

The GW Hatchet

Opinions

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What's inside

Students praise food variety, criticize wait times at Foggy Bottom's first dining hall in seven years

AMELIA ANSELL
REPORTER

CADE MCALLISTER
REPORTER

After GW opened a dining hall in Foggy Bottom for the first time in seven years earlier this month, students said the venue is a convenient spot for quality food, but low capacity and unclear nutrition labels keep it from maximizing its potential.

Located in the basement area of the newly renovated Thurston Hall, the dining area features an assortment of options ranging from smaller snacks to larger meals during three dining periods each weekday and brunches and dinners on weekends. Twenty-five students said the hall offers a wide array of affordable meal options in a comfortable community space, but some criticized the high wait times that low capacity can cause and a lack of thorough signage for allergen-free food.

Vice President of Business Services Seth Weinschel said in an interview the dining hall can serve 750 to 800 students during four-and-a-half hour dinner periods, which bring in more diners than the hall's breakfast and lunch periods. He said the communal space has brought GW community members together to share affordable meals in a dining hall for the first time since officials closed GW's previous dining hall, J Street, in 2016.

The hall offers staples like pizza and pasta daily, but Thurston's nine dining stations switch up most of its options each day, with chefs building menus that include deli-style sandwiches, international cuisines and more.

Students pay a set fee upon entering the dining hall, which charges \$8 during breakfast, \$10 during lunch and \$12 during dinner



CHUCKIE COPELAND | PHOTOGRAPHER
The dining hall offers staples like pizza and pasta daily, but its nine dining stations switch most of its options each day, with chefs building menus that include deli-style sandwiches, international cuisines and more.

before tax, and they can take as much food as they want while inside. Most students said Thurston's dining hall has high-quality food and is relatively affordable, but some criticized operational elements of the area, with a handful of diners citing long wait times and unclear food labels.

Thurston's dining hall has an official seating capacity of 225, which lags behind dining halls on Georgetown, American and Howard universities campuses, despite the student populations of those colleges being less than GW's.

Freshman Kate Amistoso, a Thurston resident who usually goes to the dining hall twice a day, said the relatively low capacity was "frustrating" when she's on a busy schedule. She said she's excited to be able to get quicker and smaller items like fruit on the pre-paid, unlimited swipe plan next semester without having to pay an \$8 entry fee.

Beginning next semester,

the University will fully transition to its new dining plan, which will give unlimited dining swipes and a GWorld dining dollar stipend for freshmen for a total cost of at least \$2,700. Upperclassmen will be able to choose from eight plans, which range from the unlimited dining swipes plan to the \$1,670 "legacy" plan that mirrors the pre-existing dining dollar plan.

Students shared mixed feelings on the transition — some prefer the flexibility of dining dollars so they're not overly reliant on Thurston for meals, and others enjoy the convenience of more swipes and quick access to smaller snacks and meals.

Emma Curry, a freshman majoring in journalism and mass communication, said dining hall staff helped her find a meal that fit her gluten-free diet, part of what has made for a positive dining experience overall.

"They were very accommodating," Curry said. "When I asked, they were

like, 'Do you want a chef to walk you around and help you out?'"

The dining hall features an allergen-free station called Pure Eats, which offers products free of gluten, milk, peanuts, tree nuts, egg, shellfish, fish and soy, according to GW's website.

Kayla Greenfeld, a freshman majoring in international affairs, said she prefers Thurston's dinner offerings over lunch and breakfast because a wider variety of foods are available in the evening.

Officials plan to open a second all-you-can-eat dining hall in Shenkman Hall for the spring semester after months of delays due to supply chain issues. Officials planned to convert the basement of District House into one of three all-you-can-eat dining halls in Foggy Bottom, but they deviated from those plans over the summer in favor of a traditional vendor set up, citing supply chain issues as among the reasons for the delays.

MFA malpractice compensation surges as insurance rates rise

GRACE CHINOWSKY
CONTRIBUTING NEWS
EDITOR

SOPHIA GOEDERT
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

The Medical Faculty Associates' malpractice compensation costs — expenses for legal payouts and insurance premiums and reserves — have surged over the last three years despite a drop in legal claims and payouts, reflecting a national trend of rising malpractice insurance costs.

The MFA — a group of physicians and faculty from the School of Medicine and Health Sciences and physicians at the GW Hospital — spent \$14.6 million on malpractice compensation in 2022, a 114 percent jump over the past three years, according to data that officials presented to faculty senators earlier this month. MFA malpractice compensation increased by more than \$7 million from 2019, including a \$600,000 increase from last year — a trend that officials partly attribute to rising insurance costs, despite dwindling malpractice lawsuit filings against the MFA in the same period.

Payouts and filed claims for malpractice lawsuits haven't demonstrated growth similar to that of the MFA's malpractice compensation, according to D.C. Superior Court records and data from the National Practitioner Data Bank. The number of malpractice lawsuits filed against the MFA and the amount of malpractice payment reports in medical facilities across D.C. and the country have decreased since 2019, the records and data show.

One of the 12 lawsuits

filed against the MFA in 2019 and one of the 19 cases filed in 2020 reached settlements, but all closed cases filed since 2021 were dismissed, court records show.

Court records do not reveal how much the settlements were worth.

The MFA, a University-operated nonprofit, lost nearly \$80 million by the end of the fiscal year in June, and the rise in malpractice compensation costs accounted for an extra \$7.8 million in expenses for the nonprofit that was not a factor in 2019.

University spokesperson Josh Grossman said the MFA's malpractice expenses include several years of "historical claims," and include insurance premiums and "reserve true ups" — money set aside by insurance companies for lawsuits not yet filed or settled — from previous years. He said overall insurance costs jumped during the pandemic, but the MFA's premiums and reserve costs have not increased substantially over the last year — in line with the MFA's overall malpractice compensation costs over the last year.

"In general, the cost of insurance has increased over the past few years across most lines since the pandemic," Grossman said. "MFA experienced very little increase in premiums and reserve requirements over the last year."

Grossman said the medical malpractice insurance market has "high confidence" in the MFA. He declined to specifically say why the MFA's malpractice compensation has increased since 2019 or how it relates to the number of lawsuit payouts or claims.

Lerner reopens Monday after five months of HVAC system renovations

GRACE CHINOWSKY
CONTRIBUTING NEWS EDITOR

The Lerner Health and Wellness Center will reopen to students Monday after being closed for "extensive" heating, ventilation and cooling system renovations since May, officials announced in an email Friday.

The email states that officials

updated the HVAC systems in the building's facilities, including the gym, pool and basketball courts during the five-month closure. Officials said the gym will be limited to students for the time being, and that faculty and staff with paid memberships will have access to the gym "later" this academic year.

Officials said they closed the

temporary workout room they installed in the University Student Center in June on Friday so officials can return the equipment to Lerner.

"We look forward to welcoming you back into the Lerner building and continuing to get to know you as together we continue to focus on your physical well-being needs," the email

states.

The email states officials encourage non-student community members to take advantage of the "physical well-being opportunities" offered by GW's Human Resource Management & Development Office while access is limited to students. During the closure, officials offered alternative exercise spaces

to students and the rest of the community in the University Student Center, District House and West Hall.

"Thank you to the thousands of students who joined us for a group fitness class, worked out in one of our other on-campus gyms, and came to St. Patrick's for free/open play in September and October," the email states.

GW paying millions to controversial online program management company

DANIEL PATRICK
GALGANO
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Officials have continued to pay millions of dollars to an outside company for online graduate course materials as the number of students enrolled in online courses at GW increases despite criticism from federal officials around the ambiguity of agreements like GW's.

Officials paid more than \$18 million in the last fiscal year to 2U, Inc. — one of the largest educational online program management companies in the country — to make a series of graduate certificate programs and boot camps, according to GW's Form 990 — an annual public disclosure filed with the Internal Revenue Service. Experts in higher education said online learning companies like 2U have come under criticism by industry and government leaders because of their long-term contracts that often lock schools into paying off much of the revenue from their virtual courses.

