

# The GW Hatchet

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## Black Heritage Celebration to honor Black joy, legacy in month of events

**BROOKE FORGETTE**  
REPORTER

**FAITH WARDWELL**  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Students will pay homage to the Black generations of GW's past, present and future with a month of collaborative, student-run programming at this year's Black Heritage Celebration.

The month's programming, titled "Black to the Future," kicked off Wednesday with more than 20 events stretching through Black History Month hosted by more than 15 Black student organizations, including the African Student Association and the Black Girl Mentorship Program. This year's BHC will span four weeks, which began last Wednesday with a keynote event featuring comedian Amanda Seales. Student organizers said BHC will conclude with its annual Finale event Feb. 26.

Telease Bowen, a senior and co-chair of BHC, said this year's theme is meant to honor the work and accomplishments of the past generations of Black students at GW who committed to bridging gaps between students and administrators



and creating safe spaces on campus for Black students to be heard and support Black students of the future with a campus enriched with a powerful Black heritage and identity.

BHC will hone in on Black history both at GW and throughout U.S. history with events like a guided tour of the National Museum of African American History and Culture Saturday. Programming like "A Better Black Future: The Progression of Black Women" Monday will celebrate the future of Black culture.

Moniah Dailey, a senior and co-chair of BHC, said the BHC committee – which is made of 10 students across Black student organizations

– received increased levels of funding this year from officials in comparison to the past year.

She said she hopes the events give Black students a space to celebrate their Black heritage without worrying about the display of racism and violence against people of color that continues to make national headlines.

Gianna Cook, a senior and the president of the Black Student Union, said this year's BHC theme calls into focus the legacy that Black students are leaving for future generations of GW. She said events like BHC will further Black representation on campus, providing students with a space to connect with and celebrate their heritage.



JENNIFER IGBONOA | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER  
BSU hosted a "Sneaker Ball" Friday where students showcased their style through sneakers in the University Student Center as a way to celebrate the launch of the month's programming.

Drew Dodd, a sophomore and the vice president of BSU, said this year's theme of "Black to the Future" is a call back to BSU's theme for the 2022-23 academic year, "The Black Renaissance," which draws inspiration from Black creatives of the past as a way of channeling the spirit of the Harlem Renaissance.

Senior Tino Stephens –

the chair and organizer of the BHC's Finale – said the Finale celebration, hosted at The Gathering Spot restaurant in Downtown, will offer students a space to unwind and have fun after a month of reflecting on Black heritage through BHC's other offerings.

Senior Ya'Nassia Whetstone – the founder and

president of Hairapeutic Beauty, a student organization helping students of color maintain and style their hair – said Hairapeutic will host a "Black Hairitage Showcase" in the University Student Center Feb. 17 where more than 30 models will wear 10 decades of hairstyles ranging from the 15th century to the early 2000s.

## Professor, advocates refute antisemitism allegations

**CAITLIN KITSON**  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

A psychology professor responded Friday to allegations of antisemitism from a pro-Israel nonprofit, contesting that its claims are false and used "racist, anti-Arab and anti-Palestinian tropes" to disparage her.

Lara Sheehi, an assistant professor of clinical psychology, said in an article published in the liberal-leaning magazine CounterPunch that the allegations – which the advocacy group StandWithUs filed in a civil rights complaint with the Department of Education last month – are a "misrepresentation" of what occurred in the Diversity I course she taught in the fall and "targets" her for being an Arab woman who advocates for Palestinians. The complaint alleges that Sheehi created a "hostile environment" for Jewish and Israeli students and "retaliated" against students who raised concerns about her class discussions, a guest speaker and course materials that addressed the Israel-Palestine conflict.

"The objective and irrefutable facts do not support StandWithUs' specious claims that I target my Jewish and Israeli students," Sheehi said in the article. "They do not support the unethical and dangerous allegations that I am antisemitic and retaliatory. What the facts, in glaring clarity do support, is that, like others before me, StandWithUs exploited students' political beliefs and targeted me because I am an Arab woman who is involved

in scholarship and activism for Palestine and Palestinians."

Sheehi said since StandWithUs filed the complaint last month, she has received racist messages and death threats, and her address, professional license and personal email address were leaked online. She said StandWithUs' decision to redact every name in the complaint except hers subjected her to racism and sexism over the past month.

Roz Rothstein, the co-founder and CEO of StandWithUs, said she and other members of StandWithUs "appreciate" the Jewish students who raised concerns about Sheehi's conduct and are calling for an "unbiased" investigation after University officials announced a "third party" would investigate StandWithUs' allegations against Sheehi. "We are confident that attempts to slander StandWithUs (a nonpartisan organization) will be seen for what they are: a means of shifting the focus away from serious claims of anti-Jewish bigotry," Rothstein said in an email.

More than 2,000 students, alumni, faculty and advocates signed more than half a dozen statements in support of Sheehi over the past month.

The statements include a letter from more than 100 students and alumni from GW's Professional Psychology Program where Sheehi teaches, a letter from the US Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel signed by more than 1,800 people like political activist Angela Davis.

## GW remains only 'large,' 'urban' US university with classroom mask mandate

**CRISTINA STASSIS**  
STAFF WRITER

**SOPHIA GOEDERT**  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

The University remains one of the few universities in the country to maintain a mask mandate in instructional settings, a continuation of an early pandemic policy that experts say still protects public health on campus.

GW is the only institution to still require masks in classrooms in the United States among all "large" and "urban" universities, characteristics based on metrics set by Forbes' America's Top Colleges list ranking the top 498 higher education institutions in the country. A Hatchet analysis of mask policies across the 229 universities that Forbes classifies as "large" and "urban" shows that GW stands alone among fellow institutions of similar size and setting despite a national shift away from aggressive masking policies three years after COVID's initial outbreak.

Experts in public health and biology said they expect GW to drop the mandate as transmission rates slow, but GW's lasting mandate has exhibited "leadership" in COVID policy because the requirement has continued to protect community members who are vulnerable to more severe symptoms from viruses.

Within D.C., GW and Gallaudet University are the only higher education institutions with mask mandates still in place. The University of the District of Columbia and Georgetown, American, Catholic and Howard universities each dropped their mandates last year.

The United States contains a total of 5,900 higher education institutions across the country, according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

Despite universities not requiring masks, several like Yale, Harvard, Stanford and Brown universities strongly recommend masking and allow professors to require masks in their classrooms.

Interim University President Mark Wrighton said at a Faculty Senate meeting last month that masks are still required in classroom settings to limit the transmission of COVID-19 during the spring semester.

"We are going to remind everyone that we still have the need to be mindful of infectious diseases as that in the classrooms," Wrighton said at the meeting. "We're going to require that there be masked students, so thank you all for your cooperation on that matter."

GW dropped its indoor mask mandate for all University spaces in September, keeping the requirement in place in classrooms, health care facilities and on GW-operated transportation. Students said they experienced "mask fatigue" last

semester as the number of students wearing masks in classrooms and on the Mount Vernon Express declined.

Immunocompromised students raised concerns last year after officials lifted the biweekly COVID testing requirement in June, saying lax COVID policies put them at disproportionate risk for severe COVID symptoms.

Experts said although GW could drop the mask mandate at any time, its masking policy demonstrates a "cautious" approach to the pandemic. Some said continuing the policy is a "fantastic" decision given the number of circulating viruses, both COVID and non-COVID.

Emanuel Goldman, a professor of microbiology at Rutgers University, said GW's mask mandate represents a more cautious approach toward limiting COVID transmission, but GW's administration could decide mask wearing is "excessive." He said officials could instead "redirect" their focus to instituting an updated vaccine requirement with the new bivalent booster, which the Food and Drug Administration authorized in August.

GW does not require students or faculty to receive the bivalent booster, but two of GW's peer schools, Tufts and Wake Forest universities, require students, faculty and staff to receive the shot. GW officials require students, faculty and staff to be vaccinated against COVID with the first booster shot the FDA approved, strongly recommending the bivalent booster.

"I can only assume that GW administration wishes to maintain the most cautious approach to managing the pandemic, while other schools presumably are satisfied that vaccination requirements provide sufficient protection," Goldman said in an email.



FILE PHOTO BY NADIA PRIMER | PHOTOGRAPHER  
Interim University President Mark Wrighton said at a Faculty Senate meeting last month that masks are still required in classroom settings to limit the transmission of COVID-19 during the spring semester.

**CAREER EXPLORATION**

**EXPO**

Find your next job or internship  
at the GW Career Exploration Expo

February 9 and 10  
Find more information in Handshake

# News

## THIS WEEK'S EVENTS

**PEACE: LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS FOR A SETTLEMENT IN UKRAINE**  
 Wednesday, Feb. 8 | 5:30 p.m. EDT | Elliott School of International Affairs  
 Join a conversation with a former CIA analyst about diplomatic engagement with Ukraine and Russia.

