



How a UConn biology professor is affected by federal grant and DEI executive orders

by **Gianni Salisbury**
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Over the past few months, Kat Milligan-McClellan, a Native Alaskan assistant professor in molecular and cell biology at the University of Connecticut, has been applying for National Institutes of Health (NIH) and National Science Foundation (NSF) grants for her research. Her work is mostly focused on the diversity, communities and exclusion in some communities of microbiota, which are the microorganisms of a particular site, habitat or geological period. She also studies the idea that “academia wasn’t built for people who are underrepresented in science,” and how it affects the way scientists research.

McClellan needs these grants to conduct her research and to ensure that she qualifies for tenure. “I go up for tenure in the next year or two. If I don’t have NIH or NSF funding, it will look poorly on me,” McClellan she said.

However, McClellan’s pursuit of these grants has been paused due to the recent executive orders set by President Donald Trump.

In late January, Trump released two executive orders that threatened to impact research. One froze federal funding on grants and the other is attempting to terminate Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) federal agencies.

Although Trump’s executive

order to freeze federal funding was temporarily blocked by a judge, the uncertainty of what might happen next still lingers.

McClellan said that whether she will get approval for NIH and NSF grants is currently up in the air as much of her work is centered around diversity. Many of the words in her research fall under the DEI words being looked at by the current administration.

“All of those words, all of those descriptions that I use include words that are being targeted by the administration for extra scrutiny. Diversity, exclusion and communities. All of those words are on the list of words that are going to be targeted for grants that are going to be funded in the future,” said McClellan.

She also stated that these executive orders will affect how she writes grants in the future.

“A large component of my lab is dedicated to ensuring that there’s diversity and equity across science and inclusion of many different people. And so, this is going to affect the way that I write grants, because I won’t be able to include that work, which means that work will not be funded. If the work is not funded, we can’t do it,” McClellan said.

If this happens, McClellan stated that she will have to look for outside private funding. However, she has found that many nonprofits and foundations are under pressure to not fund DEI.

Earlier this month the Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI), the nation’s largest private funder of biomedical research, canceled its \$60 million program that works to maintain diverse student bodies in undergraduate science and engineering programs. According to McClellan, this was due to pressure from the United States government to cancel their DEI-centered research. If they did not, the government threatened to take away their nonprofit status.

McClellan said she fears that this will also happen to other foundations as well.

She is funded by the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative (CZI), a science, diversity and leadership grant, a foundation similar to HHMI. The initiative helps fund her research related to DEI topics and she fears that it will soon be taken away.

According to The Observer, CZI started by Mark Zuckerberg and his wife Priscilla Chan, put an end to its diversity, equity and inclusion programs.

As for long term impacts, McClellan said she worries that these changes will discourage students from pursuing a future in science.

“Just about everybody in my lab comes from an underrepresented background in science. My concern is that because of these initiatives, they will be less likely to remain in science. I worry that they will want to leave and take the education that they got in the United States and



Kat Milligan-McClellan is an assistant professor at the University of Connecticut. Due to recent executive orders, her position is at risk. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

go back to their home countries, or will go to Canada or other states,” said McClellan.

She stated that overall, it is the uncertainty of the situation that has impacted her the most.

“Part of the issue is that executive orders are not policy, and they are not official. They are not laws, and so it’s unclear to

us whether or not these are going to be enforced in the future. We don’t know which of these are going to stand and which of these will be revoked later on. So, it makes it very difficult to plan. It makes it difficult to plan which grants to apply for and it makes it difficult to plan what language we include,” McClellan said.

Activists organize rally in Hartford as part of ‘Stand Up for Science’ on March 7

by **Patrick Boots**
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On Friday, March 7, multiple “Stand Up for Science” protests nationwide will spring up as a means to defend science as a pillar of social benefit, including in Hartford. The organization behind the protests is calling for lawmakers and scientific professionals to ensure its benefits continue to serve the public in the wake of political changes, according to the group’s webpage.

The Stand Up for Science organization is holding their own major protest in Washington, D.C. on Friday, and is endorsing rallies across 31 major U.S. cities, including New York, Providence and Boston in ad-

dition to the protest being held at the Connecticut State Capitol building. The group says that the issue of maintaining scientific integrity doesn’t end at Capitol Hill.

“Science shapes our world, drives innovation, and protects our future — but it needs voices like yours to defend and champion it,” their webpage says.

The rallies come in response to the actions of President Donald Trump, which has resulted in funding cuts and mass firings across federally-supported scientific agencies. The National Institutes of Health (NIH), National Science Foundation (NSF) and National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) have all seen droves of employees fired and budgets diminished, af-

fecting ongoing and proposed research and funding for numerous institutions, including the University of Connecticut. The NSF is the funding source for approximately 25 percent of all federally-supported research conducted by colleges and universities nationwide, according to their agency webpage.

“NSF is the only federal agency whose mission includes support for all fields of fundamental science and engineering,” says the UConn Office of the Vice President for Research. “It is tasked with keeping the United States at the leading edge of discovery in areas from astronomy to geology to zoology.”

The Stand Up for Science organization was founded by researchers affected by these sweeping changes. The group

says they have plans to meet with elected officials, but want the rallies to send a message to the government that science is for the benefit of all.

“We want thousands and thousands of people to come. All over the US, we want people to put down their science, put down the pipette, close their R script, cancel their run-throughs of their experiments that day and come out,” said Colette Delawalla, a Ph.D. candidate in clinical psychology at Emory University and lead organizer to the Scientific American. “That is our number one goal for March 7.”

Delawalla and fellow organizers Emma Courtney, a Ph.D. candidate in biology at Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, and Sam Goldstein, a Ph.D. candidate in health behavior at the

University of Florida, say that science has become a political subject because of the amount of involvement the government has in research and funding.

“The way that we’re taught science is really meant to minimize the role of opinion and bias in data collection. I think that is kind of the limit to which science is not political,” Courtney said. “Politics defines who can be a scientist and defines which grants get funded and what gets attention - science and politics are really incredibly intertwined.”

The Stand Up for Science rallies being held on Friday, March 7 start at noon. For more information, and to register for the Hartford event, visit standupforscience2025.org.

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News

Town of Mansfield unveils vision for mixed-use developments adjacent to the UConn campus

by Patrick Boots

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For the first time, the Town of Mansfield has publicly revealed a plan to revitalize residential and business areas in the “northwest opportunity zone” in an area of Storrs-Mansfield near the main University of Connecticut campus. The plan calls for mixed-use housing and business construction, improvements to parks and trails, pedestrian infrastructure and changes in zoning.

The town’s “Mansfield Tomorrow” committee released the 100-page draft plan in late February, which focuses on a study area directly to the west of UConn, spanning from South Eagleville Road to the northern town border with Willington. The area includes Hunting Lodge Road and the “Four Corners” area, anchored by the intersection of Routes 195 (Storrs Road), 320 (Willington Hill Road) and 44 (Middle Turnpike).

The plan was designed in collaboration with FHI Studio, a development planning and design agency.

“Northwest Mansfield is a collection of vibrant, interconnected neighborhoods, each

with unique charm and culture. The community values its natural systems, preserving them as the foundation of livability and sustainability, while blending open spaces and trails with a lively Four Corners hub featuring diverse retail and business amenities,” reads the project’s vision statement.

Key aspects of the study include the construction of “middle housing,” such as townhomes and duplex-style buildings, to help promote “affordable and varied choices” and accommodate diverse populations like seniors and UConn staff and graduate students. As UConn students face a housing shortage, having more options nearby could allow the university to comfortably accommodate a larger number of students.

“Middle housing enhances community livability by providing affordable, accessible residential options that improve access to transportation, services, and public spaces,” the plan’s housing specialists said.

Mixed-use housing development will also be fostered as an element of the town’s vision, with projects already under construction. These include The Standard at Four Corners on Storrs Road and the Eagleville Green complex on South Eag-

leville Road. Over 800 housing units across multiple other projects have also been approved by the town Planning and Zoning Commission inside the study area, the plan says.

The plan also outlines updates to town ordinances surrounding “neighborhood blight and disturbances,” like rental inspection and certification, litter fines and off-street parking restrictions.

Town officials and community members also agreed that the town’s current transportation and pedestrian infrastructure is in need of change, with suggestions to improve multi-use pathways, designate bicycle lanes and add scenic features and lighting, especially on pathways that have no current infrastructure like the Celeron Path.

Transit services were also addressed, with the plan stating that 24% of households in the study area are projected to rely exclusively on public transit options. It says that officials with the Windham Region Transit District (WRTD) have coordinated with the town to plan to increase service to development areas, but the conversation is ongoing and depends on their ability to provide those services in the first place.

A pillar of the study surrounds “placemaking,” the process of creating locations where people want to live, work and frequent, including the addition or improvement of “third places.” One community feature, the former Dorothy Goodwin Elementary School situated off Hunting Lodge Road, could potentially house recreational and community services to maintain a “neighborhood anchor” under the plan.

