



## UConn students left frustrated over housing selection process

by Gianni Salisbury | CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT | SHE/HER | gianni.salisbury@uconn.edu

On April 8, the University of Connecticut general housing selection process began with thousands of students hoping to get the best on-campus housing possible.

However, when looking at available housing options, many students found their preferred housing had already been taken. This happened for both upper and underclassmen.

The university housing selection is credit-based, meaning the more credits you have, the earlier your pick time will be in the selection process. Students receive an email a few weeks before housing selection informing them of how many credits they have and the date and time of their pick, according to the UConn Residential Life website.

Students who have more credits can pull in other students they want to room with even if those students have fewer credits, according to the website.

Up until the housing selection period, fourth-semester students Erin Cioffi, an allied health major, Marlee Archer, undeclared, Jami Sacco, a marketing major and Emma O'Connell, a nutrition major, had planned on living together in a four-person suite in the South dorms. Cioffi had the earliest pick date of the group, April 10, due to her 65 credits.

When the day came to pick their room, Cioffi found that all of the South suites had been taken and their second

choice, the Charter Oak Apartments, were also all gone.

"I was fairly confident that I would at least get old South and then I didn't get it. I felt a lot of

spaces and areas of campus."

O'Connell felt that due to Cioffi having junior-level credits they should have had the opportunity to live where they

"There are an estimated 4,400 apartment and suite spaces total on campus, out of more than 12,000 total beds, so ultimately there are not enough premium spaces to accommodate all senior and junior students interested in these areas. We do our best to educate students in selection about the types of housing that will be available and encourage students to manage their expectations and have multiple plans in place," said Reitz and Proulx.

Graham Young, a current sixth-semester history student, shared his frustration with the fact that he is going into his senior year and also could not get his preferred housing. Young currently lives in the Charter Oak Apartments and was hoping to live in the Hilltop Apartments next year but could not since they had all been taken already by the time of his roommate's pick date, which was April 9.

His main reason for wanting to leave the Charter Oak Apartments, he says, is due to the distance from campus and his inability to get to and from his dorm easily.

"I like having my own room in Charter Oak but the bus situation is annoying. The blue line is unreliable and rarely on time. It's either too early to catch or prohibitively late. There are no buses on weekends or after 6 p.m. It makes getting to class difficult," said Young.

See HOUSING, p. 2



Since it was built in 2016, the Peter J. Werth Residence Tower has housed hundreds of students each semester. The eight-story tall building is home to many diverse Living and Learning Communities.

PHOTOGRAPH BY OLIVIA WILEY, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

pressure when I saw that housing was going fast. When I didn't get it, I felt sad. There's a lot of emotion behind it," Cioffi said.

Kimberly Proulx, interim co-executive director of ResLife, and Stephanie Reitz, the university spokesperson, explained in a joint statement that "Premium housing spaces, apartments and suites typically are selected heavily in the first few days of the selection process. As selection times are generated by credits earned, the senior standing and junior standing students select in the first few days and are typically interested in these types of

wanted. The group of four decided to live in two traditional doubles in the Northwest residential halls next year to stay living near each other.

"Everything in South was gone within the first two days of housing. So you're telling me we need to be seniors to get the housing we want. We are living in regular dorms for three years in a row now and in Northwest we will be living with freshmen," O'Connell said.

In the joint statement Reitz and Proulx said that with the number of juniors and seniors looking for housing, there simply isn't enough premium space for housing to meet every student's preference.

## Stress relief giveaways happening this week at Homer Babbidge

by Hallie LeTendre  
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This week, the University of Connecticut's library will be hosting a stress awareness week.

Stop by Homer Babbidge today or tomorrow between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. to receive free UConn swag, complimentary snacks, drinks and a chance to participate in stress-relieving activities.

UConn merch that the event has on display includes stress balls, bookmarks, fidget toys and more.

The event has a tea station set up with a variety of different tea bags for students to take and use back at home, or to make right there on the spot to sip on campus.

There is also a button-making station where students can choose a design and press it themselves into a button to pin to their backpack.

Additionally, there is a table dedicated to crafting where students can take a break from studying and create artwork to relieve finals stress.

For students who miss their furry friends at home or who simply want to see some cute videos of dogs, there are cameos of Officer Tildy and Officer Carson to view.

The event is located near the main entrance of the library next to the information desk. Everything is free.

Additionally, Homer Babbidge Library is now open 24/7 until May 4.

UConn Student Health and Wellness will also host mental health discussions this week in collaboration with the library's stress awareness week, with one session occurring today and one scheduled for tomorrow.

Today's hours will be from 12 p.m. until 2 p.m. Tomorrow's will be from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. located in the library's plaza.

## Basketball Writers Association names annual award after Geno Auriemma

by Patrick Boots  
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The United States Basketball Writers Association (USBWA), an independent collective of sports journalists, personalities, coaches and partners, recently announced the dedication of their national coach of the year award for women's basketball to longtime University of Connecticut coach Geno Auriemma. The USBWA routinely awards scholarships to students pursuing careers in sports journalism.

This year, the USBWA awarded the honor to South Carolina Gamecocks head coach Dawn Staley at their annual banquet in Missouri. Auriemma has won the award a record six times, first in 1995 following the Huskies' first

national championship and most recently in 2017.

"It is fitting and proper that [Auriemma's] name be associated annually with the USBWA Division One Women's Coach of the Year," remarked USBWA vice president Mel Greenberg in a press statement.

The decision is also attributed to Auriemma's success at UConn, with the women's basketball program obtaining 11 national titles with 23 Final Four appearances, including 14 consecutive years of semifinal play from 2008 through 2022 under his leadership. This

year, Auriemma closed out his 38th season with a career total of 1,213 victories, becoming only the third coach in Division One history to reach over 1,200 wins.

"It is fitting and proper that [Auriemma's] name be associated annually with the USBWA Division One Women's Coach of the Year,"

VICE PRESIDENT MEL GREENBERG

"Few would have suspected[...]on the day he signed his first contract to coach UConn given its place in the sport at that moment - that Geno would become the most successful

[coach] of them all, breaking records that are unlikely to be surpassed," added Greenberg.

Auriemma was hired at UConn in 1985 as the women's basketball head coach after a successful high school coaching tenure.

Outside of his UConn career, Auriemma also coached the U.S. national women's basketball team from 2009 through 2016, winning undefeated in the 2010 and 2014 FIBA world championships and the 2012 and 2016 Olympic games. He has also been honored as the Naismith Women's College Coach of the Year eight times,

a separate award sponsored by the Atlanta Tipoff Club, in addition to other regional and national honors.

The USBWA also presents awards and honors to players, such as the Ann Meyers Drysdale National Player of the Year, Pat Summitt Most Courageous award and the men's basketball Henry Iba Coach of the Year, amongst others. This year, players from both UConn men's and women's basketball teams were named USBWA All-Americans.

The USBWA was founded in 1956 at the recommendation of the NCAA and serves the interest of journalists and students involved in college basketball. For more information on the USBWA and its award programs, and to see past winners, visit [wsbwa.com](http://wsbwa.com).

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**Daily** NO SKIPS | PAGE 4  
'Titanic Rising' rises to the occasion

**Daily** EDITORIAL | PAGE 7  
UConn must protect the right to student protest

**Daily** WOMENS BASKETBALL | PAGE 12  
Reviewing the Huskies' 13 scholarship players for next season

**THE DAILY CAMPUS**  
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## News

# What you can do as UConn students prepare to close out the spring semester

by Patrick Boots | CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT | HE/HIM | patrick.boots@uconn.edu

As the weather warms up and classes begin to have final exams, many students at the University of Connecticut are starting to think about how they will spend their summer vacations. Before flying the coop, here are some of things you can do to enhance the end of your spring semester.

There are a number of stress-busting activities to participate in around campus. Later today, the Student Health and Wellness office is sponsoring a wellness bracelet-making workshop at 5 p.m. in the Puerto Rican Latin American Cultural Center in the Student Union at 5 p.m., and the Academic Achievement Center will kick off their series of strategy workshops at 6 p.m. in Rowe Center room 217.

SHaW's "Sexperts" will also be available daily until May 2 in Wilson Hall room 124 for drop-ins to chat about relations and relationships, with an opportunity to get free safer-sex materials at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 25 in the Women's Center at the Student Union.

Students can also enjoy "Mega Weekend" sponsored by Student Activities, with an outdoor movie night showing "Pitch Perfect" plus a candy and popcorn bar starting at 7 p.m. on Friday, April 26 in addition to inflatable bouncy houses, free food trucks, "Stuff-a-Stanley" with Dairy Bar ice cream and more at the Student Union mall during the day on Saturday, April 27.

Regional campus students can enjoy activities such as "Pancakes for Success" in Waterbury, stress-toy making in Stamford and "Outline and Chill" at the UConn School of Law this week.

Friday, April 26 is the final day of regular class sessions. Final exams begin Monday, April 29 and will continue through Saturday, May 4. In some cases, the time or place that students are scheduled to take their final exams may differ from their regular classes — the schedule is posted outside of the One Stop Student Services office in the Wilbur Cross Building and is also available digitally on the Registrar's webpage. Additional policies and frequently asked questions are also posted.