**UKRAINIAN-AMERICAN STUDENT ASSOCIATION, INITIAL INTEREST SESSION**  
 Thursday, Feb. 9 | 7 p.m. EDT | Online  
 Tune into an interest session for the Ukrainian-American Student Association, which will discuss next steps to becoming a registered student organization.

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

Feb. 6, 2006

GWID replaced GW's previous student ID system based on social security numbers.

## CRIME LOG

### EXTORTION

Off Campus  
 1/26/2023 – 2:30 p.m.  
 Open Case  
 A female student reported being a victim of extortion through email from an unknown subject claiming to be affiliated with the University.  
**Case open.**

### UNLAWFUL ENTRY

2200 Pennsylvania Ave. (Parking Garage)  
 1/27/2023 – 2:33 a.m.  
 Closed Case  
 While on patrol, a GW Police Department officer observed a previously barred male subject in the parking garage. The police made contact with the subject who was then barred and sent on his way.  
**Subject barred.**

### THEFT II/OTHER

University Yard  
 1/27/2023 – 12:25 to 12:35 p.m.  
 Open Case  
 A male student reported that his rented electric scooter was stolen.  
**Case open.**

### THEFT II/BICYCLE

Kogan Plaza  
 1/27/2023 – 12:00 to 6:20 p.m.  
 Open Case  
 A male Howard University student reported that his bike was stolen in Kogan Plaza after the bike lock was cut.  
**Case open.**

### LIQUOR LAW VIOLATION

Public Property on Campus (2200 Block of G Street)  
 1/28/2023 – 1:35 a.m.  
 Closed Case  
 GWPD officers responded to a report of an intoxicated female student. EMeRG officials responded and after evaluating the student, transported her to the GW Hospital emergency room for further treatment.  
**Referred to Divison for Student Affairs.**

### SEXUAL ASSAULT

Thurston Hall  
 1/31/2023  
 Open Case  
 GWPD received an email Jan. 30 from a third party reporting that a student sexually assaulted a non-GW affiliated female acquaintance.  
**Case open.**

— Compiled by Max Porter

# Student health insurance cost rises by more than \$500 in last two years

**IANNE SALVOSA**  
 ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Officials raised the cost of GW's mandatory insurance plan this academic year, which students said may push necessary health care out of reach.

The mandatory annual cost for students enrolled in GW's student health insurance has risen by \$520 during the past two school years from \$2,180 in the 2020-21 academic year to \$2,700 this academic year. More than 10 students enrolled in the Student Health Insurance Plan said the price tag for coverage decreases out-of-pocket medication costs to make prescriptions more affordable but may worsen financial strains for students who are struggling to afford GW's tuition.

The insurance plan provides benefits, like 100 percent contraceptive and prescription coverage after a \$100 deductible and a waived annual deductible for GW Counseling and Psychological Services, through Aetna Student Health.

University spokes-

person Julia Metjian said Aetna sets the insurance prices annually, months in advance of the academic year, accounting for inflation and medical bills the company must cover, which have mounted since the start of the pandemic. She said Aetna set the insurance price for the 2020-21 academic year before the company was aware of the pandemic's "ongoing impact" and increased the price this school year to cover medical treatment amid higher demand.

"As more students use the services, the insurance company must pay more, and in turn there was a price increase in 2022-23 to help pay for increased use of services," Metjian said in an email.

Students enrolled in the health insurance plan can receive immunizations and physical examinations at the Student Health Center at no cost, according to the Aetna Student Health Plan Design and Benefits Summary for GW. Students enrolled in the plan can also receive medical treatment at local Aetna participating network



A University spokesperson said about 5,000 undergraduate students are enrolled in student insurance each academic year, and an additional 650 students opt into the plan each year.

providers, which include GW Hospital and the Medical Faculty Associates.

Officials began to automatically enroll in the student health insurance plan unless they provide proof they already have insurance in the fall 2018 semester, a move that slashed the annual cost of the health insurance plan from \$4,103 to about \$2,750 in hopes of making the program more accessible for students.

Graduate fellows, graduate assistants and graduate research assistants may choose

to opt into student insurance as a "lower" cost insurance option.

Metjian said about 5,000 undergraduate students are enrolled in student insurance each academic year, and an additional 650 students opt into the plan each year because their family doesn't have insurance coverage in the D.C. area or they do not have insurance. She said about 8,500 undergraduate and graduate students eligible for insurance opt out of the plan each academic year and use their family's insurance for coverage.

"Undergraduate students who want to opt out of the University coverage because they are still covered by their parent's or have their own domestic-based health insurance must complete the waiver process each year," Metjian said.

Students can complete an online form that requires them to submit information on their family's domestic insurance to waive their student health insurance enrollment, according to the University Health

Plans website.

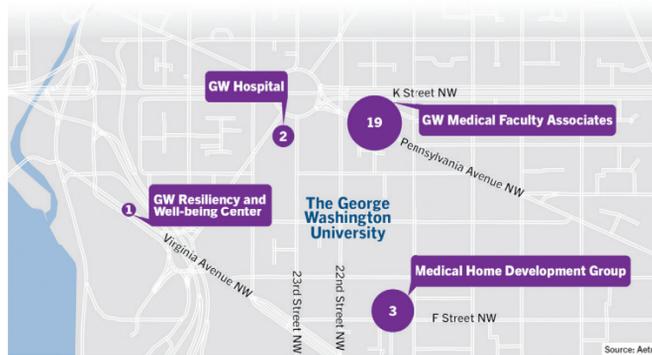
Syracuse University charged students \$2,347 for health insurance in the 2022-23 academic year for their "premium plan," \$353 less than GW's \$2,700 annual cost. Boston University charged a \$3,235 for their "basic plan," \$535 higher than GW's annual price. Tufts University charged \$4,044 for their "individual" student plan, \$1,344 higher than the annual charge at GW.

Students enrolled in GW's health insurance said the student insurance decreased costs for medication and treatments, but

because Aetna only offers 24 network providers for mental health professionals in Foggy Bottom, the coverage falls short of providing comprehensive care outside of the Student Health Center. They said the SHC Team notifies them of their automatic enrollment in student health insurance and the cost through email at the beginning of their enrollment term, which can be annual, fall, spring and summer or summer only.

Aetna-covered primary care providers in Foggy Bottom

1 = One primary care provider



NICHOLAS ANASTACIO | GRAPHICS EDITOR

# Writing Center opens at full capacity after fall cuts to budget, operating hours

**EÓIGHAN NOONAN**  
 CONTRIBUTING NEWS EDITOR

The University Writing Center opened last week at full capacity after Columbian College of Arts and Sciences officials scaled back hiring efforts and hours due to budget cuts last fall.

Faculty overseeing the center – which provides free support to students aiming to enhance their writing skills – said following a "productive" meeting with officials, the center opened for 59 hours per week at full capacity this spring. The budget increase comes after officials decided against hiring two graduate student writing consultants and suspended services at its three satellite centers in Eckles and Himmelfarb Libraries and the Multicultural Student Services Center after officials cut the center's budget in the

fall but made plans to replenish the budget this spring.

Phyllis Ryder, the director of the University Writing Center and an associate professor of writing, said the center typically hires more consultants in the spring after consultants complete the required Pedagogy for Peer Tutors training class. She added the budget constraints in the fall did not impede the spring hiring process.

"All of these processes were the same this year as they have been in the past," she said in an email. "The budget process did not affect our spring operations."

At a Faculty Senate meeting in November, faculty senators said mul-

iple departments within CCAS, including the Writing Center, experienced hiring issues and "inadequate" financial support.

Officials reduced the center's hours of operation last semester to cut its expenses, introducing a lunch hour from noon to

1 p.m.

Ryder said the center will reopen satellite centers in Himmelfarb Library and the Multicultural Student Services Center later this semester, but the Eckles Library center will remain closed due to its reduced hours.

Officials reduced Eckles library's hours of operation last semester after finding out that a limited number of students used the library in the mornings and after midnight, drawing criticism from freshman students and other Mount Vernon cam-

pus residents who frequently use the library to study.

Nearly "every one" of the University's 3,000 first-year students will utilize the writing center during their time at GW, according to the Center's website.



FILE PHOTO BY JENNIFER IGBONBA | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

At a Faculty Senate meeting in November, faculty senators said multiple departments within CCAS, including the Writing Center, experienced hiring issues and "inadequate" financial support.

## SNAPSHOT

DANIELLE TOWERS | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR



George plays a game of Jenga at the GW Palooza tailgate Sunday before attending the women's basketball homecoming game against George Mason.

# Timeline: GW, EEOC continue to spar over six-year pay discrimination lawsuit

GRACE CHINOWSKY  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

A federal workplace civil rights agency and GW are going head-to-head in court, filing opposing motions to request a District Court judge to rule in their favor on a six-year battle over a pay bias case in the athletics department.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission asked a judge to throw out GW's denial of sex-based employment discrimination allegations last week after the University refuted the claims in a dueling November motion. The motions reignited an ongoing legal clash between GW and the EEOC, who filed a complaint on behalf of former executive assistant to the athletics director Sara Williams in 2017, alleging GW violated the Equal Pay Act and Title VII — a federal statute prohibiting employment discrimination — by paying "special assistant" Michael Aresco nearly double Williams' salary for "substantially equal" work.

