

# The GW Hatchet

**Opinions**  
The Editorial Board calls for more inclusive classrooms.  
Page 6

**Culture**  
Read up on some heartwarming dating success stories at GW.  
Page 7

**Sports**  
Get to know women's basketball freshman guard Maxine Engel.  
Page 8

## What's inside

**Tracking COVID-19**  
Feb. 3 - Feb. 9

Weekly COVID-19 cases: 121

Weekly positivity rate: 1.29%

Change in cases since previous week: +7

## Officials tracked students' movements on campus without their knowledge, Wrighton says

ISHA TRIVEDI  
NEWS EDITOR

The University was tracking students, faculty and staff members' movement across campus during the fall semester based on location data from WiFi access points without informing them, interim University President Mark Wrighton told the GW community Friday.

Wrighton said in an email to students, faculty and staff that officials collected the location data along with "de-identified" descriptors, like gender, to inform the Division for Student Affairs and the Division of Safety and Facilities on how community members use campus spaces. Wrighton said he learned about the project, which ended in December, after interim Provost Chris Bracey told him in early January, shortly after Bracey learned of the project himself.

"Regrettably, however, the University neglected to inform members of our community in advance of commencing this analytical project," he said.

GW's privacy policy states that any party acting on behalf of GW processing data from the GW community must make a privacy notice available explaining how the information will be used.

Wrighton's email states that officials may have had the ability to collect individualized data, but officials did not do so for the project. Wrighton said officials will destroy any remaining data that they collected last semester for the project.

"Members of the faculty also



FILE PHOTO BY SOPHIA YOUNG | SENIOR STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER  
It's still unclear which officials approved and oversaw the project.

became aware of this pilot, and there were discussions about what would be done in the future," Wrighton said in an interview.

Officials launched a new office to oversee data privacy and ethics in January 2019.

University spokesperson Crystal Nosal declined to say which officials oversaw and approved the data collection effort, why officials didn't issue an announcement about the project until now and whether the Office of Ethics, Compliance and Privacy was aware of the data collection.

Wrighton said officials will

not move forward with efforts to conduct a similar project in the future without establishing a committee made of students, faculty and staff to develop a set of policies and a "University position" on the use of the GW community's data.

"The University deeply regrets that this project took place without proper review or safeguards, and we will work to make sure that such an incident is not repeated," he said in the email.

The Faculty Senate will discuss an update titled "tracking and student privacy" from Arthur Wilson, the chair of the

senate's executive committee, at its meeting this Friday according to the senate's agenda. Wilson did not return a request for comment.

Brian Ensor, the associate vice president for cybersecurity, infrastructure and research services, explained how officials conducted the pilot project in an article posted on the company review platform, Upshot, in December. The article has since been deleted, but the behavioral analytics company Degree Analytics tweeted a link to the article on Jan. 7.

See **PROJECT** Page 5

## How Colonials moniker is losing visibility

LIA DEGROOT  
EDITOR IN CHIEF

ZACH SCHONFELD  
MANAGING EDITOR

The Board of Trustees is expected to vote later this spring whether to ditch the Colonials moniker, but many Colonials-branded events, organizations and locations on campus have already abandoned the decades-old symbol.

Board Chair Grace Speights said in October that trustees plan to reach a decision on whether to retire the moniker by the end of the academic year. Speights made no direct mention of the Colonials decision at Friday's Board meeting but said the executive committee had recently met to consider "naming decisions."

As the GW community awaits a final verdict on the monumental decision, some facets of campus have already abandoned the Colonials logo.

A program connecting students and graduates, once called Coffee with Colonials, was changed to Coffee with Alumni in fall 2019. At about the same timeframe, student leaders changed the name of GW's fan section from Colonial Army to George's Army, and Colonial Central became the Student Services Hub.

The gradual distancing from the Colonials brand hasn't been an official policy, and the changes were often made in conjunction with broader overhauls of those programs. Students had previously participated in orientation activities throughout the summer at Colonial Inauguration, but officials dubbed the program New Student Orientation when the events were revamped in 2019, consolidating them to a singular session in August for the entire incoming class.

But eliminating the moniker completely would still be a major shift. Colonials branding is still recognizable in many areas of campus, particularly for GW's athletics teams.

That final decision now rests with trustees.

Interim University President Mark Wrighton said in an interview Friday that administrators are preparing a "process" to implement the Board's vote either way, which could happen at their May meeting. But he cautioned that trustees had not yet made a decision and were weighing mixed opinions in the GW community.

"It's very split," Wrighton said. "There are a large group of survey respondents who said we should change and an essentially equal number saying we should not change."

The process follows a framework the Board approved in June 2020 to consider naming questions to GW's buildings and memorials. Under the framework, officials established a committee the next month to evaluate the Colonials moniker based on six considerations, like the history of the moniker and the "depth and breadth" of harm caused by the use of the term.

The Colonials committee delivered their recommendation to trustees last year, but officials have yet to make its final report public. Wrighton, who became University president after the recommendation was sent to the Board, said he had seen the committee's suggestion.

"I'm not unaware of the conclusion from that," he said.

The framework has already led to the decision to rename the Marvin Center as the University Student Center last summer after following a similar process, and GW community members have submitted six other requests that will be considered after the Colonials decision. Officials are due to review requests to rename Fulbright, Madison, Monroe, Francis Scott Key halls, the Churchill Center and the William P. Barr Dean's Suite in GW Law.

After a resurgence in student advocacy about the issue, students narrowly passed a referendum in 2019 calling for the retirement of the moniker. Then-Student Association President SJ Matthews issued an executive order that September creating a "Colonial Moniker Task Force" to research replacements.

SA President Brandon Hill invoked the looming Colonials decision at Friday's Board meeting as he highlighted recent success stories from student advocacy, like GW's enrollment in the U-Pass program last fall. Hill had served on the Colonials committee that prepared the recommendation for trustees.

"Call me an optimist, but I soon imagine a University where students can voice their concerns and not have to wait for 15 years for change," Hill told trustees. "And yes, I'm referring to the Colonials moniker."

## Wrighton makes first Board of Trustees meeting appearance

ISHA TRIVEDI  
NEWS EDITOR

Interim University President Mark Wrighton delivered remarks at his first Board of Trustees open meeting Friday, recapping his first impressions of the GW community and meetings with students, faculty and staff.

The Board meeting came as trustees, faculty and administrators have been working to improve shared governance at GW in advance of the search for a permanent University president. Wrighton said he has spent his first few weeks in office attending events like town hall meetings to improve shared governance at the University and joining Black Heritage Celebration events.

Wrighton said in an interview that officials appear to be on track with plans to finalize a set of recommendations to improve shared governance at the University, which the Board will consider in May.

Wrighton said trustees are "aware" of recent incidents in which a professor in the School of Business incorrectly told a student she couldn't have her service dog in her classroom and a white GWTeach professor said the N-word in a class on anti-racism.

Wrighton declined to comment on what action officials would take against the professors despite students' calls for their removal from the University.

"We discussed these incidents with the Board yesterday, and they are aware, and they are aware of the seriousness of the incidents and concerns about the wellbeing of our students," Wrighton said.

Trustee Ellen Zane, the chair of the Board's committee on finance and investments, said at the meeting that the University's projections for the second quarter of the fiscal year are in line with GW's annual goal of revenues exceeding expenses by 2 percent on a normalized basis.

Trustee Avram Tucker, the vice chair of the Board's committee on finance and investments, said recent undergraduate enrollment trends are overall "doing quite well" despite a decrease in international enrollment, in light of the regular decision application deadline for undergraduates on Jan. 5.

"We're expecting to have good applications and enrollment in fall of 2022," Tucker said. "International applications are returning back to normal except for China."



ERIN LEONE | PHOTOGRAPHER  
Juniors Funcia Jean-Louis (left) and Kiera Sona (right) are co-chairing this year's Black Heritage Celebration, which runs through the end of February.

## BHC highlights Black students' campus 'homecoming'

ABBY KENNEDY  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

This year's Black Heritage Celebration is highlighting Black strength and unity on campus after the University emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Homecoming: Been Black" is the central theme of this year's celebration to symbolize the Black student community's return to campus with a mix of 20 in-person and online events sponsored by 17 religious, social and Greek life organizations. Student leaders organizing BHC said this year's celebration is the first with in-person elements since students were sent home following the pandemic's outbreak two years ago and is emphasizing the Black community's strength and unity that has thrived since GW's reopening this fall.

Funcia Jean-Louis, a junior and the co-chair of BHC, said BHC's executive board members hoped to make programming this year "as diverse as possible," through social, religious, professional

and artistic events. She said BHC organizers are hosting programs like "Black Hair Been Poppin'" - where students will share poetry and learn about the evolution and history of Black hair - and a DMV mixer that includes Georgetown, Catholic and American universities.

"I hope that people are able to first find the place that makes them home and people who look like them or have the same cultures as them so they can find that space on campus and also interact with other people who you might not be used to socializing with or you probably aren't familiar with where their culture is from," she said.

Kiera Sona, a junior and BHC co-chair, said the BHC organizers worked with a truncated budget to plan events compared to past years' celebration after the Student Association budget for the event dropped by more than \$10,000 compared to previous years.

Rayyaan Potter, a junior and the event director for the Muslim Students Association, said MSA will sponsor

a BHC event entitled "Muslims Come in Black Too" that fosters dialogue between students who may have conflicting views on statements that participants respond to during the event.

Blake Coleman, a freshman and the programming director for the Black Girl Pre-Health Collective, will sponsor an event entitled "Been Here: The Black Contribution to Medicine" about the "intentional and unintentional" roles that Black people have played in the field of medicine.

