

The GW Hatchet

Tracking COVID-19
March 24 - March 30

Weekly COVID-19 cases: 112 Weekly positivity rate: 1.35% Change in cases since previous week: 0

GW drops mask mandate, 'strongly' recommends continued use

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Officials will lift GW's indoor mask mandate Monday, more than a month after the District dialed back its requirement in most indoor settings.

They announced in an email Saturday that the University's indoor mask mandate would end with the exception of University healthcare facilities, but officials said mask use is still "strongly recommended." When D.C.'s requirement expired in early March, officials said they would maintain GW's mandate since they anticipated a surge in positive cases after spring break, saying continuing to require masks would help maintain a "very low" on-campus transmission rate in combination with regular testing and other public health protocols.

GW's positivity rate increased slightly after the break but has since hovered around 1 percent, according to the COVID-19 testing dashboard. Officials said the mandate's removal is a result of D.C.'s "low" community level designation by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, adding that there was no strong evidence that the recent

rise led to "significant" transmission in indoor academic spaces or increased rates of severe COVID-19 illness.

"Although masks are optional on our campuses, their use is strongly encouraged," officials wrote. "Individuals may choose whether to wear a mask based on a variety of reasons. We ask that you respect the personal decisions of others who continue to choose to wear a mask."

Masks had been required in GW buildings for most of the pandemic. The requirement was briefly lifted for part of the summer of 2021, but the mandate was soon reinstated in July as cases began to rise due to the Delta variant.

Officials said they would also lift the vaccine mandate for campus visitors, except for those coming to indoor events at GW venues, like the Smith Center and Lisner Auditorium.

Students will still be required to receive COVID-19 tests every 15 days, except for those with exemptions to GW's vaccine mandate, who test weekly.

The announcement comes as public health experts warn of BA.2 – a subvariant of the coronavirus' Omicron variant – which now accounts for the majority of cases nationwide, according to CDC estimates earlier this week.

It also comes two years after the District implemented its first COV-



FILE PHOTO BY ELISSA DETELLIS | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Students will still be required to receive coronavirus tests every 15 days, except for those with exemptions to GW's vaccine mandate, who test weekly.

ID-19-related stay-at-home order.

American University officials lifted the indoor mask mandate as of Monday in campus spaces like labs and classrooms but still

requires masks in campus medical facilities and the AU shuttle.

Georgetown University officials announced earlier in March that they would also lift the indoor mask

mandate.

D.C. Public School officials lifted their indoor mask requirement and stopped detailed contact tracing earlier this month.



HATCHET FILE PHOTO

Officials announced in July 2020 that they would remove seven sports programs, citing financial constraints.

Rowing team captain sues GW to reinstate team's varsity status

NURIA DIAZ
CONTRIBUTING SPORTS EDITOR

ZACH BLACKBURN
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

The captain of the men's rowing team filed a lawsuit against GW in the D.C. Superior Court Friday, calling on a judge to require the University to reinstate the team as a varsity sport.

In a 20-page complaint, Patrick George – a fourth-year student who has been a member of the rowing team since 2018 – alleged GW defrauded him, breached its contract and engaged in deceptive trade practices in failing to renew his athletic scholarship for the upcoming academic year. The lawsuit calls for an immediate emergency restraining order requiring GW to reinstate men's rowing as a varsity sport and provide compensation for damages if George's athletic scholarship is not renewed and for attorney fees.

"Mr. George's final attempts to resuscitate the Men's Rowing Team have fallen on GW's deaf ears," the lawsuit states. "Mr. George now brings this suit to compel GW to return the Men's Rowing Team to varsity status and fulfill its promises and other legal obligations to him."

The men's varsity rowing team was one of seven varsity teams terminated in August 2020 due to "growing financial concerns" officials say were caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The termination went into effect following the conclusion of the 2020-21 season. After the announcement, program alumni offered to fund the program to protect its varsity status, but the University declined the alumni's offer without providing a statement.

"Despite securing sufficient funding to cover the en-

tire budget for the men's rowing program, GW declined to reinstate the program to varsity status," the lawsuit states.

University spokesperson Crystal Nosal did not return a request for comment. George and his attorney, Anand Rama, each did not return requests for comment.

The lawsuit states officials have failed to confirm that they will continue providing George a \$70,000 scholarship for next academic year, which the lawsuit claims he was promised. The complaint states that the University's lack of response to George's questions about the status of his scholarship constitutes a "silent renege" that breaches GW's contract with George.

The lawsuit alleges GW defrauded George when then-Head Coach Mark Davis told him in 2018 that the sport's varsity status would be maintained throughout George's career at GW and George could earn athletic scholarships as an upperclassman. George's attorneys asked the court to force GW to provide documents pertaining to the reasons behind the termination of the team's varsity status, according to a motion filed in conjunction with the lawsuit.

"GW intentionally and knowingly withheld from Mr. George during his recruiting, and again in May 2020, the fact that it was considering cutting the men's rowing team as a varsity sport prior to the conclusion of his collegiate athletic eligibility years," the lawsuit states. "The fact that GW would maintain a varsity Men's Rowing Team throughout his athletic career was a material fact upon which Mr. George based his decision to attend GW."

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Wrighton, Carpenter drove interest in sports as fans returned to stands

FAITH WARDWELL
STAFF WRITER

GABE LOPEZ
REPORTER

With GW's fan section having returned in full force during the basketball season this year, administrators and student leaders worked to harness the rebound in energy.

Fans first returned to the Smith Center last fall after seats remained empty for more than a year, and as fan engagement bounced back, GW community members boosted school spirit with new traditions from the stands. After interim University President Mark Wrighton started his tenure at GW this spring, he soon became a regular face at basketball games, often joining the crowd side by side with Student Association Vice President Kate Carpenter and the leaders of George's Army.

Wrighton has celebrated with the men's basketball team following victory and was once spotted sporting a buff-and-blue wig as he looked on with the crowd. Carpenter also pushed students to pack the Smith Center through efforts like President's Weekend Palooza – a se-

ries of campus events building up to a tailgate and the men's basketball "homecoming" showdown against the University of Rhode Island.

She said the weekend of events was an "honor of a lifetime" where students came together and expressed their school spirit. She said the celebration was an opportunity for students to collaborate and promote University programming in attempt to build on a lack of campus community.

"We wanted to have this opportunity for students to have the option to participate in something that led to a basketball game, and of course the game was so fun," Carpenter said. "I saw so many people at that game that I normally don't see at all the basketball games."

More than a dozen students said the interest

from Wrighton and Carpenter and new traditions like President's Weekend Palooza may have contributed to an increase in attendance at basketball games this school year.

Athletics Department spokesman Brian Sereno declined to comment on attendance levels at University sporting events at the Smith Center this academic year.

Carpenter said her work on President's Weekend Palooza drew in enough attendees to spill over into the seats beyond the Smith Center's student section. She said she has promoted school spirit and school camaraderie at games through her work on the SA and new fan section traditions, like holding up an edition of The Hatchet during the introduction of the opposing team's players at basketball games.

See **FAN SECTION** Page 5

Miami associate head coach to lead men's basketball

NURIA DIAZ
CONTRIBUTING SPORTS EDITOR

Miami Associate Head Coach Chris Caputo will head the men's basketball team, athletic director Tanya Vogel announced Friday.

"After a thorough search and identification of numerous highly-qualified coaches, both sitting head coaches and assistants, Chris rose to the top," Vogel said in the announcement. "We set out to find someone who understands what it will take to be successful here and embrace the ideal of a student-athlete, and Chris demonstrated that capability."

Chris Caputo brings more than 20 years of experience to Foggy Bottom along with a 26-11 record as an assistant coach for the Hurricanes.

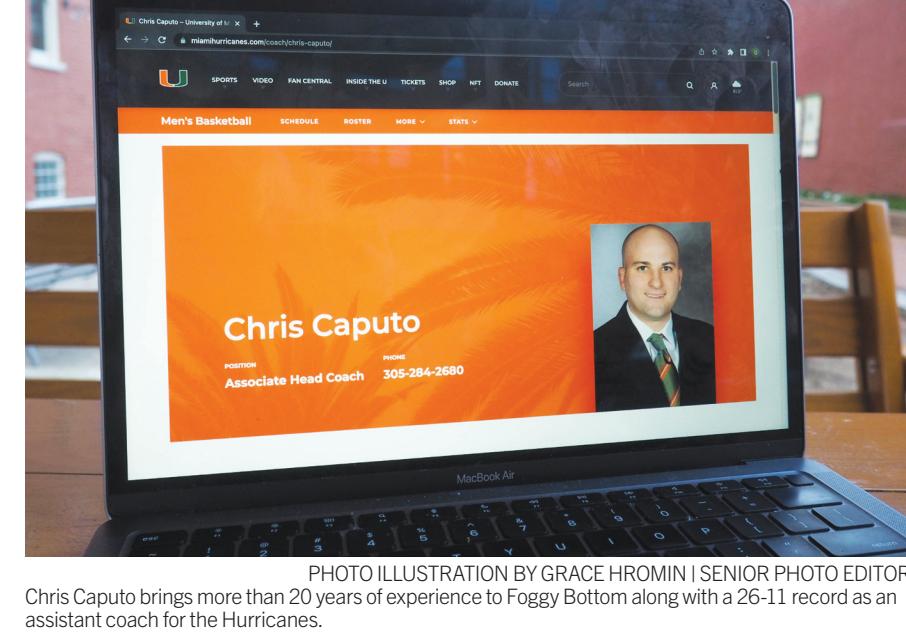


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY GRACE HROMIN | SENIOR PHOTO EDITOR
Chris Caputo brings more than 20 years of experience to Foggy Bottom along with a 26-11 record as an assistant coach for the Hurricanes.

five NCAA tournament berths, three Sweet 16 appearances as well as an Elite Eight showing in March. Caputo aided the Hurricanes to a No. 2 national ranking as well as three 25-win seasons during his tenure.

