

Congratulations 2021 Graduates





News

Class of 2021

By the numbers

1,945
**Master's
degrees**

5,519
**Bachelor's
degrees**

743
**Doctoral
degrees**

**Youngest
Grad** *19*

**Honors
Scholars** *407*

**First
Generation
Students** *1,507*

69

27

38

**Oldest
Grad**

**University
Scholars**

**U. S.
Military
Veterans**



Class of 2021 demographics

by **Grace Mcfadden**
DIGITAL EDITOR

8,197 University of Connecticut degrees will be awarded this weekend. As graduates turn their tassels, let's look at what makes up the class of 2021.

5,519 bachelor's degrees will be awarded to UConn students. The other degrees will be given to 1,945 master's students and 743 doctoral students.

The class of 2021 leans slightly more female, with 55% of the class recorded as women and 45% as men.

The majority of UConn students came from within the state: 4,331 were residents of Connecticut. That's almost three quarters of the class of 2021. 1,188 came from out of state, and there are 261 international students set to graduate this weekend.

In the fall of 2017, many undergraduates from the class of 2021 were freshman. That semester, Stamford sent more students to UConn than any other town: a whopping total of 190 people.

The class of 2021 is quite accomplished: 407 students earned the Honors Scholar distinction, and 21 will earn the University Scholar distinction. In addition, the class of 2021 has 23 McNair Scholars, four Fulbrighters, three Gilman Scholarship Recipients, two National Science Foundation Graduate Fellows and one Goldwater Scholar.

The class of 2021 also boasts 1,507 first generation students, as well as 38 U.S. military veterans.

The difference between the oldest graduate and the youngest graduate spans 50 years: The youngest member of the class of 2021 is 19, and the oldest is 69.

8,197
total degrees

5,519
bachelor's degrees

55% female

4,331
campus residents

407
Honors Scholars

23
McNair Scholars

Four
Fulbright Scholars

Three
Gilman Scholars

One
Goldwater Scholar

Feel Good Friday: 2020-2021 Edition

by **Alison Cross**
STAFF WRITER

Let's be real: This school year was a lot. Pandemic fatigue, political controversies, virtual classes — at times, the world felt like too much to handle. Thankfully, The Daily Campus made time to write some warm-and-fuzzy-feeling stories that allowed us to take a breath and make this crazy year feel a little more normal. On this final Friday, let's look back on a few of our favorite stories that made us feel good.

Feel Good Friday: Resident good boy turns seven
By **Rachel Philipson**
Oct. 9, 2020

University of Connecticut's favorite furry mascot Jonathan XIV celebrated his seventh birthday in style.

After a breakfast of fresh-cooked salmon and a morning stroll, Jonathan greeted fans at Gampel Pavilion, Fairfield Way and the Student Union lawn for some COVID-safe good-boy pets. He finished the night by sharing a birthday cake made by UConn Dining Services with his big brother Jonathan XIII.

"Thank you for all the birthday wishes yesterday," Jonathan XIV said on his Instagram page @jonathanhusky14. "I [heart] my UConn family! Today I'll be sleeping off a cake-hangover. But I'd do it all again tomorrow if I could!"

Feel Good Friday: Residence Hall Association to host Hand-Drawing Turkey Contest
By **Isabella Warren**
Nov. 6, 2020

Who said hand turkeys are a kid's craft? UConn students got their creative juices flowing for a Thanksgiving-themed art contest hosted by the Residence Hall Association.

A digitally drawn, gingham-checked and feather-filled hand turkey took the first place prize and \$10 Insomnia Cookies gift card.

"Coloring is a very good way to promote relaxation and help calm anxiety, and we wanted to offer our residents a socially distanced and safe way to do so," said Residence Hall Association President Kailee Heinrich, an eighth-semester political science and American studies major. "We wanted to provide students with a very low-stress event that everyone can participate in and have fun with."

Feel Good Friday: UConn Giving Tree supports underprivileged youth this holiday season

By **Amanda Kilyk**
Nov. 13, 2020

In the season of giving, the UConn Bookstore teamed up with the Catholic Charities of Norwich to provide gifts to 60 local, low-income children, according to their website.

Ornaments were hung on a giving tree, each representing a child in need from 2 months to 17 years old. Donors participated in person and online, picking ornaments to provide each child a gift.

"Every kid deserves to get gifts during the holiday season, and this year especially, there is so much need," Jen Amedy, assistant manager of the UConn Bookstore, said. "So many people are out of work and struggling. It's nice to be able to help them make sure their kids aren't being left out."

Feel Good Friday: UConn Stamford to participate in coastal cleanup
By **Isabella Warren**
Dec. 4, 2020

UConn's Stamford campus joined SoundWaters, a local coastal education organization, to clean up Boccuzzi Park beach.

Volunteers cleared litter from the beach. The goal of the community cleanup was to improve the well-being of the Stamford coastal ecosystem and its wildlife on Long-Island Sound. SoundWaters prides itself on

educating others about the importance of protecting beaches.

"Our coastline is one of our most precious resources and all of us must chip in to keep it pristine," the organization said on its website. "SoundWaters is leading the charge, but needs everyone's help."

Feel 'Gouda' Friday: UConn Creamery expands cheese production

By **Rachel Philipson**
April 9, 2021

As the COVID-19 pandemic caused UConn Dairy Bar ice cream sales to decline, the UConn Creamery took the opportunity to revive its cheese production.

The creamery added four artisanal and farmstead cheeses to its shelves: Juustoleipa, Old Farm Lane Fresh Cheese, 1881 Reserve and Storrs Original Farmstead Jack.

"When the Dairy Bar shut down for COVID-19, we basically weren't selling any ice cream," Dennis D'Amico, associate professor of dairy food, said. "We filled all of the freezers with as much ice cream as possible. Then, it was the perfect time to relaunch cheese production. We wanted to bring back the ones that people loved that have come and gone and bring some new flavors."

As the COVID-19 pandemic caused UConn Dairy Bar ice cream sales to decline, the UConn Creamery took the opportunity to revive its cheese production.

Senior Columns

Slowly, But Surely: A love letter to UConn (and by extension, The Daily Campus)



PHOTO COURTESY OF RACHEL PHILIPSON, OUTGOING STAFF WRITER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

by Rachel Philipson
OUTGOING STAFF WRITER

Dear University of Connecticut, Oh, UConn, my darling, I wish I could say it was love at first sight. But if I did, I would be lying.

In high school, I told my friends I would go anywhere BUT the University of Connecticut for my undergraduate degree. The idea of going to a school in the middle of nowhere as a journalism major seemed like an oxymoron. I needed to be in a big city with lots of action to become an excellent journalist.

How is a daily student-run newspaper going to change my life?

However, the mere existence of The Daily Campus helped me choose UConn. I was writing for my hometown's weekly paper for

my senior project. I had three headlines under my belt and I was hungry for more. I wanted to write powerful stories that people whispered about in the hallways and caused change. I knew I wanted to become a writer, and a daily newspaper was the perfect place to develop my craft.

When I arrived at Storrs as a freshman, I remember feeling small and overwhelmed. I'm always going to feel small; I'm under five feet. However, I felt I made a terrible mistake. I should have been in New York or Boston, where journalists are bred everyday. How is a daily student-run newspaper going to change my life?

But, this is how love works, correct? From enemies to a blissful romance?

My first experience with The Daily Campus was a strange, but memorable, one. I walked up the sketchiest wooden stairs with a broken beer bottle tossed to the side. My sneakers stuck to every step. I decided I would go to an Opinion meeting, as I have a lot of

thoughts on everything. I walked down to the lower level and was surrounded by old newspaper clippings taped to the walls. I'm sorry, Opinion. I admire your work, but I spent that meeting reading all of the old News section articles on the walls. Opinion wasn't for me. That night, I ended up taking a random story about coastal land research from the News budget. I haven't stopped taking stories from the News budget since.

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But, this is how love works, correct? Finding it in the wrong place at the right time? Opinion, you were my wrong place, but you brought me News at the absolute perfect time.

During my time at The Daily Campus, I have written easily over 150 news stories for the News section. Each one has a special place on my heart. Some of them have been written in strange locations, like on a bus or while I was dancing at UCONNIC. Some became more meaningful to me after their publication, like when my interviewees told me how meaningful a piece was to them. Together, every article made me the writer I am today.

For more of the story visit DAILYCAMPUS.COM

A triple threat in UConn journalism

by Olivia Hickey
FORMER CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT

I've acquired plenty of bylines writing for this paper. I've reported on protests, apartment renovations and established and wrote two brunch columns. I led an investigative team in collecting data on voter trends for the 2020 presidential election. I even put a cutout of a person dressed in a Grimace costume eating a child (at least that's what it appeared to be). For some reason, this article was the hardest to write. How do I encompass my journalism career at UConn in a few hundred words? Easy, getting the reader the Who, What, Where, When, Why and How.

I joined The Daily Campus as a layout designer my junior year. I was new to the pre-journalism program, and I knew I needed experience for my resume, and the job was paid so I figured why not. What I didn't know was I was also getting paid to go on Blaze Pizza runs, to throw darts at spinning chairs and hang out with some of my friends in "the building behind Moe's" until ungodly hours in the morning waiting for our pages to be received by The Hartford Courant, but seeing people pick up copies of the paper in the morning made it worth it.

Despite popular belief, no, most of us don't just "do the paper" 24/7, even though it has felt like that. But hey, how often is someone's experience at UConn archived?

With that being said, I racked up a lot of miles on my car and lost a lot of sleep. But the drive to continue reporting made it worth it. I'll be candid. Journalism, like other professions, isn't a walk in the park. There have been nights and days that were more overwhelming than others. I've seen my work used to clean muddy

rain boots. But being surrounded by people with similar drives and goals made the harder days easier.

A professor who I admire once described me as a "triple threat." That has stuck with me through my final semester at UConn and the job application process. Alongside working at The Daily Campus, I was an active member of UCTV and WHUS, where I also leave behind the legacy of reporter and Assistant News Director. If anything, this pandemic has shown me that life is unpredictable and there's beauty in it. I love storytelling, being on camera, etc. I don't know what life has in store for me, but I know that wherever it takes me, I'm prepared with the skills to report and edit my way through it.

Being surrounded by people with similar drives and goals made the harder days easier.

Thank you to my family for letting me pursue storytelling. Thank you to all my professors who encouraged me to go after my goals. Thank you to Steph Reitz for assisting me in media requests that allowed me to pursue my curiosities. Thank you to the incredible team at Connecticut Public Radio for taking a chance on me and allowing me to grow in your newsroom. Thank you to the sources that have answered my various inquiries via Buy or Sell UConn Tickets and beyond. Thank you UConn Nation for supporting student journalism through funding, reading, viewing and sharing. #oldcoochout.

Senior Column

Looking back on lessons learned

by **Ashley Anglisano**
FORMER NEWS EDITOR

Every Daily Campus writer looks forward to writing their senior column. It's where you get to tell the story of the first time you walked into The Daily Campus building and went to your first section meeting. But where I differ from those clichés is I'm writing my senior column five months after completing school, now employed with my first full-time job in a major city away from my hometown. This perspective allows me to be able to look back on my time with The Daily Campus in a new light.

I walked into my first News meeting late and tried to sneak in the back unnoticed. The News Editor at the time, Marlese Lessing, stopped the meeting to allow me to introduce myself and answer that week's ice breaker, which was, in true Marlese fashion, "What is the weirdest thing you have ever eaten?" Already frazzled from arriving late and my face immediately turning its signature bright red from even an ounce of unwanted attention, I scrambled to form an answer.

"I'm Ashley, I'm a freshman journalism major, and I don't know, I guess I don't really eat weird things. I think it's really weird when people eat, like, insects and stuff," is what I managed to put together. The room was silent. "Okay then ..." Marlese said, before going on with the meeting.

What followed after were three and a half years dedicated to the News section, spanning from my first week as a freshman to the day I graduated last December. After earning my way into a paid staff writing position, to eventually stepping in as Associate News Editor and then later taking over as News Editor, I truly learned the ins and outs of how The Daily Campus operated. This is what I learned.