Gianna Cook, the president of the Black Student Union, said this year's theme emphasizes the strength of the Black community during the pandemic and through the multiple police murders in 2020, including the killings of Breonna Taylor, George Floyd and Ahmaud Arbery.

"I really just think that for me, 'Been Black' just represents resilience, represents strength, it represents just us really walking in our full autonomy as Black people," she said.



EVA DEVIZIA | PHOTOGRAPHER

Wrighton had previously attended the Board's executive committee meeting, but Friday marked his first appearance at a public Board meeting.

# College administrators are making bad decisions, choosing optics over students' rights.



**Help them make  
the right decision.  
Join the FIRE  
Student Network.**

[thefire.org/students](https://thefire.org/students)



The Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to defending and sustaining the individual rights of students and faculty members at America's colleges and universities. These rights include freedom of speech, freedom of association, due process, legal equality, religious liberty, and sanctity of conscience — the essential qualities of liberty.

# News

Feb. 14, 2022 • Page 3

## THIS WEEK'S EVENTS

### AN EU PARLIAMENTARIAN'S PERSPECTIVE ON DATA GOVERNANCE AND DIGITAL TRADE

Tuesday, Feb. 15 • 11 a.m. EST • Free  
Tune into a conversation with European Parliament member Bernd Lange in a conversation about international trade and digital services.

### PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND BRAIN HEALTH IN OLDER ADULTS

Wednesday, Feb. 16 • Noon EST • Free  
Join the GW Institute for Brain Health and Dementia for a discussion about dementia and brain health in older adults.

**THIS WEEK IN HISTORY** Student Association President Doug Atwell calls for a student-wide strike on March 1 to protest tuition increases and President Ronald Reagan's proposed budget cuts for education. Feb. 17, 1982

## Officials remain silent on future of professor who said N-word in class

**NICK PASION**  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Administrators have repeatedly declined to say whether they'll take disciplinary action against a professor who said the N-word while instructing a class on anti-racism last month as students have called for her firing.

Officials said GWTeach professor Alicia Bitler stepped down from her position teaching the course after calling her use of the N-word an "oops moment" and later apologizing to the class. Interim University President Mark Wright and a University spokesperson have declined to say whether Bitler will face repercussions for saying the N-word in the Anti-Racism in STEM Education class, but Wright said students' hurt "troubled" him after the Jan. 18 incident in a letter he sent to some students in the class.

Wright said in an interview last week that he discussed Bitler's use of the N-word with the Board of Trustees.

"We discussed these incidents with the Board yesterday, and they are aware of the seriousness of the incidents and concerns about the wellbeing of our students," he said. "We do not comment on personnel actions. Those are completely private."

The Student Association condemned Bitler's actions and called for her termination from the University in an Instagram post last week. Several student organiza-

tions have also condemned Bitler's actions, including the Black Student Union and GW College Democrats.

Dwayne Wright – the director of diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives at the Graduate School of Education and Human Development, which oversees GWTeach – said Bitler has taken a leave of absence from the University, but officials would establish due process before potentially firing her. He said the process would normally entail an investigation and a trial, both of which are "typically" governed by an employment contract. "All professors have to have due process before removal," he said. "Everyone really in a job setting, particularly public but even private, need to have due process before removal."

Students in the anti-racism class said Bitler had used the N-word in reference to the "Problem We All Live With" painting by Norman Rockwell, which features civil rights activist Ruby Bridges and the racial slur written in the background. Students in the class said Bitler told them she tends to use the word in academic settings.

Wright said he doesn't think faculty should use racial slurs in the classroom in any context, and if they do, they must be aware of the societal consequences of their actions – determined by the reasoning for using the word to teach the class and the hurt that students may experience in the classroom. "Each professor has to unfortu-



FILE PHOTO SKYLAR EPSTEIN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER  
Bitler stepped down from teaching the class last month and has since taken a leave of absence from GW.

nately make that decision on their own, and each professor knows when they're doing something in the classroom that they might be open to scrutiny, public and private, and they might be open if they decide to use it as punishment," he said.

Wright said Bitler's use of the N-word doesn't apply to the stan-

dards of academic freedom in the Faculty Code because Bitler openly admitted that her use of the racial slur was a mistake and apologized shortly after.

"There was no stated pedagogical reason for actually saying the word," he said. "It was clearly a mistake on her part, she admitted. She decided to pull out in class be-

cause of the hurt her mistake had caused to students."

Interim Provost Chris Bracey said the faculty code, which sets the standards for faculty behavior and expectation, is made under the recommendations of faculty members.

See **ACTION** Page 5

## GW to provide Vern residents with free, late-night Lyft rides

**ZACHARY BLACKBURN**  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

The University is partnering with Lyft to expand late-night transportation options for Mount Vernon Campus residents beginning next week.

The partnership, which will begin Tuesday, gives Mount Vernon Campus residents 30 monthly free rides between campuses from midnight to 7 a.m., officials said. Destiny Jackson, the director of transportation and logistics, said the program seeks to reduce wait times for late-night Mount Vernon Express shuttles, which only depart every 30 minutes between 1 a.m. and 7 a.m.

"We are launching this new service in response to feedback from students living on the Mount Vernon

Campus who asked for more reliable and convenient ways to travel back and forth between campuses late at night," Jackson said in an email. "We hope that this will reduce the number of times a student just misses the 2 a.m. shuttle, as an example, and must wait a while for the next one."

Rides must start and end at designated pickup and drop-off locations, according to GW's website. Foggy Bottom Campus locations include the front entrance of Tompkins Hall, the Foggy Bottom Metro Station, the University Student Center, the Elliott School of International Affairs Building's front entrance and the Corcoran School of the Arts and Design. Students on the Vern can be picked up at the Vern's campus entrance and the

Academic Quad. Jackson said officials will restrict the program to Vern residents because Foggy Bottom is already serviced by SafeRide.

The partnership will grant students 30 free standard Lyft ride vouchers per month. Driver tips are not included but may be added by the rider, the website states. Vouchers are nontransferable.

Up to three students can share a ride, and the vouchers are not eligible for Lyft XL rides.

"We are already planning to incorporate this late-night transportation option for [Mount Vernon Campus] residents next academic year and look forward to student feedback to help us make improvements and/or adjustments to the program," Jackson said.

# ADVERTISEMENT

LARGE 642SF EFFICIENCY APARTMENT FOR SALE

## \$209,000

**MOVE-IN READY INCLUDES:**

- FURNITURE
- KITCHEN UTENSILS
- CLEANING SUPPLIES
- CABLE TV
- INTERNET

#720  
**Potomac Plaza  
Apartments**

*Near GWU's Foggy Bottom Campus*

**Brian Wilson**  
Realtor

**703-774-7465**

## Students demand officials investigate endowment for ties to Uyghur genocide

**DANIEL PATRICK GALGANO**  
CONTRIBUTING NEWS EDITOR

**LAUREN SFORZA**  
CONTRIBUTING NEWS EDITOR

Nearly 250 people have signed a petition calling on officials to divest from companies "complicit" in the genocide of the Uyghur people in China.

The petition – launched last Sunday by GW College Democrats, GW College Republicans, the GW Committee on Divestment from the Uyghur Genocide, the Uyghur Human Rights Initiative at GW Law and the Athenai Institute – demanded that GW reevaluate its endowment and research funding tied to companies that benefit from the forced labor of the Uyghur people. The groups launched the effort in the wake of officials removing posters from campus denouncing the Chinese Communist Party's human rights abuses against the Uyghurs, which officials have since apologized for doing.

The U.S. State Department declared last year that the Chinese government was committing "genocide" and "crimes against humanity" against the Uyghur people.

Students are planning a protest in Kogan Plaza on Tuesday at noon to call on officials to investigate GW's endowment for potential investments in companies that have a stake in the Uyghur genocide.

The posters' removal sparked a debate that gained national atten-

tion about broader concerns over Chinese censorship at U.S. colleges. The petition states that affiliates with the Chinese government monitor college campuses and fund companies that are complicit in the genocide.

"Officials of the Chinese government have sought to silence criticism of their policies on U.S. college campuses by pressuring University administrators to stifle student speech," the petition reads. "The George Washington University, and all U.S. universities, have obligations to protect their students and to act as moral leaders."

The petition's signatories demanded that interim University President Mark Wright and the Board of Trustees meet with the groups who signed the petition and implement a strategy to protect students' freedom of speech.

Officials declined to comment on what action the University will take to address the petition's demands and which of GW's investments hold ties to the genocide of the Uyghurs.

A report published in 2020 from the Australian Strategic Policy Institute stated that at least 82 companies including the Volkswagen Group, Calvin Klein, Google, Amazon, Apple and Gap profit from factories that reportedly used forced labor practices of Uyghurs.