Caputo worked as a scout, recruiter and defense coordinator, helping coach the Hurricanes to

the NBA draft each year since 2016, with Dewan Hernandez being the most recently drafted Hurricane.

"I would not have taken this role if I didn't believe with my whole heart that we are going to build a program the whole university community will be proud of," Caputo said in the announcement.

In July 2020, Caputo was named top-five assistant coach by his coaching peers in the Atlantic Coast Conference in a poll conducted by Stadium. Silver Waves Media tabbed him as one of the top 50 high-major assistant coaches in April 2020 and Yarbarker listed him in the top 10 assistant coaches on the rise in November 2019.

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THIS WEEK'S EVENTS

AGREE OR DISAGREE - CONVERSATIONS ACROSS THE AISLE

Tuesday, April 5 • Noon EDT • Free

Tune into a GSPM event where two former members of Congress will discuss the upcoming midterm elections.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

April 10, 2008

GW plans to transition its email server to Gmail in the coming fall, providing students 300 times more storage space than its own Colonial Mail system, The Hatchet reported.

Roughly half of GW's peer schools don't consider the University a peer: report

DANIEL PATRICK GALGANO

CONTRIBUTING NEWS EDITOR

Five of the University's 12 peer institutions don't consider GW as one of their peers, according to a report from the Chronicle of Higher Education published late last month.

U.S. News and World Report currently ranks GW lower than all 12 of the schools that it considers its peers, despite the University rising three spots last year. Experts in higher education administration said GW's peer school list is likely a combination of schools that officials consider to be similarly academically ranked and more selective institutions that they "aspire" to be ranked closer to in the coming years.

Higher education institutions submit their peer schools to the Education Department's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System each year to receive data that compares their performance to their selected peers.

Officials shaved six schools from its peer school list in 2018 when then-President Thomas LeBlanc arrived at GW as a part of his early strategic planning.

Fourteen schools, including Fordham and Liberty universities, consider GW to be one of their peers – but GW doesn't include them in its list.

Mary Churchill, the associate dean of strategic initiatives and community engagement at Boston University's Wheelock College of Education & Human Development, said many universities will list both schools that they consider their "peers" and "peer aspirant," which they are aiming to be ranked alongside, when determining their peer lists and strategic planning.

"If it's about the rank-

**NICHOLAS ANASTACIO | GRAPHICS EDITOR**

ings, and especially U.S. News and World rankings, I do think institutions are much more likely to indicate peers that are higher ranked than they are those that are lower ranked," she said.

Churchill said GW and BU would likely come up with their peer school lists in a similar fashion since they're both "highly selective" institutions."

GW's overall acceptance rate is about 43 percent, while BU's is just about 20 percent, according to data collected by U.S. News and World Report.

"I think the higher up you are in the U.S. News and World Rankings, the lower the number of peers you're going to put in your list," she said.

Churchill said new university leaders will often receive instructions from their boards of trustees to make changes to their peer school lists if the institution needs a new strategic plan because officials will use peer schools ranked above them to formulate policies to help rise in the rankings.

"So if the board is interested in hiring someone to

shake it up, then yes, and the board would indicate that probably even in the job description and with a search firm, like 'We're looking for someone who's going to shake this up,' she said.

GW has lacked a long-term strategic plan since officials labeled GW's last strategic plan as "obsolete" because of the COVID-19 pandemic in November 2020. Professors said officials should focus on including faculty voices in major decision-making before creating a new strategic plan during interim University President Mark Wrighton's maximum term of 18 months.

Jarrett Gupton, an assistant professor of higher education and student affairs at the University of South Florida, said most university leaders will use factors like campus setting and location, enrollment data, research funding and rankings from organizations like U.S. News and World Report when coming up with their peer lists.

He said many administrators will try to consult with stakeholders, like faculty and investors, when formulating policies to help rise in the rankings.

ing with their peer school lists to make sure the newly listed institutions align with the community's sentiments about their school and the standards that community members want to see.

Gupton said most colleges and universities will look to change or alter their peer school lists every five to 10 years, but new university leadership will often look to change the peer list.

LeBlanc retired from GW at the end of last semester and was succeeded by Wrighton to serve for up to 18 months while officials look for a permanent president. Provost Chris Bracey was appointed to the permanent role in February after coming into office last year when he took over from Brian Blake at the end of last academic year.

Everett Smith, an assistant professor of higher education at the University of Cincinnati, said although the pandemic affected long-term university strategic planning across the nation, peer school lists likely didn't change as much as they might have before the pandemic.

New Western Market sports betting bar to bring gambling to Foggy Bottom

ANNIE O'BRIEN

REPORTER

TYLER KRAMBEER

REPORTER

A sports betting bar and restaurant opening in late spring will be the newest addition to Western Market, but some locals are wary of the introduction of gambling to Foggy Bottom.

ExPat, a two-story restaurant undergoing construction on the lower level and ground floor of Western Market, will feature a bar on its top floor and a podcast studio, arcade, shuffleboard and karaoke stage on the floor below. ExPat will be the first business with sports betting in Foggy Bottom, which some community members worry could lead to potential risks like gambling addiction and theft in connection to cash payouts to winning gamblers.

Owner Ben Sislen said he hopes the mix of activities in the restaurant will make ExPat one of the focal gathering points for students on campus.

"One of our missions is to be able to break down the walls between our bar and restaurant space and the GW community," he said. "That means reaching out, bringing in GW bands and any talent that exists on campus here that wants to express itself in our space."

Sislen said an ExPat-branded app currently in development will be the primary mode of sports betting in the restaurant, and bet sizes will be limited to \$500 with a maximum \$200 cash payout per day to protect gamblers from losing larger sums of money. Betting can be placed through the app or through



ExPat will replace Bertucci's, which closed in 2020 to the delight of many students.

five betting kiosks that will be placed in the restaurant.

"It can be fun," Sislen said. "We can encourage the \$5 to \$10 to \$20 bets, as opposed to the sportsbooks trying to get people to bet \$3,000. Nobody wants to be sitting next to the person who's losing a mortgage payment on a sporting event."

ExPat will take the place of Bertucci's, which closed in 2020, he said.

The District legalized sports-betting services in 2018, joining 30 states to legalize betting after the Supreme Court struck down a law banning sports betting outside of Nevada, Delaware, Oregon and Montana. The D.C. Council voted to legalize sports betting that same year.

GambitDC – the sole citywide betting app in D.C., operated by the city – has underperformed its initial projections by nearly \$25 mil-

lion, losing \$4 million in 2021 because of marketing costs, according to DCist.

Sislen said he met with the FoggyBottom and West End Advisory Neighborhood Commission at least four times since late last year, including at a special meeting to address concerns about the restaurant's gambling, including safety threats for people carrying out large sums of cash and gambling addiction.

The ANC unanimously passed a settlement agreement in the special meeting last month to limit the amount of cash a person can withdraw each day to \$200 with a maximum of \$500 in wagers per person.

Kevin Days, GW's director of community relations, said at an ANC meeting last month that the University is "very comfortable" with the idea of sports betting near

campus.

John George, the president of the Foggy Bottom Association, said although Western Market has been a boost to Foggy Bottom's dining scene, he has concerns about noisy patrons that ExPat could attract and hopes they will not disrupt the neighborhood.

"What I'm hopeful is that there will be some ability to contain the amount of noise that comes out of a crowded space like that, so that the other retailers can still enjoy patronage and people sitting in that open air," he said.

George said some community opposition to the new business may stem from concerns about McFadden's, a former Pennsylvania Avenue bar near Washington Circle that closed after a stabbing in December 2014 that left five people seriously injured.

TRANS HEALTH JUSTICE NOW!

Tuesday, April 5 • 6 p.m. EDT • Free
Join the Elliott School of International Affairs in a discussion with author and activist Cecilia Gentili about health obstacles facing trans people in America.

Cherry blossoms around the Tidal Basin



ERIN LEONE | PHOTOGRAPHER



KRISHNA RAJPARA | PHOTOGRAPHER



GABRIELLE RHOADS | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER



MICHELLE LIN | PHOTOGRAPHER



SKYLAR EPSTEIN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER



SOPHIA GOEDERT | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER



SYDNEY WALSH | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR



SOPHIA KERR | PHOTOGRAPHER

Women's national security student consortium connects students across D.C.

IANNE SALVOSA

STAFF WRITER

A national security consortium of D.C. female college students shifted to in-person operations to host events across the city and publish student research on how gender discrimination impacts security policy since its launch last spring.

Students in the Elliott School of International Affairs established the D.C. Student Consortium on Women, Peace and Security last year for D.C. college students to focus their research on expanding gender inclusivity in foreign policy and advocate for gender-inclusive courses in their schools. Students and consortium organizers said the group has held panel discussions with national security experts, weekly meetings and networking events this year to research how security policies discriminate against different genders, where men have historically dominated the field.

Organizers said about 30 members make up the consortium, most of whom are in the Elliott School. She said the consortium has official chapters at GW and Georgetown universities but also hosted events with Howard University during the past year.

