

# The Daily Campus



THE INDEPENDENT VOICE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT SINCE 1896 • VOLUME CXXVII, NO. 84

Thursday, February 1, 2024



The Science 1 Building at the University of Connecticut is home to the Institute of Material Science and Engineering and hopes to expand UConn's educational and research work in STEM. FILE PHOTO/THE DAILY CAMPUS

## UConn College of Engineering Apologizes for Lab That Included Name of Sandy Hook Shooter

by John Haslun  
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The University of Connecticut College of Engineering has issued an apology for a cybersecurity lab that included the name of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooter.

The assignment, which entailed using increasingly challenging methods to obtain the passwords of criminal actors,

included the shooter's name as one of the users in the "darknet server" that students were tasked to infiltrate. The student is placed in the role of "a Connecticut law-enforcement cybersec researcher" and asked to crack the passwords of the man bearing the name of the shooter and subsequently, all the members of his "gang."

Following student complaints, the course instructors issued an immediate apology to members

of the class on Tuesday, Jan. 30, writing, "We have recently become aware that certain details in our original Lab 1 instructions reflected real-world scenarios and caused distress. We apologize for the presence of these examples in our document."

The professors in question promised to immediately "prepar[e] a revised version of the lab instructions" and vowed they would "take care to prevent such instances in the future."

According to former cybersecurity students, the material in question had been part of the course in the past. The name of the shooter is the only one explicitly mentioned in the lab instructions, with other questions focusing on cracking the passwords of as many additional gang members as possible.

Alums contacted by the Hartford Courant noted that cybersecurity classes at UConn commonly use real-life

figures, including historical murderers, in simulation databases. Examples of assignments from 2021 included the likes of mob boss Al Capone, cult leader Charles Manson, and Ted Kaczynski, otherwise known as the Unabomber, as would-be hacking targets.

Dean of the College of Engineering Kazem Kazerounian sent a separate email to all students in the college later on Tuesday, expressing his "deepest apologies on behalf of the College of Engineering and the course's instructors, who have reached out to its students to express their regret for this error in judgment and immediately changed the content."

"We are truly sorry that this occurred, especially for our students who hail from Newtown and all those who were personally affected by the events on that terrible day."

DEAN KAZEM KAZEROUNIAN

"Some students reported to the University that they were understandably troubled and dismayed by this, noting that the assignment's use of that specific name was needless and the emotional value of the scenario was not contingent on it," Kazerounian said. "We are truly sorry that this occurred, especially for our students who hail from Newtown and all those who were personally affected by the events on that terrible day."

Kazerounian's email to students additionally included information about the services of UConn Student Health & Wellness for any in need of support, including its 24/7 mental health line at 833-308-3040.



The Francis L. Castleman building is located by the Student Union lawn on the UConn Storrs campus. Castleman hosts the dean of the School of Engineering and other faculty offices alongside classroom spaces. PHOTO BY EMILY O'BANNON, ASSOCIATE MANAGING EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

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NEWSLETTER

# News

## UConn students have the opportunity to talk directly to President Maric

by **Hallie LeTendre**  
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Earlier this month, University of Connecticut President Dr. Radenka Maric announced to the UConn community that she will host office hours.

Like many professors, Maric plans to open her doors beginning this month to students.

In the email Maric sent out announcing her office hours, she outlined that on Feb. 7 from 8 a.m. until 10 a.m. she will be in the Student Union, room 303, meeting with those interested.

**“I invite you to come and share your questions, concerns and suggestions for how we can make UConn an even stronger university.”**

**PRESIDENT RADENKA MARIC**

“I invite you to come and share your questions, concerns and suggestions for how we can make UConn an even stron-

ger university,” Maric said in her message. “Presidential Office Hours sessions will be announced at least two weeks in advance through email, the Student Daily Digest, UConn Health Lifeline, and the UConn Instagram account.”

To attend the office hours, students must sign up on Nexus using their UConn NetID and password.

This month’s upcoming office hours will solely be available for in-person sessions. However, a virtual option is planned to be added.

“Future sessions will allow for virtual participation to meet the needs of our students at regional campuses, UConn Health, those studying abroad, and students who are also caregivers,” the message said.

Currently, Maric’s office hours are available only to students, but there are intentions to add the option for staff and faculty to book office hours based on demand and Maric’s availability, according to the email.

“President Maric’s commitment to centering students first prompted her to continue the practice of Presidential Office Hours, a tradition be-

gun by President Emerita Susan Herbst,” UConn spokesperson Stephanie Reitz said. “The hope is to offer multiple opportunities each semester via different modalities and to offer times that are both accessible for students and conducive to the President’s scheduling challenges.”

Students were encouraged to reach out to Maric via her UConn email listed at the bottom of her message.

“President Maric and other UConn leaders share knowledge and experiences with students through mutual attendance at student organization events, athletic events, visiting classes, student government meetings, university governance meetings, special events and more,” Reitz said.

The university hopes that the introduction of Maric’s office hours will allow students to feel more heard and better represented.

“The office hours are an additional pathway for students to learn more about things going on at UConn and to share their experiences and ideas for making UConn the best version of itself,” Reitz said.



**Radenka Maric was named the 17th president of the University of Connecticut by the Board of Trustees on Sept. 28, 2022.**

PHOTOGRAPH BY BRIAN JEREZ, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

## U.S. sportsbooks won’t take bets on possible Taylor Swift appearance at the Super Bowl



**Taylor Swift, center, and Donna Kelce, right, watch the Kansas City Chiefs receive the Lamar Hunt trophy after an AFC Championship NFL football game, Sunday, Jan. 28, 2024, in Baltimore.**

PHOTOGRAPH BY JULIO CORTEZ, PHOTOGRAPHER/AP PHOTO

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Fans have been wondering for days whether Taylor Swift will make it to the Super Bowl next week to cheer on boyfriend Travis Kelce and the Kansas City Chiefs and, if so, how many times she’ll show up on TV during the game. They can speculate all they want, but they won’t be able to bet on it legally in the United States.

Those types of wagers can be made offshore with sportsbooks such as BetUS, which is based in Costa Rica, and potentially in the Canadian province of Ontario. BetMGM public relations manager John Ewing said he was waiting for word from Canadian authorities there if such bets will be OK.

But in the U.S., where betting laws vary from state to state, the general rule is that wager-

ing is limited to what happens on the field. A handful of states allow bets to be placed on the color of Gatorade dumped on the winning coach — red or pink is this year’s plus-260 favorite at FanDuel Sportsbook — but even that type of wager is not allowed in Las Vegas.

Las Vegas, the longtime epicenter of sports betting in the U.S., has some of the strictest rules regarding the kinds of wagers made.

Swift’s romance with Kelce became one of the prominent stories this NFL season and she has attended several Chiefs games, including their victory in the AFC championship game at Baltimore on Sunday, where she joined the team for its on-field celebration and greeted Kelce with a kiss. Since she’s

performing in Japan the weekend of the Super Bowl, fans began wondering whether she’ll make it to Las Vegas to watch Kelce and Kansas City face the San Francisco 49ers.

It seems only natural they would be able to put money on it in Vegas.

As a matter of principle, though, Ewing said it makes sense not to allow bets on things apart from the on-field action, such as the length of the national anthem.

“We don’t want any subjectivity in a prop (bet),” Ewing said. “We want it to be either it won or it didn’t win or went over or went under, and that’s the concern for regulators as well. That’s why typically we stick to if it’s in the box score, it can be posted.”

Caesars Sportsbook assistant trading director Adam Pullen’s position is the more bets, the merrier.

“We’ve come a long way, but some stuff like we’re talking about here (about Swift) or betting on elections, there still might be a few years before we get to that point,” Pullen said. “But I like anything that drives action and gets people to bet. But we’re dependent on what the regulators in each particular state has to say.”

# The Daily Campus

Printing since 1896, The Daily Campus is the oldest and largest independent student publication at the University of Connecticut. The Daily Campus circulates 5,000 newspapers daily and strives to serve the student body by delivering accurate, relevant and timely news and content, both in print and online at DailyCampus.com. Our staff is comprised entirely of students, with roughly 200 undergraduates gaining professional development while contributing to the daily production of the paper, with positions including writers, photographers, copy editors, page layout designers, graphic designers, advertisement representatives, receptionists, delivery drivers and digital producers. Thanks for reading.

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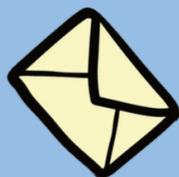
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# Tips on how to secure letters of recommendation

by James Fitzpatrick | STAFF WRITER | HE/HIM/HIS | james.fitzpatrick@uconn.edu



The Office of Undergraduate Research hosted a virtual event about letters of recommendation on Wednesday, Jan. 31. This webinar gave imperative information for every student, but especially those applying to higher education and/or programs outside of the traditional plan of study. There, it was made clear that the relationship needed for a student to ask faculty for this type of letter cannot be made in a day. Even if you have corresponded with and gotten to know a faculty member in the past, both parties should know each other and their academic careers equally well for a strong letter of recommendation to take shape.

Hosted by the Assistant Director of the Office of Undergraduate Research, Melissa Berkey, the entire process was outlined in thorough detail, as she made it clear that “these letters carry weight.” Joining her were two Peer Research Ambassadors: Emma Beard and Sana Gupta. They are both seniors who have recently applied to graduate school, so they have already had to request letters of recommendation in the past. Given their positions as undergraduate researchers, with Beard majoring in molecular and cell biology while Gupta is majoring in statistics and minoring in math, they had grown close to faculty members in those departments. Although Beard was written a letter by one of her favorite liberal arts professors, she quickly realized the professor’s input towards her getting into a STEM program may be less valued by the program than a letter from someone who teaches and researches in STEM. While it would have been helpful in high school to have a teacher vouch

for their favorite student for undergraduate studies, high-level programs want to know how you have contributed to your field so far and what you will be able to do based on the words of other professionals.