Senior Patrick Burland, the chair of GW College Republicans, said the petition's signatories sought to urge the University to take a "solid stance" against the

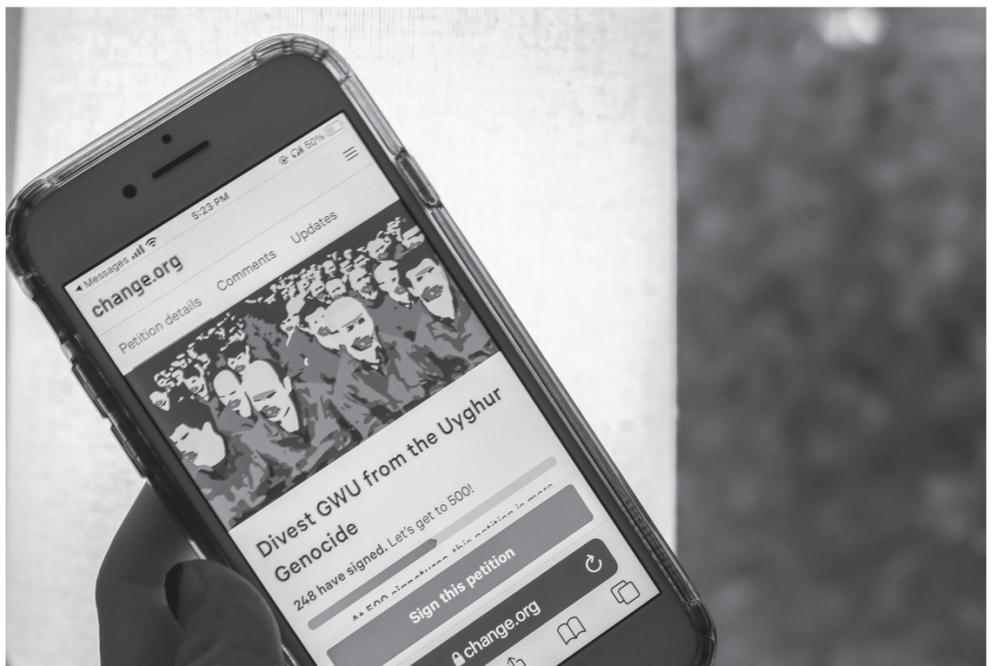


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY DANIELLE TOWERS | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR  
Students created the petition in the wake of last week's controversy when officials took down posters criticizing the Chinese government.

genocide publicly and work to protect freedom of speech on campus. He said the petition pushes officials to take a "closer look" at their finances because it's not clear whether GW could be investing in corporations that operate with forced labor policies.

Juan Carlos Mora, the chair of

the GW Committee on Divestment from the Uyghur Genocide and a junior majoring in philosophy, said he is planning the protest to call for divestment from companies complicit in the Uyghur genocide in hopes of bringing attention to this issue. He said the group of organizations that signed the petition is

basing the divestment campaign on Sunrise GW's successful movement to push GW to commit to fossil fuel divestment by 2025 after years of student activism.

He said the signatories of the petition sent the petition to the Board of Trustees and Wright to urge them to take action.

# GW ranks among top D.C. taxpayers, employers, city report reveals

**FAITH WARDWELL**  
REPORTER

The University is among the top 10 property taxpayers, employers and tax-exempt property owners in the District, according to the city's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report released late last month.

GW ranks as the District's 10th-largest property taxpayer, hires the fifth most employees and owns the eighth-most valuable tax-exempt property, the report states. Experts said the rankings demonstrate the University's role as a job-creator and investor in the District, where GW owns more than \$468 million in taxable property and almost \$290 million in tax-exempt property, according to the report.

Steven Teitelbaum, a professor of real estate and finance at American University, said a building's size and the value of its location determine a landowner's property tax rates. He says the University's proximity to downtown D.C. raises its property value and city tax payments each year.

"The three most important words in real estate: location, location, location," Teitelbaum said. "You happen to have a great location in terms of property values, and you happen to have a significant amount of prop-

erty in that location."

University spokesperson Crystal Nosal did not return a request for comment.

GW's ranking among D.C. taxpayers dropped one spot since last year, but the University's taxable property value increased from \$460 million in 2020 to \$468 million in 2021.

GW is the only D.C. university that the District reported among its top 10 taxpayers, with the other nine spots filled by limited liability real estate companies and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority. GW leases many buildings to commercial vendors as part of the University's investment strategy.

Mayor Muriel Bowser said the report reveals the District's "strong financial position," citing a healthy surplus of cash remaining in the city's reserve funds, a marker used to determine financial health. Bowser said this flexibility allowed the city to expand its public health efforts to combat the COVID-19 pandemic and improve school and workplace conditions.

"The District's finances continue to be the envy of, and among the strongest of, any jurisdiction in the nation," Bowser said in the report.

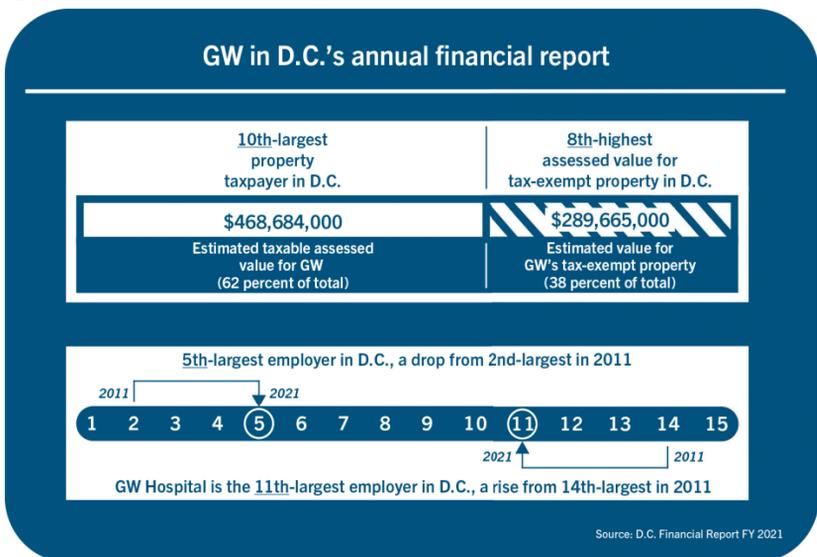
Teitelbaum said GW earned its spot on the list

of top taxpayers because of the University's dozens of investment properties connected to its endowment assets, which are liable to District taxes as noneducational property. The University pays the most taxes on the commercial properties at 2200 Pennsylvania Ave., 2112 Pennsylvania Ave. and 2221 I St., which amount to more than \$10 million in taxes annually and house the Residences on the Avenue apartments, Whole Foods, an international law firm and several businesses.

"Depending on how much you own and where it is in terms of dollars gets you on that list," Teitelbaum said. "It's not a list based on square footage or acreage. It's a list based on dollar value. So anybody who is Downtown is necessarily going to have a very high value for the purposes of that list."

The University pays taxes to the District for commercial buildings, including more than \$63,000 for Tonic and more than \$570,000 for the One Washington Circle Hotel in 2021. GW is partially taxed for buildings that serve educational and commercial purposes, like the University Student Center, which contains study spaces and food vendors.

The University does not pay taxes for academic buildings, like the Science



JEFFERSON MCGOUGH | DESIGNER

and Engineering Hall and the School of Media and Public Affairs.

Catholic and Howard universities own about \$130 million more in tax-exempt properties than GW, according to the report.

Teitelbaum said the District offers tax exemptions to institutions with services that will help boost economic activity, like universities whose students interact with surrounding businesses as active consumers. The University owns more than 70 tax-exempt educational properties that are worth

about \$1.7 billion dollars, according to D.C. data.

"You give the University the tax exemption, and it contributes value in terms of bringing people to town who help move the world forward and hopefully the local economy forward," Teitelbaum said.

The report states that the GW Hospital has climbed three spots to 11th among the District's top employers since 2011 when it was the 14th-largest employer in D.C. Since 2011, the University has dropped from the second-largest employer

in the city to the fifth, with three of the city's hospitals passing GW in the rankings.

Richard Auxier, a senior policy associate at the Urban Institute and Brookings Institution Tax Policy Center, said universities that are top employers are beneficial to a city's economy because of their economic independence and their resilience through irregular economic activity. He said these factors helped these institutions survive the pandemic while the city's economy faltered.



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY KRISHNA RAJPARA | PHOTOGRAPHER  
Student advocacy has pressured officials to reduce the cost of textbooks in recent years.

## Professors turn to free class materials to scale back on expensive textbooks

**HENRY HUVOS**  
STAFF WRITER

The University is transitioning to open source materials as part of a push to ease the burden of high textbook costs many students face.

Some professors have started providing free class materials in their own curriculum, coinciding with a grant for faculty to start using free open-source learning materials next year. Officials are also paying students through a "buy back" program to alleviate GW's \$1,400 annual projected textbook cost as part of a broader push to make class materials more affordable.

University spokesperson Crystal Nosal said the GW Campus Store's textbook buy back program, which purchases used textbooks from students at lower costs, has distributed more than \$30,000 to students and has saved students nearly \$319,000 dollars on used textbooks since last April.

Geneva Henry, the dean of GW Libraries and Academic Innovation, said GW Libraries created the Adapting Course Materials for Equity Grant this spring to award professors for transitioning their instructional materials to GW Libraries' open-source database, which provides free access to a variety of academic resources like textbooks and newspaper articles. She said GW Libraries will start distributing the grants later this semester.

"If you make it open, you benefit everybody out there," she said. "And it's the same thing for everybody else that's creating open access materials and open education resources is, let's go use those because they are available to us."

Some faculty said they are already providing free materials for their students

to make their courses more equitable and accessible to students who may not be able to afford the large price tag that comes with buying textbooks. Textbooks in the bookstore range from \$10 to more than \$100.

Dana Burton, a doctoral candidate for anthropology, said anthropology curricula are flexible, which has helped lower costs because free textbooks were available online and through GW Libraries and could be applied to her course when she designed it earlier this year.

Burton said her curriculum includes articles, interviews, videos, soundtracks and chapters from books relating to the course. She said she estimates the texts she got for free from Gelman Library would have cost between \$20 and \$40, and the free articles from Gelman would have ranged between \$30 and \$50.

Burton said she once decided against including a book in the curriculum because she wanted to keep the course materials free. She said she was able to find new materials after seeking them out through bibliographies from books and articles she is familiar with or from scholars who she knows have expertise in the subject.

