a wave of thunderstorms and heavy rain flooded several residence halls and academic buildings Thursday.

University spokesperson Crystal Nosal said standing water was present in nearly every building that had a basement in Foggy Bottom due to rain that poured down more quickly than the city's infrastructure could drain it. Students and officials said minor flooding occurred in residence halls, either in the basement or the top floor through roof leaks.

Flooding was reported in buildings and on highways throughout the DMV area, as intense rain bore down on the region for much of the afternoon.

"The majority of our buildings on the Foggy Bottom campus with basements were at least impacted with some level of standing water due to the rain," Nosal said in

an email. "We were also called to a few buildings with roof leaks."

The flooding comes after a recent spate of evacuations and mold and water leak concerns that have caused worries about building conditions throughout campus. Officials said a broken pipe in International House caused leaks and water damage that required the replacement of a piece of flooring late last month, and several students reported leaks in their rooms that potentially contributed to mold growth.

Nosal said officials relocated residents in three rooms due to a water leak Thursday.

She said officials observed ceiling and wall damage in "some cases," and the cleaning and repairs that weren't already finished would continue into the weekend. She declined to say which buildings were flooded or had water leaks.

"Safety and Facilities sent assessment teams out on campus to identify ar-

reas that needed water extraction and/or cleaning," she said. "Depending on the extent of the damage, minor issues were addressed immediately by in-house personnel, and more complicated incidents were addressed by an external remediation company."

A small electrical box a few feet away from JBKO Hall was sparking and smoking during the heavy rain at about 5:30 p.m., which Nosal attributed to water infiltration that caused it to arc, which is the uncontrolled discharge of electrical currents that can create light and heat.

"If anyone ever sees an arcing electrical box they should immediately move a safe distance away and immediately call GWPD if you are on campus, or 911 if you are off campus so the appropriate personnel can respond and render the device safe," she said. "Please NEVER approach an electrical device acting in such a manner with standing water nearby."

Media Credit: Isha

Trivedi | News Editor

Common areas in the basement of JBKO, like the TV lounge and laundry room, were nearly completely covered in about an inch of water carrying dirt and small debris. Jordan Freij, a freshman living in JBKO, said when he took the elevator down to the basement while it was flooded, water rushed into the elevator's shaft right as the doors opened.

"Once we went down to the basement, the second the elevator door opened, water began flooding into the elevator," he said.

He said the building's community coordinator instructed him not to go to the basement or "cause hysteria" over the flooding downstairs. A truck from a local water damage restoration company, A-1 Flood Tech, arrived at JBKO just before 6 p.m.

Water leaked from the ceiling of the eighth floor in Fulbright Hall, and the basement of the building also flooded throughout. Shallow floodwaters were visible in the basement of Munson Hall.

Professor receives \$1.8 million grant to develop breast cancer therapy

ISHANI CHETTRI
CONTRIBUTING NEWS EDITOR

A professor in the School of Medicine and Health Sciences received a \$1.8 million grant from the National Institutes of Health last month to create alternative treatments for breast cancer patients.

Mei-Yi Wu, an associate research professor of medicine, received a five-year grant to perform experiments on interferons — which are proteins in the immune system that help cancer cells become drug-resistant — and their role in tumor growth. Wu said her goal is to develop a breast cancer therapy that directly targets interferons to prevent drug resistance and alleviate side effects patients would normally face from more invasive treatments, like chemotherapy, that target all cells in the body.

"Pro-tumor effects of interferons protect damaged tumor cells from dying," she said in an email. "Our study tries to find a therapeutic approach that can block the pro-tumor effects."

Wu said cancer cells develop resistance to common

treatments like chemotherapy and radiotherapy, which patients undergo to kill any cancer cells that remain in the body after surgery. She said her team will identify the factors that enable interferons, or IFNs, to make cancer cells drug-resistant and then inhibit them to make breast cancer therapy more effective.

Drug resistance is the source of 90 percent of chemotherapy failures, according to a 2017 study by the National Center for Biotechnology Information.

"In addition, our study is expected to identify new therapeutic targets, which will pave the way toward new medical interventions to treat breast cancer," Wu said.

She said she will use the grant to hire a postdoctoral researcher who will conduct experiments, buy lab materials and supplies like reagents and pipette tips and cover publication costs. She said the grant will end in July 2026, and her team will send annual progress reports to the NIH throughout the grant period.

Wu said her research is critical because breast cancer

is currently the most commonly diagnosed cancer for women in the United States. Nearly 255,000 cases of breast cancer are found in women yearly, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Experts in surgery and medicine said Wu's research can help eliminate drug resistance in breast cancer cells through specific treatments like targeted immunotherapy trials.

Susan Dent, a professor of medicine and the co-director of the cardio-oncology program at Duke University, said 70 percent of women who have breast cancer have no risk factors, like family history or a genetic mutation. She said research like Wu's is critical for understanding plausible causes responsible for the progression of cancer like the role of IFNs.

"A lot of what we're doing now is looking at how can we look at what's happening within the body itself and use what's already happening in the body to assist us in either preventing or trying to cure a cancer," Dent said.