Taylor Bloch, a senior studying international affairs and the director of programming for the consortium, said the group held its first in-person event for International Women's Day last month, which featured keynote

speaker Muqaddesa Yourish, a professor of international affairs. She said Yourish discussed how U.S. foreign policy overlooks gender-based needs in other countries at the event, which drew about 150 attendees.

"I think we really succeeded in creating that safe space and creating dialogue for these voices who often are not heard within the Elliott School," Bloch said.

Bloch said she has primarily studied the works of cisgender, white and heterosexual men in courses taught by white male professors in the Elliott School like U.S. Foreign Policy and U.S. Diplomatic History. She said the lack of diverse Elliott School faculty in required coursework is a "disservice" to all students and should include a variety of diverse scholarship and faculty to increase students' diversity exposure.

Three out of four professors teaching U.S. Foreign Policy and U.S. Diplomatic History this semester identify as male, according to the Schedule of Classes. Officials in the Elliott School introduced plans to diversify the school's curricula, faculty and student body as part of the Inclusive Excellence Initiative launched this fall.

Bloch said graduate students in the consortium who have full-time jobs in international affairs research and policy provide consortium undergraduates "unique access" to the international affairs field

with mentorship opportunities.

"In comparison to other student organizations I've been involved with, we really have any mentorship regardless of who you are," Bloch said. "We're constantly learning from each other."

Shirley Graham, the director of the Elliott School's Gender Equality Initiative in International Affairs and the faculty mentor of the consortium, said conversations around gender inclusion in national security organizations have lacked youth perspective because they tend to only include adult policymakers.

"We were really missing an opportunity to engage with younger generations of scholars and students if we didn't include their research, their perspectives, their voices and their ideas," Graham said.

Rachel Yakobashvili, the director of social media for the consortium and a second-year graduate student studying international affairs, said she invited students at the Georgetown consortium chapter to virtual and in-person national security events to build collaborative connections with D.C.'s other chapters. She said the two chapters advocate for classes in the Elliott School and Georgetown's Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service that involve women in peace and security studies.

"We want to diversify the course load for the Elliott School to allow people

to take more classes that integrate gender lenses and international affairs," Yakobashvili said.

Yakobashvili said the consortium is starting to create more independent research opportunities for members to publish their research on feminist foreign policy on their website. She said the organization's undergraduate membership increased this year, and she wants students to discuss a variety of issues that affect women, like sexual violence, to inform them about on-campus resources.

"We realize that a lot of people don't know what resources are available, or if they do know something like, for example, the Title IX Office, it has mixed re-



KRISHNA RAJPARA | PHOTOGRAPHER

Organizers said the consortium currently has chapters at GW and Georgetown but has also hosted events at Howard University.

views," Yakobashvili said. "And so knowing your options is always important."

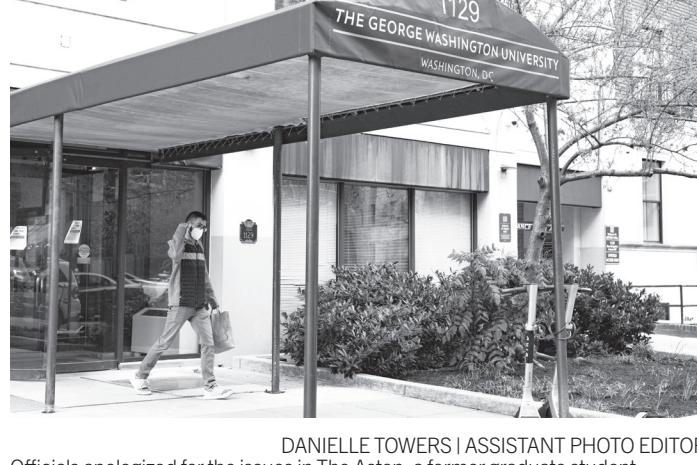
Junior Ramani Wilson, the director of outreach and advocacy for the consortium, said Georgetown established a chapter last year, and she sought to increase diversity within the consortium through the establishment of more chapters at D.C. universities like Howard University. She said she co-hosted a virtual panel discussion in February with Howard's Center for Women, Gender and Global Leadership to discuss diversifying the United Nations Security Council's women, peace and security agenda, which the consortium uses as a framework for its research.

"We've been doing a lot of work to make sure that we are promoting gender inclusive courses and even within the representation from faculty," Wilson said.

Wilson said her goal to increase diversity in the consortium as a person of color led her to take a "leap of faith" and run for a leadership role earlier this year, an action she encourages underclassmen of color in the organization to replicate.

"I didn't think that they were going to vote me in, but I knew what I could contribute to the role and I knew certain goals that I had," Wilson said. "I wanted to make sure that I saw people that look like me within the organization."

Officials grant Aston residents housing credit after repeated safety issues



DANIELLE TOWERS | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR

Officials apologized for the issues in The Aston, a former graduate student residence hall that was converted to undergraduate housing when Thurston Hall went offline for renovations.

HENRY HUVOS
STAFF WRITER

Students living in The Aston will receive a \$250 housing credit because of issues like water outages and security concerns, officials told residents in an email Thursday.

Officials said the building experienced maintenance issues "a bit more than usual" this academic year, and the housing credit would be applied to residents' student accounts within two to three business days, according to a post on the "Overheard at GW" Facebook group. The email acknowledges various issues in the building,

including water outages and repeated lapses in security that allowed non-GW affiliated people to access residential floors of the building.

An increased strain on the building's older plumbing system is partially to blame for the increase of issues, according to the email officials sent to students.

"We recognize there have been other challenges not addressed here throughout the year that have caused frustration and intermittent disruptions that may be affecting your overall living experience," they said in the email.

Melissa Schwab, a senior and resident of The Aston who made the Facebook post, said in the post that her closet flooded over spring break, her air conditioning unit malfunctioned last summer and she was temporarily stuck in an Aston elevator earlier this week because of a door jam. She said she decided to live in The Aston because it offered cheaper housing costs compared to other residence halls, but she is "frustrated" with the living conditions.

"Many of the other students in this building come from marginalized backgrounds in our GW community and also chose

this building due to its low cost," Schwab said. "It feels like our concerns are ignored because we don't live in the \$20,000 a year housing options located on campus."

Schwab said residents of The Aston sent officials an email outlining their concerns with the building's living conditions earlier this week, which led to officials' response and the University's decision to grant them a housing credit.

"A \$250 housing credit is a good start, but we should not have to petition our University en masse to stop acting like a slumlord," she said.

Aspirin COVID-19 treatment reduces mortality among patients, study shows

ISHANI CHETTRI

ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

NICHOLAS PERKINS

REPORTER

School of Medicine and Health Sciences researchers found that aspirin can limit the mortality rate of patients with moderate COVID-19, according to a study published late last month.

The study found that patients with moderate COVID-19 – which involves symptoms like fever and coughing combined with shortness of breath, sometimes requiring hospitalization – had a 1.6 percent lower mortality rate if they received aspirin during their first day of treatment. Ali Rahnavaid, one of the lead researchers and an assistant professor of biostatistics and bioinformatics, said the study will teach medical professionals to recognize the beneficial health outcomes of accessible drugs like aspirin in COVID-19 treatments.

"This type of study not only benefits the society and the communities with the COVID-19 pandemic but also educates us as a scientific community and the health care system to get this knowledge for the long term and learn from this," he said.

Rahnavaid said the team studied more than 110,000 patients with moderate COVID-19 hospitalizations between Jan. 1 and Sept. 10 last year through the National COVID Cohort Collaboration – a National Institute of Health database that compiles the records of nearly 8 million COVID-19 patients from more than 60 health clinics and hospitals.

He said researchers identified two groups for the study after modifying the database to create their own data set using a process called N3C filtering – observing patients through categories, like age and the infection severity level. He said one group included moderate COVID-19 patients who

received aspirin in the first 24 hours of hospitalization, while the other group was made of patients who didn't receive aspirin during the first day of treatment to compare two different statistical analyses of the data.

"We needed to do those filtering and data processing to get to the number we were very confident on and the data we were confident on to perform our analysis," he said.

Patients younger than 18 years and patients with severe disease on the first day of hospitalization were removed from the data set, according to the study.

Katrina Hawkins, a co-investigator of the study and an assistant professor of anesthesiology and critical care medicine, said the research team ran statistical analyses of the two groups to determine if there was a significant difference in 28-day mortality between aspirin use.

She said when aspirin was used on patients over the age of 60 who had at least one comorbidity – two or more medical conditions present in a patient – they had significantly reduced mortality rates when compared to the other age groups like patients between 18 and 40 years old.

Aspirin use had no association with the mortality of patients without comorbidities, but the odds of mortality would increase if the number of a patient's comorbidities increased, according to the study.

She said she hopes the study can reach the general public through social media and the JAMA Network Open website where users can access the paper for free.

"COVID-19 is not going away," she said in an email. "We will likely have another wave and having anything that may help our patients survive is not something to take lightly."

Ranojoy Chatterjee, a first-year



DANIELLE TOWERS | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR

graduate student in the health and biomedical data science doctorate program, said he helped organize the study's data set in the programming language Python and used statistical methods, like inverse probability treatment weighting analysis – which creates similar groups of data to compare and understand different treatment effects.

He said the National COVID Cohort Collaboration database doesn't specify which variant each patient has, so the study didn't determine whether the aspirin left different results among patients who contracted different COVID-19 variants like Omicron and Delta.

Chatterjee said the team created the study to further explore

the survival rates of patients with moderate COVID-19 because previous studies only found that aspirin treatment led to a small increase in the rate of patients with severe COVID-19 symptoms who were discharged alive within 28 days.

