



THE INDEPENDENT VOICE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT SINCE 1896 • VOLUME CXXVII, NO. 127

Friday, April 5, 2024

## UCONN REQUESTS \$96 MILLION IN STATE SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDS

by Jenna Outcalt

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The University of Connecticut is requesting \$96 million in funding from the state for the upcoming fiscal year to supplement the school's budget shortfall.

Jeffrey Geoghegan, the executive vice president for finance and chief financial officer of UConn, said that if fulfilled, their request would offset UConn's forecasted loss for the 2025 fiscal year, including almost \$23 million in mitigation efforts and operating cost reductions.

"That request of \$96 million would fully cover all of the mitigation plans that we're looking at right now," Geoghegan said. "So when we do have the conversations, and we go down to Hartford to talk with the legislature, the discussion is about the full \$96 million."

Geoghegan explained that the amount they requested was chosen to achieve a "break-even cash flow."

"We take all of the revenue sources of the cash coming in, subtract all of the payments that we have for the cash go-

ing out, and that started at a base of a \$70 million loss," he said.

According to Geoghegan, the \$70 million loss coupled with statewide renegotiation for state employee wages led to the total forecasted loss of

said there would be a few more weeks of reconciling the suggestions with the governor's office and legislators before a decision is made.

"I wouldn't expect to know the final number till the last week of April, first week of

**"Unless it's a permanent increase to our budget, it'll just kind of kick the can down the road, and we will have to revisit that five-year plan again next year,"**

UCONN CFO JEFFREY GEOGHEGAN

\$96 million that UConn is requesting from the state. He said that if the state fulfilled the request, it would alleviate the next fiscal year's concerns and buy the school more time to adjust their budget plan.

"Unless it's a permanent increase to our budget, it'll just kind of kick the can down the road, and we will have to revisit that five-year plan again next year," Geoghegan said.

Geoghegan said that the school would most likely hear from the Appropriations Committee this week. After the committee's suggestions were released, Geoghegan

May," he said.

If UConn does not get the full funding that they are requesting, Geoghegan said that UConn would continue plans to cut ledger-2 funding.

"Best case scenario is we get to defer those conversations for another year, because it's been funded by the state. And, you know, worst case scenario, we have to implement everything right away," Geoghegan said. "More likely than not, it might fall somewhere in between."

**See UCONN FUNDING, p. 02**



The Connecticut State Capitol is located in Hartford, Conn. The University of Connecticut requested \$96 million from the state to supplement the budget shortage.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF @BAMBAMBPT ON INSTAGRAM

## Mansfield proposes budget cuts for public schools, budget increases for public safety

by Liliana French

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Mansfield Town Manager Ryan Aylesworth has proposed a budget for fiscal year 2025, which includes real budget cuts for public schools and real budget increases for public safety.

Mansfield has a proposed budget for fiscal year 2025 of \$65.4 million, a 3.1% increase from last year. \$12.1 million would be a city contribution to Region 19, which funds high schools in this area. \$24.8 million will go to the Mansfield Board of Education, which pays for elementary and middle schools in Mansfield. \$28.5 million will go to fund the rest of the government under the proposed budget. In order for the budget to be passed, it must be approved by the city council.

Given that the budget for the Mansfield Board of Education is staying the same at \$24.8 million, it is shrinking in real terms. Aylesworth said that this would come from reductions in staff.

"It's somewhere along nine positions, nine or ten positions in the Mansfield Board of Ed budget that basically are not being backfilled. And I believe it was either four or five teaching positions, and then four or five non certified, ie, paraprofessional positions," Aylesworth said. "My understanding is that while there are reductions in, I guess you could say, headcounts," Aylesworth said, "nobody's being terminated, or position eliminated, other than positions that will not be backfilled after, I guess you could say natural vacancies, so things such as retirement."

The public safety budget increased by 10.7% in the proposed budget.

"The biggest increases are a couple of areas according to additional staffing of both police and fire and emergency services," Aylesworth said.

While Mansfield lacks a municipal police department, they contract with Connecticut State Police, and have ten uniformed officers.

"The town council has stated its desire to increase our staffing from the ten that we are currently at to 13. So, we are looking to, as far as the budget will allow, to increase from ten to 11 in this next year," Aylesworth said. "On the fire and emergency services side, we're proposing the creation of three new positions. One, creating a full-time deputy chief of operations position, and then also hiring two additional full time firefighter/EMTs."

**See MANSFIELD BUDGET, p. 02**

## Stop by today's ethnic studies symposium



Antoinette Brim-Bell, current State Poet Laureate, will visit UConn on Friday, April 5 for an ethnic studies symposium. The event will be held in the Wilbur Cross Building's North Reading Room.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF @ANTOINETTEBRIM ON X

by Hallie LeTendre

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The University of Connecticut will be hosting an ethnic studies symposium today.

From 11 a.m. until 6 p.m. students are invited to UConn's Wilbur Cross Building's North Reading Room for the event.

The goal of today's event is to provide students in the ethnic studies field with a space to collaborate and enjoy the community they are a part of.

"The symposium will create a space for students who research ethnic studies to gather and be in community with one another," event organizer Karen Lau said. "Often, students of color who research ethnic studies, like myself, feel like we are waiting in the wings for somebody to affirm that our scholarship belongs in the academy. Our communities deserve to be studied and our work matters beyond our campuses."

Students from across the state will present research, including some from Yale University, Trinity College, Fairfield University and Connecticut College.

Additionally, the current State Poet Laureate, Antoinette Brim-Bell will be the event's keynote speaker.

**"Often, students of color who research ethnic studies, like myself, feel like we are waiting in the wings for somebody to affirm that our scholarship belongs in the academy. Our communities deserve to be studied and our work matters beyond our campuses."**

KAREN LAU

"The symposium will have over 30 presentations across eight panels about Africana Studies, Asian American Studies, Latino Studies, Native American and Indigenous Studies, WGSS, medical humanities and more," Lau said.

**"The symposium will have over 30 presentations across eight panels about Africana Studies, Asian American Studies, Latino Studies, Native American and Indigenous Studies, WGSS, medical humanities and more."**

KAREN LAU

Lau made today's event possible with UConn's Humanities Institute, an organization with an emphasis on social inquiry, public humanities and interdisciplinary collaboration.

Lau encourages students to take up the opportunity to attend today's free and unique event. "Most humanities conferences are costly and often closed to undergrads, and the few that are open to undergrads are often held at private universities where very few public school students participate," Lau said.

A full schedule for the symposium can be found online. Additional information on the event and the UConn Humanities Institute can be found on their website.

"The symposium will be an empowering space for students to share their research, generate dialogue and chart a course for the future of ethnic studies at a critical time when several states are outlawing DEI programs and defunding humanities departments," said Lau.

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THE DAILY CAMPUS NEWSLETTER

# News

## MANSFIELD BUDGET, cont. from p. 01

Aylesworth said that this was proposed because "we're a community that's experiencing growth right now," and the proposed staff increase is so that Mansfield can provide emergency services to new residents.

"A majority of our employees are union employees and we have a few different labor groups," said Aylesworth. Given that this is a contract renegotiation year for two of these labor groups, \$260,150 in the budget is marked as contingency, and will be channeled into different departments after contract renegotiation occurs and salaries are set.

Regarding city revenue, the Mansfield budget will include a decrease in city taxes of \$1 million, or \$156 per median homeowner.

"The main driver for the reduction in the mil rate is the

fact that we are anticipating the receipt of considerably more state aid," Aylesworth said.

**"The main driver for the reduction in the mil rate is the fact that we are anticipating the receipt of considerably more state aid."**

RYAN AYLESWORTH

Mansfield currently receives a considerable amount of funding from Connecticut to cover services provided to UConn students, such as roads, a library and events held by the city.

"In particular, two areas of anticipated revenue increase is based on the governor's proposed budget for this year. We receive funds that are called Payment In Lieu Of Taxes, sometimes called PILOT funds because UConn, being a state university, is tax exempt," Aylesworth said. "But we receive in lieu of taxes, payment [from the state of Connecticut] in the neighborhood of 10 or 11 million dollars."

Mansfield also receives funds from Connecticut to cover its school districts.

"We receive, for the school district, educational cost sharing funds otherwise known as ECS. So the formula that's used for that has the town of Mansfield receiving several million dollars more than we received last year," Aylesworth said. The ECS is a grant from the state of Connecticut to assist towns with funding education.

## UCONN FUNDING, cont. from p. 01

Geoghegan said that if the school only received a portion of the \$96 million, the school would try to generate more revenue through the UConn Foundation and other revenue initiatives.