University spokesperson Josh Grossman declined to say how long the University's contract with 2U will last and what types of programs they

provide to graduate students.

"Flexibility is also important to students who may want to benefit from a GW education from other parts of the country or world. Partnering with 2U and other online education companies enables the University to offer innovative education that meets the needs of lifelong learners in a variety of fields," Grossman said in an email.

The number of students enrolled in online courses at GW increased by about 450 students between 2018 and 2021, according to the University's enrollment dashboard. The number of enrolled online graduate students increased by about 600 students, while the number of online nondegree students — like those enrolled in non-degree "boot camps" — increased by 26 students in the same period, according to the University's enrollment data.

The data does not show how many of these students are enrolled in courses that 2U had a role in making or what enrollment looks like in the 2022 academic year.

In its quarterly report to investors in July, 2U officials said its total revenue and course enrollment dropped by about two percent year-

over-year and it laid off about 20 percent of its employees as a result.

The U.S. General Accountability Office, a government auditing agency, released a report in May criticizing the higher education industry's relationship with online program management companies like 2U, because of the vague details about profit-sharing and time frames in the contracts that higher education institutions sign with them.

A report published in 2019 by The Century Foundation, a New York-based think tank, found most of 2U's arrangements with universities revolve around tuition-sharing agreements, where the institution agrees to pay 2U 40 to 65 percent of the tuition generated from their courses for a six to 10-year period on average. The contracts are often unclear about who controls the course materials and student information, according to the report.

Higher education experts said that as companies like 2U have come under scrutiny from government agencies and politicians, many colleges and universities are moving away from contracting outside firms to make their online coursework, but



MAYA NAIR | PHOTOGRAPHER
Online graduate student enrollment increased by about 600 students, while the number of online, nondegree students increased by 26 in the same period, according to institutional data.

instead use their own faculty and technology teams to build online materials.

Joshua Kim, the director of online programs and strategy at Dartmouth College, said competition among companies that provide online courses has increased over the past few years be-

cause of increased interest in their courses. He said this competition has led many institutions to hire their own administrators and faculty to design online courses, instead of relying on companies focused on dozens of projects in a volatile industry with fluctuating enrollment

numbers.

"Experts in learning technologies are really key and critical for universities to be resilient — it's very important that universities build that capacity," he said. "So what I'm seeing is that universities are trying to work to bring that capability in-house."

News

THIS WEEK'S EVENTS

CAREER TALK: OPPORTUNITIES AT STATE
 Tuesday, Nov. 1 | 4 p.m. EDT | Elliott School of International Affairs | Free
 Attend an event with senior foreign service officials who will talk about opportunities in the civil and foreign services for undergraduate and graduate students.

PROTESTS IN IRAN: WHAT'S DIFFERENT THIS TIME?
 Tuesday, Nov. 1 | 2:15 p.m. EDT | Online | Free
 Join a panel of experts as they discuss the recent protests against the government in Iran and how they are different from those in the past.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY
 Oct. 29, 1957

GW planned to award one acre of land on the moon to a GW student or alum in attendance at the 1957 Homecoming Ball, The Hatchet reported.

GW must boost research and academic profile to join AAU, experts say

FIONA BORK
 REPORTER

KELLEN HOARD
 REPORTER

University leaders tabbed joining the Association of American Universities as a top priority in GW's new presidential profile, but experts said GW needs to increase the amount of competitive federal research grants it receives and strengthen its academic programs to get there.

The AAU, an invite-only organization composed of 65 leading research universities in the United States and Canada, facilitates regular meetings with leaders from member institutions to share best practices for acquiring research funding, employing highly awarded and cited faculty and lobbying the federal government on education policy. Experts in higher education said membership is difficult to acquire and maintain because of the types of grants and programs an institution must have to be a member, but the prestige and connections with other elite universities are worth the effort, despite the nearly \$140,000 annual membership fee.

Published in early October, GW's presidential

profile – which lays out the characteristics, experiences and priorities the search committee members want to see in presidential candidates – states the University's goal to become the first AAU member in the District will “likely take years to achieve.” The profile states the first step to becoming a member would be to become one of the top 50 ranked schools in U.S. News and World Report's annual college ranking list – where GW is currently at No. 62.

The presidential profile also states that GW's next president should strengthen the School of Medicine and Health Sciences by increasing the amount of funding it receives from the National Institutes of Health and growing its research and clinical capacities, which could increase its chances at joining the AAU.

“In summary, GW's next president will need to convey unparalleled ambition for the University, a commitment to and the ability to raise the resources to fund this new agenda, and work collaboratively to realize that ambition with all of GW's key constituents as partners,” the profile states.

Interim University President Mark Wrighton served as chairman of the AAU from 2004 to 2005.

Invitation to the AAU is also reliant on the money the University can bring in from outside grants and the number of faculty who are members of the National Academy of Sciences, the number of faculty who receive prestigious academic awards and fellowships and the amount of research citations the University can produce, according to the AAU's website. A spokesperson for the AAU declined to comment on the AAU's membership criteria or on the work it conducts with universities.

University spokesperson Josh Grossman did not return a request for comment on GW's efforts to join the AAU.

Seven of GW's 12 peer schools are currently members of the AAU, including the universities of Pittsburgh, Southern California and Rochester and Boston, New York, Tufts and Tulane universities. In its annual national college ranking list published in September, Forbes ranked GW one spot below NYU and 36 and 54 spots above the University of Rochester and Tulane University, respectively.

David Peterson, the Lucken professor of political science and member of the Iowa State University faculty senate executive



AUDEN YURMAN | SENIOR PHOTO EDITOR

Published in early October, GW's presidential profile states the University's goal to become the first AAU member in the District will “likely take years to achieve.”

board, said being a member of the AAU brings prestige to an institution by association because of the number of large research institutions that are already members.

“Being in the club is a sort of signal and an indicator of research prestige,” Peterson said.

The AAU website does not lay out the specific numbers or benchmarks that prospective members should meet, but Peterson

said the factors the AAU considers in determining membership does not fit for all types of research institutions. He said some institutions are increasingly starting to put more resources into financial aid and scholarships instead of other programs, which may help schools improve the quality of their student bodies, but not be as prestigious to the AAU.

“The AAU doesn't consider things like four-year

graduation rates,” he said. “It doesn't consider things like the percentage of students with Pell grants.”

Bernard Arulanandam – the vice provost of research at Tufts University, said invitation to the association brings higher status not just to the university, but also to students.

“The fact that we have this distinction further provides the marketability of our graduates,” Arulanandam said.

Officials resolve delayed payments to graduate assistants that exacerbated students' debt for years

ERIKA FILTER
 ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Officials say they resolved payment delays for graduate students working as teaching and research assistants, which students working in the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences said lasted up to six weeks dating as far back as 2017.

Sarah Wagner, a professor of anthropology and faculty senator, said during a Faculty Senate meeting earlier this month that poor management and understaffing in GW's “central financial administration” delayed the stipends and salary payments. University spokesperson Josh Grossman said payment processing issues have been resolved through “streamlined processes” and “staffing support,” but graduate assistants in at least three CCAS departments told The Hatchet they had to borrow from family members and take on debt until GW paid them.

Grossman declined to say when stipend delays began, how many times stipends have been delayed or how

many students have been affected. He also declined to say whether any departments or programs experienced more delays than others.

The University provides graduate student assistants – a position comprised of teaching and research assistants – with two regular payments, a stipend payment and a salary payment, according to the Office of Graduate Assistantships and Fellowships.

Graduate assistants receive monthly stipends “to cover living expenses,” and payments should be received on or by the first business day of each month, according to the website. Graduate student assistants at GW cannot hold multiple assistantships, and they cannot seek other jobs “unless together they total no more than 20 hours per week,” the website states.

Students said they had to deplete their savings, borrow from friends and relatives and move back in with their parents to weather GW's payment delays when bills like rent payments were due. Three students who worked in CCAS said the delays last-

ed for as long as six weeks and during the summer months, with experiences dating back to 2017.

The Hatchet granted graduate student assistants anonymity and will not disclose the departments where they have worked due to concerns about potential retribution and to protect their financial privacy.

