

Town of Mansfield hires John Roache as new Fire Chief

by Colin Piteo
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On March 26, the Town of Mansfield announced that Somers fire chief John Roache will be hired as the town's next chief firefighter. He will be replacing interim fire chief David Dagon, who has held the chief post since December 2023. The position is not unfamiliar to Roache, who has served as chief for eight years in Somers, working in the role since 2016. Roache will fully integrate into the Mansfield Fire Chief role on May 6 of this year.

Roache originally graduated from the University of Connecticut with a bachelor's degree in economics and sociology. As an alumnus, he says the appointment to the Mansfield role served as an exciting experience, citing the town's community spirit and positive energy.

"I am really excited about coming back to this community," Roache said. "Mansfield has a lot of positive energy, there is a lot of community spirit, and there is always some sort of activity going on. It has been great seeing both all the changes and what has remained the same... and I am looking forward to visiting the Dairy Bar."

Roache described what initially led him to pursue a life in public service, citing an immense desire to help others. According to a press release given by the Town of Mansfield, prior to his paid service in Andover and Somers, Roache was



John Roache gives smoke detector tips on WTNH News 8 on November 3, 2023. This interview was when John Roache was the Somers Fire Chief. PHOTO COURTESY OF @SOMERCTFIREDEPT46 ON INSTAGRAM

quite active in pursuing unpaid volunteer work with fire and emergency services.

"As for what got me started down this path? I think it was initially my inability to do anything when something happened. It was a sense of feeling powerless, even if it was just driving by a car accident or seeing someone hurt. As a teenager, I did a lot of camping and

outdoor activities with friends, and as a group, we were always getting cuts, sprains, abrasions, etc. So I started by taking basic first aid classes. Soon, I was the go-to person when anyone needed patching up. I wanted to be able to do more, so I decided to take an EMT class," said Roache. "That led to my joining the local volunteer fire department, and as they say, I got hooked.

From then on, I kept taking more classes and expanding my skills. We have a saying in the fire service that 'We didn't create this problem, but we can help fix it.' I guess that just really resonates for me."

Ryan Aylesworth, the Mansfield Town Manager, spoke highly of Roache and his ability to navigate the Town of Mansfield through a period of great

transition and change.

"I believe that as the next leader of Mansfield Fire and Emergency Services, Chief Roache will be very successful in helping us navigate the unique opportunities and challenges our community faces. We are progressing into a period of time of increasing medical call volumes, and the construction and redevelopment of high-density housing and associated commercial developments will create new service demands," said Aylesworth. "Based on the depth of his professional experiences in Somers, and the thought-provoking conversations we were able to have with John throughout a very competitive selection process, I believe he will be a strong and capable collaborator when it comes to developing a shared vision for Fire and Emergency Services."

Roache concluded by identifying his philosophy towards community engagement and staying in tune with the town's needs, specifically referencing a necessary transparency by and for the community.

"I strongly believe that the fire department should be part of the community," said Roache. "This is not just about ensuring everyone has a safe and enjoyable time at events; there needs to be that personal interaction. Public safety is not just the people who hide out at the fire station until needed. People need to be able to see us out and about and feel comfortable walking up and asking us questions," Roache said.

SPRING VALLEY STUDENT FARM HOSTS FARM FRIDAYS FOR STUDENTS

by Jenna Outcalt
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The University of Connecticut is holding Farm Fridays at Spring Valley Student Farm every Friday until April 26.

This program allows UConn students to visit Spring Valley Student Farm, which provides fresh food for UConn dining halls, and experience different farming activities from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Fridays. Students can participate in a variety of activities, including planting seeds, weeding and harvesting crops.

Farm Fridays started on March 22 this semester. The program occurs every semester and allows students to earn community service hours.

Ayla Perosky, a sixth-semester allied health sciences student, is a student farmer at Spring Valley Student Farm. Student farmers live on the farm and complete 10 hours of work on the farm each week in addition to helping coordinate Farm Fridays.

She said the farm centers around community living practices and agriculture for the student farmers, but any student could come and enjoy it. Perosky said that Farm Fridays are "such a great opportunity to get outside" for students who do not live on the farm.



U.S. Congressman Joe Courtney meets with UConn agriculture students at the Spring Valley Student Farm on May 27, 2023. The Farm provides UConn students with practical farming skills. PHOTO COURTESY OF @REPJOEGOURTNEY ON X

"The farm in general also functions as an opportunity for students from the general body to come and visit and collaborate with us on Fridays," said Perosky. Perosky said that about 20 to 30

people come to Farm Fridays on average, though the weather could be a factor in attendance. She said that even in rainy weather, there are things to do on the farm, such as making paper pots for the mari-

golds that the farm will sell during UConn's annual Earth Day Spring Fling on April 17.

According to Perosky, students with many different areas of study participate in the program.

"Some people minor in sustainable environmental systems, or they'll have other specific things like internships, but we have a really big range," she said.

Perosky said that students interested in internships for community service hours could reach out to farm manager Jessica Larkin-Wells at jessica.larkin-wells@uconn.edu.

"There are a lot of ways you can make the farm work for you," said Perosky.

Perosky said that students who participate in the program often come back for the "friendly faces" and connections they make.

"It's such a wonderful way to cap out the week with so many wonderful people," she said. "And I think the number one thing I hear from farmers from Friday is 'oh, man, I wish I would have gotten here sooner.'"

The farm was created as a project by UConn Residential Life in 2010. Spring Valley Student Farm is also home to the beehives of UConn's Beekeeping Club and an edible forest garden.

Students can sign up through the farm's UConn contact page to take the free Community Outreach shuttle, or find their own transportation to the farm. The farm is located at 104 Spring Manor Road in Mansfield, off Route 32.

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50 years later, a Braves fan shares long-private video of Hank Aaron's 715th home run

SAVANNAH, Ga. (AP) — Charlie Russo had an unbelievable view of Hank Aaron's record-breaking 715th home run. Fifty years later, he's ready to share it with the world.

The 81-year-old Russo is releasing his long-private footage of the moment Aaron broke Babe Ruth's record on April 8, 1974, which he captured after surreptitiously following Aaron's family onto the field at Atlanta-Fulton County Stadium. He was right there celebrating at home plate with Aaron, his family and teammates — including Dusty Baker, who was on deck for the Atlanta Braves when Aaron connected.

"Was that guy filming?" asked Baker when told about the video made available to The Associated Press by Russo and his family. "Come on! I've never seen that!"

Russo's video shows Aaron — standing just feet away — raising his right arm and smiling to the cheering crowd.

"Everything just fell into place," said Russo. "I mean, just everything we did was just, you know, magical."

Russo says he and his uncle, Joseph Mathews, obtained the coveted tickets before making the drive from Savannah. The game was a sellout, with a crowd of 53,775. Russo recalls that finding the tickets was just the start of a charmed day.

Russo was filming from seats behind the third-base dugout when Aaron's drive cleared the wall in left-center in his second at-bat. He then walked closer to where he had seen Aaron's family and entertainers Sammy Davis Jr. and Pearl Bailey seated. When Aaron's mother, father and others made their way toward the field, Russo followed.

"They open the gate and they go," said Russo. "So I go in the field, too. I mean, it's just like 'OK, I'm part of the family.'"

Russo's shots — filmed with an 8 mm camera — show him



Charlie Russo speaks during an interview at his home on Tuesday, March 26, 2024, in Savannah, Ga. Russo had an unbelievable view of Hank Aaron's record-breaking 715th home run. Fifty years later, he's ready to share it with the world. PHOTO BY JOHN BAZEMORE/AP

getting closer and closer to Aaron, until suddenly Aaron is grinning inches away from his lens. He also got a close-up moment with Davis, who had promised \$25,000 to whoever caught the home run. Footage from other cameras shows Russo, in a brown leather jacket, standing directly behind Aaron while the Hall of Famer waved to someone in the stands.

It was remarkable access given the security concerns around Aaron at the time. Aaron received numerous death threats as he approached Ruth's record, the target of racism as a Black man set to pass a white player whose mark was set while the sport was segregated. Despite extra security, Russo — who is white — said he was never questioned.

"Nobody says anything," he said. "Well, all the attention is on Aaron, you know?"

Former Braves media relations director Bob Hope says a popular rumor was that police snipers were in place atop the stadium due to security concerns. Hope says that wasn't true, but when told about Russo's story, he acknowledged security should have been more stringent.

Russo wasn't the only unauthorized visitor on the field. Two 17-year-old fans, Britt Gaston and Cliff Courtenay, barged onto the diamond and joined Aaron as he ran around the bases.

"I mean, I don't know how the security wasn't tighter than it was," Hope said. "It definitely should have been. ... I mean, the two kids run

around the bases. Oh my gosh, if there were snipers, they would have gotten them for sure."

While filming, Russo looked down to see the rosin bag and weighted donut used by Braves hitters in the on-deck circle. Russo reached down and placed the items in his jacket.

"I was just down there and, you know, I think everything just sort of fell into place," said Russo. "OK, this is the rosin bag and a donut. Oh, my Lord. And I put them in my pocket."

Aaron visited Savannah a few months later and gave Russo a signature, which was placed in a frame with the rosin bag, donut and Sports Illustrated cover showing the record homer. Russo now wants to pass along the rosin bag and donut, perhaps for auction.

Russo said Aaron was not upset to learn Russo had the items from the on-deck circle.

"He was nice as he could be," said Russo. "Came in and autographed them. ... I mean, his demeanor is just 'Oh, man, that's beautiful.' And, I mean, he's fine. And he signed them, 'Best wishes, Hank Aaron.'"

Aaron finished his Hall of Fame career with 755 homers, a record broken by Barry Bonds in 2007.

The Braves plan to celebrate the 50th anniversary at Truist Park next week. Baker, who retired as Houston Astros manager after last season, plans to attend, along with Tom House, the relief pitcher who caught the homer in the Braves bullpen. Baker and Hope were the only non-family pallbearers at Aaron's funeral following his death at 86 in 2021.

Russo said being so close to one of the most famous homers in baseball history was not his first brush with a memorable game. He said he jumped over Sanford Stadium's hedges to walk onto the field after Georgia's young coach, Vince Dooley, beat Alabama's Bear Bryant in 1965.

He also has a framed photo of himself standing beside Pete Maravich in the Louisiana State locker room after Maravich scored 58 points in a double-overtime win at Georgia in 1969.

"Maybe it's my demeanor that, you know, it's an occasion," said Russo. "And when you do these things, you've got to go ahead and do them. You can't sit and think about them."

Russo isn't one to just sit. He still works six-day weeks at the fish market founded by his father in 1946. He says he wouldn't hesitate if he had another opportunity to leave the stands for an up-close view of history.

"Yes," he said. "If the event called for it, yes I would."