Here's a timeline of the litigation between the University and the EEOC:

## 2017: The EEOC files a civil complaint against GW

Williams filed a charge of sex-based discrimination to the EEOC in October 2016 to report officials' conduct after they allegedly failed to address her complaints she reported directly to them.

After a six-months-long investigation into the allegations, the commission sent a letter to GW in April 2017, notifying the University that its examination found "reasonable cause to believe" GW violated the Equal Pay Act and requesting informal discussions to "eliminate" discriminatory practice and provide appropriate relief.

The next month, the University asked the commission to recon-

sider and requested more specifics from the EEOC about the evidence referenced in the letter. The commission denied GW's request 11 days later.

In July 2017, the EEOC said they were unable to come to an "acceptable" agreement with the commission, sparking the lawsuit just a few months later.

In their first September 2017 filing in D.C.'s District Court, the EEOC alleged the athletics department, under the leadership of then-Athletic Director Patrick Nero, hired Williams in 2014, offering to pay her roughly \$39,000 a year to provide "high-level" administrative support. The 2017 EEOC complaint alleges Nero hired Aresco in January 2016 to do similar work in a "special assistant" position he created for him two years later, offering him a salary of \$77,000 while "dissuading" Williams from applying to the position.

"Nero's favorable treatment of Aresco was part of his pattern of using power granted to him by Defendant to gain access, and provide preferential treatment to males," the 2017 EEOC complaint states.

The University fired back in November 2017, requesting that District Court Judge Colleen Kollar-Kotelly dismiss the commission's complaint.

In their motion to dismiss, the University denied all forms of discrimination and argued the crux of the EEOC's "deeply flawed" claims was based on a "broad" and "meaningless" characterization of the special assistant and executive assistant positions.

GW's legal defense alleges the commission's claim that Nero did not hire Williams for the special assistant job because of her gender was also baseless because she never formally applied to Aresco's job.

The EEOC filed a memorandum against the University's motion to



The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission asked a judge to throw out GW's denial of sex-based employment discrimination allegations last week after the University refuted the claims in a November motion. HATCHET FILE PHOTO

dismiss later that month. The commission argued GW neglected to address how Nero treated Aresco "more favorably" than Williams during and after his hiring.

## 2019: District Court judge scraps GW's motion to dismiss

In May 2019, the judge threw out GW's motion to dismiss. The judge said while the EEOC didn't provide much evidence — like a concrete confirmation that officials' conduct was rooted in sex-based discrimination — the commission's claims satisfy the Court's "low pleading threshold."

"The changes in Ms. Williams'

assignments — to include running personal errands — did not stand alone," Kollar-Kotelly said in the memorandum. "They were part of a course of preferential treatment that plausibly inflicted tangible harm."

Kollar-Kotelly said to "survive" the lawsuit's next step of summary judgment, the EEOC should provide further evidence of the University's conduct stemming from sex discrimination.

Later that year, the two parties became embroiled in a yearlong standoff over the secrecy of certain evidence brought forth in the lawsuit. Magistrate Judge G. Michael Harvey ruled in June 2020 that

GW couldn't withhold documents based on evidence and that some exhibits be destroyed while others be preserved in November 2020.

## 2022: Parties file summary judgments with dueling claims

The lawsuit went quiet during the next two years until GW submitted a motion for summary judgment in opposition to the EEOC's allegations in November 2022, again denying the discrimination claims and defending Aresco's pay.

The two parties' dueling motions are pending until Kollar-Kotelly makes a judgment on the ongoing case.



Freshman Holland Ley, the event coordinator for Art n Soul, said he is excited to see a "student touch" added to the white walls of the University Student Center. COURTESY OF MELANIE ROCHA

## Students to paint D.C.-themed mural in student center this spring

SHEA CARLBERG  
STAFF WRITER

Sophomore Melanie Rocha wants to splash culture, color and history onto the barren walls of the University Student Center.

The Office of Student Life commissioned Rocha, the president and founder of the student organization Art n Soul, to paint a 52-foot mural on the wall outside of the student center's fourth-floor elevators after upgrading the building's interior with fresh paint, light fixtures and flooring during the summer. Rocha said the mural, which Art n Soul aims to complete by April, comes after multiple emails that officials sent students last year asking about their interest in the mural project.

"In terms of that space, I'm hoping that it excites people to want to be part of orgs and be part of our club and study there and just enjoy their space and feel like home," Rocha said.

Rocha, a political communications major and fine arts minor, said she will send officials the initial mural outline Monday — including a Metro railcar and a cherry blossom tree as the centerpiece, with books hanging off the branches to symbolize "education and growth." Rocha said she met with Miles Feacher, a program associate for student involvement who will oversee the overall painting process, to finalize the design last week.

Rocha said she hopes the colorful, student-led mural in the common space on the floor, which houses

student organizations like the Student Association and GW Program Board as well as Org Help, will raise students' enthusiasm about joining student organizations. She said she hopes the mural brings a wave of new public art to campus that will brighten student spaces.

"I think that being in a sterile environment is not great for your mental health," Rocha said. "And so having something pretty to look at while you're studying or while you're doing whatever, it inspires you."

Rocha said Art n Soul is an outlet for students who don't major in the arts to express their creativity through art projects, and the USC mural is the focal point of the student organization's launch this year. She said that during an Art n Soul general body meeting last month, about 50 people expressed interest in assisting with different pieces of the mural, like sketching, tracing and painting the design.

Rocha said Art n Soul's five executive board members will oversee the mural's execution by dividing participating students into small groups to paint their own respective portions of the wall.

Rocha said the e-board is recruiting more students to paint the mural with sign-ups offered to nonmembers via posters with QR codes in the student center's elevators or sign up for email updates about painting days on Engage.

"I love painting and being able to share that creativity and experience with everybody is really exciting

for me," Rocha said.

Brian Joyce, the assistant dean of student life, said officials are working to engage student organizations in the student center's ongoing "activation" post-renovations, including the grand opening of the department's Involvement and Leadership Office, free meals to students on Reading Day before finals and the debut of a new commuter student lounge this spring.

He said officials asked student leaders to submit mural design suggestions that highlight GW's values like inclusivity and collaboration in an August interest survey about the mural's development.

Joyce said the mural will be unveiled to the public April 13, around the same time cherry trees around the Tidal Basin begin to blossom. He said the mural's premiere will come as part of the University's "Buff and Pink Week" festival series, which will celebrate the District's flourishing cherry blossom season.

"Art has the ability to beautify and highlight the vibrant student organization ecosystem," Joyce said in an email.

Freshman Holland Ley, the event coordinator for Art n Soul, said he is excited to see a "student touch" added to the white walls of the student center.

"It helps to make students know that this floor is like a safe space for them," Ley said. "That doesn't matter what interest they have or if they like art or if they like sports, they feel identified."

## GSEHD, Alexandria schools partner in special education initiative

FIONA RILEY  
REPORTER

RACHEL MOON  
REPORTER

A Graduate School of Education and Human Development program starting this summer will position graduate students for employment as instructional assistants in Alexandria City Public Schools before becoming full-time special education teachers next year.

Officials said in a release last month that GSEHD will accept 10 to 12 graduate applicants in early March who will enroll in a master's special education program in June that will prepare them to work as instructional assistants in ACPS starting in August. Faculty leading the partnership said students can be hired to full-time special education teacher positions during their second year of the program, which will help combat low teacher recruitment and retention.

The Alexandria City Public Schools has been facing recruitment challenges with fewer applicants, especially in hard-to-fill positions like special education teachers, according to an October presentation to the school board. Officials said this program will help combat low special education teacher retention, providing students with paid professional experience and an \$800 tuition stipend per semester.

Margaret Browne, the ACPS director of talent recruitment and retention, said students in the pro-

gram will begin coursework through GSEHD this summer, like Foundations in Special Education, Career Development and Transition, which explores career development techniques within the context of widespread social and political change.

"It's really magical about the program is not only are they getting coursework through GW and learning about pedagogical strategies and approaches, they're also in a classroom working with students to really see how the curriculum works," she said.

About 45 percent of public schools reported vacancies for special education teachers in 2022, according to the U.S. Department of Education. Fifteen percent of K-12 students required specialized education instruction in the 2021-22 academic year, according to federal data.

Browne said ACPS has started reevaluating compensation for teachers and designing initiatives to promote mental health awareness and wellness programs among employees to combat low teacher retention. Low rates of teacher retention can destabilize relationships between teachers and students and deflate student achievement as courses are often canceled or taught by underprepared stand-ins, according to the Learning Policy Institute.

ACPS Work Life and Wellness Program, which is designed to provide access to wellness resources, inaugurated a monthly

wellness newsletter promoting events like nature walks in Winkler Botanical Preserve and encouraging employees to take an "active role" in their wellness.