On Tuesday, April 30, SHaW will be also hosting a pet therapy session at the Cordial Storrs House, located on Route 195 next to Whitney Hall, from 5 p.m. through 7 p.m.

The Residential Life office has also announced their end-of-semester timeline, requiring students living on campus to complete their move-out by Monday, May 6 at 12 p.m., except for Char-

furniture such as beds and desks to their original locations, thoroughly clean rooms and check drawers and closets. Residents with LED light strips lining their rooms are encour-

aged to submit a work ticket to have them removed properly without causing damage to the walls.

Each complex will have its own key return location, where students should retire their room and mail keys in addition to any extra or bespoke keys, except for pre-approved late departure students who should return their materials to the Residential Life office in Whitney Hall. Charges may be incurred to students for lock-changing and re-keying fees if they fail to return their keys on time.

From Friday, May 4 through Monday, May 6, commencement ceremonies for undergraduate and graduate programs will be occurring at various campus venues, including Gampel Pavilion and Jor-

gensen Center. Traffic conditions may be more congested with all of the expected visitors, so students should develop a plan with family and others involved in their move-out.

Campus dining halls, the Student Union and the Dairy Bar will most likely be experiencing additional throughput as will the shops and restaurants in Downtown Storrs, Mansfield and Willimantic-Windham. However, the weather will be much warmer and the chance to enjoy some al fresco dining or a visit to Horsebarn Hill might just be the right way to end your school year.

Graduate students and others in specialized programs may have additional due dates, testing sessions or other responsibilities that extend into May. Reference important class materials and announcements if this is the case for you.

If you're coming back to UConn for the fall, keep your email handy as changes and responsibilities get announced, and stay tuned to The Daily Campus and social media to hear other significant updates. As summer grows near, we hope students are able to make the best of their last weeks of the spring semester and finals season. For more information about specific ceremonies and important dates, visit commencement.uconn.edu and registrar.uconn.edu. To learn more about campus mental health resources, visit studenthealth.uconn.edu.

## HOUSING, cont. from p. 1

Young also mentioned that during the winter, the walk up to Charter Oak is usually very icy and it can be a difficult trek.

In the joint statement, Reitz and Proulx stressed that "Residential Life does all within its power to help alleviate the inconveniences associated with bad weather but is limited in its ability to resolve all of the issues that students say they face."

As for the UConn bus transportation around campus, "UConn contracts with the Windham Regional Transit Authority to operate the on-campus bus system, and we encourage passengers to be in touch with that entity to discuss concerns about schedules, routes, and reliability," according to Reitz and Proulx.

Although Young does find the housing selection process very helpful and easy to use, he does not think it is very effective.

"The housing process is generally easy to use but is it effective? I don't know. To me, effective is getting as many people

where they want as you can. That doesn't seem to happen very often," Young said.

However, some students have found themselves satisfied with the results of their housing selection.

Second-semester roommates Julia Forman, a biological sciences major, and Sophia Christos, an allied health major, who are currently living in the North dorms, found that they were able to secure a housing choice that they liked.

Christos picked housing on April 15, pulling in her current roommate Forman. With 38 credits, Christos ended up as an underclassman who benefited from the credit-based system as she came into college with 22 credits from high school.

The pair ended up choosing to live in the West dorms next year. Although it wasn't their first choice, they are happy to be living somewhere else.

"I think it's gonna be good. It's a much better location than here and the dorm itself is nicer than North. It's not the best option, but I think it'll be fine," said Christos.

Forman expressed that she

is looking forward to living near the UConn Recreational Center and is excited to have a laundry room in her building as the North dorm they are currently in does not have one. All North residents use one shared laundry room that is located underneath the North Dining Hall, according to Forman.

Some freshmen were not so lucky as second-semester pharmacy student Casey Benga was put on the housing waitlist after turning in her housing form a few days late. According to the UConn ResLife website, "Storrs students who apply after February 10 will be placed on a waiting list. After applying, these students should wait to receive an email offering guaranteed housing and complete the Housing Guarantee Acceptance Form by the deadline provided in the email offer."

However, in the past, some students have not been guaranteed housing when put on the waitlist due to an overflow of students. According to the 2023-2024 Reslife housing contract, any students who have "missed any Residential Life or Campus

Change approval deadlines" will not be guaranteed housing and put on the waiting list.

When Benga realized she was on the waitlist, she reached out to ResLife to see if her roommate could pull her into her room with her credits and explain that she could not live off campus or commute next year. However, she was told that there was nothing they could do to help her out.

"I felt hopeless and devastated to hear that there was nothing they could do. It was hard news for me to receive," Benga said.

Reitz and Proulx explained that it is too early to say how many students are on the waitlist at the moment and how many students they will be able to give housing to.

"We do not yet have a full picture of how many new and transfer students may accept UConn's enrollment offer, how many students who accepted housing assignments may change their minds and find other accommodations, and other factors. The waitlist is fluid and constantly changing based on these and other fac-

tors," said Reitz and Proulx in the joint statement.

Benga is looking to wait out the summer and see if she gets off the waiting list; however, she is unsure of what she will do if she does not receive housing.

"I have all 8 a.m. classes next semester so being on campus would help me get to class on time. I can't afford off-campus housing and I have nowhere to stay near campus. My house is also 2 hours away so I can't commute," Benga said.

ResLife acknowledged that housing selection can be a frustrating process for a lot of students and hopes to help in any way they can. Reitz and Proulx explained that UConn is always looking to adjust its housing process to make it more efficient and help students receive optimal results.

"While we understand that it is disappointing when a student receives a housing assignment that isn't their preferred option, they may have a different experience in the following year and be very pleased. It is always our priority to help students have the best residential experience they can regardless of where they live," said Reitz and Proulx.

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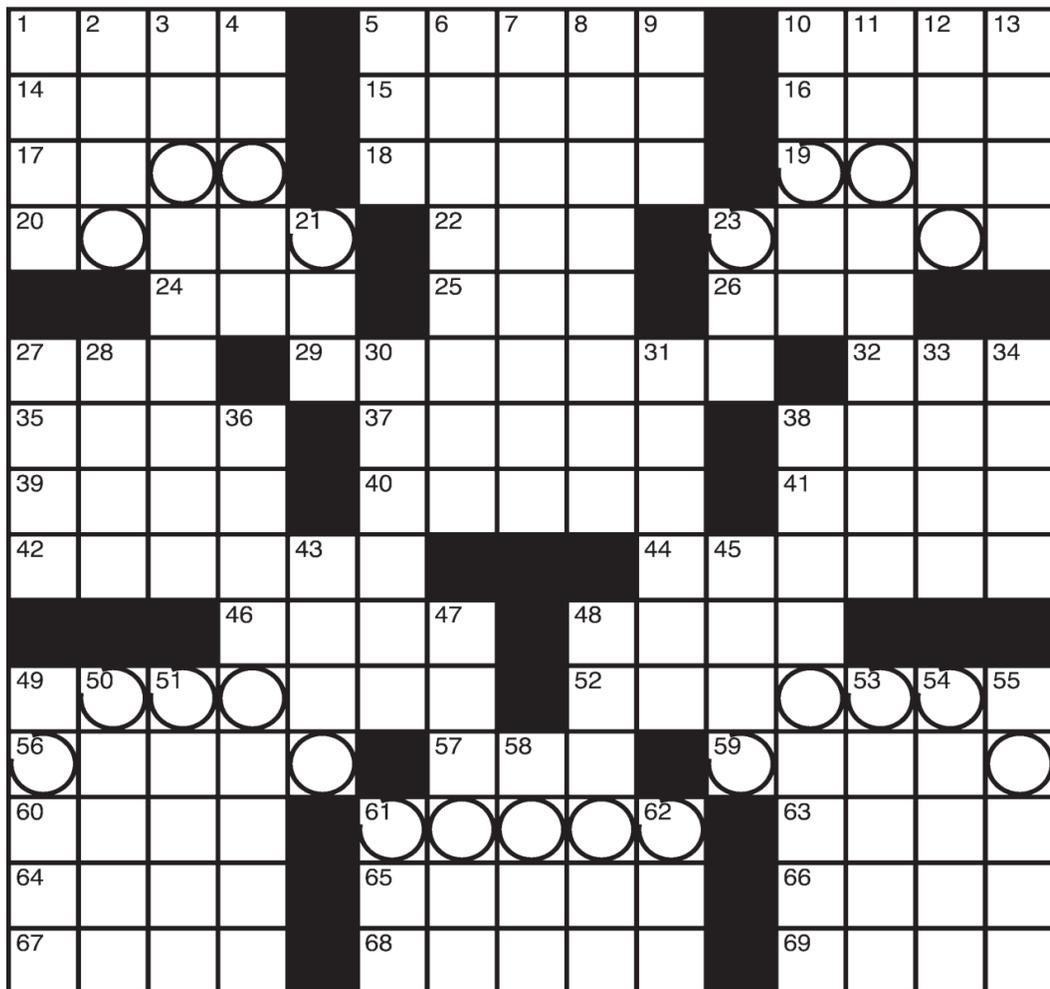
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ACROSS