One teaching assistant's stipends were delayed three separate times since the fall 2019 semester.

She said her annual stipend is about \$17,000, and her annual salary is about \$9,500. She said her one-time summer 2022 payment from an endowment was delayed by six weeks, forcing her to rely on her savings from the last two years to cover her living expenses.

“I'm losing out on money,” she said. “We're just expected to wait.”

She said if a payment from one monthly cycle is delayed, it often won't arrive until the first of the next month, leaving about 30 days of financial uncertainty.

She said the stipends are

not enough for students to build up savings to withstand potential delays on top of paying bills.

Another student waited 15 days after her payday to receive her stipend in September 2019 and in August 2020, according to her emails with department heads and departmental directors of graduate studies. She said she paid rent late in October 2019 and took on credit card debt as a result of the delays.

“I fortunately have a nice landlord, but not everyone does,” she said.

GW delayed payment for another student five times since 2017, according to his emails with department heads and departmental directors of graduate studies. He said a payment covering his tuition for a summer language fellowship abroad and a stipend for his living expenses on the trip did not go through until after he already returned from the program at the end of the summer.

“It's demeaning, and it's frustrating, and you just feel kind of powerless about it,” he said.

CRIME LOG

PUBLIC DRUNKENNESS

2000 Block of H Street
 10/23/2022 – 12:08 p.m.
 Closed Case
 GW Police Department officers responded to a report of an intoxicated non-GW-affiliated male subject. D.C. Fire and Emergency Medical Services officials responded and transported him to the GW Emergency Room.
Case closed.

DISORDERLY CONDUCT

Duques Hall
 10/26/2022 – 11:49 a.m.
 Closed Case
 GWPD officers responded to a report of a male subject knocking over trash cans and screaming inside the lobby. GWPD issued the subject a bar notice and escorted him off campus.
Subject barred.

URINATING IN PUBLIC

2100 Block G Street
 10/24/2022 – 1:13 p.m.
 Closed Case
 GWPD officers observed an unknown female subject not affiliated with GW urinating in public. Officers issued a bar notice to the subject and sent her on her way.
Subject barred.

THEFT II/FROM BUILDING

2136 G Street
 10/25/2022 – Unknown
 Open Case
 GW staff members reported multiple electronic items stolen from a building.
Case open.

LIQUOR LAW VIOLATION

Mitchell Hall
 10/28/2022 – 1:39 a.m.
 Closed Case
 GWPD officers responded to a report of two intoxicated female students. EMErg responders arrived on the scene and transported one student to the GW Emergency Room after performing a medical evaluation.
Referred to MPD.

LIQUOR LAW VIOLATION

Shenkman Hall
 10/28/2022 – 1:35 a.m.
 Closed Case
 GWPD responded to a report of an intoxicated male student. EMErg responders arrived on the scene and transported the student to the GW Emergency Room.
Referred to DSA.

— Compiled by Tyler Krambeer

SNAPSHOT

DANIELLE TOWERS | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR



Visitors play with goats and other animals at Cox Farm's Fall Festival in Centreville, Virginia Friday.

ODECE official to focus on cultural programming, social justice education

OLIVIA EMERSON
REPORTER

An official who joined the Office of Diversity, Equity and Community Engagement in June will focus on fostering community among cultural student organizations and educating students about social justice through University events.

GW hired Eunice “Eunz” Dollete in April as assistant director for cultural programming and social justice education – a new position dedicated to organizing events like heritage celebrations and creating social justice education opportunities, like workshops for students to have safe, open conversations. Dollete said their main goal will be to bring students together and facilitate conversations about different cultures in a space where students can “ask questions” and engage in “healthy dialogue.”

Dollete said they hope to create a safe space in the Multicultural Student Services Center where students in cultural organizations and across campus can discuss social issues that impact marginalized communities, like cancel culture and cultural appropriation during Halloween. They said they aim to continue

hosting MSSC events like Breaking Bread, a weekly dinner where students discuss issues like cultural appropriation and gender identity.

“Cultural programming really invites students to be able to celebrate and honor one another’s expression and traditions and to be able to create spaces where we can learn about each other’s different cultures, traditions and backgrounds,” Dollete said.

Prior to working for GW, Dollete worked as an academic success adviser at Clark University in Massachusetts, their alma mater. They said they primarily worked with undergraduate students who encountered academic struggles and identity-based and mental health-related challenges.

Dollete said they plan to host social justice retreats for student leaders next semester, where students from different backgrounds can come together to build strategies and skills related to social justice work, like organizing events and combatting burnout. Dollete said they encourage all students, even if they’re not affiliated with a cultural student organization, to participate in these events.

“Regardless of whether

or not you come to the Multicultural Student Services Center, how often you join us here, I am situated here for a reason to be able to have sort of an accessible way to interface with students regularly, to be a visible resource, but also to be able to welcome anybody through our door and say, ‘Hey, please come join our program, come be a part of this,’” Dollete said.

Dollete said they plan to meet with students in cultural organizations and other on-campus organizations like fraternities and sororities, the Student Association and academic- or religious-centered organizations.

Senior Gabriel Young, the president of the Philippine Cultural Society, said Dollete has offered to set up one-on-one meetings at the MSSC when he needs “a second ear” and help with logistical aspects of running his organization, like finding on-campus spaces to host events.

“It was just so touching because they provided that much needed security, validation and educational aspect to our historical event from an administrator that our organization has not previously had,” he said.

Sophomore Stephanie Animdee, the director of the Taste of Africa event for



RACHEL SCHWARTZ | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR

The University hired Eunice “Eunz” Dollete for the brand-new position, which focuses on organizing events like heritage celebrations and creating social justice education opportunities, like workshops for students to have safe, open conversations.

the African Student Association, said ASA leaders introduced themselves to Dollete in a meeting earlier this month and believes Dollete will be “very beneficial” to the University community.

“It’s difficult as an African student to try to find a faculty member or even students in your class who relate to you,” Animdee said. “So the fact that they do have someone in this po-

sition really does make a lot of our members happy.”

Senior Anastasia Fetisova, the president and founder of the Russian Speaking Association, said she hopes to initiate healing sessions for Ukrainian students and Russian students where they can come together and talk to counselors about conflict in their home countries. She said having a specific position to help cultural organi-

zations can help jumpstart their healing sessions and other events they felt other University offices would not have prioritized.

“It’s always good to know that some adult in the GW administration is there for you because when I started all of this, everything that is now in our institution and in our schedule was created by me from scratch, from nothing,” Fetisova said.



FILE PHOTO BY ARIELLE BADER

Center leaders said the space is designed to welcome researchers across institutions as part of an “affiliated investigators program,” where faculty at D.C. universities can apply to perform collaborative research with the Whitman-Walker team.

GW partners to advance HIV research in Southeast D.C. facility

ANNA ZELL
REPORTER

CRISTINA STASSIS
STAFF WRITER

Milken Institute School of Public Health professors are collaborating with a D.C.-based health institute to build an HIV research center that is set to open in southeast D.C. in early 2024.

The National Institutes of Health granted the center a \$2 million award earlier this month to aid the construction of the new facility. GW officials are continuing their long-term partnership with the Whitman-Walker Institute – a D.C.-based HIV research and health center – to triple current patient capacity in the Max Robinson Research Center, a biomedical HIV research facility in Ward 8.

Jonathon Rendina – the principal investigator of the project, an associate research professor of epidemiology in Milken and the senior director of research at Whitman-Walker – said the NIH grant allows researchers to expand the Max Robinson Research Center with an additional 10,000 square feet of research space to advance prevention, treatments and trial drugs to alleviate the effect of the disease in neighborhoods of D.C. that are most heavily impacted by HIV, like Ward 8.

Rendina said the center, which is named after a local resident and the first Black national news anchor who died of AIDS-related causes in 1988, is based in the Anacostia neighborhood and serves about 5,000 patients each year. The Max Robinson Center was established in April of 1993, according to the Whitman-Walker website.