If you feel overwhelmed by these testimonies, do not be. Gupta asked for a letter of recommendation from her academic advisor; we all have one. While they are mainly there to assist you with picking classes, many of them teach and conduct research. They are important people to engage with since you can discuss what they do outside of advising and build that bond, which could eventually land you a letter. Additionally, they have access to your grades and course history, essentially giving them a second-hand account as to why they should write a letter for you.

Storrs is a large campus with a disproportionate amount of advisors to students, so they may not know you well yet, but taking a class with them can further your likelihood of earning a letter from them. In the same way, you can strike a professor’s interest by talking with them after class to make you stand out from the crowd; that way, there is more than just a grade associated with your name. The hardest part is finding some faculty members who would be willing to write letters of recommendation for you, yet there is still preparation needed on your part to make the letter come to fruition.

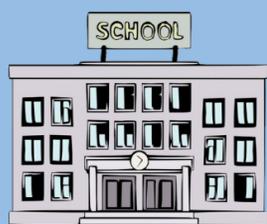
The biggest point made by Berkey is to make it as easy on the faculty as possible. Provide your intentions to ask for a letter of recommendation by email to let them consider the task and do it well before any deadlines

for your programs arrive. There are templates on OUR’s website to help craft this proposition.

You will want to arrange a meeting with this person to set up an appropriate space to give your materials. These may include your resume and cover letter, along with the details they should know about the program you are applying for. There may also be a place they need to submit the letter since your letter may be confidential, meaning you cannot read it. During your meeting, you are encouraged to emphasize details that you would like highlighted in the letter, but once they are written, programs usually require letters to be withheld from the applicant.

Being respectful and well-meaning while getting to know and asking for a letter from this person is more likely to create a “detailed, personalized and enthusiastic” letter that, according to Berkey, will have a good chance at enhancing your application. There is also a chance that the person will not write the letter for you, in which case, be thankful for their time and let them know you are grateful for their consideration. The rejection could have resulted from a variety of reasons, so there is no guarantee that they will not write one for you in the future.

Remember that faculty members are not these larger-than-life individuals who turn you down because your cause is not worth their time. Beard stated, “Writing letters is kind of part of the job description,” so professors will likely do so if you reciprocate the effort it takes for them to write it by being organized and understanding of their schedule.



IMAGES COURTESY OF RAWPIXEL

## A TASTE OF TRADITION: Lizzie’s Curbside celebrates 33 years of feeding huskies



IMAGE COURTESY OF VECTOR PORTAL



A customer orders food from Lizzie Searing, owner of Lizzie’s Curbside, a food truck on the UConn Storrs campus. Lizzie’s Curbside is celebrating its 33rd year of operation on campus. PHOTO BY PATRICK BOOTS, CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT/THE DAILY CAMPUS

by Patrick Boots  
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If you’ve ever walked down Whitney Road, you may have seen a chrome-plated food truck nestled between the Arjona Building, the Monteith Building and the Dodd Center for Human Rights. Lizzie’s

Curbside, the truck that’s more than just a chuck wagon, is celebrating its 33rd year of operation on the University of Connecticut campus by offering cake and enjoying the spirit of community on Feb. 1, 2024.

Curbside’s story began in 1991 when Lizzie Searing decided to establish a hot dog cart for UConn students as an outgrowth

of her catering business in Coventry, Connecticut. Quickly filling the void of food options, she offered simple, delicious fare like coffee, bagels and sandwiches — over the years, the menu has expanded to include burgers, soups and more. But it’s not just the food that keeps people coming back; it’s the atmosphere.

“I come here two or three times a week. My favorite is the Husky Burger with an egg and hash browns,” said Nelson, a second-year mathematics student.

Searing says that a commitment to staying local and natural is at the heart of the business, carefully selecting fresh ingredients and establishing relationships. A fixture her-

self, she is always greeting customers with a smile and a story. Searing and her husband Joey know generations of huskies by name and remember their favorite orders.

“It’s not just about the food,” Searing continued. “UConn has really been my home for a long time, and we’ve had others that met here and got married. I later catered their weddings ... Some others grew up and had children who are students today, and we feed them. It’s about the people.”

Students may also be familiar with Lizzie’s food from a variety of collaborations with UConn events, such as the SUBOG Block Party, celebrations sponsored by sports teams, Family Weekend and more. Every week, student favorites and innovative creations show up on the menu. “Maybe I could have 10 cookbooks, but I’d prefer to share my creations with everyone here,” Searing commented as she was constructing novel grilled cheeses and sandwiches.

“I’ve always seen it walking to class, but never stopped by until this week,” said Ashley, a senior English student. “Now that I have, I know it’s good food — and I can bring along friends.”

“I like to support a local business rather than a national chain,” added Kelly Dennis, associate professor of digital arts and visual studies while standing in line.

Lizzie said that the friendliness of the UConn community is the reason she keeps the food truck running and wants to give that feeling back. “People come by because we try to make good, fresh food ... I love being here. UConn is like a family.”

As days go by, the story of Lizzie’s is certain: Its legacy will continue to be fueled by the same ingredients that made it a success from the start — delicious food, warm hospitality and a deep connection to the UConn community. Lizzie’s Curbside is open regularly on Whitney Road from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on weekdays.

“Doing what you love is a lot more work than you’d think,” said Searing, “but it’s worth it.”

“Doing what you love is a lot more work than you’d think, but it’s worth it.”

LIZZIE SEARING

# 'THE GREATEST NIGHT IN POP: Behind a great age of artistry

by Xander Serrano | CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT | HE/HIM/HIS | alexander.serrano@uconn.edu

"Check your egos at the door," Quincy Jones once said. The brilliant record producer had a no-nonsense approach when herding the cattle of music legends to record the 1985 hit song "We Are The World." The Netflix documentary "The Greatest Night in Pop" shows never-before-seen footage of the song's making and how the music video to accompany it was shot in one night. Artists like Michael Jackson, Stevie Wonder, Diana Ross, Ray Charles, Bruce Springsteen, Kenny Rogers and Billy Joel, to name a few, all contributed to the powerful song.

I was unaware that Lionel Richie was the moving force behind this operation and was responsible for bringing in some of the music's biggest names to appear in the song. Richie co-wrote the song with Jackson and felt like an older brother towards him, having known him since he was 10 years old singing in The Jackson 5. Nonetheless, it was inspiring to witness their creative process and how the memorable melody came to be.

Dealing with the hectic schedule of musicians, the recording session took place the same night of the 1985 American Music Awards in Los Angeles, California. This was important since most artists were going to be there and it was the only opportunity to get every-

one in the same room. Artists who were not in Los Angeles flew in to be a part of the project. Some had such passion for the project such as the legend Quincy Jones, who wanted to help with the project's cause: famine relief in Africa.

Springsteen had just finished his "Born in the USA" tour and flew in from Buffalo, New York. Richie hosted the American Music Awards that night, taking home numerous accolades while performing throughout the show. Amazingly, he recorded "We Are The World" right after the award show ended. Was it adrenaline? Probably not. After all, it was the 80s. Richie's energy and ability to keep the diverse group of artists together allowed him to be the dream creative partner to have.

Hearing the song is one thing, but watching each artist sing their solos brings much so more to the performance. Seeing the passion Steve Perry and Daryl Hall brought to their solos was a reminder of how these artists changed the industry in each genre and are still relevant today.

In the absence of Prince, Huey Lewis took on the role of singing his solo, which was out of his vocal range and delivered under pressure. Getting over his nerves and being one of the more prominent voices in the song, Lewis showed himself to be a true tal-

ent. Finally listening to the song in the shower, Lewis was critical of himself, but was happy with the finished project.

Watching Bob Dylan be the introvert in a room full of artists showed his discomfort, needing everyone out of the room to sing his part of the song. But Wonder helped to make Dylan feel comfortable and gave him individual attention; rehearsing the song a few times on the piano speaks to the fragility of Dylan and how a legend like Wonder can bring the best out of artists with different approaches.

"The Greatest Night in Pop" shows the execution of the production crew, executives and artists working seamlessly to create a piece of music that could have quickly fallen apart if one person did not pull their weight. Everyone knew their role in this project and understood they were a part of something bigger than themselves. In the contemporary world, it is rare to see a unity of artists working together regardless of their genres or ideologies — the main focus is this particular work.

"The Greatest Night in Pop" is streaming now on Netflix. Give it a watch.

**RATING:**  
5/5



# HILLEL HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL TRIP

by Isaac Grad | CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT | HE/HIM/HIS | isaac.grad@uconn.edu



PHOTOS COURTESY OF UCONN HILLEL

On Sunday, Jan. 28, the University of Connecticut Hillel hosted a trip to Boston to hear from a Holocaust survivor and receive a tour of the New England Holocaust Memorial. Attendees left UConn at 9 a.m. and were met upon arrival by their tour guide, Mona, the daughter of two Holocaust survivors. She was born in a displaced persons camp — a place for Holocaust survivors without homes to return to after they were freed by the Allies.