- 1 Doughy
- 5 Ramsey of "The Last of Us"
- 10 Actor Epps
- 14 On a bye week
- 15 Squad suiting up for opening day, presumably
- 16 Bahama \_\_\_
- 17 Hoodwink
- 18 Shampoo target
- 19 Analogous
- 20 Fad toy with unruly hair
- 22 Actress Mendes
- 23 Impertinence
- 24 Old-Fashioned choice
- 25 Hill, in Hebrew
- 26 Hem and \_\_\_
- 27 Org. with flag bearers?
- 29 Third No. 1 hit for Bruno Mars
- 32 "The Gilded Age" ailer
- 35 "Sorry, but ..."
- 37 Olympic sprinter Szewinska
- 38 "I'm convinced!"
- 39 Gas station station
- 40 Family nickname
- 41 Lip balm additive
- 42 Dramatic segment of 44-Across
- 44 David Muir's field
- 46 Cassini of fashion
- 48 Dom Pérignon maker, informally
- 49 Lack of waste
- 52 Not just irks
- 56 Amplify, as on social media
- 57 Bolted
- 59 Court for King James, briefly
- 60 Diving position
- 61 Passover cracker
- 63 "Angeleyes" band
- 64 \_\_\_ Saint Laurent
- 65 Express in words
- 66 Dollop
- 67 Message status
- 68 Many holiday events
- 69 Some evergreen shrubs

DOWN

- 1 Aerate, as flour
- 2 Impetus to clean the fridge



By Alex Rosen & Brad Wilber

4/24/24

- 3 Torchiere, for one
- 4 Sesame Street worrywart
- 5 Humanities degs.
- 6 "You get the idea"
- 7 Unlike bread on Passover, and like four of the five sets of circled letters in this puzzle
- 8 Film mistakenly announced as Best Picture at the 2016 Oscars
- 9 Psych (up)
- 10 Nebraska city
- 11 Pay restitution
- 12 Paris pal
- 13 Relative standing
- 21 Journey segment
- 23 "Weekend Update" comic Michael
- 27 Part shaded by a backward cap
- 28 State of change
- 30 Rodeo cry
- 31 Burial city of the Wright brothers
- 33 Squander
- 34 Poems to things
- 36 One with a supporting role in the kitchen?

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved



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4/24/24

- 38 Eartha Kitt song with the lyric "Been an angel all year"
- 43 Fruit in the liqueur Bargnolino
- 45 Cast or oil, sometimes
- 47 Use a hula hoop
- 48 Tony winner Idina
- 49 Best Play and Best Game, for two
- 50 Leek kin
- 51 Like cognac barrels
- 53 Triangular part of a house
- 54 Recommended spot to catch a sneeze
- 55 Marble hunks
- 58 "\_\_\_ girl!"
- 61 Kate Middleton, to Prince George
- 62 Suturing ctrs.



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# 'Titanic Rising' rises to the occasion

by Raquel Montelindo | MANAGING EDITOR | SHE/HER/HERS | raquel.montelindo@uconn.edu

Hello, and welcome to the final edition of No Skips. This idea for this column was born four weeks ago and has manifested into a product I am very proud of.

Let us unpack our final album on No Skips, Weyes Blood's "Titanic Rising." Weyes Blood, or Natalie Laura Mering, is an American singer who started her music career in Portland, Oregon when she attended Lewis and Clark College. While studying music there, she had a college radio show and got involved in the underground music scene. She released multiple works under three variations of her stage name — Wise Blood, Wise Bluhd and Weyes Blood — and reached musical acclaim with the release of her 2019 album, "Titanic Rising."

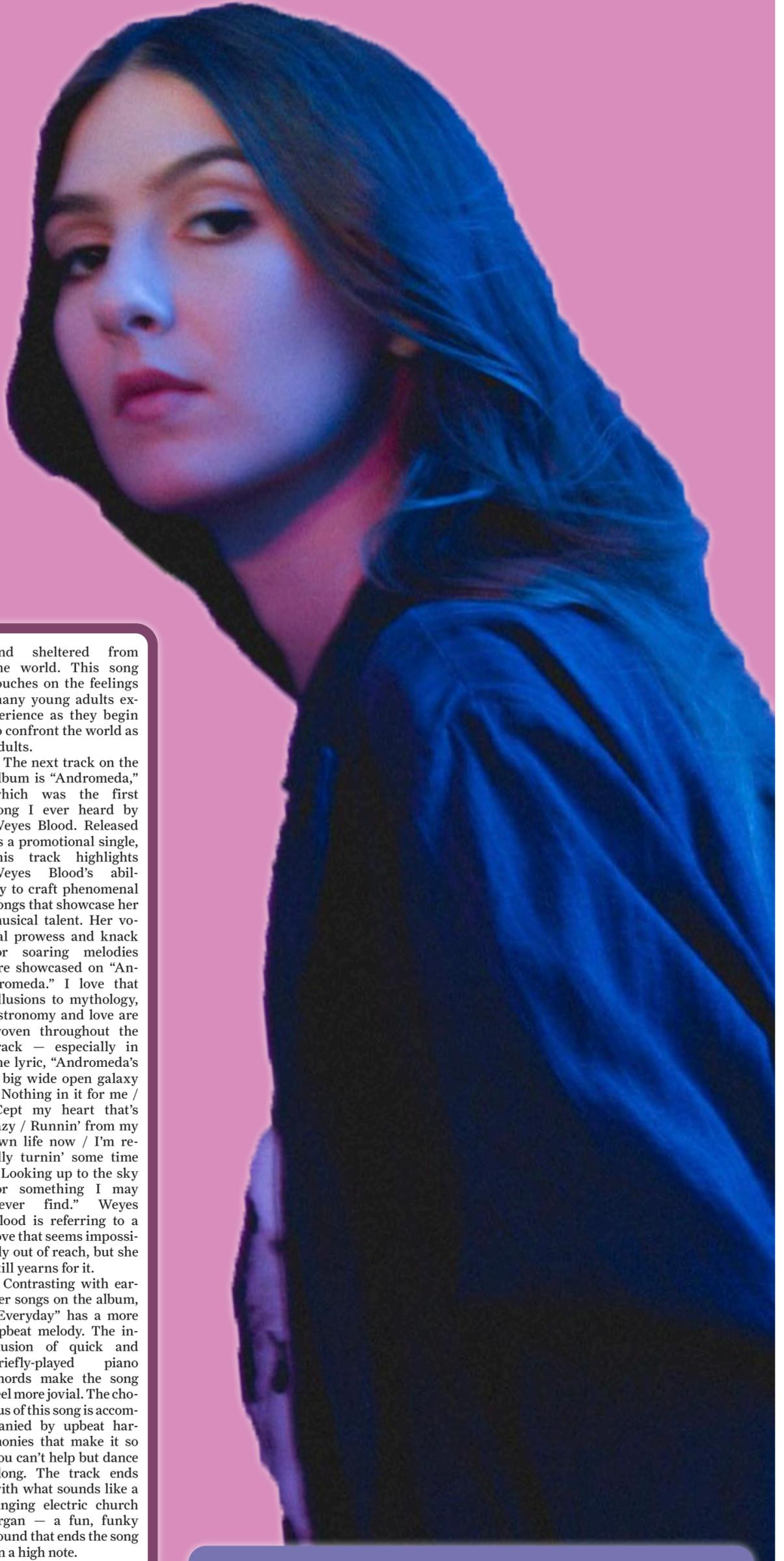
While the album only has ten songs on it, every one of them is phenomenal. This album has absolutely no skips and is the perfect album for me to wrap up this column with.

"Titanic Rising" opens with "A Lot's Gonna Change," a powerful piece that discusses growing up and facing changes. Weyes Blood reminisces about her childhood and having no responsibilities — "If I could go back to a time before now / Before I ever fell down / Go back to a time when I was just a girl / When I had the whole world / Gently wrapped around me." Her lyrics yearn for a simpler time when she was young

and sheltered from the world. This song touches on the feelings many young adults experience as they begin to confront the world as adults.

The next track on the album is "Andromeda," which was the first song I ever heard by Weyes Blood. Released as a promotional single, this track highlights Weyes Blood's ability to craft phenomenal songs that showcase her musical talent. Her vocal prowess and knack for soaring melodies are showcased on "Andromeda." I love that allusions to mythology, astronomy and love are woven throughout the track — especially in the lyric, "Andromeda's a big wide open galaxy / Nothing in it for me / 'Cept my heart that's lazy / Runnin' from my own life now / I'm really turnin' some time / Looking up to the sky for something I may never find." Weyes Blood is referring to a love that seems impossibly out of reach, but she still yearns for it.

Contrasting with earlier songs on the album, "Everyday" has a more upbeat melody. The inclusion of quick and briefly-played piano chords make the song feel more jovial. The chorus of this song is accompanied by upbeat harmonies that make it so you can't help but dance along. The track ends with what sounds like a ringing electric church organ — a fun, funky sound that ends the song on a high note.



The artist Weyes Blood poses during a photoshoot with photographer Eliot Lee Hazel. Weyes Blood is an American artist that began their career in Portland, Ore. IMAGE COURTESY OF @WEYESBLOOD ON INSTAGRAM



Weyes Blood poses on the cover of the 'Titanic Rising' album. This album was released on April 5, 2019.