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COLLABORATIVE FILMMAKING GATHERS GREAT RESULTS IN NEPAL STUDY

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Collaborative filmmaking has been viewed as a great method for gathering first-hand research data, specifically in communities. On Wednesday, April 3, Sara Baumann, an assistant professor at the Department of Behavioral Community Health Sciences at the University of Pittsburgh School of Public Health, provided examples of three pilot studies that followed women and children to understand their beliefs and rituals regarding different topics.

Baumann displayed her passion for her studies as she introduced herself to the audience. While her career is not centered in anthropology, Baumann said anthropology is her “sister discipline,” and it has set a foundation for the work she’s doing now.

The first pilot study that was introduced took place in Madagascar. In this study, participants drew what they perceived as violence occurring in their lives. Through their work, they were able to determine what needed to change in their lives and what didn’t.

“It’s who are we telling stories about, and who are we telling stories for,” said Baumann when introducing the different research methods used in the presentation.

Partnering with Projet Jeune, Baumann and other researchers used art as a way to determine how the young participants understood empowerment. During the presentation, an audience member raised the question: “Why was the age group specifically 7-year-

olds?” Baumann explained that the researchers wanted an age group that could understand what empowerment meant, and 7-year-olds were at an age where they could determine for themselves what that looked like. At the end of the study, participants gathered their artwork and reflected on what they drew.

During this time, women sleep in menstrual sheds and are supposed to avoid certain things such as touching people, going out in public or eating food. According to Baumann’s presentation, 91% of women in Nepal are reported to practice menstrual restrictions. While Chhaupadi was criminalized in 2017, people still practice it

difficult to collect via interviews. The participants, seven girls aged 16 to 18 years old, were given tools to shoot their own footage over 21 days of what they do during this time. Some footage included rituals, cleansing and seclusion.

Once the footage was complete, the researchers and participants gathered to ana-

were happy to see what they made regardless of what issues the storm was causing.

“This collective experience is very important in the work that we do,” said Baumann about the collaborative filmmaking experience. “There is power in numbers, there is power in a collective voice.”

After the collaborative filmmaking study, Baumann said they attempted the study again in Nepal, but with grandmothers as participants. To their surprise, the grandmothers were eager to be a part of the study. They believed it was because of the relationship they developed with the community since the last study, said Baumann.

“This study is a great example of continuous consent,” commented Urvi Kaul, a sixth-semester anthropology graduate student, on the collaborative filmmaking method.

As time was ending, Baumann introduced the last research method conducted in Nepal. The study focused on human-centered design, an approach to solving problems at the center of human experiences. Consisting of 10 women, the group engaged in discussions on Chhaupadi. These discussions involved topics like how Chhaupadi can be harmful but also why might people want to engage in the practice.

While the discussion could have gone on longer, time flew much faster than everyone expected. Baumann encouraged guests to look at her website, Collaborative Filmmaking. On the site is a free handbook on collaborative filmmaking, the method, reports and Baumann’s portfolio.



In Nepal, Baumann conducted another study involving collaborative filmmaking. In the study, participants filmed chosen portions of their lives regarding a topic the researchers selected. For this study, Baumann wanted to learn about Chhaupadi, a menstrual seclusion practice followed in far-west Nepal.

Audience members of the presentation questioned: “who would be criminally responsible?” Baumann was unsure as well, because it depends if the women are the ones making the decision or not.

By using collaborative filmmaking as their research method, Baumann and her associates received information that could be

analyze their films. This included what they saw, thought and felt about the films, said Baumann. After this, they were able to choose if they would like to share their footage with their community. While there were technical glitches because of a storm, Baumann said they didn’t mind, they

A POWERFUL DIALOGUE WITH IRISH NOVELIST MARTIN DOYLE

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On April 2, 2024, the University of Connecticut hosted Martin Doyle for the annual Gerson Irish Reading. The event took place in the Alumni House and commenced at 7 p.m. with an introduction by UConn’s Irish literature concentration coordinator and professor of English, Mary Burke.

Doyle currently serves as the books editor of the Irish Times, a highly esteemed newspaper established in 1859 with the aim of fostering a progressive approach to journalism and enabling readers to reach informed, independent judgments. His role as books editor aligns with his deep-seated

passion for literature and his Irish roots. Now, Doyle embarks on a new literary venture with a book tour for “Dirty Linen: The Troubles in My Home Place.”

Following Doyle’s introduction, Doyle read from his latest work, “Dirty Linen.” The acclaimed memoir was published by The Irish Academic Press in 2013 and was short-listed for the An Post Best Non-Fiction Book of the Year in 2023. Centered in County Down, Northern Ireland, “Dirty Linen” covers a conflict known as “the Troubles,” a time filled with political unrest and paramilitary violence in Ireland. The Guardian praised the profound novel in a review by Ian Cobain, commenting that it holds the book as among “the most moving works on the conflict.”

Doyle began his introduction to the memoir by stating that the mantra “write what you know” is central to his writing process. He emphasized, “I have written about my own experience growing

up in the Troubles,” with a focus on “what it was like to be a victim, not just a bystander.” By this, he aims to tell his story through the “microcosm of a single rural parish,” alluding to himself. Through anecdotes and poignant reflections, he brings to life the profound impact of the Troubles on individuals and society, preserving their stories for future generations to learn from. He led with the horrifying cold blunt statistic, reminding readers of the gravity of the suffering, pointing out the thousands of deaths: “more than 3,500,” and the time it stole “three decades which is too immense to comprehend.”

Doyle recounted his haunting experience of growing up in an environment where he feared for himself and others. As the novel unfolds, accounts of heartbreak, tension, trauma and violence are

revealed. The trials and tribulations of his childhood experiences found expression in his seminal work, as he explores the lingering grief in the ashes of his community.

The evening concluded with a lively Q&A session, allowing students and faculty to delve deeper into Doyle’s literary prowess and inspirations. In wrapping up, Doyle’s visit and his powerful narrative in “Dirty Linen” didn’t just entertain; they also opened avenues for reflecting on Northern Ireland’s turbulent past and contemporary relevance. As the event ended, attendees were left with a renewed appreciation for Doyle’s ability to intertwine personal experience with broader historical themes. His narrative prompted introspection and dialogue about the enduring impact of conflict and the importance of storytelling when reconciling the past.

Ava Chin chronicles a rich family history as a fifth-generation Chinese American

by **Lilith Rampertab** | CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT | SHE/HER/HERS | lilith.rampertab@uconn.edu

On Tuesday, April 2, Ava Chin, author of the generation chronicling non-fiction book “Mott Street: A Chinese American Family’s Story of Exclusion and Homecoming,” gave a keynote speech at the University of Connecticut’s Student Union Theatre in honor of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month.

Elisa Tolentino, a graduate assistant at the Asian American Cultural Center, delivered the land and labor acknowledgment before introducing Chin.

Chin began her talk by telling a story about a building in Chinatown that had a heartbeat. She hit her shoulder as she imitated the sound. Chin said “公公” (“gung gung”) while hitting her shoulder, which she later said was Cantonese for “grandfather.”

Chin then told the story of how she met a family member of hers, presumably her grandfather, who passed away when she was a sophomore in college. “I was going to do the single most terrifying thing ever: I was going to meet him,” she said. Chin likened her grandfather to a ghost, pointing out different areas of Chinatown that were used for different purposes before she, a fifth-generation Chinese American, was born.

Chin then shared tidbits of her grandfather’s legacy, including how he was a successful basketball coach for Chinatown, leading his team to beat other towns in games. “These nuggets of information piqued my interest,” she remarked. This led her to learning more about her family, including her absent father. “I could never have realized that 公公 was the missing piece of the puzzle,” said Chin.

Chin tried to make sense of living in a home with a single parent. “I

yearned to understand my father,” she said. When addressing forgiving her father for not parenting her, she said “forgiveness is a work in progress.” She also said “you don’t always get the things you yearned for as a child but if you wait, you’ll get something even greater,” alluding to the creation of “Mott Street.”

Chin had a lot of questions about her family that were answered after she did research for “Mott Street.” “This led me to two interests: the Chinese Exclusion Act and a single tenement in Chinatown.” She then said that “‘Mott Street’ is a book that weaves multiple generations” through her perspective.

As an example of how far back Chin researched, she mentioned her great-great-grandfather, who helped build the Transcontinental Railroad. “Ever since I could talk, the railroad became a part of my vocabulary,” she said, emphasizing how important the railroad was to her family. Chin did research on the Transcontinental Railroad and learned her great-great grandfather’s name through a census record. Chin then acknowledged the anti-Chinese legislation in the United States’ history which barred Chinese people from entering the U.S.

Chin was discouraged from pursuing the truth of her family for a while. When talking about the mystery of her father, she said “I buried the story into the cavities of my mind.” She hoped that academics and writing about other topics would distract her from the questions. However, she acknowledged how “We were losing the people holding the keys to the story. If I didn’t talk to them, I would lose the truth forever.” This strengthened Chin’s resolve.

“I write to fill out the exclusion that society and my family had,” she said. She ended the lecture by saying “I encourage you to learn about your family history not just for yourself but for the past you, the future you and those in the future.”

Then there was a discussion between Chin and a student who read “Mott Street.” When asked how she wrote about people she personally never knew, Chin said that there is an unexplainable connection between her and her ancestors. They then talked about how the documents regarding Chinese Americans tended to be fabrications, and that the oral stories tended to be — counterintuitively — more accurate. Discussion then focused on how people in her family tree fought against the Chinese Exclusion Act with Black and Irish ministers, as well as how both sides of her family liked “Mott Street” — and even had a family reunion because of it. But some family members refused to read the book because they were written about in it. They closed on how Chinatown is meant for everyone, but gentrification is an issue.

There was then a book sale and signing. When asked what she would say to Asian American youth, Chin said “I have a daughter who is 11 years old, I like to talk about history with her and I like to show her the sites of Asian American and American history. Realize that you’re not alone, and there’s living history all around us.” On the topic of preserving family history, Chin said: “You can create your own archive by interviewing family members, collecting extant documents, talking to those who remember the past.”