The study also remarks that Storrs-Mansfield’s downtown area includes many of these necessary elements, like green space and social opportunities, and would like to make the northwest zone equally vibrant.

“Storrs Center and...Route 195 through the UConn campus includes features such as pedestrian area lighting, plantings, and benches that contribute to a cohesive and welcoming environment. However, these elements are lacking in Northwest Mansfield, particularly in the Four Corners area,” the study says.

While UConn is not directly involved with the plan, the town acknowledges that the college community is a driving force behind the town’s population and economic development.

“While the study area’s boundaries do not encompass

UConn’s campus, there’s a recognized understanding that UConn’s influence, particularly its student population, deeply impacts the neighboring areas,” the document says. “Continued success and improvement of [UConn’s off-campus housing support] program will require ongoing support from both the Town and UConn.”

The plan also considers the town’s geography and conservation initiatives, explaining the potential impacts to flood zones, wetlands and habitats, farmland and topography.

The Town of Mansfield will officially present the plan to the Mansfield Town Council and Planning and Zoning Commission on Wednesday, March 12 at 6:30 p.m. in the Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building at the corner of South Eagleville Road and Storrs Road. A virtual attendance feature will also be available. The meeting will include an opportunity for public comment with written comments being accepted through the end of April.

For more information about the Town of Mansfield’s Northwest Vision and Strategy Plan, or to register for the public presentation on March 12, visit mansfieldtomorrow.org.



Students unwind with a meal at the Northwest dining hall. This is one of the seven on-campus dining halls.

PHOTOGRAPH BY NATHAN GALICINAO, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

The Daily Campus

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Daily Campus Crossword & Sudoku

- ACROSS**
- 1 Update a historic home, say
 - 6 Quick look
 - 10 "Dream on"
 - 14 Enlighten
 - 15 Crooner Paul
 - 16 Novela introduction?
 - 17 Fleetwood Mac hit with the lyric "I'll settle for one day to believe in you"
 - 19 Jai ___
 - 20 Pro vote
 - 21 Ingrid's "Casablanca" role
 - 22 Strenuous
 - 24 Prefix with tech
 - 26 Taylor Swift hit that features a sweater metaphor
 - 28 Milwaukee team
 - 31 "The Daily" podcast producer, briefly
 - 32 Special glow
 - 33 Paul of "The Batman"
 - 35 Venomous snake
 - 40 Elvis Presley hit about someone who only looks like an angel
 - 43 Be of ___: help
 - 44 ___ Point, California
 - 45 Summer getaway
 - 46 Govt. intel org.
 - 48 Gets to giggle
 - 50 Rihanna hit about friends who stick together rain or shine
 - 55 For fear that
 - 56 See 50-Down
 - 57 Quite bright
 - 59 Alley-___
 - 62 Actor Alda
 - 63 Musical remakes, and what 17-, 26-, 40-, and 50-Across all are, in a way
 - 66 Rare rocks
 - 67 Sinister
 - 68 Verdi work
 - 69 "Gotcha"
 - 70 "The Voice" host Carson
 - 71 Elevates

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14					15					16		
17					18					19		
20				21			22	23				
24	25				26	27						
28	29				30	31						
32				33	34		35	36	37	38	39	
40				41			42					
43				44			45					
46	47				48	49						
50	51	52	53			54	55					
56					57	58			59	60	61	
62				63	64				65			
66				67			68					
69				70			71					

By Sala Wanetick & Emily Biegas 3/5/25

- DOWN**
- 1 Depend (on)
 - 2 Actress Falco
 - 3 Touched on something touchy
 - 4 Back of the boat
 - 5 Author credit
 - 6 Buds
 - 7 Pioneering computer
 - 8 Scrape (by)
 - 9 Danish, e.g.
 - 10 Pong platform
 - 11 Former baseball commissioner Bud
 - 12 Glazer of "Broad City"
 - 13 Pretend
 - 18 "Euphoria" actor Jacob
 - 23 Pet collar attachment
 - 25 Stand by for
 - 27 Designate as a successor
 - 28 Grammy winner Erykah
 - 29 Feels remorse
 - 30 Flip-flop, e.g.
 - 34 Confidentiality contract, for short

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

T	O	W	N	S		S	C	A	T		M	E	A	N			
I	N	A	N	E		H	U	S	H		A	P	S	O			
N	E	V	E	R	M	I	S	S	A	T	R	I	C	K			
A	L	E		B	E	N	T		T	A	I	P	E	I			
I	R	K		M	E	O	W		O	N	E	N	D				
S	N	I	F	F	E	R	D	O	G		A	N	T	S			
H	E	N	C	E		Y	O	U	R	S							
E	R	G		S	P	A	D	N	A		B	R	A				
				S	T	E	W	S			M	O	L	E	S		
C	H	O	W		P	E	A	R	L	S	B	U	C	K			
H	E	X	E	S		S	L	O	E		I	R	E				
A	T	T	L	E	E		T	U	C	K		T	S	P			
S	E	A	L	E	D	W	I	T	H	A	K	I	S	S			
E	R	I	E		G	O	N	E		M	I	N	E	S			
S	O	L	D		E	W	E	R		A	N	G	I	N	G	S	T

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- 36 Dodges
- 37 Landline sounds
- 38 "Twilight" vampire Cullen
- 39 Gym count
- 41 Not a people person, say
- 42 Mariner
- 47 Prepared to serve, as pie
- 49 Black out
- 50 With 56-Across, grilled eel dish
- 51 Odometer units
- 52 Not one's best effort
- 53 Flush
- 54 Blacksmith's block
- 58 Wriggly
- 60 Fantasy monster
- 61 Unpaid ads
- 64 Egg cells
- 65 Maker of Lincoln Park After Dark nail polish

	2			4			9	
	6		3	5	1			2
					7			4
		6	5					
				8				9
					4	8		
2			4					
7			8		3		4	
	5			2			3	

Solution to Tuesday's puzzle 3/5/25

9	8	7	1	2	6	3	4	5
4	2	5	9	7	3	1	8	6
3	1	6	5	8	4	9	7	2
8	4	1	7	6	2	5	9	3
2	7	3	4	5	9	6	1	8
5	6	9	3	1	8	4	2	7
1	3	2	8	9	5	7	6	4
7	5	8	6	4	1	2	3	9
6	9	4	2	3	7	8	5	1

Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 box (in bold borders) contains every digit, 1 to 9. For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, visit sudoku.org.uk



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Split Record Review: 'brat'



LOGO BY SAMANTHA HASS, ARTIST EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

by Henry St. Pierre

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Welcome to the first half of Split Record Review! This week we'll be tackling one of the biggest records of 2024: Charli xcx's "brat." It's been well over half a year since "brat summer" took the world by storm. From teenagers in their bedrooms to Kamala Harris, "brat" dominated the cultural zeitgeist for quite a while. Today, we'll be seeing what Henry has to say!

Unless you've been living under a rock for the past year, you've seen the now-iconic neon green and black Arial text album cover that was meme'd out of existence. "brat" became a cultural icon of zoomers last year, and its impact has yet to diminish nearly nine months

later. Though I will admit my knowledge of electronica and EDM don't extend past the requisite classics for each genre, I still learned to appreciate "brat" for all its glory.

Starting with the bouncy and danceable "360," Charli's unmistakable vocals cut through the minimalistic instrumental, supplemented only by 808 claps, staccato synthesizers and synth bass. "Club classics" continues the bombastic energy, this time including a more layered instrumental. Whereas "360" appealed more towards the pop charts, this track leans heavily towards EDM.

Through these first two tracks, Charli shows her ability to create hits while showing off her knowledge of EDM and respecting the genre. Many attempts to fuse a poppy sound with electronic often lead to an

out-of-touch and cringeworthy final product, but Charli never takes the easy route on this record.

"Talk talk" isn't a reference to the 80s British synth-pop group; however, it still nods to classic Europop. Though this track didn't reach nearly the same heights as "Apple" or "365," it's an earworm for sure. The only problem I have with this song is a gripe I have with the rest of the record: Many of the songs are criminally short. Though this can occasionally lend to the track's character, it often leaves the listener wanting more.

"Von dutch" is another poppy track that could surely sway a crowd into a dancing frenzy. Part of the massive appeal of "brat" is Charli's unfettered ability to craft an earworm. It's important to mention that she's been a massive figure in

the game for years now, and her abilities as a songwriter are unwavering.

The grinding bassline on "Girl, so confusing" is reminiscent of hyperpop, which is a somewhat controversial genre among the chronically online. As someone who's admittedly chronically online, I have a soft spot for hyperpop. "Girl, so confusing" contains many hallmarks of a good hyperpop song, instilling Charli's ability to jump from subgenre to subgenre with minimal effort.

Now for the big fish: "Apple." Even if you've somehow never listened to "brat," you've heard this song. Being the subject of a viral TikTok dance, "Apple" became the flagship song for the record. What else is there to say that hasn't been said? There's a reason it's become so popular — it's a stone-cold banger. Not much else to say.