He said doctors currently treating moderate COVID-19 patients could use the study to justify using aspirin in treatments at their own institutions because the drug is commonly used to prevent inflammation, fever and strokes.

"In our given data set, we found that it was better off if you were given aspirin for the first 24 hours," he said. "You would have a better chance of fighting off the disease and surviving."

Jeffery Berger, the chair of the

anesthesiology and critical care medicine department, said he supported the study's development, edited the written results for the paper and guided the team throughout their research on patients with moderate COVID-19.

He said conducting research to identify new treatment methods for COVID-19 is essential because there could be more waves of COVID-19 in the future.

"Until we have eradicated COVID-19, it is important that we continue to investigate therapeutic modalities that can have an impact on morbidity and mortality aggressively, and therefore I think it has the chance to save lives because the current rate of death is still fairly significant worldwide," he said.

SMHS students celebrate acceptances to residency programs on Match Day

TALON SMITH
REPORTER

More than a dozen national universities' residency programs accepted more than 150 GW fourth-year medical students in specialties like internal medicine and ophthalmology as part of an annual matching ceremony at Lisner Auditorium last month.

Families and friends huddled around the students as they joined others across the country in opening letters dictating the next three years of their medical journeys on Match Day. The School of Medicine and Health Sciences Class of 2022 is the first graduating class to hold the annual Match Day ceremony in person since the beginning of the pandemic in March 2020.

Lorenzo Norris, the SMHS associate dean for student affairs and administration, said an average of 167 fourth-year medical students have participated in the National Resident Matching Program's Main Residency Match — an online algorithm that randomly assigns medical students to residency programs based on each other's rankings — in each of the past five years.

He said more than 40,000 applicants across the country applied for the 2022 national matching program in July 2021.

"Match Day symbolizes the transition from undergraduate to graduate medical education, the day when they learn which residency training program they will attend as they begin their careers as physicians," an official statement from the NRMP reads.

Students said Match Day marks their first opportunity



The annual event pairs medical students with a hospital or clinic where they will receive their residency training.

to apply the medical skills they learned from lectures to clinical settings across the country as they learn to become practicing physicians over the next three years.

Allison Barshay, a fourth-year medical student specializing in emergency medicine, said these students have spent the year leading up to Match Day choosing the medical field to join and which university and hospital to attend to kickstart their professional careers.

She said medical students rank their residency programs based on personal preferences while residency program directors rank applicants based on their academic records and interviews that take place in the fall.

Barshay said she matched to Rhode Island Hospital, which is affiliated with Brown University, and anticipates completing independent medical tasks like writing prescription orders for patients and learning about surgical procedures as a practicing

physician.

"There's a countdown to noon exactly when you're allowed to open your envelopes and see where you matched, and then after noon, it was basically a couple of minutes of crazy, chaotic celebration," she said.

Christbel Chan, a student specializing in ophthalmology, said she matched back to SMHS and its ophthalmology department for her residency program, where she's excited to work closely with the attending doctors and

residents she already knows as a practicing student physician.

Chan said she hopes to continue polishing skills like diagnosing specific eye pathologies and learning how to use different lenses that can view the back of the eye known as the retina.

She said she might return to work for SMHS or the GW Hospital after she completes her residency because she wants to build her network in the District and help teach future medical students and residents who are interested in ophthalmology.

"It's just the beginning because this is when we're officially going to be physicians and officially known as doctors, so there's obviously a lot of responsibility that comes with that's both terrifying and exciting," she said.

Haley Bush, who is specializing in internal medicine, said she and her boyfriend matched to Duke University residency programs in internal medicine and orthopedic surgery, respectively. She said they both look forward to learning with experienced faculty members and working with new surgical procedures within their specialties.

She said she got to share the Match Day experience with her fellow classmates, who she learned with for the past four years, as everyone celebrated which residency programs they matched with.

"I'm really proud of our class for basically doing med school through a pandemic and then having really successful outcomes in terms of matching to places that we really want to go and are proud to be a part of," she said.

GW Law launches animal legal education initiative with advocacy nonprofit

GRACE CHINOWSKY
STAFF WRITER

MAX BEVERIDGE
REPORTER

GW Law is forming a partnership with an animal advocacy nonprofit to make animal law a stand-alone legal discipline.

Law school faculty said the Animal Legal Education Initiative will partner with the Animal Legal Defense Fund to introduce a series of courses, four new fellowships, training programs and a clinic on legislative animal law during a five-year span. The type of law includes any legal practice involving animals and is an interdisciplinary study that can be applied to practices like environmental and family law, where pets and agricultural animals can be the subject of a ruling.

Stacey Gordon Sterling, the director of animal law at the Animal Legal Defense Fund, said GW will work to expand fellowships and faculty training to increase law professorships. She said the initiative sets the law school apart from flagship animal law programs like those at Harvard and Yale universities that focus on scholarship.

"We need attorneys that have had animal



GW Law will seek to raise millions of additional dollars for the initiative in partnership with the Animal Legal Defense Fund.

law courses and experience and can hit the ground running well," she said. "The only way we're going to have those attorneys is if animal law is integrated across the country into law school curriculums."

GW Law currently offers six animal law courses with two professors and three professorial lecturers in the field.

Sterling said the law school and Animal Legal Defense Fund have created a five-year plan and raised enough money to fund a new assistant dean position through the initiative, but the partnership will need to raise between \$5

million and \$10 million to launch the clinic and grow the curriculum — a roughly three-year process. She said the initiative would need to fundraise in new markets beyond regular sources like the defense fund and other organizations, like general legal education organizations.

Sterling said animal law programs should expand to meet the influx of cases in recent years, a result of growing public concern for animal rights and climate change. She said GW's program will focus on court case and litigation training for law faculty and students to improve their exposure to the field.

Animal law cases have made national headlines in recent years, notably in 2016 when a Cincinnati Zoo gorilla named Harambe was shot and killed after a toddler crawled into the pen in 2016, sparking outrage and fueling public demands for animal legal advocates to question its legality..

Joan Schaffner, an associate professor of animal law who serves as the law school initiative's primary contact with the defense fund, said the program would develop a discipline to "comprehensively" address animal law disparities like animal law policy and research, which are currently only addressed by programs at schools like Yale and Harvard universities.

"This initiative is designed to fill this void, devoted to animal law scholarship and education, while simultaneously providing opportunities for students to learn and practice

animal law, affect policy and develop an animal law discipline more broadly," Schaffner said.

Schaffner said animal law cases and discussion have increased in recent years with larger interest in the possible animal-related origins of diseases throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and the "exponential" growth of the vegan food industry and animal product alternatives.

Animal law experts said the program can highlight the interdisciplinary applications animal law has across the legal field including in the ongoing conversations about animals' connection to climate change.

Mariann Sullivan, an adjunct professor of animal law at Cornell University, said the practice can be applied in a number of other fields of law like divorce law regarding custody disputes over pets, landlord tenant law concerning pet restrictions and tort law involving dog bites.

"Virtually any course you take in law school could have an animal law part to it because it touches so many areas," Sullivan said.

Penny Ellison, an adjunct professor of animal law at the University of Pennsylvania, said animal lawyers go head-to-head with a number of organizations and departments in their litigation.

"Between climate change and the rate of extinction of species, the need to get advocates ready to fight against the much better funded opposition is crucial," she said in an email.

Milken to introduce graduate-level concentration with climate, health focus

SOPHIA GOEDERT
STAFF WRITER

The Milken Institute School of Public Health will offer a climate and health concentration for graduate students this fall housed under an interdisciplinary research institute that launched in September.

Officials said in a release that the climate and health concentration — part of Milken's Climate and Health Institute — will prepare graduate students for careers in the climate field and teach students to assess climate change-related health risks, like asthma. The release states that rising global temperatures because of greenhouse gases have brought the need for climate-based actions that benefit global human health.

"Climate change has a profound impact on human health," officials said in the release. "What we do about it also matters. The actions we take to mitigate long-term, global climate change would also improve health and livelihoods locally

through clearer air, cleaner water, improved physical fitness, expanded natural environments for both recreation and ecosystem protection and reduced congestion and noise."

Graduates who are already enrolled in GW's online Master of Public Health program can enroll in the concentration in the fall, and residential students can enroll in courses within the concentration.

Master-level courses associated with the concentration include climate change courses like Sustainable Energy and the Environment and Global Climate Change and Air Pollution.

Officials said the concentration will teach graduates how to address health issues associated with global environmental changes and anthropogenic climate change — the human impact on Earth's climate. The concentration also teaches graduate students to "manage diverse teams" that will evaluate government policies, urban planning, public engagement, corporate action and finance.

FRESHFARM market to return to Foggy Bottom for first time in two years

ISHA TRIVEDI
NEWS EDITOR

Foggy Bottom's farmers market will return to campus for the first time Wednesday, nearly two years after the onset of the pandemic forced the market's shutdown.

Molly Scalise — the deputy director of communications for FRESHFARM, the organization that oversees farmers markets in the District — said vendors at the location will continue to accept GWorld as a form of payment as they did prior to the pandemic. The market, located along the walkway by the Foggy Bottom Metro station between 23rd and 24th streets, will be open every Wednesday from 3 to 7 p.m. until Nov. 23.

"We hope that the market can

continue to serve as a source of fresh, nutritious and healing foods for GW students and faculty, hospital staff and patients and the wider Foggy Bottom community," she said in an email.

The market vendors this season include sellers like Timber Pizza Company, Bun'd Up — which sells bao, steamed or baked buns with various fillings — and DMV Empanadas.