According to Director of Operating Budget Kelly Whibey, the ledger-2 cuts will come out of operational administrative units as well as academic departments, if the cuts happen this year. Geoghegan said that UConn will present its final budget plan around mid to late June.

"Any aspect where we can actually cover that reduction with new revenue is goal number one. And then after that, of course, everything else, we're looking at the expenses, and overall staffing levels and things

like that," he said.

Geoghegan said that even though there is a lot of support for public education funding, the state has to balance the interests of other educational institutions, such as other Connecticut state universities and the K-12 system.

"There does seem to be a lot of support that is around for UConn and UConn Health so the university in total, but we were one of many that are asking for additional funds," Geoghegan said.

According to Geoghegan, UConn has been having "very good conversations in the legislature."

"We do have a lot of support, so we are very hopeful that we'll get a good positive number when something does come out," he said.

# Tennessee lawmakers pass bill to require anti-abortion group video, or comparable, in public schools

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — Tennessee would become the latest state to require public school students to watch a video on fetal development produced by an anti-abortion group, or something comparable, under legislation that is headed to Republican Gov. Bill Lee's desk.

The GOP-dominated Senate passed the legislation Thursday, with the five Democrats in attendance and one Republican voting to oppose.

The Senate voted down various Democratic amendments: to let parents opt their children out of watching the video, to let school districts decide whether to show it; to show a disclaimer that it's scientifically inaccurate political propaganda; and to let schools teach comprehensive sex education.

"This cutesy, shiny, pink video is offensively childish and it diminishes the complexity of reproductive health," said Democratic Sen. Heidi Campbell. "It's insulting to women and it's insulting to the medical profession."

The bill's sponsor, Republican Sen. Janice Bowling, argued the video is accurate.

"It does show conception and it's an AI-type of film, but it's medically correct," Bowling said. "And it shows the moment when the sperm unites with the egg, and that is the beginning of life."

The bill mirrors similar proposals that have popped up this year in Iowa, Kentucky, Missouri, and West Virginia, have all been backed by Live Action, an anti-abortion organization. North Dakota was the first state to adopt the idea last year.

Live Action has been approaching states pushing them to use their three-minute animation

in classrooms that they say helps visualize a fetus developing in the womb. The fetus in the video is referred to as Baby Olivia.

The clip depicts an egg being fertilized and implanted then progressing through embryonic and fetal developments occurring throughout a pregnancy. A voiceover also introduces viewers to Olivia as an illustration of a fully developed baby in utero appears on screen. Olivia's mouth and eyes open and close, and her hands move.

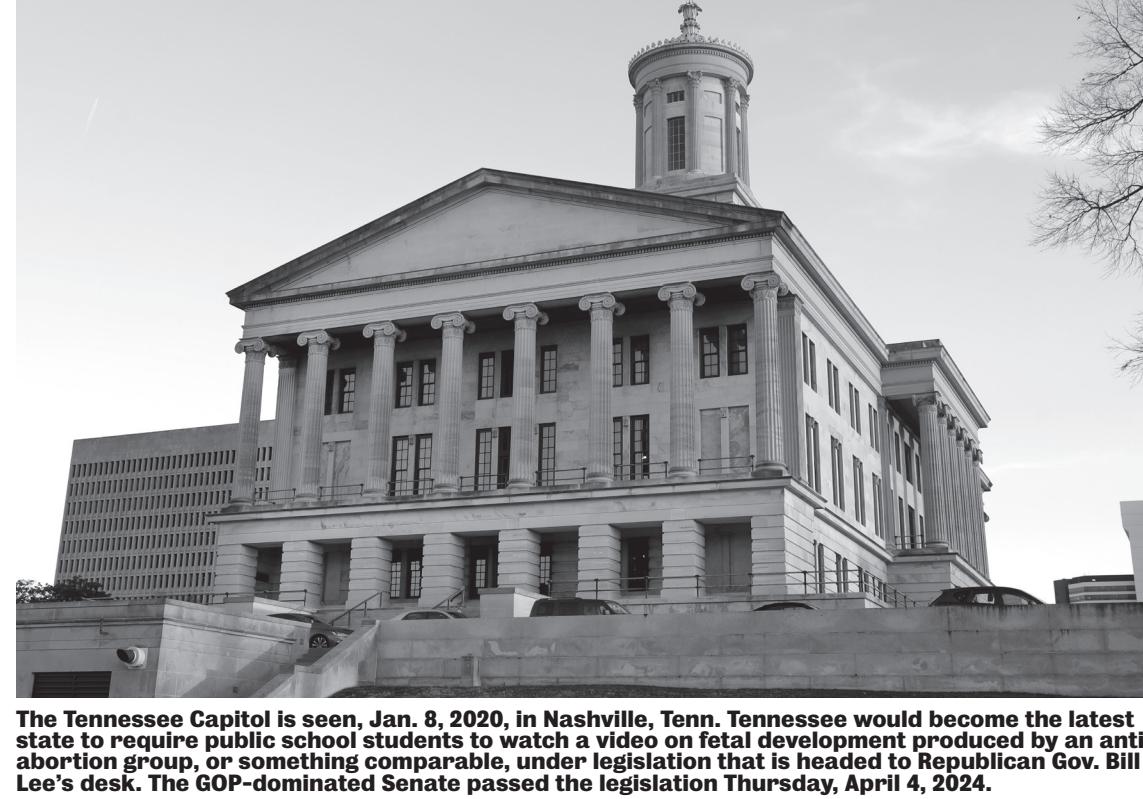
"Though she has yet to greet the outside world, she has already completed an amazing journey," the narrator says.

However, the video has been criticized by some educators and physicians, who argue the video is deceptive and problematic for a young audience. Furthermore, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, a professional organization with over 60,000 members, has said that the video is anti-abortion misinformation "designed to manipulate the emotions of viewers."

Live Action says the video was made in consultation with doctors.

Under the Tennessee version, public schools would have the option to show a different video, but the legislation contains strict requirements that it must be at least three minutes long and contain "a high-quality, computer-generated animation or high-definition ultrasound" that shows "the development of the brain, heart, sex organs, and other vital organs in early fetal development." It's unclear how many other organizations offer something similar.

The bill says the video must be shown as part of a school's family life curriculum.



**The Tennessee Capitol is seen, Jan. 8, 2020, in Nashville, Tenn. Tennessee would become the latest state to require public school students to watch a video on fetal development produced by an anti-abortion group, or something comparable, under legislation that is headed to Republican Gov. Bill Lee's desk. The GOP-dominated Senate passed the legislation Thursday, April 4, 2024.**

PHOTO BY MARK HUMPHREY/AP

Democrats said requiring the video goes against Republicans' claims that they prioritize parental choice in education.

"I've heard many members in this body talk about school choice, parent choice as the lay of the land and how it should be," said Democratic Sen. Charlene Oliver. "But it seems to be only convenient when it fits a certain political ideology."

During the same floor session, the Senate also voted to send the governor a bill that would require annual firearm safety instruction in public schools, including safe storage, avoiding injury if a student

finds a gun and informing adults if one is discovered. No live guns, ammo or firing could be involved.

While Lee hasn't publicly weighed in on the video legislation, it's likely to win the Republican's signature. The governor has never vetoed a bill since taking office in 2019 and he has repeatedly stressed his opposition to abortion. Under his administration, Lee enacted a sweeping abortion ban that went into effect shortly after the U.S. Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade in 2022 and approved sending more tax dollars to anti-abortion

crisis pregnancy centers.

The Baby Olivia legislation has not made as much progress in other states as in Tennessee. West Virginia's Senate signed off on the measure in February that specifically applied to eighth and twelfth graders, but the Legislature adjourned before it could clear the House of Delegates.

In Iowa, lawmakers are debating whether to remove specific references to the Baby Olivia video and instead require any video depicting the "humanity of the unborn child." Meanwhile, the bill has not advanced in Kentucky and Missouri.

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## THE TEACHING OF HMONG AND ASIAN AMERICAN HISTORIES TO BE REQUIRED IN WISCONSIN UNDER A NEW LAW

MADISON, Wis. (AP) — Gov. Tony Evers on Thursday signed into law a bipartisan bill requiring Wisconsin schools to teach Asian American and Hmong American histories.

Evers signed the bill at an elementary school in Wausau, which is home to about 4,700 Hmong. That is 12% of the city's residents, making Wausau the highest per capita Hmong population in the state and country, according to the Hmong American Center.

"The Hmong and Asian American communities are a critical part of our state's history,

culture, economy, and our future," Evers said in a statement. "It's important that we celebrate our shared histories and honor the people who help make Wisconsin the state it is today."