"365" is a great way to end the record. As a closer, it's incredibly memorable and catchy. Being another massive hit from the record, it's no surprise. Like "Apple," many of the bigger hits have already had much said about them. There isn't much more that I can add besides stating the facts: It's another banger.

Many artists have the steadfast goal of crafting the "song of the summer." Charli xcx not only created several songs of the summer but created a movement that defined the entire season. "brat summer" was truly inescapable for a time. In many ways, it never really ended and still affects all of us in some way or another.

Rating: 4/5

'Hunt for the Wilderpeople'

by Isaac Grad

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Welcome back to another issue of Your Movie Mage, where I discuss underrated movies across genres. Last week, we discussed the low-budget and depressing "On the Count of Three." This week, we'll be talking about the lesser-known, low-budget dramedy, "Hunt for the Wilderpeople."

"Hunt for the Wilderpeople" manages to balance dry humor with heartfelt moments in a beautifully shot film written and directed by Taika Waititi. In classic Waititi manner, he creates characters that draw in viewers as we learn more about them through seemingly simple plots.

Waititi's films are heavily character-based, though this movie has an interesting storyline following a fostered boy, Ricky Baker, played by Julian Dennison, as he struggles to find his place in this world and find love from parent figures. These are Hec, played by Sam Neill, and Bella, played by Rima Te Wiata.

Viewers also see the two main characters grieving during the majority of the film as they learn to love and care about one another. Ricky captures the tendency for hurt kids to hide behind a shell, scared to allow people in and trust others. Ricky, upon finally trusting enough to accept love and love back, is thrown into another unfortunate situation in which he ultimately decides to run from foster care, knowing he's exhausted all of his options.

The audience can experience the beautiful scenery of New Zealand, as this film is predominantly filmed in "the bush." The way the film was shot was nice but different from Waititi's other movies.

The interesting locations elevate the movie, such as the house we see at the beginning of the film. The fact that they managed to make the movie as interesting as it was while filming the majority in the woods is a testament to Waititi's storytelling abilities and the acting abilities of all involved.

Something Waititi does very well is create child characters in his films that feel real and



LOGO BY SAMANTHA HASS, ARTIST EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

have depth like many other child characters in films. He does so in other films such as "Boy" and "Jojo Rabbit." He's able to write characters like Ricky multidimensional. They're kids with faults, certainly, but the film highlights that children want to feel loved, understood and accepted despite whatever front they may put on.

This crucial understanding separates his movies from others featuring stories through the eyes of young people. It's clear that Waititi has a desire to tell these stories and pays close attention to the characters and their development more than anything.

This movie is also very quotable, with classic New Zealand Kiwi humor and dry delivery. Every time I watch it, I laugh throughout. As mentioned, Waititi is a master at balancing humor with sad and heartfelt scenes.

We see many actors that Waititi uses in other projects such as Rachel House who plays Paula in this film. She does an amazing job as the foster care worker attempting to track down Ricky.

With a budget of about \$2.5 million, "Hunt for the Wilderpeople" is relatively low budget, making it all the more impressive. Waititi didn't use any big names to draw attention to the film. He is able to create amazing films no matter what the budget is, and this movie is a prime example of that. When Waititi has a vision, he brings it to life.

Waititi has made numerous of my favorite movies and "Hunt for the Wilderpeople" is one of them. The acting is great by everyone, the writing is fun and balanced, and the story is engaging and interesting. I give this movie an underratedness score of 3.5/5.

It is loved by many, but it deserves much more recognition and appreciation. Some of Waititi's older work is overshadowed by his more recent films, which is a travesty seeing as those early movies are gems.

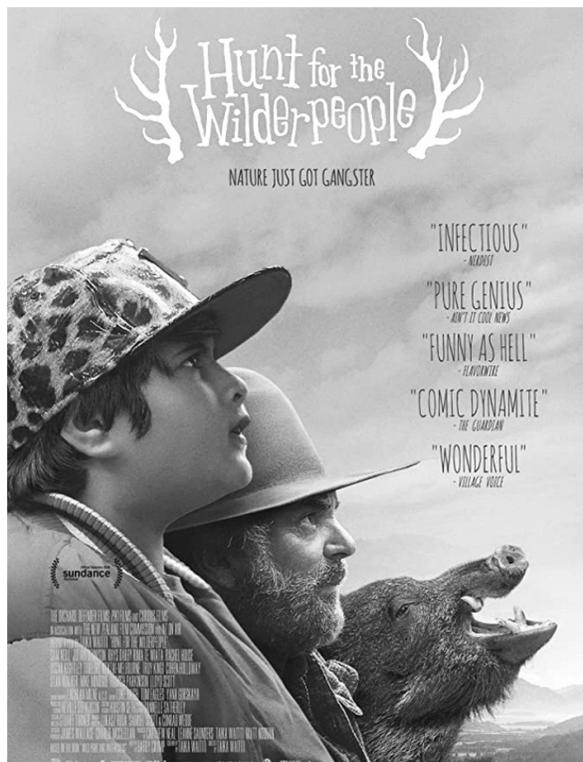


PHOTO COURTESY OF IMDB

3/5

Keeping it simple with revuelto Gramajo

by **Oliver Power**
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When I was a student moving away from the comfort of ever-ready dining hall food, I always needed a go-to when I wanted a tasty and easy-to-make comfort meal. We are deviating from our usual TikTok meals this week and making something out of my very own recipe book. I am certain you will enjoy it.

The recipe is called revuelto Gramajo. It is something I particularly enjoyed as a kid in Argentina, and I wanted to bring it out this week for you all to learn about it. It essentially consists of fried potatoes, either straight-cut or cube-cut, eggs, vegetables and a meat such as bacon or ham. So, without further delay, let's jump into the recipe.

First, peel and wash four to five potatoes. If the potatoes are smaller than the length of your palm to your fingertips, then make it six or seven. Cut them vertically into about one-inch-thick circles. Then make cubes by cutting what you can of the circles. Try not to make them too thick and be consistent with cuts to ensure even cooking.

Add the potatoes to hot oil kept at medium-high heat and fry them for about seven min-

utes, or until they are easily punctured with a fork. You may need to do two batches to avoid overcrowding the pan. Too much crowding will leave the potatoes at the bottom cooking much more than those barely submerged in oil, so take the time to ensure even frying.

While frying, dice half an onion and a clove of garlic. Add these to a sauté pan and cook on medium heat until the onions are translucent. Once this is finished, add chopped up ham or bacon to the pan. Use whatever vegetables you have on top of this. I had carrots and peas which worked nicely. Cook these all and add in a splash of water to steam the vegetables a little. This should take no longer than 15 minutes.

Once finished, add salt, pepper and about a teaspoon of onion powder to the vegetable and meat mix. Let these flavors blend for about another minute or so.

Once the potatoes have finished frying, add them to a bowl and salt them. Add all the potatoes to the vegetable and meat mix and combine. Let these cook for about two minutes on medium low heat. While these cook, grab a bowl and crack four eggs into it. Add about a tablespoon worth of milk. Whisk with a

fork and season with salt and pepper.

Once everything is combined in the egg mix, turn the sauté pan heat off so the eggs do not burn at the bottom or scramble too quickly. Add the eggs over the entire mix and stir it around, letting the mixture coat all of the potatoes. Some of the eggs will scramble and that is fine, as long as it gives the potatoes a nice smooth texture on the surface. Now, you are ready to serve!

This recipe is great for a few reasons. First, I was able to make this when I had to learn how to cook for myself. It utilizes simple techniques and makes the most of what you have.

You can substitute in other vegetables or use other meats you have. Frozen French fries — a common item in most college fridges — are also okay to use if you do not want to make the potatoes from scratch. This is great for college students since the ingredients are very cheap and very manageable. It makes a solid portion as it comfortably fed three people but could easily be extended to four. Timing was also very convenient as it took about 45 minutes to make. Try it out and make this a recipe to add to your weekly lineup.

Ingredients

- 5 large potatoes
- 1 clove of garlic
- 5 sheets of ham, cut into square sheets, or 5 strips worth of bacon bits
- Carrots, diced
- Green peas
- 4 eggs
- 1 tbsp of milk
- 1 teaspoon of garlic powder
- Salt/Pepper to taste
- Splash of water
- Frying oil
- (You can add parsley for color and freshness or red pepper for added flavor)

LOGO BY LILLIAN LAFEMINA, ASSOCIATE ARTIST EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS



Price: \$19.48 Rating: 4.9/5

COMEDY IN FULL RANGE WITH SUBOG

by **Maleena Muzio**
SHE/HER/HERS
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SUBOG hosted a comedy show in the Student Union Theater on Tuesday, March 4, showcasing a diverse range of hilarious comedians.

Ali Kolbert, a stand-up comedian and writer based in New York City, was first on the stage. Kolbert is popular on social

media and has been featured on programs such as “The Tonight Show” with Jimmy Fallon and “The Today Show.” Kolbert was also mentioned in Forbes’ “30 Under 30” list in 2019.