"After a two-year absence due to COVID, we are delighted to bring back the FRESHFARM Foggy Bottom market, which has operated in the neighborhood since 2005," Scalise said. "At FRESHFARM, we believe that food is medicine, and we are proud to operate this important food access point adjacent to the George Washington Hospital."



The farmers market will accept GWorld once again when it returns this week.

TWEETED



TWITTER/@JULESCAPUTO

Taking it all in. What a feeling. #RaiseHigh @coach_c_caputo

Julie Caputo on 4/2/2022

CRIME LOG

THEFT II/FROM BUILDING

Off Campus
3/26/2022 – 10:30 p.m.
Open Case

A female student reported that her coat and wallet were stolen at an off-campus event.
Case open.

THREATS TO DO BODILY HARM

Virginia Science and Technology Campus
3/27/2022 – 12:30 p.m.
Open Case

A male staff member reported that a female student threatened him in a VSTC classroom after class ended.
Case open.

DRUG LAW VIOLATION

One Washington Circle Hotel
3/28/2022 – 11:23 a.m.
Closed Case

An administrator on-call in the hotel found drug paraphernalia in a student's room and gave it to GW Police Department officers.
Referred to the Division for Student Affairs.

THEFT II/FROM BUILDING

7-Eleven (912 New Hampshire Ave. NW)
3/29/2022 – 4:28 p.m.
Closed Case

While on routine patrol, GWPD officers witnessed a male subject committing a theft. GWPD officers apprehended the subject, but an unknown person paid for the stolen goods on behalf of the subject, who was then sent on his way.
Case closed.

FRAUD ID/FRAUD

Academic Center
3/30/2022 – 3:13 p.m.
Open Case

A male student reported he was a victim of fraudulent phone calls coming from an unknown subject, who claimed to be a Department of Homeland Security official. The subject alleged fake crime charges in an attempt to extort payment from the complainant.
Case open.

—Compiled by Acacia Niyogi

Medical school institute to increase spiritual care for patients with serious illnesses

CRISTINA STASSIS
REPORTER

ISHANI CHETTRI
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

The Institute for Spiritual Health within the School of Medicine and Health Sciences will develop teaching models to care for patients' spiritual health during medical treatments with a \$3 million grant from the John Templeton Foundation.

The Advancing Spiritual Care in Everyday Practice is a 10-year initiative that will create a teaching model to educate health care professionals on spiritual care – attending to a patient's religious needs and existential concerns while they cope with serious illnesses like cancer to heal emotional distress. The John Templeton Foundation – a philanthropic organization that supports financial funds for religious and spiritual knowledge in science – will fund the project's first three years of setting up training courses and retreats for medical care workers.

Christina Puchalski, a professor of medicine and one of the initiative's three lead researchers, said the project will educate health care workers and chaplains to include chronically ill patients' existential life questions in the physical care process to improve their emotional conditions.

"There's an urgency to be able to address patients suffering spiritual distress as well as support the resources," she said. "Everybody who takes care of patients should have the skills and



DANIELLE TOWERS | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR

Christina Puchalski, one of the initiative's lead researchers, said the courses role play hypothetical patient conversations to practice addressing existential questions about life in the clinical setting.

the commitment and the appropriate way to do that in their clinical practice."

Puchalski said a team of palliative care specialists, including herself, who work to increase the quality of life for patients with serious illnesses like cancer, will host two-day courses on interprofessional spiritual care education for doctors as part of the initiative.

She said the courses will encourage clinicians and chaplains to hold small group discussions about the significance of spiritual care and role play hypothetical patient conversations to practice addressing existential questions about life in the clinical setting.

"We want to have different perspectives at the table, so I think growing a field means being open to listening to others, learning how other people view things and growing it with everybody's input," she said.

Rev. Trace Haythorn, a co-investigator of the initiative and the CEO of the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, said health care practices that neglect existential questions of life – concerns about one's meaning and purpose – and their impacts on patients ignores the religious and spiritual perspectives of medical treatments for serious illnesses.

Haythorn said spirituality is vital to patient care because palliative care specialists' effective engagements with patients' individual medical experiences can lead to shorter hospitalization stays.

"This work is not about a particular religious or spiritual perspective," Haythorn said in an email. "It is about helping clinicians recognize spiritual distress, how to engage chaplains and spiritual specialists, and ultimately how to better serve patients as whole persons."

Betty Ferrell, the third co-lead of the initiative and the director of the division of nursing research and education at the City of Hope National Medical Center in California, said she and two other team members will routinely meet with chaplains to review any research resulting from the national training programs, the program.

Xu motions to dismiss Student Court case against finance bylaws

LAUREN SFORZA
CONTRIBUTING NEWS EDITOR

Student Association Sen. Yan Xu moved to dismiss a Student Court case Thursday that could overturn legislation he introduced to widen the SA Senate finance committee's authority to regulate financial activities among student organizations, arguing the lawsuit is irrelevant.

The SA Office of the Legislator General filed a lawsuit in February against Xu, the chair of the finance committee, alleging that the updated bylaw gives the committee too much power over registered student organizations. Xu passed leg-

islation in response later that month, which addressed most of the suit's complaints, but the plaintiffs filed a revised complaint last month, arguing that the committee's power to sanction student organizations is still unconstitutional.

"The Defendants believe the Court should wait for further factual development in the form of a dispute over an implemented procedure that would facilitate the Court's review of the sanction process," the motion reads.

In his motion to dismiss, Xu contested that the finance committee will only theoretically be able to sanction student organiza-

tions until the power expires in July because of the updated legislation the senate passed, rendering the case irrelevant. He said the committee wouldn't sanction any student organizations before July because SA bylaws do not outline or provide for the sanctioning process despite the powers his legislation grants.

"The claim brought by the Plaintiffs is not yet a dispute, and the Court will judge on abstract disagreements," the motion reads.

The court was set to decide whether to review the case Sunday at its initial consideration meeting.

GW rejected offer to reinstate men's rowing varsity status: lawsuit

From Page 1

The lawsuit states the cost of reinstating the rowing team as a varsity sport would cost the University less than \$200,000 plus the additional costs of renewing scholarships for athletes. In an additional motion filed Friday, George asked the court to require GW to turn over documents regarding the rowing team's varsity cancellation and the Athletics Department's balance sheets from the past five years.

The complaint states the lawsuit is a "last ditch attempt" to preserve the varsity status of the team. When George and his teammates told Athletic Director Tanya Vogel that they were considering legal action to maintain the team's varsity status last year – before the conclusion of the team's final varsity season – she told George that

any such effort could result in the immediate cancellation of the team's varsity status before the 2021 season's end, according to the lawsuit.

During its final season, the team concluded the Intercollegiate Rowing Association championships ranked seventh in the nation, the best finish in program history, according to the lawsuit.

The lawsuit states Vogel told the team that "the best way" to encourage the Board of Trustees to revisit its decision would be through "showcasing" its performance, but the team's seventh-place national ranking did not lead officials to reverse its decision to change the team's status.

Officials said in 2020 that the varsity sports which were cut, including men's rowing, would have the ability to compete in the "same or similar" conferences after their transition to club sports, according to

an FAQ on the athletics department's website. But the rowing team lost its eligibility to compete at any event sanctioned by the IRA, the governing body of collegiate rowing, according to the lawsuit.

George met with Vogel, then-University President Thomas LeBlanc and Board Secretary Avram Tucker in several separate meetings during his quest to protect the team's status, but all declined to reinstate the team as a varsity sport, according to the lawsuit. The lawsuit states Tucker denied George's request that Tucker approach the Board about the rowing team, and the Board refused to let George present at a meeting.

The SA Senate passed a resolution supporting the program in December, calling on the University to reinstate the team to its varsity status or combine it with the women's program.

Student fans rebound in first season back with Smith Center crowds

From Page 1

"It's given people that excitement to go."

Carpenter said officials like Wrighton and Dean of Students Cissy Petty have helped encourage excitement at games. She said Wrighton's tendency to sit in the student section and even wear a buff and blue wig has added to the energy at basketball games.

"Seeing the president of the University, who you typ-

ically would think is wearing suits and sitting in an office and sitting in meetings all day, come to a Saturday game and sit in the student section and jump up and down and cheer with us and yell like the rest of us, that's awesome," Carpenter said.

Juniors Macy McClintock and Ryan Puelo – the co-presidents of George's Army, the official student section of GW Athletics –

said attendance at basketball games over the last semester was the highest they saw during their time at GW, starting with the home opener.

"Ryan and I just kind of looked at each other like 'Oh my goodness, I've never seen this many students in the Smith Center,'" McClintock said. "It was awesome."

McClintock said George's Army built up its

social media presence to encourage students to fill the Smith Center seats that once held cardboard cutouts of fans during the fall 2020 semester when the District barred fans from attending in-person sporting events.

Puelo said Wrighton's support through social media with consistent posts about GW sporting events every few days on his personal Twitter page and ap-

pearances at games has been encouraging for those working to organize sporting events.

"Mark Wrighton, what he's done so far with showing up to games and showing enthusiasm by posts on his Twitter and all that, and he's at the games and stuff," Puelo said. "And yeah, I mean, that's a big thing – support and to have leadership involved."

"There's no harm in rubbing shoulders with your neighbors, even if it's just in line for lunch."

—ETHAN BENN ON 3/3/2022

The SA's incoming leaders should focus on building relationships with students

STAFF EDITORIAL

The students of GW have spoken – albeit fewer of them than any time in at least a decade – and have elected senior Christian Zidouemba and sophomore Yan Xu as Student Association president and vice president, respectively.