"I did a lot of research on what text to include," Burton said. "I found out that several scholars who have books that were very similar to the ones that I wanted to teach were offering all of their material and their publications for free on their websites, which is amazing."

Aman Luthra, an assistant professor of geography, said he can assign online articles in his more flexible classes that he can design on his own, like human geography, which has an evolving body of literature. He

said he provides students with book chapters and articles in PDF form he found online for free.

Luthra said Columbian College of Arts and Sciences leaders has sent multiple emails encouraging professors to try to use materials that don't cost students money.

"I always get emails from the administration asking us to consider using either open-source textbooks or other materials," Luthra said.

Margaret Ulfers, a teaching assistant professor of epidemiology, said she doesn't use a textbook for her Introduction to Epidemiology class because she felt there weren't any textbooks that students would find helpful after the course ends.

Student advocacy, including a Student Association resolution passed last semester outlining plans to establish a textbook exchange program, has pressured officials to reduce the cost of textbooks for students in recent years.

SA Sen. Gabriel Young, CCAS-U and the sponsor of the SA resolution, said one of his professors has scanned, copied and uploaded textbooks for students to use online and another offered open-source articles that students could access for free. He said as part of the textbook exchange program, in the upcoming weeks he will release a social media post and an online sign-up sheet for students to start trading their textbooks.

"Textbooks are just so expensive," he said. "So by professors actually making these books free and accessible and providing PDF copies or links to download them, it provides students the opportunity to save money and cut costs for themselves that they may not have."

## TWEETED

**Many American universities are enthusiastic agents for #China's censorship efforts in America**

**For example GW University just ordered posters criticizing China's human rights record removed & the schools President said he was 'personally offended' by them**

Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., on 02/07/2022

## Milken professor advising WHO on noncommunicable disease research

**ETHAN FOX**  
REPORTER

A Milken Institute School of Public Health professor will propose recommendations on noncommunicable disease research in a World Health Organization advisory group over the next two years.

Adnan Hyder, a professor of global health, joined the WHO's Technical Advisory Group of Experts on NCD Research and Innovation in December to propose prevention strategies for noncommunicable diseases, which are chronic conditions that do not infect others like diabetes and asthma. Hyder said the advisory group will meet twice a year to discuss ways to reduce risk factors, like obesity and smoking, and how to direct more research investments in low- and middle-income countries.

The WHO established the advisory group composed of 12 professors and corporate leaders with expertise in noncommunicable diseases from a dozen countries including the United States, Oman and Peru last July.

The advisory group discussed how to support low- and middle-income countries with gross national

incomes less than \$1,005 per capita to conduct noncommunicable disease research activities during their first meeting earlier this month.

"I think it's incredibly important for us to ensure that institutions around the world begin to recognize the impact that these NCDs are having on people in their countries," Hyder said.

Hyder said he hopes to expand the number of institutions in low- and middle-income countries to create preventative treatment strategies that can reduce the disproportionate impact of noncommunicable diseases in those areas of the world.

Four out of five people who live with a noncommunicable disease live in a low- and middle-income country, according to NCD Alliance—an organization that creates and tracks noncommunicable disease global policies.

He said the advisory group will prioritize research dedicated to noncommunicable diseases, like HIV and tuberculosis, that require more treatment plans in low and middle-income countries, where risk factors, like alcohol intake and obesity, are more prevalent.

Hyder said increasing global noncommunicable disease research can po-

tentially end one third of all premature deaths from noncommunicable diseases by 2030.

Hyder said urging international governments to devote more funding to noncommunicable disease research is challenging because governments are prioritizing money and political policies for other crucial issues, like the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

He said the advisory group will cite economic analyses that highlight the personal health impacts of noncommunicable diseases to encourage governments to increase their research funding.

Noncommunicable diseases, like heart attacks and cancer, produce higher death rates that cause lower productivity rates in low-income countries and harm their economic growth, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"I'm very proud of the fact that some of us from GW are participating in such committees," Hyder said. "I think it's incredibly important for us to be part of the global community, but also to understand global dynamics and participate in it."



COURTESY OF ADNAN HYDER  
Professor Adnan Hyder joins 11 other professors and corporate leaders in the advisory group.

## CRIME LOG

### LIQUOR LAW VIOLATION

Strong Hall  
2/5/2022 – 10:32 p.m.  
Closed Case

While conducting a welfare check in Strong Hall, GW Police Department officers made contact with an intoxicated female student. EMERG emergency medical technicians responded to the scene. After a preliminary medical exam, the student refused further treatment.

Referred to the Division for Student Affairs.

### UNLAWFUL ENTRY

South Hall  
2/6/2022 – 2:30 a.m.  
Closed Case

GWPD officers responded to a report of an unknown male subject who had allegedly followed students into the lobby of South Hall. Officers made contact with the subject, who was barred and sent on his way.

Subject barred.

### UNLAWFUL ENTRY

Potomac House  
2/6/2022 – 7:39 a.m.  
Closed Case

GWPD officers responded to a report of an unknown male subject who had allegedly followed students into the lobby of Potomac House. Officers made contact with the subject, who was barred and sent on his way.

Subject barred.

### THEFT II/BICYCLES

2152 F St.  
2/6/2022 – Unknown  
Open Case

Two female students reported their bikes, which were both parked on the sidewalk across from South Hall, stolen.

Case open.

### HARASSMENT: E-MAIL AND ELECTRONIC MEDIA

Various Locations  
2/7/2022 – Multiple  
Open Case

A staff member reported several disturbing posts related to GW on social media. The subject remains anonymous.

Case open.

### SIMPLE ASSAULT

District House  
2/9/2022 – 2:20 p.m.  
Case Closed

GWPD officers responded to reports of an assault. Upon arrival, GWPD officers made contact with a male and female student, who both alleged to be victims of simple assault by a male subject. Officers made contact with the subject, but neither of the two victims wished to press further charges.

Referred to DSA.

–Compiled by Acacia Niyogi



COURTESY OF JENNIFER SACHECK

The research team will ask students about their dietary habits and conduct body scans as part of the study.

## Milken study to track how freshmen develop health practices throughout college

AVA SVOLOS  
REPORTER

SUAD MOHAMED  
REPORTER

A team of professors and students from the Milken Institute School of Public Health will track freshmen's eating and exercising habits throughout their four years at GW as part of a study launched earlier this month.

The study, titled GW F.R.E.S.H., includes an online survey and an optional annual in-person physical fitness test that will analyze a student's body composition through metrics like body mass index and blood levels. Members of the research team said they have recruited 78 students so far via flyers posted in campus buildings since last Sunday, and they aim to start the hour-long physical fitness tests with 100 participants before the end of the semester.

Jennifer Sacheck, the study's principal investigator and the chair of the department of exercise and nutrition sciences, said the study will use data like students' sleeping habits and physical activities to highlight health patterns. She said the data could help identify students' food insecurity issues and if the University is lacking healthy dietary options on campus.

"Raising awareness of

any of those issues, like a lack of fitness or ability to be physically active, or that the choices of healthy dietary options are limited and therefore their diet might look a certain way," she said.

Sacheck said she hopes for the study to be peer-reviewed if the research team decides to publish their findings in a report or present their findings to administrators. She said she hopes to present the study's findings at the GW Research Showcase, an annual conference where students and faculty can present their research and compete for prize money.

Sacheck said the research team will use DEXA scans, full-body scanning tests used to measure factors like students' body mass index and blood pressure to determine body composition and health levels. She said the physical testing will also include a blood test to observe data like blood sugar and cholesterol levels so freshmen can be more informed about their physical health.

Sacheck said the study is only analyzing freshmen to focus on a group of college-age students who are learning to create their own health behaviors for the first time.

"I had been thinking about this for a while because we have a lot of junior faculty and undergraduate and PhD students, who are

all always looking for research," Sacheck said.

Loriann Hom, the study's project manager and a second-year graduate student pursuing a Master's of Public Health in physical activity, said students will receive \$10 in GWorld funds if they complete the survey and might earn more rewards after they participate in the physical fitness test.

"It would be great empowering students to know about themselves more and how they can improve either environmental factors on campus that are making them behave a certain way, or just about their own health in general," she said.

Annika Stadler, the study's testing coordinator and a junior majoring in exercise science, said the online survey will ask about students' dietary habits, like how often they drink beverages with sugar, via RED-Cap – a data organization software that will collect their answers in a spreadsheet.

She said students in the research team are hanging fliers in common spaces like the University Student Center and District House and freshmen-oriented classes to encourage freshmen to participate in the study.

Stadler said the team is also promoting the study to faculty members in all departments, the Milken undergraduate newsletter

and Pre-Health Advising – a University-wide team of advisers who help students and alumni pursue a career in health care.

"This is something that I've never had experience with, so it's definitely like a learning point for me and it could potentially intrigue me into doing more research along this topic area or branching out into different research," she said.

Jennifer Cook, an undergraduate researcher on the team and a junior majoring in exercise science, said the study allows freshmen to learn more about their bodies like their resting metabolic rate – a measure of the number of calories a person burns while at rest – to gauge their fitness levels.

She said the survey and physical fitness tests will help the student researchers increase their understanding of students' overall physical and behavioral health that could help improve student wellness on campus.

Cook said other schools could use the study's observations as a guide to implement policy changes that can improve their own campus health.

"At the end of the day, we're college students too," she said. "We're undergrads, so what we learned from this study about college-age students like health habits is really applicable to us."

## Data analytics project compiled density maps based on campus traffic: report

From Page 1

Nosal also declined to confirm that Ensor authored the original article that he posted, outlining GW's partnership with Degree Analytics. Degree Analytics works with educational institutions to track and analyze students' activities around campus, like class attendance based on Zoom participation and physical presence in classrooms, according to its website.