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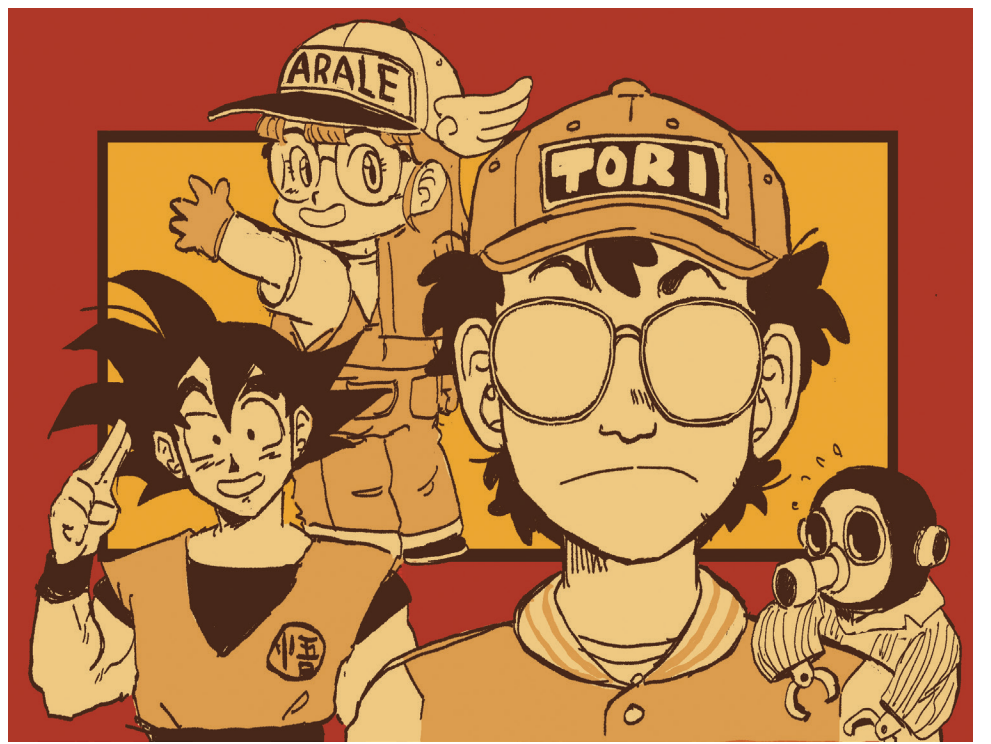
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ILLUSTRATION BY HALEIGH SCHMIDT, ASSOCIATE ARTIST EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Akira Toriyama, the super-powered scribe

by Nell Srinath | OPINION EDITOR | THEY/THEM/SHE/HER | nell.srinath@uconn.edu



On March 1, Akira Toriyama, the legendary mangaka behind titles like “Dr. Slump” and “Dragon Ball,” passed away from acute subdural hematoma at the age of 68, according to a statement published by his production companies.

Toriyama’s titanic impact was made apparent by the international response to his passing. He was memorialized by the foreign ministries of El Salvador and the People’s Republic of China. French President Emmanuel Macron commemorated Toriyama by sharing a signed piece of artwork in his collection on X, writing (in French), “To Akira Toriyama and his millions of fans who grew up with him.”

His hallmark series, “Dragon Ball Z,” is immensely popular in Latin America. As JP Brammer writes for the Los Angeles Times, the franchise protagonist Son Goku is a “Latino icon.” Thousands of Argentine fans gathered in Buenos Aires to honor the mangaka, and a slightly off-color joke circulated on social media claiming that Mexican cartels agreed to a temporary ceasefire in mourning.

The extensive body of work cementing Toriyama’s legacy spans over four decades and includes 10 manga titles and two Japanese role-playing games (JRPG), the cult classics “Dragon Quest”

(1986) and “Chrono Trigger” (1995). At every stage in his career, Toriyama blessed readers with a vast imagination that would shape global perceptions of anime, manga and Japanese art in general.

His breakout work, “Dr. Slump,” is widely credited with launching his career in shonen manga, a genre primarily marketed to Japanese boys. “Slump,” a self-contained procedural comedy, saw enough commercial success during its six-year run to amass 236 chapters across 18 volumes. Though the outward appearance of “Slump” is a far-cry from the strobing colors, exploding planets and excessive — but nonetheless chivalrous — violence associated with Toriyama’s most popular series, it hits many of the same stylistic beats that make him such an iconic artist and storyteller. The series’ stocky character designs with exaggerated features; huge, fantastical creatures; radiant ensemble cast; naive but playful protagonist in Arale Norimaki and, of course, androids draw striking similarities to early “Dragon Ball,” which debuted just a few months after “Slump” ended.

In the latter, Toriyama established his mastery at treating readers to sprawling, chaotic ad-

venture rife with comedic gags. Based on the 16th century Chinese novel “Journey to the West” for its first saga, “Dragon Ball” follows a young Goku and his growing entourage of friends who augment the manga’s effortless — but sometimes lewd — humor through their distinct and discordant personalities. Though it doesn’t shy away from fantasy and science fiction tropes in the iconic franchise’s first installment, “Dragon Ball” is surprisingly grounded. Even as the series introduces demons, androids and giant apes, these elements still feel cohesive within the story because it is charmingly weird from the outset (one of Goku’s first battles is with a talking pterodactyl). The series’ fights, which paradoxically become more elegant and explosive as Toriyama’s style becomes more refined, are packed with markedly less world- and universe-ending stakes compared to its high-octane sequels.

“Dragon Ball” highlights the brilliant rhythm of its fights in its numerous tournament arcs, starting with the Budokai Tenkaichi — the “Strongest Under the Heavens Martial Arts Tournament.” Although tournaments of hot-headed fighters are certainly not new to manga as a medium, Toriyama canonized the practice of dedicating entire story arcs to

watching characters duke it out in raucous, sometimes comically unequal displays of power and skill. This story template carries over into “Dragon Ball Z” and “Dragon Ball Super” without managing to get stale. Toriyama’s ability to elevate the stakes of these battles, as well as the bizarreness and destructive capacities of their combatants, doesn’t fade throughout his decades-long career.

Toriyama’s vivid imagination is his greatest strength. The cast of “Dragon Ball Z” and “Super” characters is incredibly visual, composed of a menagerie of humanoid aliens differing in shape, color and apparel (but unfortunately not gender), which make the story a universe-trotting romp. Characters are frequently cloaked in colorful auras to visualize their growth in strength. Every kind of laser and explosion is expended as characters pummel each other through time and space. Protagonists and antagonists alike will undergo sometimes awesome, sometimes grotesque physical transformations to heighten the tension of fights. All these elements, though absurd, are enough to make kids obsess over watching the “Toonami” channel before school.

Of course, an imagination with so much weight runs the risk of collapsing in on itself at times. An

attentive “Dragon Ball Z” viewer will likely notice a myriad of holes — or at least threadbare areas — in the plot. Don’t bother asking a fan what a power level is, how characters can die and be resurrected so often or why the titular Dragon Balls took eight months to grant wishes again instead of the previously established year. But the beauty of Toriyama’s story is that it’s completely beside the point to ask those questions. The breakneck speed of developments in “Z” — unless you’re watching the anime, a mistake a lot of us made — make it almost blasphemous to hang back and contemplate the inconsistencies. Panaceas like healing “Senzu beans,” extra sets of wish-granting Dragon Balls and — I’m not kidding — the physical dimensions of Heaven and Hell are Toriyama’s invitation to the reader to sit back and enjoy the ride.

Toriyama, the super-powered scribe and engineer of excitement he was, made an indelible impact on the childhoods of anime and manga fans around the world. With his legacy being crystallized in the medium through evergreen tropes and iconic shonen archetypes, there is no conceivable future in which the fruits of Toriyama’s 45-year career will not be enjoyed.

TOMMY LEFROY’S ‘FLIGHT RISK’ IS NOWHERE NEAR A ‘TRASHFIRE’

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

Hello, and welcome to the first edition of No Skips — a column where I discuss a new album every week that I have deemed as having “no skips.” Many artists produce albums that have a few bops or a high-performing single, but it is rare for the entirety of an album to be perfect. The first album being covered in the inaugural edition of No Skips is Tommy Lefroy’s 2021 EP “Flight Risk.”

I discovered Tommy Lefroy during my first semester at the University of Connecticut in the fall of 2021. The COVID-19 pandemic led to my first year of college being online, meaning I missed out on key college experiences, including wandering campus and listening to new music. Nevertheless, I vividly remember strolling around Swan Lake and listening to Tommy Lefroy’s “The Cause” on repeat in the fall of my sophomore year when I finally arrived on campus.

Composed of Wynter Bethel and Tessa Mouzourakis, the soft rock duo is stationed out of London. They released their first single, “Northern Towns,” in February 2021 and had immense success with their next release, “The Cause.” Previously, the duo opened for Samia and had their headline tour, “Le Trashfire,” named after one of the hit tracks on “Flight Risk.” I had the privilege to see them live on that tour in Boston at Cafe 393 at The Red Room and, to my excitement, got to meet them at that show. Most recently, Tommy Lefroy opened for Niall Horan’s European leg of “The Show” tour. Tommy Lefroy was the first band that I truly discovered on my own and one that has been a part of huge shifts in my life.

Let’s bring it back to the point of this column —

“Flight Risk” has absolutely no skips. The album dropped on Nov. 17, 2021, at the end of my first semester on campus and perfectly summed up my first experiences at UConn. I met new friends, grew into my new college self and experienced homesickness — feelings that were all represented in this album.

The album opens with “Flight Risk” — a track that is just shy of a minute long. This song opens with beautiful harmonies and perfectly sums up the feelings I felt when moving across the country for college.

The song talks about being the person to leave first, instead of being the person left behind. This truly hit home when I moved away to college and left everything I had known for the first 19 years of my life. However, reflecting on that move three years later, I have no regrets and can say I am so happy to have found this album to help me process my first year at college. Every time I listen to this album, it still brings me back to my fateful first semester at UConn. Despite being so short, “Flight Risk” is never one to skip.

If this album had a theme or a catchy daylist title on Spotify, keywords would include soft, sad, indie and yearning morning. These themes are seen especially in the next track on the album, “The Cause.” This song was one of my most streamed songs in 2021 and was put on my “Fall in New England” playlist that I crafted for long walks around campus admiring fall foliage and the changing seasons. It’s the ultimate no-skip — so much so that I played it on a loop for hours straight when I first heard it.

The next few tracks, “Shoot,” “Kneivel” and “Mortals,” maintain the trend of no skips. Each song has a unique sound that highlights the duo’s ability to create strong harmonies and all-consuming lyrics. “Shoot” showcases their ability to tell vibrant stories through their lyrics. Seeing this song performed live emphasized my position that this track is not skippable. The harmonies and the crowd singing along rang throughout the venue and made the song even more powerful. Now whenever I hear this song, I think of that moment, and it reinforces the listenability of the track.

“Vampires” focuses on supporting your friends through hard times and being there for them. The song is sadder and slower than some of the others on the album, but the message behind it is very profound. The meaning alone affirms the fact that this track is unskippable and a great song for anyone to listen to.

The final track on the album, “Trashfire,” resonated when I was missing home and experiencing the seasons for the first time. The song covers themes of struggling through new experiences and how everything will eventually work out. This song hit hard for a baby sophomore who had just moved across the country for college and continues to hit hard as a senior who faces graduation in four weeks.

This album summed up my first semester of college and continues to be one of my favorite albums of all time. There are absolutely no skips on this album, and I wholeheartedly encourage every single person who reads this article to listen to “Flight Risk.” To play on the final track of the album, “Flight Risk” is nowhere near a trashfire.



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



Life

@dailycampuslife

Gampel Pavilion invites students to the 2024 Spring Career Fair

by Karla Perez | ASSOCIATE LIFE EDITOR | SHE/HER/HERS | karla.perez@uconn.edu

The University of Connecticut hosted its final career fair of the 2023-24 academic year on Tuesday, April 2 in Gampel Pavilion. 112 employers tabled the fair in search of undergraduate students seeking internships and/or post-graduation jobs.