Persecuted as an ethnic minority in their ancestral lands in China, the Hmong fled first to the mountains of Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam. There, tens of thousands fought for the United States in the Vietnam War. When Communist regimes swept the region, they escaped to refugee camps in neighboring Thailand and,

starting in the mid-1970s, resettled largely in California farm country, Minneapolis and central Wisconsin.

Wisconsin's Hmong population of 50,000 places it third highest behind California at 80,000 and Minnesota at 70,000, according to the Hmong American Center.

Current Wisconsin law requires K-12 schools to teach Black, Hispanic and Native American histories. The new law adds Hmong and Asian American histories to this required curriculum. The goal is to promote greater awareness and understanding



**Gov. Tony Evers, D-Wis., speaks Thursday, Jan. 25, 2024, in Superior, Wis. Evers on Thursday, April 4, 2024, signed into law a bipartisan bill requiring Wisconsin schools to teach Asian American and Hmong American history.**

PHOTOGRAPH BY ALEX BRANDON/AP

of Hmong and Asian American histories, cultures and traditions.

The measure had broad support in the Legislature, including from

the state education department, the state teachers' union and the Wisconsin Council of Churches. There were no registered opponents.

## April nor'easter with heavy, wet snow pounds Northeast, knocks out power to hundreds of thousands

(AP) — A major spring storm brought heavy snow, rain and high winds to the Northeast, downing trees and power lines and leaving nearly 700,000 homes and businesses without power at one point. A woman was killed by a falling tree in a New York City suburb and a second woman died in a New Hampshire fire caused by the weather.

Two feet of snow was expected in parts of northern New England by Thursday evening, with wind gusts of 50 to 60 mph (80 to 97 kph) in coastal areas and inland, according to the National Weather Service. Moderate to heavy snow was forecast to continue in the evening and into Friday in areas of higher terrain.

Maine and New Hampshire bore the brunt of the power outages, with about 310,000 and 125,000, respectively, as of Thursday night, according to poweroutage.us. Local officials said the heavy, wet snow was to blame for bringing down trees and power lines.

"This was pretty much a classic nor'easter," said Stephen Baron, a meteorologist for the weather service in Gray, Maine. "This is definitely a high-end storm for April. It's not crazy for us to get snow in April, but not usually getting double-digit amounts."

The weather service said it was the biggest April nor'easter to hit the region since 2020.

"Still reporting snow and wind here at the office, with 17.4 inches (44.2 centimeters) of snow for the event thus far here in Gray," the service posted in the evening on X, formerly known as Twitter.

Over a foot of snow fell in Wolfeboro, New Hampshire, where some residents who lost power checked in at the Wolfeboro Inn, general manager Shawn Black said.

"This is a lot of heavy, wet snow," he said. "And the wind is out of the northeast, so it's really not nice in a sense of temperature-wise, especially when the speed gets up to gusts of 55 mph. While I was out on the snowblower I could really feel my forehead just go numb."

Jane Phillips, who was cross-country skiing in her neighborhood in Portland, Maine,

was relishing the weather.

"It's special to get snow in April and to be able to get out and enjoy it," said Phillips. "It's fun being a Mainer."

Heavy snow made travel treacherous in northern New England and New York, and numerous vehicle crashes were reported.

One temporarily shut down Interstate 95 northbound near Lewiston, Maine, on Thursday morning. In Windham, Maine, near Portland, a vehicle lost control and struck a police cruiser, but no one was injured.

The storm brought mostly heavy rain to southern parts of the Northeast, as well as high winds.

Late Wednesday afternoon, a tree fell on a vehicle and killed a woman in the hamlet of Armonk in New York's Westchester County, police said.

In New Hampshire, Derry Fire Chief Shawn Haggart said a

tree fell on the house near external propane tanks at a time when strong winds were knocking down branches and power lines.

Dozens of flights in the region were canceled or delayed, and many schools and government offices were closed in northern areas.

"We recommend that you stay off the roads if you can, but if you must travel during the storm, be sure to give

plow trucks, utility crews and emergency first responders plenty of room as they work to keep us safe," Maine Gov. Janet Mills said.

Utilities in northern New England said they were prepared for the storm but power restoration

could still be lengthy.

"Our crews are responding to widespread tree damage across our service area brought on by today's long-duration nor'easter," Central Maine Power said on its website, adding that most of the damage was due to "more than a foot of heavy, wet snow and strong winds."

The utility said more than 450 power line crews and 250 tree crews were assessing the damage and were prepared for a multi-day restoration effort.

Whipping winds and driving rain battered Boston, where staffers at the New England Aquarium did a sweep of the roof to make sure nothing could blow into the sea lion habitat, which is partially exposed. The storm caught some visitors off guard.

"I just saw the wind and the rain and I just bought this little poncho to protect myself," said Claire Sausso, who grew up in France and was visiting the city Wednesday. "I wasn't prepared with the warm clothes. It's worse than the north of France!"

Elsewhere, cleanup work continued in several states wracked by tornadoes and other severe weather blamed for at least three deaths this week. Tornadoes touched down in Oklahoma, Kentucky, Tennessee and Georgia.

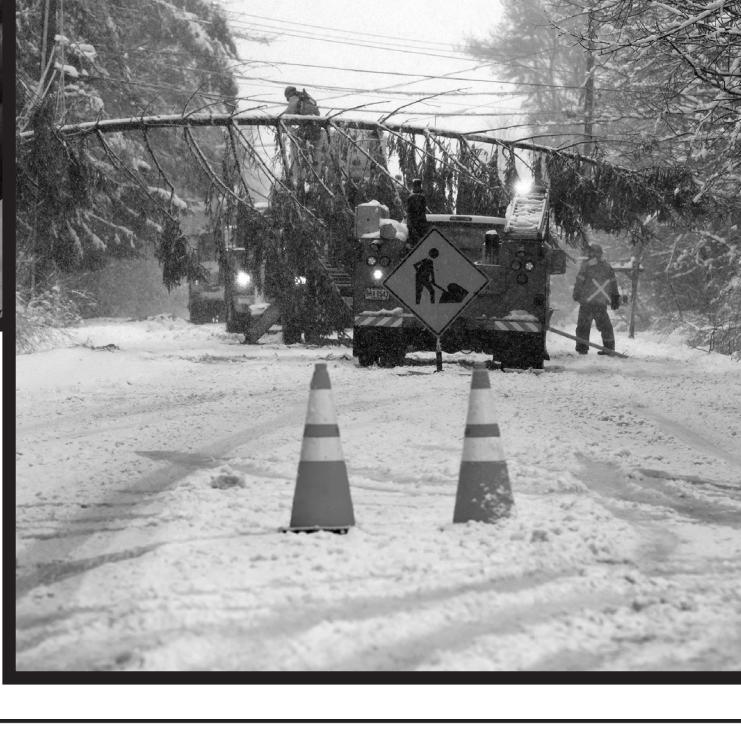
Killed were a homeless woman in Tulsa, Oklahoma, who was sheltering inside a drainage pipe during heavy rains; a woman in the Philadelphia suburb of Collingdale whose car was hit by a falling tree; and a person involved in a car accident in Kentucky.

In West Virginia, the National Weather Service on Thursday confirmed that two tornadoes with maximum winds of 130 mph (209 kph) and another with maximum winds of 110 mph (177 kph) hit in the southern part of the state Tuesday, damaging homes and businesses and snapping and uprooting trees. The weather service also issued a warning for major flooding through Sunday in some communities along the Ohio River. About 20,000 homes and businesses in the state remained without power as of Thursday night.



**(Left) Commuters walk with umbrellas through wind-driven rain near South Station, Thursday, April 4, 2024, in Boston.**

PHOTO BY CHARLES KRUPA/AP



**(Right) A portion of Route 9 between Falmouth and Cumberland is closed as crews work to remove a downed tree spanning the snow-covered roadway in Falmouth, Maine, Thursday, April 4, 2024, following a spring snowstorm.**

PHOTO BY BEN McCANNA/AP



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# Tales from the Turntable:

## WOODSTOCK '69 - PEACE, LOVE & DRUGS



IMAGE COURTESY OF FLICKR

by Henry St.Pierre

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Welcome to this week's Tales from the Turntable! Throughout the year, I've covered almost every facet possible about music, including bands, songs, albums and rumors alike; however, I've never covered live music. This came to my surprise, as I often find myself waiting with bated breath for my favorite musicians to announce a show near me. Now that we're getting closer and closer to summer break, I'd like to close out this year with a trilogy of articles covering the most famous — and sometimes infamous — series of concerts in modern music.

For the next two weeks, I'll be going over each Woodstock festival, hopefully giving an insight into the state of musical culture at the time and the minds of American youth. This week we'll be looking at the very beginning.