“The goal of the facility is to bring together researchers at GW and hopefully over time researchers at other institutions in D.C. to

come to Whitman-Walker’s building, and to conduct research there within the communities in those neighborhoods,” Rendina said.

GW and the Whitman-Walker Institute collaborated in 2021 to conduct HIV clinical trials and performed a long-term study to improve care and treatment for individuals living diagnosed with HIV in the District. GW was also one of the first institutions to administer doses of the mRNA HIV vaccines to human test subjects in February.

More than 12,000 D.C. residents are currently living with HIV, but the number of new cases in the District has dropped by 61 percent since 2011, according to the Annual Epidemiology and Surveillance Report from D.C. Health in 2019.

“We’ll really be expanding to try to be most inclusive of folks that are living in the southeast D.C. region, folks that live in the northwest will still have some of our existing sites to go to to participate in research as well as the range of other universities that exist in northwest D.C.,” Rendina said.

Rendina said the research center will house an internship program for Milken undergraduate and graduate students beginning in the spring semester of 2023.

“We really see it as an amazing space for applied research, training and particularly applied research training in collaboration with communities,” Rendina said.

Rendina said the space is also designed to welcome researchers across institutions as part of an “affiliated investigators program,” where faculty at D.C. universities can apply to perform collaborative research with the Whitman-Walker team.

“So the goal here is really to make a space where

researchers can connect better with communities to understand what the research needs are and to propose and conduct studies that are designed to address those needs,” Rendina said.

Experts in HIV care and research said the facility will grant researchers access to a larger patient pool and an expansion on their research, which could support efforts to find a long-term cure for HIV.

Patricia Cioe, an associate professor of behavioral and social sciences at Brown University and an HIV researcher, said researchers are still looking for long-term treatment for HIV. She said issues like adherence to HIV treatment regimens and access to HIV care are also vital for officials to research and address to properly treat the HIV crisis.

She said the NIH grant will allow researchers to draw from a larger population of patients for research and hopefully treat more people. Cioe said that care for patients with HIV has always been based on clinical trials, so a new research center provides opportunities to further expand research.

Sergei Nekhai, a professor of medicine and the deputy director of the Sickle Cell Center at Howard University, said a new research space where testing opportunities are available will create additional opportunities like drug trials and continued research for a cure.

He said there isn’t one single treatment for HIV but the antiviral medication Truvada is a common treatment. Nekhai said the research center would increase opportunities for those with HIV to participate in clinical research that would help develop a fully functional cure for HIV.

“We’re still far away from an effective cure,” Nekhai said. “So for now, there is also a semi-functional cure.”

Faculty members incorporating virtual reality in classroom education

CAITLIN KITSON
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

RACHEL MOON
REPORTER

In the basement of Corcoran Hall, a professor and a student are developing a virtual reality simulation to allow students to virtually travel through outer space.

Sylvain Guiriec, an associate professor of astrophysics and an astrophysicist at NASA Goddard Space Flight Center, said he and a student are coding a virtual reality program that allows astronomy classes to view celestial bodies like the Milky Way galaxy through a virtual reality simulation. Other professors in the computer science department and the surgery department in the School of Medicine and Health Sciences are also working to introduce virtual reality technology, like virtual reality headsets, into courses to immerse students in visuals that are relevant to their curriculum.

“I’m an astrophysicist so it will be implemented in introductory astronomy classes, not the advanced ones, really for the students who are not necessarily physicists,” Guiriec said. “I think it’s more important for them because we can show really a lot of basic things.”

Guiriec said they hope to improve the simulation this academic year to allow multiple students to each use a headset to be in the simulation at once so a professor can guide them through the experience. He said the program currently only has access to one virtual reality headset but plans to acquire more funding to obtain two to three more this year.

“We can actually have multiple users using the virtual reality environment with an instructor who controls the visit,” he said.

Guiriec said the vir-

tual reality program can be adapted to disciplines outside of astrophysics, like history, to allow students to virtually experience visuals and events relevant to their courses, like historic battles.

Adellar Irankunda, a senior majoring in astronomy and astrophysics who is working on the program with Guiriec, said the program provides astronomy students with experiential learning opportunities that are usually inaccessible.

“Astronomy is a very abstract concept,” he said. “You can read it in textbooks and you can also watch media on it, but things are explained to you and you don’t really get a first hand understanding for it because you can’t really go out into space.”

Hurriyet Ok, a professorial lecturer of computer science, said he received 13 Meta Quest 2 virtual reality headsets during the summer through a VR learning grant funded by Meta and Unity, a gaming software company, for his Augmented and Virtual Reality course.

“The moment they have their headset and put it on their head, they are mesmerized and amazed by this 3D world,” he said.

Ok said the students in the course, which is open to undergraduate and graduate students in the computer science department, will use the headsets in conjunction with Unity’s virtual reality software to design their own virtual reality applications.

“Through Unity, they learn how to create what I call their ‘dream story, dream journey,’ and through that they create their first virtual reality application,” he said.

Keith Mortman, the chief of the division of thoracic surgery at the GW Hospital and an associate professor of surgery at GW, said he utilizes virtual reality to educate medical students and

patients as they prepare to conduct surgery to remove tumors.

“They got a much better understanding of the anatomy and what was required of me to take out that mass safely,” he said.

Mortman said officials have discussed incorporating virtual reality materials into SMHS’ curriculum, specifically in first-year gross anatomy courses.

Virtual reality experts said the devices can simulate real-life situations in classrooms and provide alternative educational materials for students with learning disabilities and remote students to make higher education more engaging.

Sammy Popat, the interim director of the Mixed Augmented Virtual Reality Innovation Center at the University of Maryland, said virtual reality materials enable instructors to simulate emergency situations for medical students, like responding to a gunshot wound, that could not be recreated in a classroom otherwise.

“You’re actually being put in that position and seeing how quickly and how well you respond, and effectively learning that there might be some strengths and weaknesses to how you would actually act or react in that situation,” he said.

Andrea Stevenson Won, an assistant professor of communication at Cornell University who runs Cornell’s Virtual Embodiment Lab, said virtual reality technology can be an alternative to Zoom meetings for professors who want to immerse remote students in the same content when conducting group activities.

“I think those can offer things like the ability for people to do group activities with shared content in ways that Zoom doesn’t support in exactly the same way,” she said.



JENNIFER IGBONOBA | PHOTOGRAPHER

Sylvain Guiriec, an associate professor of astrophysics and an astrophysicist at NASA Goddard Space Flight Center, said he and a student are coding a virtual reality program that will allow astronomy classes to view celestial bodies like the Milky Way galaxy.

Opinions

WHAT THE UNIVERSITY WON'T TALK ABOUT THIS WEEK

The amount of the Medical Faculty Associates' medical malpractice payouts since 2019. p. 1

FROM GWHATCHET.COM/OPINIONS

"GW should expand the pass/no pass option to freshmen for their first semester so they can spend more time enjoying the university where they are trying so desperately to succeed."

— ANAYA BHATT on 10/27/2022

Crowded dining halls could risk food security through GW's new meal plan

I never thought I would be turned away from one of GW's newly opened dining halls empty handed, but that's exactly what happened when I tried eating at Thurston Hall earlier this month. GW's newest dining venue is crowded, mismanaged and fails to give students the food options they need and deserve.

Silas Kennedy
Opinions Writer

GW's new all-you-care-to-eat dining halls and meal swipe system will replace its current dining dollar plan, which gives students a limited amount of money compared to the expensive price of eating in DC. The swipe system will commence in the spring semester, but the first dining hall to open in Foggy Bottom lacks the capacity to seat more than 225 students, the rest of whom are often refused entry until the space clears. If the University cannot address and resolve this issue, students will be cut off from their basic right to accessible food options when they want to eat on campus. Before implementing the meal swipe plan, officials must open the dining hall in Shenkman Hall on time in January to give students the space they need to eat.