Dent said cancer cells might find other methods of



GRACE HROMIN | SENIOR PHOTO EDITOR

Nearly 255,000 cases of breast cancer are diagnosed in women annually, according to the CDC.

replicating even if Wu's team discovers how to target IFNs and their pro-tumor effects. She said more than one drug that specifically targets IFNs may be required to stop tumors from forming.

"We know that cancers can be very adaptive and tumors, and so when we're thinking about pathways

and ways to try and prevent cancers from growing, it's important that we always keep in mind that they may have other pathways in which to grow," Dent said.

Jean Bao, an assistant professor of surgery at Stanford University, said IFNs and other regulators in the human immune system can

also have positive effects like preventing tumor growth, in addition to the negative effects like increasing drug resistance in cancer cells. She said Wu's research team will have to study how to get rid of the pro-tumor effects of regulators while still preserving their anti-tumor effects.

Surge in COVID-19 testing needs strains available appointments

From Page 2

"My hunch is that the information about the Delta variant has made everybody feel alarmed, and so they've wanted to increase testing and they made the requirement before they had the necessary capacity," he said.

Ralkowski said he was impressed by the availability of testing appointments in August, and the testing center can "catch up" with the uptick in the de-

mand for tests in "a matter of time."

Experts in public health said a university's testing protocol depends on the number of breakthrough cases and the vaccination rate on campus.

About 97 percent of students are fully vaccinated, two percent received exemptions and one percent is non-compliant with the vaccine requirement as of Wednesday, University spokesperson Crystal Nosal said in an email late last week. The University faced a positivity rate of

0.29 percent this past week, according to the COVID-19 testing dashboard.

Jennifer Horney, the chair of the epidemiology department at the University of Delaware, said there are benefits in confining coronavirus testing data to University-owned centers but not at the expense of students having symptoms and no available tests. Allcare Family Medicine and Urgent Care, Medstar Health and Farragut Medical and Travel Care all provide coronavirus testing options near campus.

"There has to be a strong joint relationship between the local and the campus health center," Horney said.

Amy Fairchild, the dean of The Ohio State University's College of Public Health, said testing is critical to identifying and isolating infected individuals before they spread it to others.

"If you can isolate on Thursday instead of the following Monday, you eliminate three to four days during which that individual could spread the infection to others," Fairchild said in

an email.

Ajay Sethi, an associate professor of population health sciences at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, said frequent testing can be difficult for universities because tests are expensive and schools need to hire and train contact tracing personnel.

"There's definitely the financial cost of the tests themselves and having laboratory capacity and personnel to process that many tests and to get results back in a timely way," he said. "That's not cheap."

Administrators should learn from mold outbreaks

Students have complained about moldy residence halls for years. The University pretty much ignored them – until students started going to the hospital.

In the last few weeks, nearly 75 students have reported finding mold in their residence halls. Townhouse Row, home to many of GW's fraternities and sororities, has been evacuated, with the University temporarily re-housing students in local hotels. It is a full-blown crisis at this point – instead of settling into their first in-person semester in a year and a half, students are crashing in hotel rooms or seeking medical attention for respiratory problems.

Andrew Sugrue
Opinions Editor

GW didn't take student complaints about mold seriously until it went from a medium-sized inconvenience to a dire health emergency. It should serve as a teachable moment for the University to not brush aside students' concerns or wait to address them until it's too late – when it comes to mold or anything else.

A deep dive into The Hatchet's archives shows students raising concerns about mold in residence halls as far back as 2009, and about buildings falling into disrepair as far back as 2005. But the problem seemed to have escalated in recent years. In 2013, students were so fed up with officials ignoring their pleas to address the mold situation that they turned to a local news station to tell their story. The negative media attention helped spur administrators to action, and the University promised it would review maintenance policies.

This review, in turn, led to the University making a commitment to renovating residence halls every seven years. That was in 2014. In the seven years between then and now, mold-related maladies have still



NICHOLAS ANASTACIO | GRAPHICS EDITOR

befallen more than a few students, with the University taking very little broad action to stop the issue. When summer residents in Mitchell Hall started experiencing congestion and migraines in 2017, maintenance crews found mold, and the University relocated those students to other buildings for the rest of the semester. Later that same year, the University hired maintenance crews to regularly wipe down the

bathrooms in Thurston Hall amid widespread reports of recurring mold and mildew.

Thurston has historically been the worst fungal offender among mold-infested residence halls. As any GW student who has either lived there or attended a freshman-year party there can attest to, it is a generally unsanitary place. Administrators made the right call in massively renovating the

building. But until then, officials failed to proactively address maintenance issues that arose in buildings.

GW is bringing in mold experts to inspect every single residential building. These deep, across-the-board steps are being taken now – but were not taken during the decade and a half when students consistently complained about mold in the places where they eat,

sleep and bathe.

There's the practical side of the mold issue, which may be related to how Facilities, Planning, Construction and Management handled the shutdown of HVAC systems during the pandemic. But the symbolism of GW quite literally covering over a problem until it caused chaos is quite on-the-nose. When students raise concerns, the University should not just brush problems with a fresh coat of paint until the point of disaster.