The Washington Post reported in December 2019 that Degree Analytics uses WiFi data to track where students go to improve their experience. Aaron Benz, the founder of the company, said Degree Analytics could identify that a student who does not spend much time in dining spaces or cafeterias on campus could be dealing with food insecurity or an eating disorder, the Post reported.

The Post reported that students can opt out of Degree Analytics' data collection efforts if they click "no" on a window that asks whether they want to help "support student success, operations and security," but Benz told the Post that few actually do so.

A spokesperson for Degree Analytics did

not return a request for comment. Nosal also declined to state when GW partnered with Degree Analytics on the project.

Wrighton said in an email that Ensor's article contained several inaccuracies, like the implication that the project analyzed individualized data, although the de-identified data that officials collected to track student space utilization did include individual descriptors like gender.

"The privacy of our GW community members was of utmost importance to this pilot," Wrighton said. "The data included in the heat maps for space utilization and dashboards for student utilization for certain spaces was aggregated and de-identified."

Wrighton said in his email that the article also incorrectly implied that officials conducted a similar project at GW Law in 2019. He said officials discussed a potential project at the law school but did not implement it.

"Our original plan was to launch a pilot at GW's Law School, and we had even mapped out 6,000 access points across the Law School's buildings," the deleted article states. "Then the pandemic struck and everything changed."

Ensor's now-deleted article states that officials could collect data on how many students used campus spaces based on swipes recorded at GWorld card readers in buildings like Gelman Library, but they could not determine how long students stayed in those buildings.

He said in the article officials could use data on the amount of time students spend in a building to assess which students were most "at-risk" to help the University adjust their services accordingly.

Ensor said officials worked with Cisco System's Country Digital Acceleration Program – a group that helps leaders in government and academia with "digital transformation" – and Degree Analytics to collect data and interpret it to improve student services.

A spokesperson for Cisco did not return a request for comment.

Ensor said in the article that the onset of the pandemic pushed officials to reconsider how they could use this location data to generate maps of GW's campus indicating which buildings and floors were used most to develop a cleaning schedule to best limit the spread of COVID-19.

Ensor said that during officials' efforts to complete the data collection project, they were "mindful" of privacy issues and looked to only collect data from students that they need to make "more informed decisions and deliver better services."

GW's privacy policy states that any University office or contractor that collects personal information for GW should only collect the "minimum amount" of necessary information. The website states that any one collecting personal information must inform individuals of what data is being collected and establish a "lawful basis" for the collection of this information by taking actions like getting consent.

Experts said universities can often access student demographic data based on their student IDs but should practice "policy-aware" data collection when conducting research efforts like this.

Bhavani Thuraisingham, a professor of computer science at the University of Texas at Dallas, said institutions should collect data like this with informed consent, as doctors would when they advise patients on how to move forward with medical decisions.

## Bitler's action could warrant consequences: experts

From Page 1

"Under the faculty code, the regular faculty participates in the formulation of policy and planning decisions affecting the quality of education and life at the University," he said in an email. "This participation includes an active role in the development, revision or elimination of curricular offerings in each department or school."

GSEHD Dean Michael Feuer, said GSEHD has set a "schoolwide priority" to integrate diversity, equity, inclusion and anti-racism into all its courses, in an email late last month.

"We are committed to strengthening the Anti-Racist STEM Education course," he said "We are working in consultation with University leadership to develop and implement options for the class this semester and beyond."

Feuer declined to say how Bitler was selected to teach the course.

GW's academic freedom recommendations, which afford faculty "freedom of expression" in the classroom, do not allow faculty to engage in expression that can disrupt University "academic and educational functions," according to a set of guidelines for academic freedom on the provost office's website. There is no mention of the use of racial slurs in the guidelines and the academic freedom clause in the faculty code.

Students in the Anti-Racist STEM Education course said after Bitler's use of the N-word, instruction in the class was put on pause for three classes as administrators made plans for the future of the

course. Students said they were given the choice of a new instructor, guest speakers or independent study for the remainder of the course.

Faculty can also "enjoy freedom of investigation," according to the academic freedom clause of the faculty code.

Higher education experts said professors should refrain from using racial slurs and sensitive language in the classroom unless it is for educational purposes and they should issue trigger warnings for students in class who may be affected by the language.

Jamel Donnor, an associate professor of American and African studies at the College of William and Mary, said if faculty are going to use highly sensitive language in class, they must be prepared to deal with the consequences that follow, like removal from the class or the University. He said higher education institutions are becoming more aware of race, after the recent racial reckoning that came with the Black Lives Matter movement and other race movements across the United States.

"It becomes harder and harder for professors to feign ignorance when there's just so much out there," he said.

James Turk, the director for the Centre for Free Expression and a distinguished visiting scholar at Ryerson University in Toronto, Canada, said professors should avoid using harmful language without academic "justification" like in Bitler's case.

"It's never acceptable to use those kinds of words gratuitously even in a descriptive way, that is, given how emotionally charged they are," he said.

# Opinions

Feb. 14, 2022 • Page 6

## Freshmen need more ways to connect with mentors

Although it may seem like spring classes just started, the semester is coming to a close in just three months. For freshmen, the end of the academic year marks an accomplishment that's especially profound after the challenges we've faced throughout the pandemic — our first year of college, soon to be complete.

Mia Adams  
Opinions Writer

The transition to college can be difficult, especially at a school like GW, where a culture of independence runs deep. Although I'm thankful for the opportunity to study at GW and I feel proud of how much I've grown since being here, it's still challenging to be more than 400 miles away from my family in Massachusetts.

Like myself, many students live hundreds of miles away from their most comforting places and people. The pandemic has exacerbated our feelings of unfamiliarity, ultimately leading to less socialization. While freshmen adjust to independence during such an uncertain time, we're looking to faculty for guidance and mentorship. Officials should prioritize hiring more community coordinators and academic advisers to create personal relationships between freshmen and faculty.

Life at GW is overwhelming for some freshmen who aren't yet bonded with any adult figure. It's expected that forming relationships with faculty takes time, but freshmen need the most guidance from an authority figure early in their time at GW.

While reflecting on my first semester at GW, I realized that my feelings of disconnect from the GW community derive from



SOFIJA JUODAITIS | CARTOONIST

the fact that no adult faculty member knows me beyond being one of thousands of students. No adviser, professor nor community coordinator knows where I'm from, what my intended major is, what I'm involved in or even the sound of my voice. With the exception of one professor, no authority figure even knows my name.

I've recently dealt with multiple residence hall issues and building evacuations relating to an undiscovered gas leak and a fire that caused serious smoke collection in my room. In both situations, my friends and I felt both unsafe and uninformed. Despite my entire room accumulating smoke from a lower floor's fire, staff members told

students living in our residence hall that it was safe to reenter soon after the fire was terminated. Ultimately, we had to relocate at midnight due to unbreathable air quality. We never received help airing out our room without having to aggressively ask for it the next day, when my community coordinator had air purifiers brought into my

room. While community coordinators are expected to be available guides for students, this ideal is not always practiced. GW should urge community coordinators to spend more time walking through residence halls or simply hanging out in lobbies, where they could greet students. Officials should also consider hiring more community coordinators to increase opportunities for students to informally meet with them to touch base about classes, extracurriculars and social lives.

It's not just the community coordinator program that needs attention — depending on their school, some freshmen, including myself, lack a relationship with an academic adviser. As a freshman in the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences, I've never met my adviser, either in person or virtually, and when I needed guidance with class registration, it was challenging to make an appointment. In exploring ways to create relationships between academic advisers and students, advisers across all schools could individually meet with students through Zoom or in person at least twice each semester. GW should also search for additional ways to improve communication and relationships between students and advisers.

Administrators have a responsibility to create an environment where relationships between freshmen and faculty members can grow. Come August, as I transition to my sophomore year, I hope that I, as well as the many incoming freshmen, feel more bonded with faculty and comfortable within the GW community.

—Mia Adams, a freshman majoring in political science, is an opinions writer.

## GW must train faculty to run inclusive classrooms

### STAFF EDITORIAL

The student body is once again calling on administrators to get their act together following yet another instance of a professor creating a hostile or discriminatory classroom environment for students. Late last month, Marie Matta, an assistant industry professor of decision sciences, publicly picked a verbal fight with a student who brought a service dog to class. The professor argued about it with the student in front of the entire class, despite the student informing the professor that Disability Support Services does not require paperwork for service animals.

This incident was evidence of something the GW community already knows: the University is failing students with disabilities. But it also points to the broader problem that the University does not provide faculty with the tools or instructions to make sure classrooms are safe learning environments.

Administrators will not even say how professors are trained to accommodate students with disabilities. Officials need to clarify how professors should make classrooms safe places for students' learning and well-being, and if GW doesn't have policies to that effect, it needs to make them. And administrators have a responsibility to rigorously and thoroughly communicate these policies to faculty and the entire community. Every professor should have these policies drilled into their heads before they ever step up to a lectern.

In a vacuum, this episode is troubling enough. But in the context of the incident last month when Alicia Bitler, a white GWTeach professor said the N-word

in a class specifically on anti-racism in STEM education, it is clear that somewhere along the line, faculty aren't equipped with adequate instruction about protecting students from marginalized communities. It should not be possible that no one ever told a professor how to respond when a student comes to class with a service animal. And it should not be possible that no one ever told a professor that saying the N-word as a white person is unacceptable, even if it's with pedagogical intent.