Delays and shortcomings have plagued the rollout of GW's new all-you-care-to-eat dining system since 2021. Officials announced last year that four reimaged dining halls would be open for the current fall semester. By the start of the 2022-23 school year, only one — The Eatery at Pelham Commons — was open on the Mount Vernon Campus, where only a small fraction of undergraduate students live. While The Eatery may serve students on the Vern, it's unreasonable to expect students living in Foggy Bottom to take a round trip on the Mount Vernon Express just for breakfast, lunch and dinner. The Foggy Bottom dining halls



MAURA KELLY-YUOH | STAFF CARTOONIST

— Thurston, Shenkman and District House — should have all been ready for the start of the 2022-23 school year, but officials pushed back the opening dates of the Thurston and Shenkman dining halls and scrapped their original plans for District House. The Thurston dining hall was set for September but opened earlier this month, and Shenkman is set to open in January. The District House dining hall opened in September, but as a restaurant-based system rather than an all-you-can-eat dining hall.

Though Thurston offers relatively affordable meals after opening, the biggest issue has been crowds

and logistics. The capacity for the Thurston dining hall is 225, compared to 675 at American University and 2,300 at Howard University's two dining halls. American and Howard also happen to have lower undergraduate populations than GW — around 8,000 and 9,000 respectively, compared to around 12,000 at GW — which means that our dining halls are tiny both in actual size and in proportion to our student body.

The logistical failures at Thurston speak to GW's complete mismanagement of its dining halls. Students can choose to either sit down and eat or get a to-go box when they

enter the dining hall. To make the most of the advertised all-you-care-to-eat experience, students are taking up the already-limited number of seats to enjoy longer and theoretically unlimited sit-down meals. Officials expect to serve 750 to 800 students during the daily four-and-a-half hour dinner period as if students will take at least an hour to eat — a far cry from the constant flow of customers at quick, accessible venues like Western Market. That leisurely pace may work in the restaurant industry, but that is not the case at GW. Because of the capacity crunch, the dining hall has less of a relaxed "all-you-care-to-

eat" feeling than a "hurry-up-and-eat" and "take-what-you-can-get" atmosphere.

The crowd issues at Thurston already mean that students are not able to eat when they want to, so the longer the Shenkman dining hall remains closed, the more strained Thurston becomes. The switch to a swipe-based system will only make things worse if students cannot eat at the overcrowded dining halls. Freshmen on the meal swipe plan would have less money to spend on other vendors for the semester depending on their meal plan, which cuts dining dollar balances to \$500, \$250 or \$100.

As one of the most well-respected universities in the country, GW must make sure that students have full access to the dining halls when our meal swipe system comes into place. Pushing back the opening of Shenkman yet again while reducing the dining dollar balance under the meal swipe system would risk students' nutritional well-being.

Instead, officials should prevent any further delays to the dining hall rollout, or they can admit they were not ready for the meal swipe system in the first place. GW could still extend our current dining-dollar-only plan to the spring semester to ensure that students can find food outside of the dining halls when they are at capacity, while also making sure Shenkman is fully ready to relieve crowds from Thurston Hall.

The administration cannot allow students to potentially go hungry some nights, and it's not fair that many students rely on one dining hall in Foggy Bottom that seems to always be at or near capacity. Officials need to make smart choices when it comes to the immediate future of dining at GW. Failure is not an option for the administration when it comes to the food security of students.

—Silas Kennedy, a freshman majoring in international affairs and political communications, is an opinions writer.

GW-affiliated health care facilities must be affordable and accessible

STAFF EDITORIAL

After years of negotiation and months of construction, a GW-staffed urgent care unit in Southeast D.C. opened to the public earlier this month. Though it's only one part of the still-developing Cedar Hill Regional Medical Center, the completed urgent care clinic shows that the University can escape the Foggy Bottom bubble for the betterment of the city.

GW's investment in new health care facilities east of the Anacostia River should improve the lives of residents. But the University must leverage its position as a stakeholder in the medical development at St. Elizabeth's East — a 183-acre space of developmental land in Southeast — to ensure Cedar Hill Urgent Care GW Health and the entire medical center offer accessible and affordable health care to the communities it's meant to serve.

Residents of Wards 7 and 8 suffer disproportionately high rates of illnesses from cancer to COVID-19, yet all but one of the city's seven current hospitals — the United Medical Center — is in Northwest. With more health issues but fewer health care centers, Southeast residents die on average almost a decade earlier than residents of whiter and wealthier neighborhoods.

That stark contrast led Mayor Muriel Bowser to partner with the GW

Hospital to expand health care access in Southeast D.C. by building a new hospital. But the hospital would only agree to construct a new facility in Southeast if it could increase the number of beds in its current Foggy Bottom location, which University officials, local residents and staff at the Howard University Hospital all opposed. Bowser, the D.C. Council and the hospital finally reached a deal in 2020 and broke ground on the complex in February this year.

The clinic, which is the first urgent care center to open in Ward 8, will treat nonlife-threatening conditions. But when it finishes construction in 2024, the completed Cedar Hill Medical Center complex will represent an even more dramatic improvement in the services available to the community it serves. While D.C. has stopped the United Medical Center from delivering babies since 2017 due to issues in its screening, clinical assessment and delivery protocols, Cedar Hill will have a newborn delivery and an intensive care nursery. The hospital will also be a Level 3 trauma center that can treat injuries from gunshot wounds or car accidents, the only one east of the Anacostia River.

While new facilities in Wards 7 and 8 are evidently more accessible to residents east of the Anacostia River, they ought to be affordable,

too. If the hospital can't serve the people in the local community without burying them in medical debt, then who really benefits from it?

The employment opportunities these facilities will create should go to people from Wards 7 and 8. The Universal Health Services, School of Medicine and Health Sciences and Medical Faculty Associates staff at both the urgent care clinic and hospital will work in the midst of the 8,233 families in Wards 7 and 8 who live below the poverty line, more than the rest of the city's wards combined. Good paying medical and nonmedical positions can actively create wealth for residents of some of the poorest parts of D.C.

D.C. is more than a backdrop to our college education, and we hope that the opening of Cedar Hill Urgent Care GW Health and the continuing development of the Cedar Hill complex will begin to chip away at decades of systemic neglect of communities east of the Anacostia River. But only a medical facility that puts the health and well-being of our neighbors first with affordable and accessible health care can proudly carry GW's name.

Many of us attend GW to learn how to become global leaders, but the University is showing us that you don't have to look very far from home to make a difference.

Like it or not, it's time to rally behind Democratic candidates for office

As states roll back reproductive rights across the nation, violent attacks target our political leaders and democracy itself seems under threat, the outcome of this year's midterm election will determine the future of this country. Though young, left-leaning voters are growing increasingly disillusioned with the Democratic party, if progressive voters fail to fill government seats with Democrats, then Republican politicians will seize their power to threaten human rights. Whether you like it or not, it's time to rally behind Democratic candidates for office.

Chloe Werner
Opinions Writer

Dwindling support from America's youngest voters, who are more progressive than older generations, has been a looming source of concern for Democratic politicians in this year's midterm elections. Young voters make up a much smaller fraction of early voters in 2022 as compared to the 2020 election.

Many voters feel as if they've given their vote to Democratic politicians who aren't making substantive change — they may seek nothing short of an immediate and total social and economic revolution. Left-leaning voters feel Biden and Democrats are failing to assert their

political power and have grown at odds with the political party that fails to meet their demands despite controlling the White House and Congress.

The sentiment extends to GW's campus — GW Environmental Justice Action Network criticized Biden's minimal effort to eliminate emissions from cars and trucks, and The GW Political Review has argued that Biden failed to use his executive power to protect abortion rights in the wake of the overturn of Roe v. Wade. Even last February, GW's chapter of the Young Democratic Socialists of America bluntly tweeted, "Can we shut up about Joe Biden's f*cking dogs already literally who cares?"

To be clear, I am also disillusioned with Biden and the Democratic party. I haven't forgotten about former U.S. Senate aide Tara Reade's groping accusations against Biden in 2020. And I am both furious and horrified by Democrats' failure to codify abortion rights and declare a climate emergency, support for increased police funding despite an uptick in racially motivated police violence and resistance to changing political systems, like the filibuster, that stall the progress of this country.