Student concerns going unaddressed, or students feeling like their concerns are not being listened to, is not restricted to just the mold issue. Students have often felt like they have been shouting into the void. But the University has shown signs of genuine good faith and effort in changing this dynamic. From acceding to student demands on divestment to removing segregationist Cloyd Heck Marvin's name from the University Student Center, administrators are clearly listening to the most prominent voices on the biggest issues facing students.

It is great to see administrators paying more attention to some of the larger issues students raise. But seemingly small issues – like the way student concerns about mold may have seemed a decade ago – should get addressed once students start bringing them up. It should not take two decades and a narrative-completing crisis to spur action. When students say hey, this bad thing is happening, their University should listen and not paint over the problem.

In 2019, The Hatchet's then-contributing opinions editor wrote, "The University needs to prioritize stopping problems before they become costly for both the University and for students." This is a rule for GW to live by going forward.

—Andrew Sugrue, a senior majoring in political communication and political science, is the opinions editor.

Essay: We need to process the past year to be able to move on

For two weeks before the academic year began, and into the first week of classes, I couldn't sleep. My brain had no desire to rest, feeling as though it needed to be awake and alert to think about something important, but I couldn't put a finger on what was making me so uneasy.

I can only guess that I was worried about an amalgamation of new events that were taking place and about to take place – the prospect of the first in-person academic year since March 2020, my senior year, after which I may or may not get a job, and living off campus for the first time.

Shreeya Aranake
Contributing Opinions Editor

But these changes barely scratched the surface of all of the changes that upended my life since the pandemic began. Since March 2020, I have lost friendships, forged new ones, started living with a completely new set of roommates, completed almost half of the classes for my major from home and started seeing a therapist regularly. Though most of these changes have been positive and I find myself much happier than I was toward the end of my sophomore year, I still couldn't sleep.

In an aha moment at 5:15 a.m. one morning, after six restless hours of trying, and failing, to sleep, I realized that I never allowed myself to process any of these changes, or even to acknowledge that

they were changes. Every time an adult lamented about how much the pandemic had taken away, and how much us young, college-going folk had lost, I chafed at the suggestion. Admitting or thinking about the loss of "normal" college years would make me feel helpless given that I couldn't do anything about the situation. Whenever I started to think about how different my life is now I just rationalized the changes as progressions in life rather than seeing them as byproducts of the pandemic.

The line between natural, and pandemic-induced progression is blurred for me. The friendships I ended up losing were already on their way out of my life, and the friendships I forged were already developing before the pandemic hit. But the manner in which each relationship either ended or became stronger was heavily influenced by the fact that I was at home and not on campus. While in isolation, I was more callous and less caring in allowing friendships to be severed because I knew I wouldn't have to deal with the consequences in the near future, and I made twice the effort to make connections with new friends by reaching out to them through text and phone calls. Rather than living in a dorm and seeing all of my friends constantly, I was at home, with more freedom to reach out to the people I was more interested in spending time with, and less inclination and obligation to make an effort with the relationships that

had already been in decline.

It's difficult for me to accept that mantra in what feels like a pivotal academic year. Not only did the loss of a pandemic-less junior year rob my classmates and me of a full year of in-person education, but also a full year of feeling like time was on our side. Suddenly, thrust into senior year, I feel an immense pressure to suddenly be ready for life outside of school, for life that will likely take an entirely different skill set and mindset than that of a student.

Even as we broach the prospect of being on the other side of that uncertainty, it still feels like tomorrow's normalcy isn't guaranteed. As we all sit in classrooms, and finally begin to see our friends again, I try to believe that we're getting back to normal. But the prospect of going back online continues to gnaw at the back of my mind, and I feel as though openly voicing this fear might tempt fate into making it come true. I know my peers are having similar thoughts, and it might be helpful to have a place on campus to acknowledge the elephant in the room.

It's important that we, the GW community, fit some time into our busy schedules to process the past year.

Together, we should allow time for ourselves to acknowledge and commiserate on the lost year, and reflect on how we can move forward.

—Shreeya Aranake, a senior majoring in history, is the contributing opinions editor.

Wrighton is a solid choice for interim president

STAFF EDITORIAL

GW is getting a new president sooner than expected. Outgoing University President Thomas LeBlanc will depart on Jan. 1 and be replaced by Mark Wrighton, the former chancellor of Washington University in St. Louis. The search for a permanent replacement will be delayed until the spring.

The Board of Trustees justified their decision in part by citing a tight pandemic-era job market for university presidents and said bringing in a seasoned administrator like Wrighton to steady the ship for up to 18 months would help set GW on the right course.

The Editorial Board has not historically had much praise for the Board of Trustees, but we think they made the right call here. Their reasoning was sound, the decision was communicated honestly and transparently and Wrighton seems like a well-qualified pick for the job of interim president. The Board should keep working at shared governance and consulting the GW community, but things genuinely seem headed in the right direction.