Teachers with a master's degree earn a minimum of \$57,725 annually — \$7,156 more than those solely with a bachelor's degree, according to ACPS salary records.

"It really is just finding ways to let all of our educators, teachers included, know that we value them, and we value their time," Browne said

Browne said students will apply pedagogical skills they learn in their GSEHD classes to ACPS classrooms, where professional special education teachers will mentor them through firsthand classroom experience.

"They will be getting coursework through GW and learning about pedagogical strategies and approaches, but also in a classroom, working with students to see how the curriculum works and working alongside a talented and dedicated special education teacher in ACPS," Browne said.

Beth Tuckwiller, the department chair of special education and disability studies at GSEHD, said the program will provide students with a full-time teaching contract with ACPS upon its completion to remove barriers to employment.

"Our experience is that many people want to be teachers, but they're encountering barriers like cost or opportunity," she said.



Faculty leading the partnership said students can advance to full-time special education teacher roles during their second year of the program. AUDEN YURMAN | SENIOR PHOTO EDITOR

## Marketing firm surveys students on 15 moniker ideas in private focus groups

**NICK PASION**  
SENIOR NEWS EDITOR

**ZACH BLACKBURN**  
SENIOR NEWS EDITOR

Students said officials started surveying their opinions on more than a dozen ideas for GW's next moniker at a series of private focus groups this week.

Students who participated in the focus groups, which were not open to the public, said a marketing firm introduced 15 moniker options in Duques Hall Wednesday and Thursday, including The Fog, Revolutionaries, Sentinels and Monumentals. Officials will conduct a total of six focus groups with Chicago-based marketing firm Yes& Lipman Hearne, according to an audio recording of a Wednesday meeting obtained by The Hatchet.

Nine student participants, who asked to remain anonymous because they were unsure if they were allowed to speak about the meeting, said the list of monikers included Fireworks, Cavalry, Ambassadors, Foghoppers, Fogriders, The Revolution, Firecrackers, Independence, Independents, The Buzz and Blue Fog. Some students said officials urged them to keep the discussions private.

The Barstool GW Instagram account first reported the list of 15 nicknames Wednesday night.

University spokesperson Julia Metjian said officials are "exploring" options for the new moniker and are "gathering feedback" from community members. Metjian declined to say how officials selected the moniker options, what role focus groups will play in the final selection and if officials will host surveys for faculty and staff.

"In the coming weeks, we will share some of these options publicly with the entire GW community for additional input," Metjian said in an email. "We recognize that the selection of the new moniker is an important decision, and we look forward to a robust engagement effort that will provide all members of our community



Students said the focus groups took place at the Behavioral Laboratory on the third floor of Duques Hall, where officials from the Chicago-based marketing firm Yes& Lipman Hearne watched from behind a one-way mirror.

with the opportunity to register their opinions about the various options."

The focus groups are part of the administration's efforts to select a replacement for GW's nearly century-old Colonials moniker after the Board of Trustees voted to retire the nickname last year following years of pressure from students who said it glorified colonialism. Officials plan to select a moniker by the 2023-24 academic year after releasing a set of principles to steer student feedback last month and ruling out the Hippos in the same announcement, which has become GW's unofficial mascot since the 1996 installation of the "River Horse" statue outside Lisner Auditorium.

Eight students attended a focus group survey for undergraduate students Wednesday, according to the recording. Students said the focus groups took place at the Behavioral Laboratory on the third floor of Duques Hall. Alongside officials from Yes& Lipman Hearne, eight students were seen leaving the Behavioral Laboratory Thursday afternoon, and six were seen leaving Thursday night.

Officials randomly selected the students in the undergraduate focus groups, according to an email from Dean of Students Colette Coleman to selected students, which was obtained by The Hatchet. Coleman said in the email that participants would receive a \$125

Amazon gift card as an "honorarium," and students said officials catered the meetings with food from Panera Bread.

"Your insight is vital to informing future decisions about the new moniker," Coleman said. "It is critically important that we hear your voice."

Officials hired Sullivan – a New York-based consulting firm specializing in higher education – to lead the moniker selection process after a "competitive" bidding period, according to a University release issued in September. Coleman said officials are working with Yes& Lipman Hearne to facilitate the private surveys but did not mention in the email how Sullivan contributed to the focus groups.

After the undergraduate meetings Wednesday and Thursday afternoon, participants said officials did not ask their opinion on the Fogriders and Foghoppers monikers. One student in the Wednesday evening undergraduate student focus group said participants sharply criticized those two nicknames, saying The Fog was the only fog-based moniker variant that "made sense."

"They were so unpopular," one of the graduate students said in an interview after a Thursday focus group session.

Students at Thursday's graduate survey said officials told them they plan to speak with alumni next.

Donna Van De Water, the group facilitator at the undergraduate focus group Wednesday and the chief operating officer at Yes& Lipman Hearne, said participants would be asked to grade each moniker on how "tenacious," "electric" and "open" they are, according to the meeting recording. "We all come from different places and have different experiences, and that's why we wanted to bring a group together because people have different perspectives on the monikers that we're going to be talking about," Van De Water said in the meeting.

One participant in the Wednesday evening focus group for undergraduate students said the Behavioral Laboratory where the focus groups took place contained a one-way mirror. They said officials from the firm watched the survey from behind the mirror in the lab.

They said no students in that group objected to The Fog, which was the most popular nickname among the options that Van De Water presented to the focus group.

One participant in the Thursday focus group for undergraduate students said while rating the monikers, The Fog "scored pretty low" among students in their focus group. They said Revolutionaries, Monumentals and Sentinels were the most popular options in their focus group, with participants rating Revolutionaries the "highest."

## Health studies receive 70 percent of FY22 research funds

**CAITLIN KITSON**  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

**SOPHIA GOEDERT**  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Health-related research accounted for 70 percent of all University research expenditures in fiscal year 2022, according to a report on GW's research enterprise at the Faculty Senate meeting Friday.

Pamela Norris, the vice provost for research, said in the report that officials plan to modernize infrastructure like myResearch – a website for faculty to better track research proposals and awards – diversify GW's research portfolio with more internal collaboration and capitalize on the University's location to add new research partners going forward. She said research in the social sciences, arts and humanities, science and engineering and other research accounts for about 30 percent of GW's overall research expenditures.

"I'm happy to say the faculty and the scholars across campus really have a growing interest in diversifying our research portfolio," Norris said.

GW's total publications increased by 911 between 2019 and 2021, but they fell off by 131 between 2021 and 2022, according to the report. Total federal expenditures have increased from more than \$150 million in FY 2019 to about \$190 million in FY 2021, according to the report.

She said in December 2022, The National Institutes of Health awarded GW's Biostatistics Center a \$51 million grant over five years for a research project that aims to stop, prevent or reverse Alzheimer's disease in individuals with prediabetes or Type 2 diabetes. Norris said the principal investigator of the study, Marinella Temprosa – an assistant research professor in the Milken Institute School of Public Health – will "coordinate" clinical trials that provide administrative and clinical operations and data management support.

GW's total research expenditures from the federal government, businesses, nonprofit organizations and institutional funds have largely remained flat at around \$250 million per FY since 2018, according to the

report.

Norris said the launch of myResearch last February consolidated the research application process into a streamlined system, modernizing GW's research infrastructure. She said faculty members submitted more than 893 research proposals through the website, drawing \$85.1 million in research awards.

She said GW can diversify the University's research portfolio through international collaboration, "export-controlled information," clinical research and contracts with "faculty-controlled spin-off companies," which transfer research out of laboratories and into the world. Norris said strengthening the research enterprise will require more faculty training in areas like human trials, export controls and human subjects research.

"It's really important I think that they understand first what we have to offer is a really well-educated student, educated in a broad University who understands technology of these companies as it connects to ethics and to policy and to broader decisions," Norris said.

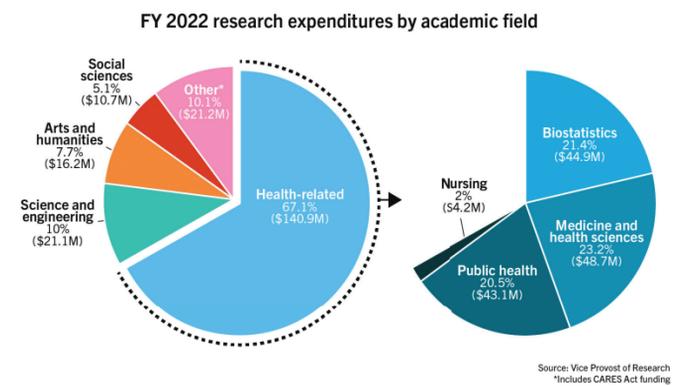
Norris said she has been "leveraging" the University's location to increase funding from corporations like Raytheon and build GW's reputation to foster partnerships with federal organizations like the Office of Naval Research and research organizations in the District like the Southeastern Universities Research Association.