Before getting into the music, it's important to look at America as a whole during this time. The late 1960s was a time of intense tension. The civil rights movement had only just ended segregation in most places in the country, but bigotry was still around. Coupled with the assassinations of Martin

Luther King Jr. and presidential candidate Robert F. Kennedy in 1968, many across the

nation feared for the future.

Across the Pacific Ocean, the U.S. was still waging war against North Vietnam, much to the displeasure of many Americans. Richard Nixon had just taken office as president, promising to pull out of Vietnam as soon as possible. It wouldn't be until 1973 that he fulfilled that promise.

The unstable state of the political sphere had caused many young Americans to seek escapism through both visual and aural art. Through this expression of intense emotion, the hippie movement was born.

The festival idea came from the mind of 25-year-old Michael Lang, who had just dropped out of New York University to pursue a career in business. Lang

was quickly shot down. In an effort to keep their idea afloat, they eventually landed a deal with a

farmer in Bethel,

about 60 miles south of Woodstock.

With a venue locked in, the two began searching for artists to book. Initially, almost no one wanted to sign on, but the duo was eventually able to



LOGO BY KRISTA MITCHELL, STAFF ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS

land big-name acts like Creedence Clearwater Revival, Jimi Hendrix and The Who.

While Lang and Kornfeld told Bethel city council that estimated attendance was to be no more than 50,000, the actual attendance was almost 500,000. Many concertgoers had also brought in copious amounts of drugs, with 752 confirmed drug overdoses over the course of three days, two of which ended up being fatal. There were also reports of up to eight women having miscarriages over the weekend, though the actual number is often disputed.

Common amenities quickly became scarce across the

farm; parking filled up almost immediately and lines of cars stretched for miles across the countryside waiting for a chance to enter. Bathrooms were too few and broke down, and rain from the previous week had left the ground muddy. Most didn't care though, despite few having tents or any kind of sleeping equipment.

The music ran throughout the night and into the morning, concluding with a performance from Jimi Hendrix at 9 a.m. on Sunday, becoming the most iconic performance throughout the festival. Though

nearly half a million people attended, the concert was

very peaceful.

Most incidents were strictly drug-related, and very little violence was reported. For an event set out to bring peace and happiness to its guests,

most viewed the festival as a complete success, despite its shortcomings with the law. Authorities threatened to shut everything down numerous times, though no real action was taken.

For the festival's 25th and 30th anniversaries, Woodstock '94 and '99 were held to honor the original festival and celebrate popular musicians at the time. These two festivals were unlike the first, however, as music became angrier and teenage concert-goers became more angsty. What was supposed to be a weekend of fun quickly morphed into a weekend of nightmares.

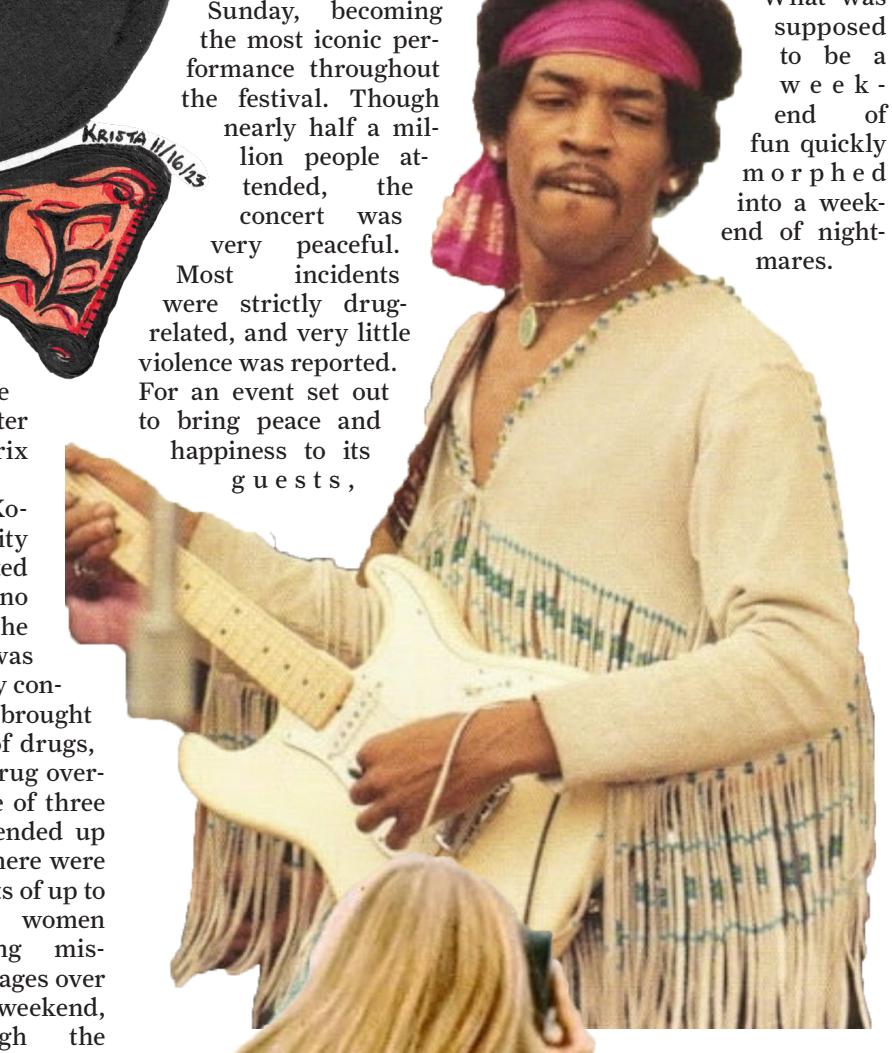


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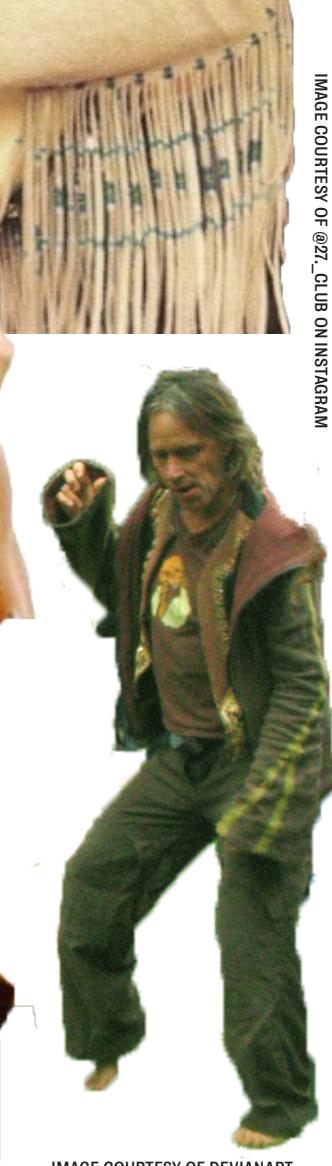


IMAGE COURTESY OF DEVIANART



# Life

@dailycampuslife

## PIANISTS DUET BETTER AT UCONN

by Kenneth Van Dyk | CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT | HE/HIM/HIS | kenneth.van\_dyk@uconn.edu

Tomorrow, April 6 at 8 p.m., the UConn Piano Studio in the School of Fine Arts will be holding their annual Piano Project concert. Every spring semester, students of all years studying piano, from undergraduate freshmen to doctoral students along with their instructors, get together to perform at von der Mehden Recital Hall in a spectacular display. These concerts usually center around a theme that all the pieces follow, this year's theme is pieces for four to eight hands. And seeing as how a single person usually doesn't have that many hands, these pieces will be performed by up to four people at once.

The concert will start with an arrangement of the overture to "Le Nozze di Figaro" by Mozart for eight hands, played by instructors Angelina Gadeliya, Javor Bračić, Dmitriy Glivinsky and doctoral student Anthony Bonamici. Even if you don't recognize the name, this overture is famous for its lighthearted feel and is a perfect showcase of Mozart's brilliance. To replicate the enormity of an entire orchestra, this arrangement must be played on two separate pianos, and just imagine the effort in coordinating four different pianists at the same time.

After that, the first movement of Claude Debussy's "Petite Suite" will be played by Gadeliya and Bračić. De-

bussy was a titan of impressionist music and his music is often described as having a "French" quality to it. If you know Debussy's works such as "Clair de lune" and "La fille aux cheveux de lin," you'll already be familiar with his signature ethereal sound that mixes the emotional and spacy. If you love those pieces, you'll love this one even more. Its name "en bateau" translates to "on a boat," a fitting name for the waves of sound that rock back and forth.