In many ways, Wrighton seems like a welcome departure from LeBlanc. In his four years as president, LeBlanc made unilateral decisions that were unaligned with the GW community's overall vision for the University. LeBlanc's 20/30 Plan, which was intended to tilt GW toward STEM, and his decision to bring over his former colleagues from the University of Miami to work in GW's administra-

tion were two significant decisions that marred his presidency from the beginning. On the other hand, Wrighton has a reputation for being a "stable" force with few controversies in his 22 years at WashU.

Wrighton seems to possess some qualities that LeBlanc could have used during his tenure. He was a long-serving head of a major university, and his tenure lasted longer than the average of about seven years for a university president or chancellor. But there are still some caveats that we should be aware of as the interim president settles in anywhere from one semester up to 18 months, depending on how long it could take to find a new long-term president.

For years, WashU was the least socioeconomically diverse school in the country. Though GW is not much different in this regard, with 14 percent of our student body coming from the top one percent of earning families in 2017, the lack of socioeconomic diversity in Wrighton's 22 years at WashU casts doubt on his interest in diversifying wealthy private universities.

From a communications standpoint, the email sent out to the GW community was honest and frank. Speights plainly said that GW was not yet in a position to bring in the best possible talent to run the University in a permanent capacity, and nodded to thawing the icy relations that administrators have had with facul-

ty and students. This was a departure from the opacity that the Board has exhibited in the past, and it is a welcome one.

About the same time as the Board rolled out their plan for an interim president, Speights and a group of faculty senators also laid out a new approach to shared governance. Speights committed to more transparency and a "fresh start" amid long-standing tensions between administrators and faculty. This is excellent, it shows legitimate good faith on the part of the Board. It would immensely benefit the entirety of the GW community if these discussions between faculty and administrators go well.

But the Board unilaterally postponing the presidential search and installing an interim chief administrator without faculty input directly cuts against the spirit of this proposed and long-overdue "fresh start." The Board is simultaneously extending an olive branch and violating their new commitment to placing shared governance in a more important role in decision-making. Some faculty noted that, even though they found this to be dissonant, they recognized that the particulars of a decision to bring in an interim president were not conducive to a drawn-out consultative process.

On the whole, this is good news at the University's administrative level. Let's keep going on this path.

Culture

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THE SCENE

ART ALL NIGHT 2021

Sept. 24 | Van Ness Main Street | Free
Enjoy an evening filled with local music, dance, art and community in the Van Ness neighborhood.

THE GREAT OKTOBERFEST 2021

Sept. 25 | The Bullpen | \$45
Celebrate Oktoberfest with beer, giant pretzels, live entertainment and other themed festivities.

RELEASED THIS WEEK:

NEW SINGLE: "COLORS AND SHAPES" BY MAC MILLER

Escape the city with these fall hikes

DAVID BROTHERS
REPORTER

As fall weather starts to roll in, head outside of the city to explore beautiful natural parks and trails around the DMV.

Take a break from your busy schedule and spend some time in nature to rejuvenate yourself as the semester gets into full swing. Whether you're looking for a challenging hike or just need a peaceful walk in the forest, we've compiled plenty of options for you to get some space from the commotion of the city.

Seneca Creek Greenway Trail

This 11.5-mile trail is a natural, wooded path extending from Potomac River to the Damascus Regional Park trail system. Surrounded by woods overlooking the stream and a natural rock bridge, this trail is ideal for hikers, bikers and equestrians who enjoy natural scenery. The trail is lightly trafficked, making it an ideal spot to be alone with nature.

Great Seneca Stream Valley Park. Parking is at the end of Riley's Lock Road just before the bridge over Seneca Creek. Find maps and more information here. Open 8 a.m. to sunset.

Theodore Roosevelt Island

Theodore Roosevelt Island was created in the 1930s by landscape architects who transformed Mason's Island into a memorial to America's 26th president, Theo-



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY GRACE HROMIN | SENIOR PHOTO EDITOR
Nearby parks like Theodore Roosevelt Island offer quick escapes from the city, but traveling a bit further can lead you to the incredible scenery of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

dore Roosevelt. The island covers miles of trails with dirt paths, long boardwalks and a tidal marsh. If you're in the mood for a nearby reflection walk, this could be a good bet.

Theodore Roosevelt Island Park. Parking is the first right on northbound lanes of George Washington Memorial Parkway after Memorial Bridge or a 15 minute walk from the

Rosslyn Metro station. Open 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Potomac Heritage Trail

Potomac Heritage Trail is filled with landscapes to attract adventurers, one of which includes George Washington himself, who was known to have explored this land. Running along the historic Potomac River, hiking this trail

will lead you to limestone cliffs, waterfalls and winding trails, according to its website. The trail you'll hike is only a short portion of a larger trailway that connects the Potomac and upper Ohio river basins. Along with hiking the trail you can bike, run, horseback ride and even kayak along the river.

Access one of its multiple trailheads at Theodore Roosevelt Island.

View trail map here. Operating hours vary.