"I think part of my job is really talking to the external audience about the excellence of GW to promote our reputation," Norris said.

Later in the Faculty Senate meeting, interim University President Mark Wrighton said incoming University President Ellen Granberg visited campus last week and is planning to visit GW in three- to four-day periods every month until she begins her term in June.

"The Board of Trustees has done an outstanding job in recruiting Ellen Granberg to be the 19th president," Wrighton said.

Provost Chris Bracey said in a report to the Senate that freshman fall to spring semester retention rates increased to 97.7 percent, which he said is "comparable" to pre-pandemic numbers.



**NICHOLAS ANASTACIO** | GRAPHICS EDITOR

## Long COVID affects 36 percent of GW community who tested positive: study

**ANNA ZELL**  
REPORTER

**RORY QUEALY**  
STAFF WRITER

Long COVID-19 is prevalent among 36 percent of GW community members who tested positive for COVID between July 2021 and March 2022, according to a study released last month from the Milken Institute School of Public Health.

Researchers surveyed a sample of 1,338 community members who were infected with COVID during that period and determined 36 percent experienced common long COVID symptoms like fatigue and shortness of breath. Experts in long COVID said the study's results may influence students' COVID behavior, like increasing mask-wearing, but the effects and prevalence of long COVID will remain unclear until it receives more national attention and research.

Megan Landry – the study's lead researcher and the director of the Campus COVID Support Team, a team of faculty and staff who manage the response to COVID cases on campus – said the idea for the study came after the CCST sent out a self-reported symptom check-in between July 2021 and March 2022 to GW community members who tested positive for COVID on campus to evaluate their symptoms. She said the check-in notified officials that the GW community members may

be experiencing symptoms of long COVID if they reported symptoms more than four weeks after the initial COVID infection.

Landry said researchers launched a follow-up email study of the campus community in July 2021 to investigate "persistent" symptoms of long COVID. She said the study found vaccination protects against severe infection and limited symptoms consistent with long COVID – nearly half of the 36 percent of patients with long COVID symptoms were not fully vaccinated, according to the study.

"Our results do suggest that vaccination continues to be very important – not only does vaccination protect against severe initial infection – but is also associated with a lower likelihood of reporting symptoms consistent with long COVID," Landry said in an email.

Landry said the people with the highest risk for long COVID are those with low vaccination levels against COVID and current and former smokers. More than 45 percent of the community members suffering long COVID were former or current smokers and were "significantly" more likely to report experiencing long COVID symptoms, according to the study.

Long COVID is identified when symptoms, like fatigue, brain fog and cough, continue or develop four weeks after the initial COVID infection, according to

the CDC.

Landry said more research into long COVID in the GW community is needed to better understand the prevalence and impact of long COVID. She said few studies look into the prevalence of long COVID in younger populations, but the 36 percent prevalence rate in the GW community falls under the wide range of nationwide research results that have found between 10 to 80 percent of COVID survivors experience long COVID symptoms four weeks after initial infection.

"We did not know what to expect before we examined the rates in our community because so few articles have looked at long COVID among younger populations," Landry said. "Our results do suggest that even young, healthy populations are vulnerable to long COVID."

GW is the first of its peer schools to conduct a study of long COVID prevalence on campus. A study released in July 2022 by the University of Southern California, which employed an internet-based national survey, found that 23 percent of people who test positive will experience long COVID.

Vivian Jeckell, a freshman majoring in political communication, said she first tested positive for COVID in January 2022 and experienced long COVID for four months after the initial infection, with symptoms like a fever, cough and difficulty breath-

ing. She said when she tested positive for COVID again in October 2022, her doctor said her lungs were already damaged from the previous infection causing the shortness of breath.

Jeckell said she struggles to breathe when doing physical activities like walking upstairs to classes and taking her self-defense LSPA course. She said she wishes GW would advertise more resources to raise awareness about long COVID and its prevention.

"I think it would be beneficial to the University to showcase some of the effects that long COVID can have

on people," Jeckell said. "It might encourage them to wear their masks more and to talk about the fact that it is a thing and it does exist."

GW's long COVID recovery clinic opened in the fall of 2020 but closed in June due to staff shortages under the Medical Faculty Associates. The GW Center for Integrative Medicine – GW's contemporary and alternative medicine practice – is still providing treatment for long COVID through specialized doctors.

Experts in long COVID research said the Milken study adds to a broader understanding of long COVID's

prevalence, but they would like to see more specificity about the definition of long COVID and its symptoms in future studies.

Ziyad Al-Aly, a professor of medicine and clinical epidemiologist at Washington University in St. Louis, said research trends show that younger adults, like college students, with long COVID are more likely to experience brain fog or fatigue than metabolic disorders.

"I think the core conclusion is that long COVID is not trivial," Al-Aly said. "It's significant, it's important, affecting many, many people and it needs urgent attention."



FILE PHOTO BY LILY SPEREDELOZZI | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR  
Landry said the next research step is a follow-up study in the GW community to investigate "persistent" symptoms of long COVID.

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# Opinions

## WHAT THE UNIVERSITY WON'T TALK ABOUT THIS WEEK

How officials selected the moniker options for private focus groups last week p.4

FROM GWHATCHET.COM/OPINIONS

"By keeping up with the news, we can help improve the quality of media information that those around us intake."

—MIA ADAMS on 2/2/2023

## Point-Counterpoint: ChatGPT in the classroom

### Point: Revere, don't fear, ChatGPT

Our world is ever-changing, especially when it comes to technology, education and where they intersect. And with the arrival of AI programs like ChatGPT, we can take advantage of new and developing technologies to enhance our education and synthesize information.

Anaya Bhatt  
Opinions Writer

While search engines like Google require you to look across different websites for answers, ChatGPT immediately produces a detailed, coherent answer to your question just like another human would. The way the program synthesizes information eliminates the need to scour the internet for answers, giving you access to information and advice from prestigious universities, professors and libraries that once only belonged to the elite.

Now, you don't need a graduate-level education to draft a report, develop academic syllabi or write a story – just give ChatGPT a prompt, and it can most likely spit back a response. ChatGPT can bridge the economic and educational divide that makes social mobility and success so difficult to achieve.

And ChatGPT's potential to alter our lives goes beyond the workplace and into the classroom. Thanks to its advanced knowledge, the system can pass graduate-level master's tests, compose essays and source information. This has led its biggest critics, especially academic instructors, to fear that students will turn to the software for essay writing purposes and exam answers instead of learning or understanding a topic. At GW, officials are trying to stop students from using ChatGPT for assignments through the Code of Academic Integrity.

These critics fail to realize that the way



MAURA KELLY-YUOH | STAFF CARTOONIST

we learn and what we learn is not stagnant. We've moved from teachers and textbooks to digital entities, taking advantage of the internet, and through it, Zoom and online courses and resources. And while having immediate and practically unlimited access to information may have been frightening at first, try imagining life without Google today.

We should revere technological advancements like ChatGPT, not fear them. The only way to keep up with the fast pace of our world is to embrace new technology and learn how to use it to its fullest potential.

—Anaya Bhatt, a freshman majoring in political communications, is an opinions writer.

### Counterpoint: ChatGPT may be quick, but it's no author

What makes someone an author? The job involves creating essays, paintings, poems and other works that reflect our perspectives, identities and the stories only we can tell. A sense of ownership and pride comes with being an author, but artificial intelligence programs like ChatGPT threaten to replace authorship with computer-generated imitation.

My first assignment of this semester for my Modern American Cultural History class, taught by associate professor

of American studies Dara Orenstein, was to use ChatGPT to generate a poem in the style of an author I chose describing myself. I prompted the program to write a poem in the style of Sylvia Plath about a college student who moves from the Pacific Northwest to D.C. to study history, politics and philosophy.

Terra Pilch-Bisson  
Opinions Writer

The cold, inhuman style of ChatGPT failed to mimic Plath with any real attention to detail, except for a few gloomy words.

With the help of technology, I created something supposedly artistic but felt no more like an author than I would have scribbling down a grocery list on a Post-it note. ChatGPT excels at creating study guides and outlines, but the moment we treat computers like authors, we forget the importance and nuance of human perspective and end up with meaningless corporate art and Twitter spam bots.

We shouldn't fear ChatGPT. It will, and should, inspire classroom conversations regarding the philosophical purpose of academic writing altogether. But there is a difference between writing purely to communicate information versus writing to articulate thoughts, feelings and emotions – and ChatGPT cannot perform the latter.

Faculty and students alike can utilize AI software in a way that supplements learning without stifling creativity. To do so, we must value authorship above expediency and not allow ChatGPT to infringe on our intellectual and creative abilities as students and authors.

—Terra Pilch-Bisson, a freshman majoring in American studies, is an opinions writer.

## Recent success showcases the SA's potential. It can't stop now.

### STAFF EDITORIAL

Like D.C.'s legendary local groundhog Potomac Phil, the Student Association has poked its head outside, taken a look around and finally done its job. The installation of a new contraception vending machine on campus last month demonstrates that the SA can get things done – and how far it has to go.