Editors have hard jobs. My first day as News Editor, a UConn student passed away on campus. I was thrown into covering a tragedy and worried that I wasn't cut out for the



PHOTO BY KEVIN LINDSTROM, PHOTO EDITOR/ THE DAILY CAMPUS

job. It was mentally exhausting. It made me realize how thankful I was to have an incredible Associate News Editor, Taylor Harton, who truly stepped up to her new role and supported me more than just during that tragedy, but continuously during our time working together. As News Editor, I worked with a great staff of writers. They made my tenure as an editor enjoyable and incredibly rewarding. I've seen them do great things in the last semester I've been gone, and I know they all will continue to succeed.

Walking into the production room for the first time is scary, until you see a familiar face or a designated place to sit. Then someone puts on music, you have a box of *Insomnia Cookies* in front of you and an *InDesign* document that quits just when you've made good progress, and everything feels comfortable. You grow close with your production night staff and you look forward to going to work. Who would've thought?

Writing for a completely stu-

dent-run newspaper is rewarding. You learn lessons you don't get from just sitting in a classroom (I do, though, have many to thank in the UConn journalism department, but this unfortunately is not the space to do so). You get angry emails from students, professors and the UConn and Mansfield community. You go viral on social media. You mess up and spell someone's name wrong and you feel awful, but you learn from it and never do it again. You make connections in the industry, and pick up tools that help you in your future career. You form different kinds of friendships; that I will always value.

I didn't leave UConn and The Daily Campus and start a journalism career. I was lucky enough to instead put my journalism skills toward a full-time communications position that is allowing me to focus on different kinds of work and discover what I'm truly passionate about. The Daily Campus gave me so many tools and experiences to set me up where I am today, and I can't thank it enough for that.

21 of the biggest events for the class of '21

by **Alison Cross**
CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT

Here are the highlights. For the full list of 21 events go to dailycampus.com.

1. Aug. 25, 2017 - **Class of '21 moves in**

A total of 5,230 freshmen students entered the class of 2021.

2. Oct., 15 2017 - **#MeToo takes off globally**

#MeToo, coined by Tarana Burke, gained a global following.

3. Feb. 14, 2018 - **Parkland shooting**

17 people died in a shooting at a Florida high school.

4. Oct. 6, 2018 - **Brett Kavanaugh confirmed**

Students marched on Fairfield Way to protest the confirmation.

8. August 2019 - **UConn gets a new president**

Thomas Katsouleas began his new role at UConn.

10. Dec. 18, 2019 - **Trump impeached**

Trump became the third president impeached by the House.

12. Feb. 24, 2020 - **HuskyTHON sets record**

Dancers raised \$1,520,234.98 for Connecticut Children's.

13. March 2020 - **COVID-19 pandemic starts**

The WHO declared COVID-19 a global pandemic.

14. May 22-27, 2020 - **Manhunt for UConn student**

Peter Manfredonia, a UConn senior, was caught by police.

15. May 25, 2020 - **George Floyd murdered**

Derek Chauvin murdered George Floyd outside a store.

17. Sept. 18 2020 - **Ruth Bader Ginsberg dies**

Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg died at 87.

18. Dec. 15, 2020 - **UConn's first COVID-19 vaccine**

Nearly 40 UConn Health staff members received a vaccine.

19. Jan. 6, 2021 - **Insurrection at U.S. Capitol**

Rioters stormed the U.S. Capitol after a Trump rally.

20. Jan. 20, 2021 - **Biden, Harris inaugurated**

Joe Biden and Kamala Harris took the oath office.

21. May 8-12, 2021 - **Class of '21 graduates**

The class of '21 took the stage for an in-person ceremony.



Opinion



Oak Hall at the University of Connecticut, Storrs campus. This building has some of the strongest winds on campus flowing around it during the school year. PHOTO BY ERIN KNAPP, ASSOCIATE PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS



A barn at Horsebarn hill at the University of Connecticut. Horsebarn Hill is one of the most beautiful parts of campus and many graduating seniors flock to the red barn for grad photos every year. PHOTO BY ERIN KNAPP, ASSOCIATE PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Editorial: What not to forget about UConn

The Editorial Board

As one of the most unexpected, dangerous and hectic academic years winds to a close, The Daily Campus is still reflecting on everything we appreciate about the University of Connecticut. Here are some of the things we think you'll need to remember about us, long after you've graduated:

Harrison Raskin, OE: The wind. UConn Storrs' architects designed the campus to maximize the wind, and you shouldn't take that for granted. You may go many places in life, but rarely will you be able to say that you're in a windier place. The wind has permanently built up your character, and you can always reflect back on how it tested you.

The wind. UConn Storrs architects designed the campus to maximize the wind, and you shouldn't take that for granted.

HARRISON RASKIN

Katherine Jimenez, Weekly Columnist: Don't forget The Daily Campus. Besides the fact that we have the largest circulation of any college paper in Connecticut, we're a community. The writers, editors and all other members of our team make it possible for us to reach out to UConn students in ways other organizations can't.

Anika Veeraghav, AOE: The campus scenery in general and the beauty of it. Sure, UConn is essentially in the middle of no-

where but it has a lot of beauty, like the sunsets on Horsebarn Hill, the flowers blooming toward the end of spring semester and the way campus looks when it's snowing. It's definitely something a lot of us take for granted.

Sam Zelin, Weekly Columnist:

With the thousands of students, faculty and staff that inhabit the campus, UConn is a unique community.

SAM ZELIN

nist: The people. With the thousands of students, faculty and staff that inhabit the campus, UConn is a unique community. We all make so many great relationships here, and many of those will be with us for the rest of our lives. Cherish not only the people you get to take with you into your next phase of life, but also the memories that will always remind you of your time at Storrs.

Sharon Spaulding, Weekly Columnist: Don't forget all the little things. Your shortcuts and daily routines. All the calculations in your head of how long it took to walk from point A to point B for every place you ever went. Everything you worried about as a freshman. The bus routes and what the old Student Admin looked like. The accumulation of fun facts about people whose names you barely remember from all the ice breakers over the years. The best snippets of conversations you overheard (accidentally, of course). The fact that you're still graduating after only four years, even if you may have walked over the seal in the center of campus at least once.

Senior Column

The Daily Campus, a home for black sheep

by **Peter Fenteany**
OUTGOING EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

What does it mean to be a black sheep? I think about this as I enter a Daily Campus Opinion section meeting my third week of college. Lights are on upstairs, and I hear the sounds of pounding feet and laughter. Downstairs, it's just myself, fellow freshman Alex Klein and the editors, Jacob Kowalski and Emma Hungaski. In those days, attendance at Opinion meetings was light, to put it nicely. I am only there to write a piece on Storrs Center, from the perspective of a local.

My second semester, I get a taste of the upstairs. I get the opportunity (perhaps because there was no one else) to join the Editorial Board. The meetings don't last long — we get in, pick an editorial topic, and get out. But for those 15 minutes, I see the production room, alive with members coming in and out. I want to stay and chat, but I'm intimidated. That spring, I go to the end-of-year banquet, talk to the three people I know and promptly leave. I love every moment.

Sophomore year, I finally get the opportunity to work production and join that lively upstairs atmosphere ... until the schedules change, and I am put on a waitlist. I don't get to copy edit until the spring. By the banquet that year, though, I am taking photos with my newfound friends and missing those who are leaving. I feel at home.

The next semester, I start designing, working first alongside Brandon Barzola and Lyric McVoy. We all push each other creatively and get along wonderfully. There's great music and great people.

I am promoted to Associate Opinion Editor in my junior year, working alongside Harry



PHOTO BY KEVIN LINDSTROM, PHOTO EDITOR/ THE DAILY CAMPUS

Most of all, it means finding your niche group of other black sheep. I could not be happier to have found my flock at The Daily Campus.

PETER FENTEANY, OUTGOING EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Zehner. We jointly lead the meetings I had been attending for the previous two years. We fill the room downstairs, taking up every available chair

and then some. Yet we are still the black sheep. I see how in meetings with the rest of the paper, the Opinion section is at times dismissed. Its mem-

bers are weird and its takes are bizarre. I laugh along with the teasing, but internally I take this as a challenge, and I help create a great cohort of pas-

sionate writers, new ideas and creative content. We are the best section that year, by my count.

That spring, at the urging of a friend, I run for editor-in-chief. I am aware of my status as a black sheep. I am a math major, I am from the Opinion section, and I am nowhere near a real journalist. I interview accordingly, focusing on how I love the paper and the people within it, how I push and feel pushed to greatness by them. Once again, I get the opportunity, and the position is mine (perhaps because there was no one else).

Two weeks later, we get sent home for two weeks. Two weeks becomes the rest of the semester, and the rest of the semester becomes a year and counting.

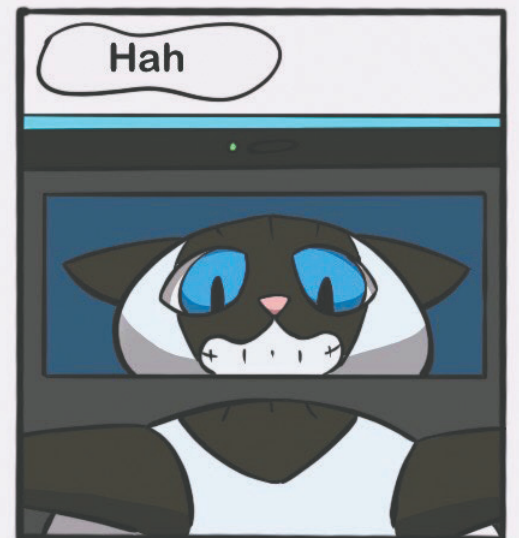
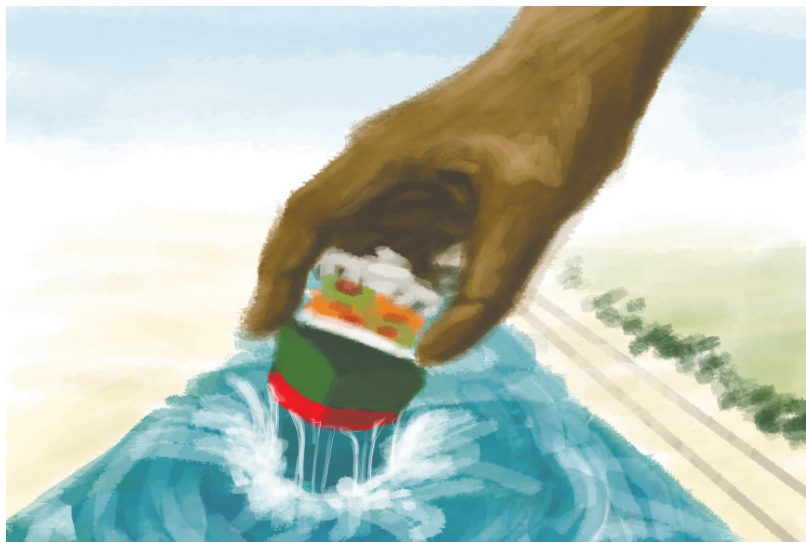
Through these challenges, and through my role as paper's advocate and steward, I get a broader view, and I see how The Daily Campus is a black sheep. We are keen yet cynical, we have little say in the whirlwind of COVID-19, we care about the intricacies of the community when few do. It is for those reasons we are wonderful and effective. We do our due diligence and we have a great time doing it. We are at times exhausted, unhinged, obsessive and terminally online. And yet, we are always giving it our all, together.

What does it mean to be a black sheep? It means talking with C. Dennis Pierce for an hour about balancing vegetarian options with meat-light ones. It means singing along poorly to "Sukiyaki" at 2 a.m. while waiting on edits. It means writing 800 words about buildings that really resonate with a random man who works at the depot campus. But most of all, it means finding your niche group of other black sheep. I could not be happier to have found my flock at The Daily Campus.



A compilation of Daily Campus comics

A huge congratulations to our graduating artists Alisia Gruendel and Chad Jennings!