The memorial featured six towers that represent several things regarding the Holocaust, such as the six million Jews murdered, the six major concentration camps and the six curved branches on a menorah (not a Hanukkah menorah). The memorial also always has steam coming up from the towers, which represents the smoke from the gas chambers. The memorial represents the stories of Boston Holocaust survivors, while six million markings on the towers, representing the six million Jewish lives lost. As you walk through the towers, there are quotes and stories from survivors. There are plaques that remind us that the Nazis intended to destroy the Jewish people, to the point that nobody would even remember they existed, but here the memorial stands. It is just one of the many memorials honoring the lives lost.

The memorial is seemingly in the middle of everything, symbolizing how while many people went about their lives as usual, millions were being murdered. At the end of the memorial tour, there is a plaque that tells visitors they have to stick up for everybody, not only once they are in danger. "Then they came for me, and by that time no one was left to speak up," reads a quote from Martin Niemöller. Visitors are also reminded that it is their responsibility to talk about what happened in order to prevent it from ever happening again. One of the plaques reads "The memory of the Holocaust is the legacy and responsibility of all humanity." To emphasize this, we are reminded that the Holocaust didn't just begin with mass murder, but with words.

Attendees then went to Quincy Market for lunch before going to Boston University's Hillel to hear from Janet Applefield, another Holocaust survivor. Applefield, né Gustava Singer, is a Holocaust survivor that was born in Poland in 1935. She went over her experience during the war. She was also curious as to how anti-semitism is now, from the perspective of college students. She talked about how she was able to better blend in as Aryan due to having blonde hair and blue eyes, which helped her

survive. She lost all of her family but her father in the war, whom she was luckily reunited with after he was freed. She and her father were able to come to America, which was only possible if you had a sponsor to take on the financial burden. She emphasized the importance of continuing to have these conversations to ensure that something like the Holocaust can never happen again.

We live in a time where most Holocaust survivors have passed away, meaning we are likely the last generation to hear from survivors directly. Despite many survivors still sharing their stories, we still see many people deny that the Holocaust ever took place.

With antisemitic incidents at a 337% increase, it's incredibly important to continue open conversations about it. It's also our responsibility as the last generation to hear from Holocaust survivors to learn from them so that we may teach future generations about what they endured. This trip was very important and provided students with an opportunity that won't be forgotten. Staff members Jared White and Jake Niefeld were also there to debrief after the trip, as it isn't an easy subject to hear about. Overall, it was a very informative and important trip.



Life

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# HUMAN RIGHTS NORMS IN TURKEY THROUGH THE LENS OF POLITICAL PARTIES

by **Desirae Sin**  
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The University of Connecticut Humanities Institute hosted a Fellow's Talk by Dr. Zehra Arat on Wednesday, Jan. 31. Arat is a professor of political science at UConn and focuses her research on human rights. This includes women's rights, democratization and development.

Her presentation, titled "Human Rights Norms in Turkey: A Historical Analysis of Political Party Programs" is a book project that asks the question: Can countries develop human rights norms without external influence or pressure? She chose to focus her research on the nation of Turkey from 1920 to 2018. To approach the issue, she explained that she wanted to "see how norms were developed in Turkey" and if they could be strictly through international intervention.

For a long time, Arat based her research on Turkey's transition from a one-party system to a multi-party parliamentary government. Arat stated that "norms are articulated by the elite, but which elites would be the most important?" These political parties in Turkey introduced various programs in order to garner support internally, and Arat approached these programs with specifics in mind. She looked at when "human rights" and related terms appeared, which rights are spelled out and gained frequency, if rights are mentioned favorably or critically and what factors — national or international — might have influenced changes over time.

She also talked about how Turkey has participated in international relations. She mentioned that Turkey was a founding member of the United Nations, joined the Council of Europe in 1949, joined the International Labor Union in 1932 and was one of the original signatories of the 1975 Helsinki Final Act. Instances such as these reveal that Turkey has played a role in international politics, but that begs the question: Has international influence impacted Turkey's national norms? Arat mentioned that "different political entities would use these words rather than be direct with their human rights policies," in relation to international documents.

To summarize her answer to the question: Yes. Countries can develop human rights norms without pressure from external influences. Arat goes over two aspects of Turkey's history to support her answer: women's political rights and recent party programs that include specific rights that are not included in international doctrines.

For the political rights of women, Arat described how Turkey allowed women the right to vote in 1930, this extended to nationwide elections in 1934. This predates the international agenda as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was published in 1948, along with the UN Convention on the Political Rights of Women in 1952. Turkey had been progressive in terms of gender equality before the rest of Europe, signaling to scholars that this was not an impact of international pressure.

As for the party programs, Arat listed specific rights that were pushed by political parties in Turkey, such as the right to education in the mother tongue, language collective rights and the right to live long. Rights such as this were not found in any international documents during that time, meaning that they were distinct to Turkey.

Arat goes on to elaborate further on the case study of women's political rights. She approached the subject in three ways: the pattern of change, ideological differences and causal/triggering factors. When examining the pattern of change, Arat saw a shift from there being no mention of women in politics to one where they viewed women's rights and needs through a very paternalistic, pro-natalist perspective. This meant that women were seen more so as mothers who needed protection. This would go on to a shift towards recognized women's rights that we see today — where women have political rights.

The ideological differences were mostly based around the earlier, increasingly feminist parties and the more reluctant and dualistic parties. These feminist parties pushed for modernization and identified as left-wing or socialist. The dualistic parties were towards the center-right of the political spectrum and were more concerned with pro-business programs.

The causal and triggering factors were the biggest points for Arat. She mentioned how the women's movement saw two waves: one from the 1920s to the 1930s, and another from the 1990s to today. The second factor that goes hand-in-hand with these movements is the European Union's candidacy for Turkey. "The second women's movement used the EU candidacy as leverage to push forward feminist programs," Arat stated.

Arat's presentation was met with a presentation by Dr. Tracy Llanera, an assistant professor of philosophy at UConn. She commended Arat's work for looking at human rights norms through national and local levels. Llanera acknowledged how the spheres of political parties tend to be ignored by political scientists. "Duty and accountability aren't a priority of political parties," she said. "Human rights norms are skewed to the agendas of political parties," which is why they tend to be overlooked.



Tracy Llanera gives her response to Zehra Arat's presentation. PHOTO BY DESIRAE SIN, STAFF WRITER/THE DAILY CAMPUS



Zehra Arat presents her research on human rights norms in Turkey at a UCHI Fellow's Talk on Wednesday, Jan. 31. PHOTO BY DESIRAE SIN, STAFF WRITER/THE DAILY CAMPUS





# Opinion

## The Daily Campus

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COMIC BY JASON J. SAMPSON, CONTRIBUTING ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Jason J. Sampson

### ► Editorial

# CONNECTICUT IS FAILING HIGHER EDUCATION

The state of Connecticut is tightening its belt around higher education, leading the University of Connecticut to begin fiscal year 2025 with a deficit of \$70 million, according to The Daily Campus. UConn President Radenka Maric has stated that the deficit, stemming from nearly \$50 million in reduced state support from COVID-19 funds, will result in 15% cuts to academic programs over the next five years.

The impact of the cuts has led to concerns among the UConn branch of the Association of American University Professors (AAUP) of the "potential for layoffs, departure, or early retirement of faculty members, the closing of graduate programs and the loss of UConn's R1 research institution classification."

The Daily Campus Editorial Board has been vocal about the UConn administration's exorbitant spending on construction of new dormitories and other facilities despite their knowledge of expiring COVID-19 funds, a charge that is now corroborated by the present budget shortfall. As such, the university's leaders bear major responsibility for impending program closures and department downsizing, which, as one member of the history department told the Chronicle of Higher Education, would eliminate entire graduate

programs without coming close to meeting the required 15% reduction in their operating budget.

However, when it comes to the supposed lack of funds for public colleges and universities, Governor Ned Lamont and the state legislature don't exactly have their backs to the wall — the reasoning requires parsing through seven years of tax policy.

According to in-depth reporting by the CT Mirror, the funding gap faced by public higher education, which includes UConn as well as 17 state universities and community colleges, is a symptom of steep "fiscal guardrails" meant to finance pensions for employees of the state's large public sector. Since 2017, the state has capped spending to help chop \$7.7 billion off its \$37 billion in unfunded liabilities. But one cost-saving mechanism — which prohibits the state from spending any revenue collected from businesses that exceeds \$3.15 billion — leaves

anywhere from hundreds of millions to billions of dollars per year untouchable. The policy enables less spending on services such as healthcare, housing, investments in low-income communities and communities of color and, not least, higher education. In other words, the cost of Connecticut's pension debt is displaced onto these underserved social resources.

### The Daily Campus Editorial Board has been vocal about the UConn administration's exorbitant spending on construction of new dormitories and other facilities despite their knowledge of expiring COVID-19 funds, a charge that is now corroborated by the present budget shortfall.

This demands the question: How much of state funds have been drained on servicing debt that could have been invested in higher education?

To make matters — and deficits — worse, the state has provided robust tax incentives to large corporations over the past decade, compounding with ambitious tax cuts to limit the amount of potential support for colleges and universities.

In 2022, the legislature passed an agreement with Lockheed Martin's Sikorsky, a manufacturer of military helicopters, providing the company with up to \$75 million in tax relief to remain in the state for two decades and keep jobs in the state. Sikorsky later thanked the state for its fealty to the war industry by losing a \$7.1 billion contract with the U.S.

Army and, in October 2023, laying off 179 employees, short-changing taxpayers on both jobs and revenue.

In 2014, East Hartford based manufacturer Pratt & Whitney, which produces engines for commercial and military aircraft, struck an agreement with the state for up to \$400 million in tax incentives for remaining in the state up to 2029. In July 2023, the producer's parent company and fellow weapons manufacturer Raytheon Technologies (RTX) disclosed a malfunction in Pratt & Whitney engines that could cost the company up to

\$7 billion in lost income — effectively eating its own profits from the past two years and negating the anticipated benefits of the past decade's tax abatement.