IMAGE COURTESY OF @WEYESBLOOD ON INSTAGRAM

"Something to Believe" returns to Weyes Blood's signature ballad style. This is emphasized in the chorus when she sings, "I just lay down and cry" in a beautiful vibrato. This song has the fun background harmonies that are often included on her pieces. Strong harmonies and gorgeous instrumentals with a piano focus are emphasized on "Something to Believe."

The album continues to have no skips as it moves to the title track, "Titanic Rising." The opening of the song builds from a soft angelic melody to a darker, more electronic sound. There are no lyrics on this track and it serves as a transition between the first and second half of the album.

The start of the second half of the album is marked by "Movies," which continues the electronic — almost techno — sound "Titanic Rising" introduces. Weyes Blood sings this song in a lower register that is haunting and slow. It makes you hold on to every word she sings, especially when she draws out the vibrato in her voice. The harmonies on this track are stellar and make a shiver go down my spine every time I hear it. The most gorgeous part of this track plays at the chorus: "Put me in a movie and everyone will know you / You'll be the star you know you are / The movies I watched when I was a kid / The hopes and the dreams / Don't give credit to the real things / I love the movies." Weyes Blood utilizes her unique talent of vibrato and lilting vocals to emphasize the line "I love the movies." The techno transition started

in "Titanic Rising" continues throughout the track and builds throughout the bridge and the outro into a swelling crescendo.

"Mirror Forever" opens with a dark, gloomy tone. Weyes Blood again utilizes her lower register in this song. With a more aggressive electric guitar interlude, this track continues the shift marked by the half-way point of the album. I particularly enjoy the lyric "But the timing's spent / In this situation circumstance" — a) because of the phrase "situation circumstance" and b) because of the vocal styling Weyes Blood places on it.

The next song, "Wild Time" is another favorite of mine. It opens with vocalizing "ahs" that are accompanied by a soft piano melody. The result is an incredibly soft and soothing feeling. Reverting to the softer theme seen earlier in the album, the song continues to develop that feeling, particularly with the chorus. Melodic "ahs" continue throughout the song fluidly — highlighting the softness and smoothness of Weyes Blood's voice.

The final two tracks, "Picture Me Better" and "Nearer to Thee," continue to decrescendo back to the slower melodies of the opening tracks of the album. "Picture Me Better" is more tender and reverts to Weyes Blood's signature vocal stylings of soft and open lilting melodies. Weyes Blood wrote the song for a friend who sadly committed suicide while

she was writing the album. It is a memorial for her friend and an emotional tribute to their life.

Like "Titanic Rising," the final track, "Nearer to Thee," has no lyrics. The melodies and harmonies on this track mirror the first song — "A Lot's Gonna Change" — demonstrating Weyes Blood's intentionally continuous themes throughout the album. She uses shifts and callbacks to show the full cycle of the album and create a cohesive listening experience.

The thought and intention she put into this album is why it garnered acclaim and has been deemed as a "no skips" album. If you miss a single song on the album, you miss a part of her storytelling. That is why "Titanic Rising" has no skips. The album shows the sweeping impact music can have and how an

album can ebb and flow. Weyes Blood is able to evoke those ebbing emotions in a listener with the flowing of her voice. Her work on this album is phenomenal and one that everyone reading this column should listen to and appreciate.

As this album comes to an end with the final track's soothing melodies, let's bring this column to an end as well. Starting this column four weeks ago was a fun way to end my time at UConn and The Daily Campus and I'm so happy to have done it. I enjoy sharing my thoughts on music with each and every one of my dear readers and I hope I introduced you to at least one song or album that you can enjoy and share with others.

Peace out and enjoy all the music the world has to offer!



NO SKIPS





# Life

@dailycampuslife

# Food Fight: Mouthwatering watermelon

by Charlotte Chen | DIGITAL EDITOR | SHE/HER/HERS | charlotte.chen@uconn.edu  
and Naiiya Patel | BUSINESS MANAGER | SHE/HER/HERS | naiiya.patel@uconn.edu

We l - come back to the final edition of Food Fight! We originally started this column because Charlotte wanted to become a writer before she graduated and Naiiya was dying to start a column. We both love food yet have opposite tastes, so it was easy to find something to talk about. These articles, albeit short, have been a wonderful addition to our weeks when we randomly talk about food. We hope our viewers enjoyed the food fights and maybe even tried one of our recommendations. We wanted to end the column with a classic treat: candy. Yet when we were deciding on our favorite candy, we both landed on the wonderful and timeless watermelon Sour Patch Kids. There was no food fight, only food peace.

## CHARLOTTE AND NAIIYA:

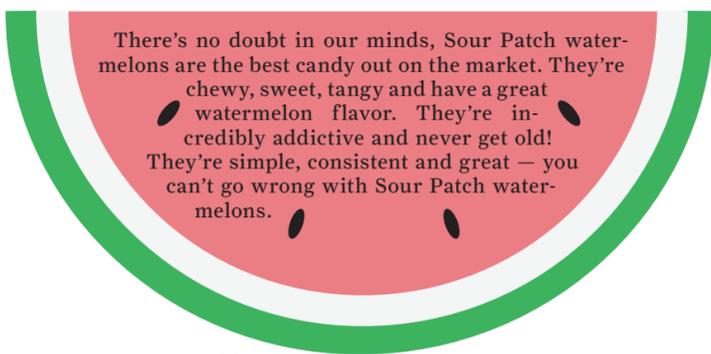


ILLUSTRATION BY HALEIGH SCHMIDT, ASSOCIATE ARTIST EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

## OUR HONORABLE MENTIONS:

### KIT KATS

**Charlotte and Naiiya:** Kit Kats are a delight. The snap, the crunch, the crispy wafer and the chocolate exterior are all magnificent. They're even better if you pop them into the fridge for a bit! Beyond the classic milk chocolate, there also are a whole bunch of flavors that are equally (or arguably more) delicious. Charlotte has personally tried matcha, strawberry, peach, mint-chocolate duos and some other flavors here and there. She did love all of the flavors listed, and if you ever get the chance to try them, she would highly recommend each one! A lot of the more unique flavors are only sold in Japan, but if you go to an Asian grocery store you might still be able to find them (albeit at a higher price).

### GUMMY WORMS

**Charlotte and Naiiya:** Gummy worms bring out something in us. They're silly, fruity and chewy! We are not the biggest fans of the Trolli Sour Brite Crawlers, which are one of the most common types of gummy worms on the market, but Charlotte does really enjoy the Albanese gummy worms; more specifically, the mango-pink grapefruit and watermelon-blue raspberry gummy worms, which she likes to save for last. They have a bunch of other flavors that are really delicious too.

### HI-CHEW

**Naiiya:** Hi-Chew! With a unique texture and delicious fruity flavors, what's not to like about Hi-Chew? They've got lots of fun flavors from the classics (strawberry, grape and green apple) to the more tropical fruits like mango, pineapple, kiwi and dragonfruit, among others. Naiiya personally likes the texture a lot; it's a fun chew that isn't quite like any other chewy candy, but she knows it's not everyone's cup of tea!

### ALMOND JOY

**Charlotte:** Hear me out. I know Almond Joys are widely hated on, but imagine an Almond Joy outside of the candy bar: sweet, shredded coconut covered in a thin layer of chocolate with an almond on top. It almost sounds too good to be a candy bar, but that's why I love them. They're the perfect sweet treats that taste delicious and are probably less bad for you. Also, since a bunch of people hate Almond Joys, there's usually a bunch left in any communal candy bowl!

## WORST CANDIES:

### MIKE AND IKES AND DOTS

**Naiiya:** These are honestly fine, but just very boring. If you gave me the choice between eating Mike and Ikes, Dots and a saltine (which many consider to be "boring"), I'd choose the saltine any day. If I'm going to be consuming excessive amounts of sugar, I'd rather do it with stuff that actually tastes good.

### WAR-HEADS

**Charlotte:** These are too sour to enjoy. Candy shouldn't give you mouth burns. Anyone who puts this as their favorite candy is trying to be edgy and quirky.

Anyways, thanks for an awesome semester! Maybe you'll see us one more time...



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



# Opinion

## The Daily Campus

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Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed by individual writers in the opinion section do not reflect the views and opinions of The Daily Campus or other staff members. Only articles labeled "Editorial" are the official opinions of The Daily Campus.

CARTOON BY CHRISTIAN BARBARA, CONTRIBUTING ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS



### ► Editorial

# UConn must protect the right to student protest

For the past few months, universities across the United States have been ablaze with student protest in opposition to Israel's ongoing assault on Gaza, resulting in arrests and disciplinary action.

On April 18, over 100 students were arrested and numerous suspended at Columbia University in response to a days-long tent encampment on the campus' South Lawn. The arrests were requested by university president Nemat "Minouche" Shafik, who on the same day sent a letter calling on the New York City Police Department to "remove" students for being "in violation of university rules and policies." The violation in question was peacefully pitching tents on university property.