Not Today



Chad Jennings

Enjoy the small moments



Alisia Gruendel

GRADUATING SENIORS FROM PHOTO



A dad gives his son water from a plastic bottle during the summer heat, as their family, and more than 300 other Greater Hartford community members protest peacefully against police brutality on June 6, 2020. PHOTO BY ERIC WANG, OUTGOING ASSOCIATE VIDEO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS



James Bouknight (2), a freshmen guard at the time, reaches for the ball before a dunk in a game against UCF on Feb. 26, 2020. PHOTO BY ERIC WANG, OUTGOING ASSOCIATE VIDEO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS



A "miracle child" high-fives Jackie Stephens, a UConn student and Morale Team Captain, while the miracle child's mother records the emotional moment at HuskyTHON on Feb. 22, 2020. PHOTO BY ERIC WANG, OUTGOING ASSOCIATE VIDEO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS



(Above) The Men's Basketball Team celebrated their Senior Night on March 5, 2020. The final home game against University of Houston was won with a final score of 77-71. PHOTO BY ERIC WANG, OUTGOING ASSOCIATE VIDEO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS



(Above) A member of the Hartford community speaks to a crowd of over 300 Greater Hartford community members at the State Capitol building on June 6, 2020. PHOTO BY ERIC WANG, OUTGOING ASSOCIATE VIDEO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

(Right) The entire Mohegan sun arena stares in anticipation for Christyn Williams' three pointer to drain the basket on March 7, 2020. The final score of the game against Temple was 94-61. PHOTO BY ERIC WANG, OUTGOING ASSOCIATE VIDEO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS



Eric Wang

Matt Pickett



UConn Huskies score 12 runs and concede none against the Boston College Eagles on a warm Tuesday afternoon in Storrs. Huskies senior Chris Winkel hit two home runs to help UConn win their 6th game in 8 played against the Eagles. PHOTO BY MATT PICKETT, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS



UConn women's soccer picks up a 1-0 victory over the previously undefeated St. John's University Red Storm on a sunny afternoon in Storrs, CT. Huskies senior Yamilee Eveillard scored the game-winning goal off a header in the 11th minute to help UConn improve to 3-1-1 on the season. PHOTO BY MATT PICKETT, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS



UConn students participate in The Great Rubber Duck Hunt at the Student Union on March 24, 2021. A prize was awarded to each student who found a duck. PHOTO BY SOFIA LANGOU, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS



Student groups perform at International Night hosted by the UConn honors program in the Rome Ballroom on Nov. 14, 2019. PHOTO BY SOFIA LANGOU, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Sofia Langou

THE DISPOSABLE CAMERA PROJECT

Welcome to The Daily Campus Disposable Camera Project: an initiative made by The Daily Campus photo department that gave 10 UConn students disposable cameras to document their spring 2021 semester at UConn. This project aimed to document the college experience during the pandemic and foster a sense of community through photography. Here are the results!



"Manhattan Chinatown."



"Visiting my family's favorite restaurant on my 22nd birthday."



"UConn's Baseball team gathers after a win in the first game in a double header."

ERIC WANG

FLO EVARDO



"My friend Cjei's birthday in Boston."



"Me on the Jonathan statue."



"Sunset on Horsebarn Hill the last day before spring break."



"The first time I ever saw every single washer and dryer empty in my dorm."

ERIN KNAPP



"Caitlin and her dog, Daisy, looking at the lake."

KHADIZA SHAIKH



"My friend in the Buckley lounges."

LUKE UDELL



"A pie in the face for HuskyTHON on day of strength."

MACKENZIE JACOB

Daily Life



UConn CLASS OF 2021: FOUR YEARS IN REVIEW

by Amy Chen

STAFF WRITER

Students who graduated from UConn in 2020 had to adjust to about two months of online learning. For the graduating class of 2021, most classes remained online for another year.

According to several graduating students in the class of 2021, the pandemic caused an incomplete college experience and missed opportunities; whether it was seeing friends, going to clubs/classes or just the overall sense of community. Nonetheless, this year's graduating class of 2021 enjoyed reminiscing about their past years at UConn.

"My most memorable year, by far, was freshman year because nothing can beat the excitement of leaving home and being a college student for the first time," Nathan Choi, an eighth-semester computer science major, said. "I tried so many new

things and met so many new people, which made every single day extremely exciting."

Choi said he not only learned a lot about himself during his time at UConn, but added that online classes actually made his computer science classes easier. However, he was still sad to spend his last year missing out on intramural sports and clubs. Choi said he was disappointed that he had to pay full tuition for a fraction of the experience. After graduation, he will be working as a software engineer at The Hartford.

Isaiah Edwards, an eighth-semester digital media and design major, said he almost did not apply to college because he didn't know his potential. He also hated the idea of change - and is still skeptical about it - but going to UConn challenged his identity. Edwards said that his

sophomore year, when he developed long-term friendships by joining organizations like UConn Bros and UCTV, had to be his favorite. Edwards said he will miss his friends and mentors who have helped him during his college experience.

"I was hoping that getting back on campus this semester would act as a distraction to everything going on in the world and in my life," Edwards said. "But it was really disappointing to see how dry campus was. Especially thinking about the things I missed out on and can never get back - my last UCONNIC, Huskython, end-of-the-year banquets, to name a few."

Edwards stated that there were also times when he felt the UConn administration could have done a lot more to protect students against racism and hate. Edwards added

that after graduation, he plans to promote Black artists in New Haven and help organize the second Black Haven Film Festival.

Ashlyn O'Boyle, an eighth-semester English major, transferred from Eastern Connecticut State University to UConn during her sophomore year. O'Boyle said her time at UConn was a mix of good and bad experiences. However, the events, clubs and professors made her experiences at UConn enjoyable.

"My most memorable time was my sophomore going into junior year because I made a lot more friends, got more involved with clubs, took a variety of different courses, used the new gym and was more comfortable with the campus," O'Boyle said. "When I first got there, I was slightly overwhelmed, but by junior year I was confident with myself and my education."

Like other graduating students, O'Boyle said her final year felt strange. During her senior year, she lived on campus for the fall semester, but moved back home for the spring semester. She missed how easy it was to make friends on campus. Now about to graduate, she feels there wasn't really much support for seniors and she had to figure out things on her own. After graduation, O'Boyle is going to work as an English teacher in Harlem at Success Academy.

"I'm going to really miss walking through Fairfield Way and seeing a sea of people going to and from classes," Choi said. "And though I didn't realize this at the time, I'm also going to miss being able to go to the library with friends to grind for exams or even just do homework because the vibe was honestly really nice."

UConn students raise a record \$1,520,234.98 for Connecticut Children's Medical Center in their annual HuskyTHON dance marathon. The dance marathon lasts 18 hours and is a show of solidarity and support for children affected by long-term illnesses.

PHOTO BY MAGGIE CHAFOULEAS, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF/THE DAILY CAMPUS



UConn's Student Union Board of Governors (SUBOG) held the annual Food Truck Festival on Fairfield Way. Students had to register ahead of time to receive a wristband for a specific hour time slot to come and enjoy the variety of food including barbeque, fries, and ice cream. PHOTO BY ERIC WANG, ASSOCIATE VIDEO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

So long and thanks for all the edits

Rebecca Maher

OUTGOING ASSOCIATE LIFE EDITOR

My very first article for The Daily Campus was a review of the movie “Home Again” with Reese Witherspoon. At the time, I was a freshman, sick with mono, who had just gotten my voice back after three weeks of scaring off potential friends with my monstrous attempts at speaking around my tonsils. In fact, one of the only people I didn’t terrify was Alex Houdeshell, a girl on my floor who worked for the newspaper. When I finally started to feel a little better, halfway through September, I started going to Life Section meetings with her. And on the 18th, we used our U-Passes for the first and last time to take the bus to the East Brook Mall to catch “Home Again.”

I’ve got to say, looking back, my first article is hilarious. That’s not to say it’s a bad review. Obviously, I was a born newspaper protégé. What’s hilarious is that I don’t mention the fact that my movie trip ended up taking around five hours, because with all our planning we didn’t see that the next bus back to UConn wouldn’t come for three hours after the movie ended. After some quick math and some spur-of-the-moment decision making, I joked that we could probably walk the six miles back and beat the bus. But since we had already seen the sights of the East Brook Mall — Claire’s and Subway — the joke quickly became our best option.

As Alex and I walked six miles on that 90-degree day, something incredibly important happened to us. We became best friends. And as the days and years went by, The Daily

Campus continued to be the glue that held us together. We would go to events together freshman year and walk to meetings together sophomore year. It forced us to talk to each other while we were fighting during our junior year and now, this past year, it reunited us during, of all things, a pandemic.

When I think back at what I did during my college career, I honestly don’t think that much about my classes or my professors. I think about the events I covered, the 2 a.m. hysterical giggles as production refused to ever end and the Life Breakers every Sunday. I think about the time I insulted a famous cookbook writer, and then befriended her and heard her entire life story a week later.

I think about how I felt when I got to see John Mulaney and the Kinsey Sicks in person. I think about how I got the time wrong to interview Tarana Burke, and had to run barefoot across campus, in formal wear, to meet her. I think about that professor who pretended to be Charles Darwin and the haunted truck that came for Halloween one year. I think about how I would strategically pick events with snack potential, and how one time I took an entire baguette and a block of cheese from the appetizer table as if I was grocery shopping.

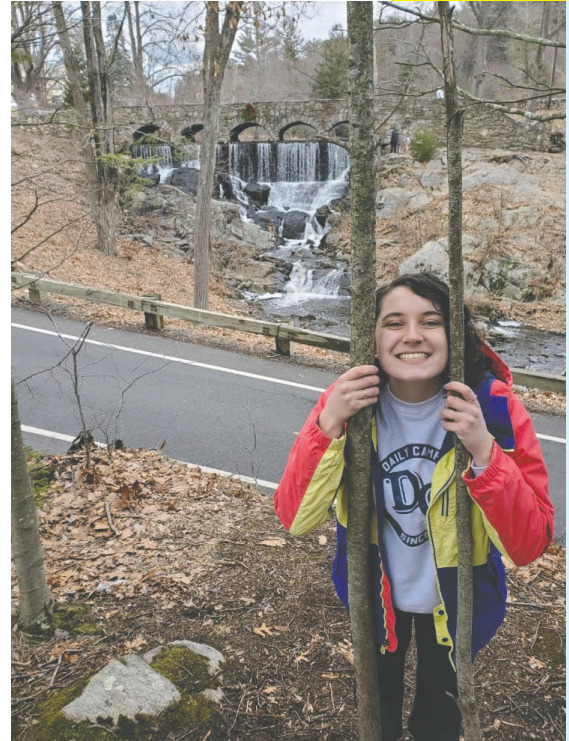
I think about that time Stephanie Sheehan and I ordered and obsessed over a box of squishy toys that we referred to as squishies. And how we threw them at the ceiling. I think about the uncooked pizza a bunch of us ordered to our hotel room during the National College Media Convention. I think about how my college

newspaper brought me to Kentucky of all places. I think about packing the Vernon Diner with 40-plus newspaper employees on the last night of production and ordering a decaf coffee and french toast and shamelessly stealing the homefries of everyone around me.

I think about running the Life section with Hollianne Lao, and watching how our workshoping and compassion genuinely helped our writers to improve and feel more comfortable writing articles. I think about going around the Food Truck Festival with Hollie twice, in the name of journalism, and how full we were before we broke out the tupperware. I think about the dangerous game we played, private messaging each other on Zoom during the Life meetings.

If I hadn’t been part of The Daily Campus, I know for a fact I would not be the person I am today. I am more confident in my writing, in my ability to talk to strangers and to lead a section and more comfortable being myself than I ever was before I started at UConn. This newspaper forced me to go to events I never would have attended and to meet people I never would have come across otherwise. I am beyond grateful for the newspaper because in our big campus of tens of thousands of students, it gave me a purpose, a sense of importance and, most of all, a family.