Rock Creek Park

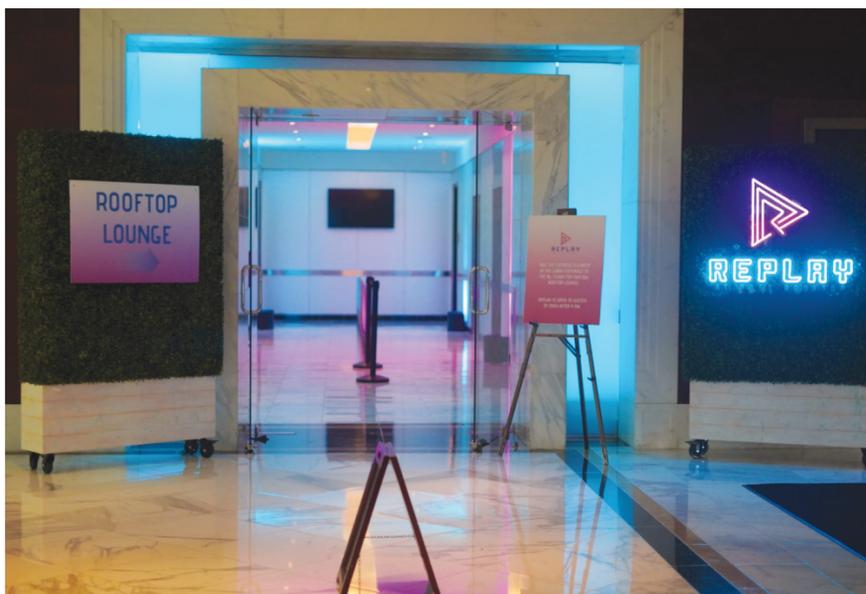
Rock Creek Park constitutes more than 1,700 acres along with 32 miles of looping trails. For specific programs and rentals, you can find information on the website. Its primary trails are the Western Ridge Trail and the Valley Trail, both of which run north-south and are surrounded by forests.

Rock Creek Park Nature Center and Planetarium, 5200 Glover Rd. NW. Closest Metro stops are at Friendship Heights and Fort Totten. Find more information and maps here. Open sunrise until sunset.

Old Rag Mountain in Shenandoah National Park

Old Rag Mountain is the ideal hiking destination for a challenging immersive nature experience. Advanced hikers can try the park's steep climbs along granite boulders through tiny spaces. Hikers can choose whether they want to take a trail that includes the mountain's "rock scramble," a sharply ascending patch of uneven rocks that requires a mix of rock climbing and hiking. Regardless of the difficulty, many complete this path, in large part, for its reward: a view of nearly 200,000 protected acres of national parkland.

Robertson, Va. Access from multiple points from Shenandoah National Park eastern boundary. Find more information and maps here. Always open.



SABRINA GODIN | SENIOR STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Head to Replay, an 80s-themed rooftop pop-up bar in National Harbor, for vintage arcade games and spiked milkshakes.

Game-themed bars around the District

ISABELLA MACKINNON
STAFF WRITER

The next time you go out, try coupling your cocktails with competition and head to a game-themed bar around the city.

Luckily, the District is home to a popping scene of bars with various games from mini-golf and ping pong to board and arcade games. Boost your bar-hopping game by mastering Pac-Man or board games while you sip on cocktails at one of these local spots.

Swingers

Enjoy a fusion between mini-golf and alcoholic beverages at Swingers. Inside Swingers, you'll find two nine-hole putt-putt courses outfitted with greenery and a giant windmill. While Swingers doesn't prepare its own food, the menu caters meals from local businesses like Southern BBQ (\$12-\$14) from Succotash, pizza (\$15-\$20) from Kneadza Pizza and tacos (\$9-\$12) from tuTaco. To loosen up on the mini-golf course, order cocktails like the Mulligan Mule (\$14) with vodka, hibiscus liqueur and ginger beer and the Lime in the Coconut Collins (\$13) with spiced rum, pineapple and Red Bull. Tickets are \$19 a person for golf (\$24 a person at their peak times of Thursday and Friday after 6 p.m. and all day Saturday) and food and drink packages start at \$39 a person.

Dupont Circle. 1330 19th St. NW. Open Tuesday through Thursday 3 p.m. to midnight, Friday and Saturday noon to midnight and Sunday noon to 10 p.m. 21+ only.

The Board Room

For a quiet night out with friends, The Board Room is the ideal place for you. For \$2, choose from one of the 30 plus board games offered like Scrabble and Yatzee to Settlers of Catan and Backgammon. To drink, the Board Room serves draft beers like Guinness Draught (\$7 a glass) and DC Brau Public Pale Ale (\$6 per glass and \$20 per pitcher). The Board Room does not serve food but provides paper menus from local places like Flippin' Pizza, Banana Leaves and Glen's Garden Market to deliver with no extra cost.

Dupont Circle. 1737 Connecticut Ave. NW. Open Monday through Thursday 4 p.m. to 2 a.m., Friday 4 p.m. to 3 a.m., Saturday noon to 3 a.m. and Sunday noon to 2 a.m.

Players Club

Transport yourself back to the 70s at Players Club for a night of vintage games, music and drinks. Try your hand at the pool tables, foosball, pinball and other classic arcade games located in the downstairs basement. The games are cash and coin-operated, and the venue includes an ATM and quarter machine. On the roof is the Skybox bar where you can order cocktails and draft beer options. Players Club does not serve its own food, but you can place orders through Player's club to be supplied by the neighboring Shake Shack.