Other corporate tax relief from the past year include tens of millions to animation studios — whose permanence in Connecticut is uncertain, according to reporting from the CT Mirror — and as much as \$100 million to property developers looking to "revitalize" communities (the siren song of gentrification). Households and individuals earning \$100,000 may see their taxes decrease by as much as \$600, but those savings might be negated entirely if a family member is attending one of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities increasing tuition by \$610.

Tax cuts for individuals and corporations are generally an incentive to unleash spending and keep jobs and people in the state; however, not only is the evidence that higher taxes lead to more outward migration scant, but Connecticut's handouts to corporations have failed to solve the fundamental crises facing residents, be they renters, unhoused people or students. Furthermore, the legislature's parochial mission to slash pension debt and serve the people of the state has done precisely the opposite, penalizing students and faculty of public universities and colleges for decades of fiscal problems they had no part in.

# FEENEY'S FOCUS: Fund the UNRWA

by **Luke Feeney**  
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It has been an eventful few weeks in international affairs. Israel's bombardment of Gaza — bombings that have killed 26,751 and left 65,636 Palestinians wounded — was center stage in the top court of the United Nations. On Friday, Jan. 26, the court introduced six legally binding measures that Israel must follow.

Under the ruling, Israel must refrain from acts under the Genocide Convention, prevent and punish the direct and public incitement to genocide and take immediate and effective measures to ensure the provision of humanitarian assistance to civilians in Gaza. In addition, the court also ordered Israel to preserve evidence of genocide and to submit a report within one month of all measures taken in line with the court's orders.

The ruling does not call for a ceasefire, but the measures are virtually impossible to follow without a serious de-escalation of Israeli military action. The

only problem is Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, has made it clear that Israel will not adhere to the ruling of the International Court of Justice.

It's one of the weaknesses of international institutions of government such as the ICJ. While these decisions are legally binding, there is no meaningful enforcement mechanism for them. Simply put, there isn't a world police force to make Israel stop its brutality in Gaza. It's up to Israel itself or pressure from other nations to do so.

The same day of the court's ruling, the Israeli government alleged that 12 members of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) were involved in the attacks on Oct. 7. "To protect the agency's ability to deliver humanitarian assistance, I have taken the decision to immediately terminate the contracts of these staff members and launch an investigation in order to establish the truth without delay," Philippe Lazzarini, commissioner-general of the UNRWA said on Friday.

The UNRWA was created in 1949, following the removal of

hundreds of thousands of Palestinians in the Nakba of 1948. According to its website, UNRWA's mission is to support the relief and development of Palestinian refugees.

The agency doesn't have a set budget; instead, it relies on contributions from other countries.

Following Israel's allegations, the United States — the largest individual contributor — immediately cut its funding from the UNRWA. Afterwards, Canada, Australia, Britain, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Finland, Estonia, Japan, Austria and Romania pulled their funding as well.

Any member of the UNRWA who committed any violation of international law during the attacks on Oct. 7 should be held accountable for their actions. However, this agency should not be punished for the actions of a few. The UNRWA is of paramount importance for the 2.3 million Palestinians throughout the Gaza strip. They are responsible for running Gaza's schools, primary health-care clinics and other social services. If funding is not resumed, the agency will have to cease its operations in Gaza by the end of February. Taking away this last form of aid for Palestinians continues the collective punishment that they have had to endure since Oct. 7.

Israel has already brought a humanitarian disaster onto the Gaza strip through its bombings. According to the U.N., three liters of water are required daily for survival, yet in Gaza the average citizen only has access to 1.5 to two liters. Gaza's 625,000 students do not have access to an education. Hospitals have been destroyed and they don't have access to the internet.

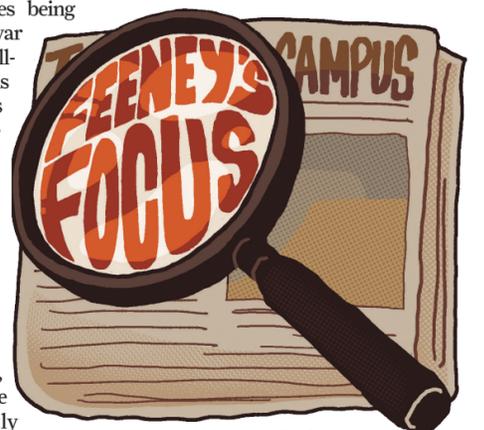
So much western-endorsed terror has been inflicted onto Gaza and its people. Liberal democracies like the U.S., Britain and Germany have sent over millions of dollars in weaponry to Israel. The UNRWA is literally the last line of hope for these people. Even after the rebuke of Israeli wartime policies at the ICJ, the Israeli military has kept up its relentless bombing and killing throughout the Gaza strip.

I understand that the thought of anyone working with humanitarian aid agencies being involved with war crimes is a chilling one. But this agency employs 13,000 people in Gaza. Only 12 employees have been accused; that's less than a fraction of a percent of the entire workforce in Gaza.

In the U.S., when a police officer unjustly

murders one of the citizens they are supposed to protect and serve, does the government pull the funding of the entire department? No; in fact, most times, police officers are barely even prosecuted for their crimes in the U.S., but that's an issue for another article.

There are a lot of unknowns in international affairs, I will admit that. However, this is not one of those situations. Basic necessities in Gaza have been impossible to meet — healthcare, food, water, sanitation — are being operated and distributed through the UNRWA. There is no standard of life for the citizens of Gaza already; Israel's bombings have made sure of that. The people of Gaza have literally nowhere else to go. Taking this agency away is sentencing a population that is 50% made up of children to death.



LOGO BY HALEIGH SCHMIDT, ASSOCIATE ARTIST EDITOR / THE DAILY CAMPUS

# Opinion StudyBreak

Huskytalk | What's one student event that you wish existed here at UConn?



**"Weekly farmer's markets."**

Luiza Zima  
Physiology and Neurobiology  
Second Semester



**"A vintage or thrifting event."**

Chelsey Abel  
Animal Science  
Second Semester



**"A petting zoo."**

Eliza Truempy  
Allied Health  
Second Semester



**"Cat therapy."**

Jenna Riley  
Allied Health  
Second Semester

PHOTOGRAPHY BY EMMA MEIDINGER, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

# MAKE COLLEGE CLASS ATTENDANCE MANDATORY

by Youssef Macary  
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Something that most college students quickly learn is that there are some classes that they can skip. This does not go for all college students nor is it true for all classes, but in general there are some college classes where students fail to show up and still pass. And while this flexibility may be something that many students value, in reality, it is counterproductive when considering the purpose of college.

To start, I'll describe two personal experiences that I have had. At the University of Connecticut, there are classes that I could miss without a large downside. For this reason, there have been classes that I missed. However, during my time in a study abroad program, they had a very strict attendance policy. If you missed class, the dramatic drop in your grade was extremely difficult to ignore. During my time in that program, I never missed a class. In essence, educational institutions have the power to shift students' priorities through attendance incentives.

What makes the ability of college students to miss class perplexing is that in no other phase of life can someone simply miss something. From elementary school through high school, attendance is not optional. Many high schools have attendance policies that prohibit students from passing should they miss a certain number of days of school. Both through that policy and the culture, it is much harder to be considered as "absent" from a college classroom. Fast forward to when people get full-time jobs: The same principle applies. You can't miss work without reasoning, and when you do, there is a system you have to go through such as calling out or taking a sick day. Throughout most of life, the incentive system makes attendance the bare minimum. You don't graduate from high school if you don't show up and you get fired if you don't go to work. That begs the question, why does college not have this same alignment of incentives, especially given the purpose of college is to educate students and prepare them for the real world?

One may argue that college wants students to build independence, and to do this they need to learn to make the correct decision without force, such as attending class. This argument has its merits, but is simply not how the real world works. Attendance in every other facet of life, as was previously discussed, is set as an expectation because of the alignment of incentives, such as keeping a job and getting paid. Without such consequences and incentives, a lot of people probably wouldn't show up for work every day.

Some classes can get students to show up. Some of them grade on participation and others have in-class mini-quizzes that count toward a student's grade. However, while such measures help, they do not solve the issue of attendance on an institutional level. There are several ways that UConn could institute policies to shift its culture and make attendance the expectation. One is by creating significant consequences in terms of a student's grade if they have so many absences. For example, for every two unexcused absences, a student's grade may drop a letter grade. While this seems harsh, it would establish the expectation of attendance, which not only prepares students for the real world but ensures they are getting the education that they paid for. Such a system would be easy to institute, especially with today's technological capabilities. It would need to include a way for absences to be excused for legitimate reasons such as illness.

Another advantage of tracking absences is that it gives the university the chance to support students who may be struggling. If someone is missing a lot of classes, they might be facing some sort of extenuating circumstance. Tracking absences allows UConn to support students and reach out with resources if they are concerned. This is just another way for the university to support its students and ensure they have the best college experience.

Overall, there is a dramatic misalignment of incentives when it comes to college attendance in comparison to the general expectation of attendance in the real world. But, it would be extremely easy for UConn to raise the bar for its students and create a system where every student can get the most out of college.