The University has to move beyond responding to events as they happen and instead work to prevent these incidents from ever taking place. For starters, when it comes to DSS, the University needs to provide professors with clear guidelines on how to accommodate students with disabilities. The past month has shown us that professors cannot be relied on to familiarize themselves with all of the guidelines surrounding students with disabilities — and this is a problem that is not new. The DSS office has come under fire for failing to communicate with students, and professors are not always deft about respecting students' basic dignity. The University should start by fixing DSS, then move on to rigorously training faculty in what DSS' rules and policies are and how to run an inclusive classroom.

Enacting new DSS guidelines are important, but what these incidents are truly revealing is a University preoccupied with PR issues rather than one interested in fixing systemic issues. Officials have to show that they give a damn about making these incidents stop

happening. Even if they can't fix the problems in one fell swoop, they need to make progress or at the very least get caught trying.

To this end, there are a few steps the University could take to make sure faculty are ensuring a positive and safe learning environment. Increasing the frequency and quality of faculty evaluations could be one way to catch issues before they happen. Providing a stronger and more accessible means for students to flag problematic comments or behavior toward students from marginalized communities could allow someone higher-up to step in to neutralize this tendency before it causes a major incident.

This increased evaluation could come in the form of expanding the end-of-semester surveys or implementing a strategy to incentivize their completion that goes beyond repeated emails from administrators. If ignorance and bad conduct get caught early, it can make it less likely that more severe and high-profile incidents — like the rejection of the service dog or Bitler's use of the N-word — end up happening. Essentially, catching and correcting the small stuff is important, and the University needs to make that happen.

It seems reasonable that most professors would have the wherewithal and basic decency to not start arguing with a student about their service animal in front of an entire class. But faculty's lack of training and accountability means there is nothing stopping bad behavior before it happens or preventing it from harming students when it does happen. That has to change.

## Essay: As the pandemic reels back, students should enjoy D.C.

Last week, when a professor in my class asked for volunteers to write something on a whiteboard, my hand immediately shot up. It was an opportunity to be an active participant in the learning experience, which I would not have been motivated to take advantage of two years ago when classes first moved online.

Zachary Bestwick  
Opinions Writer

During winter break, the prospect of a normal, uninterrupted semester looked bleak for students. As the Omicron variant led to a dramatic increase in COVID-19 infections, both here in the District and all over the globe, I began to worry that we might return to entirely online instruction, that perhaps we would not get to return at all.

This fear did not come to pass. Thanks to GW's vaccine mandate and rigorous on-campus testing, we were able to return to the classroom and participate in in-person student organization events after a brief delay at the beginning of this semester. But when we finally got back in the classroom, a glum feeling began to sink in. I'd been in this headspace before: believing the disruptions were finally over during the summer and then having to mask back up in the spring, and then being blindsided when Omicron showed up and seemed to infect nearly everyone in my life.

I couldn't stop thinking about how unpredictable the world really is, and the pandemic only accentuating that unpredictability. I wish I could say that we won't

ever have to worry about being pushed back online again, but nobody can say that with certainty. I found myself at every class, every club meeting and every hangout with a group of friends enveloped in a cloud of negativity. But then it hit me — I'm never going to know how long the good times will last. Pandemic or not, the world around us is inherently temporary. The only way to get the most out of my college experience while we're here is to enjoy it while it lasts.

Attending class virtually made me feel detached from the learning experience. It's easy to zone out or get away with participating much less than you might in person, and nobody will notice. It feels nice to be able to relax, but in the end we get out what we put in, and putting forth less effort harms us as students.

Perhaps the most important piece of an in-person college experience is our ability to engage with one another socially. If we can't see our friends, is this even a college campus? The part of losing out on my in-person freshman year that hit me the hardest was the fact that I'd have to meet most of my peers on Instagram, and my biggest fear about what Omicron could do to this semester was that I wouldn't be able to see the people I had gotten so close with in the fall. Moving forward, I'm not going to take these important connections for granted, to do so would be to throw away one of the best parts of going to college.

I get to spend time with my friends primarily through student organizations, which were not permitted to hold

gatherings until the end of January, about two weeks after in-person classes resumed. Before that time, meetings had to be conducted via Zoom. It felt like 2022 was 2020 all over again. Since campus has opened back up, I haven't been late to a single meeting. I have decided to leave it all on the field from now on, in all of my extracurricular activities, because it is impossible to know how long we'll have the opportunity to meet with our favorite clubs. It would be foolish to waste the time we've been given now by doing the bare minimum in the student organizations you are a part of by missing meetings or limiting your own participation. It is important for me to go above and beyond for the clubs I'm passionate about, and I hope that my peers are doing the same.

We never know what the future holds, or what it has in store for us and the people around us. It's scary to think about, but we can choose to be motivated by this feeling of uncertainty rather than discouraged by it. See the people you care about now, as often as you can. Take some friends to a concert, go to the zoo or to a Capitals game. Don't let your busy schedule distract you from getting in touch with some of the people you might not get to see as often as you'd like in the future. You never know how long this window of opportunity will be open. Presumably, the world has more hurdles to throw at us. But rather than letting negativity overtake us, let's enjoy being alive in D.C., while we still can.

—Zachary Bestwick, a sophomore majoring in political science, is an opinions writer.

# Culture

Feb. 14, 2022 • Page 7

## THE SCENE

**REMI WOLF**  
Tuesday, Feb. 15 | 9:30 Club | \$59  
Catch an electric performance by pop and soul artist Remi Wolf featuring songs from her newest EP, "I'm Allergic To Dogs!"

**IKÉ UDÉ: NOLLYWOOD PORTRAITS**  
Friday, Feb. 18 | National Museum of African Art | Free  
Explore photos of Iké Udé, a multimedia artist in Nollywood, Nigeria's film industry.

**RELEASED THIS WEEK:**

**NEW SINGLE: "MONA LISA" BY MXMTOON**

## Romantic success stories at GW to warm your heart this Valentine's Day

**ISABELLA MACKINNON**  
STAFF WRITER

Sophomore Alex Horowitz had already been on a first date with her now-girlfriend Avery Shields when GW's Marriage Pact became the second matchmaking algorithm to pair them together.

"We actually had matched on Bumble before Marriage Pact, and we had messaged a few times, and we had a first date planned," she said. "Then we got Marriage Pact-ed in the midst of that."

She said the timing could not have been more perfect given their recent introduction on the dating app.

"The day before Marriage Pact came out, we went on a date and then we got initials the next day, and they were the same," she said.

Horowitz said quality time is a key component in a healthy relationship, and she and Shields have found ways to accommodate their busy schedules and heavy work loads by spending time together whilst getting classwork done.

"We've started studying together and doing homework together," she said. "It's pretty hard because both of us want to succeed in school as well as make time for each other."

Juniors Kate Carpenter and Henry Long met in a freshman year meditation class but didn't start dating until March 2021.

"Sophomore year, he had reached out to me because I've been in the Student Association for a while, and Henry had gone up in ranks at WRGW, the on-campus radio show, and he was doing podcasts for them," Carpenter said.



EVA DEVIZIA | PHOTOGRAPHER

Looking for relationship advice this Valentine's Day? Hear what these GW couples have to say.

"I'm the Student Association girl, so they're doing a Student Association podcast for WRGW. He reached out to me to be on it. And I'm like, 'Oh, of course. That's the guy from meditation class.'"

Carpenter and Long said that podcast received more than 70 listens, a high performance for the show. But it wasn't until seven months later, while classes were remote, that the relationship began to spark.

"We texted for about a month and a half, during the pandemic, did some FaceTime calls, because he was in North Carolina and I was in D.C.," she said. "And then we went on our first date the day before his birthday. It was a super romantic first date, and then we started dating like five days later."

Long said despite advice he's heard telling couples to "never stop dating" to keep the romance alive, more realistic advice for college

couples on a budget should be exactly the opposite.

"We always laugh about this because people always say 'Never stop dating,' and we had a joke about it this year because we are trying to save money in 2022," Long said. "So we were like 'Our new resolution is to stop dating and save some money.'"

Instead of fancy and costly evenings out, the pair work hard to devote a little bit of time each week

just for each other, even committing to lunches every week at the same time.

"Even if the day is super crazy, in which a meeting comes up or there's a crisis, like if it's Tuesday, Thursday, we know we'll be having lunch together," Long said. "And so it's like just a quaint hour where we can sit around and like nothing about anything else. We walk together and explore the city together. We're lucky to live in DC."

Senior Emma Brady and her boyfriend Alexander Satin's paths crossed freshman year, but they didn't start dating until 2021. Brady and Satin lived on the Vern their freshman year but never formally met.

"He was my Vern crush," she said. "I didn't even know his name. I would just see him around the Vern and think 'That kid is so cute.' I literally thought his name was Nick."

The two parted ways at the end of the year without ever actually meeting each other but were given a second shot when both moved back to D.C. in December 2020. As it turned out, their new apartment buildings were two buildings apart.

"I found out that apparently he thought I was cute too on the Vern," she said. "And he didn't know who I was. And he totally forgot about me too. So it's just like a weird, full circle moment."

Brady and Satin officially began dating almost two years after both living on the Vern.

"It was a very cute thing for me because I was like 'Oh my god, I feel like I'm back in high school again. Someone likes me back,'" she said.



GRACE HROMIN | SENIOR PHOTO EDITOR

The queens at Perry's Sunday Drag Brunch wear clear masks so they can lip-sync to songs as they dance around the dining room.

## Everything you need to know about D.C. drag brunches

**MOLLY MACFARLANE**  
REPORTER

Watching drag queens perform while enjoying brunch should be on everyone's D.C. bucket list, so we've compiled a list of some of our favorites.