Logan Circle. 1400 14th St. NW. Open Tuesday through Thursday 5 p.m. to 1:45 a.m., Friday 5 p.m. to 2:45 a.m., Saturday 4 p.m. to 2:45 a.m. and Sunday 5 p.m. to 1:45 a.m.

Replay at Pose Rooftop

Drink, dance and pinball the night away to throwback tunes at Replay, an 80s-themed rooftop pop-up bar at Pose Lounge in the Gaylord National Resort. The lounge, which opened in July, features neon 80s-style decorations, priceless National Harbor views and vintage arcade games like Atari, Pac-Man and pinball. Its star cocktails are giant milkshakes that guests can add alcohol to for \$6. Try out the strawberry shortcake milkshake (\$26), which serves two people and is topped with a cookie, brownie, marshmallow and chocolate covered cherries.

National Harbor. Pose Rooftop Lounge, 201 Waterfront St., National Harbor, Md. Open Fridays and Saturdays 4 p.m. to 2 a.m. and weekdays 4 p.m. to midnight. No reservations needed.

Comet Ping Pong

Comet Ping Pong is a hipster pizza restaurant, ping pong tournament locale and live music venue all in one. This restaurant is family friendly and full of ping pong tables to try your hand at. The pizza menu includes a build-your-own category with ample toppings in addition to original creations like the Little Mac Burger (\$16), the Cheesus Crust (\$15.50) and the Veganista (\$16). Starters include garlic knots (\$6), risotto balls (\$7), meatball sliders (\$9) and a variety of salads (\$5-\$11). Reservations are available by phone but are not necessary.

Chevy Chase. 5037 Connecticut Ave. NW. Open Monday through Thursday 5 to 9:30 p.m., Friday 4 to 10:45 p.m., Saturday 11:30 a.m. to 10:45 p.m. and Sunday 11:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.

A guide to the District's farmer's market scene

GABRIELLA SPINA
REPORTER

To spice up your weekly shopping run, check out D.C.'s farmer's market scene for fresh and sustainable grocery options.

Supporting local and sustainable food practices can be hard on a college budget, but D.C.'s farmer's market scenes provide plenty of options for students to try out. Most D.C. neighborhoods host their own markets, making local produce, meat and seafood, prepared food and flowers available to you throughout the week.

The next time you've got a free morning, check out one of these farmer's markets around the city:

For specialty coffee and treats:

Columbia Heights FRESHFARM Market

Within walking distance of the National Zoo, this market is a great pit stop for lunch or to grab groceries for dinner post-sightseeing. Before visiting, place an order for Quailia coffee beans, which are roasted in-house every three days. Other vendors range from Justjuice smoothies to Jarabe Gourmet Pops artisan popsicles. Multiple produce vendors sell items like varied mushrooms, Alaskan salmon and assorted vegetables. Pre-order whole wheat sour-

dough (\$7.50), jalapeño cheddar bread (\$7) or vegan nutty apple cake (\$6.50) from D.C.'s organic Ravenhook Bakehouse. Visit El Sabor del Taco food truck for tacos wrapped in a homemade tortilla and house mole sauce.

For the Instagrammable farmers market:

FRESHFARM Dupont Circle Market

Founded in 1997, the Dupont Market houses 57 vendors and is packed from open to close every Sunday. Located in the heart of Dupont circle, this market is a walkable stop for groceries or a fun Sunday morning stop for coffee and a snack. You can also pick up goodies from the market and enjoy them with friends in the park around the Dupont fountain. Long lines in front of Zeke's, Call Your Mother Deli and Little Austria bakery booths are often filled with college students, families and cute dogs. Pick up fresh dairy products from Clear Spring Creamery or Shepards Manor Creamery or a bucket of flowers from Wollam Gardens. Purchase fresh flaky Baklava (\$15 for 6 pieces) from Mastiha Artisan Greek Bakery, which is only located at the Dupont market or browse the vibrant produce from Potomac Vegetable Farms.

To explore the city:

Brookland Monrow Street Farmer's Market

Head out of Northwest D.C. and check out this 18-vendor market to find sweet treats and drinks to enjoy your morning with. Founded in 2014, this market is a hub for residents in the Northeast to pick up local produce and sip on coffee. The next time you're in Ward 5, check out this market for produce from Diaz Veggie and Berries, which supplies fruits and vegetables from a farm in Colonial Beach, Va., just 66 miles from the District. If you're still feeling peckish, place your order at DMV empanadas, which got its start serving the savory pastry at the market in 2014 before opening its own storefront in Gaithersburg, Md. in 2019.

For the quick trip:

Palisades Farmers Market

Head to the Palisades neighborhood for this market that is organized and run entirely by the Palisades community. Though smaller than the markets in Dupont, more than 25 vendors selling both prepared food and fresh produce line the street. Groff's Content Farm attracts market-goers interested in hormone- and antibiotic-free meat and eggs. Stroll through the market with a cup of Zeke's cold brew or vegan Gemma Gelato. Finally, grab dumplings for an easy dinner from the Chinese Street Market.