## SUBMIT TO CULTURE SHOCK



**Culture Shock is a column for underrepresented and marginalized UConn students to anonymously discuss their stories and experiences as members of those groups at UConn.**

<https://dailycampus.com/culture-shock/>

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# Huskies in the Pros: Hawkins and Jackson square off, Drummond scores 15, Sanogo recalled to Bulls

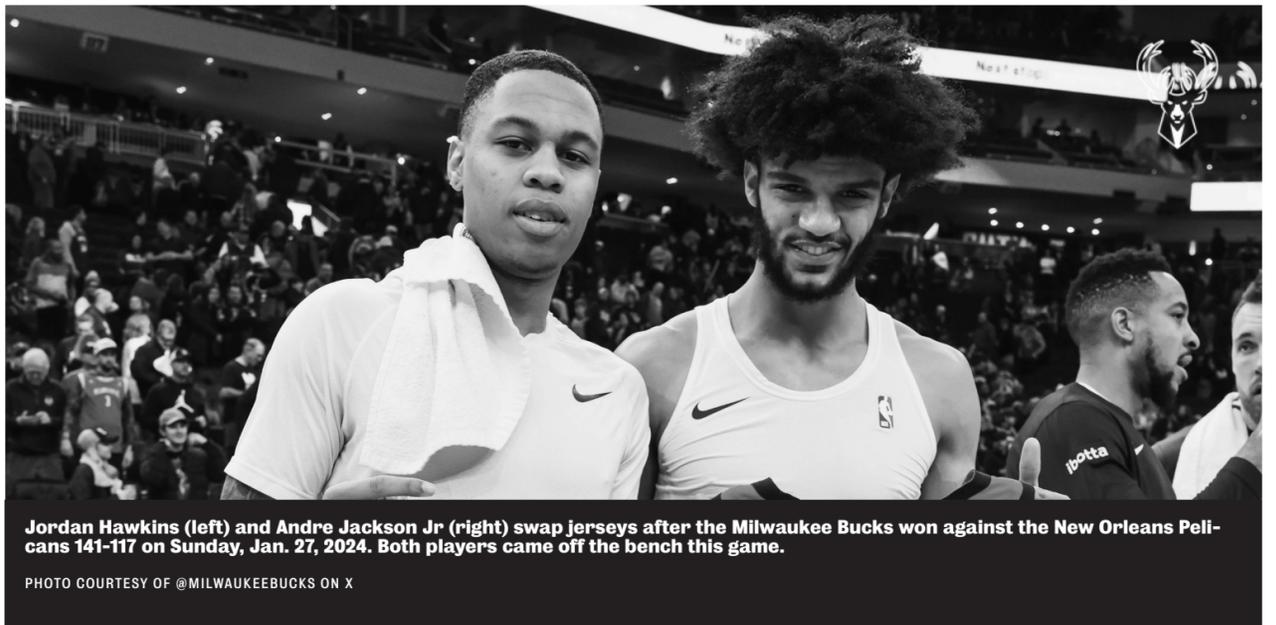
by **CJ Dexter**  
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## Pelicans-Bucks game sees national championship teammates go head to head

On Saturday, the New Orleans Pelicans began their four-game road trip with a matchup in Milwaukee. The hometown Bucks cruised to a 141-117 victory over New Orleans, but this game's anticipation lied in the first matchup between former national championship teammates: Jordan Hawkins and Andre Jackson Jr.

Despite coming off the bench, Hawkins logged 29 minutes and finished with eight points and seven rebounds with two three-pointers made. Jackson came off the bench for 17 minutes and finished with three points, two boards and two assists in the victory.

The two UConn stars declared for the 2023 NBA Draft after being an integral part of Connecticut's fifth national title. Hawkins, who shot 50% from beyond the arc during UConn's title run, was picked 14th overall by the Pelicans and was recently selected to the All-Star Weekend's rising stars challenge. Jackson, who



Jordan Hawkins (left) and Andre Jackson Jr (right) swap jerseys after the Milwaukee Bucks won against the New Orleans Pelicans 141-117 on Sunday, Jan. 27, 2024. Both players came off the bench this game.

PHOTO COURTESY OF @MILWAUKEEBUCKS ON X

dished out over 40 assists during the Huskies' title run, was selected by the Orlando Magic (pick rights to the Bucks) in the second round of the NBA draft and has started eight games this season.

## Drummond scores 15 points, grabs seven boards off the bench in win vs. the Trailblazers

In the Bulls' Sunday afternoon victory over the Portland

Trailblazers, former top-10 pick Andre Drummond scored 15 points and corralled seven rebounds in 17 minutes off the bench. Drummond, who sits top-15 all-time in rebounds per game, has been a major contributor off the bench for Chicago this season with averages of 7.8 points and 8.3 rebounds per game. The former UConn glass king played just one season in Storrs before being selected

ninth overall by the Detroit Pistons in the 2012 NBA Draft.

## NCAA Tournament Most Outstanding Player Adama Sanogo recalled to active Bulls roster

After winning the MVP of the 2023 NCAA Tournament, former UConn big man Adama Sanogo went undrafted in the 2023 NBA draft but earned a two-way contract with the Chicago Bulls. Sanogo, a na-

tive of Bamako, Mali, has put up impressive numbers in the G-League this season. Called up for a three-game stint earlier in the year, where he scored his first NBA points. However, despite his success in the G-League, he was left out of their All-Star game. On Tuesday, Sanogo was called up to the Bulls roster for a second time after Chicago big man Patrick Williams suffered a foot injury.

# Spin Cycle: What are the Sox doing?

by **Nick Spinali**  
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The 2023-24 offseason has not been the hot stove that Boston Red Sox fans imagined.

While the team has been active in the trade and free agency markets, the Sox have yet to make any specific moves that fans can cite as a reason to think the team will improve on last year's last-place finish in the American League East. Meanwhile, teams like the rival New York Yankees have made moves such as acquiring Juan Soto and Alex Verdugo in hopes of bolstering its roster ahead of next season. The other AL East teams have all made an effort to build a winning club ahead of the 2024 campaign. Yet, Boston seems stagnant in comparison to their peer's transactions.

Perhaps the biggest move that the Red Sox made this offseason was the firing of their former President of Baseball Operations, Chaim Bloom, in favor of former pitcher and Yale graduate Craig Breslow. The New Haven native received praise in the past from many league officials, given his intuition and level of intellect surrounding the game of baseball. Bringing an executive of Breslow's caliber was thought to lead to turnover within the team's roster.

Instead, the moves that the Red Sox have made with Breslow have been, let's say, perplexing. Not due to the players they've acquired themselves, but because of the way that the moves have left Boston's roster.

So far, the Sox have acquired outfielder Tyler O'Neill from the St. Louis Cardinals and infielder Vaughn Grissom. They received pitcher Greg Weissert plus two minor league pitchers in the trade that sent Verdugo to the Yankees and signed free agent pitcher Lucas Giolito to a contract. Aside from Verdugo, other notable losses include P Chris Sale and designated hitter Justin Turner while outfielder Adam Duvall and P James Paxton remain free agents. Whether Boston's additions are able to outweigh their subtractions remains to be seen, but in just the handful of moves that the team has made, their roster may have more question marks now than it did before.

Verdugo's time as a team favorite died suddenly as the end of his tenure with the Red Sox turned sour, so there was no denying that the team needed to move on from him. Acquiring O'Neill as a potential bounce-back bat can help replace Verdugo, but the team has a plethora of outfielders as is. The team still has Jarren Duran and



Cardinals' (now Red Sox) Tyler O'Neill is at bat against the Toronto Blue Jays on Opening Day at Busch Stadium on March 30, 2023, in St. Louis. The final score of this game was 4-2 in favor of the Toronto Blue Jays.

PHOTO COURTESY OF @SMBMLB ON X

Masataka Yoshida on its roster to occupy the left and center field positions. Perhaps O'Neill serves as a fourth outfielder and rotates with younger Willyer Abreu, whose late-season production drew attention last season, in right field. Still, that leaves budding prospect Cedanne Rafaela without a spot in the outfield. Although Rafaela can also play in the infield, it's difficult to imagine where he fits into a lineup that already includes starters Rafael Devers, Trevor Story, Triston Casas and now Grissom.

Hopefully you can start to see where the team's roster problems lie; Boston currently has too many outfielders who will all cut into each other's playing time. This becomes problematic when considering that it may be in the team's best long-term interest to let its younger players, such as Abreu and Rafaela, play now to garner valuable experience for the future. With all of these players taking away each other's playing time, will the Sox's young prospects have a chance to show that

they have a future as a solid contributor or will they be relegated to utility work?

The loss of Sale leaves the Red Sox without a true ace, a mantle that is likely in line for Brayan Bello to claim. The team added Giolito this offseason to help an ailing pitching staff, though it's needless to say the team wouldn't



mind being on the receiving end of more arms. This is where another problem arises: instead of addressing their pitching needs, the Sox are relying on their average pitchers to carry them to the promised land.

"At the end of the day, the Whitlocks, the [Kutter] Crawford, the [Tanner] Houcks, the Bellos, they have to take a step forward," team manager Alex Cora said Friday night at the team's annual Winter Weekend event. Aside from Crawford, Houck and Whitlock, you can add names like Nick Pivetta and Josh Winckowski to that list. While there's no denying the

talent that some of Boston's pitchers have, simply put these expectations are unreasonable for many of their guys.

It's not that these players aren't good pitchers. In fact, that's exactly the problem with the pitching staff: there are too many guys who are only good. If the Red Sox really want to win, they need to acquire a pitcher who is great. They need that no-doubt ace who can act as a leader. Right now, the pitching staff has no clear-cut leader and are more like a band of misfits than an organized orchestra. It seems that with guys

like Whitlock, Houck, Crawford and Pivetta, the Sox can't even decide if they operate best as starting pitchers or if they are better suited for the bullpen. How many more seasons can they roll out these arms with the same uncertainty constantly lingering?