Various parts from Sergei Rachmaninoff's "Suites for Two Pianos" are in the program, played by students of Dr. Gadeliya. These suites are earlier works from Rachmaninoff, but they show his iconic late Romantic sound. His work is known for its drama and grandiosity, pushing the limits of the piano's expressivity. He was also infamous among pianists for having giant hands and writing pieces that take advantage of them, which make parts of his music nearly impossible for people with a normal handspan to play. With two pianos, Rachmaninoff was able to reach even greater heights. The sheer range and speed of notes makes this impossible to play on one piano, but it works beautifully on two.

Another highlight of the concert will be Zoltan Almashi's "Carpathian Song for Two Pianos." Instead of

being composed centuries ago, this piece was written in 2022. Born in 1975 in Lviv, Ukraine, Almashi took inspiration from his homeland of western Ukraine and wrote a piece based on the region's folk songs. It passes through a wide range of emotions with a sound that's both familiar and new. The ending is especially chilling, subtly fading into nothingness on a mysterious or contemplative note.

The last piece in the concert will be "Variations on a Theme by Paganini for Two Pianos" by Witold Lutosławski. This theme from Paganini's "Caprice, No. 24" is one of his most famous works. It's widely regarded as one of the most difficult violin pieces out there and is a testament to the man who — according to legend — had his soul sold to the devil by his mother so he could become a great violinist. This theme is also famous for the variations made on it, such as those by Brahms and Rachmaninoff's "Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini." Lutosławski added to this collection with a stunning and virtuosic work for two pianos.

These are only half of the pieces being played at the concert! If this interests you, come to von der Mehden Recital Hall near Storrs Center at 8 p.m. tomorrow night. Tickets are \$10, but students are admitted for free with their student ID. See you there!

**2024 UCONN  
PIANO PROJECT**

**SATURDAY, APRIL 6, 2024  
AT 8PM**

**PIANISTS  
DUET BETTER**

**At  
von der  
Mehden  
Recital Hall**

**875 COVENTRY ROAD, STORRS, CT**

**MUSIC BY: MOZART • DEBUSSY • POULENC • RAVEL • DVORAK • LUTOSLAWSKI • RACHMANINOFF • AND ALMAŠI**

**INFOGRAPHIC BY SOFIA ACOSTA**

**UCONN | SCHOOL OF FINE ARTS**

LOGO COURTESY OF UCONN WORDMARKS & ASSETS



# Opinion

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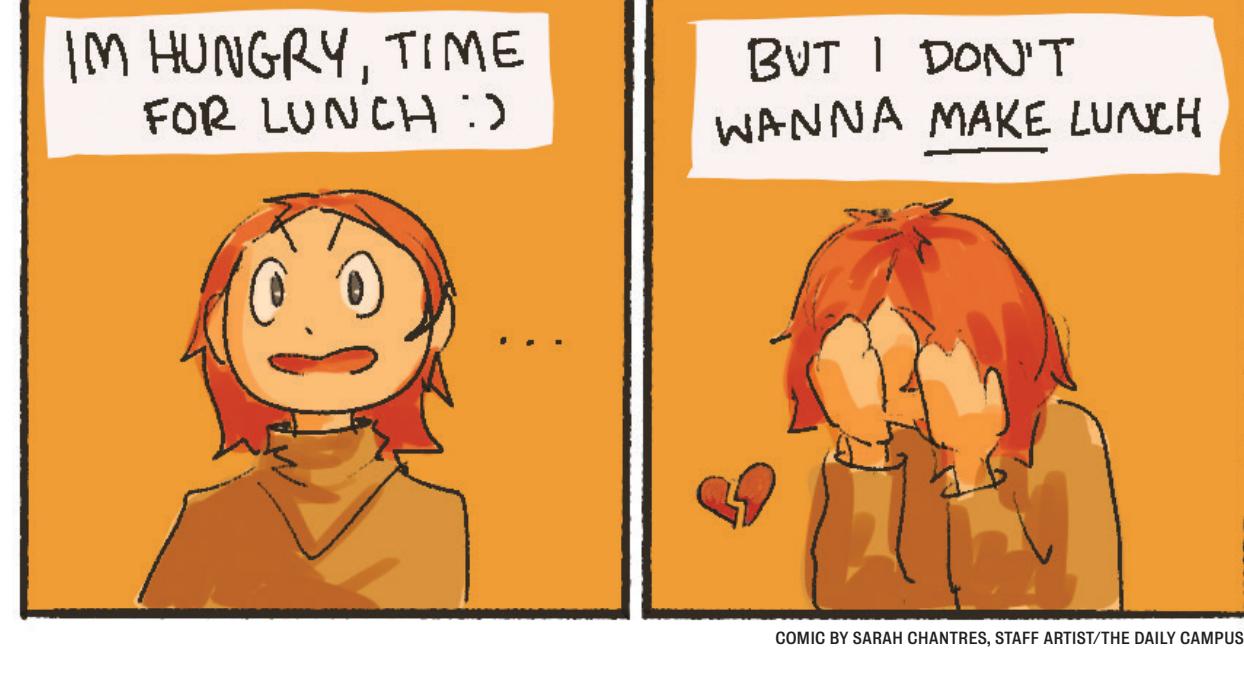
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Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed by individual writers in the opinion section do not reflect the views and opinions of The Daily Campus or other staff members. Only articles labeled "Editorial" are the official opinions of The Daily Campus.



COMIC BY SARAH CHANTRES, STAFF ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS

### ► Editorial

## UCONN'S STUDENT SPEECH FAILURE

The University of Connecticut is remembering a watershed moment in campus student activism with a new exhibition created by the Archives & Special Collections in the Richard Schimmelpfeng Gallery, located at The Dodd Center for Human Rights according to UConn Today.

"Please Respond Personally: Commemorating the 1974 Black Student Sit-in" revolves around a student sit-in at the Wilbur Cross building — which was previously the University's main library — on April 22, 1974. The sit-in resulted in arrests the next morning for more than 200 students who would not leave the building.

The takeover of the Wilbur Cross Library was a form of direct action taken by Black UConn students in April 1974. It came after several peaceful protests and demands from Black students, who were led by the Organization of African American Students, as a part of a larger campaign focused on increasing resources and representation for students of color.

The Daily Campus Editorial Board celebrates the exhibit's commemoration of student activists. Moreover, we hope this exhibit refreshes students' memory about UConn's legacy of radical activism and inspires them to challenge the trend of pacifying student speech.

In the aftermath of the attacks on Oct. 7, 2023 there has been a collective chilling of student-speech across college campuses nationwide; the Massachusetts Institute of Technology was one of several institutions that have suspended student groups for violations of campus protest rules, Columbia University has suspended both Jewish and Palestinian groups and Stanford University threatened to take disciplinary action against students who occupied a campus plaza for nearly four months.

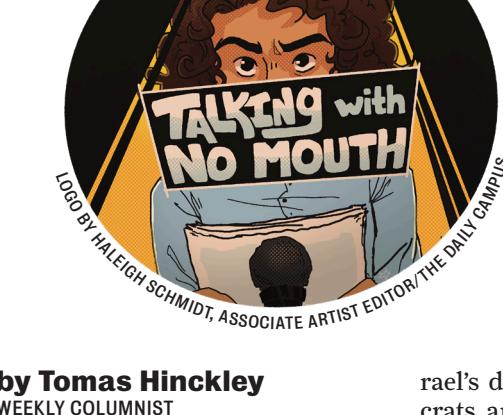
Though less flagrant in its suppression of student speech, UConn has been no exception; In December, according to reporting from The Daily Campus, administrators at the University of Connecticut discussed removing one of the iconic spirit rocks numerous times after it became an outlet for student expression about Israel and Palestine following Oct. 7. As the Editorial Board has discussed previously, we view increased regulation of the Spirit Rock as a way to curtail student speech by coaxing it through official, university approved channels.

Another way the university attempts to preemptively influence speech is by setting stringent regulations for student assembly. According to Student Union guidelines, any event sponsored by a registered student organization must be planned in advance in collaboration with Division of Student Activities or Student Union officials. Quick Response Events (QRE), which are significant university events that are likely to elicit a strong, immediate response from the UConn community — a strange euphemism for student protests.

Student Union guidelines place the onus on student groups to "contact and work directly with the Associate Director for Event Services to plan a QRE event with an expedited timeline," which "does not guarantee space availability." It is absurd to expect that students rapidly organizing a protest in response to "a violent or bias incident of significance to our community... a natural disaster" or other urgent situations would go through formal bureaucratic processes. But the utility of this red tape is that administrators can set the ground rules of student protest, most of which is contrary to the administration's interests.