CAMILLE DESANTO | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR
Founded in 1997, the Dupont Market houses 57 vendors and is packed from open to close every Sunday.

GAMES OF THE WEEK



VOLLEYBALL
vs. Dayton
Friday | 7 p.m.
The Colonials face off against the Flyers at the Smith Center.



SOFTBALL
vs. Georgetown
Saturday | Noon
GW prepares to face their crosstown rival at the Vern.

NUMBER CRUNCH **.057**

Women's soccer's shooting percentage, down from its five-year average of .108.

Student-athletes experience burnout, increased stress during pandemic

NURIA DIAZ
CONTRIBUTING SPORTS EDITOR

As the COVID-19 pandemic surged through the nation, student-athletes were forced to confront a new reality as their mental health suffered.

Student-athletes at GW said the pandemic caused their mental health to decline as they felt removed from the college environment and struggled to find a balance between their academics, athletics and personal lives. They said the athletic department provided support for their mental health throughout the pandemic, encouraging them to meet with mental health professionals and lean on each other for support.

Senior women's basketball guard Maddie Loder said she experienced a "straining" semester as she struggled to compartmentalize her emotions about the pandemic. She said she felt she placed her value on how well she was performing instead of her how she adjusted during the season.

"That felt very dehumanizing and very, bringing us down to a point where it was like, we were playing basketball, we were going to class and we were lying in bed," she said.

She said the pandemic was the backdrop of a "brutal" season for her, as she was unable to maintain her regular schedule due to the social distancing mandated health guidelines. She said the team felt lucky to be competing given the conditions of the pandemic but felt she had a "minuscule" role to play during the season.

In May, the NCAA released

a survey showing a 150-to-250 percent increase in student-athlete concerns over mental health. About one in 10 students reported feeling depression symptoms that did not allow them to carry on a regular day.

A study by Drexel and Kean universities showed that 23.7 percent of college-level student-athletes reported clinically significant levels of depressive symptoms. In the study female athletes were almost twice as likely to show clinically relevant symptoms compared to male athletes.

Loder currently leads GW's chapter of Hidden Opponent, an organization that seeks to empower students to talk about their mental health. She said organizations like this have begun to gain popularity as professional athletes like Naomi Osaka and Simone Biles have led the way for athletes addressing mental health.

"The field female student-athletes will feel more empowered to really say how they're feeling because when you look at Simone Biles, who is the greatest of all time, in her respective sport, people can be like 'I know I'm not as great as Simone Biles, but if she feels this way, it's OK for me to feel this way at whatever level I'm not,'" Loder said. "And so I'm at least hopeful that that will open more doors for people to be more honest about their feelings."

Senior gymnast Deja Chambliss said the pandemic made it difficult for her to maintain a work-life balance, adding another stressor to her life. She said adapting to a team mentality allowed team members



FILE PHOTO BY ARIELLE BADER
Senior gymnast Deja Chambliss said Simone Biles' recent public advocacy for mental health has been empowering for other gymnasts.

to put their challenges into perspective and see they were not alone.

Chambliss said the athletics department enlisted professional sports psychologists as a resource for many of the student-athletes. She said head coach Margie Foster-Cunningham emphasizes gymnastics as a safe space for her team, focusing on breathing exercises to help them concentrate before the meets to help them relax.

Chambliss said the movement Biles created for mental health was empowering because gymnasts are typically taught to "do as told" without prioritizing their own health and safety.

Junior gymnast Hannah Munnely said mental toughness and adaptability were vital for the season to help team members adjust to the new changes in protocol. She said she had trouble adjusting to online classes and facing the health uncertainties,

like the possibility of outbreaks during meets, that arose during the season.

Munnely said the department encourages them to communicate instead of "suffering in silence," to work on finding the routine that's best for them. She said organizing her daily schedule helps her keep her student and athlete life separate, allowing her to compartmentalize as much as possible to focus on one thing at a time.

Golf prepares to prioritize team-building this season

NURIA DIAZ
CONTRIBUTING SPORTS EDITOR

After finishing sixth at the A-10 tournament last year, golf is looking to improve its team building to perform better this season.

The Colonials concluded their first tournament of the season with a score of 893, ranking 16th overall in the Gene Miranda Falcon Invitational hosted by Air Force. Head coach Chuck Scheinost said the team is concentrating on strengthening their bond after COVID-19 restrictions made it difficult for teammates to get to know each other last season. Scheinost said he was "pleasantly surprised" with the team's current performance because many members of the team did not have the opportunity to practice over the summer.

"One of the big focal points for us is getting back to being ourselves, our team has always had a tight bond and been close-knit, and that pushed each other to get better, and to perform," Scheinost said. "And during COVID the ironic part is that other teams that struggled with that got it because most of our guys live together, where our guys didn't necessarily live together."

The team is expected to play four other tournaments in the fall semester.

Scheinost said the team needs to work on their consistency to have a

successful season, as many are still getting used to being back on the course. He said the team needs to work on their short game, specifically wedges, to continue raising their game.