This year's SA elections demonstrated both the flaws and the promise of the SA's power. Low turnout matched the abysmally low confidence the student body seems to have in the SA. After a listless campaign season – with most SA Senate seats going uncontested and almost no one showing up to the traditional poster event – the race returned to its usual dramatic character.

Now is as good a time as any for the SA and the student body to reevaluate their relationship. The SA as a whole needs to do a better job laying out what it can and cannot do, and members need to start acting like the advocates they are instead of the politicians they aren't. Students also need to lay off the vitriolic hate toward the SA.

The new SA leadership should make an effort to change the image of the SA, from presenting themselves less like professional politicians and more like peers who have the opportunity to make change around campus. One way to promote a more relaxed image would be to actively debunk myths and simplify the language of the senate, for instance explaining what exactly the legislator general's office does in the GW context on social media. Current Vice President Kate Carpenter set an example of how social media can be effectively used to interact with the student body and integrate herself within student circles instead of remaining social media-less.

The SA also needs to be better at communicating the extent to which they can improve students' issues. Much like Carpenter continuously updating her loyal Twitter followers on what is going on with the SA, the next SA president and VP should keep up that tradition. They should educate the student body on what are specific actionable issues they

work on, what issues they are only able to address but don't have the power to change and what issues are completely out of their control. Many students don't have a proper understanding of what the SA has the capacity to do and what they don't.

Much of the SA's job has to do with taking students' advocacy efforts, bringing them to administrators and putting them into action. For instance, GW's Sunrise Movement, which began as Fossil Free GW in 2013, had been pushing for divestment since its inception. Starting in 2013 and all the way

Christian & Yan's To Do List

- Improve SA's Image
- Clearly communicate with peers
- Distribute finances equitably
- Clear up extent of SA's capacity
- Increase voter confidence
- Strengthen school spirit

JENNA BAER | CARTOONIST

through 2020, the SA had held two student referendums on the issue. These brought attention to the push and clarified students' position.

This clear communication of what the SA's job is is especially crucial as GW undergoes major administrative changes. Officials are also looking to fill more than 10 senior administrative roles, including a permanent University president and senior roles in GW's provost and development offices. The incoming SA leaders should double down on becoming loudspeakers for students' needs because new administrators won't be as fami-

iar with what students on campus want and need.

The student body needs to be part of the change too. Many students seem to see the SA as simultaneously hapless and omnipotent in their criticisms on social media, alternately condemning the organization as serving no real purpose and at the same time breathlessly demanding more decisive action from them. Just as the SA needs to level with the community about what it can and cannot do, students need to recognize that members of the student government can't force administrators to enact large-scale

policies on the fly. After a professor said the N-word in class and after another professor refused to allow a student to keep a service dog in a classroom, the SA caught criticism for not doing more to ensure these faculty were punished. In reality, there is not much the SA can do in situations like that beyond criticizing the perpetrators and listening to students. The SA can, for example, work with administrators to try to increase training and rules for faculty aimed at making classrooms more inclusive. But they do not have the power to get faculty fired, and students should not expect them to. If students think the SA should have been more vocal about these incidents, that's entirely valid, but students need to make reasonable demands of the SA that are within their capacity to deliver.

But students need to act like members of the SA are their peers, too, not internet randoes to be criticized in personal terms with impunity. Anonymous social media accounts' unique, vicious and ad hominem criticism of Carpenter – which she characterized as "cyberbullying" and made her consider taking a leave of absence – was an embarrassing display of immaturity from college students.

Students absolutely should keep holding the SA accountable, though. After all, it is unlikely that the SA would have sat down with administrators to advocate for fossil fuel divestment without groups like Sunrise strenuously demanding that they do so. Community backlash and well-founded outrage also helped force former SA President Howard Brookins to resign after he was accused of mismanagement and sexual misconduct. A more constructive relationship between the SA and students can be built on shared goals, not mutual antagonism.

As Zidouemba and Xu take the reins of the SA's executive branch, they have the unique opportunity to reshape the relationship between the SA and students. With a new SA administration on the way, now's the time to make change.

Dropping GW's mask mandate is ill-advised

After nearly a full academic year of wearing masks, getting tested for COVID-19 every other week and mandating vaccines for GW community members, officials announced this weekend that the University's mask mandate will lift on Monday.

Ethan Benn
Columnist

While GW has so far largely succeeded in keeping its students, staff and faculty safe, this sudden about-face is ill-advised. Students and professors are dying to see each other's faces, and rightfully so, but the cost of this reprieve outweighs its benefits. As tiresome as a strict regimen of vaccinations, frequent testing and mask wearing is, rushing to return to "normal" at the University and national level would be a mistake.

This change to a mask-optimal policy is well-deserved and well-intended: Students and staff who happily complied with the University's mandate now deserve a reward for their perseverance. The simple truth is that masks are uncomfortable, and our collective willingness to embrace them has waned.

But a mask-optimal policy removes a powerful tool from GW's public health arsenal. Why make them optional? This seems more like a self-sabotaging concession to

restless students and staff than a carefully considered policy.

Though not yet dominant in the District, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that the more transmissible yet not necessarily more lethal BA.2 subvariant now accounts for more than half of cases nationwide. Our individual and collective responses to BA.2 will determine if we get back to "normal" at all.

Mask-wearing is fundamentally about collective action – it requires students, staff and faculty to put their community's health above their own comfort. Embracing a patchwork of individual choices and strong but unenforceable recommendations does exactly the opposite.

At the University level and across the nation, declaring a return to normalcy has often meant making an ongoing public health emergency a matter of individual responsibility.

Dispensing with the mask mandate now puts students and professors, particularly those who are immunocompromised, in the position of hoping their dozens of peers or hundreds of students willingly "mask up" for their own safety. These personal pleas for public safety lack institutional weight, leaving each of us to navigate the pandemic on our own.

I understand the desire to declare victory over this virus, tear off your mask and return to some semblance of normalcy. But let us

not forget the cost of this pandemic. Last October's "In America: Remember" art installation on the National Mall, commemorated more than 695,000 Americans who died of COVID-19. Since February 2020, 35,000 of those deaths occurred in the DMV.

It's impossible to move on from something that's still happening. The pandemic may be out of sight and out of mind for some, but it hasn't simply ended – at least not yet. Any talk of "living with the virus" has to contend with one simple fact: some people won't survive an endemic form of COVID-19.

As well-meaning and understandable as this talk of returning to "normal" is, there's a certain callousness to it. It implies knowingly or not, that we can trade other peoples' lives – particularly those who are older, poorer, sicker and so on – for our own comfort. This is a particularly grim prospect and one that I don't accept.

These "unprecedented times" now have precedents of their own: missed opportunities, poor decision making and blatant disregard for the health and wellbeing of others. Treat the rise of the BA.2 variant as a test: what have we learned? Will we protect the most vulnerable in our society? Will we put people before profits? For our sake – all of us – I hope we pass with flying colors.

—Ethan Benn, a sophomore majoring in journalism and mass communication, is an opinions columnist.

Professors should be more diligent about posting grades to Blackboard

It's a common, even ubiquitous experience: Logging into Blackboard, clicking on the "Grades" tab and seeing nothing uploaded, even as the semester is approaching the finish line. Almost any student could attest that some professors are often slow to provide information on grades. This isn't just stressful on its face – GPA is critical for graduate school admissions, merit aid packages and more. Professors should be more diligent about posting grades so students can have access to this information that is necessary to making decisions.

Andrew Sugrue
Opinions Editor

In an ideal world, college students would not have to watch their grades like a hawk – they would be able to perform to the best of their ability in their classes and let their grades fall where they may. But undergraduate education does not exist in a vacuum, and grades are an easy heuristic for graduate schools, employers or outside sources of scholarship funding to assess students' aptitude. Students need to be, and are, pragmatic about their grades, taking certain classes and avoiding others to pad their GPA or consulting services like the University Writing Center to maximize their grades on assignments. Many graduate schools

weigh GPA highly when considering which students to admit. This is especially the case for aspiring doctors or lawyers – a high GPA is critical for most medical and juris doctorate programs. Even for programs where GPA is not a sink-or-swim metric, it may be a factor that is determinative for how much merit aid is doled out to an applicant. In that case, having a high GPA is less do-or-die for admission but could be determinative for being able to attend. And for graduate programs that are GRE-optimal, whether or not students take the exam may depend on what their grades are going to look like by the end of the semester.

For all of these reasons, students with an eye toward future plans sweat bullets over every hundredths place of their GPA, where it will stand at the end of a semester and how specific in-progress classes will affect the score. That's not ideal, but it's the way it is. These goals are not served well when professors keep students in limbo for weeks, months or until after finals about performance.

Not knowing where grades stand is not just a matter of being stressed. All of these undertakings require long-term planning. Students generally do not decide to apply to graduate school on a whim. There is almost always a months-long run-up to pressing "send" on an application that is occupied by keeping grades as high as possible, gathering recommenders

or speaking with career advisers. Without knowledge of grades during this process, students can be making impactful plans and decisions based on incomplete information.

To be fair, no one should be unsympathetic to how swamped the average faculty member is. That being said, plenty of professors have found the capacity and time to keep students informed about grades. There is room for the University and individual academic departments to step in here. A faculty member who is so phenomenally busy that they cannot find the time to post students' grades should probably have a teaching assistant to lighten the load anyway, even without considering the posting-of-grades issue. Departments can pair more teaching assistants with professors, and the University should come up with ways of funding such an effort.