Kolbert’s sarcastic humor shone through her performance as she playfully poked fun at men. The comedian joked that women are inclined to prefer serial killers because they are the first men they have ever met

that know how to plan things, producing many laughs in the small, but hearty audience.

Identifying herself as a lesbian, Kolbert made many references to her romantic and college experiences as an LGBTQ+ person. She also poked fun at modern American politics regarding her personal life.

Justin Matson, a comedian based in Los Angeles, was next to perform. He opened

with a series of classic “fat jokes,” relating them to his personal life. Matson’s best landing joke told the story of people shouting “cannonball” at him whenever he stands near a pool — even if that pool is at a wedding.

The latter half of Matson’s performance centered around his gay identity. He described himself as a “Bernie Sanders gay,” not the stereotypical “fun” gay best friend.

Ali Sultan was the third comedian to take to the stage. Sultan is currently based out of New York City and is Yemeni-Ethiopian American. From appearing on “The Late Show” with Stephen Colbert and “Comedy Central’s Hart of The City” with Kevin Hart, Sultan also has a large social media following.

Sultan used dark humor to play at many difficult topics,



ILLUSTRATION BY SARAH CHANTRES, STAFF ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS

such as racism in the United States. He made playful passes at his white midwestern friends and their love for camping, which he coined as “refugee reenactment.” Sultan explained that all the reasons why his family left Yemen are the same reasons white people love to camp.

“[Act] three got the ball rolling. He ended on a good note for the night,” Kristina

Clarke, a fourth-semester natural resources major said. “It was really fun. Wish there were more people, but I am not upset at that. It felt more personal.”

To close his performance, Sultan ended with a segment about his anxiety and smoking weed. He told a hilarious story about the time he had a panic attack on the subway after smoking a ridiculous amount

of marijuana. This act filled the room with laughter.

Anthony Moore, a comedian originally from Philadelphia and residing in the New York area, was the final act of the night. Moore has appeared on Kevin Hart’s “LaughOutLoud” network, the Netflix show “Tires” and was also featured on the HBO’s “Game Theory” with Bomani Jones. Moore is a

Black man, which many of his jokes referred to.

Moore’s act was more conversational in nature, playing off audience responses to his questions. He previously worked as a one-to-one behavior specialist for children and made many jokes aimed at kids as well. One of Moore’s best lines referred to rap songs describing teachers that told young artists they

wouldn’t be “shit,” to which he replied, “I’m that teacher.”

The event ran for about two hours and showcased a wide variety of talent, each with unique experiences as the basis of their shticks.

“I have never been to SUBOG Comedy before, this is my first time coming. It was really good. I would definitely come back again for another event,” Clarke said.



Life

@dailycampuslife

'Daredevil: Born Again'

BACK IN HELL'S KITCHEN

by Noa Climor

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The “Devil of Hell’s Kitchen” returns, but now he’s on Disney+. “Daredevil: Born Again” is a continuation of the beloved “Daredevil” series, which originally aired on Netflix in 2015 and ended after three seasons in 2018. The title, “Born Again,” is a reference to the 1986 comic book story arc written by Frank Miller and illustrated by David Mazzucchelli.

It was loosely adapted in season three of the original “Daredevil” series, and I was curious to see how much of the storyline we would see in the new adaptation. In terms of the cast, we are back with Charlie Cox as Matt Murdock, or Daredevil, Vincent D’Onofrio plays Wilson Fisk, also known as Kingpin, Deborah Ann Woll is Karen Page and Elden Henson is Foggy Nelson. Additionally, Jon Bernthal returns as Frank Castle.

Murdock was always one of my favorite characters. There is something so fascinating about a character with so much lore and potential, and the humor of the comics — and the show — never fails to pull me in. I was excited when I learned he’d return in his own show. Without further ado, the review begins.

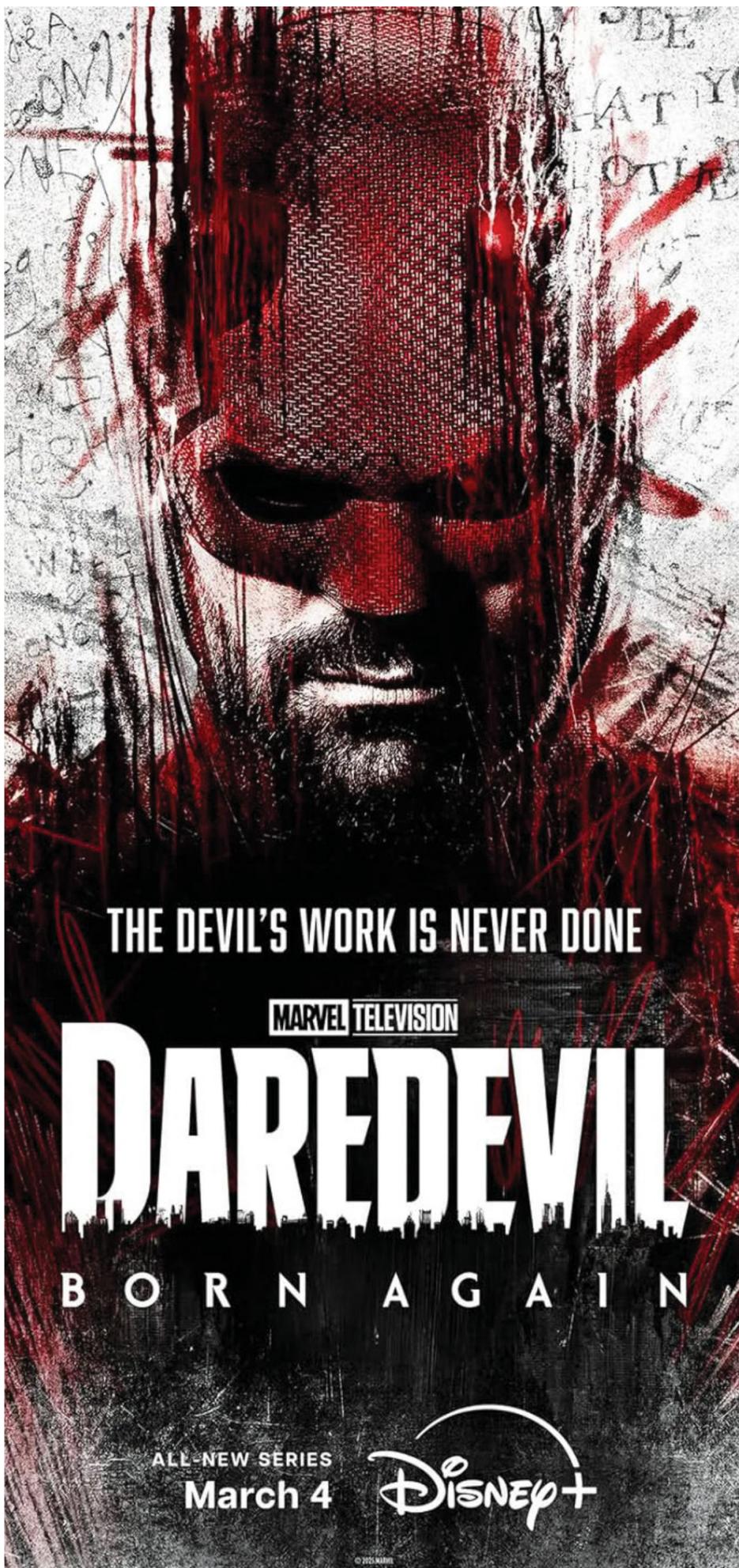
Episode one, titled “Heaven’s Half Hour,” is a doozy. The episode begins with the familiar theme song playing over stunning shots that re-familiarize the viewer with the world of Daredevil. We see Nelson, Murdock and Page talking about Becky’s diner being turned into a SoulCycle as they head down the street.

As they bicker, the nostalgia — or reverence for the past, as Foggy said — is strong. But you know what’s stronger? The shadows. This show is so darkly lit that I am squinting at the screen and praying it gets brighter, but to no avail. On that note, this isn’t just an issue with this show. I find that many shows nowadays have this issue, but since you didn’t come here to read my complaints about lighting, I’ll leave it at that.

We’ve got White Tiger and Josie’s bar! And the vibes are so good, in “Daredevil” terms, that I just know something will go wrong. “For Cherry, may you be in heaven a full half-hour ‘fore the devil knows you’re dead!” says Josie, and as much as I love a title name drop in the episode, this feels like an ominous reminder that things aren’t as okay as they seem.

Foggy tries to flirt when he gets a phone call and Murdock overhears it. Before I ruin the first episode for you, I’ll stop describing the scene in favor of telling you what I think about the first two episodes, conceptually.

“Born Again” is doing an exquisite job at making you



feel as though “Daredevil” didn’t end, but rather took a long break. Creatively and cinematically speaking, everything feels familiar and I’m sure that bringing back the same actors helps out.

The characters are warm and welcoming. The fighting choreography is good, and the acting is better. “Heart-break” does not feel good in a place like this, and the title sequence post-opening is a harsh reminder that nothing is permanent. It is different from the original song and imagery, but one thing is the same: Things are going horrifically wrong, yet Daredevil is rebuilt from the crushed marble, a sign that maybe even he can be born again.