He also said the team needs to decrease the number of doubles and increase their shots on the course. He said the team had consistently endured an underwhelming start to seasons in the past, but said the team has honed their warm-up routine to enhance their tournament play.

"We had a lot of opportunities with wedges in our hands, but we weren't able to capitalize on them and really capitalizing is hitting it within 15 feet where you have a realistic birdie opportunity," Scheinost said. "So for us, that's another big focus, we're doing weekly wedge testing in our track man, simulator room and pushing that aspect of things."

Golf welcomed three new members to the team this year, including freshman Arav Patel and graduate student Florian Blatti, who participated in the Gene Miranda Falcon Invitational. Patel hit a two-over-par 228 ranking 79th and Blatti hit a 16-over-par 232 ranking 88th. Scheinost said the new players are adapting well to the program but still have some learning moments to face this season.

"Both of them can actually challenge to really push guys for spots this year and really contribute to the team as

we go throughout the year," Schoenist said. "So I'm very excited about our freshmen class and I think combined with what we got, it bodes well for the future."

Graduate student player Clifford Thompson tied for 13th overall in the individual category with a six-over-par 222 at the invitational. The South Africa native said the seniors building a camaraderie with him was a "big thing" when he was a freshman and he aims to do the same for the freshman now that he is an upperclassman.

Thompson said he feels more optimistic about this year after the team struggled to maintain relationships and morale last season.

He said the team is looking to increase the amount of competitive rounds with each other, to play more qualifying events. Thompson said that during practices they have been focusing on short game challenges with each other.

During the Gene Miranda Falcon Invitational, senior Luis Alfonso Preciado hit a hole-in-one from 142 yards, the first of his career. He said he is concentrating on maintaining a level head to decrease his mistakes.

Preciado said the team has been working hard to get better every day and enhance team camaraderie this season.

The Colonials will return to the course at the River Run Invitational hosted by Davidson Monday and Tuesday.



AUDEN YURMAN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Brian Burgamy, softball's newest assistant coach, was drafted in 2002 by the San Diego Padres and spent 16 seasons playing professional baseball.

Softball fills staff ahead of 2022 season

NURIA DIAZ
CONTRIBUTING SPORTS EDITOR

Former professional baseball coach Brian Burgamy will serve as an assistant coach for the upcoming softball season, the Athletic Department announced last Friday.

Softball head coach Chrissy Schoonmaker appointed Burgamy as the third and final assistant coach of her staff, according to an Athletic Department release. Burgamy joins assistant coaches Teresa Fister and Avon Meacham who were added to the program in mid-August and early September, respectively.

Schoonmaker said Burgamy's experience playing professionally for more than a decade and his experience coaching professionally has prepared him to join the program this season.

"I am thrilled to welcome Brian Burgamy to GW, to the softball program and to our coaching staff," Schoonmaker said in the release. "Brian has a wealth of experience from his 16 plus years playing professionally, his time as an All-American student-athlete at Wichita State and his time spent coaching at the professional level."

Before his coaching career, Burgamy played collegiately at Wichita

State, starting as an outfielder for three years and finishing with a batting average of .356. During his junior campaign in 2002, he was named the Missouri Valley Conference Player of the Year, later being inducted into the Shocker Sports Hall of Fame in 2019.

He was drafted in the ninth round by the San Diego Padres and spent 16 seasons playing professional baseball from 2002 to 2018, eventually ascending to Triple-A with the Los Angeles Dodgers in 2015. He also spent time in the international winter leagues in Mexico, Venezuela, Australia and the Dominican Republic.

Burgamy finished his professional career with 246 home runs, more than 1,000 runs batted in, and a .270 batting average across approximately 2,000 games. He was a member of two minor league championship squads, including the 2014 Double-A Binghamton Mets with whom he was named Team MVP.

After his final season, Burgamy joined on with the St. Louis Cardinals organization as an assistant hitting coach for the Triple-A Memphis Redbirds in 2018. He also served as the hitting coach for the Rookie-Level Johnson City Cardinals, aiding them to an Appalachian League title in 2019. In

2020, he was working with the High-A Palm Beach Cardinals before the minor league season was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, forcing him to shift to remote instruction.

"Brian's expertise on the offensive side of the ball and his passion to teach will be assets to our program," Schoonmaker said. "We are excited to welcome Brian and his family to GW - I cannot wait to see the impact he makes on our student-athletes."

Prior to his gig at GW, Burgamy worked as the managing director of RB² Baseball in Binghamton, New York where he focused on providing hitting, outfield, and infield instruction.

Burgamy and his wife Suzanne are parents to two children.

"I am extremely grateful and excited for this opportunity that Coach Schoonmaker and George Washington University have given me," Burgamy said in the release. "I look forward to working with an outstanding coaching staff, this group of student-athletes and the administration at this very prestigious institution. I can't wait to get started!"

The Colonials will return to the mound for their first home game of the non-conference slate against crosstown rival Howard Oct. 9. First pitch is slated for noon.



FILE PHOTO BY DEAN WHITELAW

The Colonials will return to the course at the River Run Invitational hosted by Davidson Monday and Tuesday.