The other day, Alex and I got lost on a hike and ended up walking six miles instead of the two we had planned. It’s nice to see we’ve come full circle after everything we’ve gone through together these past four years. It’ll be strange not



working with her and my other friends from The DC anymore. But I have hope that with all our journalistic curiosity and amazing writing ability, we’ll stay in touch and stay close, whatever lies ahead.

“I am beyond grateful for the newspaper because in our big campus of tens of thousands of students, it gave me a purpose, a sense of importance and, most of all, a family.”



Alex Houdeshell

OUTGOING MANAGING EDITOR

My very first weekend at UConn, after meeting my roommate, attending the mandatory sexual assault presentation, walking around campus with a stranger I hoped to turn into a friend, I left my dorm (good old Buckley) and went next door to The Daily Campus.

That first weekend, pre-Involvement Fair, I signed up for my first article — a “Game of Thrones” season seven review that somehow got published on the front page — and a whole chapter of my life began. Who I am today has been indescribably changed by my experiences at The Daily Campus, in and out of the newsroom.

Having been an avid book nerd growing up, I attribute a lot of my pre-college persona to reading. Now, post-college, I attribute the ways I’ve changed as a person to writing. As a writer for the Life section, I went to events I would have never had the interest or confidence to attend otherwise. I went to a drag show, and cultural events like Asian Nite and the closing ceremonies of African American History Month. I went to a puppet slam — yes, that is a real thing — where I saw a 10-minute performance of a man dressed in black slowly moving a leg-shaped

puppet around the stage. I went to marches and protests. I went to human rights lectures. I interviewed actors, administrators and pageant-winners. Sure, I learned stuff in class, but 90% of the learning I did in college happened while on the job for the Life section.

Besides all that academic, cultural, self-improvement type stuff, I had the best and worst times — and my best and worst moments — because of The Daily Campus. When

I started out, writing for Life and designing once a week, I was quiet, self-conscious and not sure how to insert myself. When the end-of-the-semester midnight diner trip and Christmas party at Ted’s rolled around — my first ones — I wasn’t sure if I wanted to go. Luckily, my best friend and Daily Campus comrade rallied where I faltered. Thanks to Becca, we were a part of the tradition from the beginning of our time.

Coming back for my sophomore year, walking into the newsroom for my first shift of the year, our then-editor-in-chief remembered my name. It was a huge moment for me; even if I hadn’t been the most rambunctious participant the year before, it made me feel like I belonged there. From then on, I only felt more emboldened.

I traveled to Louisville for a conference and we accidentally ordered a frozen pizza that we had to beg the hotel to let us cook in their restaurant. I was in the newsroom at 2 a.m. when we started a Nerf gun fight. I was in the EIC office for the impromptu ukulele jam sesh that began while waiting for the diner trip. I was there for the newsroom debate about “Is coffee a date?” and moderated the podcast discussing the very important question. I wore

my slutty dinosaur costume to our Halloween party, and I judged the ugly sweater contest at Christmas-time.

When I was there long enough that I earned a leadership position of my own, my biggest goal was to keep up the crazy, loving, crackhead energy The Daily Campus had always given me. I wanted people to feel comfortable dancing in the newsroom to TikTok songs, and throwing darts at water balloons to see if they would pop and just sharing stories with their friends while coloring in pictures of Disney princesses that we ultimately hung up in the bathroom.

I have so much gratitude to those who came before me, for giving me a place where I could feel comfortable and invited. I have so much gratitude to everybody who I’ve worked with this year, for keeping me sane through crazy times and giving me a job I could look forward to coming in for every night.

Courtney Gavitt

OUTGOING DIGITAL EDITOR

I have thought about writing this column a million times since my freshman year, yet I still have no idea what I want to say. But every imagined version of this column always came down to one point: The Daily Campus was my home.

Home has always been a complicated and unstable term for me, but no matter what, The Daily Campus was always here for me. The people became my family. I met some of my closest friends, fell in love with one of them and used one of my paychecks to get myself a cat. My little family grew.

The work was hard, and it was long. It was a lot of late nights until two in the morning, skipped morning classes and phone calls trying to explain to my family why my work schedule was the way it was. It was

loopy, half-asleep conversations on the couches while we waited for production to finish and late-night trips to 7-Eleven to get coffee. But most of all, it was fun, and I got to go home every night knowing that we made a product worth something.

To be fair, I still have no idea how we managed to make a paper while standing on top of tables and screaming out the lyrics to “She’s So Gone” from “Lemonade Mouth” and reenacting “High School Musical 2s” entire “Bet on It” scene, but it happened.

When I think back to my college experience, it is the memories at The Daily Campus that I will remember the most. From drinking wine in a 40th-floor hotel room that looked out over Times Square to doing improv at midnight in Kentucky to hitching a ride home with three people in the trunk of an SUV, I’ve ended up in a lot of interesting locations.

As a freshman, I remember standing in the newsroom with the group of nervous freshmen waiting for the Life meeting to start. I stared at the Macs and Christmas lights in awe and whispered to the girl next to me, “How do we get there? How do we get to be one of the people who works here?” That girl ended up being Alex, who four years later I not only got to work side-by-side with as an executive, but who I’ve gotten to live with for the past nine months.

My time as the Digital Editor has been a weird one. The entire staff of digital producers graduated alongside the Digital Editor when I was a sophomore, so I took on the position without ever having worked for the digital

team at the DC. I had to start from scratch. It was hard and confusing, and trying to remake our entire website last summer to fit the needs of the entire editor cohort was the hardest project I’ve ever taken on here. But I’ve loved every minute of it.

Each year, I’ve dreaded when the seniors graduated and wondered how hard it would be to walk away from this place when it was my time. How do you hand off something so important to you? How do you walk away from your home?

I thought it would be harder. But it turns out the incoming editors are really freaking good at their jobs and I can’t wait to see where The Daily Campus goes with their leadership. It’s a wonderful feeling, really, to hire employees who then come around to take your place. To Grace and Charlotte, I know you’ll do amazing things with Digital next year. I’m so incredibly proud of the work you’ve done and the work you’ll continue to do. Keep my legacy of sitting on the back counter during the editor’s meetings.

To the entire editor cohort next year, I know you’ll absolutely kill it next year. I’d say make us all proud, but you already have.

And to The Daily Campus building, thanks for giving me a home for the past four years. I don’t know what I would have done without you.



SENIOR COLUMNS

How going to UConn shaped my journalism career

Ian Ward

OUTGOING STAFF WRITER

Coming to the University of Connecticut as a transfer student from a community college was one of the weirdest experiences of my life. At 21, I felt like a freshman even though, academically, I was a junior. The scope of the campus was unlike anything I had seen before and the idea of a library being open past midnight was unheard of to me.

During the first two weeks of the fall 2019 semester, I did what any new student would do and attempted to socialize with other Huskies. Though my attempts were hit-or-miss, I did have the advantage of knowing a few people on campus prior to transferring. Originally, I was a communications major since I thought it would land me the most job opportunities when I graduated.

I then came to the realization a month into the semester, however, that communications was a boring major and I needed something that would fit my interests. Thankfully, I had a talk with my friend and fellow community college transfer student

Edison about switching majors. He suggested that I switch to journalism as I was not only writing for the Daily Campus that semester, but I had also worked with him as assistant editor at our community college newspaper.

The following semester, I switched my major to journalism, and this would normally be the part of the article where I mention how life would get a lot easier after switching majors. It did not. The classes were hard as hell and there were many points where I considered dropping out of college. However, my passion for journalism prevented me from quitting and motivated me to become more involved with The Daily Campus.

During my senior year, I became fully invested in The Daily Campus since I knew being involved would improve my chances of landing a solid job. In addition to writing articles, I also became a designer for the newspaper, specifically the Life and News sections.

There were some nights that were more frustrating than others and spacing was always my Achilles' heel, but my boss Alex was always there to help. She was patient with me when it came to re-learning InDesign or when I had trouble writing captions for photos. Alex was a core reason why The Daily Campus was my home on campus.

When it came to writing, I felt like Sisyphus pushing a boulder up a mountain.

No matter how many edits or improvements I made to my writing, it seemed like I could not make any progress. Then I met my friend Sarah, who also writes for the newspaper. Reading her articles made me feel smarter since they featured vocabulary outside my own, and inspired me to write with better word choice in mind. Chatting with her outside of Life meetings about music, movies and philosophy also opened my mind to looking at reviews differently and ultimately structuring my articles differently. For that, I thank her a lot.

The most important lesson I learned while working at The Daily Campus and being a journalism student at UConn is to expect the unexpected. When it came to writing articles or designing news pages, there would always be some sort of last-minute change that would occur and I would often have to adapt to.

A good example of this would be when I was working on my very first article during my first semester. Previously, I was used to having a couple of weeks to write an article for my community college newspaper. For The Daily Campus however, I was at a screening for the film "For Sama" and it turned out that I only had two hours to write the article. I panicked at first but then a friendly staff writer — later turned associate Life editor — Becca came and helped me write the article. The rest, they say, is history.



Lesly Nerette

OUTGOING CAMPUS
CORRESPONDENT

life. I've enjoyed meeting, connecting and writing with not only The Daily Campus, but the UConn community as a whole. While my time with The Daily Campus was short, I've cherished every moment.

Beyond The Daily Campus, thank you all for loving me and being so kind! Every individual I've met had a story to tell, and every day had a new experience to be had. This is everything that the younger version of myself always wanted. Through the good days, the bad and a previous environment that tried to dim my light, here I am writing to you with joy and gratitude in my heart. I will be forever grateful to you all.

To close, I just want to say that this is not the last you have seen of Lesly Nerette! This curtain may be closing, but there is a future to be had and I have the main role! Thank you once again UConn. Huskies forever!

It felt like it took forever and a day, yet also only a few seconds, to get to where I am now. Maybe this isn't the best way to describe how fast time runs away from you, but it's a start. As a senior, I'm closing another chapter of my life and it's bittersweet. But looking back, I wouldn't have had these four years move any other way.

Being taught how to find my voice and who I am as an individual has been the greatest gift given to me at UConn. Being able to express myself freely through different outlets has been even better!

With this, I just want to thank all of you for giving me the time and opportunity to share a piece of me in your everyday

SENIOR
COLUMNS





Evan Burns

OUTGOING CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT

How do you sum up four years in so short a space? There are so many little things you don't think you'll miss until the moment you realize they've passed just beyond your reach and have become relegated to memory. You fall into certain routines and don't notice you'd become accustomed to them until something in your life changes and they've been replaced. I think we all dealt with that to one degree or another over the past year.

Writing for The Daily Campus, I still reviewed theater productions from the drama department and films, but the experience had changed. Instead of heading to a crowded cinema to watch new releases on the big screen, I was watching them in bed on my laptop. Instead of giving my extra comp ticket to a friend and walking to the Harriet Jorgensen or the Studio Theater or the Naffe Katter to watch live actors perform the newest Connecticut Repertory Theatre show on stage and afterwards hurriedly interview them at Dog Lane as I created questions on the spot and guzzled down as much free ginger lemonade as

my stomach could handle, I was watching virtual productions over Zoom in bed on my laptop.

There are various reasons I could have had to finally call it quits this year and discontinue my participation at this paper; I was busy as a student teacher, events had become less numerous and more homogenous, the excitement I got from live con-

certs and plays was absent and I just felt, as I'm sure many others have as well, a general malaise from the relative solitude brought on by the pandemic. Still, at no point did it cross my mind to stop writing. For any one reason there could be to stop, there were more to continue on.

To begin with, I love writing. I know it's hard to believe the guy whose articles typically run well over twice the recommended length enjoys putting words on a page, but it's true. Writing is work, especially when I'm scrambling against a deadline that's only an hour away after just getting back from the event I'm about to describe, but it's never unwelcome. Even with all the essays and reading responses and research papers I'm endlessly assigned, The Daily Campus gives me an outlet where I can write about what I want with as much stylistic flourish and indulgence as I feel in that moment. Writing can be stressful and difficult, but it's also freeing and invigorating.