It is not just through administrative efforts that UConn has found ways to curtail student speech, reaching those in power at UConn for open dialogue can prove to be a challenge. Earlier this semester university President Radenka Maric announced that she would be holding office hours according to reporting from The Daily Campus. However, the limited, 15-minute time slots offered from 8:10 a.m. filled up before most students even learned of this opportunity.

This is another example in the long line of frustrating contradictions from UConn, in one breath they will celebrate the student-activists of the past, while in the next they take away resources from this generation of student-activists.



by Tomas Hinckley

WEEKLY COLUMNIST  
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Abortion is set to be one of the most important issues of the coming 2024 election cycle, with the existential threat to the right to abortion being extremely credible given recent statewide attacks and bans. Although many voters are very dissatisfied with the rematch between President Joe Biden and former President Donald Trump, this issue could become a heavy motivating factor for democratic

rael's destruction in Gaza. Democrats are aware that they need a point to win over people when they are overwhelmingly failing to appeal to their base on most other issues, and so they are already ramping up their campaign materials centered around protecting abortion and other reproductive treatments like in vitro fertilization. The only problem is they've been doing this for years, and abortion access in America continues to worsen anyway. It raises the question of what has more value to Democrats: abortion rights or American's desire to protect them?

**A strong majority of Americans disapprove of the overturning of Roe v. Wade, and 62% of Americans believe that abortion should be legal in all or most cases.**

voters. Especially as many continue to vote "uncommitted" in Democratic primaries due to an incredible amount of anger over President Biden's handling of Is-

Abortion has a wide base of support across the United States. A strong majority of Americans disapprove of the overturning of Roe v. Wade, and 62% of Ameri-

cans believe that abortion should be legal in all or most cases. A similar percentage, 63% of respondents in a Gallup poll supported the abortion pill mifepristone to be available as a prescription drug around the U.S. In terms of IVF treatments, what seems to be Republicans' next target, around 86% of Americans approve of the practice. Even though abortion is one of the most emotionally and morally charged issues at the center of politics right now, with such support from a majority of Americans, incredibly, the issue has not only failed to move forward at all but regressed so much in the past few years. Now, there are 14 states where abortion bans are in place and enforced, with many more attempting to join them with similar acts on hold because of temporary court proceedings. The momentum of the pro-life movement currently is very strong, and a Trump presidency would only further this as he is the self-proclaimed "most pro-life president in American history."

**See DEMOCRATS, p. 08**



In the cutthroat world of electoral politicians, lawmakers need to set themselves apart from their colleagues through a number of methods. Does that mean effective policymaking, unconditionally advocating for the most vulnerable constituents or standing up to entrenched party establishments? Probably not; it usually means gimmicks.

This week, the Opinion section answers the question:

**WHAT ARE THE BEST — OR WORST — GIMMICKS THAT POLITICIANS USE TO CEMENT THEIR BRAND?**

Nell Srinath, Opinion Editor:

Amy Klobuchar joking, to absolute audience silence, "Donald Trump, the science is on my side... and besides, I'd like to see how your hair would fare in a blizzard" at every campaign trail stop. Honorable mention to Katie Porter's whiteboard. I would be a menace with that thing in her position.

Dan Stark, Associate Opinion Editor:

John Fetterman wearing shorts in every context, including on the Senate floor, was a hilarious one in my book. The meltdown from the right was legendary.

Tomas Hinckley, Weekly Columnist:

Other than my previously written disdain for the politician Jeff Jackson and his gimmick of being the TikTok man while also voting to ban TikTok (and then doubling down on it), I really like Mitch McConnell's little political gimmick of being a literal deer in headlights.

# Opinion StudyBreak

## Photo of the Day | Big things coming

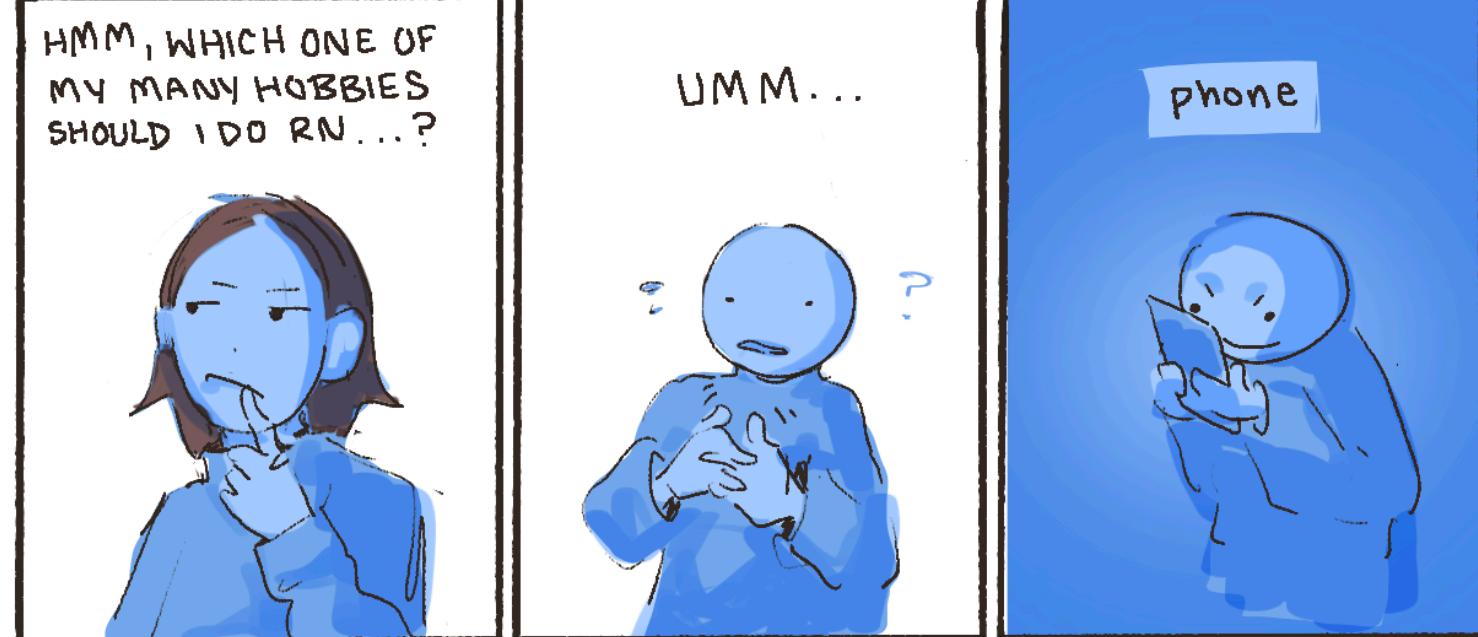


The calm before the storm. As Cleveland prepares for a very busy next few days between the Final Four, Championship and eclipse all in a four day period, the surrounding area hasn't felt the impending business yet. PHOTO BY CONNOR SHARP, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

## TALKING WITH NO MOUTH

DEMOCRATS, cont. from p. 07

The problem is that Democrats have had opportunities to do something about this for years. Barack Obama promised Planned Parenthood when running for president in 2008 that codifying Roe was "the first thing I'd do as president." After he won the presidency, he largely tried to stay out of the issue, calling it a "culture war" and saying it was "not my highest legislative priority." Obama completely failed to put Merrick Garland on the Supreme Court, and he had the opportunity to do so regardless of Republican senate opposition. Democrats could have pushed for Ruth Bader Ginsberg to retire earlier and replaced her with a younger democratic judge. After the 2020 elections, Democrats had control of the House, the Senate and the presidency but chose to focus their efforts on centrist, bipartisan legislation. It was not enough that even the Dobbs opinion was leaked early while democrats still had the aforementioned control, they still failed in the face of Roe's de-



COMIC BY SARAH CHANTRES, STAFF ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS

## THE DAILY CAMPUS COMICS



COMIC BY SAMANTHA HASS, CONTRIBUTING ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Barack Obama promised Planned Parenthood when running for president in 2008 that codifying Roe was "the first thing I'd do as president."

struction to ensure lasting protections. Later on, in November of that year, President Biden's only answer was to once again ask voters to support Democrats, and that this time he would not hesitate to codify it if given a supportive Congress.

Now in 2024, the cycle of disappointment and broken promises is starting once again. The question is whether it will be enough to convince voters despite everything else Democrats are failing at currently. As much as I would like to see change, I do not trust Democrats when it comes to seeing it through. The only thing they seem to care about more than protecting people's rights is the fear that losing those rights has over us.



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

Looking for a copy on campus?



Check out these locations!

# Softball: Huskies look to bounce back from Boston College loss in series at St. John's

by Sam Calhoun

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The UConn softball team (19-16, 7-2 Big East) is looking to bounce back after losing three of their last five games, with two coming against opponents based in the Boston area.