The Democratic party does not have all the solutions, but it holds the foundations to make more progressive change than Republicans. Biden has succeeded in passing some major liberal initiatives,

like the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, the first major gun safety legislation Congress had passed in 30 years, and the Inflation Reduction Act, which will cut greenhouse gas emissions by almost 40 percent by 2030. And issues like inflation and high gas prices are largely the result of the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's invasion of Ukraine, both international problems not specific to a failure on the part of Biden or the party.

While the Biden administration hasn't met every voter's expectations, its successes demonstrate the necessary progress that Democratic leadership can create. But Democrats rely on young voters to get elected. The need for college students like ourselves to show up during elections and support Democrat nominees cannot be understated. Despite the understandable, collective disappointment in Democrats, Republican politicians threaten the future of issues from health care to climate change to civil rights in the United States.

With a little more than a week before Election Day, we should focus on the need to defeat Republicans who would threaten our rights instead of causing Democratic losses by discentrifying liberal voters.

—Chloe Werner, a freshman majoring in journalism and mass communication, is an opinions writer.

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Culture

THE SCENE

COMEDY SHOW
Wednesday, Nov. 2 | DC Comedy Clubhouse | \$15
Laugh with talented DMV comedians at a lively comedy show in the heart of Adams Morgan.

DC BEER FEST
Saturday, Nov. 5 | Nationals Park | \$50
Enjoy the warm weather at the annual DC Beer Fest with live music, food trucks and fall seasonal beers from local breweries.

RELEASED THIS WEEK:

NEW SINGLE: "LIFT ME UP" BY RIHANNA

Labor advocates, restaurant management split on initiative to nix tipped wages

JACKSON LANZER
STAFF WRITER

NICK PERKINS
STAFF WRITER

After getting laid off during the pandemic along with many other tipped employees in the service industry, Ryan O'Leary decided to launch an initiative to give tipped workers livable wages.

O'Leary, the chairman of tipped worker advocacy group Committee to Build a Better Restaurant Industry, started working as a tipped employee 11 years ago at Tysons Corner, Virginia before balancing a job at The Hamilton with political organizing just ahead of the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. He said getting laid off due to harsh financial impacts felt by the restaurant industry at the time prompted him to reach out to One Fair Wage, a campaign devoted to ending sub-minimum wages, to start organizing advocacy efforts against the tipped wage system.

"It was high time to reintroduce this and try to get tipped workers in D.C. full wage plus tips on top," he said.

Initiative 82, which O'Leary filed with the D.C. Board of Elections in June, would raise tipped workers' wages by about \$2 per year until they equal D.C.'s standard \$16.10 per hour minimum wage by 2027. In 2018, D.C. voters passed a similar initiative that the D.C. Council overturned, opting for what they said to be better policies to support tipped workers, like creating an any-



O'Leary said the current tipped minimum wage makes personal budgeting for basic weekly needs difficult for tipped workers because their pay is inconsistent depending on factors out of their control. **KIMBERLY COURTNEY | PHOTOGRAPHER**

mous tip line for workers to report stolen wages, which never received funding.

With the elimination of the tipped minimum wage – which totals \$5.35 per hour – back on the D.C. general election ballot, restaurant management and labor advocates are split on the measure. Some welcome an increase to workers' base earnings, while others fear locals may struggle to find tipped

jobs and would earn less from customers who leave less gratuity if the initiative is passed.

O'Leary said the current tipped minimum wage makes personal budgeting for basic weekly needs difficult for tipped workers because their pay is inconsistent depending on factors outside of their control.

He said during his time as a tipped employee, managers seldom provided a tip credit to ensure their

employees earned the equivalent of minimum wage pay for each shift, which is legally required in D.C.

Seven states have implemented the standard minimum wage since 1975, including California, Washington, Oregon, Nevada, Minnesota, Alaska and Montana, all of which have experienced declines in racial and gender pay gaps as well as lower rates of poverty and on the job harassment.

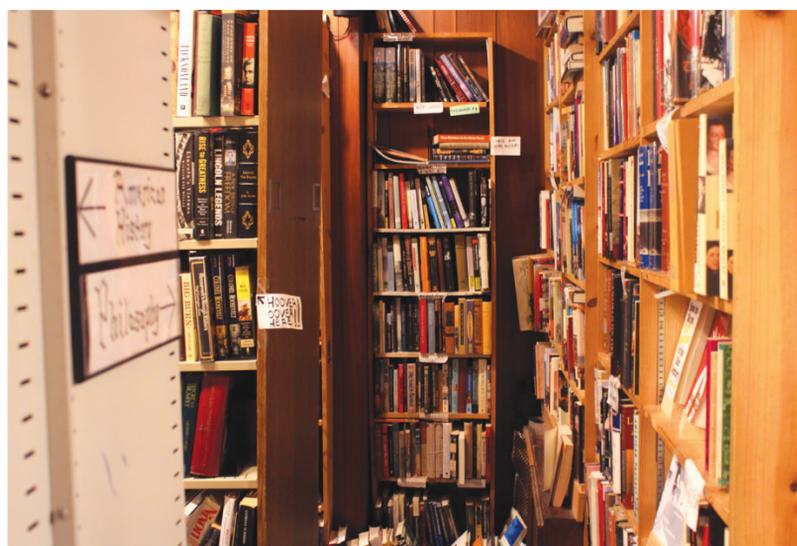
Geoffrey Tracy – the founder of Chef Geoff's restaurant group – said tipped workers can earn beyond the minimum wage threshold, depending on the tips they receive in a given night. He said at his restaurant, employees tend to make \$30 to \$40 per hour.

Tracy said eliminating the tipped wage strips employees of the opportunity to earn higher pay through tips, while others prefer to receive a fixed wage. He said restaurants will need to add a service charge to customers' bills to cover the cost of higher wages, which will reduce gratuities and limit servers to roughly the same earnings.

"For servers, what we'll do is we'll change the way they are paid, meaning that more of their money will come on their weekly or bi-weekly paycheck," Tracy said. "And they will actually have less take home money than what they have right now."

Alex Morash, the director of policy and communications at One Fair Wage who worked as a tipped employee in Rhode Island, said tipped employment is growing across the country, because employers want to pay their staff less money. He said that mindset hurts efforts to increase the minimum wage, like the nationwide Fight for 15 movement that seeks to increase the minimum wage to \$15 per hour nationwide.

"If we don't eliminate the sub-minimum wage soon, we might see all the gains of the Fight for 15 movement of the last 10 years completely eroded," he said.



KRISHNA RAJPARA | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR

Co-owner Kyle Burk said the Twitter account has reeled in customers who wouldn't have visited the store otherwise, including those from outside the District.

Capitol Hill Books connects followers to literature through Twitter account

TARA SUTER
EVENTS EDITOR

At first glance, Capitol Hill Books looks like a small neighborhood bookstore nestled in a tiny white brick building on C Street Southeast, but behind its mellow exterior lies a widespread and adored social media presence.

When you first walk in the store, any book lover will immediately sense the classic aroma of dust motes and aging pages filling the air. But more than a purveyor of published material, Capitol Hill Books connects its customers to literature through humorous exchanges between staff members, photos of gorgeous first editions and bibliophilic thirst traps on their Twitter account, which currently retains more than 50,000 followers.

"I think the people who like it in general are the people who understand that we're not taking it or ourselves too seriously," current co-owner of Capitol Hill Books Kyle Burk said.

The account's following list ranges from prominent journalists like Kaitlan Collins of CNN to politicians like House Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, D-N.Y. An array of D.C. locals also enjoy the bookstore's occasionally snarky tweets, ranging from jokes about the impressively enormous amount of titles they sell to a recent seeming annoyance with Elon Musk.

"Proposed 2022 policy platform: Seize the wealth of billionaire technofascist cosmonauts," the Musk-in-

spired tweet reads.

Mixed in with the humorous posts are sarcastic responses from other Twitter users who join in on the back-and-forth engagement touching on topics ranging from popular media to the store's policy on dogs.

"I know a few of the tweets have gone viral," Burk said. "It seems like it's generally the more political tweets that go viral for whatever reason."