The breakup of the encampment followed Shafik's testimony before the U.S. House of Representatives at a hearing duplicitously titled "Columbia in Crisis: Columbia University's Response to Antisemitism," where Shafik scapegoated pro-Palestinian, anti-Zionist faculty and student organizations, including Columbia Students for Justice in Palestine and Columbia Jewish Voice for Peace, for reported antisemitism on campus.

Soon after the political "crisis" hit a boiling point at Columbia, on Friday, April 19, 400 students at Yale University in New Haven launched an encampment to demand that the Yale Corporation — the administrative equivalent to the University of Connecticut Board of Trustees — disclose and divest the university's \$40.7 billion endowment from weapons manufacturers, according to Yale Daily News. Yale police arrested nearly 50 people the morning of April 22 following the encampment's third consecutive night, resulting in street protests by students and community members.

A hundred and twenty students at New York University were arrested and charged with trespassing for organizing an encampment within a plywood barricade on Monday, April 22. Additional encampments have sprung up at universities around the country, including ones at MIT, UNC Chapel Hill, the University of Maryland among others. Protests continue at Columbia and Yale despite mass arrests, and each protest held a Seder for the first night of Passover.

It may not be clear what the direct implications of this recent wave of protests are to UConn students. However, The Daily Campus Editorial Board holds that restrictions on the rights of students to protest on one campus (or several) threaten the rights of students to protest everywhere. Beginning with Shafik's authorization of the arrest of peaceful protesters, college administrations, even if those colleges are private, establish a concerning precedent that it is justifiable to arrest students for peacefully exercising their First Amendment rights and weaponize banal conduct rules to punish free — truly free — expression.

The Editorial Board writes in support of students and faculty at universities across the country who are organizing against their respective schools' financial ties to occupation, ethnic cleansing and apartheid in and around Palestine. As a student press organization, we have a responsibility to categorically reject public and private universities' attempts to stifle expression and support students when their administrations — and the vested interests within them — don't. Accordingly, we also reject the insidious and cynical accusations that student pro-Palestine protests have anything to do with antisemitism whatsoever; as Shafik's political theater demonstrates, these charges are being increasingly leveled against pro-Palestinian students to shut down their right to organize.

See EDITORIAL, p. 8

I never thought the day would finally come, or at least this soon. This is one of the hardest things I've ever had to write. I'm sitting here at my desk right now writing the final edition of "The Stark Tank," the weekly column that I've written for The Daily Campus since January 2023. It's a tough task to try to write a conclusion to something that's been such an important part of my college experience. Writing the words that dance around in my head isn't always easy, but here goes.

When I first came to the University of Connecticut in August 2022, a time that seems so far away to me now even though it was less than two years ago, I knew I wanted to get involved at the paper. I remember wandering around the September involvement fair looking for the DC's table and struggling to find it. I was about to head back to my dorm when I finally

**I'LL STILL BE WRITING AND DOING EVERYTHING I CAN FOR THIS GREAT ORGANIZATION THAT I LOVE, JUST IN DIFFERENT FORMS THAT I'M STILL TRYING TO FIGURE OUT.**

found them and put my name on two email lists for the news and opinion sections. Now, I still don't fully know why I decided to put my name down for opinion, as I absolutely detested the idea of opinion writing at the

time. I was a firm believer that opinion writing had no place in the world of journalism and had only written an opinion piece once as an assignment for my high school journalism class. Nevertheless, I figured I might as well go to the opinion meeting that Sunday and see what it was all about.

That first opinion meeting I went to on Sept. 11, 2022, changed my life. As I sat in the "opinion basement" as we call it, I listened to the opinion editors at the time, Maddie Papcun and Nell Srinath, talk about what the section was all about. I loved the creative freedom and expression the section offered to talk about any topics, which was right up my alley as someone who loves rambling about politics and elections. But what stuck with me most was the prospect of becoming a weekly columnist, where I could curate my own column with a logo and everything. I didn't bother going to any other section meetings after that, as I walked out of the building with the goal of becoming a weekly columnist by the end of the semester. That goal became a reality by December when my application got approved, which I have the live reaction to on a podcast I co-hosted last year.

To put it simply, writing this column has not only been one of my greatest accomplishments at UConn, but one of the greatest and most fulfilling experiences of my time on this earth. I've used this column to explore a variety of topics that continued to expand as I kept writing, including deep dives into US-Mexico border construction, controversial athletes like Antonio Brown and Aaron Rodgers, of course, taking any opportunity I had to go after my beloved George Santos. I focused on topics that I'm passionate about and that I thought the Storrs community should be discussing more. In the process, I developed a snark-laden writing style packed with tons of jokes and puns that allowed me to express in writing the thoughts that I struggle to articulate out loud. Doing so made every column I

wrote unique and non-formulaic breaking from what standard newswriting can be like at times. Writing this column also forced me to think more critically to come up with original takes filled with clever phrasing and subtleties to really make my readers think. But most impor-

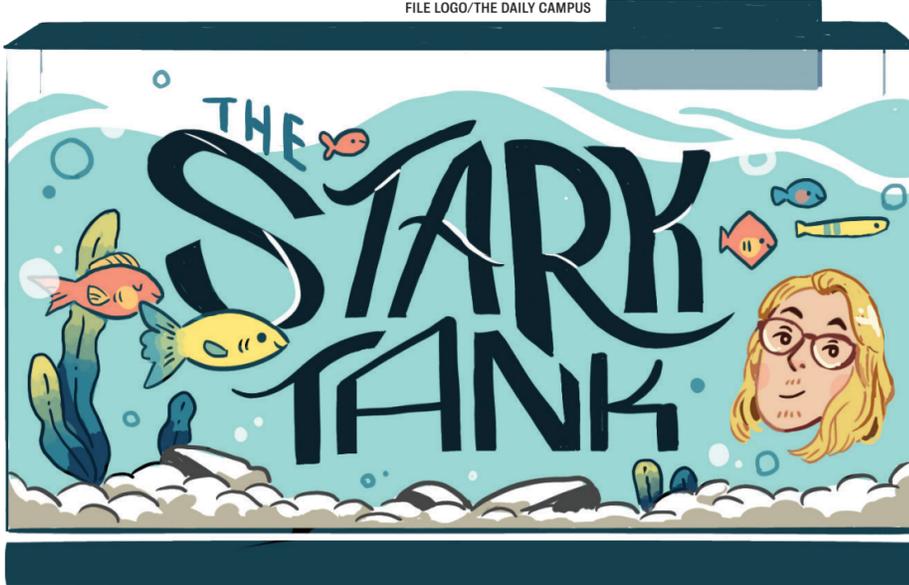
**BUT LET ME ESTABLISH SOMETHING: MY TIME AT THE DAILY CAMPUS IS FAR FROM OVER.**

tantly, writing this column has given me a sense of identity as I navigate through the trials and tribulations of college life. Anyone who knows me knows that I don't shut up about my column at times, but I can't help it since I'm so proud of it.

Now, you're probably wondering why I'm ending this column even though I love it so much. Well, to be frank, I'm ready to move on. I'm at a point in my writing journey where I'm trying to expand my reach and do as many different types of writing as possible, which I'm not sure I would be able to do while continuing this column. I've also found myself increasingly creatively frustrated trying to come up with takes that I'm passionate about and have had difficulty unlocking my creative spark certain weeks. I would be doing a disservice to myself and my readers by continuing to put out content that isn't my best work, despite getting paid for it anyway. But let me establish something: My time at The Daily Campus is far from over. I'll still be writing and doing everything I can for this great organization that I love, just in different forms that I'm still trying to figure out.

See STARK TANK, p. 8

FILE LOGO/THE DAILY CAMPUS



## SOME FINAL THOUGHTS FROM THE STARK TANK

by Dan Stark | ASSOCIATE OPINION EDITOR | HE/HIM | daniel.stark@uconn.edu

# Opinion

Photo of the Day | Ready to Rec



The UConn Storrs campus' recreation center on April 23, 2024 in Storrs Conn. As we approach the last few weeks of school, you can find students enjoying the outdoors and see the staples of UConn such as DP Dough and an ambulance in front of the Rec.  
 PHOTO BY SIHAM NEDLOUSSI, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

### EDITORIAL, cont. from p. 07

We also call on the University of Connecticut to break from the nationwide status quo of repressing pro-Palestinian activism by stretching university policy to conveniently fit their interests. We urge UConn administrators to stand by the university's

commitment to free expression and remind them that students can clearly see when the administration weaponizes the Student Code of Conduct to chill speech instead of working toward the safety of all students regardless of nationality or religious identity.