Fisk is introduced with a sad-looking breakfast and an exquisitely fitted suit. Vanessa, now a Fisk, is at the head of the table. Her husband enters the room, and something about the scene clenches my heart. The lovey-dovey feelings are gone, and Fisk grovels for forgiveness in true Fisk fashion, which is not necessarily working.

“I made this business bulletproof,” says Vanessa. He tells her of the 25,000 signatures, and our aspect ratio changes to play a small clip about people being interviewed about crime in New York.

Cox is brilliant because he has the immense power and skill to play with your heartstrings no matter what he does. This time, he’s on the stand as a witness, speaking with such raw emotion that it convinces you to feel as he does. He has charisma, power and a sense of something brilliant within him that brings layers to a character that genuinely deserves them.

D’Onofrio does the same, and Woll makes Page stand out and move beyond the confines of a side character. Even with a time skip — which I generally am not too fond of — and changes that I was not expecting, nothing is boring. “Daredevil” was always different from the rest of the Marvel shows due to how well it executed the theme and how unafraid it was to portray things as they are, and “Born Again” is no different.

The rest of the cast is exquisite as well. The filming, themes and music lull you into a show you never want to leave, and I am truly looking forward to the rest of the season. The Marvel Cinematic Universe is vast and contains hundreds of characters, but none are as special as Murdock and I am glad he returned.

To the man without fear and those who stand by him, thank you for a marvelous show — we will see you every Tuesday at 9 p.m. Eastern time. I promise we won’t regret it.

Rating: 5/5



Opinion

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Stop letting "unboxing" culture control your wallet

by Hannah McClellan | CONTRIBUTOR | SHE/HER/HERS | ger24001@uconn.edu

We live in a world where we are constantly bombarded by images of new products, new trends and new ways to spend. The act of unboxing isn't just about unveiling a product; it's about unveiling desire. Surely if you've been on any source of media recently, you've seen the growing phenomenon that has become a staple of online culture: unboxing. This spectacle can be seen in the form of influencers opening unnecessarily large PR packages, YouTubers reviewing mass orders of the newest fad or even children mimicking this glamorized overconsumption by imitating the same behavior, eagerly awaiting the next unboxing video to fuel their desire for the latest must-have item.

But the impact of unboxing culture goes beyond the screen. It's shaping the way we view consumption, suggesting that acquiring new products — often in excess — equals success, happiness or even validation. Through algorithms, "haul culture" and the new era of influencer dictatorship, overconsumption has become normal-

ized to the point where there are now devastating long-term effects.

The appeal of unboxings can be traced back to a new buzz word in today's society: the "algorithm." The algorithm of social media is a click-hungry beast that is only fed off of the instant gratification short-form media provides. The key to this internet snare-trap is visual stimulation. With the rise (domination) of this short-form media, our attention spans are shrinking significantly. This leaves content creators with mere seconds to captivate viewers. One of the most effective tactics? Eye-catching packaging. Whether oversized, oddly shaped or uniquely designed, it sparks an irresistible curiosity to see what's inside. That decision to keep watching, engaging or sharing fuels the algorithm, ensuring the cycle continues.

With the rise of "haul culture," defined by the unboxing and display of numerous commodities, social media has reinforced a cycle of mass buying behavior driven by false validation. Clearly, unboxings provide validation for false

needs. "Hair identifier spray," "self-stirring glass" and "spitting llama hat" are a few of the products I have come across on TikTok. Now, I assure you, you don't need those. Yet with the right combination of an engaging unboxing, a catchy hook and a flood of enthusiastic comments, these products suddenly feel essential. Social media seems to blur the line between necessity and impulse, convincing viewers that owning these unnecessary items is not just normal, but desirable.

This new age of the algorithm dictating our wallets has led to the normalization of overconsumption. Large boxes get large amounts of views, leading influencers and brands to prioritize excess over necessity. The bigger the haul, the more engagement it generates, creating a cycle where quantity is valued over quality. The unboxing era is directly contributing to unsustainable consumer habits such as a desire for fast fashion and excessive packaging.

Beyond the environmental impacts, these haul videos are giving viewers the illusion of "afford-

able luxury," a false sense that constant consumption is again, both attainable and necessary. This couldn't be further from the truth. Sure, buying one large order of clothes will be worth it in the long run because (in theory) you won't need to buy any more clothes, but this is always short-lived. As soon as another trend emerges, you will be inclined to make another large order. While it may seem like a smart investment at the time, the cycle of consumption never truly ends. The short-term satisfaction of a massive haul quickly fades and is replaced by the pressure to chase the next trend. This constant turnover of products doesn't just strain personal finances, it also feeds into a system that thrives on waste and disposability.

This problem becomes even more concerning when we consider its long-term effects. The constant craving for temporary satisfaction through material possessions bears a striking resemblance to a different phenomenon: addiction.

Our brains are addicted to the slight jolt of excitement we get

from opening a package, which slowly diminishes until we can get our next high in the form of content or commodity. Over time, this pattern conditions us to seek fulfillment through material goods rather than genuine experiences or meaningful connections. The evidence is everywhere. As I sit in my 260-person lecture, I glance down and see at least 10 people shopping online. I only sit in the third row. Even the thousands of dollars my classmates have spent to be in this class aren't enough to break the addiction.

The cycle of overconsumption won't end unless we actively resist it. In a world that is defined by what's in a box, I dare you to think outside of it. Thrifting, borrowing and donating items are just a few ways to fight back. As long as the algorithm profits from "unboxing culture" it will continue to blur the line between need and want. True fulfillment isn't found in endless hauls or the next viral product, it's found in breaking free from the illusion that more is always better.

Patrick's Politics: Republicans cutting Medicaid is a tragedy of American health

by Patrick Minnerly

WEEKLY COLUMNIST
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In an America where health care is already a broken and warped industry, there may be more pain ahead for those just trying to get by. The Republican-controlled House of Representatives squeaked through a major budget resolution 217-215 on Feb. 25, aiming to pay for the second Trump administration's proposed tax cuts. The problem is that in order to make up the difference on those cuts, Republicans will have to shred Medicaid benefits for people across America, putting a core tenet of the United States' health care system in jeopardy.

The Medicaid program can be traced back to the Lyndon B. Johnson administration. In 1965, both Medicaid and Medicare were created to help Americans with health care services. Over the years, Medicaid was slowly built up, culminating in the Affordable Care Act under Obama. The ACA significantly expanded Medicaid coverage to more Americans, resulting in the current program we have today. Now, Medicaid provides health insurance to 72 million people in the U.S. who are often low-income and rely on these benefits for their coverage, all the way from birth until death. In Connecticut, for instance, 38% of births are paid for with Medicaid coverage, and care for seniors and people with disabilities is also largely funded by Medicaid.

All 50 states have Medicaid to some extent, as they are reimbursed for at least 50% for the cost of giving their residents coverage. Since the ACA expansion was optional for each state, some rely on Medicaid more than others. California, New Mexico, Arkansas, Louisiana, New York and West Virginia are the states with the highest number of people on Medic-

aid, forming a group that cuts through typical red and blue lines. Out of the states that have opted in — 41 if you include D.C. — the overall reimbursement also varies relative to wealth. Poorer states often get 70% or more of their coverage costs paid back from the federal government.

Medicaid's importance in health care is also recognized by a large majority of the population, making it very politically popular, especially in the bitterly polarized environment we're in today. Nearly three-fourths of Americans have a favorable view of Medicaid, because a large percentage of U.S. resi-

dents have benefited or know someone who has benefited from the program.

At the same time, opposition to government-funded health care has always existed. In the 1980s and 1990s, Republicans tried to cap spending for Medicaid by having the program pay out a flat fee to states, not a percentage of costs. Decades later, they nearly succeeded in getting rid of the ACA expansion in 2017.