At a moment when the right to bodily autonomy is under threat across the country, convenient, stigma-free access to contraceptives helps ensure students' health is in their hands – not those of government officials.

The SA's effort to make the vending machine a reality began over the summer after the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade in June. And now that it's come to fruition, the machine's installation is a rare success for the SA. Contraception available directly on campus is a step forward for GW. But this is a case of meeting – not exceeding – expectations. The push to install the vending machine tells a different story than what the SA has, or more accurately hasn't, been up to this year.

Zidouemba's presidency got off to a shaky start when members of his cabinet attempted to remove him from office over the summer.

Zidouemba allegedly threatened to fire SA members for using their titles in an open letter demanding that GW remove Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas from lecturing at GW Law after he voted to overturn Roe v. Wade. Though Zidouemba retained his position, the whole debacle – which involved a four-month-long Student Court lawsuit – cost the SA time it could have spent advocating for students.

Once the school year rolled around, the SA spent more of its energy restructuring itself to represent students than actually representing them. Fourteen of the 33 bills the SA Senate passed last semester approved nominees for a variety of positions within the student government. Another 10 pieces of legislation dealt solely with reforming the senate's internal processes, like allowing senators to hold multiple committee leadership positions and removing the requirement that a chairperson of one committee must be a member of another.

With the vending machine, the SA demonstrated its potential to act as a conduit to convey students' concerns to officials as GW undergoes a period of historic change. Though the scale of the vending machine project pales in comparison to the University's search for its third president in three years or its highly anticipated replacement for the Colonials moniker, students needed – and still need – their voice to be heard on these issues.

We don't expect our peers to retroactively handpick GW's next president or paint Foggy Bottom hippopotamus gray over officials' heads. But when it comes to major University-wide decisions, students need a larger seat at the table – let alone one in the room. Zidouemba, who received a little more than half of the 2,690 votes cast in last year's SA elections, was the sole student included in the 17-member Presidential Search Committee. And while officials are conducting focus groups with students to garner input on the new moniker, they officially ruled out the

student-favorite Hippos last month.

Without student input, the changes coming to GW may leave the overly bureaucratic systems in place at the University and its longstanding culture of racism and discrimination practically untouched. But it's impossible for students to make their thoughts known when the governing body tasked with conveying them to officials would rather spar over parliamentary procedure than take a unified stand. The SA's members must be mature and capable enough to present the needs, wants and occasional demands of GW's thousands of students to officials.

Recent SA administrations have met even greater expectations. Last year, SA Vice President Kate Carpenter spearheaded efforts to expand SafeRide and advocate for U-Pass, which together made it easier and safer to travel around Foggy Bottom and D.C. Besides a career fair planned for Feb. 10 and a commission for students to voice concerns about GW offices created last semester, the vending machine will be one of the only concrete achievements that most students will remember from this SA's whole term. The vending machine is a good first step – students asked, and their representatives answered. But when SA members vie for students' votes later this year, they should expect to get quite a few blank looks – and ballots – in return.

This should be an inflection point for the SA. What could have been if they spent more time fighting for students instead of bickering over bylaws? Spring is coming soon, and the SA shouldn't go back into hibernation.

## GW's suppression of Palestinian voices violates academic freedom

Clinical psychology professor Dr. Lara Sheehi, who is the subject of a federal civil rights complaint for allegedly engaging in "erasive antisemitism" is not teaching courses at GW this semester. The complaint against Sheehi follows a several decades-long systematic effort by Israel-backed lobbyist organizations to repress speech critical of the Israeli government on college campuses.

Karina Ochoa Berkley  
Opinions Columnist

Academic institutions like GW have traditionally been hubs for anti-Zionist activism. But instead of protecting free speech, GW has institutionally discriminated against Palestinians and supporters of Palestine on campus, punishing students, faculty and staff perceived to be critical of Israel or supportive of Palestine.

In 2015, the administration and GWPD threatened and disciplined a student for hanging the Palestinian flag in their dorm window. In 2018, following a Student Association resolution urging GW to divest from nine companies contributing to Palestinian oppression in the West Bank, Canary Mission – a Zionist blacklisting site – doxxed and harassed supporters of the resolution on campus.

Just last semester, the University investigated Students for Justice in Palestine following a poster campaign leading up to a protest outside the GW Hillel building against an event inside featuring a former IDF commander of a military unit notorious for its authoritarian and abusive surveillance of

Palestinians. The University disciplined SJP President Lance Lokas following an unsubstantiated allegation that he caused "tens of thousands of dollars in damage" by attaching a sign reading "Zionists f\*\*\* off!" to a concrete bench outside of the Hillel building. Interim University President Mark Wrighton quickly condemned the poster as "disturbing" and "antisemitic." The charges against SJP and Lokas were dropped after Lokas' hearing in December.

In 2020, GW replaced Dr. Ilana Feldman as the interim dean of the Elliott School of International Affairs after GW for Israel and other Zionist organizations alleged she was an antisemite for supporting Boycotting, Sanctioning and Divesting from Israel in the past. The University posted a statement affirming its institutional stance against BDS after replacing Feldman.

In 2021, then-University President Thomas LeBlanc threatened to close the Office of Advocacy and Support in response to its plans to host a "virtual processing space" for Palestinian students after an IDF attack in Gaza killed 260 Palestinians, including 66 children, to further Palestinian evictions from the territory. Assistant Vice President of Health and Safety Kathleen Fox also threatened to fire OAS staff if they did not cancel the event, according to Palestine Legal. To date, the University has not allowed trauma support events for Palestinian students, and two of the three permanent OAS staff members have resigned.

The complaint against Sheehi from last month alleged she facilitated an unsafe environment for Jewish students by inviting an internationally

renowned Palestinian legal activist to deliver a guest lecture that criticized Israel's weapons and pharmaceuticals testing on Palestinian prisoners and children. Sheehi defended the lecture, arguing that criticism of Israel was not antisemitic, a distinction the allegations against her purposefully blur. While the complaint alleges Sheehi made comments targeting students for their Israeli identity, which is clearly inappropriate if true, StandWithUs wrongly argues that legitimate criticism of Israel is antisemitic.

Conversations around Israel's occupation of Palestine are extremely contentious and controversial, but that is precisely the kind of speech that requires protection. GW must publicly acknowledge and apologize for its patent violations of its own policy on academic freedom and extend these freedoms to speech critical of Israel.

The University must clearly distinguish antisemitism from anti-Zionism in its nondiscrimination and nonretaliation policies. And officials must begin repairing the harm they have done to Palestinian students by reinstating trauma support services for them and reversing the University's policy on BDS.

It is incredibly irresponsible for academic institutions to repress speech for fear of bad press or retaliation. When our political institutions fail to promote rigorous civic engagement with dissenting views, academic institutions must step up to the task of fostering that environment – and it is about time GW stepped up.

—Karina Ochoa Berkley, a senior majoring in political science and philosophy, is an opinions columnist.

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609 21st St. NW  
Washington, D.C. 20052  
gwhatchet.com | @gwhatchet

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# Valentine's Day Guide

## Students reflect on their love lives while finding individuality

**NATALIE ARBATMAN**  
REPORTER

Valentine's Day can evoke

mixed feelings depending on your relationship with the holiday, but it can just as easily be a time to reflect on the heartbreak and hookup hysterias that define your love life.

Whether in a committed relationship or riding solo this February, students shared how they've learned to nurture their relationships and themselves as individuals as they develop their introspection and communication and balance their independence. They said Valentine's Day has summoned a throbbing heart for those dating from afar, but it has also been a time to rejoice over intimate connections and flower arrangements to come.

Senior Victoria Freire keeps her Valentine's Day open each year as she takes what some might see as an unorthodox approach to the holiday—she

schedules casual, friendly dates to form a bond with peers both around the holiday and throughout the year. She focuses on being authentic to herself when she goes out with people, and she remains upfront about her plans for those relationships, usually preferring a level of distance veering on the side of friendship.

"I'm never in the realm of wanting something really serious," Freire said. "I think I find it difficult to believe that—at this age—that people want that, and not in a totally negative way, more just like people should just be experiencing new things."

Dating at GW for senior Brittany Troupe was daunting in the past, meeting prospective partners who differed from her preferred level of exclusivity. But GW's ill-suited dating field shifted tides for Troupe when she and her now-boyfriend Aidan Yilmaz shared a class together after matching on a dating app the day she was going to delete it.

The two find compatibility in their relationship as they invest time in their respective hobbies,

like painting and watching self-growth videos, and share appreciation for the other's interests.

"Dating was dismal freshman year at GW," Troupe said. "So I just do feel lucky having this and having this here. And I've had friends whose relationships have ended at GW, so it's really nice to have something that's still going and is still positive and healthy."