A woman walks past a sign where students protest at an encampment on the campus of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Tuesday, April 23, 2024, in Cambridge, Mass.  
 AP PHOTO/CHARLES KRUPA

### STARK TANK, cont. from p. 07

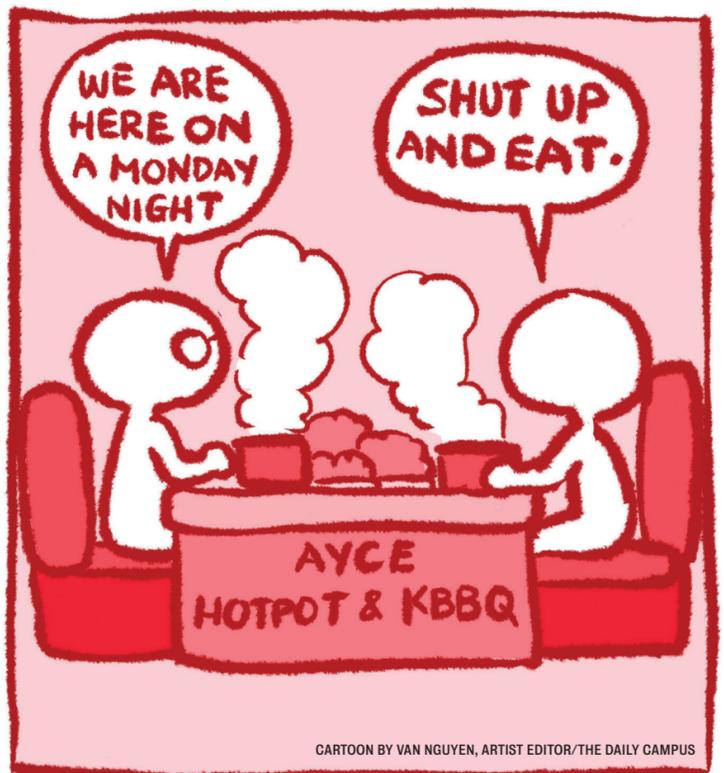
To Maddie and Nell, thank you for being great editors who helped me so much with my writing; I would have never become a columnist without you. To anyone who's ever read my column, thank you so much for taking a few minutes out of your day to read the ram-

blings of a scattershot 20-year-old trying to make some sense in a confusing world. I'm incredibly grateful to have had the platform to write this column and couldn't imagine who I would be today without this. Thank you for everything, good night and good luck.

# 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/>



CARTOON BY VAN NGUYEN, ARTIST EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

# Roundtable

The Daily Campus Sports

What has been your favorite UConn sports moment this year?



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

It's been quite the year for UConn sports fans this athletic year as the entire fanbase was treated to countless memorable moments. From the UConn women's hockey team grabbing their first Hockey East Championship in program history to the UConn men's basketball team going back-to-back in the national championship, there was plenty to write about in Storrs. For our final Daily Campus Roundtable of the year, our writers decided to give their takes on their favorite UConn sports moment of the year.

**by Stratton Stave**

SPORTS EDITOR  
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**Women's basketball second-round win over Syracuse**

One of the most special things about women's college basketball is the fact that the first two rounds are hosted by each of the top 16 teams. There's something about the home court advantage and the buzz from the students that just makes those games, especially the Round of 32, extra magical. This year's opponent was Syracuse, a gritty 6-seed with one of the best

guards in the country, Dyai-sha Fair. With 10,000 strong in Gampel Pavilion behind them, Connecticut used a dagger 3-pointer from freshman KK Arnold to earn a bid to the Sweet 16. Along with Arnold's clutch shot, the Huskies also enjoyed a tremendous game from All-America selection Paige Bueckers. She scored 32 points and dished out six assists on national television, showing the country that she's back and better than ever. It was the final home game for the Huskies in what ended up being a bit of a surprise Final Four campaign.

**by Evan Rodriguez**

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**Winning the 2024 Big East Tournament trophy**

While coach Dan Hurley earned a second illustrious NCAA title to add to his resume, one of the biggest things that this program has been looking for has been a Big East Tournament trophy. To emphasize how much this accomplishment means to the program, a cutout of the trophy was displayed during practices leading up to the Tournament. Up until this

year, it had evaded the team since 2011, but with their relocation back to the Big East in 2020-21 season, they had the opportunity to bring the trophy back to Storrs. With another deadly squad for Hurley and company plus a firmly secured conference title, the team electrified Madison Square Garden again. The program collected wins over Xavier, St. John's and Marquette to hoist the gold in front of the Storrs North faithful and ultimately add another momentous accomplishment to a year full of Husky greatness.

**by Tyler Pruneau**

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**UConn vs. Illinois 30-point run**

One of the best moments this year across UConn sports was by far the 30-point run the UConn men's basketball team made over Illinois during their Elite Eight game in the March Madness tournament. After the program lost key players to the NBA Draft like Adama Sanogo, Jordan Hawkins and Andre Jackson Jr., people had their speculations that the team would not

be as good as they were the previous year. To add to that, in the beginning of the season players like Donovan Clingan and Stephon Castle were hurt, which influenced those speculations even more. The reason why the 30-point run was so special was because it is something that doesn't happen every game. The men's team made it clear that they were that same dominant team that they were last year. Not only did they have that run, but they also won the game by 25 points after it was said that Illinois could be the first team in the tournament to actually challenge them.

**by Sam Calhoun**

STAFF WRITER  
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**Going back-to-back to tie North Carolina for third-most in NCAA men's basketball history**

The UConn men's basketball team now has six national championships (1999, 2004, 2011, 2014, 2023, 2024) and became the first school to win back-to-back national championships since Billy Donovan's Florida Gators completed the feat in 2006 and 2007. It's also fun to say that the Huskies have not lost

an NCAA Tournament game since I started college and only lost one non-conference game (at Kansas in December). What I like most about winning this national championship is the fact that fans and the media took all four teams in the Final Four seriously. Purdue had a shot at the national title and Alabama had one of the best offenses in the country. Last year's Final Four had no major basketball names outside UConn: San Diego State, Florida Atlantic and Miami (Fla.). To see how dominant this team was all year was special and something all UConn fans should cherish for the rest of their lives.

**by Cole Stefan**

SENIOR COLUMNIST  
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**UConn women's hockey wins their first Hockey East championship**

This could easily be a basketball-specific roundtable, but can we take a minute to appreciate the success that occurred on the ice? The UConn women's hockey team finished first in the Hockey East Conference for the first time ever with a 19-4-4 record and 61 points. Junior goaltenders Tia Chan and Megan Warrenner were both the team's backbone as they each

recorded a .951 save percentage and spearheaded the top goalie tandem in the country. Warrenner's 1.01 goals against average in 14 games led the entire nation. I attended the Huskies' quarterfinal matchup against the Holy Cross Crusaders in early March. Little did I know it was the start of a postseason run that ended with Connecticut capturing their first-ever Hockey East Tournament title over the Northeastern Huskies. A banner will be flying at the Toscano Family Ice Forum next season. It will belong to National Coach of the Year Chris MacKenzie and a UConn squad that got to participate in their first NCAA Tournament.

**by Patrick Boots**

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**WHUS sports broadcasts and ESPN College Game Day**

One of my favorite sports memories this year was being a part of the WHUS broadcast team. As the engineer, it was my responsibility to ensure remote equipment was connected to all of you at home. WHUS crews traveled to Boston, Cleveland, Portland and Phoenix to cover both basketball teams — sometimes within minutes. In the studio I cued up music and mo-

ments of UConn history, like our first women's championship in 1995, "The Shot" from the Hartford Civic Center and more. We assembled some students to host a postgame show, and The Daily Campus was by our side with important updates. Another fun experience was when ESPN hosted their College Game Day special here on campus — when else can students bring so much electricity? We brought the house down! The team made half-court shots and played other games, we got some, er, moments from Dan Hurley and afterward enjoyed a great game (not to mention a great rest of the season for both the men and women!).

# Sports

## Photo of the Day | Softball season



**UConn Softball wins their Tuesday night game against Boston College at the Burrill Family Field in Storrs, Conn. on April 23, 2024. The Huskies extended their win streak to three games.**

PHOTO BY MECER FERGUSON, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

CLIPART COURTESY OF GOODFON.COM

### Sam's Section

# FAVORITE NFL DRAFT PROSPECTS

by Sam Calhoun | STAFF WRITER | HE/HIM/HIS | samuel.calhoun@uconn.edu

The NFL Draft begins Thursday night, and all eyes are on the top-four quarterbacks and where they may land in the first round: USC's Caleb Williams, LSU's Jayden Daniels, North Carolina's Drake Maye and Michigan's J.J. McCarthy. There's also a plethora of offensive tackles, cornerbacks and wide receivers. In the final edition of Sam's Section for this school year, we will look at my favorite prospects in this year's draft.

#### Christian Haynes | IOL UCONN

(2023: 80.2 overall grade, 80.1 run block grade, 82.5 pass block grade per PFF)

Haynes looks to be the first UConn football player taken in the first three rounds of the NFL Draft since Obi Melifonwu was taken 56th overall by the Raiders in 2017. In the last two seasons, Haynes was named to the AP All-American third team while starting all of his games at right guard. The Maryland native allowed just three sacks over his final three seasons.

#### Keon Coleman | WR FLORIDA STATE

(2023: 50 receptions, 658 receiving yards, 11 TDs)

Don't let his low number of receiving yards fool you. Coleman is one of my favorite receivers in the draft, with the ability to produce massive plays. NFL analyst Lance Zierlein compared him to Drake London, but Coleman may be better than him. While he didn't excel as well as some receivers at the NFL Draft Combine, he has what it takes to go to the next level. Coleman finished his career with 115 receptions and 19 touchdowns, with the 2023 season landing him on the All-ACC first team. He can also be elite on special teams, ranking third in FBS with 300 punt return yards. Coleman is an all-purpose player that all 32 teams want on their

team. Outside of the core four receivers (Ohio State's Marvin Harrison Jr., LSU's Malik Nabers and Brian Thomas Jr., Washington's Rome Odunze), he's my favorite, along with Texas receivers Adonai Mitchell and Xavier Worthy.