After a mid-week loss to Boston College, the Huskies turn their attention back to Big East play as they travel to New York to take on St. John's University (19-16, 8-4 Big East).

Connecticut is No. 2 in the Big East standings, while the Red Storm is No. 4.

With an underwhelming past five games, none of UConn's players made the Big East Weekly Honors, which were released on Monday.

St. John's has been hot, winning their last four games.

St. John's sophomore Ana Serafinko was named the Big East Player of the Week after a run-rule no-hitter as a pitcher and a grand slam at the plate. She struck out ten batters in a pair of victories over DePaul University. The Chino Hills, California native hit .375 on the weekend with two home runs and six runs batted in. She leads the conference in Big East wins this season with five.

Serafinko wasn't the only pitcher on St. John's recognized on Monday's Big East Weekly Honors. Sophomore Loreley Francia was named the Big East Pitcher of the Week after earning two wins this weekend, striking out 18 batters without giving up an earned run in 14 innings. She tossed a complete game on Friday, striking out eight in a shutout win over DePaul.

St. John's was supposed to host Fordham University on Wednesday, but the game was canceled due to inclement weather.

In the circle, the Johnnies have one of the best pitching groups. They lead the conference in opposing batting average (.204) and strikeouts (81).



The Huskies suffer a 0-2 loss from Boston University Terriers March 26, 2024. Game scores were 3-6 and 0-1 at the Connecticut Softball Complex. PHOTO BY MERCER FERGUSON, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

It seems to be a series in which runs will be scored on base hits, as these two teams allow the least and second-least amount of home runs.

Shortstop London Jarrard and outfielder Jess Bianco have come up big for St. John's at the plate. The two share the top two spots of total hits during Big East play. Jarrard has 18 so far, while Bianco has 17.

Sophomore Cassidy Stouffer hasn't fared well so far this season, leading all batters in strikeouts in Big East play with ten.

In the Huskies' last Big East series, they won a series against Providence College,

only dropping one game and scoring four runs in each win.

They were shutout for just the third time this season in their loss to Boston College. All three shutouts have come against non-conference foes.

Connecticut is one of two teams in Big East play without at least ten doubles this season (7). DePaul only has hit one during conference play.

Both teams have 12 steal attempts in Big East games, tied for second-most in the conference. UConn has been caught four times, which is the second-most in the conference.

In the circle, UConn is another strong team in Big East

play. They are tied with St. John's for the second-best earned run average (2.01) and have the least amount of wins outside of Villanova's perfect conference record. Outside of Villanova, they have allowed the least amount of runs, earned and total.

Lexi Hastings and Hope Jenkins own two of the three best batting averages in Big East play. Hastings has batted .500 so far, while Jenkins has batted at .467. Jenkins is tied for the conference lead of RBIs with 12 in Big East play.

Rosie Garcia leads the conference in the Big East with five home runs.

Jenkins has been a force in the circle, leading the Big East in opposing batting average with .114 while posting an ERA of 0.66.

Following the Huskies' series with St. John's, UConn will travel back home to host Creighton next weekend. St. John's will travel to Stony Brook next week following the three-game series.

This weekend's series is at Red Storm Field in Queens, New York. Today's first pitch is set for 2 p.m. Saturday's game begins at 1 p.m., while Sunday's finale is at noon. All three games are available to watch on FloSoftball.

# Men's Golf Recap: Huskies Grab Fifth

## Place at Golfweek/AGT Invitational

by Sean Ahern

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The men's golf team traveled down to South Carolina and finished tied for fifth out of 19 teams at the Golfweek/AGT Invitational. The Huskies were one of eight teams to have at least two golfers place in the top-15.

The third round was unfortunately canceled due to the weather, but for the first two, the Huskies made an exceptional effort. In the first round they shot 293 and came back to shoot 283. The total, 576, helped them finish at an even par for the course. They finished just six strokes behind the winner Richmond.

Leading the way for UConn

were seniors Jimmy Paradise and Tommy Dallahan. Paradise finished tied for 10th in the 100-golfer field shooting three-under par (141). Dallahan, who finished tied for 15th, was not far behind his teammate, shooting one-under par (143).

Paradise notched 11 total birdies, which was tied for the most among all participants. Dallahan also played the par

fives very well, finishing three-under on them throughout the tournament.

With Paradise and Dallahan leading the way, UConn finished third in both par five scores and total number of birdies as a group, a major reason UConn turned in an impressive fifth-place team finish.

UConn's third man freshman Bradley Sawka finished

28th in the field. After shooting 76 in the first round, he came back incredibly strong for the second round to shoot 69, tied for the fourth lowest among all competitors.

Sawka is coming off a week where he cashed in a six-under performance at the Bridgestone Collegiate Invitational and earned Big East Golfer of the Week honors.

The Huskies' fourth man freshman Alex Heard had a similar game to Sawka where he shook off a 75 in the first round to shoot 72 in the second.

Rounding out the top five for UConn was junior Ray Dennehy who shot 155 across both rounds. Similar to Sawka, Dennehy was awarded Big East Golfer of the Week honors for his performance at the Surf Club Invite three weeks ago. For the three rounds, the junior shot an impressive 10-under that helped UConn take the team title over 18 teams. The Huskies will need these levels of play from everyone to contend in the competitive Big East Championships.

As an individual, sophomore Connor Goode finished tied for 86th in the field shooting 154.

The Huskies next travel to Penn State to compete in the Rutherford Invitational starting on April 13. It will be their last match before they travel down to the Riverton Pointe Golf and Country Club in Hardeeville, South Carolina, to compete in the Big East Championships.

UConn men's golf hosts their invitational at GreatHorse Country Club in Hampden, Mass. on Oct. 2, 2023. The invitational went on for the next two days. PHOTO BY SKYLER KIM, PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS



Photo of the Day | Next time we publish, we'll be women's national champs.



**UConn destroys the Georgetown Hoyas in the Big East Tournament final with a score of 78-42 to punch their ticket to the NCAA tournament.**

PHOTO BY CONNOR SHARP, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

# WOMEN'S LACROSSE:

HUSKIES AIM FOR THIRD CONSECUTIVE CONFERENCE WIN IN XAVIER MATCHUP

by **Bridget Bronsdon**

STAFF WRITER

SHE/HER/HERS

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The Huskies appear to be on a steady climb following two conference wins this past week.

After getting off to a rocky start and beginning the season 0-3, UConn is now climbing the ladder to emerge at the top of the Big East. Now, the only team that remains in their way is Denver (2-0).

This past week, the Huskies pulled out some of their most dominant wins against Marquette and Villanova. It was no secret UConn could dominate certain opponents, as they did earlier in the season to Columbia (17-1) and Marist (17-3), but it was just a matter of getting into a steady groove.

In both the Marquette and Villanova contests, the Huskies' consistency was key. Repeatedly outsourcing their opponents in every quarter and utilizing offensive dexterity from nearly every player was critical for UConn. Against Villanova, nine Huskies scored, and against Marquette, there were six.

There is clearly no shortage of skill on the UConn roster as



**UConn women's lacrosse takes on Marquette University at Joseph J. Morrone Stadium on March 30, 2024. UConn secured a 17-7 win.**

PHOTO BY EMMA MEIDINGER, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

nearly every player has had a chance in the spotlight.

This weekend, the Huskies will take on Xavier for one of their final conference contests before their season finale in the Big East Championship.

As for the Musketeers, they are battling a tough season (3-8). Falling to the basement of the conference (0-2) and fighting a subpar record has already put the odds in the Huskies' favor.

Mentality will be another factor

in play. Going into this weekend, the Musketeers will be coming off five straight losses whereas UConn is riding the high of a new-found two-game winning streak.

Although mentality isn't everything, it can help boost morale and continue the intensity and high spirits UConn is now enjoying.

While the cards appear to be stacked against the Musketeers, they shouldn't be counted out as every conference game has the opportunity to produce an upset.

of 60.46m ranks eighth all-time in the UConn outdoor records list and second best in the conference.

The dominance in the hammer throw carried over to the women's team as well, with junior Natalia Surdej also setting a new personal best of 62.48, taking first place. In the 4x400 event, the squad of Mia Powell, Anna Connors, Jalah Cooper and Jessica Starr ran a season-best mark of 3:48.11 to add a first-place tally for the Huskies.

Chloe Thomas was a major standout in the Raleigh Relays, taking second place in the 5k event with a UConn-record 15:35 stamp. Junior Jailya Ash also broke a school record in the outdoor 100-meter hurdle event, finishing with a 13.29.