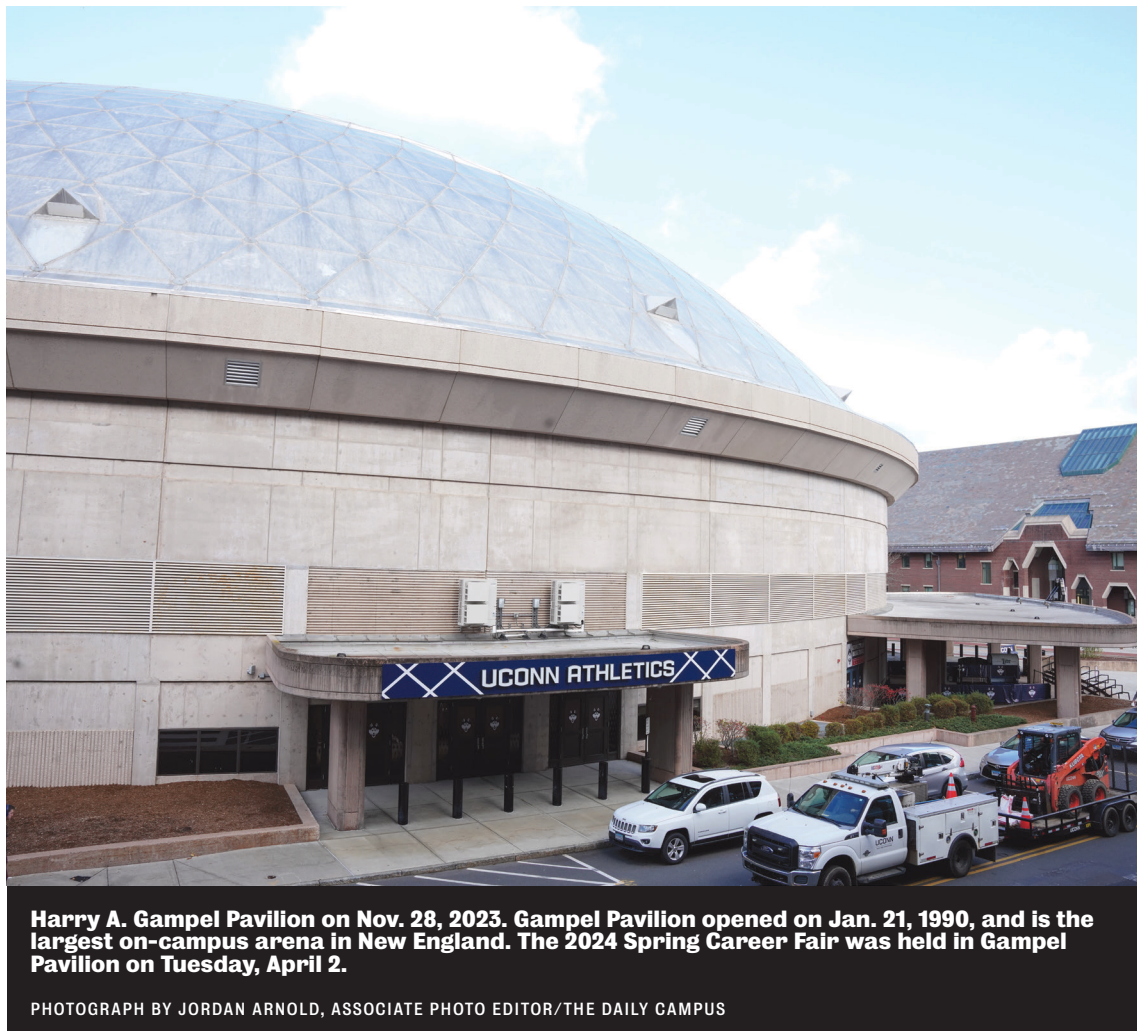
The UConn Center for Career Development sponsors multiple career fairs every academic year on both the Storrs and certain regional UConn campuses. Lisa Famularo, the assistant director for equity and inclusion, and Pedro Badillo, a graduate assistant for college career readiness and experiential learning, hope that students come to career fairs to see that there are opportunities for everyone.

They emphasized that career fairs are not catered to a particular kind of student. Famularo touched on the misconception that career fairs are only available to upperclassmen or students of certain majors.

“We want students of any year here, especially first and second-year students. If they can come and start building relationships with employers now, that can help them get jobs and internships in the future,” she said.

Employment opportunities ranged from federal security to the restaurant industry. The employees representing their companies ranged from recent graduates to seasoned professionals.

Kelsie Quick, a fourth-semester psychology major, went to the career fair to find internship opportunities. She said that she



Harry A. Gampel Pavilion on Nov. 28, 2023. Gampel Pavilion opened on Jan. 21, 1990, and is the largest on-campus arena in New England. The 2024 Spring Career Fair was held in Gampel Pavilion on Tuesday, April 2.

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

was able to speak to all of the companies she hoped to and felt that her visit was successful.

Glorie Vital, a talent acquisition specialist for the New England Center for Children, talked about how her company is looking for students inter-

ested in working with kids on the autism spectrum. She said that the company does face difficulty with finding people to fill certain roles, as the company’s primary focus, applied behavior analysis in children, is such a niche field. The com-

pany will use outreach tactics such as emails or Handshake notifications to find students interested in the field and make them aware of this opportunity.

“We want to find students who are ready to jump into a field where we are able to provide

them with professional development opportunities, they can learn more about applied behavior analysis and we can point students where they need to [look] for their future,” said Vital.

Ryan Donegan, the business development manager at L&W Supply Corporation, said that his company comes to the UConn career fairs every year. The company offers internships and job opportunities for undergraduate students. It is looking for students who communicate well and are sales-driven.

According to Donegan, L&W Supply Corporation attends the career fairs because of the great turnout. “Great school, great atmosphere, a lot of good candidates,” he said.

Quick noted that doing her research ahead of time greatly helped her navigate what employers she wanted to talk to and learn more about. All information about future career fairs can be found on the UConn Center of Career Development’s website, its profile on Handshake or its Instagram page.

If you missed the career fair, you could still benefit from the resources offered by the Center for Career Development. Their website has tabs that allow students to schedule career coaching appointments and job market insight. It also has lists of internships and job opportunities for different majors. For a more immersive experience, undergraduates can also apply to be student ambassadors via listings on Handshake.

Undergraduate students present research on Black liberation and homofascism

by Desirae Sin | STAFF WRITER | SHE/HER/HERS | desirae.sin@uconn.edu

The Humanities Institute at the University of Connecticut held their first undergraduate fellow’s talk on Wednesday. The talk was hosted by Breanna Bonner and Nathan Howard. Bonner is a fourth-semester student seeking a dual degree in human rights and political science. Howard is an eighth-semester student majoring in philosophy with a minor in music.

The talk began with Howard’s presentation on “Homofascism: The Queering of Hate.” His presentation started with the example of Johannes Büchner, a gay neo-Nazi who was stabbed to death in Hamburg in 1981 for his sexual orientation. Howard posits the question: “What might this incident reveal about gay men’s relationship to fascism?”

He described how fascists, antisemitism and homophobia have historically gone hand-in-hand. Howard pulled a quote from Heinrich Himmler: “[The murder of gay men] wasn’t a punishment, but simply the extinguishment of abnormal life. It had to be got rid of, just as we pull out weeds, throw them on a heap and burn them.” Howard pointed out how this type of rhetoric has been parroted by modern white supremacist nationalist groups.

Yet, there have been instances where gay men are involved with these fascist groups. A famous example that Howard mentions is Ernst Röhm, an early Nazi and close friend of Hitler. His homosexuality was known, but Hitler tolerated it in favor of his soldiers, which were valuable to the rise of the Nazi party.

Howard defined white supremacist fascism as “the in-



Breanna Bonner presents “The Space Between Black and Liberation: A Digital Exploration of Intersectional Invisibility” on Wednesday, April 3. Nathan Howard also presented “Homofascism: The Queering of Hate” at the Homer Babbidge library on Wednesday, April 3.

PHOTOGRAPH BY CONNOR SHARP, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

tegration of white supremacist racial, gender and sexual ideologies into the feature of generic fascism.” Some key components of this that he highlights are hierarchy being biologically ordained, masculinity and the endorsement of violence.

To conclude his presentation, Howard hypothesizes that

homofascism is created due to “whiteness” being valued above all else. “Whiteness is prized due to its cultural superiority,” stated Howard. Yet at the same time, Howard points out that white supremacist fascism and homosexuality are irreconcilable. The two concepts ultimately clash no matter what.

The second presentation was by Bonner, titled “The Space Between Black and Liberation: A Digital Exploration of Intersectional Invisibility.” Her work consists of a website that she and Melina Sandal created and are currently working on.

Bonner began by presenting a poem she created in

response to the Black Lives Matter movement and various Black women who have been the victim of police brutality. One that particularly stood out to her was Ma’Khia Bryant, a 16-year-old girl who was shot by a police officer in Ohio on April 20, 2021. “Ma’Khia’s shooting shook me,” stated Bonner. Bonner mentions how she felt that Bryant’s killing was greatly glossed over by the media and how, since her killer was not charged, it was deemed a justifiable homicide.

There has been a trend of Black women being ignored by the public, due to both their race and gender. To explain this, Bonner brought up the term “intersectional invisibility.” She defined it as “the unique experience in which persons holding multiple identities (race, gender, religion, sexuality, etc.) are further marginalized through social movements.”

Initially, her project started as a large text, but Bonner realized that a visual element was necessary. This is when she began her website and workshopped its format through many sticky notes. Bonner noted that she felt sorry for how many trees she must’ve gone through. Her website, blackandliberation.com explores intersectional invisibility through testimonies by Black women at UConn, a chronological organization of the movement and recommendations that Bonner makes to move forward.

Both Bonner and Howard’s projects are still ongoing. Howard seeks a better explanation for why homofascism exists and how it can be prevented, while Bonner seeks to expand her website and make Black women seen.