A typical big-ticket dinner goes beyond the bounds of Troupe's Valentine's Day playbook. She and her partner like to play it simple, finding quality time watching shows or going on lunch dates to Five Guys. She said the pair makes a point of writing love letters and gifting flowers for Valentine's Day and anniversaries, which is why Yilmaz adorns their apartment with a luminous bouquet of white hydrangeas twice a month to keep both their living environment and relationship blossoming.

Senior Cordelia Scales said she used to dread Valentine's Day because she was "the tall, dorky, awkward girl that never got asked out," but she is



LILY SPEREDELOZZI | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR

Students said Valentine's Day has summoned a throbbing heart for those dating from afar, but it has also been a time to rejoice over intimate connections and flower arrangements to come.

happy to now spend Valentine's Day with her boyfriend Kai Simson, a second-year master's student at the Graduate School of Political Management. Scales said the two are going out on a pizza date and haven't planned anything exorbitant because she finds fancier displays "overwhelming."

Scales said she has started seeing herself from a different per-

spective after becoming "stronger and more resilient" through her past relationships. She said she learned to be less hard on herself and more self-confident thanks to those relationships in which her partners vocalized their mutual love and support.

"Some of the things I've been through are traumatic, and my relationships helped me realize that the psychological

scars are always going to be there, but they're beautiful and they make me who I am," she said.

Freshman Noah Edelman said the most "gratifying" part of his relationship is the ongoing work that allows the pair to build their relationship.

"You can tell someone you love them, but to show them you love them is a continuous piece of effort," Edelman said.



NICHOLAS ANASTACIO | GRAPHICS EDITOR

## Artsy date ideas to woo your Valentine

**MAXIMUS VOGT**  
REPORTER

Let's face it, the last-minute trip to the drug store to pick up a heart-shaped box of chocolates and wilting roses won't cut it if you're looking to create lasting memories on Valentine's Day.

To elevate your date beyond the usual ritual of flowers and dinner, organizing a crafty activity will bond you and your Valentine with an appreciation for the beauty of romance that a work of art can capture. From painting in pairs to a joint jewelry-making project, we've compiled artsy date ideas that will create a lasting symbol of love with your person to make it all the more memorable.

### Paint with passion

For a post-dinner activity, grab some brushes and your favorite color of pastels to get to know one another over the easel. Once your work is complete, your painting will embody both your hard work and remind you of a special Valentine's Day.

Allure Bar & Lounge on the H Street Corridor is hosting romantic "Sip and Paint" events throughout February for couples to decompress with wine and pour their heart into art.

If you want to stay in and go at your own pace, try the stylings of Bob Ross. Consider his tutorial in Season 3 Episode 10, where he instructs

viewers to paint a glowing crimson campfire, the perfect visualization of your burning love.

Hopping off the canvas, painting pottery is also a great way to put some artsy flare on your special date. At All Fired Up in Cleveland Park, patrons can paint resculpted pottery in their studio space or bring home a bundle of pottery, brushes and paint for \$27.99.

### Sketch your heart out

Even if you don't consider yourself an artist, sketching a loved one can unlock a new appreciation for their beauty. Study their contours and stare deeply into their eyes as you put pencil to paper and let passion take over your artist's hand.

Take a notebook and some pencils down to the National Mall and sketch your date on a notepad next to some monuments. Who doesn't look better with the iconic D.C. skyline behind them?

Wander through the galleries of the National Gallery of Art to find some inspiration to get started sketching. Consult French artists from 18th-century Rococo art movements on the Main Floor of the West Building, especially The Love Letter by François Boucher and The Swing by Jean Honoré Fragonard.

### The joy of jewelry

If a tennis bracelet is outside of your price range, it might be time to pull out the pliers. Jewelry

that comes from the heart is bound to pry open the heart of your Valentine, so take your shot at welding chain links to make a chic bracelet.

Bead necklaces or bracelets will serve as a multicolored fashion statement and a special reminder of you with every wear. Many DIY jewelry kits include beads with silencers to spell your name or attach a short message.

### Attach a "love lock" to the Francis Scott Key Memorial Bridge

In Paris, the so-called City of Love, there are more than a million engraved padlocks attached to the Pont des Arts bridge, commemorating the unbreakable bonds of the many who have traversed it.

With all the French-inspired architecture littered throughout D.C., it is no surprise that the District is home to a similar bridge with its very own "love locks." Take a romantic stroll to the Francis Scott Key Memorial Bridge, connecting Georgetown to Arlington, Virginia, and you'll spot a few similar locks affixed to the metal handrails.

Creating these locks are simple—all you need is a padlock and something sharp, like a key or pocket-knife to engrave you and your Valentine's initials into it. If you're looking for a preengraved lock, look to Etsy, where you can add a short message in addition to names or initials.

## Movies and shows to watch if you're single on Valentine's Day

**JENNA BAER**  
REPORTER

It's that time of the year once again when couples obnoxiously flaunt their love with public displays of affection that bring singles to the brink of reinstalling the dreaded dating app tundra.

I call upon all my fellow singles to put down your phones and pick up the remote for a night in with comfort TV shows and movies to strengthen your relationship with yourself. Check out this lovingly curated list of unromantic content, all of which are available for free on various streaming platforms, and embrace singleness this Valentine's Day because it's just another Tuesday in 2023.

### "Lovesick"

Where to Watch: Netflix  
Aired: April 15, 2015 – Jan. 1, 2018

To most people, notifying each of your sexual partners that they might have chlamydia would be a nightmare. But soulmate-obsessed Dylan (Johnny Flynn) chooses to turn his chlamydia diagnosis into an opportunity for closure. Each episode in the series revisits Dylan's failed relationships, as we see how he held onto relationships that were doomed from the start out of fear of being alone. Dylan comes to terms with the fact that none of these women

were right for him. "Lovesick" has the ultimate slow-burn relationship between Dylan and his best friend Evie (Antonia Thomas), who fall for one another at the most inconvenient times. The show serves as a reminder that if you become too obsessive searching for "the one," you'll miss out on what life has to offer.

### "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind"

Where to Watch: Amazon Prime Video  
Aired: March 19, 2004

Be honest, if you could erase your ex and all of the pain that goes along with a broken heart, would you? In this anti-rom-com, Joel (Jim Carrey) and Clementine (Kate Winslet) take the plunge and undergo procedures to remove their memories of one another after a difficult fight. The film unpacks their partnership out of order, leaving viewers in suspense as the audience shuffles through each memory just before it disappears, all at the whims of the company Joel has hired to erase Clementine from his mind. Be warned: this film has been known to induce intense ugly crying—we're talking uncontrollable snot-nosed tears, folks.

### "Fleabag"

Where to Watch: Amazon Prime Video  
Aired: July 21, 2016 – April 8, 2019

Written by and star-

ring Emmy award-winning actress Phoebe Waller-Bridge, this program constantly breaks down the fourth wall and the unnamed main character's boundaries, laying her most vulnerable thoughts bare for viewers. At the center of this dramedy is the love-hate relationship between the main character and her sister as they navigate disappointing romance and estrangement from their father. Take a page from "Fleabag" and have an honest, unfiltered conversation with yourself about what you want out of life.

### "The First Wives Club"

Where to Watch: HBO Max  
Aired: Sept. 20, 1996

I'd like to dedicate this cult classic to all of the lonely hearts who have recently left long-term relationships. Powerhouse comedienne Diane Keaton, Bette Midler and Goldie Hawn portray estranged friends from college. They have lunch together and quickly find out that all of their ex-husbands cheated with younger women. As a united front, they hatch a plan to exact revenge on their exes. Hilarity ensues as they even the scales and develop confidence in themselves as individuals. Watching these friends build each other up is the perfect remedy for anyone who has survived a bad break-up and needs a nudge in the direction of self-love.



FLORENCE SHEN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

These picks might help you remember being single doesn't mean you're alone this Valentine's Day.

# Sports

## GAMES OF THE WEEK



**WOMEN'S LACROSSE**  
vs. UMBC  
Saturday | 1 p.m. EDT  
GW kicks off the preseason slate against the Retrievers with a new head coach.



**MEN'S BASKETBALL**  
vs. Richmond  
Wednesday | 7 p.m. EDT  
The Colonials look to forget their loss versus Duquesne as they take on the Spiders at the Smith Center.

**NUMBER CRUNCH** **65.47**

The average free throw percentage at the Smith Center for men's basketball's opponents, seven percent lower than their season averages

## Athletics department inducts eight members into Hall of Fame

**LUKE WIENECKE**  
CONTRIBUTING SPORTS EDITOR

The athletics department inducted eight members into the GW Athletics Hall of Fame Friday, starring the historic 1993 Sweet Sixteen men's basketball team and the first three Black athletes who integrated GW sports.

The induction ceremony for the Class of 2022 was held at the Betts Theatre Friday night where the audience was made up of top administrators, former inductees, current GW athletes and friends and family of this year's inductees.