Here are some of the most popular spots around D.C. to watch drag queens and kings showcase their lip-syncing talents and perform with bursts of energy to adoring crowds — while you eat and drink to your heart's content.

### Perry's Sunday Drag Brunch

Head to Adams Morgan to check out the longest-running drag brunch in D.C. at Perry's, a Japanese restaurant. Right now, you can expect to see a trio of drag queens, India Larelle Houston, Whitney Gucci God and Sophia Carrero, perform at brunch alongside a rotating special guest. The queens wear clear masks so that they can lip-sync to songs as they dance around the dining room. You can also choose from \$12 glasses or \$45 carafes of Perry's specialty Queen of Cocktails options dubbed after the performers like the Guccigoo Blue with vodka, peach liquor, blue curaçao and sparkling wine. Reservations must be made by email or phone and can be made up to a month in advance.

1811 Columbia Rd. NW. Sundays, 10 a.m. to noon and

1 to 3 p.m. Tickets are \$39.95.

### Class Act Drag Brunch

Since reopening as a sushi and southern food restaurant in 2020, Sign of The Whale continues to host Class Act Drag Brunch every Saturday. Drag queen Tiffany Carter emceed the drag brunch each week with a rotating cast of local queens. The performers dance and interact with guests around the first floor where you're seated and perform from a lofted second floor area visible from downstairs. Take advantage of the \$22 bottomless mimosas, bloody marys or its signature Whale Pails, a bartender's choice mix. And you can't miss out on trying some brunch dishes like the eggs benedict (\$11) or The Whale breakfast burrito (\$11). Tables are \$10 to reserve, but general admission standing tickets are free.

1825 M St. NW. Saturdays, 12:30 to 3 p.m. Tables are \$10.

### D.C. Drag Brunch — Twice is Nice

Hosted at Harlot, an eccentrically decorated lounge and event space north of Shaw, D.C. Drag Brunch sells out fast. The show is hosted by drag queen Monet Dupree who's been performing for 20 years. Unlike other brunches, the Twice is Nice show highlights its stacked cast of celebrity impersonating queens who do impressions of A-listers like Tina Turner, Miley Cyrus,

Beyoncé, Cher, Cardi B, Ariana Grande, Barbra Streisand and Rihanna. The \$50 tickets include an all-you-can-eat brunch buffet. Since the show has a reputation for selling out, making a reservation at least two weeks in advance is recommended. The show is an ideal setting to celebrate any special events like "birthdays, bachelorettes, divorces and retirements," according to the website.

2001 11th St. NW. Saturdays and Sundays, 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Tickets are \$50.

### Shi-Queeta-Lee's Illusion Drag Brunch

For a morning of brunch, drag and arcade games, reserve a ticket for Shi-Queeta-Lee's Illusion Drag Brunch at H Street Country Club. The venue owns a host of arcade-type games from pinball and mini golf to Jenga. Before you hit the games, sit back and enjoy the show hosted by drag queen Shi-Queeta-Lee, known for her "glitz and glamor designed to get you off your seat." Walk-ins are sometimes available, but reservations are encouraged. Buy a ticket in advance for \$55 on Eventbrite. A complimentary mimosa and a buffet with breakfast classics like pancakes, sausage, eggs, potatoes and bacon is included in the ticket price, but bottomless drinks for the two-hour show can be added for \$20.

1335 H St. NE. Sundays, noon to 2 p.m. Tickets are \$55.

## Hidden gem museum study spots

**ANNA BOONE**  
CULTURE EDITOR

Next time you're looking for a study spot, try getting some work done in one of the world-class museums we have at our disposal instead of being stuck in a Gelman Library study room or locked in your residence hall.

Coffee shops and on-campus study spots can get old quickly, and sometimes all you need to finish your work that's been piling up is a change of scenery. Almost all of the Smithsonian museums have reopened so check out one of these spots as you gear up for midterms.

### National Gallery of Art

You don't need to be an art history buff to take advantage of the serene atmosphere in the National Gallery of Art. The museum's accompanying Sculpture Garden, which hosts jazz in the Garden during warmer months, is a lively outdoor study spot to keep in mind for later this spring. But inside the museum, make your way to the second floor of the West Building to seek out a spot in one of the two Garden Courts. The spaces tout high ceilings, marble detailing and lush greenery. Both courts have a sparse selection of chairs, but luckily the steps down into the courts form a seating ledge around the perimeter of each space that does the trick. Or you can have a main character

moment and secure a spot on the ledge of one of the fountains that act as the centerpieces of each court. Between 3rd and 9th streets on Constitution Avenue NW. Open daily 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Free admission.

### Freer Gallery of Art

The interior courtyard of the Freer Gallery of Art is a hidden gem for those who need less noise to focus. The square, open-air courtyard was designed as the focal point of the museum and at one point was home to live peacocks. The thick stone walls and glass doors encasing the courtyard muffle any outside noise. Since the museum has a smaller collection than most Smithsonians and is slightly hidden behind the Smithsonian Castle, you won't have to count on sharing the space with many other visitors. Choose from a scattering of chairs in covered areas around the perimeter of the courtyard and study for a few hours.

Between Jefferson Drive and 12th Street on Independence Avenue SW. Open Thursday through Sunday 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Free admission.

### National Portrait Gallery

For a productive but leisurely study session, check out the Kogod Courtyard of the National Portrait Gallery. The massive, atrium-like space is visually striking with a multistory ceiling of glass

and metal framing that give a wavy illusion and let floods of natural light in. There is no shortage of tables or chairs, so bring your friends for a study session here, and you can enjoy a tour around the museum afterwards as a reward for your hard work. Bring a few bucks to fuel your studies with a coffee or snack from The Courtyard Café, which stays open until 4 p.m.

Between 7th and 9th streets on G Street NW. Open Thursday through Sunday 11:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. Free admission.

### Hirshhorn Museum

Peppered with couches and plush chairs, the Hirshhorn Museum makes for a comfortable and cozy spot to study. A window-filled space on the third floor of the Hirshhorn called the Lerner Room is a break in the floor's exhibit. The panoramic window in the Lerner Room is the only outward-facing view on the upper floors of the circular museum. There you can enjoy the view of the National Mall and nearby Smithsonian museums while grinding out some work. But what you'll stay for are the large, worn-in curved couches the museum provides. Sink into one of these couches, and you might find yourself spending hours here.

Corner of Independence Avenue and 7th Street SW. Open Thursday through Sunday 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Free admission.



GRACE HROMIN | SENIOR PHOTO EDITOR

Spend an afternoon at the indoor Kogod Courtyard, nestled between the National Portrait Gallery and the American Art Museum.

## GAMES OF THE WEEK



**WOMEN'S BASKETBALL**  
vs. George Mason  
Wednesday | 7 p.m.  
The Colonials take on the Patriots before setting out on the road again.



**MEN'S BASKETBALL**  
vs. Rhode Island  
Saturday | 6 p.m.  
GW returns to the Smith Center to face off against the Rams.

## NUMBER CRUNCH 4

The number of Olympic medals monobob athlete and alumna Elana Meyers Taylor has won, including a silver medal she clinched Monday.

# Women's basketball captures second straight win at home

**ROMAN BOBEK**  
SPORTS EDITOR

Women's basketball notched a second straight win in conference play against St. Bonaventure Saturday afternoon at home.

The Colonials (9-14, 2-8 A-10) downed the Bonnies (12-11, 4-8 A-10) in a 60-47 comeback victory to avenge their Feb. 2 loss on the road in their previous time out. After trailing through three quarters, GW put it all together in the final quarter to win their first game at home in conference play.

Junior guard Sheslanie Laureano led GW with 14 points on 7-of-12 shooting while graduate student guard Sierra Bell collected 13 points on 5-of-7 shooting and 1-of-2 from deep. Graduate student guard Kyara Frames and Taiwo also reached double figures to go along with seven rebounds each.

On the other side of the court, Johnson led the Bonnies with 17 points on 8-of-18 shooting, followed by redshirt senior guard Tori Harris with 12 points on 4-of-13 shooting.

Both teams struggled on offense to start the first quarter, but the Bonnies opened the scoring with a 3-ball to take the lead. Taiwo gave the Colonials their first lead of the game with a layup before Harris drained a 3-pointer to regain the advantage with 6:26 left to play.

Taiwo retook the lead yet again for the Colonials on the break after Frames hit her with a pass wide open near the basket. Harris nailed another uncontested 3-pointer before Johnson capped the quarter

with a layup to give the Bonnies a 11-8 lead.

Despite leading the rebound battle 13 to 8, the Colonials failed to convert their second-chance opportunities, hitting just 3-of-16 from the field and 0-of-7 from beyond the arc. St. Bonaventure went just 4-of-13 from the field but shot 3-of-6 from deep.

The Bonnies found their rhythm in the second quarter on the back of some flash plays by Johnson to earn a 20-10 lead. Head Coach Caroline McCombs called a timeout with 6:03 left in the half to help the Colonials regroup.

GW came out of the timeout seemingly rejuvenated, and Frames kicked off an 8-0 scoring run to cut the deficit to two. But the Bonnies roared back with a 7-0 run of their own before the Colonials cut the lead to 27-22 heading into the break.

After opening the first half of the quarter 4-of-7 from the floor, St. Bonaventure cooled off, finishing just 1-of-5 from deep and 7-of-17 overall. GW netted four points off turnovers, four on the fast break and four second-chance points to improve from the first quarter.

Harris reestablished some distance in the third quarter with a trey, but Laureano responded with a pair of layups. St. Bonaventure earned their largest lead of the game at a score of 40-29 with 5:12 left in the quarter after Harris converted a layup and free throw following a foul by junior guard Essence Brown.