#### Mike Sainristil | CB MICHIGAN

(2023: 44 total tackles, 26 solo tackles, 2 sacks, 2 FFs, 6 INTs, 2 TDs)

It seems fitting that a Massachusetts native is one of my favorite prospects in the NFL Draft. Despite his 5-foot-9-inch, 182-pound build, he excelled en route to Michigan's first national championship in the 21st century. He's got the athleticism to succeed and can improve even more at the nickel corner position. Initially a wide receiver, cornerback ended up being a better position for Sainristil — his six interceptions this season tied him for third in the nation. Sainristil earned a spot on the All-American first team according to The Sporting News, ESPN and FOX Sports. He can be a game-changer at the next level.

#### Laiatu Latu | EDGE UCLA

(2023: 49 total tackles, 21.5 TFL, 13 sacks, 2 INTs, 2 PBUs, 2 FFs)

Latu's story is my favorite in recent memory. He began his college career at Washington in 2019, playing 12 games as a reserve. He would not see the field the next two seasons due to a neck injury that nearly ended his career. The doctors at Washington would not clear him in 2020 and 2021. He transferred to UCLA to follow Ikaika Malloe, one of his defensive coaches with the Huskies. At UCLA, he was cleared and had an incredible season to earn him a spot on the All-Pac-12 first team in 2022. In 2023, he led the nation with 21.5 tackles for loss and tied for fourth in

FBS with 13 sacks. Latu won the Lombardi Award (for the nation's top lineman) and the Ted Hendricks Award (for the nation's top defensive end). He's expected to be a first-round pick and will be someone I root for in the NFL regardless of his team because of his ability to defy the odds stacked against him. Zierlein compared him to T.J. Watt, one of the best defensive players in the NFL today. An AFC executive said he's "easily the most skilled rusher in the draft."

#### Blake Corum | RB MICHIGAN

(2023: 258 carries, 1,245 rushing yards, 28 total TDs)

Corum ended his college career as a legend in Michigan football history. While this draft class isn't high on running backs, I am high on Corum. He had an incredible 2022 season, earning him first-team All-American honors. In that season, he tied for fifth nationally with 18 rushing touchdowns. However, he missed the team's final two games with a knee injury, including an upset loss to TCU in the College Football Playoff. While his career ended with no Doak Walker Awards (for the nation's best running back), that 2022 season, with 1,463 rushing yards, was deserving of one. In 2023, he led the nation with a school-record 27 rushing touchdowns but was named a third-team All-American by the Associated Press. The Virginia native is expected to be taken in the third round according to his NFL.com profile, but his exceptional production and running after contact make him my favorite running back in the draft.

**Keon Coleman (4), WR for Florida State University football, prepares for a game at Truist Field against the Wake Forest Demon Deacons. The seminoles won the game 41-16 on Oct. 28, 2023.**

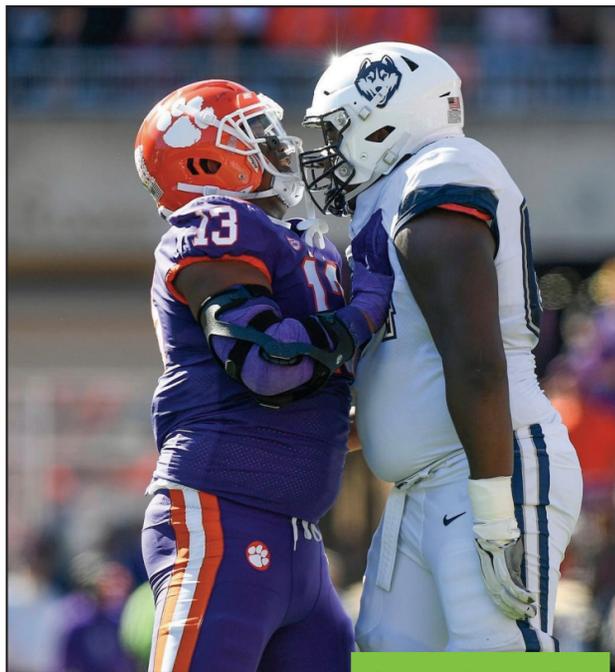
**(Right) Mike Sainristil (0), CB for the Michigan State Spartans prepares to catch a football.**

PHOTO COURTESY OF @KEONCOLEMAN3/INSTAGRAM  
PHOTO COURTESY OF @MIKESAINRISTIL/INSTAGRAM

### NFL DRAFT SCHEDULE (ALL TIMES ET):

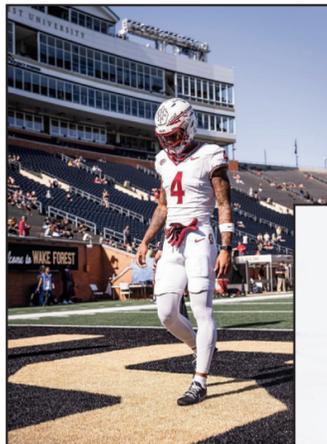
THURSDAY (ROUND 1): 8 P.M.  
FRIDAY (ROUNDS 2-3): 7 P.M.  
SATURDAY (ROUNDS 4-7): NOON

WATCH/LISTEN ON: ABC, ESPN (THURSDAY/SATURDAY), ESPN2 (FRIDAY), NFL NETWORK, ESPN RADIO, ESPN DEPORTES.



**Christian Haynes, IOL for the UConn football team, defends the Huskies in a game against the Clemson Tigers.**

PHOTO COURTESY OF @C\_HAYNESTO/INSTAGRAM



# SOFTBALL

## HUSKIES GET REVENGE AGAINST BOSTON COLLEGE IN MIDWEEK BATTLE, 5-4



UConn Softball wins their Tuesday night game against Boston College at the Burrill Family Field in Storrs, Conn. on April 23, 2024. The Huskies extended their win streak to three games.

PHOTO BY MECER FERGUSON, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

by **Sam Calhoun**  
STAFF WRITER  
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Earlier this month, the UConn softball team (26-20, 12-6 Big East) was shut out by the Boston College Eagles (25-20, 5-13 ACC) in Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts. On Tuesday, the Huskies got their revenge.

The first meeting of the season series ended up becoming the second consecutive game Connecticut had lost against the Eagles, with both contests taking place in the Bay State.

After being swept by No. 14 Florida State University and No. 18 Virginia Tech in two three-game series, Boston College looked to put an end to their six-game losing streak.

UConn came into this midweek game with more momentum than the first meeting, winning the final two games in last weekend's series at Seton Hall University.

It was the team's cancer awareness game, with the players writing who they "fight for" before the game. They also sported different helmets that raised awareness for cancer.

The Huskies knew not to trifle with the Eagles, as they play in the ACC, one of the toughest conferences in college softball, with five teams in the top 30 of the ESPN.com/USA Softball rankings — No. 5 Duke University being their top team.

With senior Hallie Siems in the circle, seeking a team-high 11th win on the season, Boston College got on the board in the first inning on an RBI single to left field by freshman Gator Robinson, who stole second to get into scoring position but was left stranded to keep Connecticut's deficit at one run.

After junior Lexi Hastings walked to begin the bottom of the first inning, senior Lauren Benson and sophomore Grace Jenkins reached on a

fielder's choice, setting up junior Rosie Garcia with a chance to tie or take the lead. Garcia fouled out to left field, allowing Benson to tag up and score, moving Jenkins to second base.

Later in the inning, senior Jana Sanden singled to left field to score Jenkins and take a 2-1 lead early in the game.

In the top of the third inning, Boston College tied the game up on a leadoff home run to center field by senior Nicole Giery.

The Eagles took the lead in the fifth inning on back-to-back scoring plays. After Hannah Slike stole second base to put herself in scoring position, Giery struck again, hitting a double down the left-field line. On the following play, Robinson brought Giery in to score on a single to left center.

At that point, UConn head coach Laura Valentino had seen enough from her ace, putting in senior Payton Kinney, who got the Huskies out of the inning with Robinson at second base.

Siems didn't have her best outing of the year, allowing six hits, four runs and striking out four batters in 4.1 innings.

In the bottom of the fifth inning and with runners at the corners, Benson doubled to left center to score both sophomore Haley Coupal and Hastings. Garcia would break the tie and give UConn the lead for good after reaching on an error, with Benson crossing home plate.

The fifth inning was by far the most productive one for both teams, with a combined five runs scored by both teams.

In the top of the seventh inning, Hastings helped keep the bases cleared with a massive diving catch in left field.

Kinney got her eighth win of the season, allowing no hits in 2.2 innings and striking out two batters.

Freshman Addison Jackson got the start in the circle for the Eagles, allowing two hits and two runs in four innings. However, sophomore Halie Pappion earned her seventh loss of the season, allowing three runs and two hits in two innings.