Opinion

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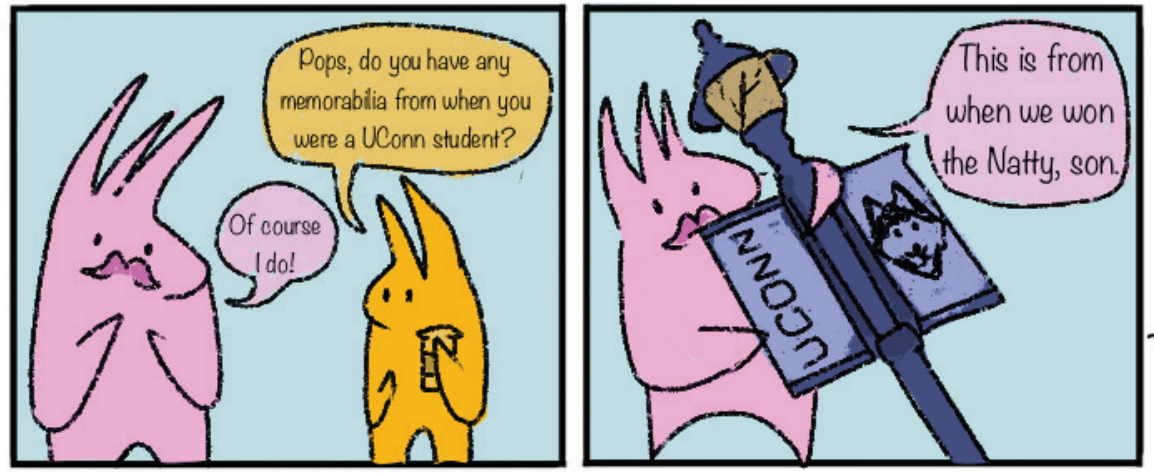
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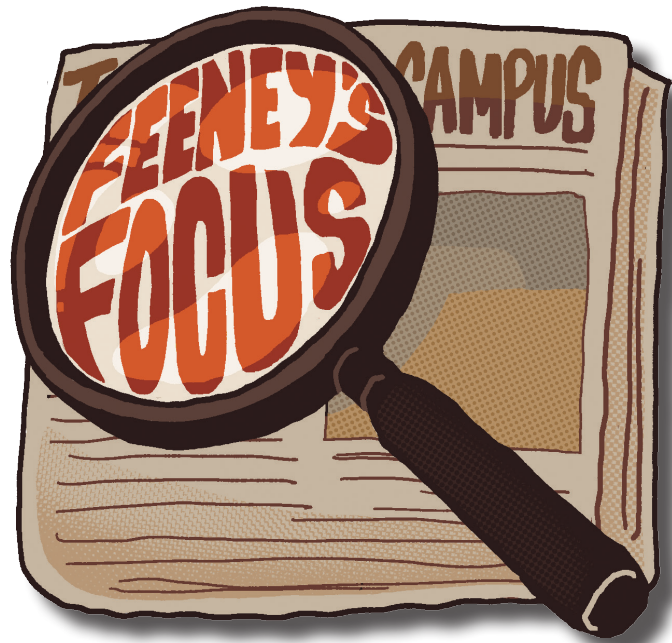
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The White Collared Worker



Jason J. Sampson

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



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

FEENEY'S FOCUS: FRANKENSTEIN'S VOTER

by **Luke Feeney** | WEEKLY COLUMNIST | HE/HIM/HIS | luke.feeney@uconn.edu

"Frankenstein" is one of the most culturally significant novels of the last 300 years. As the story of a creation that brings about the ruin of their creator, Mary Shelley's gothic masterpiece is a timeless metaphor for the intersection of science, technology and hubris.

We've seen an increasing number of voters voting uncommitted in democratic primaries across the country; states like Wisconsin, Connecticut and Michigan had thousands voting uncommitted in direct protest of President Joe Biden's policy in Gaza. It's not just uncommitted voters; Biden is also losing support across numerous important categories.

In 2020, Black voters favored Biden over Trump 92% to 8%, according to a Pew Research Center analysis. In the most recent Wall Street Journal survey, Biden's support among Black voters sat at 68%.

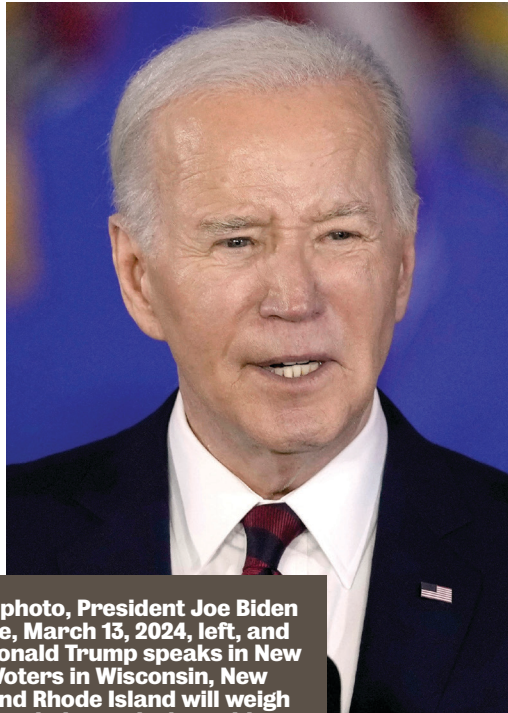
Biden won Latino voters 59% to 38% in 2020, according to Pew, but the Journal's most recent survey showed Biden with 48% support among Latino voters in the swing states. In addition, the new survey showed Biden registering 50% support among swing-state young voters, who have been especially vocal in their disapproval of the president's handling of

the Israel-Hamas war. In 2020, young voters aged 18-29 backed Biden over Trump 59% to 35%, according to Pew.

More than half a million uncommitted votes have been cast in primaries coast-to-coast, according to organizers. Despite these clear indicators of dissatisfaction from the electorate, democratic

party leadership and Biden — much like Victor Frankenstein — have been adamant on downplaying the threat their angered creations present.

Parts of the anger towards Biden are largely out of his control; voters tend to blame anything that goes wrong on the president, regardless of who's in power. This is



In this combination photo, President Joe Biden speaks in Milwaukee, March 13, 2024, left, and former President Donald Trump speaks in New York, Jan. 11, 2024. Voters in Wisconsin, New York, Connecticut and Rhode Island will weigh in Tuesday, April 2, on their parties' presidential nominees, a largely symbolic vote now that both Biden and Trump have locked up the Democratic and Republican nominations.

PHOTO COURTESY OF AP PHOTO



combined with some of the highest levels of political polarization

within Congress, as well as burdens of incumbency which have existed long before Biden assumed office. However, much of the anger is due to policies that Biden has supported and has refused to back down from.

75% of youth voters have expressed disapproval of Biden's policy in Gaza, one of appeasement and deference to the Israeli government. While he has privately expressed disapproval of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu — calling him a "bad f**king guy" at one point — it hasn't stopped him from giving Israel billions in weapons and aid.

It's not just in the Middle East; Biden's policy on the southern border has also been received with an abundance of criticism. In his own words, Biden set out to "restore our moral standing in the world and our historic role as a safe haven for refugees and asylum seekers, and those fleeing violence and persecution." Despite this promise, Biden maintained the strict Trump-era border policy known as Title 42 that has allowed the

government to quickly expel migrants at the U.S.-Mexico border, and while the administration now plans to lift Title 42 next month, there are few signs that Biden will significantly loosen his approach to immigration.

On top of the concerns over policy, there are also concerns regarding his overall fitness. While his opponent is a complete and utter oaf, that doesn't diminish the valid concerns over his age. A recent special counsel report described the 81-year-old's memory as hazy, fuzzy, faulty, poor and having significant limitations. It also noted that Biden could not recall defining milestones in his own life, such as when his son Beau died or when he served as vice president.

I'm not delusional; come Nov. 5, it's going to be either Biden or Trump that will be elected. However, it is incredibly frustrating seeing how nonchalantly democratic leadership is reacting to the anger of the voters who have won them the past few elections. In 2018, 2020 and 2022, young voters were pivotal to help Democrats win the House (2018), Senate and Presidency (2020) and maintain the Senate in 2022. Yet, they continue to refuse to meaningfully engage with these voters. I opened this column with an allusion to a story about a creation destroying its creator; in this instance, if Democrats aren't smart, they risk being abandoned by the very voters who gave them their power to begin with.



President Joe Biden speaks about lowering health care costs in the Indian Treaty Room at the Eisenhower Executive Office Building on the White House complex in Washington, Wednesday, April 3, 2024.

PHOTO BY MARK SCHIEFELBEIN/AP

Opinion StudyBreak

Huskytalk | What's an alternate way to rioting that we can celebrate if UConn wins a national championship?




“Hosting an event outside the Union.”

Peyton West
Biological Science
Second Semester




“Celebrating in the dorm with friends.”

Ruby Sember
Elementary Education
Second Semester



“Set up an all day event in the middle of campus.”

Giovanni Maione
Biological Science
Second Semester



“Have a parade.”

Rob Esposito
Economics
Fourth Semester

COLLEGE PRICES ARE RISING AND IT'S OUR FAULT

by **Youssef Macary**
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Starting this fall, “several private colleges and universities in New England will cost more than \$90,000” to attend. This is an insane amount of money to pay for simply going to school. A lot of people have different opinions regarding why college has gotten so expensive, but at the end of the day, one of the key reasons is people's lack of sensitivity to price increases. Prices continue to rise, and we continue to apply for and pay for these schools. The continued stream of demand only incentivizes institutions to continue to increase prices.

Considering one example, “at Boston University this fall, tuition, housing and other expenses will be \$90,207 for this upcoming academic year.” Based on the BU Arts and Sciences website, adding up the same costs equates to roughly \$85,000. It's important to mention that in the “other expenses” category, personal and transportation expenses were cut in half from this academic year to the next academic year. Both sites indicate that it is for an academic year, making it possible that these expenses were potentially decreased in estimate to accommodate for other expenses increasing, such as tuition, which saw a roughly \$3,000 increase. Despite the roughly 5% cost increase of attending Boston College, “applications to the University dipped slightly compared to last year (about a 2 percent decrease).” There ended up being “78,750 submissions to the Class of 2028.” This shows there is a level of inelastic demand — in other words, a price increase of 5% only equates to a 2% decrease in applicants. It should be noted that this analysis doesn't consider nation-

Prices continue to rise, and we continue to apply for and pay for these schools.


The continued stream of demand only incentivizes institutions to continue to increase prices.

al trends. Additionally, a 2% decrease in applicants is extremely meaningless to a school that enrolled a little over 3,000 students for the class of 2027, despite getting tens of thousands of applicants.

Nationally, we also see an increase in college applicants and college costs. According to Forbes, “the number of college applicants through March 1, 2024, has increased by 6% over the same time last year.” At the same time, US News reports that “the average tuition and fees at private ranked colleges have climbed by about 4% over the last year [and] at ranked public schools, tuition, and fees rose 2% for in-state students and about 1.4% for out-of-staters.” For colleges, this makes sense. More people are applying to their schools, so they can respond by increasing the cost of attending their universities. However, for all of the students, it makes very little sense. Even though the price is already high, more students are continuing to apply.

While students are paying for high college prices, there is a greater application rate among public schools compared to private schools, showing there is some price sensitivity. Forbes indicates that “applications to public school members using the Common App (10%) grew at twice the rate of applications to private members (5%) over last year.” This shows that students may be responsive to the high price of attending private higher education institutions.