I also stay for the community. What makes The Daily Campus such an incredible environment is its people. Even without the weekly meetings moved online

instead of at The Daily Campus building behind Moe's, which I've repeatedly been made aware no one who is not associated with the paper seems to know exists, I'm always in awe of how many of the brightest, funniest and most interesting people on campus are a part of this paper. All the editors I've had across all four years have encouraged and inspired me to become a better writer and a more adventurous person. They deserve all the praise I can lavish. Thank you Schae, Julia, Melissa, Becca and Hollie.

I look back on being a part of this paper with the most pride and satisfaction. Some of my favorite college memories were made possible by this paper. I'll never forget the experience of watching a concert where the star was a holographic projection of an opera singer who'd been dead over 40 years, or the time an Emmy-winning director personally emailed me to make a suggestion for my article. I will forever be grateful to this paper for sending me to New York City and setting me up with a Times Square hotel room all at their own expense. As I write these final sentences, I feel truly lucky to have been a part of such an amazing, talented and supportive family. The beautiful thing about print journalism is that a bit of me will always remain here in my writing, just like a bit of The Daily Campus and my experiences with it will always live on in me.

Alisia Gruendel
OUTGOING STAFF ARTIST

I'm a digital media and design major with a concentration in 3D animation from the Storrs campus. I am so grateful to have been a part of this wonderful and unique community, even if it couldn't be on campus. I became a Staff Artist for The Daily Campus during a time where many students weren't able to return to Storrs. But nevertheless, the Husky pride persisted. Creating comics and illustrations for people to read on or off campus gave me a tremendous sense of pride in my work. It wasn't just for myself or my coursework, it was for my fellow students. I had a much greater sense of community and awareness when I was creating for The DC. I wanted the comics to be relevant and personal, yet

relatable to almost anyone. We're still college students going through the motions of life, so why not have some fun with it? Whether that be those oh-so-familiar moments of spring allergies, the crazy weather of New England or simple moments during the year.

I truly wish I joined the DC earlier in my academic career. It has been a rewarding experience to work alongside the other incredibly dedicated and diligent members of this newspaper. There's nothing more gratifying than seeing all of our hard work come together and create an insightful and thoughtfully executed publication. I'm glad I got to be a part of it for this year and I'm excited to see where they will go in the future. Go Huskies!

SENIOR COLUMNS



Concerts and Community: What the DC has given me



Lucie Turkel

OUTGOING CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT

As I sat and thought about what I wanted to say for my senior column, I couldn't help but scroll back through the (now archived) Daily Campus Squarespace site and reread the very first article I wrote for the Life section. Dated Sept. 19, 2017 – a little less than a month after I stepped foot on the UConn campus as a freshman – the article is one that completely escaped my memory: A feature piece on a UConn graduate student who released a single. The article is short and sweet, with quotes that were most certainly emailed to me – I hadn't yet conquered the worthwhile but terrifying phone interview. Rereading the article, I couldn't help but

smile about how despite the way in which so many things have changed between then and now, some other things have stayed exactly the same.

As I kept scrolling through the archive, I stumbled upon the article that completely changed my outlook on writing. The piece was one I wrote at the beginning of my second-semester freshman year about what to expect for the 2018 music festival season. I had originally thought of it as somewhat of a throwaway article; nothing special. That was, until, a press person that represented the Governors Ball Music Festival reached out to me via email to express her gratitude that I included the Gov Ball lineup in my piece. More than that, she asked if I would be interested in conduct-

ing an interview with one of the co-founders of the fest.

I was completely floored upon receiving this email – I distinctly remember texting my parents about it in all caps and running around my dorm floor to tell anybody who would listen. Growing up outside of the city and attending Gov Ball throughout high school, the festival was a big deal to me and before that email, I had never imagined that writing for my school newspaper could lead to such incredible opportunities like that very first Gov Ball interview.

I'll never forget that first phone interview. I banished my roommate from our Alumni dorm room for 30 minutes, had all my questions typed out and tried to modulate my voice to sound like a "real adult." That interview article opened my eyes to the fact that as a journalist I could reach out to press contacts, request interviews and – as my concert-obsessed self joyously grasped – get free media passes.

I have many memorable highlights of concerts I was able to attend through media passes. One of these were the VIP tickets I scored to the Kygo concert at the Javits Center in Manhattan that took place on the last day of Pride month. It also happened to be my friend's birthday, and my plus-one ticket for her served as the ultimate present. Another that stands out in my mind is the photo pit access I got to Fool's Gold Day Off in 2018 at the Knockdown Center in Queens, where I moshed with the other photographers as Sheck Wes sang "Mo Bamba." However, that very first Gov Ball holds a special place in my heart.

Getting to go to Gov Ball for all three days for free with access to the media tent (for two years in a row!) was, at the time, my dream come true. Both years, I interviewed a different band in person and was able to bring a plus-one,

making my friends pretty happy that I was able to get the gig, too. I still have my media wristbands stashed away in my room at home for posterity's sake. Writing for the DC showed me just how much was possible if you simply reached out, made connections and tried for it. Of course, everything didn't always work out – I was never able to interview Brockhampton, although their press people did respond to my email with a nice "No," rather than fully ignoring me, which was enough to make me excited. Yet, the possibility was enough to open my eyes to the extent of what journalism – and specifically, working for an esteemed college paper like The Daily Campus – could do.

When COVID-19 hit, however, it put an end to the live entertainment. I think it was this natural break – along with my changing interests – that reflected in my different article topics. Because I've written for the DC for the entirety of my college career, looking back at old articles has become more than just a walk down memory lane; instead, I can truly see the journey of me finding myself and my authentic passions right there on the page (or computer screen). In this way, my articles for the DC have become a living, breathing archive of my personal thoughts and feelings.

While I've always been passionate about social justice and history – with my individualized major focusing on the study of race relations and the Black experience through the history and literature of the United States and Latin America – I have always struggled to find a way to bridge this academic pursuit with my journalistic writing. However, as another wave of protests against the racial violence that has historically taken place since our country's genesis hit this past summer – mainly spurred by the murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor – I turned to none other than The

Daily Campus to express myself. My sole Opinion article I've written for the paper, entitled "It's Not About Me: The pursuit of white allyship in the fight to end racism" is most certainly the article I'm most proud of, as well as the one that took the most courage in writing. I'll never forget how a woman in Utah reached out to me via email to tell me how my article affected her.

Yet again, The Daily Campus showed me exactly what journalism can do. This time, I could see how all of my interests – writing, history, social justice, music – could be combined to create something valuable and permanent. Having the opportunity to cover events such as the Angela Davis talk, as well as write more information-based articles on topics such as Black history facts that are often overlooked in the K-12 classroom, didn't just feel worthwhile and important, but also shed more light on what I potentially could do as a career path.

Looking back through this immense archive of work from my four years of writing at The Daily Campus is a bittersweet feeling. As someone that was involved in other organizations and groups outside of the DC, it's sometimes easy to forget just how much being part of the community at The Daily Campus has impacted my college experience for the better. Since I began writing for the Life section as a freshman and then additionally became a Digital Producer as a junior, it almost seemed like a given to me that the DC would always be a part of my life – something that I knew, that my friends knew, but that I didn't think about all that much. Reflecting now makes me realize that the DC didn't just give me the improved writing skills or free concert tickets, but also a thoughtful and loving community.

**For more of the story
visit [DAILYCAMPUS.COM](https://www.dailycampus.com)**



When one door closes, another opens



Kate Luongo

OUTGOING CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT

We all know the letter. The kind that arrives with that familiar heart-sinking first sentence, “We regret to inform you...”

Regret. Regret. Regret.

As a high school senior reading these words, I was the one with regrets. If only I had gotten a higher score on the SATs. If only I had taken physics my senior year. If only ... and the list goes on.

The doors kept slamming, one by one.

But one of them stayed open.

My mom and older sister had gone to UConn, so it seemed like the natural path forward. UConn was not the dream destination, but rather, a starting point. Standing at the top of Horsebarn Hill the spring before my freshman year, I decided that was where the adventure would begin.

What I didn’t realize was that the next four years would be an adventure in and of itself.

At the end of the fall semester of my freshman year, I was faced with a tough decision. After the holidays, I packed up my first dorm room at Towers and returned to my childhood bedroom. I decided to stay home during the spring semester for health reasons. At the time, I felt like I had failed a test – a thought that filled me with self-doubt. Somehow, I thought with absolute horror, I had failed at being a college student.

But that wasn’t the case. I want to share my story because there should never be shame in taking care of yourself and doing what’s

best for you, even if it doesn’t follow the same path as everyone else. Perhaps I didn’t have the typical freshman experience – a wild mix of socializing and studying and crying in the library moments before an exam.

But I did have something else.

I signed up for British Literature II at the Waterbury campus that spring. Professor Barecca, an English professor at the Storrs campus, was teaching the course. By reading “Death of the Heart,” a new favorite book of mine, Professor Baracca gave me a gift that I had lost that semester: my motivation and love for learning.

Sophomore year, I arrived back at UConn with newfound strength and bursting ambition to try anything and everything. I came across The Daily Campus at the Involvement Fair. My mom had done a sports humor column when she had been at UConn, and as an English major, I couldn’t wait to put pen to paper. I didn’t have a lot of journalism experience, but I did have words, and a desire to share them with the world.

That year I primarily wrote for the Opinion section, writing articles ranging from “The 2018 U.S. Open is a wake-up call for women’s rights” to “Why we must start thinking about trauma now.” Writing for the Opinion section gave me the chance to use my voice and speak up about the causes I cared about.

In junior year, I decided I wanted to start a travel column for the Life section. As someone who loved to travel, but did not have

the time or means as a college student to get very far, I shared local hidden, inexpensive destinations.

However, with the COVID-19 pandemic, I once again was faced with an obstacle. Another door shut. First the door to my Holcomb dorm room, and then a canceled summer study abroad program in Toulouse, France. The challenges with my travel column became obvious, as more doors were shutting and the once-foreign idea of “quarantine” became the new normal. Instead of giving up on it, I got creative, sympathizing with my fellow travelers, and wrote “Husky on the Road: From the couch.”

This past fall, I was disappointed to not be able to take in-person classes on campus. I felt frustrated that my senior year of college would not be how I pictured: working behind the desk at the English office, smiling at the students and professors I had come to know so well. Instead, I sat at my kitchen table with my dog Sailor at my feet, and got the chance to bond with my older sister, who was also home doing grad school classes remotely. A challenging time for the world turned into a chance for us to grow closer and make memories together.

One of my best friends from home who attended Georgetown was also taking classes remotely at the time. We decided to get an apartment together in D.C. for the spring semester. If it weren’t for doors closing that fall due to the pandemic, I never would have gotten to open the door to my first apartment and live with my best

friend from kindergarten, an idea we would often fantasize about. I completed my honors thesis – a middle-grade realistic fiction novel, *Sophie Spiraling* – from my desk overlooking R Street as the cherry blossoms were beginning to bloom.

Despite not being on campus, I still felt connected to UConn through my live Zoom classes, English department meetings and working with the editors – primarily Hollianne Lao – at The Daily Campus. This year, in an effort to not only find and feature extraordinary college students who are following their passions, I also wanted to make connections in a world that had become harder than ever to do so. Through my series, “Sensational Student,” I not only be-

came a better journalist, but I also met some truly incredible people, including Henry Bird of “The Great British Bake Off.”

The time I had at UConn may not have been the typical college experience that students can relate to, but I can say that I could not be more proud of everything I accomplished.

If I hadn’t gotten those college rejection letters in my senior year of high school, I would not have met the amazing professors who have become important mentors to me. I would not have gotten my job working for the English department or found my voice at The Daily Campus.

I ended my UConn journey and my time at the DC in D.C., and I have absolutely no regrets.



Congratulations to our 2021 graduates!