The Eagles extended their losing streak to seven games, while the Huskies continued a three-game winning streak.

The overall series favors UConn by a large margin, improving their record against Boston College to 47-22.

Both teams will return to conference play this weekend.

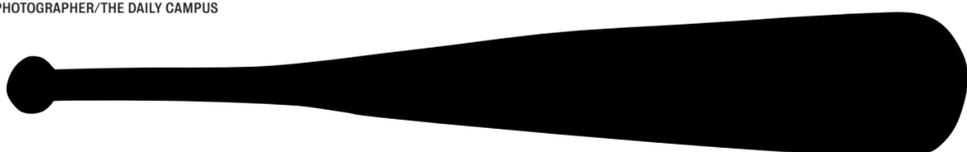
Boston College will travel to South Bend, Indiana, to take on Notre Dame. UConn finishes its home schedule with a three-game series against Villanova, including a nationally-televised game on Saturday, April 27.

Overall, the two errors by Boston College were costly, as UConn took advantage and split the season series against its former conference rivals.



UConn Softball wins their Tuesday night game against Boston College at the Burrill Family Field in Storrs, Conn. on April 23, 2024. The Huskies extended their win streak to three games.

PHOTO BY MECER FERGUSON, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS  
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# Sports

## STRATTON'S STAND



FILE LOGO/THE DAILY CAMPUS

### WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

# REVIEWING THE HUSKIES' 13 SCHOLARSHIP PLAYERS FOR NEXT SEASON

by Stratton Stave | SPORTS EDITOR | HE/HIM/HIS | stratton@uconn.edu

**B**asketball season ended just over two weeks ago, but it's never too early to talk about next year, especially when it comes to Connecticut, the Basketball Capital of the World. There's been some movement for the UConn women's basketball team, with benchwarmers Amari DeBerry and Inês Bettencourt transferring out, and Sarah Strong, the class of 2024's late-deciding top-recruit, committing.

Today's goal is to say fewer than 100 words about every scholarship player who is currently slated to suit up for the Huskies in 2024-2025. They're categorized into three tiers, with the first being projected starters, which are players who I think would assume starting roles if the season began today. Next up are players who are starter-caliber or are near that zone. If there are no injuries, they'll probably be on the bench, but will be getting key rotational minutes. The last category is players who will be further down on the bench. At least in recent history, coach Geno Auriemma hasn't played more than nine players in a rotation. These four are talented enough to be in the rotation, but likely won't get that opportunity if UConn stays healthy, which is no easy feat.

\*players are listed alphabetically within their tier

### PROJECTED STARTERS

**KK Arnold** - Some might be wondering why Arnold is here as opposed to her freshman counterpart Ashlynn Shade, who won Big East Freshman of the Year honors. That's because Arnold will return a defensive intensity to the starting five that UConn is losing with Nika Mühl's departure. Though the freshman did have some lulls in her confidence as a shooter, she's incredibly aggressive as a driver and on defense, while passing well. Expect a big sophomore jump with Mühl out of the fold.

**Ice Brady** - It's tough to figure out who's going to be the center in the lineup, but Brady is a fine assumption for now. She's more of a hybrid of forward center, but did assume the role of the backup five this past season. Brady wasn't amazing by any means with an average of 4.5 points and 3.3 boards, but she did step up in big moments. Most notably, she hit timely shots in UConn's Elite Eight victory over USC as the team battled foul trouble, something she'll hope to carry over into next year.

**Paige Bueckers** - Not much needs to be said about the reigning All-America selection and once National POTY. She's incredible and will likely be the frontrunner for NPOTY heading into this campaign. Bueckers can score from all three levels and has improved her defensive game, adapting to guarding the opposing team's power forwards. As long as she's

healthy, the Huskies have a chance to go deep and if she can play her true position, then the team will be in even better shape.



**KK Arnold dribbles the ball down the XL Center court on Feb. 19, winning 73-53 against Creighton.**

PHOTO BY JORDAN ARNOLD, ASSOCIATE PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

**(Below) Paige Bueckers passes the ball during the Huskies' first NCAA tournament game against Jackson State at Gampel Pavilion on March 23, 2024. UConn secured a win with a final score of 86-64.**

PHOTO BY SKYLER KIM, PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS



**Azzi Fudd** - Fudd has had her past two seasons hampered by injuries, missing a chunk of the 2022-2023 campaign with a knee injury and all but two games this past year with a torn ACL. People forget just how good Fudd was in the first third of that 2022-23 campaign before the initial injury. She torched any team she played against, with 88 points across three wins over top 10 opposition. If she can get anywhere near that form, she'll be a huge help for the Huskies.

**Sarah Strong** - Any freshman brings question marks, but Strong is about as good as they come. She has good size and can do it all on the court, with a solid post game and guard skills. Her best two assets are her shooting and her Magic Johnson-level passing abilities. It's unclear what will translate on day one and what won't, but Auriemma has a track record of starting top-recruits from the jump.



**Sarah Strong, the No.1 recruit in the class of 2024, reveals her commitment to the UConn WBB program on April 6, 2024.**

PHOTO COURTESY OF @SARAHSTRONG\_/INSTAGRAM

### POTENTIAL STARTERS/ FRONT OF BENCH

**Caroline Ducharme** - Another player whose impact is fairly uncertain is Ducharme. She had a great freshman year with exceptional confidence and positional size, but has had her past two seasons wrecked by concussion complications. She appeared in just four games this past year and hasn't looked like herself. When healthy, she's a competent defender and reliable scorer, but getting healthy appears to be more of a hurdle than everyone would hope.

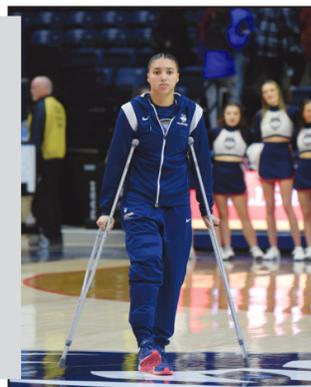


**(Above) Caroline Ducharme possesses the ball in a game against St. John's at the XL Center in Hartford, Conn. on Feb. 21, 2023.**

PHOTO BY SKYLER KIM, PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

**Jana El Alfy** - El Alfy was anticipated to be a big piece on last year's team after enrolling early, but lost her chance to do so when she ruptured her Achilles while playing for the Egyptian national team over the summer. Auriemma has advertised her as being everything the Huskies need from a center—and her 6-foot-5 frame is a great place to start. She could definitely take the starting role from Brady, but as things stand, she's still an unknown entity.

**Aubrey Griffin** - The redshirt senior was relegated to the bench five games into this past season, a place where she was much more comfortable for UConn. Griffin thrived as a sparkplug, but just as she was truly finding her niche, she tore her ACL. She's a great defender and has shown



**Azzi Fudd sits out with an injury while teammates play the Butler Bulldogs, picking up a 79-39 win at Gampel Pavilion in Storrs, Conn. following a noon matchup on Jan. 21, 2023.**

FILE PHOTO/THE DAILY CAMPUS

flashes of a shot, but has been the most successful at showcasing her elite athleticism. As she recovers from the knee injury, it's unclear what role she'll have.

**Ashlynn Shade** - It may be strange to have this year's Big East FOTY on the bench, but if Fudd returns in form, then that's likely the way it's going to be. Fudd is an amazing shooter, and Shade is excellent in her own right, but what they bring to the floor is not comparable. Shade will still get minutes, but Fudd's return will limit her playing time. The projected demotion is not a dig at Shade, but is more a case of the Huskies getting healthy (knock on wood).

### ROLE PLAYERS/ BENCH

**Morgan Cheli** - Cheli is an interesting prospect, but with the amount of talent the Huskies have, it's tough to see her finding much playing time without injuries to others. She's a do-it-all guard who can score, rebound and pass at a high level with a 6-foot-2 frame. Toughening up in practice will be huge for her before she gets minutes next year, though if the past few years are any indication, she may get thrown onto the floor earlier than expected.

**Ayanna Patterson** - Patterson missed all of this season with a back injury and her timeline for a return is unclear. She hasn't shown her best self in 30 games in Storrs, averaging 2.2 points and 2.2 boards in 10 minutes. When she's not battling an ailment, Patterson is a force on the glass and the defensive end, but getting there could be a challenge.

**Qadence Samuels** - Samuels struggled in limited minutes her freshman year, but she wasn't expected to play much—if at all—in the first place. Injuries to others put her on the floor in many more situations than would have been expected, including 14 minutes in the Elite Eight. Samuels is long and has a solid 3-point stroke, though it's tough to see her getting minutes as long as everyone else is healthy.



**(Above) UConn WBB No. 4 Qadence Samuels attempts a three-point shot during the 2024 March Madness tournament.**

PHOTO COURTESY OF @MARCHMADNESSWBB/INSTAGRAM

**Allie Ziebell** - The top-5 freshman in the class is a bit undersized at 5-foot-10 and has been touted by Auriemma as having a Fudd/Bueckers level of intensity. However, similar to Cheli, there is just not a lot of room for minutes early on during her time in Storrs. While she's set to be a high-level scorer whenever she hits the floor, fans will likely have to wait to see that.