What the Red Sox need to do, and what fans would love to see, is the team acquire a star-caliber pitcher by drawing from its plethora of outfielders and perhaps packaging one or two of their good-but-not-great pitchers. In addition, if the team wants to play its budding prospects in short-stop Marcelo Mayer or outfielder Roman Anthony on their big league squad in the near future, they'll need to clear those positions for them. Just another reason for the team to package some players for another notable arm.

That would be the best case scenario for Boston. With the moves they've made right now, the team has a roster problem that will haunt them throughout the regular season. The time is now for the team to address those problems with a few moves here or there.

## Sports

Photo of the Day | Go Huskies!



The UConn women's hockey team took on the Vermont Catamounts on Friday at the Toscano Family Ice Forum. The Huskies won the game 3-0 and their record currently stands at 17-6-3. PHOTO BY MERCER FERGUSON, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

## Sam's Section: What went wrong in the Lions' second half choke

by Sam Calhoun

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Championship Sunday brought two exciting matchups: the Chiefs against the Ravens and the Lions against the 49ers. The Chiefs handled business in Baltimore, setting up a highly anticipated matchup between Detroit and San Francisco.

Dan Campbell, the Lions' head coach hoping to bring his team to the franchise's first Super Bowl ever, is known to make aggressive play calls in crucial moments. It's a big gamble and it may have lost Detroit's best chance at a Super Bowl appearance.

The Lions had a 24-7 lead at half-time, leaving the team feeling even more confident about their chances to get to Las Vegas, where the Super Bowl will be held on Feb. 11.

The 49ers are debatably the best all-around team in the NFL. That showed in the second half. Quarterback Brock Purdy and the Niners scored on every drive outside when they kneeled to end the game. The Nick Bosa-led San Francisco defense did not allow any points until a touchdown with just under a minute remaining in the game.

According to StatMuse, the Lions converted more fourth downs than any team this season except the Carolina Panthers. Campbell's squad was successful 21 times on fourth down.

However, the Lions' aggression has cost them games.

With a one-score game and a four-point lead against the Seahawks, the Lions turned the ball over on downs at their 45-yard line. While chewing the clock, the



Dak Prescott of the Dallas Cowboys and Jared Goff meet up after the Detroit Lions won 31-23 on Jan. 21, 2024. This win advanced the Detroit Lions to the NCF title game. PHOTO COURTESY OF @BOONERSPORTS ON X

Seahawks took the lead and never gave it back to Detroit on a 45-yard drive for a touchdown.

Following a touchdown by Amon-Ra St. Brown, Campbell decided to go for two despite an extra point tying the game up at 20 with the Cowboys. While penalties put the team in a tough position to convert the two-point attempt, Campbell kept the offense on the field and, as a result, Detroit quarterback Jared Goff's pass to St. Brown failed to give Detroit the lead.

When Goff was asked about his team's aggressiveness on fourth downs, he replied, "I love 'em. We gotta convert."

Midway through the third quarter, the Lions were at the 28-yard line in San Francisco territory with a fourth & two coming up. A field

goal would have given Detroit a three-score lead. But instead, Goff tried to find wide receiver Josh Reynolds in hopes of continuing the drive. He was unsuccessful and the lead remained at 14.

With seven minutes and 32 seconds left to play, the Lions trailed by a field goal and were well within field goal range with a fourth and short decision to make.

Kicker Michael Badgley had not seen the field much this season outside extra points. He went 13-15 on extra points and 4-4 on field goals, the longest being 41 yards.

However, Campbell decided to keep the offense on the field with hopes of continuing the drive and potentially getting even more points.

The safe decision to make

would be to kick the field goal. However, Campbell did not trust Badgley to kick a 47-yarder to tie the game at 27 apiece.

Goff looked for St. Brown, his top receiver, hoping to bounce back from turning the ball over on downs earlier in the half. However, the pass fell short, making the 49ers' door to Sin City open wider.

As the offense continued to go to work, the 49ers went down the field for a touchdown by second-string running back Elijah Mitchell with three minutes remaining.

Mitchell's touchdown extended San Francisco's lead to two scores, giving the Lions one long-shot opportunity to climb back into a game they choked.

Goff did an excellent job marching down the field in a two-

minute drill to cut the deficit to a field goal. However, with an on-side kick recovered by the 49ers, the game was out of reach.

The 49ers punched their ticket to Super Bowl LVIII with one of the best comebacks in National Football Conference Championship history, setting up a rematch of Super Bowl LIV with the Chiefs. They won by three points, the same number of points Campbell could have gotten back if he decided not to be so aggressive on fourth down.

Campbell said he didn't regret his decisions because it is the identity of his team. However, if he wants to even think about having another run in the NFL Playoffs, he might want to reconsider just how aggressive he should be in certain situations.

## Husky History: Kiah Stokes

by Sean Ahern

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LOGO BY HALEIGH SCHMIDT,  
ASSOCIATE ARTIST EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Welcome back to another edition of Husky History, the column that highlights a former UConn athlete's accomplishments in Storrs and professional career.

This previous week at Gampel Pavilion, the 2004 and 2014 women's basketball team members were honored for the 10 and 20-year anniversaries of the championships they brought home. Among the group was Kiah Stokes, the defensive star for three straight UConn national championships, from 2013 to 2015.

Stokes was born on March 30, 1993, and attended Linn-Mar High School in Marion, Iowa. For the Lions, she was a McDonald's All-American in her senior season and averaged a dominant 25.0 points, 14.8 rebounds and 5.1 blocks per game. While in high school, she proved her utility for UConn: She was a winner. Stokes led the team to a 26-0 record and an Iowa 4A State Title in her final season.

In high school, Stokes was ranked as the No. 9 overall girls recruit by the All-Star Girls Report, so it only made sense she was picked up by coach Geno Auriemma to continue building a winning culture. As a freshman, she had the typical first-year role that saw her average 4.5 points, 4.5 rebounds and 1.4 blocks in 13.4 minutes per game. Even in her smaller role, she was named to the All-Big East Rookie Team.

In the NCAA Tournament that year, Stokes played sparingly for the Huskies who had championship aspirations. When she did

get her chance, she did not disappoint. Trouncing over Kansas State, the freshman tallied 13 points, nine boards and three blocks in just 18 minutes.

Her second-year role decreased to 10.7 minutes per game, but Stokes made the most of it, most notably in the postseason once again. In UConn's dominating 105-37 win over Idaho in the first round of the NCAA Tournament, Stokes put up 14 points and 11 rebounds. That kickstarted the run to claim the team's eighth national title.

As an upperclassman, Stokes' responsibility increased, and she took the opportunity and ran with it. She averaged 4.5 points and 7.1 rebounds in only 18.5 minutes per game, recording four double-doubles on the season.

The 2013-14 team was perfect. The Huskies went undefeated with a 40-0 record and defeated Notre Dame to clinch the national championship. Stokes contributed four points, eight boards and a steal to help raise banner No. 9.

Stokes started to see more recognition for her play in her senior season. The Husky was named American Athletic Conference Defensive Player of the Year as well as awarded a spot on the AAC Second Team. She also became the fourth Husky in program history to record a triple-double with 10 points, 11 rebounds and 10 blocks in a win over East Carolina.

Stokes led the AAC in blocks per game at 3.8. She was the defensive force down low that helped the Huskies win their third championship in a row.

Stokes' name is all over the team leaderboards. She holds the single season record for blocked shots with 147 in her senior season, and ranks second all-time in program history in blocks and blocks per game, only behind fellow teammate and champion Breanna Stewart.

The former Husky was drafted with the 11th overall pick in the 2015 WNBA draft by the New York Liberty. Her playstyle has translated over to the professional

game smoothly. She was named to the All-Rookie First Team and All-Defensive Second Team in her first season, ranking second in the league in blocked shots.

After six seasons with the Liberty, she signed a contract with the Las Vegas Aces in 2021. With her, she brought the winning DNA she has established every place she has played. Stokes helped the Aces win back-to-back WNBA Championships in 2022 in 2023.

Unfortunately, she suffered a foot injury that held her back from playing in the 2023 clinching game. Before that, she averaged 2.8 points and 7.9 rebounds during the playoffs in a pivotal starting role.

To this point, the nine-year veteran center has averaged 4.0 points, 5.8 rebounds and 1.1 blocks. At the exact time of this writing, Stokes is re-signing with the Aces on a two-year deal. Husky and Aces fans hope to see return to good health and provide the winning culture they have all grown to love from her.

# Sargeant's Orders: Knicks lose Julius Randle, what now?

by Connor Sargeant  
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If you are a fan of the New York Knicks, you have been treated to quite the 2024 so far. OG Anunoby has fit like a glove in the Big Apple and given this Knicks squad new life. New York is 14-2 in the new year, and it's not just bottom-tier teams they have bested. In that same stretch, they have beaten the brakes off the Philadelphia 76ers, Denver Nuggets and Miami Heat. To say this team was firing on all cylinders isn't an overstatement. They are third in the Eastern Conference, mainly due to their defensive performance, which is also near the league's top. However, Knicks fans received some earth-shattering news last week. Miami visited Madison Square Garden on Jan. 27, and with that, the Knicks won in convincing fashion, 125-109. That win was not the biggest headline, though. With about four and a half minutes left in the fourth quarter, Julius Randle drove to the basket, drawing contact from multiple defenders. He landed on his right side and grabbed his right shoulder in discomfort. The pain was so unbearable that the 6-foot-8 forward immedi-

ately left for the locker room.