One runner to keep an eye out for in this one is Bulls star Goodness Iredia, who holds the third-best triple jump mark in

As for their history, Xavier isn't a familiar competitor for the Huskies. Unlike opponents such as Fairfield and New Hampshire which the Huskies have faced for over a decade, Xavier is a new opponent, as the duo has only gone head-to-head one other time in 2023. In this year's matchup, neither team has the upper hand in understanding the more personal dynamics of their competitor.

As for their lineup, UConn has a powerhouse of athletes as several players reached milestones in the last contest. Graduate students Kate Shaffer reached and surpassed 150 career goals and Maddy George reached and surpassed 250 career draw controls. In goal, Landyn White surpassed 400 career saves and program record total wins as a goalie.

Without a doubt, UConn has quickly emerged as a strong conference competitor and will likely force Xavier onto their toes early on. If the Huskies can continue to capitalize on their offensive dexterity with White remaining a steel trap in goal, all signs point to success.

The opening draw is scheduled for Saturday at noon in Cincinnati.

the NCAA. The USF men's team currently holds the second fastest 4x100m in the nation (39.03) from Lincoln, Metelus, Croal and Saminu and the sixth fastest 4x400m relay from Zayquan Lincoln, Jaleel Croat, Nathan Mateus, Abdul-Rasheed (3:02.16).

This race will also see reigning ACC field athlete of the week Ilse Steigenga of Pittsburgh, who posted new personal bests in three of the seven heptathlon events; the shot put, javelin throw and 800-meter race. The Netherlands native will compete in the long jump and javelin throw on Saturday.

The men's team will compete in their first event on Friday in the Hammer at noon EDT and the girls will follow on Saturday at 11 a.m. EDT in the same event. Coverage and results can be tracked on [www.halymiletiming.com](http://www.halymiletiming.com).

## WOMEN'S TENNIS:

HUSKIES TO TRAVEL TO DC THIS WEEKEND TO TAKE ON GEORGETOWN

by **Avery Becker**

CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT

SHE/HER/HERS

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After defeating the University of Massachusetts Minutemen on Wednesday 4-3 for their second straight win, the UConn Women's Tennis team is looking to ride this high as they head into Washington, D.C. to face the Georgetown Hoyas on Saturday.

When you look at the history of these two teams, Georgetown has dominated the matches the past two years, even though the Huskies did defeat their Big East rival in their first match against each other in 2009.

The last time these two conference foes played against each other was on April 2, 2023, when the Hoyas won the match 4-3 in Storrs on Connecticut's Senior Day.

Like Wednesday's matchup, the last game where the Hoyas and Huskies faced off against each other was decided with the scores going down to the wire. Cameron Didion and Isabel Petri Bere clinched two singles points in third and fourth singles, but due to the Hoyas' strong doubles play, the match didn't finish in the Huskies' favor.

"Unfortunately we came up just a few points short in a heartbreaking 4-3 loss. But we fought tough on every court, and left everything out there today" said head coach Glenn Marshall after the match.

Coming into the matchup, the Hoyas are coming off a close win 4-3 against Marquette on Saturday, March 23, and are currently 6-11 on their season and 2-2 in conference play.

To sustain this winning streak, Connecticut has a tall task ahead of them and an athlete they will need to look out for is Georgetown's freshman Emily Novikov, who is 10-6 overall on the year in singles play and 5-4 in doubles play.

To take this win back to Storrs, the Huskies will need to utilize clutch athletes like Didion in singles and the pairing of Olivia Wright and Maria Constantinou in doubles to really clinch their eleventh win of the season.

Connecticut is also currently 2-2 in conference play and a convincing win over Georgetown would be a huge confidence booster for their team as their season ends in the coming weeks.

This third to last matchup for UConn will have a first serve scheduled for 11 a.m. in Washington D.C. If Husky fans wish to keep up with this match, they can do so on iOn-Court Live Scoring.

# TRACK AND FIELD

Huskies head to Tampa for South Florida Invitational



**Kasey Savage jumps 7.65 meters in the men's long jump at the Black and Gold invite at UCF. Savage has two total first place markers in high jump and two in triple jump.**

PHOTO COURTESY OF @UCONNTFCX ON INSTAGRAM





# Sports

# Men's Basketball:

## Huskies seek trip to National Championship in Final Four Matchup with Alabama

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The UConn men's basketball team has faced their fair share of competition this NCAA Tournament. From one of the most dangerous offenses in the country with Illinois, to one of the strongest defenses in San Diego State, the Huskies have plowed through it all. All their hard work has carved a path straight to Phoenix for their biggest challenge yet: the Final Four.

Connecticut's first test in the West? A dance with the Alabama Crimson Tide on Saturday at 8:49 p.m.

Like the Huskies, the Crimson Tide have had their fair share of challenges to make it to this matchup. They've had to take down an extremely tough University of North Carolina team that featured both Armando Bacot and R.J. Davis, along with another ACC foe in the Clemson Tigers. Both of those single digit wins set up this battle, and with the way that Alabama has played up until this point, UConn should certainly have their hands full.

One of the biggest things that makes the Crimson Tide team so tough to play against is their offensive efficiency, a mark that currently sits third in all of college basketball according to KenPom. They're not really like any team that UConn has played throughout the Tournament, as Alabama not only commands a very fast-paced offense, but also shoots plenty of three-point shots. The worst part is that this lineup is very gifted at hitting their shots from beyond the arc, 37.1% of them in fact.

Of course, you have to carry the weapons to secure impressive stats, but no one is more dangerous on this team than senior guard Mark Sears. If the lefty shooter being ranked No. 10 on KenPom's Player of the Year ranking doesn't impress you enough, then perhaps his 21.5 points per game on 50.4% from the field may just do the trick. As their team ranking also says, the senior is lethal from beyond the arc, draining 43.4% of his shots on about four attempts per game.

However, one of the bigger things to touch upon with this roster is their defense. Throughout this season, the Tide have played outside the top 100 in terms of their defensive efficiency, yet that's stepped-up big time. Sears has been a big help after leading his team in steals during the regular season, and he is currently averaging 1.75 steals per game.

For Alabama to pull off what many are calling a David vs. Goliath battle on Saturday, they'll need to be able to stop the size of Donovan Clingan in the paint. It's a task that both Coleman Hawkins and Jaedon LeDee have failed to accomplish, and that matchup for the Tide will be given to 6-11 big man Grant Nelson.

The former North Dakota State transfer has played a pivotal role in the frontcourt for his squad, averaging 11.7 points, 5.6 rebounds and blocking 1.6 shots per con-

test. But will his defense be enough to contain the impact of a projected NBA lottery pick? That remains to be seen, but it will nonetheless be one of the tougher challenges of the season for the senior.

Along with Sears, the Tide also has another weapon in the backcourt with Aaron Estrada, another impressive scorer for this unit. His 19 points on 52.9% shooting against UNC were critical in keeping this team alive, and with how this Connecticut defensive lineup has been known to silence the best of scorers, he'll need to be prepared for the worst.

Similar to Clingan vs. Nelson, all eyes will be on the Stephon Castle vs. Sears matchup. The current Huskies freshman has had to guard some tough names in the Tournament, including Terrence Shannon Jr. and Boo Buie. Both times, he's played a brand of defense that this Connecticut team has needed from him, and they'll once again need some relentless play from him on that end of the floor. The Georgia native has been one of the keys to why opponents haven't been able to score above 60 against Connecticut throughout March Madness. While it's certainly going to be tough for the Huskies to reach that level of defensive play against such a gifted offensive unit, they have the players to make it happen.

On top of all the positives I listed above for the Tide, their team is embracing that underdog mentality ahead of the matchup.

"We were an underdog. Nobody expected us here," said coach Nate Oats. "We had to sell our guys that we can make the run before the Tournament. Now that we've made run to get to the Final Four, I want our guys playing loose and free, but I want them thinking we have the chance to win. If you guys know me, I'm not going into this game just happy to be here."

The key here for UConn to win this game goes back to how they defend opposing three pointers. Alabama is 7-1 this season when hitting more than 15 triples, with their one loss of the season coming to fellow Final Four team Purdue. Of course, the matchup with Sears remains the most important, but one of the biggest weapons for the Tide, Latrell Wrightsell Jr., could be back in time for Saturday's matchup. As a 44.3% shooter from beyond the arc and a player that operates at 23.5 minutes per contest, that's another weapon that Dan Hurley and his coaching staff will have to gameplan for. He may have been out since the Round of 32 but considering his offensive rating of 135.1 ranks fifth in college basketball, that's always something you need to be wary about.

Ultimately, it's time for Connecticut to play their best basketball of the entire season. To deliver a second straight NCAA Championship, an improbable task for many schools across the nation, their mistakes must be minimal, and effort must be 110%.

Tipoff is slated for 8:49 p.m. EDT and will be televised on TBS.



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