SOPHIA ARRUDA



EVAN BURNS



COURTNEY GAVITT



EMMA GEHR



CONNER GILSON



OLIVIA HICKEY



ALEX HOUDESHHELL



ARMANA ISLAM



MARISA KARASIK



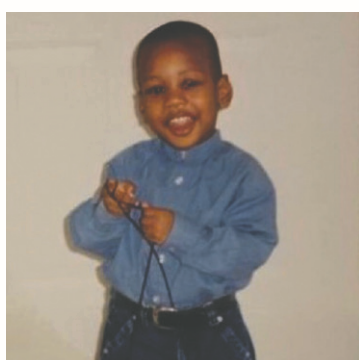
KATE LUONGO



DANI MACUIL



REBECCA MAHER



LESLY NERETTE



LUCIE TURKEL



ERIC WANG



IAN WARD

Daily Sports in the time of COVID-19



The UConn Huskies win 2-0 against the CCSU Blue Devils March 24, 2021. PHOTO BY ERIC WANG, OUTGOING ASSOCIATE VIDEO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS



The Huskies win against UCF with a final score of 81-65 on Feb. 26, 2020. James Bouknight (2) scored 16 points. PHOTO BY ERIC WANG, OUTGOING ASSOCIATE VIDEO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS



UConn men's hockey ties No. 12 UMass Lowell 3-3 in the XL Center Friday night on Nov. 15, 2019. PHOTO BY KEVIN LINDSTROM, PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS



The Huskies take their first win in the AAC Tournament on March 7, 2020. PHOTO BY ERIC WANG, OUTGOING ASSOCIATE VIDEO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS



The UConn men's soccer team suffers a 0-2 defeat to the Providence Friars on Feb. 27, 2021. The first goal was scored on a penalty kick in the first half. PHOTO BY KEVIN LINDSTROM, PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

by **Jonathan Synott**
ASSOCIATE SPORTS EDITOR

All it took was two quick notifications.

There I was, a freshman engineering student, enjoying my last week before spring break. It was a Wednesday, seemingly similar to any other. My friends and I had heard rumors of a few weeks off from school due to COVID-19, but didn't think too much of it.

We sat together, listening to music and playing cards, when one of my friends got a notification. Tom Hanks and Rudy Gobert had contracted COVID-19. A few minutes later, our phones buzzed again, this time with the news of the NBA suspending its season indefinitely, effective immediately.

All of a sudden, something became certain to everyone in the room. This pandemic was real, and it was here. Weeks off became months, and 2020 became the year of COVID-19.

After that Wednesday, more and more sports cancellations came flying in, from imminent events like March Madness to ones further down the road like the Tokyo Olympics, being pushed back a full year. Sports fans across the world which were wondering the next time they'd see their favorite athletes compete. We went from having sporting events in some capacity every day for centuries to none for months. In a time of despair, personal heroes were no longer available to turn to for entertainment or an outlet.

On a university level, some athletes never got to see how their senior seasons ended. The NCAA was generous in giving athletes an extra year of eligibility, but some athletes didn't have graduate school plans and just graduated instead of returning. My spring beat that year, women's lacrosse, played a game that Wednesday against Columbia, not knowing it would be their last. The

women's basketball team, fresh off their undefeated conference regular season and tournament play, weren't able to continue their successes in the NCAA tournament. Likewise, the men's team, blazing hot on a five game win streak, saw no tournament play in March due to COVID-19.

Some events remained, but went virtual, like the WNBA and NFL drafts in April. They lost some of their luster, but were entertaining nonetheless. ESPN pushed up the release of "The Last Dance," a cable documentary that shattered records for drawing in the most viewers in an age of streaming-dominated television.

In May, non-"Big Four" American sports (baseball, football, hockey and basketball) started to make a comeback, starting with (if memory serves) the KBO league, baseball in South Korea. I remember waking up early on a few occasions just to get in my sports fix. Soon after, we had our

first U.S. event in months with UFC 249, which had no fans in attendance. A week later, Kevin Harvick won the first NASCAR race since the pandemic hit. A month later, the "Big Four" organizations laid plans to return as well, complete with rapid testing and masks. The NBA was the first, announcing the creation of the bubble down in Florida. The MLB, the last domino to fall, announced an ultra-short season of just 60 games set for a mid-July start. Despite attendance being very limited or nonexistent, we would finally have most of our sports back.

College sports took a little longer to return, with football most notably returning in the fall. At UConn, we saw the football season canceled, while Big East fall sports were pushed to early spring start times. Winter sports were able to start at their standard times. Our basketball teams were able to finish out their successful seasons, but not without a few separate

weeks of program suspensions due to COVID-19 protocols.

It was definitely weird at first, watching only some of our favorite players as others sat out the year and seeing stadiums of 30,000 empty seats with pumped-in crowd noise (or sometimes, no noise at all). There were some road blocks along the way, like false positives and players having to miss key games, as well as whole teams suspending operations for a week due to multiple cases. But we all adjusted, and the sports world somehow is living on in the uncertain time of COVID-19.

We appear to be reaching the home stretch of the pandemic as more and more players have come back to their respective sports, and state and national officials are allowing more and more in-person attendance. With the state of the sports world returning to normalcy, it's safe to say we will never forget the past year with its wild and unprecedented events.

Grad Issue: Thank you, seniors

by Mike Mavredakis
STAFF WRITER

Every year I have been at The Daily Campus, we get to the end of the year and it never feels real. Maybe it's just how college works, but seeing people you've

grown used to being around suddenly disappear is jarring. Especially when they've had such an impact on you as a person.

This group of seniors leaving UConn and The Daily Campus had that impact on me. Included in this group are

some of my greatest friends and my favorite co-workers. It is only right that they get the send-off they deserve. I'll do my best to do that.

I also extend my congratulations to all six people I'm about to talk about; college is hard, man.



Danny Barletta, Outgoing Sports Editor

I have truly never seen another person take on so many jobs like Danny has in the past two years. Anything you can name in this business, Danny can do. He must be an organizational mastermind in order to get any sort of sleep. It's remarkable.

Danny has covered every sport imaginable at UConn. We spent many beats together, and I am really grateful for getting the chance to work alongside him.

David Sandoval, Outgoing Staff Writer

David is as knowledgeable about soccer as they come. Even though he doesn't have much to be proud of as a Spurs fan, David has quite a bit to be proud of as a journalist. He has shown incredible dedication to covering Hartford Athletic.

Conner Gilson, Outgoing Associate Sports Editor

There are few things more consistent than a Conner Gilson "The Packers Are Killing Me" column. Conner was once recruited by George Mason to play soccer after scoring two goals his senior year of high school, but he opted to go for UConn instead. I think that was a mighty fine choice.

Fast forward four years, Conner has accomplished pretty much all you can do at The DC. With Danny, he's led the sports section to a Best Section award in probably the hardest year to do it to date. In a year where half the UConn sports teams didn't play and the staff was fairly thin in terms of numbers, they recruited hard and nailed it — kudos to them.

Personally, I'll miss our Zonas, Subway runs and football tossing in the office the most. And our cake-making skills — even if I didn't win a *single* game of pong that day. Conner has been one of the people that have made the DC the most special for me, I'm lucky to call him a friend.

Jorge Eckardt, Outgoing Staff Writer

When I think of the sports section, the first name that comes to mind is Jorge Eckardt. He is one of the best writers I have seen in my time at the paper, regardless of section. He is among the hardest working and the most creative content creators I know, if not the best. There are few who care more about succeeding in this line of work than him.

I don't know what I would have done in college if I hadn't spent my nights getting yelled at by Jorge for wasting my money on packs in FIFA and The Show — both of which he is better at than me (except maybe hitting).

Seriously though, Jorge has become one of my closest friends over the past three years, and I am better off having him around. He calls me out when I need that extra kick and he has always supported me when I need it. He is the textbook definition of a great friend.

Karthik Iyer, Outgoing Staff Writer

Karthik joined this year to write about the NBA and instantly become one of the most analytical minds in the section. For someone who was only around for a year, he absolutely crushed it this year. He should be proud of his impact.

Ben Berg, Outgoing Staff Writer

I first met Ben in Newswriting during my freshman year, and I don't think I've met a funnier person since. When Ben reached out to me to start a podcast — the No Chips Podcast, available on Apple Podcasts and Spotify — last May, I knew it would be one of the most fun things I would have going for me.

Ben also is one of the few rational New York sports fans out there — maybe even the only one. He can write a damn good story too.

Zacrab forever.



Big East Baller Update No. 14(ish): Senior night

by Cole Stefan
CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT

Since the last Big East Baller Update, a lot has happened not only in the Big East, but also in college basketball in general. I wanted to take a “page” out of this paper to send off the seniors and transfers of Big East basketball teams.

Ladies and gentlemen, here are the seniors/players declaring for the draft of each and every Big East team. Returning seniors using their “COVID” year (i.e., Isaiah Whaley) and people testing draft waters (i.e., Julian Champagnie) will not be included.

Writer’s Note: Thanks to each and every senior of The Daily Campus for your contributions to the paper during your time at UConn. Good luck in your future endeavors.

Creighton Blue Jays:

Damien Jefferson: Damien, over



the years, you have improved your game significantly and you took a huge step forward this year. Wherever you end up in the pros, good luck with your career — it could turn out to be something special.

Mitch Ballock: Mitch, whenever you were about 10-feet away from the three-point line, I always knew the shot was going to go in. Wherever you go pro, I wish you the best.

Denzel Mahoney — Denzel, whatever your plans are for the future, know this: You were a vital part of a really good Blue Jays squad. Wherever your decision takes you, good luck with your future career — you have something special in you.

Marcus Zegarowski: Marcus, you were the key cog in Creighton’s high-powered offense. Although you did not win Player of the Year, you still dominated day in and day out. Good luck with your future pro career.

DePaul Blue Demons:

Charlie Moore: Charlie, you pro-



vided veteran experience throughout your years at DePaul. You stayed strong and kept the energy alive with the program. I wish you good luck as you bring your competitive passion to Miami.

Pauly Paulicap: Pauly, your numbers bounced up and down over the years, but your willingness and energy for the game did not. Good luck at West Virginia, because you will be a huge part of a decent Mountaineers’ squad next season.

Ray Salnave: Ray, your senior year capped off a solid career at DePaul. Wherever you end up playing next year, good luck, as you are going to develop into a regular starter.

Georgetown Hoyas:

Jahvon Blair: Jahvon, you have



improved tremendously over the years, and you proved time and again that you are a great player that can make great shots off of the bench. As you head for the NBA, I hope a team signs you and realizes you have incredible potential to be a force in the game.

Marquette Golden Eagles:

Jamal Cain: Jamal, your im-



provements over this season were incredible, and I am excited to see what talent you bring to the court as a graduate student. Wherever you go, I wish you the best, because you will find great success.

Theo John: Theo, you could dunk on the rim until it fell off. As you head to Duke, I hope you continue to dunk like crazy in Durham — the fans would go ballistic (in a good way) every time you do.

Koby McEwen: Koby, you’ve put up strong numbers during your time at Marquette, and you led this team with incredible audacity. As you head to Weber State, I hope you can follow in the footsteps of a certain Damian Lillard and thrive in your time as a Bobcat.

Providence Friars:

David Duke: David, you were a



leader on the Friars. You leave behind a lasting memory and a great legacy with the Friars’ basketball program. I wish you the best as you head on to the NBA.

Seton Hall Pirates:

Sandro Mamukelashvili: To the



one they call Mamu, you were incredible to watch as you grew to be the franchise star after the departure of Myles Powell. Good luck with your career wherever you go pro.

Shavar Reynolds Jr.: Shavar, as the years went by, you provided offense to a Pirate squad that seemed loaded with it. Good luck at Mon-

mouth, where your career is going to reach a high point that was starting to show at Seton Hall.

St. John’s Red Storm:

Rasheem Dunn: Rasheem, you



provided serious leadership this season to help your young team. As you finish your collegiate career at Robert Morris, remember your leadership skills.

UConn Huskies:

Josh Carlton: Josh, I am amazed



by your commitment over the years. You handled the transition between Kevin Ollie and Dan Hurley well and even handled going from a regular starter to a critical bench player with reasonable ease. I am interested to see what firepower you can bring to Kelvin Sampson’s Houston Cougars, because it is looking bright for you.

Brendan Adams: Brendan, I am proud of your achievements over your time at UConn. I was impressed the most by how much experience you brought to this talented Husky team, especially off the bench. I am very excited to see your skills at George Washington University, where you will become a successful guard in a dominant backcourt.