The new budget resolution Republicans pushed through will have to cut Medicaid, even though the right has argued that it won't. House Majority Leader

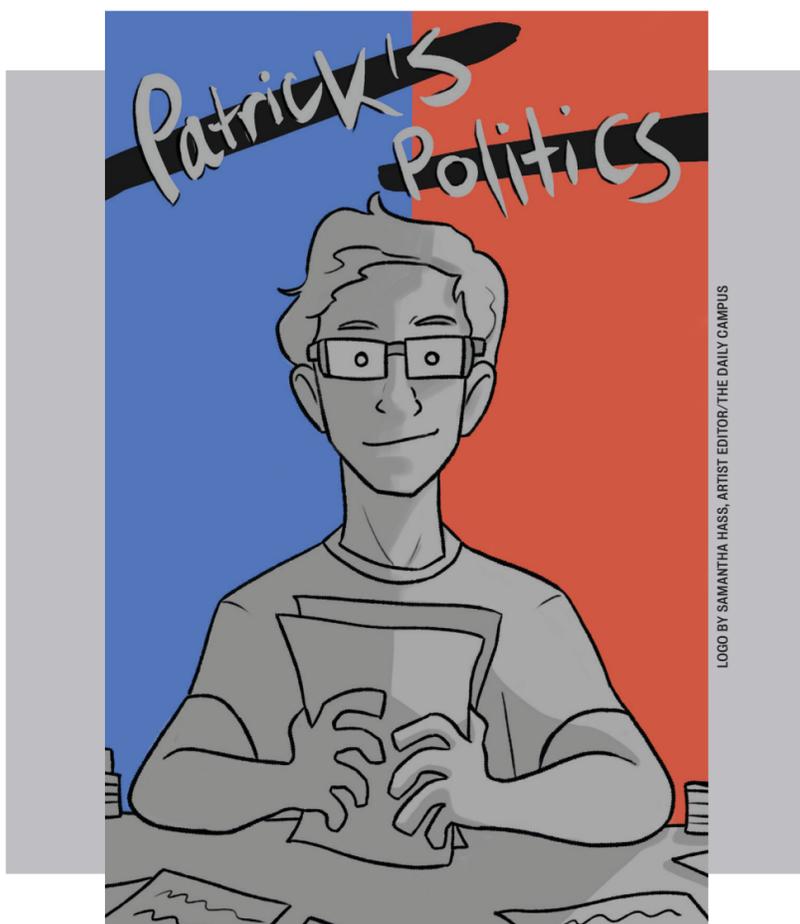
Steve Scalise claimed in a press conference on Feb. 25 that "this bill doesn't even mention the word Medicaid a single time." It is true that the resolution technically does not refer to Medicaid, but this does not mean that benefits won't be cut. The plan calls for \$880 billion over 10 years in cuts to the House Energy and Commerce Committee, which oversees both Medicaid and Medicare. This huge amount will have to come from somewhere. Since even President Donald Trump has declared Medicare off the table when it comes to cuts, Medicaid, with an approximately \$600 billion federal cost each year,

presents a ripe and guaranteed target for the budget tightening. A recent New York Times report outlined how there is essentially no way around making major cuts to Medicaid if the budget resolution persists as it currently stands.

If these cuts are put in place, states will have to shoulder far more of the burden on providing healthcare. As a result, the poorer and mostly Republican states I mentioned earlier that need the federal government to reimburse more of their costs will suffer at a disproportionate rate, but all states would see their programs negatively affected. Hospitals, which are required to provide care regardless of whether someone is covered, would have to administer more uninsured treatment, likely leading to closures for those struggling financially.

It's worth mentioning that none of the lawmakers trying to shrink Medicaid are the ones who actually need the program. The average salary for members of the House of Representative is \$174,000, and a large share of representatives already arrived to Congress with a significant amount of wealth. The author of the budget resolution, Rep. Jodey Arrington, has an estimated net worth of over \$1 million, which is far from unique to him.

In sacrificing Medicaid for tax cuts that will benefit the wealthy members of society, Republicans are showing they don't care about the Americans who rely on it, just the rich. Even though Medicaid is popular with Democrats and Republicans alike and has helped offset costs for tens of millions of Americans, Republicans are showing that they don't care about their constituents. And although this new resolution passed the House, Republicans should be aware that their plan will alienate the American people who simply want to have the healthcare they deserve.



LOGO BY SAMANTHA HASS, ARTIST EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Opinion

Photo of the Day | Did he make it? We'll never know.



As the playoff season draws closer, University of Connecticut students and basketball fans alike wait eagerly to attend some of the last home games. Lines formed outside of Gampel Pavilion on Wednesday March 5, 2025. PHOTO BY MERCER FERGUSON, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

‘Captain America: The Winter Solider’ goes deeper than any other Captain America movie

by Hannah McClellan | CONTRIBUTOR | SHE/HER/HERS | ger24001@uconn.edu

“Captain America: The Winter Soldier” is one of many Captain America movies. It stands out among all of the films as the one with the most heart as well as the greatest focus on interesting characters and their relationships. In this film, more so than any other, we are able to dive into the very interesting relationship between Steve Rogers, AKA Captain America, and Bucky Barnes, AKA The Winter Soldier.

The exploration of Barnes is probably the most interesting aspect of this film, which is saying a lot. His character is one that intrigues many, including myself, not only because he's so handsome and truly rocks the smokey eye look, but also because he's a character that has struggled immensely. His relationship with Rogers is one of the best in the entire Marvel Cinematic Universe. The care Rogers shows him throughout this film is what made me like Captain America, despite

my initial hatred of him. (Unwarranted, I know. Nothing against you Chris Evans. You amaze me.) Rogers stands up for his friend, refusing to hurt him and refusing to allow him to be hurt.

A movie that focuses so heavily on friendship in the MCU stands out, seeing as the Avengers movies frequently involve fighting one another. Barnes and Rogers bring out the most interesting aspects in one another. Before this film, Captain America was a pretty boring character, with limited weaknesses and flaws. In this movie, we're able to look beyond the surface and see a man who will do anything for his best friend, making him loyal to a fault in some situations. There were complex themes explored in this film that we hadn't seen before, mainly him ultimately having to fight his best friend, while also attempting to get Barnes to recognize and remember him. Seeing his best friend, the one per-

son he could relate to, and the one person still alive from the life he knew before being brain-washed and unable to recognize him back, is a very interesting plot that explores both characters in an intriguing way.

This film is also praised for its political commentary and taking a strong stance on important issues. Following the theme of a post-World War II world, in “Captain America: The Winter Soldier,” Nazi ideas are still present and impacting government decisions. This is an important concept to explore in a manner typical to comics and comic-adaptations. While I ultimately find the X-Men films to do a better job at exploring such issues, “Winter Soldier” is the best at doing so in the MCU.

There was also an interesting theme of accepting and being honest about your past, mainly through Black Widow, who, upon revealing the secrets of Hydra, must also reveal her

own secrets and difficult past. This is an interesting theme if we apply it further to the American government, seeing as there was also a reference in the film to “Project Paperclip” in which Nazis were brought into America after the war by the American government. Perhaps this underlying message is advocating for a level of honesty and accountability from the government in its past mistakes, so long as it learns from them and acts accordingly, rather than pretending certain things didn't happen.

A message encouraging people to stop blindly following the government in the name of patriotism and to support what's in the best interest of your country is highly relevant then, now and in the future.

Compared to “Winter Soldier,” the other Captain America movies aren't as strong, except for “Captain America: Civil War,” which I will admit makes Barnes more in-

teresting while continuing his story and his relationship with Cap. But of course, we couldn't have “Civil War” without “Winter Soldier” and all the ideas and characters it introduced so strongly. “Winter Soldier” set up future projects involving Barnes and Rogers as one where Rogers will continue to side with his best friend Barnes, refusing to give up on him.

“Captain America: Winter Soldier” is what changed my opinions on Cap as a boring goody-two-shoes and solidified his character as one who truly follows what he believes in and isn't tied to whatever government is trying to use him. It's a very solid introduction to another crucial character in the franchise without giving him his own film (yet), which the MCU has and continues to struggle with doing successfully. The exploration of the characters and their relationships is what ultimately made this movie stand out.

Comics



Comics

WOMEN'S ICE HOCKEY: HUSKIES FALL TO NORTHEASTERN IN HOCKEY EAST TOURNAMENT CLASH

by Patrick Minnerly

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The UConn women's hockey team lost 3-1 against Northeastern University in the Hockey East Championship semifinals on Wednesday, March 5. The matchup determined which team would make it to the tournament final. Despite battling hard in what was initially a defensive struggle, the Huskies fell to the Northeastern attack and were knocked out of the Hockey East tournament.

Coming into the contest, UConn had shut out Merrimack 4-0 last weekend in the Hockey East quarterfinal draw, fueled by the stalwart efforts of goalie Tia Chan and two goals from senior captain Jada Habisch. They had also received good news earlier in the week as freshman Claire Murdoch won the Hockey East Rookie of the Year award and Chris MacKenzie was anointed as the conference's Coach of the Year.

Meanwhile, Northeastern was fresh off a quarterfinal win of their own, a close contest against Providence that was decided by a 3-2 score. In that game, Northeastern had to fend off a two-goal third period from Providence that culminated in a nervy ending for the ultimate victors.

The first period of Wednesday night's semifinal saw some early heroics from Chan, who was in goal for both of UConn's playoff matchups. With about three minutes gone in the first, Chan made a kick save which deflected the puck to her right side, where Northeastern's Shannon tried to shoot the rebound into the net, but Chan excellently saved the second effort.

At the end of the first period, the teams were all knotted up at 0-0.

The second period finally saw a break in the scoreless deadlock. UConn was granted a power play halfway through the period after Northeastern's Tuva Kandall was called for boarding. Pouncing on the advantage, Riley Grimley fired the puck past Northeastern goalie Lisa Jonsson to take a 1-0 lead, assisted by Christina Walker. The goal was Grimley's fourth of the season. UConn also had a 23-20 advantage in shots heading into the third period and seemingly had the momentum going into the final stages of the game. There were just 20 minutes left to close out Northeastern for the win and move on to the final.