Vogel introduced interim University President Mark Wrighton, who said his own experience cheering on the Buff and Blue has been a major highlight of his tenure and spoke to the three first inductees of the 2022 class, Norman Neverson, Robert "Rocky" Wright and Garland Pinkston for their role in the integration of GW athletics and the University at large.

"I'm very proud that we cherish the role of students here at GW and those who devote themselves to their athletic talent," Wrighton said at the ceremony.

Norman Neverson, who graduated in 1967, became the first-ever Black student-athlete to receive an athletic scholarship from GW in 1963, when he enrolled as a freshman during the height of the Civil Rights Movement and the same year he joined the March on Washington. Neverson, who was unable to attend the ceremony, paved the way for Black athletes at GW for generations as one of the most

consequential student-athletes in the University's history.

Basketball forward Robert "Rocky" Wright '66, whose family was there to receive the award, played an equally important role in the integration of GW athletics as he was the first Black basketball player to make the team in 50 years. At the time, freshmen were not allowed to play varsity under NCAA rules, but he paved the way for the next inductee, Garland Pinkston.

Pinkston was the first Colonial basketball player to be awarded a scholarship. The first inductee recognized attendance was soccer forward Diane Rose Kelly, part of the class of 1989, who led women's soccer to their first period of major success, while smashing the single-season record for goals and points in her first year at GW. Kelly's 44 career goals and 96 career points rank second of all time despite just two seasons for the Colonials, after transferring from Mercer Community College.

Danny Rouhier, part of the class of 2003, played first base for four years at GW, underscored by an All A-10 selection in 2000 after the Colonials won 37 games as part of Hall of Fame Head Coach Tom Walter's first recruiting class. Rouhier graduated in 2003 after setting the then-career record for RBIs, still ranking third in the category and home runs.

The next inductee was basketball forward Noeila Gomez from the class of 1998, GW's all-time career average scoring leader in women's basketball with 18 points per game. In 1998, she averaged 19.6 points per game and



JORDYN BAILER | ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR  
The induction ceremony for the Class of 2022 took place at the Betts Theatre Friday night where the audience, including top administrators, former inductees, current student-athletes and friends and family of this year's inductees.

was named the A-10 Player of the Year after already participating in two conference titles and two NCAA appearances.

The seventh inductee, wrestler Chris Peterson '87 ranks second all time in career points at GW with 320. He won the now-dissolved Capitol Collegiate Conference, a small collection of D.C. and Virginia schools, in both 1986 and 1987. Peterson was only the fourth

wrestler in Colonial history to achieve 100 wins.

Inductee Karen Ercole joined the athletic department as an academic advisor in 1991 and, after multiple promotions, she rose to the role of Associate Athletics Director for Educational Support Services in 2011. Even before 2000, Ercole was responsible for academic support for more than 400 student athletes, including the

1993 men's basketball team.

To conclude the Hall of Fame ceremony, coach Mike Jarvis, part of the Hall of Fame Class of 2008, inducted the 1993 men's basketball team into the GW hall. The team's run to the NCAA Tournament's Sweet 16 marks the furthest men's basketball has ever advanced toward collegiate basketball's highest honor in the national NCAA tournament.

## Soccer forward reflects on Hall of Fame induction

**NURIA DIAZ**  
SPORTS EDITOR

Alumna Diane Kelly was a sensation on the women's soccer team in 1987, guiding the Colonials to its second-most winning season of all time with 15 victories and lifting the program out of a six-year slump marked by consecutive losing records.

Kelly, GW's star forward at the time, led the Colonials with 15 goals and five assists to propel the team to a 15-6-1 record, ranking No. 2 all time in GW women's soccer history for points and goals with 44 and 96, respectively. She was inducted into the GW Athletics Hall of Fame Friday, joining the all-time GW greats as one of the most prolific attackers in Colonials history.

"It's all about mindset," Kelly said at the Hall of Fame induction ceremony. "So I did a lot of practicing at Mercer County. I had a really great team and a really great coach who believed in me, and belief gives you wings. And that really helped facilitate my drive as a goal scorer and lots of practice by myself and lots of support from teammates and lots of prayers."

Kelly arrived at GW in 1986 after transferring from Mercer County College as a sophomore, where she scored a nation-leading 29 goals during her first season with the Colonials. GW rebounded from a 3-11-1 season in 1985 to rack up 12 wins under then-Head Coach Adrian Glover while led by Kelly during the following season.

Kelly's single-season record of 61 points in 1986 crushes the 1997 runner-up by 21 points.

Kelly said coming to GW on a soccer scholarship marked the first time she left

home in New Jersey to be on her own in a big city. She said the adjustment from junior college to the Division I program was a struggle at first, but her busy schedule and the close-knit bonds on the soccer team helped her adapt to the District and grow up fast in the city environment.

"We were all learning, growing as women and also student-athletes," Kelly said.

In 1996, the New Jersey Wildcats — a team formerly in the United Soccer League W-League — invited her to play during the team's first-ever season in the sports organization, which was founded a year earlier. She said she was motivated to play the first season but no longer felt like she was in shape to compete, a progression away from what she called her "soccer body" to her "rock star body." She said she had less muscle and got knocked off the ball a lot, but she still had a great experience before hanging up her cleats at the end of the season to pursue her music career.

Kelly said she's excited about the future of GW women's soccer under head coaches Michelle Demko and Shannon Higgins-Cirovski, who turned the program into a competitive force in the last decade with a pair of appearances in the A-10 Championship finals. The 2015 women's soccer program went on a historic 13-game winning streak to clinch the top seed in the Atlantic 10 for the first time since 1995 and claim their first undefeated season in conference play.

"Success on the field really comes from success within team cohesion character," Kelly said.



JENNIFER IGBONOBA | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER  
Redshirt freshman guard Maximus Edwards led the Colonials in scoring with 15 points on 6-15 shooting.

## Men's basketball suffers third-straight loss against Duquesne

**SUNIT CHAKRABORTY**  
REPORTER

Duquesne dealt men's basketball a 93-67 blowout loss Saturday after the Dukes' defense kept the GW offense to an icy 29.6 percent first-half shooting rate causing a scoring chasm the Colonials couldn't climb out of.

The Colonials (5-5 A-10, 11-12) trailed from start to finish, as Duquesne (5-5 A-10, 15-8) capitalized off red-hot 3-point shooting and aggressive defensive pressure that forced a string of GW turnovers. The Dukes shot 53.1 percent from behind the 3-point line, while the Colonials sunk about 36 percent of their 3-point tries.

GW failed to get good looks at the basket for the first 10 minutes of play but still managed to score with some lucky bounces — senior guard James Bishop banked in a turnaround deep three with about 13 minutes left.

With 11:27 left in the first half, GW lagged just 2 points behind the Dukes after a 3 from redshirt freshman Maximus Edwards. But then the shots stopped falling.

GW missed their next 13 field goal attempts, failing to score a point for more than 10 minutes. Duquesne used the

scoring drought to go on a 28-0 run against the Colonials, grabbing a 47-17 lead.

Senior forward Ricky Lindo Jr. finally broke GW's abysmal scoring spell with a 3-pointer off an assist from graduate student guard Amir Harris at the 1:18 mark, and GW ended the half down 30 points, 50-20.

Edwards led the Colonials in scoring with 15 points on 6-15 shooting. The matchup marked his seventh straight game reaching double figures. Edwards is on the way to becoming the program's first rookie to average at least 10 points and six rebounds per game since GW's all-time leading scorer Chris Monroe in the 1999-2000 season.

Edwards scored 12 of GW's first 17 points, keeping the Colonials in the game for the first 10 minutes, highlighted by a catch-and-shoot 3 that he splashed off of an assist from Bishop.

Duquesne outperformed GW across the board in the first half, shooting 19-for-31 from the field compared to GW's 8-for-27 shooting. The Dukes hit a scorching 9 of 15 from beyond the arc compared to the Colonials' 4 of 12.

The Colonials, played by turnovers, allowed 13 in the first half compared to

Duquesne's five. The Dukes also racked up 13 first-half assists compared to GW's three.

Despite faring better in the second half, the Colonials' last-minute burst of energy was too little, too late. Duquesne started off the second half with a 9-2 run before GW responded with a 16-7 run of their own. Forward Hunter Dean scored the first 7 points in the half for GW, capped off by an emphatic dunk off an Edwards assist that brought the score to 62-27 with 14:52 left to go.

GW got scoring contributions from all eight of their players in their main rotation, but Duquesne continued their onslaught of 3s to hold on to their commanding lead. Duquesne guard Jimmy Clark recorded his third steal and a dunk to put the Dukes up 71-38 before GW guard Brendan Adams hit a jump shot to put the score at 71-40 with 10 minutes left.

Colonials center Noel Brown slammed home a resounding dunk with 8:49 left in the game, and Bishop hit a 3 nearly 40 seconds later to bring the score to 50-77. GW outscored Duquesne 47-43 points in the second half, shooting .533 percent from the field and notching 10 second-half assists.

## Athletes in action: Students set sail on the Potomac

FLORENCE SHEN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