This was a devastating loss for New York, and of course, the question is what comes next if Randle misses extended time?

As of the time of writing this, we do not have an exact timetable for when the Kentucky alum will return, although the initial signs are encouraging. Randle suffered a dislocated shoulder, and while that in and of itself is bad, it could have been far worse. Reports from ESPN suggest that the Knicks are optimistic that Randle can return "in weeks and not months." Another hopeful sign was Randle's MRI, which showed no significant damage. In this article, we will review the worst and best-case scenarios for New York and how the team should adjust.

If Randle is out for the year, this would be devastating for the red-hot Knicks. The 6-foot-8 forward is in the middle of an all-star caliber year, averaging 24 points per game on 47% from the field, not to mention grabbing over nine boards per game. Accounting for over 20 points a night is no small feat, and the road to an NBA Championship gets much harder without Randle's production. However, the team has played well since the 29-year-old went down. While a small sample size, the team

has won two straight since Jan. 27, and it hasn't games close, with both games decided by 15 points or more.

In particular, Donte DiVincenzo has stepped up his offensive production, scoring 33 points in his team's 118-103 win over the Jazz. Likewise, the night before, he put up another 28 points. This is all the more meaningful when you consider what the 26-year-old has done up to this point. DiVincenzo has averaged 12 points per game. While that number won't blow anyone away, his efficiency, shooting 46% from the field, is commendable. The Villanova product has now moved into the role of a top scorer, and New York needs him to be a 20-points-a-night guy for the duration of Randle's injury. As good as Jalen Brunson is, relying on him to score 40 points a night is not sustainable. If DiVincenzo can become more of a scorer for New York in Randle's absence, the season might not be lost.

Of course, what happens if his injury is a minor hiccup in an otherwise perfect season? Knicks nation can exhale if Randle is out for only a few weeks. From now until Feb. 10, New York plays five home games, and their next two opponents on the road are below

.500 teams. Directly after that is the week-long hiatus that is All-Star Weekend. I am saying this because there shouldn't be a sense of urgency to try and play Randle, especially considering where the Knicks are at.

There is no rush to get Randle back into action, and there shouldn't be. The last thing New York wants to do is re-aggravate anything. No matter the diagnosis, Randle shouldn't even consider suiting up until after the all-star break. This also gives head coach Tom Thibodeau a chance to experiment with the lineup against lesser opponents. Can Precious Achiuwa handle an uptick of minutes? If need be, does Anunoby have the ability to be an effective four?

These crucial questions will address this Knicks squad's depths. And again, if this is a minor setback, how will Randle bounce back?

The goal is for him to come back as soon as possible and get back into the recent hot stretch he was in, and that is more than likely. Anunoby has revolutionized this Knicks squad. They are much more fluid on offense, their defense has improved tenfold and they space the floor much better. This recent acquisition will also benefit Randle's recovery because he can play his own brand of basketball and not be relied on to force up poor shots. Before, Randle had horrid nights, playing too much like a guard. With this added wing depth, he can develop at his own pace and play his brand of basketball.



LOGO BY VAN NGUYEN, ARTIST EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

# Chris's Column: Are the Chiefs the new Patriots? Is Mahomes/Kelce on their way to Brady/Gronk status?

by Christopher Charbonneau  
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The Kansas City Chiefs continue their reign as one of the top teams in the NFL as they head to their fourth Super Bowl in the last five years. Patrick Mahomes and Travis Kelce are on their way to becoming the next great quarterback/tight end duo in the league. Mahomes and Kelce, reminiscent of Tom Brady and Rob Gronkowski, are a tough dynamic duo for the San Francisco 49ers to handle at Super Bowl LVIII.

## Tale of the Tape

From 2014-18, the Patriots went 62-18 in the regular season, 12-2 in the playoffs, won five division titles, grabbed five conference championship appearances, had four Super Bowl appearances and won three. If the Chiefs come out on top this season, the team has the following accolades from 2019-23: a 63-20 regular season record, five division titles, five conference championship appearances, four Super Bowl appearances, three Super Bowl wins and a 14-2 record in the playoffs.

## Mahomes and Brady in the Media

On the Pat McAfee Show, Brady said "There's nothing Patrick can do in my opinion that takes away from what I tried to accomplish in my career. And there's nothing that I did to take away from what he is trying to accomplish."

The Chiefs quarterback faced critics who wondered if he could win a road playoff game. In true Mahomes fashion, he handled the Dolphins at home in the Wild Card and continued to silence the haters with two wins on the road against the Buffalo Bills and Baltimore Ravens. The offensive performance against the Ravens in the second half wasn't exactly impressive, but with Mahomes/Kelce's veteran-esque performance, they survived in Baltimore.

On the flip side, the New England Patriots had plenty of close-call shaky AFC Championship and divisional games where it was either the offense, defense or special teams that bailed each other out.

## Mahomes' Career so far

Through the former Texas Tech quarterback's first six seasons with the Chiefs, his record is 73-

22. He has two MVPs, two Super Bowls, four AFC titles and a 14-3 playoff record.

Comparing that to Brady, his record in his first six seasons was 70-24. He had zero MVPs, three Super Bowls, three AFC titles and a 12-2 playoff record. Ever since Mahomes lost to Brady in the 2019 AFC Championship game, his team has been in the conversation for the Super Bowl every year. The question remains if the Chiefs are a dynasty if they win or lose in the Super Bowl. Brady won seven out of 10 Super Bowls and New England had a 20-year dynasty with multiple AFC Championship appearances just like the Chiefs. Mahomes/Kelce will be compared to Brady/Gronk for the rest of their careers because there is no other quarterback and pass-catcher duo in the NFL right now that has achieved as much as them.

Mahomes has already established himself as the best quarterback in the league. After he sat for a year and learned under former

quarterback Alex Smith, he has been to the AFC Championship game in every season in his first six years as a starter.

His Super-



LOGO BY HALEIGH SCHMIDT, ASSOCIATE ARTIST EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

per Bowl record is 2-1 and he's seeking to become the first team since the 2003-04 Patriots to win back-to-back titles. The conversation shouldn't be about whether they will be the next Brady/Gronk, but it sure has been the most impressive run in the first six years for

a starting quarterback in the history of the NFL.

## Kelce's Career

Kelce has been a dominant force on the field since 2013. With his impressive size and athleticism, his route-running ability is a nightmare for defenses. Kelce and Mahomes are elite talents at their positions. Their strong chemistry on and off the field is like Brady and Gronk, who were known for their close relationship as teammates and were a dominant offensive duo from 2011-2021. However, no quarterback and pass-catcher duo has combined for more playoff touchdowns in NFL history than Mahomes and Kelce.

The former Cincinnati tight end specifically leads the NFL with the most playoff receptions of all time at 156. The next three on that list are 49ers wide receiver legend Jerry Rice at 151, former Patriots receiver Julian Edelman with 118 and Gronk with 98.

## Final Thoughts

The Patriots faced a 10-year

drought to win their fourth Super Bowl. The stats will be close if no team stops the Chiefs from entering the playoffs, never mind the Championship game and Super Bowl. It is never too early to start conversations and consider if Mahomes is better than Brady. Chasing seven rings and playing 20 years in the league will be a tough task for the Kansas City star. Brady set the standard to the absolute max and made it extremely difficult for young and upcoming quarterbacks like Mahomes to achieve similar careers.

There is no question that what Brady and Gronk did together will keep them at the top for quarterback/tight end combinations. If Mahomes and Kelce can win two more Super Bowls, they could join the conversation as one of the most dominant tandems in the NFL. In the end, Mahomes may not reach Brady's seven Super Bowl rings. But right now, it doesn't look like the multi-time MVP is slowing down anytime soon as he is looking to win his third Super Bowl alongside his safety blanket Kelce.



Patrick Mahomes looks to make a pass in the NCF title game against the Baltimore Ravens on Sunday, January 29, 2024. The Kansas City Chiefs won the game 17-10 and will advance to play in Super Bowl LVIII. PHOTO COURTESY OF @KANSASCITYCHIEFS ON X



# Sports

## Women's Basketball: No. 11 Huskies vanquish Villanova at the Finn

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UConn Women's basketball returns to a sold-out Gampel Pavilion on Saturday, Jan. 20, 2024, taking the win against Big East opponent DePaul. This win sets the Huskies at a 12 game win streak and a 8-0 standing vs. Big East teams this season.  
PHOTO BY ZACH MOLLER, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Less than five minutes into the game, junior guard Lucy Olsen picked up her second foul after trying to defend senior forward Aaliyah Edwards. With the Big East Conference's leading scorer on the bench, it looked like the Villanova Wildcats might struggle for the rest of the first half.

That was not the case. Villanova gave the No. 11 UConn women's basketball team their toughest conference challenge yet. Although UConn won 81-60 at the Finneran Pavilion in Pennsylvania, the 21-point margin of victory does not tell the full story.

Up until the halfway mark of the third quarter, the Huskies found themselves engaged in tactical warfare. During the nine minutes Olsen spent on the bench in the first half, the Wildcats kept Connecticut within eyesight. Down as much as eight in the first quarter, Villanova pulled within one behind their aggressive drive to the lane and a raucous home crowd.

Reigning Big East Freshman of the Week Maddie Webber led the charge in Olsen's absence. Webber had two points in the first five minutes but transitioned into a leading role that she carried into halftime. Junior guard Zanai Jones also got in on the action, cashing in often at the line and making it difficult for the Huskies to gain any real momentum.

Their two-headed attack, combined with Olsen's offensive prowess once she returned, kept the Wildcats within six points for most of the second quarter. Despite a go-

ahead second-chance jumper from the junior guard, UConn went into the locker room up one following two free throws.