Then Northeastern woke up. Northeastern's Skylar Irving, a senior second-team Hockey East All-Star, got things started for her team in the third. Six



The UConn Huskies take on the Northeastern Huskies at Toscano Family Ice Forum in Storrs, Conn. on March 5, 2025. The Huskies faced each other to move onto the Hockey East championship. PHOTO BY CONNOR SHARP, PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

minutes into the period, Irving scored a solo goal to tie the score at 1-1. Suddenly, UConn found themselves on the back foot.

Six minutes later, Irving struck again and fired another shot past Chan, this time assisted by Morgan Jackson and Eloise Caron. The goal was Irving's 17th of the season and would prove decisive in the contest.

Though UConn made a good effort to fight back, compiling 14 shots in the third period, Northeastern didn't let up and added a third goal off the stick of Lily Brazis. Again, Jackson provided the assist.

In the last two minutes, UConn pulled their goalie in an attempt to make one last push, but they couldn't break through and

Northeastern prevailed 3-1. This marked an end to Connecticut's hopes to repeat as Hockey East champions following an excellent season in which they secured the first seed in the tournament. Interestingly, UConn captured their last Hockey East title by beating Northeastern 1-0 in Storrs in 2024. In 2025's contest, however, Northeastern ex-

acted their revenge.

As a result, Northeastern moved on to the Hockey East final against Boston University, which will be played on Saturday, March 8. The site of the final was set in September 2024 as the Toscano Family Ice Forum on the Storrs campus. Puck drop for the final will be at 2 p.m.

Sports

Photo of the Day | Getting prepped



UConn swim and dive celebrates their seniors in Storrs, Conn. on Feb. 8, 2025. The Huskies hosted Providence College for the last home meet of the season.
PHOTO BY SYDNEY CHANDLER, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

BRAYDEN'S BREAKDOWN: DOES THE 40-YARD DASH REALLY MATTER FOR WIDE RECEIVERS?



LOGO BY LILIAN LAEMINA, ASSOCIATE
ARTIST EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

by **Brayden Gorski**

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Almost every fan of the NFL tuned in to the league's combine this year for the annual 40-yard dash this past week.

University of Texas wide receiver Isaiah Bond could not live up to his prediction of beating his former collegiate teammate Xavier Worthy's record-breaking combine time. Bond, who ran a 4.39, was not close to Worthy's record time of 4.21 last year. Another Texas product, Matthew Golden, beat Bond on Saturday. Golden had the second fastest time of the 2025 combine, finishing in 4.29 seconds.

Bond's stock did not drop heavily. He is still considered a late first, early second round talent and is a valuable asset to plenty of teams. However, his confident claims of breaking 4.2 seconds were met with criticisms after being beaten by many others, including his own teammate.

This raises the question of the importance of the 40-yard dash. I will look at two of the fastest and slowest times by wideouts to see if speed equals performance on the field.

Cooper Kupp: 4.62 seconds

The 2021 Super Bowl MVP started off his combine with one of the slowest times ever at his position. Kupp was taken by the Rams in the third round and never thought about his 4.62 again. Despite some injuries, Kupp has scored 57 touchdowns and gained almost 8,000 yards in his first eight seasons in the pros. His 2021 season is hailed as one of the best seasons ever by a receiver. Kupp won Offensive Player of the Year and was a first team All-Pro after winning the receiving triple crown with 145 receptions, 1,947 yards and 16 touchdowns. Kupp's skillset goes way beyond the 40-yard dash, as he has cemented himself as one of the best route runners and pass catchers in

the game.

John Ross: 4.22 seconds

When Ross crossed the 40-yard line for his recording breaking dash, he pulled up and grabbed his hamstring. He sat out the remainder of the combine, and that would be the telltale sign of his career. Coming in to the combine, Ross had a lengthy list of injuries including ACL and meniscus tears. The injuries did not stop once Ross was taken with the ninth pick by the Bengals in the 2017 draft. The Washington product only played three games before being sidelined with a shoulder labrum tear that he previously aggravated in college. After a few groin problems in 2018, Ross missed half of 2019 with an A/C joint sprain in his shoulder and has only played in 14 games since 2019. These injuries were not the fault of the speedster, and his status as a draft bust should be credited more towards the Bengals' front office than to him.

Mike Evans: 4.53 seconds

Evans was a powerhouse in college that scouts did not even worry about his 4.53 time. After two seasons with Johnny Manziel at Texas A&M, the Buccaneers selected Evans with the seventh overall pick in the 2014 draft. In his 11 years since being drafted, Evans has never gone under 1,000 receiving yards in a season. In 2024, Evans surpassed this mark in just 14 games despite being sidelined with a hamstring injury for three weeks of the season. The six-time pro bowler has accumulated over 12,000 career receiving yards and tallied his 100th career touchdown reception last year. The 2020 Super Bowl champion has carved out a Hall of Fame career for himself and no one has once mentioned his 4.53 time.

Tyquan Thornton: 4.28 seconds

As one of the final draft picks of Bill Belichick's tenure as general manager of the Patriots, Thornton did not live up to

expectations of Patriots fans. Thornton had an amazing senior year at Baylor and his combine numbers boosted his stock even more. Belichick selected Thornton in the second round, pairing him with second year quarterback Mac Jones. His first season showed some promise, scoring two touchdowns and hauling in 22 passes. However, Thornton's lack of success coincided with New England's struggles over the past two seasons. Thornton caught 17 passes in the same number of games before being released by the Patriots in November of 2024. The 24-year-old was signed to the Chiefs practice squad but never appeared in any games. It is uncertain whether the speedster will be on an NFL roster in 2025.

The 40-yard dash can definitely boost your draft status and bring in life-changing money. However, the fate of the receiver's career after the combine is up to them to decide.

THE DALLAS MAVERICKS ARE IN PURGATORY

by Seth Wallen

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The title of this article refers to how the Dallas Mavericks' front office has continued to double down on the Luka Dočić trade. This has been absolutely embarrassing, and people were begging for them to just stop. Despite that, the Maverick's front office has continued to make things worse. It has been a little over a month since the trade heard around the world was finalized; yet it feels like almost every week there is something new about this trade, and enough is enough.

This trade will be talked about for generations, and it is because the front office cannot keep Dončić's name out of their mouths — and not in a good way.

Immediately after the trade, there was a smear campaign before the deal was officialized. The phrase was “defense wins championships,” even though they lost in the finals to a Boston Celtics team that wasn't all too great offensively for Celtics standards. While Dončić's defensive performance wasn't great, you cannot deny the impact he makes offensively. The viral clip of ESPN's Brian Windhorst laying into Dončić after last year's playoffs comes to mind. But you must also keep in mind that Dončić led the league in the playoffs in minutes played, points, rebounds and assists. He was putting up amazing numbers in these playoffs and was the anchor to the team going to the finals. If his defense was that much of an issue, they could have continued to collect defensive players, like the front office did with PJ Washington and Daniel Gaffard.

At the press conference held the day after the trade, Nico Harrison was cracking jokes at the team's expense, basically admitting that he did not tell anyone else about this trade. Not Jason Kidd, not even Dončić himself; literally no one else except for Patrick Dumont and Rob Pelinka. In response to a question about the long-term impact of Dončić's impact, Harrison said that “the long term is 3-4 years and I'm not going to be here for that long anyways.” Kidd's body language was especially uncomfortable throughout the press conference; he looks like

he does not want to be there. He must now coach a team that just traded away their best player, and as he says later in that press conference, they have multiple injured players.

The Mavs then, shortly after a 40-point loss to the Cavaliers (first game post-trade), swapped Quentin Grimes for Caleb Martin. Martin's medicals were so concerning that he went from being questionable the game after he got traded to being out indefinitely. The Mavs were given the option to void the trade but chose not to after receiving a second-round pick. As for the writing of this article, Martin has been assigned to the G League for rehab and still has not played a game as a Maverick.

Conflicting narratives have started to spread—there were reports on national TV regarding the potential of death threats being sent towards Harrison,

while Dallas police stated there were no credible ones. ESPN's Tim MacMahon had discredited a Dallas local journalist, Grant Aarseth, for the claims of the threats not being credible. During this public spat, Mavericks fans staged a protest at the first home game since the trade, bringing signs, wearing jerseys and the like. At this home game, Anthony Davis dominated, breaking franchise records. However, he got hurt re-aggravating the injury that had him out on the Lakers.

Dumont, the governor of the Mavericks, continued the Dončić smear campaign, essentially calling the superstar swingman's work ethic into question by naming iconic stars like Larry Bird, Michael Jordan, Kobe Bryant and Shaquille O'Neal. Not only did Dumont get shade from LeBron James shortly after that (indirectly, through Instagram Stories), but

the stars he brought up were not examples of good work ethic. Jordan has been spotted gambling in Magic City, Bird has gotten into bar fights, Bryant has been (at times) detrimental to team effort and O'Neal has so many examples I don't think I can get into in this article. Bryant noted that if O'Neal had the same work ethic that he had, “The Diesel” would be the GOAT. There were other players he could have mentioned, such as Dirk Nowitzki, who played 21 seasons for your franchise. Nowitzki also just recently pulled up to Dončić's first Lakers game, which is as public of a denouncement of the trade as he can make.