James Bouknight: James David Bouknight, where do I even begin? In your freshman season, you broke out so well you almost won

the American Rookie of the Year award. You proved to everyone in the UConn community that you were going to be a star player; a rock for this team. In your sophomore year, you did just that. Were you snubbed of Big East Player of the Year? Perhaps. Did you make the Big East first team? Yes. Your competitive spirit and style helped bring the Huskies back to national relevance and gives them the possibility of being a consistent Top 25 team next year. I wish you good luck as you head on to the NBA, where you are certainly going to be a lottery pick and a future starter with whoever drafts you.

Villanova Wildcats:

Jeremiah Robinson-Earl: Jeremi-



ah, you were a major threat on both sides of the ball, and it paid off when you won co-Player of the Year. Good luck with your NBA career — you will be a steal of a pick wherever you go.

Xavier Musketeers:

Jason Carter: Jason, you provid-



ed some outstanding experience to this young Musketeer team, and you handled the transition between Chris Mack and Travis Steele well. Good luck at Ohio University, where you can make the Bobcats a March Madness regular.

Like our seniors in The Daily Campus, we wish you luck on your future endeavors. Until next season; this has been a Big East Baller Update.

Point/Counterpoint: *Who was the better editor?*



by **Ashton Stansel**
SPORTS EDITOR
and **Jonathan Synott**
ASSOCIATE SPORTS EDITOR

As the school year comes to a close, we have to say goodbye to our seniors, including our outgoing editors Danny Barletta and Conner Gilson. We are super appreciative of all these two have done for the

Conner wrote a great piece on UConn alum Andre Drummond and players getting different treatment than teams' front offices.

DC Sports section, especially in these uncertain times of COVID-19, which have turned the entire sports world upside down. They inherited a tough task and were able to produce yet another successful year of content with The DC.

As the two incoming editors, we will be capping off Danny

and Conner's time at The DC with an annual tradition: an

Danny brought some great profiles of UConn's athletes, like when wrote about Paige Bueckers' fight against racism.

epic debate asking who was the better editor. Typically, there is a bit of roasting involved, but we decided to take it in a different direction this year.

Ashton Stansel: Danny was clearly the better editor. He was the one who was in charge, after all, and despite the pandemic, he led the section to a very successful year in which we covered all the sports and such that were happening, even through a lot of cancellations and frustrations.

Jonathan Synott: While Danny did a great job leading the pack, Conner was right alongside him helping the entire time. Conner was easily reachable and came up with

great ideas for articles week in and week out. Despite his odd choices for his favorite teams (Packers, Bucks and Swansea City), he came in hot with great takes, especially when he called a return-to-form season from Aaron Rodgers this past year, who won MVP.

Ashton: True, but Danny did his job as editor while also covering multiple of the most

Danny did his job as editor while also covering multiple of the most competitive sports, like men's basketball and baseball.

competitive sports, like men's basketball and baseball. He wrote all or some of 90 articles this year as the editor, while

Conner was easily reachable and came up with great ideas for articles week in and week out.

still having time to edit stories and help people with pitches and articles of their own. He always made sure to cover

Conner he came in hot with great takes, especially when he called a return-to-form season from Aaron Rodgers this past year, who won MVP.

point/counterpoints and recaps when there was a lack of ideas and brought some great profiles of UConn's athletes, like when he wrote about Paige Bueckers' fight against racism.

Jon: That was a great article, but Conner had some gems too. He wrote a great piece on UConn alum Andre Drummond and players getting different treatment than teams' front offices. He also tackled multiple tough beats, including women's basketball and baseball this year. Although not relating to The DC, he was also a great orien-

tation leader. He was definitely the second best "O-Leader" around (shoutout Tim) and his leadership efforts definitely translated to his hard work at The DC.

Ashton and Jon: As the incoming sports editors, we definitely have some big shoes to fill, and Danny and Conner to thank for making the DC Sports section what it is today. The meetings were always fun and light, and despite the pandemic, we were able to accomplish a lot this semester. We are both really appreciative of our sports editor duo, and wish them the best of luck in the future.

Danny wrote all or some of 90 articles this year as the editor

Senior Column: DB's final word

by **Danny Barletta**
OUTGOING SPORTS EDITOR

I truly can't believe this will be my final story ever published for The Daily Campus. I still remember my first: UConn in the NFL story from September 5, 2018 that I probably spent more time on than I should have. A lot has changed since then. I've become a dad and lived through a global pandemic, among other minor things. You know, just a perfectly normal college experience.

Not quite, and that goes back to before that first Daily Campus article. All the way back to when I was a bright-eyed freshman majoring in chemical engineering.

First of all, shoutout to anyone who is graduating this week with a degree in chemical, electrical or any other type of engineering. You all are absolutely insane, but I respect the hell out of you.

You're probably wondering why I picked engineering in the first place. Great question. Well, I didn't exactly pick it. I had no idea what I wanted to study in college, but I was my high school's class salutatorian, which basically just means I tricked a lot of people into thinking I was really smart. Because of that, my counselors recommended I go into engineering. I didn't even know what engineering was. I just knew it had to do with math and science and it paid a lot of money. How bad could it be?

Well my first semester, I learned I didn't actually like chemistry (which was the reason I picked chemical engineering). I just liked the fun experiments I got to do with my lab group in high school, but those really had nothing to do with the boring and brutal concepts of college chemis-

try. After a tough but survivable first semester, I made the lateral shift to electrical engineering because it seemed more interesting.

Wrong again. The intro to electrical engineering course was a nightmare. All the coding and the wires, and nothing ever worked properly. I'm getting chills just thinking about that garbage. It didn't help that I was taking three other difficult math and science courses on top of a couple of gen-eds.

That semester was a very dark time for me, one of the darkest of my life. I was constantly overburdening myself doing work for classes I hated. I knew I had made a mistake, but I didn't know how to fix it. I felt trapped. It sent me into a depressive spiral, and I was taking my anger out on people I cared about. Something had to give. I couldn't go on like that.

I've never been one to quit something, but I knew I didn't want to continue engineering for another month, let alone for the next 50 years as a career. Luckily, I had supportive people around me. My girlfriend Kayla, as well as my parents, saw I was miserable. They encouraged me to find something I enjoyed, even if that meant taking a semester off to figure it out.

Now with a light at the end of the tunnel, I turned my attention away from my schoolwork and toward finding a new path. I knew I wanted to do something with sports, and in my research, I came across sports journalism as a possibility. Funny enough, when I was in elementary and middle school, I actually wanted to go into sports media, but it didn't seem like a realistic career

choice so I kind of forgot about it.

But in April of 2018, it seemed like the ideal path to pursue. I loved sports and had all this knowledge and insight about them. This would give me an opportunity to actually use that for something. At that point, I decided to make my biggest hobby my career path. That decision changed my life for the better.

Over the next month, I started making the necessary changes to get my life back on track. By the time I came home in early May, I was already registered as a pre-journalism major, I was writing my own Red Sox blog to get in the groove of sports writing and I was in the process of landing a summer internship covering sports with my local papers. And I still somehow managed to finish the semester with good grades (I'm still not sure how because I couldn't have been less focused on engineering work at that point). Pretty productive month if I do say so myself.

Since then, things have been pretty good (with the exception of a pandemic that disrupted everyone's lives, but this is a positive column so we're going to steer clear of that subject). That summer was great — learning the business on the fly and continuing to cover the Red Sox during their incredible 108-win World Series campaign. When I went back to UConn in the fall, I felt like a new person. I immediately got involved with UCTV Sports and The Daily Campus Sports section. I started taking classes that actually interested me. It was liberating.

I'm not going to go through every single thing I did, but over



Danny Barletta reflects on how he ended up being a journalism major and how it led him to becoming DC's Sport Editor. PHOTO BY KEVIN LINDSTROM, PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

the next three school years, I got to cover well over 100 different UConn sporting events either for The DC, UCTV or for my other UConn Athletics job I got my junior year, writing feature stories on different athletes and teams. I fell in love with UConn sports over this time, which you can read about in my last regular column. I have done work with every single one of UConn's teams in some form, and it's been truly amazing.

I worked my way up to being The DC's Sports editor this year, a role I really enjoyed despite the challenges the pandemic brought.

It was awesome to get to lead the coverage of both UConn sports and professional sports when there were no UConn sports last fall. I wouldn't trade any of my experiences from the past three years for anything. Of course there have been difficult days and weeks, but it's different when you're working toward something that really matters to you. I love telling stories of games and athletes, and I hope I get to do that for a long, long time.

For more of the story visit DAILYCAMPUS.COM



Senior Column: Forever grateful

by **Conner Gilson**

OUTGOING ASSOCIATE SPORTS EDITOR

Welp. Here it is. After four years, the time for my senior column has finally arrived as has graduation, a new beginning and a whole lot of unknowns ... including how to write this thing.

This is a moment and an article I've been thinking about since last year's seniors wrote theirs back in May. But as has been the case for the last decade of my life, I put it off until right before it was due. Classic.

So instead of going into this with a plan or outline like I normally would, I'm just gonna talk. From here on out I'm going to try not to pause, think or edit (mostly) anything I say to get the most genuine experience out of this as I can. So here we go.

Back in 2017, I came to UConn as a pre-teaching math major, hoping to graduate and become a high school teacher and soccer coach. But after getting the worst grade of my life in Calculus my first semester, I quit. Doing poorly in a course I had taken my senior year of high school and considered to be an introductory course was enough for me to call it quits and move on to something new. After all, UConn always flaunted the number of majors they had and that it wasn't a big deal to be in their ACES program up until your sophomore year, so that is what I did. Now, all that was left for me to figure out was what I would move on to.

Math or any related topic seemed to be out of the question due to my sudden inability to understand complex derivatives, but I wasn't quite ready to call it quits on the teaching gig. So

I texted a couple friends, did a little bit of my own research and ended up with the potential of becoming a speech pathologist, but I never even got to declare the major.

At the same time I was doing research on SLHS at UConn, I got a text from my buddy Jorge (you're gonna come up a few times pal) that he had written a fantasy football article for the school newspaper and that I should reach out to the current editors. I had always thoroughly enjoyed sports but wasn't sure I could make a career of it. But with nothing in the works aside from the research I still had going on toward speech pathology, I figured why the hell not.

Here's how that went:

Subject: Interested in Joining the Sports Column (*bad start*)

Dear Mr. Keating,

My name is Conner and I am currently a freshman Sports Management major (*liar*) at UCONN (*bad*). Along with this, I am also interested in a career in sports journalism, so I was hoping to join the sports section of the daily campus (*oof*). Thank you, hope to hear back from you soon.

Why Tyler even responded to that email I have no idea, but thank god he did. Ten minutes later, I was sent the information I needed to join the section and headed to the meeting. What happened when I got there, I honestly can't tell you because I probably blacked out from anxiety of being in the same room as so many peo-

ple I didn't know, but Tyler and Chris did a good enough job of making me and all the other new guys feel welcome that I decided to stay, though that feeling of genuine belonging didn't come until a bit later.

After a picturesque junior year in which I joined the digital team (shoutout Kim, Courtney and Grace), the design team (shoutout Alex, Dan and Brandon) and became more involved in the sports section, I finally felt like I had made a home out of this place.

But then, right on cue, COVID-19 swooped in and took everything heading into senior year. As classes were online and extracurriculars were being canceled left and right, the one string of hope I had left for much of the summer was that there would be sports in the fall. Wrong.

Fall sports were officially canceled pretty early on in the semester, leaving myself and Danny to be (someone fact check me on this) the first UConn sports editors to not have UConn sports to write about. But with a little creativity and hope that the section full of new writers would be understanding, Danny (you'll also pop up once or twice) and myself worked out a plan for the fall semester that more or less went off without a hitch. Thank god the spring was better.