A tweet from the account about the controversy surrounding Dr. Seuss books that were taken off shelves for containing racist content earned more than 70,000 likes in March 2021.

"No, we don't have any of the recalled Dr. Seuss books and why are you suddenly trying to buy them now that you found out they have racist imagery, you weirdos," Capitol Hill Books tweeted.

The store's Twitter account launched in June 2013, but Burk said it didn't become as active until he and his fellow employees started using it about "a year or two later" to entertain each other with jokes about books and literature. As they tweeted more, Burk said the account never received a steep influx in followers, but amassed a steady audience over the last decade.

"From my perception, it doesn't feel like something that's taken off," Burk said. "We've been doing it for many years and slowly growing a following over those years."

Burk said the Twitter account has reeled in cus-

tomers who wouldn't have necessarily visited the store otherwise, including those from outside the District.

"Some people say, 'Oh, I've been following you on Twitter for years, and I finally made it to D.C.,'" Burk said.

Burk said the main mission of the store is to provide the "best books" it can to the community. The employees regularly post photos of new, used, signed and first edition books for sale on the account. He said the employees love books and want to share that love with everyone.

"That's the number one job of any bookstore," Burk said.

Stacy Staggs, a customer at the store from Jackson, said she stopped at the bookstore because of her "love of literature."

"I've been here twice in the past years before," Staggs said. "And I always really liked how small the space was. Reminds me of another bookstore that's in Jacksonville, similar 'crawl space' vibes."

Nikki Grigg, a customer from Chicago, said she trekked out to the bookstore Friday to search for books on D.C. history. Grigg said she went to Capitol Hill Books when she lived in D.C., but the Twitter page and the variety of books has drawn her back to the bookstore.

"They just kind of have everything and you never know what you'll find," Grigg said. "It's really just fun to spend some time in."

Enchanting albums and autumnal drinks to sip through your fall feels

MOLLY GILL
REPORTER

Maybe you're carving pumpkins and listening to folk tunes to lean into autumn, or maybe you've left your scarf at your lover's sister's house and she's still got it in her drawer.

To complement the cool, fall weather, warm up one hand with a cup of coffee as you queue up an equally cozy autumnal album in the other. Peruse our list of warm, comforting seasonal drinks and the music they pair perfectly with – aesthetically and emotionally.

Tigerella's snickers latte + Bon Iver's "For Emma, Forever Ago"

Just like Bon Iver's layered harmonies and tender lyrics, Tigerella's snickers latte is playfully sweet. Notes of bold chocolate and warm caramel whisk you into the autumn weather, providing an escape from the cold. Littered with spell-binding, hollow harmonies, Bon Iver's 2007 debut album creates an autumn dream-scape of fallen leaves, barren forests and nostalgia. Bare instruments and bittersweet, devotional lyrics can be heard throughout the album, deeply layered like ripples of cream and chocolate in a snickers latte. On "Skinny Love," Iver sings of a past lover, "Who will love you? Who will fight? Who will fall far behind?" Iver's voice booms through the track, awakening your senses and commanding attention sweetly, just like Tigerella's snickers latte.

Swing Coffee's fall spice latte + The Neighborhood's "I Love You."

The fall spice latte from Swing's Coffee summons the essence of autumn through a reimagined, classic recipe. The latte tastes like the feeling of a borrowed jacket to brave the season, the first crunch of leaves beneath your boots and your favorite mug. Notes of all-spice, orange and cinnamon accompanied by espresso are reminiscent of The Neighborhood's 2013 debut album "I Love You." On the album's most popular track, "Sweater Weather," lead vocalist Jesse Rutherford sings of a beachy, autumn breeze and a beloved sweater over ambient music and techno drums. Much like the experimental production of "I Love You," the latte's blend of festive, fall spices compliment each other and flow seamlessly. Lead vocalist Jesse Rutherford's rasp tucks you into an autumn dream – one that's filled with morning fog, sweater weather and of course, fall spice lattes.

Tatte's kabocha squash latte + Taylor Swift's "Red"

The pumpkin spice latte is an established autumn icon, and the popular beverage has a brand new sister to discover right on campus. In Tatte's kabocha squash latte, you'll find a sweeter interpretation of its predecessor that substitutes a pumpkin base for one of kabocha squash, a natu-

rally sweet vegetable native to Japan. Hints of nutmeg and espresso layer over the kabocha squash seamlessly, and it tastes like Taylor Swift's "Red," an album that's both bitter and sweet. Each song on Swift's whopping 30 track re-released album transports you into a world of never-ending autumn. Cinnamon and nutmeg swirl across your taste buds, while a mild squash flavor escorts you to a crisp November morning breeze. The squash latte is warm with bold spices that are just as vivid as the "Red" album title suggests.

Peet's Coffee's caramel apple latte + Phoebe Bridgers' "Punisher"

Peet's caramel apple latte presents a bittersweet blend of espresso and caramel with a faint twinge of green apple in every sip. The latte pairs unlikely flavors of sour apple with sweet caramel and a bold, smooth espresso. The drink's unpredictability is echoed in Phoebe Bridgers' 2020 album "Punisher," an emo-folk alternative album with both wistful, finger-plucked guitars and fiery drums. Like a caramel apple latte, the album encapsulates mid-autumn, with Bridgers singing of Halloween and ghosts over melodic and mournful ambient music. The unpredictable nature of "Punisher" tightropes between soft, melancholic music and bitter, harsh lyrics, creating an unlikely balance of breezy and bold, sour and sweet – just like a caramel apple latte.



AVA PITRUZZELLO | PHOTOGRAPHER

A layer of nutmeg and espresso over Tatte's kabocha squash latte taste like Taylor Swift's "Red," an album that's both bitter and sweet.

Sports

GAMES OF THE WEEK



MEN'S WATER POLO
vs. Fordham
Saturday | Noon EDT
The Colonials welcome the Rams to the Smith Center pool as they look to secure a victory in their final conference match.



WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL
at Rhode Island
Friday | 6 p.m. EDT
GW heads to Rhode Island to take on the Rams in their final road conference series of the season.

NUMBER CRUNCH

24:11.6

Senior cross country star Ryan Fowkes' 5-mile time at the A-10 Championship, good for sixth place and a GW program record.

Cross country records dual top-four finishes at A-10 Championship

GABE LOPEZ
CONTRIBUTING SPORTS EDITOR

Men's and women's cross country respectively finished in third and fourth places in the Atlantic 10 Championship meet Saturday, each blowing by more than 100 competing runners from across the conference.

The men's team finished with its highest placement in the A-10 Championship since 2017 with its third place finish, while the women's team settled for fourth place after finishing in first last fall. Senior Ryan Fowkes delivered the standout performance of the meet in Mechanicsville, Virginia, where he broke GW's five-mile record for the second consecutive meet with a blazing time of 24:11.6.

The Colonials competed in six meets each throughout the mid-Atlantic and Midwest this fall, facing competition ranging from other regional teams to nationally ranked powerhouses, like Northern Arizona. The men's team collected two team first place finishes, and the women's team notched three top-two finishes throughout the season.

Fowkes led the men's squad with consistently the fastest times on the team throughout the season, breaking GW's 8K record earlier this month with a 24:18.21 time. Graduate Yukino Parle was the fastest on the women's side, taking the top spot for the team through the fall and running the second fastest 5K time in program history at the championship meet with a 17:12.9.

Check out how both teams rounded out the season Saturday:

Men's five mile

The 137-runner men's race had a packed field, including Loyola Chicago and La Salle, which the NCAA ranks fifth in the Midwest and mid-Atlantic regions, respectively.

The runners got off to a quick start, with all 10 Colonials crossing the 1-mile mark in under 4:47. Fowkes and freshman Michael Bohlke stuck close together, crossing the mile mark in 4:43.3 and 4:43.5, respectively, less than two seconds behind the leader.

Fowkes picked up the pace, passing three runners and running a scorching 4:34.8 over the last 1.03 miles of the race to secure a sixth place finish.

Fowkes' 5-mile finish marked his second record-breaking performance of the season, on the heels of his GW-leading 8K time earlier this month.