Both teams traded points until the Colonials were able to



JORDYN BAILER | PHOTOGRAPHER

The Colonials were down going into the fourth quarter but were able to pull out their second straight win.

trim the lead slightly going into the final quarter with a score of 45-37. Despite improving their shooting average to a game high 42.9 percent, the Colonials had yet to score from deep and were down in rebounds 12 to seven for the first time all game.

Johnson hit a jumper to temporarily provide some distance before Bell drained a 3-pointer to

knot the game up at 47-47. Frames tacked on another trey to give the Colonials their first lead since the first quarter and force a timeout by the Bonnies with 6:41 left to play.

From there, GW never looked back, holding St. Bonaventure to just 2 points for the entire quarter. Bell converted a layup, followed up by an Engel 3-ball to hand the Colonials a 9-point lead.

After some back and forth defensive play in which neither team could score, the Bonnies started fouling with 2:02 remaining, but it was ultimately in vain as the Colonials closed out the game with a 60-47 lead. The Colonials finished the quarter 9-of-14 from the field and 4-of-8 from deep, a vast improvement from the prior quarters.

# Baseball looks to make a conference title run

**GABE LOPEZ**  
REPORTER

Baseball is seeking both an Atlantic 10 title and an NCAA playoff berth this season.

The Colonials are preparing to make a run at the A-10 Championship after capturing the most wins in their division last season and finishing with an overall record of 26-18, just narrowly missing the A-10 playoffs. As Head Coach Gregg Ritchie begins his 10th season, he said he believes team success comes down to two factors – attitude and effort.

"Attitude and effort is everything," Ritchie said. "Because whatever character you think you possess, if you're not getting something done, and you're kind of off the beaten path, then you can directly look back to, 'Is my attitude right, and is my effort right?'"

Ritchie said he hopes to use senior experience to set an example and facilitate team culture for the 15 new players added to the roster this season. He said there is plenty of leadership among the returners, including both leaders by example and more vocal leaders.

Among the roster additions are 13 freshmen and two graduate student transfers in outfielder Michael Ludwig and left-handed pitcher Johnathan Brus. Senior outfielder Cade Fergus said the team prides itself on the inclusion of its first-year members.

"We all try to make sure that we share the things we've learned through our experiences and make sure

they're ready to go right away because Coach Ritchie is not scared to play freshmen or a first year right away," Fergus said. "We could say that from firsthand experience."

Ritchie said the team is using this experience to get the new players up to speed and help them adjust to potential new roles. He said this will happen over the course of the season and come in part through gameplay.

"Those guys that carry themselves in that way – they accelerate the learning of these guys," Ritchie said. "And when you can put them in the right platform and do enough work, it brings them along."

Ritchie said the team culture he has created endures from year to year, and every season is an opportunity to build upon it.

"That's what we all live this for," Ritchie said. "It's not just baseball, it's the whole life. It's the essence of everything."

Senior infielder Noah Levin said Ritchie has prepared the seniors for leadership roles, and the team feels ready to bring new players on board. He said he also played during the off-season in a summer collegiate league.

"I played in a league with some younger guys," Levin said. "So that helped me develop a leadership role, where I was able to talk with some of the younger guys and really learn how to communicate with them."

Levin said the team is also working to be more consistent on defense to compliment their strong play on offense. Last year, the Colonials ranked in the top 50 in the nation in on-base percentage and batting

average.

Fergus said the team is looking to capture an A-10 Championship and they have the right team to do it. He said between the coaching staff, the new additions and the returning players, there is a lot of confidence that they can "really make a run."

"We're all confident, no one's scared to fail, and each day in practice is a competition," Fergus said. "So everyone's just competing, and it really shows, like in the inner-squads we have, everybody just looks like they got a new gear."

It is not just the roster that has seen new additions. Ritchie brought on three new coaches for the upcoming season: Tyler Kavanaugh as assistant coach and recruiting coordinator, Chris O'Neill as assistant coach and Ryan Gaynor as volunteer assistant coach.

Ritchie said he hopes the experience between the coaches will be an asset for the team.

Following a canceled season in 2020 and a season of reduced travel and fans in 2021, the team is excited to return to full play, starting their year in Texas before heading to South Carolina.

"I haven't gotten a chance to make a run at the A-10 Championship," Levin said. "So that really is what I'm focused on is now doing whatever we need to do just to get prepared to win."

Both Fergus and Levin talked about sharing their experiences throughout their time in the program, making sure to include all the new players. Fergus said the seniors want the team to be together from the start.



RACHEL SCHWARTZ | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Engel said the University's location in D.C. and the Milken Institute School of Public Health originally drew her to GW.

# Women's basketball walk-on makes strides in first season

**LIAM O'MURCHU**  
STAFF WRITER

When women's basketball walk-on freshman guard Maxine Engel was deciding where to go to college, basketball was an afterthought. Now, halfway through her first season, Engel has become a critical asset for the squad under the leadership of Head Coach Caroline McCombs.

Engel, a local of Memphis, Tennessee, has averaged 5.1 points and 4.3 rebounds on 37.7 percent shooting from the field in 18 minutes per game. After not playing in the first 11 games of the season, she has seen action in 11 of the last 12 games of the Colonials (9-14, 2-8 A-10), starting the past three games.

In her first-ever college game, a 70-57 loss to Lehigh on December 21, she scored eight points on 4-of-8 shooting to pick up the Atlantic 10 Rookie of the Week award.

"I give all the credit to her because of her hard work," McCombs said. "There was an opportunity for her to play in the Lehigh game, so we put her in the lineup and she did what she has been doing in practice."

When Engel was making her decision on colleges, she said her focus was entirely on academics. She said she was looking at some Division I and Division III schools in her home state of Tennessee along with GW.

"The three schools

I was looking at were strictly academic," Engel said. "I was just making my decision on that and seeing if basketball worked out."

Engel said she wanted to study public health, and the Milken Institute School of Public Health became a big draw for her, along with GW's location in the heart of D.C. Once she got accepted, she said she reached out to Assistant Coach Adam Call to see if she'd be able to continue her basketball career in Foggy Bottom.

"I emailed Coach Call and got on the phone with him and he was like, 'Just try it out,'" she said. "See if you like it – you don't have to stay the whole year. If you don't like it, you can go back to being a student."

When she's not playing basketball, Engel said she likes to shop and go to bookstores in Georgetown, go monumenting, hang out with friends and read.

She said she also likes watching her hometown NBA team, the Memphis Grizzlies, although her busy schedule has prevented her from watching a lot of their games this season.

Growing up, Engel said she played just about every sport you can think of, but she stuck with basketball because it's always been a family thing, and most importantly, she likes to score.

Engel has been able to translate her scoring ability into college basketball after

averaging 15 points or more per game all four years of high school, culminating in a state championship her senior year.

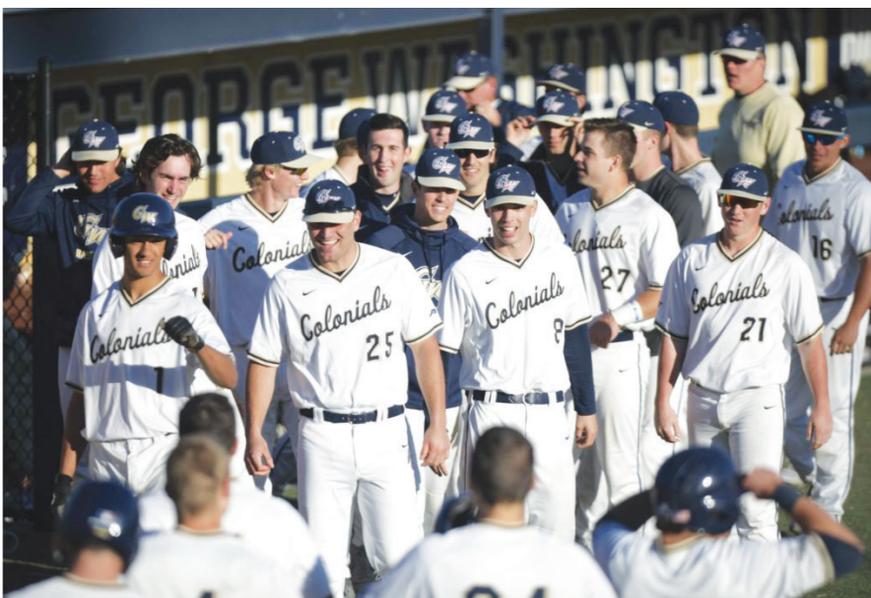
Her highest scoring effort of her college career so far came against Saint Bonaventure earlier this month. She led the team in scoring with 19 points on a scorching 8-of-10 shooting from the field and 2-of-2 from 3-point range in a heartbreaking 50-49 loss.

Including the game against the Bonnies, when she played 33 minutes, Engel has averaged 26.5 minutes per game in the last four games. Engel said her recent breakout is a result of hard work with strength and conditioning coach Jonathan Lamb, a staple of her basketball career, as well as a little bit of good fortune.

"Knock on wood, I have not gotten COVID," Engel said. "So I've been here the whole time going to every practice. I was getting stronger with John, getting extra lifts in and then just being active when I'm on the court, talking a lot."

It's not often that a freshman walk-on sees such significant minutes, but it's easy to see why McCombs has given Engel more time.

McCombs said the Memphis local has outstanding footwork and a terrific jumpshot to go along with a ferocious rebounding ability. Not to mention the work ethic she brings every day on and off the court.



HATCHET FILE PHOTO

Head Coach Gregg Ritchie brought on three new coaches for the upcoming season.