While college costs are extremely high, as students we are enabling these costs to increase. Costs are high and keep rising, but we continue to apply to expensive schools. This begs the question: will college prices ever go down, or will they rise indefinitely? If there are people willing to pay, colleges will continue to charge insanely high prices.



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

Husky History: Shabazz Napier

by Sean Ahern
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HE/HIM/HIS
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Welcome back to another edition of Husky History, the column that highlights a former UConn athlete and their accomplishments in Storrs and their professional careers.

Amid the UConn Huskies making their second consecutive Final Four, there is so much conversation revolving around the chance for them to become repeat champions, and how the returners from last year would cement themselves into a league of their own.

However, they wouldn't be the first players to hang two championship banners in their playing days. Of the three players who were members of the 2011 and 2014 NCAA Championship squads, Shabazz Napier stands out to UConn fans for what he accomplished in four years. I'll highlight his lengthy, successful career in Storrs.

You cannot make a list of UConn legends without including Napier. Napier was a tough, smart guard coming out of Charlestown High School in Charlestown, Massachusetts that was bound to fit in well with Hall of Famer coach Jim Calhoun's system.

As typical for a freshman on the 2010-11 team with championship aspirations, Napier's role was to be the spark plug off the bench. After averaging 7.8 points, 3.0 assists and 1.6 steals in 23.8 minutes per contest in all 41 games, he was named to

the Big East All-Freshman Team. Even in limited minutes, Napier finished third in steals in the Big East with 66 on the season, two of those coming in the National Championship game against Butler. His production was vital considering he played the third highest minutes in that game for the Huskies. A championship ring was a perfect ending to a stellar freshman season.

In the 2011-12 season, the year after Kemba Walker's departure and Calhoun's final season at UConn, Napier's role increased as expected. His minutes skyrocketed to 35 per game, and with that he averaged 13 points, 3.5 rebounds and 5.8 assists.

Although there wasn't any championship trophy to raise, the Huskies still had a solid season. Napier routinely stuffed the stat sheet, including a triple-double in an early season game against Coppin State with a stat line of 22 points, 12 rebounds and 13 assists. Unfortunately, the Huskies suffered a first-round NCAA tournament exit to Iowa State, but Napier led the scorers with 22 points.

The following season, Napier's third, the junior's production increased even more. He averaged 17.1 points, 4.4 rebounds and 2.0 steals in 37.3 minutes per game, earning All-Big East First-Team Honors.

Under first-year head coach Kevin Ollie, Napier led the team in points, assists and steals per game. As outstanding as Napier was, he



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

could not carry the team himself, but help was on the way in his final ride wearing UConn across his chest.

The 2013-14 season was nothing short of remarkable. After making the move to the American Athletic Conference, most people outside of UConn fans counted this team out in terms of contending for a National Championship.

When you look to find a pattern between each year's championship teams, one of the main trends is consistent guard play. Even in UConn's history that holds true, with Richard Hamilton and Khalid El-Amin in 1999 and Tristen Newton and Jordan Hawkins in 2023. In 2014, Napier held that tradition.

Napier led the Huskies in all categories against Kentucky in the NCAA Championship game with 22 points, six rebounds and three assists on 50/44/100 shooting splits. Finishing your career winning two of four titles is not a bad way to go out at all.

To go along with another championship, Napier was named the 2014 NCAA Tournament Most Outstanding Player. He also be-



Shabazz Napier takes a fadeaway three in the FIBA AmeriCup. Puerto Rico would go on to win this game.

PHOTO COURTESY OF @SWISHCULTURES ON INSTAGRAM

came one of the nine Huskies to be named a Consensus First-Team All American.

To end any debate of who the best point guard in the country was, Napier was honored with the Bob Cousy Award.

Like most UConn greats, Napier sits atop several statistical leaderboards. As the saying goes, the best ability is availability, and Napier embodied that. To this day he appeared in a program-best 143 games, totaling 4,614 minutes across his career.

Here are some more stats to showcase his versatility and tenacity: Despite being a smaller guard,

Napier sits seventh all-time in defensive rebounds with 475. Also, he cashed in 260 3-point field goals, the third most in program history.

An entire book can be written on the impact Napier left on UConn basketball. What he did was incredible and will be remembered by fans forever.

The last thing I wanted to highlight to get fans excited with the Final Four approaching and a sixth National Championship in sight: Tristen Newton, like Napier, is a First-Team All-American who leads the team in points and assists per game. Maybe history will repeat itself?

Spin Cycle: Biggest surprises from MLB's opening week

by Nick Spinalli
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Major League Baseball is so back.

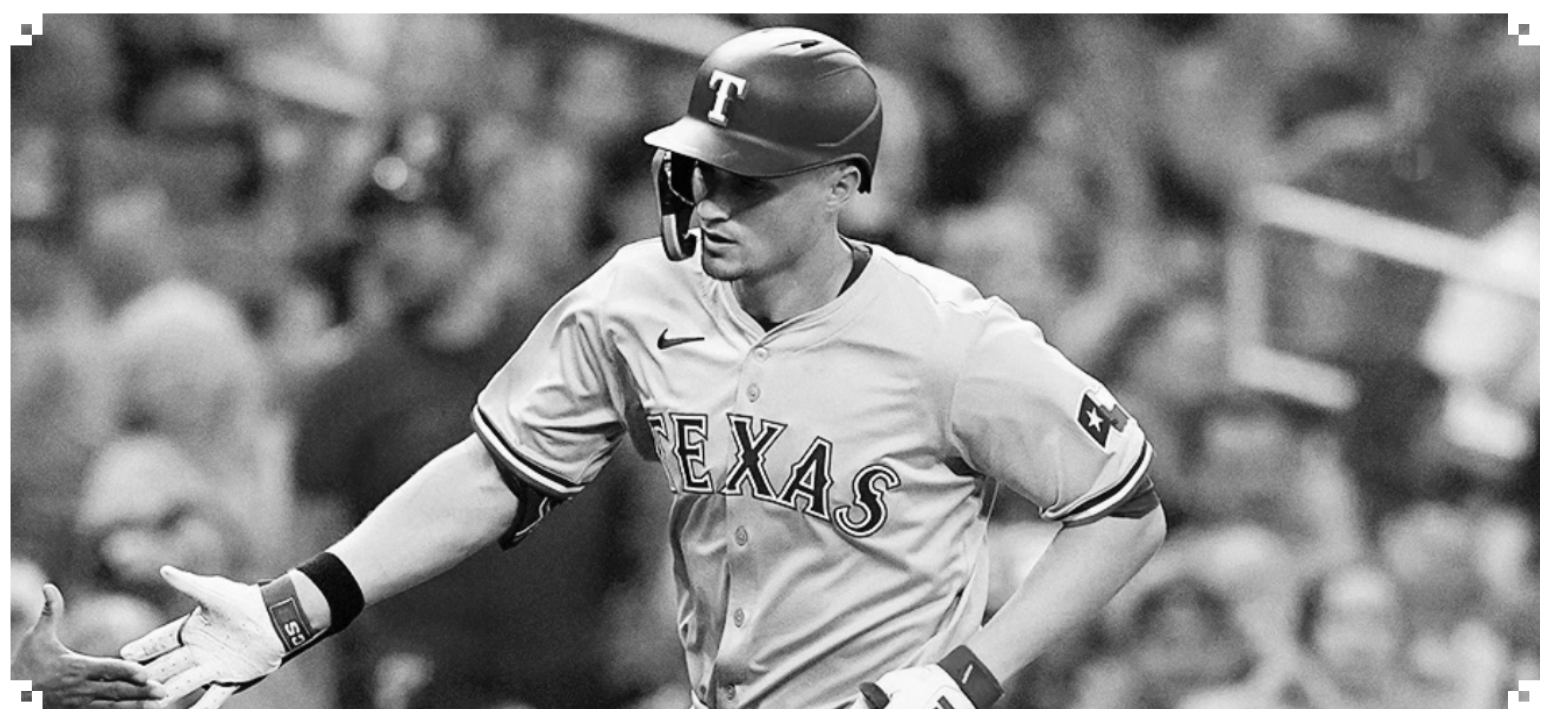
The start of a new season brings some hot performances and some not-so-hot as players look to hit the ground running. Here's a look at some of the surprises, good and bad, throughout the first week of baseball action.

A's option Esteury Ruiz to Triple-A Las Vegas

Some thought that Oakland was pulling an April Fool's joke when they announced they were demoting Ruiz to their Triple-A affiliate, the Las Vegas Aviators. They were not. Fans around baseball are absolutely perplexed as to why the A's would demote their young outfielder this early in the season, especially considering he was batting .429 through seven at-bats and a 1.232 on-base plus slugging (OPS) to begin the campaign. Not to mention that the 25-year-old led MLB with 67 stolen bases last year.

Supposedly, Oakland was considering starting Ruiz in the minors to begin the season to work on his swing and consistency at the plate. Still, the organization has been a trainwreck over the last few seasons and doesn't seem to be heading anywhere near contention this year. Would it really hurt to let Ruiz work on his swing at the Major League level? At the very least, the Athletics would still have the player who set the record for most steals by a rookie in the American League. It seems that the front office is trying its best to torment the fans that still pay attention to this team.

Hot start for Nick Martini
Martini made his professional debut back in 2018, though this season was the first time that he cracked a Major League roster



Corey Seager hits his first homerun of the 2024 season as a Texas Ranger. Alongside this, the Rangers threw seven shutout innings to help them win the game. PHOTO COURTESY OF @MLB ON INSTAGRAM

and received a starting nod for his team's Opening Day game. The 33-year-old made quite the first impression to begin the new campaign, smashing two home runs to lead his Cincinnati Reds to an 8-2 victory over the Washington Nationals back on March 28. Both long balls came off Washington starter Josiah Gray, including a two-run shot in the second inning and a three-run bomb in the third.

After enduring a long stint in the Minor Leagues and bouncing around between Oakland, the San Diego Padres, the Chicago Cubs and even a quick trip to Korea to play for the KBO League's NC Dinos, Martini must hope that his hot start will keep him on Cincinnati's roster — even after fellow outfielder TJ Friedl makes his return from the injured list. In addition to his Opening Day performance, Martini already has eight runs batted in (RBIs) in just 11 at-bats spanning four games. He's tied for fourth in

the Majors in RBIs despite all players ranked ahead of him playing in six or more games.

Are Colorado's pitchers really that bad?

The two Major League pitchers who have allowed the most runs so far this season both belong to the Colorado Rockies. Kyle Freeland has surrendered 17 runs over 5.2 innings while rookie reliever Anthony Molina has allowed 11 runs over 3.1 innings. Freeland was rocked for 10 runs over 2.1 innings on Opening Day against the Arizona Diamondbacks before yielding seven runs over 3.1 innings in his next outing against the Cubs. Dakota Hudson was the only Colorado starter to pitch a scoreless outing in their season debut as all other starters have amassed an earned run average (ERA) over 5.40 to begin the year.