I had gotten to cover some really cool sports during my time at UConn, but nothing felt more surreal than being one of 20 people in Gampel Pavilion on a random Tuesday night to watch the women's basketball team play. In some ways it made everything that had happened in the past year okay, because there I was, watching a top team in the



Conner Gilson reflects on how he ended up at The Daily Campus and how he possibly ended up the first Associate Sports Editor to not have UConn sports to write about. PHOTO BY KEVIN LINDSTROM, PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

country making history before my very eyes ... and I was one of the few people that got to be there in person. What a crazy experience that was (P.S. that South Carolina game will live rent-free in my head for as long as I live).

But for as valuable as the in-office experience was for me, it has always been and will always be the people that made it feel like home, so here are some of the heavy-hitters I have to thank:

Courtney Gavitt! CLG2! Thank you for letting me sit next to you in our class for orientation. If I hadn't done that I never would

have learned about DC life outside of the Sports section and how truly amazing it can be. At least for this column, you are the better CLG.

Alex Houdeshell! Another orientation homie turned DC colleague. Thank you for putting up with my very bland Life designs for the majority of my time at work. Even though I don't think I had an eye for it you always supported what I put on the paper and convinced me it looked great.

For more of the story visit DAILYCAMPUS.COM



Hey Dave: What's next?

by David Sandoval
OUTGOING STAFF WRITER

Well, I guess this is it. My time at The Daily Campus is now coming to an end, and so is my time at UConn.

After spending my first two years at UConn's Hartford campus, I made the transfer request to Storrs for two reasons: the first being the fact that Storrs offered journalism courses unlike Hartford — and the second being that I wanted to start writing for The Daily Campus. Sure, you could say I could've started earlier, but I didn't see the point in a one-hour round trip to Storrs for a half-hour meeting.

Anyways, I was pretty nervous entering my first Sports meeting. I didn't know anyone there, let alone know anyone from Hartford who also wanted to write for the newspaper and I saw little to no articles about soccer. I feel like a broken record, but I only know and breathe soccer (I will say this has gradually changed, but not by much). Because the men and women's soccer beats were taken by people who were at The Daily Campus before me, I was left with a weekly "Around the American soccer" column. Not to toot my own horn, but I thought I did a decent job at the start of the semester with it.

Some time after befriending colleagues in the department, as well as easing into Storrs and writing for the newspaper, I felt I could do more to expand the soccer representation in the section aside from the collegiate teams. After talking to my colleagues and then-editors Andrew Morrison and Kevin Arnold about the idea, since collegiate soccer was coming to an end, I started to write my own columns. To me, this was the highlight of my

early journalism career.

As my writing improved over the months, I was given the opportunity to cover women's lacrosse for the 2020 season with Jon Synott, who will be the associate editor for Sports at the start of next semester. We were both new to the sport, but I was excited because it opened my eyes to a new sport and would enhance my writing skills. However, 2020 was probably the worst year to give that a whirl. I don't think I need to go into further detail about what happened.

At the start of the 2020-2021 school year, professional soccer had already made a return but without fans. While I continued my columns about professional soccer across the pond under the new name "Hey Dave," I also covered Hartford Athletic with my "From the Capital" series — I'm keeping that name post-DC, by the way. Keeping a tab on the Connecticut club was such a fun experience, especially when I was able to see games like their quarterfinal playoff match in person. With all of this excitement came my promotion as a staff writer.

I was fortunate enough to cover two more UConn sports before heading out the door, the first being Men's Hockey with Tim Keaten. I'll admit, my writing wasn't all that good while on the beat — or at least I believed that it wasn't — but at least the ice bus got one more fan. Watching the team perform massive comeback games in their UMass, Boston College and UMaine series, for instance, were thrilling experiences.

The second was men's soccer. To say it was the team I heavily looked forward to covering since my arrival would be an understatement; until they got a few games in, that is. Being in

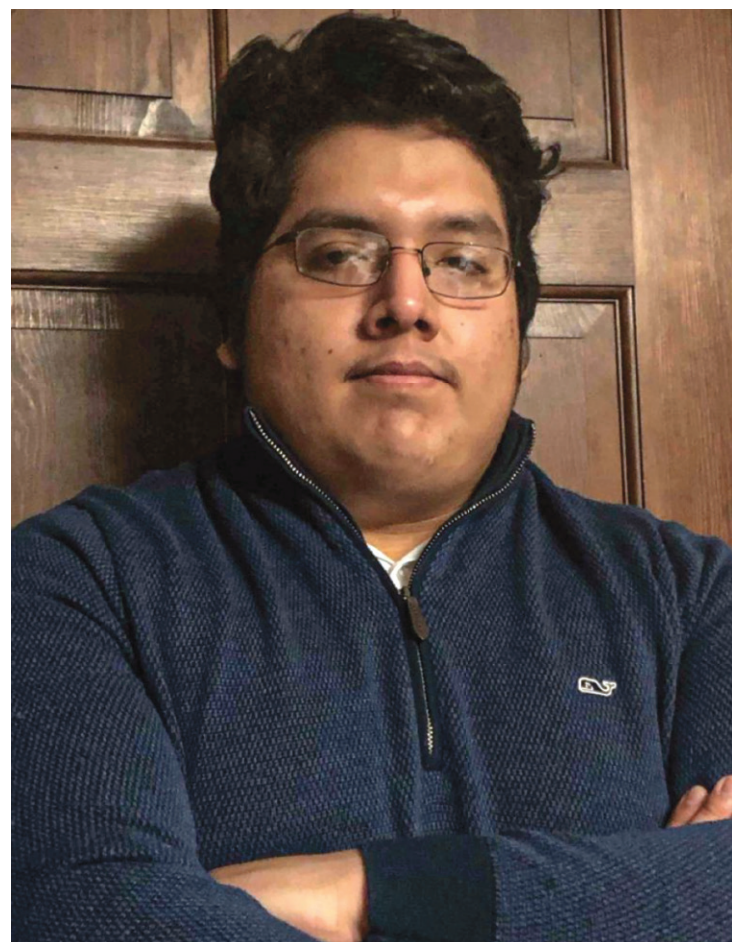
the new and improved Morrone Stadium was a blessing, and I hope fans — whenever they're allowed in — will enjoy it as much as I did. If you're wondering about my thoughts on their season, however, I'll leave you with the infamous Jose Mourinho quote:

"I prefer not to speak. If I speak, I'm in big trouble, in big trouble, and I don't want to be in big trouble."

Now I don't want to take all the credit for incorporating the professional side of soccer in our section, since people prior to my arrival at the DC did that, but I more so reinvigorated it. I hope whoever comes to the section next semester will continue to showcase the beautiful game, even at its lowest points.

There are so many people I can thank for helping me get to be the journalist I am today, whether it be my past editors, my current editors Danny Barletta and Conner Gilson or colleagues like Mike Mavredakis and Jorge Eckardt, but it comes down to the readers of my articles as well. Upon my arrival, I had the assumption that most people didn't really care about soccer except for a small group. The readers helped change my viewpoint on that, but us soccer fans have a long way to go to make the sport at the same level as basketball or football here in the states.

I wish nothing but the best to those who will continue to



David Sandoval reflects on what led him to transfer to the UConn Storrs campus and how he helped create the "From the Capital" series about the Hartford Athletic soccer team. PHOTO PROVIDED BY AUTHOR

write for the DC, especially the department's future editors Jon Synott and Ashton Stansel. Just like regular sports, e-sports will continue to massively grow in popularity, and I believe Ashton helped open the door for it here at UConn. Jon's done fantastic work with his MLB articles and his continued coverage of women's lacrosse. Hopefully it wasn't as confusing this time around as it was for us last year, Jon!

So, what's next for me? Well, honestly I don't know. I've applied to some places for an internship, but like the beauty of the real world, I never heard back from them. I recently applied to a couple more places, so fingers

crossed I actually get a phone call or email from them. I'm 98% likely to continue to write about Hartford Athletic and soccer in Europe, regardless if I have a job in the sports realm or not, so hopefully you've followed me on Twitter by this point to stay up to date. That totally isn't a shameless plug, or anything.

The future is bright for the majority of us, but for me, I'm still getting there. Maybe not having a sports job right after graduating is a sign that something big will come in the future. We shall see, especially given the fact we're still in a pandemic.

See you later, UConn Nation. Take it easy.



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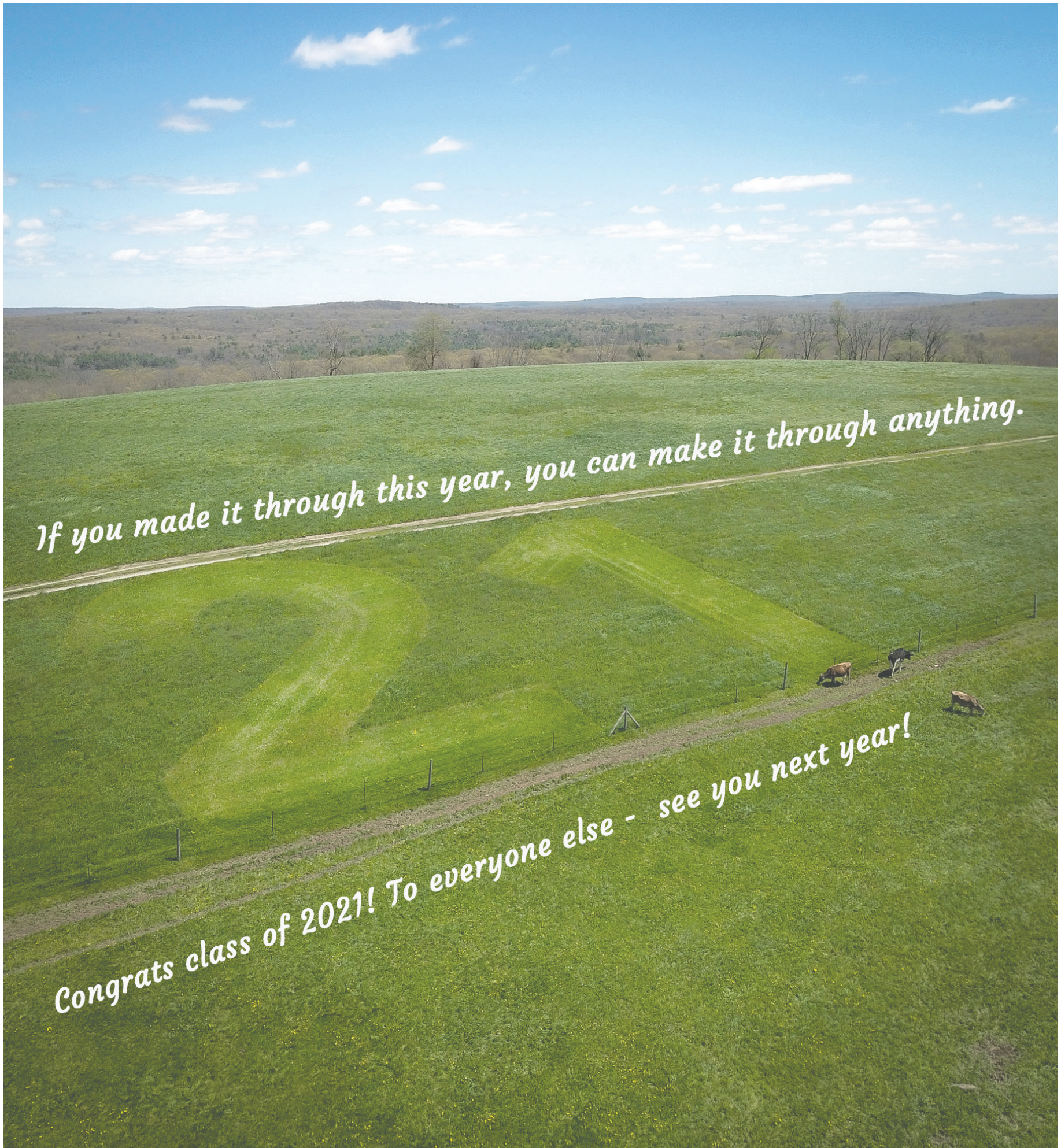
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If you made it through this year, you can make it through anything.

Congrats class of 2021! To everyone else - see you next year!