This is not a particularly difficult fix – and in the grand scheme of things, this is admittedly a minor grievance. Knowing grades as the semester unfolds would make students' efforts at planning the future a quarter-turn easier. Faculty should improve their diligence about posting grades, and the University should provide any necessary support to make that happen.

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

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Culture

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THE SCENE

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RELEASED THIS WEEK:

NEW SINGLE: "AS IT WAS" BY HARRY STYLES

Foggy Bottom restaurants raise prices amid inflated food costs

KRISHNA RAJPARA
REPORTER

The price of food is on the rise, and campus hotspots like GW Deli, Tonic and Carvings are feeling the effects along their majority student clientele.

Food prices have already risen by more than 7 percent since the start of the new year to the end of February, according to the Agriculture Department's latest report. Foggy Bottom restaurant owners said this period of inflation have put them in a tough situation where menu price hikes seem to be the only feasible remedy.

The report predicts prices in general to raise at least 4.5 to 5.5 percent from the current rates and expects take-out and dine-in prices to inflate between 5 and 6.5 percent in the coming months.

John Ambrogi, the owner of GW Deli, said the campus staple prides itself on providing food at reasonable prices for its customers, a majority of whom are college students who have to budget their meals. Ambrogi said he has never seen prices of food and produce as high as they are now. "Labor costs are our biggest expense along with supplier chains," Ambrogi said. "In the past few weeks our shelves have been half empty. I've never seen anything like this."



As supply chain issues linger, Foggy Bottom restaurants have not been immune to the effects of inflation.

He said the prices of food-stuffs like eggs, bacon, produce and beverages have been "skyrocketing," which in return has pushed the Deli to raise their prices.

"Soon the price of a sandwich might look like \$10 a piece," Am-

brogi said. "I don't like it. I'm not happy to raise our prices, but we have to pay our employees somehow."

Tonic's marketing and event's coordinator, Anastasia Kochnowicz, echoed similar sentiments on dealing with supply chains

coming out of the pandemic and into a period of high inflation.

"Prices fluctuate on a week-by-week basis, making it hard to predict," Kochnowicz said. "Suppliers are keeping prices high, having taken advantage of COVID. Its greed at the top,

the majority of chicken supply is owned by four companies that keep prices high."

She said Tonic has changed its pricing recently, most notably taking the 99-cent chicken wings deal off the menu. In addition to poultry, she said Tonic has also faced inflation in seafood supply as well as produce like lemons and limes, which are crucial to the restaurant's notoriety as a campus happy hour hotspot.

"It's never fun having to raise prices," Kochnowicz said. "But we are a locally owned small business. We have to pay employees, so we do what we have to do. No one wants to pay \$20 for a burger, but we still offer our GWWorld \$10 burger deal for the students here on campus."

Tomas Castillo, the manager of Carvings, said he estimates that they have had to increase their prices by about 3 percent to keep up with the rising costs of meat and produce.

"Drinks as well, crazy, insane prices," Castillo said. "We're a business. We have to take action to keep things going if we want to survive."

Castillo said he has to keep his mind on rent and building fees while the prices continue to skyrocket.

"We still have other costs to cover, you know," Castillo said. "Rent, electricity, labor – it all adds up."

Breaking down the Oscars moment that left Twitter reeling

ABRIGAIL WILLIAMS
STAFF WRITER

What Just Happened.

Chris Rock stood still on the screen for a few seconds, the broadcast cut away and switched to Will Smith sitting in his seat yelling inaudibly at the stage. His lips read, "Keep my wife's name out your f—ing mouth." Seconds later "What Just Happened" along with the actor and comedians' names were trending on Twitter.

Smith got into more than just "one little fight" in West Philadelphia, making headlines last Sunday night after slapping comedian Chris Rock on stage at this year's 94th Annual Academy Awards.

Often referred to as the biggest night in Hollywood, the ceremony was live-broadcasted on ABC before an audience of the world's biggest celebrities and A-list actors awaiting their coveted Oscars win. But this year's show elicited record-breaking views. The award show's ratings increased by 58 percent from 2021, streaming to 16.6 million viewers, arguably because of the recent scandal.

In the seconds leading up to the altercation, just as Smith walked on stage, ABC cut the live broadcast sound, leaving viewers clueless as to what occurred next. But those watching in other parts of the world received the uncensored version of the broadcast, and after the video was released on Twitter, social media users went wild.

The uncensored broadcast shows Smith walking up to the stage and slapping Rock across the face after he made a joke about the hair of Smith's wife, Jada Pinkett Smith.

"Jada, I love you...G.I. Jane 2

– can't wait to see it," Rock said.

After what is now being referred to as "The Slap," Smith walked back to his seat and yelled to the stage.

"Keep my wife's name out your f—ing mouth," Smith said twice.

Rock went on to stumble through his introduction of the nominees for best documentary. His shocked and delayed reaction is causing some Twitter users to discuss his Non-Verbal Learning Disorder diagnosis, which he has spoken publicly about.

In the aftermath that followed, users took to social media to speculate about, react to, condemn and praise Smith's actions.

Some users have supported Smith taking action to protect his wife. Rock's joke commented on the short hairstyle Jada Pinkett Smith retains due to the star's alopecia, a medical condition that causes hair loss, which she has spoken publicly about in recent years.

Jada Pinkett Smith can be seen rolling her eyes after the joke. Some viewers may have noticed live, and live video footage confirms that Will Smith laughed at the joke before he saw his wife's reaction.

"To make a hair joke when Jada is suffering from Alopecia is really kind of gross," social media personality Sean Garret said in a tweet. "Especially to make a joke like that in a room full of her peers. You don't know how that may trigger her."

Some have pointed out that the slap overshadowed the most anticipated wins of the night like "CODA," the first film with a predominantly deaf cast to win best picture and director Ahmir "Quest-

love" Thompson's win for best documentary "Summer of Soul," which Rock announced directly after the altercation.

Critics also suggest the slap overshadowed Smith's win for his portrayal of Richard Williams, father of tennis legends Serena and Venus Williams, in "King Richard." Smith apologized for his actions in his acceptance speech for best actor in a leading role and mentioned he acted out of love.

Will Smith issued a formal apology on Instagram Monday.

"Jokes at my expense are a part of the job, but a joke about Jada's medical condition was too much for me to bear and I reacted emotionally," the post read.

Rock commented on the situation Wednesday evening at the sold-out Boston show of his stand up comedy tour "Ego Death World Tour." Ticket sales for the tour have skyrocketed with StubHub experiencing "more than 25x the daily sales for the past two days," according to Forbes.

"I'm still kind of processing what happened," Rock said to an audience while on stage.

In response to the altercation, The Academy has issued a statement condemning Smith's actions – which violated its code of conduct – and is launching a full investigation. The Los Angeles Police Department issued a statement after the show ended stating they were aware of the altercation, but Rock declined to file a police report.

But Will Smith officially resigned from the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts & Sciences Friday and has already faced consequences like Netflix halting production of a new film he stars in.



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY AUDEN YURMAN | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR

After Will Smith slapped Chris Rock, viewers took to social media to analyze and react to the incident.



With a strong enough current, riders should be able to relax without needing much effort to paddle.

Review: Tidal Basin paddle boats

ANNA BOONE
CULTURE EDITOR

As D.C. residents, it's easy to dismiss the paddle boats on the Tidal Basin as a tourist trap, but the activity actually proved to be one of the best ways to spend an afternoon this cherry blossom season.

For \$32 per boat, up to four people can enjoy paddling, or just coasting, around the Tidal Basin without a time limit until the last boats are due in at 7 p.m. I got on the boat at about 5 p.m. and was met with unforgettable views of the Jefferson Memorial with a golden hour glow and the Washington Monument surrounded by full cherry blossom trees.

The Tidal Basin boathouse sits down a ramp on the edge of the water at 1501 Maine Ave SW. It's one of Boating in DC's seven locations around the District and is accepting riders until mid-October from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily.

My friend and I waited for 15 minutes at the top of the ramp before being called down to the dock, and after paying, an employee gave us a few quick instructions – don't paddle too close to the Jefferson Memorial, stay 10 feet away from the walls and keep the life jackets on. The line for walk-ups

was short when we arrived, but reservations are encouraged for their busier hours from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The employees were friendly and efficient, and I appreciated the quick and no-frills nature of the operation. It's the sort of activity you can do on a whim even if you need to be in and out pretty quickly.

Each boat is equipped with two sets of foot pedals and a steering wheel attached to a stick in between, although ours was a little jammed and hard to turn. We were fully prepared to put in elbow grease to get around the Tidal Basin, but with a steady current on the water we barely broke a sweat. Keep in mind that it might be a little more difficult to paddle around with the boat's max of four people, since two folks will have to just ride along.

The Basin was densely scattered with boats of people enjoying the warm and sunny afternoon, and the area stayed packed for the entire hour we were out on the water. After a long, stressful week, we took this as an opportunity to relax and let our worries float away with the grimy water of the Potomac River.

By the time we were situated in the middle of the Basin, I felt most of my stress from the week melt

Sports

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GAMES OF THE WEEK



WOMEN'S TENNIS
vs. Rhode Island
Saturday | 1 p.m.
The Colonials look to capture
a conference victory against
the Rams.



LACROSSE
vs. Massachusetts
Wednesday | 7 p.m.
GW faces the Minutewomen
before heading to George
Mason on Sunday.

NUMBER CRUNCH

5.49

Baseball's earned run average through the spring slate,
up from its five-year average of 4.50.

Baseball sweeps St. Bonaventure in first conference series

GABE LOPEZ
STAFF WRITER

Baseball won all three home games against St. Bonaventure this weekend in their first conference series of the season.