It's hard to believe in a pitching staff that has a notable lack of talented arms, but one would think

that they could manage a better start with the new season commencing. As a unit, the Rockies are dead last in the Majors in ERA at 8.08. They're also in last place in strikeouts (32 in six games), tied for last place in home runs allowed (11) and fourth-to-last place in walks (28). Opponents are batting .332 against Colorado, one spot behind Washington for last place in the league. It looks like it'll be another painful season for Rockies fans.

Bailey Ober has a start to forget

Ober took the bump for the Minnesota Twins in their third game of the season against the Kansas City Royals. To say that he didn't pitch well would be an understatement. In the contest, the 28-year-old surrendered eight runs on nine hits over just 1.1 innings of work, also allowing three balls to travel over the outfield fence. Of the 14 batters that he faced, 10 reached base, ballooning his early-season ERA to a

whopping 54.00.

It was probably the worst starting pitching performance that took place during MLB's Opening Week. It's a bit surprising that it was Ober who can be tabbed with the week's worst start; he's coming off a season in which he managed an 8-6 win-loss record to complement a solid 3.43 ERA. It's the most runs that Ober has given up in a single start in his career after he previously allowed six runs to score in a start back in July 2023. He'll look to rebound during his next scheduled start this Sunday against the Cleveland Guardians.



FILE ILLUSTRATION/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Sports

Photo of the Day | Light work.



UConn lacrosse waves the school's flag as they prepare for their match against Villanova on April 3, 2024. The Huskies won the match with a score of 16-6.
PHOTO BY CONNOR SHARP, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Chris's Column: Stefon Diggs to Houston Texans

by **Chris Charbonneau**
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If you thought the NFL's off-season of blockbuster trades was finished, then you better buckle up. The Buffalo Bills finalized a trade to send star wide receiver Stefon Diggs to the Houston Texans in exchange for draft pick compensation. The Bills also sent the Texans a 2024 sixth-round pick and a 2025 fifth-round pick for a 2025 second-round pick via the Minnesota Vikings.

Diggs is a four-time Pro Bowl wide receiver and began his career with the Minnesota Vikings in 2015. Shortly after, he had a four-year stint in Buffalo. Last season the superstar player had arguably one of the worst seasons of his career with quarterback Josh Allen. In the first six games of the 2023-24 NFL season, he had 100 or more receiving yards in five of those games. However, slowly but surely, his numbers plummeted. From Week 10 to the playoffs, he scored one touchdown in that stretch and did not have a single 100 receiving yard game. From that perspective,

what can he bring to Houston?

Reigning NFL Rookie of the Year quarterback C.J. Stroud may have just landed his new go-to guy. The Texans are already loaded with young talented receivers in Tank Dell and Nico Collins. In Diggs' first season with the Bills, he led the league in receiving yards with 127 catches and 1,535 yards. In 2023-24, his least productive season, he still had 107 catches and 1,183 receiving yards.

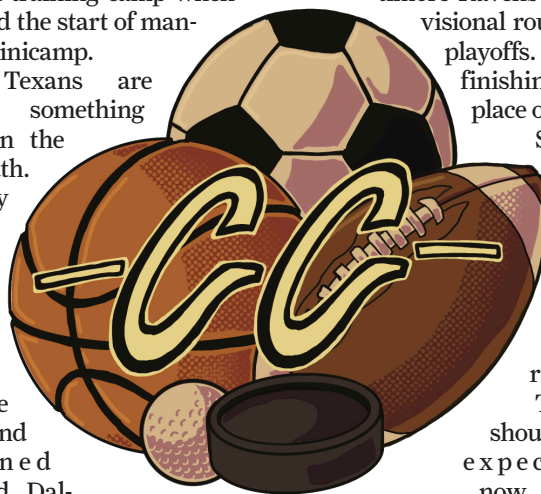
The former Maryland Terrapin worked with numerous quarterbacks in Minnesota: Teddy Bridgewater, Sam Bradford, Shaun Hill for one game, Case Keenum, Kirk Cousins and Sean Mannion. In 136 career games with the Vikings and Bills, he has 810 receptions with 9,995 yards and 67 touchdowns. In the postseason, he's played 14 games with 69 receptions, 909 receiving yards and four touchdowns.

Now, Diggs has left both the Vikings and Bills on bad terms. The question remains if he is the problem. He's worked with two Pro Bowl quarterbacks in Cousins and Allen and recently, Diggs left a cryptic tweet, reading, "ready for whatever." There

were red flags early on with the Bills' last training camp when he missed the start of mandatory minicamp.

The Texans are building something special in the AFC South. They signed both former Bengals running back Joe Mixon and re-signed tight end Dalton Schultz. The NFL community should tip their cap to Texans general manager Nick Caserio, as the moves he's made this offseason show that the Texans are looking to build off last year's successful season. They won their wild card game against the Cleveland Browns, marking their first playoff win since 2019. Previously, they hadn't made the playoffs since 2020 and still managed to prove the entire league wrong. They simply were out-

performed by the No. 1 seed Baltimore Ravens in the divisional round of the playoffs. But, after finishing in first place of the AFC



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

South with a 10-7 record, the Texans are on the rise right now. There should be high expectations now for the Texans because of all the offsea-

son moves they made. What can Stroud do in his second year with this much talent on the offense? How will the addition of Diggs elevate Stroud's game to a new level? He stacks up against the juggernaut quarterbacks in the AFC like Joe Burrow, Lamar Jackson, Allen, Justin Herbert, etc.

The AFC was put on notice with the Diggs signing and other teams should be following the Texans' blueprint.

WOMEN'S TENNIS: CONNECTICUT SECURES 10TH WIN ON THE SEASON

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After a big shutout 7-0 win against Providence on Friday, March 22, the UConn Huskies looked to continue their winning streak as they faced the UMass Minutemen on Wednesday in Manchester at Magic Lincer Academy.

The Huskies had a stellar start to the match, especially with their doubles play.

Starting for the Huskies, juniors Olivia Wright and Marie Constantinou took down the senior duo of Danielle Hack and Thamonpan Jonglertrakul, defeating them 6-4.

Isabel Petri Bere and Caroline Hinshaw clinched the doubles point for the Huskies, after dating UMass's Ella Faessler and Amelia Tye, 6-2, and the Huskies were heading into singles play winning 1-0.

Heading into this matchup, Connecticut's record was 9-6, while the Minutemen's record was 8-6, so it was safe to say that Connecticut wasn't going down without a fight. That was certainly what they faced in singles play.

Wright and Constantinou both took the first two singles points for the Huskies, with the Virginia native winning in two straight sets. Constantinou had a bigger feat for the Huskies after losing her first set to Jonglertrakul, as she was able to pick herself up by the bootstraps and win in two straight sets, 7-5 and 6-3.

At this point, the Huskies were at 3-0 scoring-wise but started to dig themselves into a hole.

Petri Bere was defeated after being shutout in the first set, 6-0 and the third set, 4-6, even though she won the middle set, 6-3.

Hinshaw was also defeated by her opponent in two straight sets.

Those two straight losses put the score at 3-2, and the Huskies needed another point to officially solidify the win.

That is where sophomore Cameron Didion came into play.

Even with the loss of her middle set, 4-6, she was able to start and end with two winning sets, 6-4 and 6-3.

With these wins by Didion, the Huskies won the match 4-3, elevating their record to 10-6. Didion has proven herself time and time again to be a clutch player for the Huskies, especially in the moments they need it most.

The Huskies will ride this high after two straight wins and next up, they will travel to Washington, D.C. to play the Georgetown Hoyas on Saturday, April 6 at 11 a.m. That will be their third to last matchup of the season, as they hope to end the season off on a high note.

Huskies in the Pros: Success across sports

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NHL: Tage Thompson scores four goals in win over New Jersey

On Friday, Sabres star Tage Thompson continued his dominant stretch of play with a monster four goal game in the Sabres' 5-2 win over the New Jersey Devils. Thompson's career night was then followed up with a three-point performance (one goal, two assists) against the Washington Capitals on Tuesday. Over the last few weeks, the former UConn star has been one of the game's best players in the league, tallying 16 points over the team's last 11 games. The first round pick exploded for a career high 94 points last season (47 goals and 47 assists), but an injury to his left hand kept him sidelined for a chunk of this season. Thompson has 27 goals and 25 assists so far

and will look to continue this hot stretch of play as the Sabres sit just five points behind the Penguins, Islanders, Red Wings and Capitals for the final wild card spot in the east.

NBA: Andre Drummond scores 13, collects 18 rebounds off the bench against Atlanta

Despite sitting four games under .500 on the season, the Chicago Bulls managed to clinch a spot in the play-in round of the NBA playoffs. With Chicago looking to capture one of the final playoff spots in the Eastern Conference, veteran big Andre Drummond will hope to continue to dominate the glass off the bench as he did on Monday against Atlanta. Despite the Bulls' 113-101 loss to the Hawks, Drummond was a beast on the boards, coming down with 18 rebounds and scoring 13 in 20 minutes off the bench. The former lottery pick out of Connecticut is averaging 8.4 points and 8.9 rebounds in 2024.



George Springer walks out to the field as a player on the Toronto Blue Jays. Springer enrolled at UConn in 2009.
PHOTO COURTESY OF @BLUEJAYS ON INSTAGRAM

MLB: George Springer hits two home runs in Jay's opening series

The beginning of the 2024 MLB campaign marks year 10 for former UConn star and current Blue Jays outfielder George Springer. In the team's opening series against the Tampa Bay Rays, the New Britain native

launched two home runs in the first two games as the Jays settled for a series split on the road. The tenured right-fielder has batted .267 with 244 home runs with a world series MVP to his name at this point in his career. Springer is in year four of a six-year/\$150 million deal with Toronto.

THE COLEUMN: WHAT IF MLS HAD A PROMOTION AND RELEGATION SYSTEM?

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On May 18, 2023, Major League Soccer commissioner Don Garber officially awarded the city of San Diego, California, with the league's 30th team. San Diego once had a soccer club in the United Soccer League Championship called the San Diego Loyal, founded by 2009 MLS MVP Landon Donovan.

The Loyal have since disbanded because they could not find a long-term stadium. It made me wonder about the structure of certain soccer leagues, however. The top four soccer leagues in the United Kingdom and Spain are part of a pyramid and managed through a promotion/relegation system. One league's bottom feeders are relegated to a country's next-lowest-tier league. Conversely, the top two teams from the three lower leagues, as well as the playoff champion, would all be promoted to the next level.

What if that system came to the United States?

Comparing with the U.K.'s system, if MLS is the USA's Premier League, then perhaps the USL Championship is in the same tier as the English Football League Championship. Three out of MLS' 29 current teams came from the USL, while another two earned the call from the now-defunct North American Soccer League. Each of the three divisions in the United Soccer League (USL Championship, USL League One and USL League Two) could have their own official competition level.