It remained gritty after the intermission. Both teams exchanged the lead once within the first two minutes of the third quarter. Edwards drove to the lane for a deuce with 5:12 remaining in the frame for a 44-43 Huskies' advantage. From then on, Connecticut never relinquished their lead. The Huskies shot efficiently in the third quarter for the second straight contest, going 10-14 from the field and making their last nine shots.

Unlike Saturday's loss, UConn sustained it over two periods and never let their foot off the gas.

The Huskies made 18 of their last 22 field goal attempts over the final 15 minutes, including two stretches where they made seven or more in a row. First-year guard KK Arnold went a perfect 4-4 in the second half, bouncing back from a three-foul first for a 13-point outing.

Villanova could not answer once Connecticut found its groove. The Wildcats scored 17 points across the game's final 15 minutes, missing four straight shots on three sep-

arate occasions. When the dust settled, the Huskies walked out of the Finn with their seventh true road victory of the year and remained undefeated in conference play.

Edwards did not attempt a single shot in the fourth quarter of Saturday's loss to the then-No. 15 Notre Dame Fighting Irish. UConn gave their All-American forward a 34-minute buffet in the post against Villanova. Left all alone down low and near the basket on numerous occasions, the senior capitalized at a 9-13 clip for a game-best 22 points.

Senior guard Nika Mühl provided the assist on three of Edwards' nine buckets. Having fouled out and been held scoreless in Saturday's upset loss, Mühl bounced back in a big way in 39 minutes of action with a 12-point, 10-assist double-double. Made clear following a defeat at Gampel Pavilion, head coach Geno Auriemma sees the senior guard as the motor of their offense.

"We are a different team when Nika [Mühl] is on the floor," Auriemma told SNY afterward.

Redshirt junior Paige Bueckers, meanwhile, did what she normally does against conference foes. De-

fensively, Bueckers forced one steal and gave Villanova trouble from all over the floor. Offensively, the red-shirt junior shot 50% from the field despite making just one three for 21 points with five assists to boot. Although she dropped 20+ points for the fifth time in her last six games, Auriemma believes Bueckers is not getting recognized enough at the national level for the impact she has had on the team.

"The problem with coaching somebody like Paige [Bueckers] is that your expectations are so high, you do not truly appreciate how many great things she does," Auriemma stated. "I would like to see [Bueckers] play with a full complement of players. Then you can judge for yourself how good she is."

UConn's defense and communication on that end of the court improved from their loss to the Fighting Irish four days earlier. It was not perfect they allowed six triples and gave their longtime foe 14 extra possessions but the Huskies forced the Wildcats into 11 turnovers on six steals. Between conquering the defensive glass 24-14 and rejecting two shots, Connecticut caused problems for

several of Villanova's stars.

As they have against leading scorers throughout most of conference play, the Huskies kept Olsen well below her season average. The junior guard entered scoring almost 24 points a night; she finished with 15 (13 of which came in the first half) on 6-17 shooting. It was not a season-low by any means, but Olsen's 6-17 performance from the field was her worst in four weeks. Christian Dalce came in averaging almost nine points and double-digit rebounds a night. UConn held her to seven points and just three boards, putting her in several tough situations on the interior more than once. All 11 of Webber's points came in the first half. No Wildcat finished with more than four rebounds. Since upsetting the then-No. 22 Marquette Golden Eagles at home two weeks ago, Villanova has lost three of four.

Next up for the Huskies is a two-game homestand to kick off February and their second contest against the St. John's Red Storm (14-9, 8-3 Big East). Tip-off in UConn's third game at Gampel Pavilion in as many weekends is set for 3 p.m. on Sunday on CBSN.

## The Coleumn: 1985 was not the last time the Big East had three Final Four teams

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39 years ago, the Georgetown Hoyas, Villanova Wildcats and St. John's Red Storm men's basketball teams all reached the Final Four. Most people recall the eighth-seeded Wildcats' historic upset over the Hoyas in the championship game that season. It marked the only time in men's basketball that three teams from the same conference made the Final Four.

1985 was not the most recent year the Big East Conference accounted for 75% of the teams in the national semifinals, however.

Last Saturday, the UConn women's basketball team inducted their 2013 and 2014 national championship teams into the Huskies of Honor. Both of the Huskies' title teams combined for just four losses; all of them came during the 2012-13 season.

Like 1985, that season featured two of the nation's top programs who played each other in the Final Four. They met three times beforehand.

UConn's previous two tournament campaigns ended in heartbreak in the national semifinals. Two-time National Player of the Year Maya Moore and three-time All-Big East selection Tiffany Hayes departed for the WNBA in consecutive seasons. Big East

Rookie of the Year Kaleena Mosqueda-Lewis took Moore's spot in the rotation during the 2011-12 season; forward Breanna Stewart changed the Huskies' starting five into a three-forward attack.

With that lineup and several other future WNBA stars, Connecticut wreaked havoc. The Huskies allowed 35 points against the No. 1 Stanford Cardinals in their first-ever victory at Maples Coliseum and dusted the No. 4 Duke Blue Devils by 30, just to name a few non-conference wins. Six different players landed on the All-Big East teams led by center Stefanie Dolson and Mosqueda-Lewis' First Team honors. Despite their success, all three of UConn's conference defeats came at the hands of the Notre Dame Fighting Irish.

Notre Dame had their sights set on making their third straight national title game. Head coach Gary Blair and the Texas A&M Aggies beat the Fighting Irish for their first national championship in 2011. Reigning National Player of the Year Brittney Griner and the Baylor Bears capped off an undefeated season with a 19-point victory in 2012.

Despite losing All-Big East selections Natalie Novosel and Devereaux Peters, Notre Dame still had Big East Player of the Year Skylar Diggins-Smith and star forward Natalie Achonwa. Illinois native Jewell Lloyd

strengthened their roster.

Under the guidance of Basketball Hall of Fame coach Muffet McGraw, the Fighting Irish were a national title contender all year. Notre Dame went 19-0 against conference foes between the regular season and the Big East Tournament. Diggins-Smith won her second straight Big East Player of the Year Award, and Lloyd took home Big East Freshman of the Year honors.

Connecticut provided the Fighting Irish with their toughest battles. Only once out of the three wins did Notre Dame beat the Huskies by more than five points, which came in a triple overtime epic at Purcell Pavilion. The Big East Tournament champs steamrolled their way through the NCAA Tournament as a No. 1 seed in the Norfolk Regional. Diggins-Smith scored in double figures in 15 straight games heading into the Final Four, but Connecticut delivered the biggest surprise of them all.

Stewart scored 31 total points in three career games against the Fighting Irish going into New Orleans, Louisiana. She dropped a season-high 29 points with the season on the line. The Huskies did not just fend off Notre Dame; they beat them by 18 and held Diggins-Smith to 10 points on 3-15 shooting.

Downing the Fighting Irish removed a huge boulder off UConn's back. Back in the championship game for the first time in

three years, the Huskies were one game away from tying the Tennessee Volunteers on the all-time national title list.

Only one conference foe stood in their path.

Head coach Jeff Walz and the Louisville Cardinals finished 16th in the final AP poll, but they had the talent of a top-10 program even without forward Asia Taylor. Junior guards Shoni Schimmel and Antonita Slaughter both earned All-Big East honors. The Cardinals started their season with a ranked victory over No. 15 Texas A&M and went 11-5 in conference play.

Their third-place finish and Big East Semifinal appearance prepared them for an improbable NCAA Tournament run.

Griner and the Bears had lost just one contest heading into the Sweet 16 in the Oklahoma City Regional. Redshirt senior Monique Reid spoiled Baylor's repeat title hopes with two clutch free throws in the final seconds of regulation for a one-point upset. Two days later, the Cardinals stunned Tennessee by nine to earn their second Final Four appearance.

After a comeback win against the California Golden Bears in the national semifinals, Louisville was 40 minutes away from becoming the second school in history to sweep the national titles in the same year. Basketball Hall of Fame coach Rick Pitino

and the men's team outdueled the Michigan Wolverines for their third national title 24 hours earlier (it would later be vacated).

Louisville kept it early in the first half; their five-point lead marked Connecticut's largest deficit of the tournament. Once the Huskies went ahead, they never let go. UConn ended the Cardinals' Cinderella run with a 33-point victory, claiming their first of four straight championships.

Eight teams represented the Big East in the NCAA Tournament, the most of any conference that season. Half of those teams — the Syracuse Orange, DePaul Blue Demons, St. John's and Villanova — were first-round exits. The 10th-seeded South Florida Bulls upset the Texas Tech Red Raiders but fell in overtime against second-seeded Cal in the second round.

2013 marked the last time three teams from one conference made the Final Four in either men's or women's basketball. That may change soon because of realignment, but until it does, how the Big East achieved this phenomenon 11 years ago remains an impressive feat no Power Five conference can claim.



WHAT TO KEEP AN EYE ON THIS WEEK

UConn SCOREBOARD

vs.

80      61

Men's Basketball  
Wednesday

Upcoming Games

vs.

Women's Hockey  
6:00 p.m. Friday  
Storrs, Conn.

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vs.

Men's Hockey  
7:00 p.m. Friday  
Providence, R.I.

INSTAGRAM OF THE DAY

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Halftime in Gampel

TWEETS OF THE DAY

UConn Women's Basketball

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HUSKIES WIN @WellsFargo

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@UConnHuskies

Full @UConnStudents section less than 20 minutes after doors opening #BleedBlue

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UConn Men's Basketball

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