The Colonials (15-13, 3-0 A-10) opened the series with a 12-1 victory on Friday and kept the momentum, winning 10-2 on Saturday and finishing the sweep with a decisive 15-2 victory on Sunday. The Colonials managed 37 runs throughout the weekend while only giving up five.

Redshirt senior right-handed pitcher Harrison Cohen allowed just one run on four hits in the opener's eight innings, while senior second baseman Noah Levin batted in three runs to close out the series.

Head Coach Gregg Ritchie said he was proud of how committed and seriously the team took each of the three games.

"It's hard to sweep, period – at any time," he said. "And to grind it out like our guys did and come prepared, and they committed themselves to playing their best baseball this weekend and kind of relentlessly."

Game One

Led by Cohen on the mound and redshirt sophomore third baseman Joe Biancone at the plate, the Colonials beat the Bonnies 12-1 Friday.

Junior shortstop Steve DiTomaso, junior right fielder Logan Leax and Biancone all batted in runs in the first inning to start the scoring. Senior catcher Anthony

Frechette, Biancone, DiTomaso and Leax all claimed multiple runs batted in during the match.

The Bonnies scored a single run in the seventh off a single from redshirt sophomore left fielder Jack Putney but could not overcome the Colonials defense.

Cohen lasted eight innings, giving up only one run, four hits and one walk while striking out 11 to collect his fourth win of the season. Sophomore right-handed pitcher Chris Kahler closed out the final inning, giving up no runs and no hits.

Game Two

A quality start by junior right-handed pitcher Connor Harris led the Colonials to a 10-2 victory in the second game of the series.

The offense got off to a slow start with the Colonials scoring only one run in the first inning and two runs in the fifth, but a five-run seventh inning combined with a two-run eighth inning pushed them further ahead of the Bonnies.

The Colonials would finish the day with a .324 batting average after collecting 12 hits in 37 at-bats. Redshirt senior first baseman Derek Ripp, Levin and Leax all had multi-hit and RBI games.

The Bonnies managed single-run innings in the third and sixth but once again fell short to the Colonials defense.

Harris pitched six innings, allowing only two runs on six hits while striking out two for his second win of the season. Graduate right-handed pitcher Trevor Kundl picked up his third save of the



FILE PHOTO BY SYDNEY WALSH | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR

The Colonials produced an offensive juggernaut that overwhelmed the Bonnies all weekend.

Game Three

The Colonials collected a season-high 21 hits to close out the sweep with a 15-2 win Sunday.

Seven Colonials had multiple hits and five batted in two or more

runs. Senior centerfielder Cade Fergus and DiTomaso managed a season-high four hits and three runs each during the onslaught.

Levin and Biancone batted in three runs a piece to lead the Colonials. Biancone hit a three-run homer in the seventh inning, recording the third of the season and second of the series.

GW held their defense with graduate right-handed pitcher Justin Solt giving up a run on five hits in six innings for his third win of the year. The Colonials bullpen gave up only one run and one hit through the final three innings.

Ritchie said none of the wins over the weekend could be attributed to just one player.

Lacrosse picks up second straight win

LIAM O'MURCHU
STAFF WRITER

Lacrosse won their second consecutive game, collecting a win against St. Bonaventure on Sunday afternoon.

The Colonials (4-8, 2-2 A-10) emerged with a 13-10 victory over the Bonnies (1-9, 0-4 A-10) ushered by sophomore attacker Katie Lederman and senior midfielder Tori Hampton, who each had a hat trick. GW rode a nine-goal first half to stymie a St. Bonaventure comeback.

Lederman nabbed her first career hat trick, and Hampton's trio of assists earned her a career high six points on the afternoon. On the Bonnies' side of the pitch, freshman attacker Fiona McGovern scored six goals to lead the visiting offense.

GW started off strong offensively, scoring twice in the first five minutes of the game to control the pace of play. Junior attacker Katelyn Walker opened the scoring just more than a minute into the game on a free-position shot, and Lederman got on the board courtesy of an assist from Hampton.

With a little less than five minutes remaining in the first quarter, senior attacker Sophia Watkinson put GW up 3-0 off a pass by freshman midfielder Emily Mowbray from behind the net. Walker added another goal with three minutes left in the quarter with an underhanded finish as the shot clock approached zero.

The Bonnies finally got on the board with a minute remaining in the opening quarter thanks to a McGovern drive to the net and finish to

cut the GW lead to 4-1 at the end of the first quarter.

The first tally of the second quarter came from Hampton, who received a pass on the halfway line and took it all the way to goal, slotting it past junior goalkeeper Ashley Herrick. But McGovern quickly responded with a goal of her own off a feed from sophomore attacker Abby Hiltz.

GW finished the half with four unanswered goals and led 9-2 at the break. With just under six minutes remaining in the first half, the Colonials extended their lead behind two goals from senior midfielder Kendall Lambert.

Hampton assisted the first score while the second score came off a pass from sophomore midfielder Phoebe Mullarkey. Senior midfielder Alana Greene also got onto the scoresheet, with another assist from Hampton before sophomore midfielder Bailey Aaron scored on a free-position shot to close the half.

The Bonnies found some momentum at the start of the second half, scoring two goals to bring the deficit to 9-4 with 13 minutes left in the third quarter. McGovern got her hat trick on a wrap-around finish before junior midfielder Nora Anderson got a goal of her own 54 seconds later.

Lederman slowed some of the Bonnies momentum with an underhanded finish, but Anderson responded a minute later for St. Bonaventure to bring the GW lead back to five goals. St. Bonaventure continued their strong second half with McGovern converting a free-position shot before Hiltz finished off a chance for the

Bonnies to make the score 10-7 in favor of the Colonials.

Lederman once again replied with a goal to slow the Bonnies' roll, this time giving GW a four-goal advantage heading into the final quarter of play.

The Bonnies came into the fourth quarter with a 3-0 run to open the stanza. Senior attacker Madison Mundener brought the deficit back to three, converting a rebound amid a sea of bodies with 13 minutes left before McGovern scored two more goals to trim the Colonials' advantage to just 11-10.

Hampton stepped up for GW, scoring two consecutive

goals to put the Colonials up 13-10, the final scores of the afternoon.

GW is currently tied for fifth place in the Atlantic 10 as the team approaches the halfway point of conference play. The top four teams make the conference tournament, and the Colonials will look to make their first conference tournament since 2009, when they fell 12-9 to Massachusetts in the first round.

Though Head Coach Jennifer Uehla has been absent from the bench in recent games, assistant coaches Leighann Stauffer, Hayley Sabol and Kelly Layton have led the team in recent games.

The Colonials will play their next three games on the road, starting with a trip to Massachusetts to take on the reigning A-10 champion Minutewomen, who are ranked 18th in the country in both the Inside Lacrosse and IWLCA Coaches Poll.

The Colonials are set to take on Massachusetts for a 1:30 p.m. tipoff Friday.



FILE PHOTO BY ZACH BRIEN

Recent turnover has made Faith Weber one of the most experienced coaches on the team.

Former utility player joins coaching staff

OWEN AVERILL
REPORTER

After claiming a 14-1 record and 2.22 earned run average in the 2021 season, softball alumna Faith Weber is returning to the diamond as a graduate assistant coach.

As an undergraduate utility player, Weber accumulated a 3.64 ERA through her five years at GW while earning a .295 batting average. Weber gained a plethora of honors during her time as a Colonial including the Academic All-American award, the CoSIDA Academic All-District 2 first team and all-conference and all-region honors before graduating.

Weber hit the diamond as a coach in December and has since taken a leadership role with her past teammates.

"I think that my favorite part about the job is just to be around the people," Weber said. "So the dynamics, the relationships just supporting the players that we have on the field. I think that's a pretty big role that I have, which is to be there in support of everything they're able to accomplish."

Weber, who built up a 14-1 record and struck out 98 batters on the mound during the 2021 season, was an integral member of the team, winning the GW Athletics Red Auerbach Award for all-around excellence during her last year.

Weber, despite her recent position on staff, is one of the most experienced on the team

following recent coaching turnover. Head Coach Chrissy Schoonmaker gained the title in 2021

after the departure of ex-Head Coach Shane Winkler and his team in 2021.

Weber said she was grateful for her opportunity to come back as a graduate assistant coach.

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Weber said she will continue supporting the team throughout the season by getting the field ready for the team and giving them the necessary tools to be successful. She said she hopes to continue

growing as a coach and supporting the team as best as she can.

"I played with a lot of them and there's a few new kids," Weber said. "It's cool to just continue to build those relationships on the field and also off the field just to be around."

Schoonmaker said Weber hit the ground running in her new position as a jack of all trades, since she has been helping the coaching staff on the road. She said Weber has also been helping the team practice their arm circles and base plays to strengthen their offense.

"There's a lot of things that go into coaching that are not just Xs and Os on the field, but she does a great job with that," Schoonmaker said. "She's helping us relay some signals. She's committed and whatever we ask her to do, Faith is bought in."

Schoonmaker said Weber's experience as a recent graduate allows her to understand the demands the team may be battling or looking to balance their life as student athletes.

"She was an outstanding GW player and she's gonna be an outstanding coach if that's the route she decides to pursue," Schoonmaker said.

Graduate student utility player Sierra Lange, who played with Weber for four years, said Weber is source of a positive leadership for the team, keeping the team energy and motivation high throughout games.



ERIN LEONE | PHOTOGRAPHER

The Colonials finished the first half with four unanswered goals, helping them eventually seal the victory.