For starters, the league structure used in Europe may

further increase viewership among the U.S. population. Inter Miami CF superstar Lionel Messi is already doing that by himself, as he has increased the league's social media presence at an unprecedented rate. Approximately 10.9 million people watched an MLS match during the 2023 season, and Apple has confirmed that some matches attracted millions of viewers on Apple TV+. Those numbers could increase if there was more at stake because each match would be equally important and worth someone's viewing interest.

The promotion/relegation system would also significantly raise the stakes. Every regular-season match would feel like a do-or-die playoff game. It would be less like a Lamar Hunt US Open Cup or CONCACAF Champions Cup battle, but more like an MLS Cup Playoff contest. Some soccer matches already feel like one because of their stadium's standing-room sections or key rivalries, such as El Tráfico and the Hudson River Derby.

Major League Soccer has more playoff games than the

Premier League and La Liga do. Since those leagues do not have a true playoff format, the league's official champion goes to the club that earns the most points. Competition for the Supporters' Shield would significantly increase if MLS adapted that format.

The Supporters' Shield is awarded to the league's regular season champions each year before the playoffs, but under this format, the winners would be that season's outright champions. Both DC United and the Los Angeles Galaxy would have the same number of league titles at four apiece if that had been incorporated throughout MLS' four-decade tenure.

The only true playoff format in English and Spanish soccer is in the divisions below the Premier League and La Liga. Since 2016, the EFL Championship, EFL League One and EFL League Two have each had a two-round tournament where the winner of that playoff earns the final promotion spot. It only features the clubs that finished third through sixth in the league table be-

cause the top two teams are automatically promoted.

The USL's is a little different as it involves the eight best teams from each conference and is a single-elimination tournament. If the EFL Championship or Segunda División's formats were in place in the USL Championship, for example, perhaps the top teams from each conference could earn automatic promotion to MLS. The next seven best clubs from each conference would compete for the remaining spot.

There are a few caveats to bringing this system to the U.S.; the main one being how long the regular season might last as a result. Both La Liga and the Premier League have 20 clubs. Starting next season, when San Diego FC debuts, MLS will become the fifth professional sports league in the U.S. with at least 30 teams. Premier League and La Liga clubs play the other 19 squads in their league twice for 38 league matches. Major League Soccer clubs face the teams in their conference twice and only half of the ones in the other conference once for 34.

If MLS were to have each

club play every other team in the league twice, they would be currently competing in 56 total league matches. Between the league's regular season, a player's obligations to their national team and international break periods alone, a campaign with that many games is just not manageable.

So maybe the solution is to do promotion and relegation by conference. I am not suggesting that the conferences become independent leagues titled MLS East and MLS West. Instead, perhaps each MLS conference's last-place team gets relegated to the USL Championship while their regular-season conference champions earn a spot in the following MLS season. It could help maintain MLS' 34-game scheduling style and leave some room to expand the regular season by four games and match it with Europe's top-flight leagues.

The U.S. is one of three countries hosting the 48-team World Cup in 2026, a first for FIFA. MLS Next Pro president Charles Altchek has openly considered the idea of relegation and promotion as part of MLS' efforts to expand their presence in lower divisions ahead of the World Cup. That includes turning reserve teams in MLS Next Pro into individualized sides that could go into any USL league.

The European style of promotion may work to further grow soccer's popularity in the U.S. if it is implemented. With the right amount of strategy and planning, the promotion and relegation system could succeed in the United States Soccer Federation.



LOGO BY ANNA IORFINO, STAFF ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Women's Lacrosse: UConn dominates Villanova in Big East triumph

by Bridget Bronsdon
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The UConn Huskies have come alive in their recent conference campaigns to finally notch a favorable 6-5 record after climbing a seemingly uphill battle for most of the season.

After a 9-18 blowout in Denver to begin the Big East series, the Huskies appeared to be at a crossroads. The absence of a winning streak, except for a short 3-0 mid-season run, had the Huskies jonesing for another chance. Luckily, Villanova was the perfect opponent.

Historically, the Huskies have blown the Wildcats out of the water, and have only fallen to them twice since 2009. If the trend continued, all signs pointed to a UConn triumph.

The first period defined the match for the Huskies, as they flew out of the gates and were prepared to run circles around the Wildcats. UConn quickly made it known that Villanova would not be dominating the Huskies' home turf.

Breakout star Rayea Davis was the first to make a move. The redshirt sophomore netted the first goal of the game to get the Huskies on the board in no time. Throughout the season, Davis' prevailing success has been exceptional to witness as her efforts continuously get her name on the board. Davis already has 26 points this season, not including this matchup, and has dominated every opponent the Huskies have faced.

UConn continued their dominant streak to overwhelm the Villanova goaltender

with attack after attack. Outshooting the Wildcats 10-2 was no problem for the Huskies as a perfect storm appeared to be brewing.

Senior Morgan Carter had the next opportunity in the spotlight. An assist from Jenna Giardina gave Carter the perfect opportunity to rush the net for her sixth goal of the season.

By the end of the first, UConn was able to put away five more goals with Davis picking up yet another. Although Villanova eventually found two opportunities to score, they were no match for the Huskies.

There was no shortage of excitement heading into the second, but the Huskies had to walk on thin ice as the quarter wended down.

Graduate student Kate Shaffer, whose shoes may be the hardest to fill next year, notched her first of the game less than a minute into the second, which marked her 150th career goal.

This time around, Villanova got closer to keeper Landyn White and increased their shots on goal from two to eight.

UConn was a bit quieter but managed to hold their ground. After successfully finding the net two more times, the Huskies unraveled a bit towards the end. The Wildcats were able to inch closer to the Huskies in hopes of earning at least half their points.

The final three minutes allowed Villanova to capitalize on the holes in the Huskies' defense to net two more, ending the half 10-4.

Beginning the second half, UConn needed to find their edge. Luckily, their offensive



UConn defeats Villanova at Storrs with a final score of 16-6. The Huskies took a huge early lead and didn't let up even in the cold weather. PHOTO BY CONNOR SHARP, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

versatility and aggression were just what the Huskies needed.

While Shaffer's talent was no surprise to anyone on the field, she was relentless in the third, picking up two more. Senior Abby Charron also came out of the Huskies' back pocket to notch her first of the contest alongside Susan Lafountain.

Although the Wildcats nudged a bit closer to the Huskies, their two points in the third weren't enough to cause panic.

UConn comfortably sailed 14-6 into the fourth, just 15 minutes away from a conference win.

While the final quarter was anything but toned-down from both sides, the Huskies remained untouchable. A free position shot by Carter, a final goal by Shea van den Broek and a grand total of 17 draw controls in the quarter were more than enough for the Huskies to comfortably glide into a win.

Although Villanova hasn't

been great this season, a Big East win is no small victory. With the final stretch of their season coming up, it is now essential for the Huskies to maintain their newfound streak.

Next week, the Huskies have a great shot at another victory as they hit the road to take on Xavier (3-8). Record and streak alone, the Huskies already have the upper hand, but a Big East victory is never set in stone.

The opening draw is scheduled for Saturday at noon.



Sports

ROUNDTABLE:

WHICH UCONN MBB PLAYER WOULD YOU WANT ON YOUR INTRAMURAL SQUAD?

Evan's Earthshaker #32

It's the most obvious answer on the board, but there is practically no one in my mind who can defend Clingan if I were to add him to my intramural basketball team. Considering how the 7-foot-2 giant looked in UConn's massive Elite Eight win over Illinois, just imagine how he'd play against people who could only dream of playing Big East basketball. The fact that I'd be able to look like Chris Paul the way that I'd be throwing alley-oops on every possession to the current Huskies big man is almost comical, but that's how impressive Clingan would be. On top of that, the Bristol native would be an utter force on the defensive end, blocking any ball near the basket. Even if my team may not be the most athletic or have the best shooting, I'd be able to count on one thing: Clingan would look like a prime Shaquille O'Neal in the paint and would give my squad a massive advantage over anyone.

Brayden's Blazer #12

Even though Cam Spencer is a top player on a top team in the country, the intensity that he will bring to the intramural basketball court is why he is vital for any squad. It doesn't matter if he is playing against Terrence Shannon Jr. or the business major on the other intramural team when it comes to Spencer's play style. He will scream in their face, talk trash to whoever listens, fire up whatever crowd is there and light it up from the three-point and mid-range areas. He's the glue guy to your intramural basketball team but he is also the best player at the same time. Furthermore, intramural basketball tends to get a little chippy and free throw shots become important. Who else would you want at the line other than a 92% free throw shooter in Spencer? Spencer will stop at nothing to win, which is why he is necessary on any intramural basketball squad.



It's no secret that the 2023-24 UConn men's basketball team has one of the most dangerous rosters in the country. With talent from head to toe, this team is currently coming off an Elite Eight win in which the program smoked Illinois after going on an unbelievable 30-0 run. Featuring players from All-American Tristen Newton to future NBA Draft pick Donovan Clingan, the Huskies have shown that they can grab a bucket from plenty of players on this roster. However, what if you could add one of these players to your intramural squad and elevate your lineup to new heights? That's the question on our minds in this week's edition of The Daily Campus Sports Roundtable, as our writers give their takes on which current Connecticut player they'd love to play with on the intramural hardwood.

UConn beats Illinois in the Elite Eight of the NCAA Tournament in Boston at the TD Garden with a score of 77-52. UConn moves onto the Final Four, making this their seventh Final Four appearance in the program's history. PHOTO BY JORDAN ARNOLD, ASSOCIATE PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS



Stratton's Slammer #35

There are no wrong answers here, but to everyone else: I'm right. Yes, someone like Spencer would light it up from the shortened three-point line or Newton could get a triple double, but I want certainty with this pick. This is why I'm going with the pogo stick, Samson "Slamson" Johnson. While shots can be streaky, dunks are not. Every trip down the floor, I'm tossing a lob above the rim and letting Johnson throw it down with authority. The man makes his living off his athleticism and throwing down thunderous slams. There is nothing more reliable than that. With his 6-foot-10 frame, what would other teams be able to do to stop it? Centers in intramural basketball are like 6-foot-5 max, and no one will be able to match his athleticism. I'm suspecting the box score at the end of games will include 70 points for Johnson and 35 assists for everyone else. No other offense is needed.

Cole's Controller #10

I have broadcasted more recreational basketball games, including the Pearlman Jam between The Daily Campus and UCTV Sports, than I have played. Despite not knowing as much ball as everyone else in this esteemed roundtable, Hassan Diarra would give my hypothetical rec team the best shot at victory. Although he won the Big East Sixth Man of the Year award, Diarra has all the qualities of a starting point guard. The Queens, New York native would be as much of an X-factor for my intramural squad as he is with this year's UConn men's basketball team. Diarra is averaging a career-high 6.2 points, 2.9 rebounds and 2.4 assists per game, doing so in just 19.4 minutes. He is as much of a triple threat as unanimously selected First Team All-American Newton. With the Texas A&M transfer on the floor, there is no reason why my rec team could not go on a 30-0 run like the men's team did in the Elite Eight.