Bohlke crossed the finish line with a time of 24:37.7 at the first A-10 Championship meet of his career, setting a new personal record good enough for a 15th-place finish.

The next five Colonials finished in 19th, 26th, 32nd, 41st and 42nd place, securing a third place overall finish with 98 points, 50 behind second place La Salle. The Colonials ran a team average of 24:44.6 over the 5-mile race.

Fowkes and Bohlke both secured All-Conference honors with their runs. This fall marks the first season since 2017 when a pair of men's runners have earned All-Conference honors for cross country.

Women's 5K

The women laced up their spikes looking to defend their



Senior Ryan Fowkes led the men's squad with some of the fastest times on the team throughout the season, breaking GW's 8K record earlier this month with a 24:18.21 time.

A-10 Championship title from last season but were outpaced by Loyola Chicago, La Salle and A-10 rival George Mason.

The 136-runner women's field split from the pack sooner than the men's race with graduate twins Liz and El Mancini from La Salle coming through the one-mile mark two seconds ahead of the competition. They would go on to take first and second place nearly 15 seconds ahead of the third-place finisher.

Parle kept stride with the Loyola runners that she hung

with, running the last mile in 5:34 to finish in seventh place, just six seconds behind the sixth place finisher.

Parle's final time of 17:12.9 was good for the second fastest 5K time in GW program history, besting her previous personal record of 17:45.7. Her run was nearly 15 seconds faster than the previous second best of 17:26.5, set by Margaret Coogan in 2020.

Mitchell, competing in her first A-10 Championship race, finished in 17:40.9, good for a 14th place finish.

The next five Colonials finished in 21st, 30th, 32nd, 52nd and 65th place, securing a fourth place overall finish with 105 points, 13 points behind third place George Mason. The Colonials ran a team average of 17:51.62 over the 5K race.

Parle and Mitchell both earned All-Conference honors thanks to their quick finishes. It is the third consecutive season the women's team earned a pair of All-Conference honors.

The Colonials now set their sights on the NCAA Mid-Atlantic Regional meet.

Golf wraps up fall season with five consecutive top-10 rankings

LUKE WIENECKE
STAFF WRITER

Golf wrapped up its fall slate of tournaments with two third-place finishes, stringing together its highest tournament program ranking since the 2018-19 season.

The Colonials finished the Grandover Collegiate in Greensboro in seventh place, marking their fifth consecutive top 10 ranking this fall season. The program, which only has three returning players, has taken advantage of the newly recruited talent and experienced players to bolster their performance in pursuit of the Atlantic 10 crown.

Head Coach Chuck Scheinost said the program's freshmen have played an integral role in increasing the team's standing to place within the top four with their great understanding of the game. Rodrigo Barahona, Jed Dy and Manuel Barbachano make up the team's freshman starting lineup, bringing renewed vigor and professional experience at the PGA level to the team.

"This year's group of freshmen is a special group," Scheinost said in an interview in September. "Our seniors are really hungry, and that helps because they've done a

great job of helping bring the younger guys in and start to teach them things."

Four out of the seven athletes are freshmen, with three freshmen manning a five-person starting lineup. Just two of last year's starters, seniors Jakob Hrinda and Hugo Ribound, are returning this year to lead the team.

Hrinda notched his first collegiate victory at the Visit Stockton Pacific Invitational last weekend with a 14-under-par 199. As a team, GW finished fourth in the 16-team field, earning its third top-four finish of the season.

The schedule for the second half of the season during the spring has yet to be finalized, but will likely feature five tournaments and culminate with the A-10 Championship at the end of April.

The Colonials kicked off their season at the Virginia Commonwealth University Shootout on Sept. 12, posting a program record of 829 and clinching its highest ranking in a tournament since the 2018-19 season. In that same tournament, Hrinda fired a 202 and set a new individual par record for GW.

Hrinda continued his impressive streak at the VCU shootout where he led the way at the first-ever Howard/San Francisco Intercollegiate,

finishing just five strokes over par and placing sixth overall individually. At the Howard and San

Francisco Intercollegiate on Sept. 26, the Colonials placed third out of the nine teams competing, firing a 40 over 880. The team then headed to the Phoenix Invitational on Oct. 10 where the squad shot a two under 850 to tie for seventh overall among 17 teams competing.

Ribound led the way with a three under 210, placing him in 18th individually out of 40. Barahona was named A-10 Rookie Golfer of the Week for his own three under performance – which is a par that is mostly seen at the professional level – at the Phoenix Invitational, before the Colonials headed to the Stockton Pacific Invitational in California.

Hrinda fired an incredible 14-under 199 in California, enough to secure the top individual spot at the tournament. This performance broke the 18-36-54 hole program records after he set the 36- and 54-hole records himself earlier this season.

"This year's group, the A-10 Championship is our ultimate goal at the end of the day," Scheinost said. "But winning is a byproduct of going through the process and working hard."



FILE PHOTO BY AUDEN YURMAN | SENIOR PHOTO EDITOR
The Colonials are set to take on Loyola Chicago Saturday where they hope to survive the first round of the A-10 Championships.

Men's soccer clinches A-10 Championship berth with final win

NURIA DIAZ
SPORTS EDITOR

OWEN AVERILL
REPORTER

Men's soccer crushed George Mason in a 3-0 victory Saturday to close out its regular season and enter the Atlantic 10 Championship as the fifth seed in an eight-team bracket.

The Colonials (8-8-2) clinched a playoff berth with the win over the Patriots (2-11-2), building a substantial lead with unstoppable attacks in the box before establishing an impenetrable defensive wall that kept George Mason scoreless. The must-win game secured a playoff berth for the Colonials, who entered the game in seventh place in the conference and would have been eliminated from postseason play with a draw or loss.

GW opened the game with high tempo and aggressive play through the first 25 minutes. Senior attacker Roeve Tenne fed the ball to senior midfielder Elias Norris who ran down the left and rocketed a shot into right corner of the net for his seventh goal for the season, putting GW on the board 1-0.

A lengthy back-and-forth battle ensued between the teams as the

Patriots defense locked down with increased pressure, leading to seven fouls against GW throughout the game. But the Colonials wall proved stronger – GW senior goalkeeper Justin Grady blocked all of George Mason's five attempts.

Both nets remained untouched during the last 20 minutes of the first half of the match, but the Patriots offense started to build momentum as halftime approached. Freshman attacker Zach Golden entered the match and helped generate momentum for his team as they transitioned into a 4-3-3 formation.

The score remained at 1-0 at the end of the first half with 12 total fouls between the two teams.

In the second half, GW maintained possession for the majority of the 45 minutes and capitalized with a pair of goals during the first 10 minutes. In the first minute of the half, senior attacker Tom Cooklin launched a corner kick following an offside penalty and junior defense Lucas Matuszewski headed in the goal.

GW intensity continued entering the 51st minute when Cooklin fired a cross to senior attacker Oscar Haynes Brown who rifled it off the left post and rebounded back to the

George Mason goalkeeper. The Patriots pushed upfield before a steal by Cooklin sabotaged their push toward the GW goal. Cooklin shoveled the ball to Haynes Brown who entered a long run and drilled the ball straight into the back of the net for the Colonials' third score of the evening.

Haynes Brown is now fifth on GW's all-time points list, passing 2009 men's soccer alumnus Andy Stadler with the 84th goal of his career.

George Mason had four opportunities to score, the first of which came in the 60th minute when junior forward Ishmail Kamara missed wide. 19 minutes later, senior forward Kent Harrison ran down the box and kicked the ball toward top corner of the goal, but Grady caught it with both hands.

A minute later, George Mason graduate student forward Noah Raphael fired a shot from out left that went long. The Patriots had one final chance to score in the 88th minute when freshman defender Eric Allen ran down the zone and shot out left, but Grady made a diving save.

The Colonials are set to take on Loyola Chicago Saturday where they hope to survive the first round of the A-10 Championship. Kickoff is set for 4 p.m.



HATCHET FILE PHOTO
Four out of the seven athletes are freshmen, with three manning a five-person starting lineup.