All hell is breaking loose in Dallas. An employee of the Mavericks made a personal tribute video of Dončić, which was deleted without warning or explanation. Kidd didn't have a press conference after a last sec-

ond loss to the Kings. He claims it was because of the frustration of the game, both losing in that fashion and losing yet another player to injury. Mark Cuban, during a game, even told fans to be quiet (in more harsh words) and then got into arguments on X (formally Twitter) regarding who was booing what.

The Mavericks then released a hype video, which Dončić is sloppily edited out of. His body is literally blacked out and the Maverick logo is slapped on his face. The rapper who made the song used in this video had to issue an apology in place of the front office. I know what you may be thinking: organizations do this with all former players! And you might be right, however, Maxi Kleber is seen on a poster in the background for a good 30 seconds into the video.

In the Mavericks' first game against the Lakers, Dončić dropped a triple double, and Los Angeles won that game. He could be seen hugging every Mavs player and staffer with the exception of Kidd. Harrison was in attendance and the crowd broke into a “thank you Nico” chant as the former Dallas star went to the free through line.

The situation got much worse from there: Kyrie Irving tore his ACL and is out for the remainder of the season, officially killing any hope of Irving and AD hooping together, and the playoff chances of the Dallas Mavericks. Funnily enough, I had them matching up against the OKC Thunder in the Western Conference Finals so that Dončić and Shai Gilgeous-Alexander could face off once again. All that hope managed to get crushed within the span of a literal month.

Worst part of it all? Dallas is raising season ticket prices by at least 8%, citing “team investment” as justification. I don't think I have ever seen anything as bad as this when it comes to sports teams.

Now that you've gotten the full recap of the past month, does your head hurt yet? Harrison has essentially taken over Jerry Jones's spot as the most hated sports executive in the Lone Star State, and maybe the country. Mavericks fans, you have my condolences. The only thing I can describe this past month as is excruciating self-immolation of criminal degree.



Dallas Mavericks' head coach Jason Kidd reacts during the first half of an NBA basketball game against the Milwaukee Bucks on Wednesday, March 5, 2025, in Fiserv Forum Milwaukee.

AP PHOTO/MORRY GASH

UFC VEGAS 103: KAPE ENDS ALMABAYEV'S 17-FIGHT WIN STREAK VIA KO/TKO

by Cameron Cruz

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The Ultimate Fighting Championship returned to the APEX Center in Las Vegas, Nev. to host its fifth straight weekend event. Fans around the world saw No. 6 ranked flyweight Manel Kape take on popular up-and-comer Asu Almbabayev in a five-round main event bout. The co-main event presented a three-round middleweight fight between Cody Brundage and veteran Julian Marquez. The main card also featured names like Esteban Ribovics and William Gomis. Rising stars Hyder Amil, Ramazan Temirov and Sam Patterson were all able to put their names on the map this weekend with huge wins.

With only a small 10-fight card and barely any big names, fans were already deeming the event as one of the worst cards of the year. However, four fights ended by KO/TKO, including both the main and co-main events. Meanwhile the other six fights went to the judges' scorecards, with three of the six ending in a split decision. Once again, I will be discussing some of the best knockout wins

from this past weekend.

Austen Lane vs. Mario Pinto

This heavyweight bout was the last prelim before the main card, and it did not disappoint. The former NFL defensive end turned pro-fighter Lane took on undefeated Portugal native Pinto in a three-round brawl.

Lane was coming off a huge unanimous decision win over former UFC fighter Robelis Despaigne, while Pinto was making his UFC Fight Night debut. Pinto had just recently earned himself a contract after a first-round knockout over Lucas Camacho during season eight of Dana White's Contender Series. He came into this fight a -600 favorite with a 9-0 record.

Both of these athletes have a history of knockout wins; Lane has a career total of 11 to Pinto's six. As the first round began, these two giants wasted no time trading blows with each other. Lane was able to out-strike the heavyweight prospect throughout the first five minutes, while also scoring a knockdown during the round. As the second round began the two heavyweights wasted no time, exchanging strikes immediately. It only took 39 sec-

onds into round two for Pinto to throw a huge one-two combination, connecting with a big right hook, knocking Lane out cleanly. No further work was needed. Pinto improved to 10-0, winning his debut fight in brutal fashion.

Cody Brundage vs. Julian Marquez

Marquez came into this fight riding a three-fight losing streak all by the means of knockout. Brundage, on the other hand, was coming off of a submission loss to wrestling prodigy Bo Nickal at UFC 300, along with a No Contest against Abdul Razak Alhassan in July 2024. Both fighters were looking to get back into the win column this past Saturday and were willing to do anything.

As the fight began, Brundage and Marquez took immediate action, exchanging on the feet. Brundage had 44 significant strikes, with a total of 68 strikes landed. Marquez had a total of 53 strikes landed, with 37 being counted as significant. With a minute left in the round, Brundage was up against the cage trading bombs with Marquez. Both their mouth guards would end up falling out of their mouths, which led referee Mark Smith

to call time with 46 seconds left in the round. Some fans argued it was a questionable time to stop the fight when the two were in a heated exchange, but nevertheless, Smith made his decision. As the two regained their mouthguards, the fight resumed. Brundage wasted no time throwing a huge uppercut followed by a barrage of hooks. A huge right sent Marquez to the mat, Brundage quickly hopped on top of Marquez to deliver some vicious ground and pound to end the fight.

Manel Kape vs. Asu Almbabayev

Kape was coming off a dominant performance against ranked flyweight Bruno Silva, which saw him put on a beautiful striking demonstration, along with a KO/TKO win over Silva. After his fight with Silva, he called out a handful of people, leading him to a fight with No. 1 contender Brandon Royval. However, Royval had to pull out of this fight due to an undisclosed injury, leading to the No. 8 contender Almbabayev getting the call to step in.

Almbabayev stepped into this main event on a 17-fight win streak, following a recent win against Matheus Nicolau

via unanimous decision. The Kazakhstani became the first fighter from his country to headline a UFC fight card.

Kape and Almbabayev were scheduled in the octagon for a five-round shift, but it ended up getting cut short in the third. Kape once again put on an amazing performance striking wise plus some amazing takedown defense during his battle with Almbabayev. After being doubted by fans for his ability to get taken down, he stepped up during this fight, showing how good he can be. Almbabayev went 0-6 on takedowns during this fight, while also getting out struck. After stuffing yet another takedown halfway during round three, Kape delivered a series of body shots, knees and hooks to Almbabayev. This led him to run around the cage in an attempt to get free. However, Kape hit him with a right hook during the chase, which led to referee Mike Beltran calling to stop the contest. Kape won by knockout, and fans around the world can only assume he will soon have a rematch with the flyweight champ Alexandre Pantoja soon.



Sports

WOMEN'S TENNIS: HUSKIES LOOK TO STAY IN THE WIN COLUMN FOR WEEKEND ROAD MATCHUPS

by Connor Sargeant
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Following last weekend's Midwest split against South Dakota and Creighton, the UConn women's tennis team hits the road again for a weekend matchup against Xavier and Eastern Kentucky. The Huskies are coming off the heels of a matchup where they swept their doubles matchup and won five out of their six singles matchups.

Of course, Maria Constantinou's performance will be crucial for the Huskies' success this weekend. The senior, by way of Cyprus, is coming off an excellent weekend where she won both her singles and doubles matchup. Constantinou has been a catalyst of success for the program throughout her career in Storrs. She has been exceptionally lethal in doubles, leading the program in doubles wins in her sophomore season and winning on eight occasions last season. This is all the more crucial considering that Xavier struggled a week ago against Ball State in doubles. This is where the Huskies can pull away.

Abby Nugent and Clara Owen won their doubles matchup for the Musketeers a week ago. However, Madeleine Rexroat, Natalie Smittek, Emily Pendergast and Elizabeth Pendergast struggled a week ago, with both teams losing their respective matchups. However, Rexroat and Smittek's games came down to the wire. Coming down to the final set, the duo lost the match 7-6 in nail biting fashion. Look for how the duo responds this weekend, as winning here could

get the Musketeers back on track for this Big East season.

After facing Xavier, the Huskies will make the trek to Eastern Kentucky to take on the Colonels. Eastern Kentucky comes into Saturday with a less than ideal 6-9 record. However, the program is as good as any when it comes to performing in front of the home crowd, owning a 5-1 record in "the Bluegrass State." A large part of the success of the program has centered around Marilou Cote, who is on a three-game winning streak and owns a solid 8-5 record in singles. As a "2," she is a perfect 3-0, effectively neutralizing the opposition's second best player. However, the Canadian has struggled to get it going regarding doubles, owning a 2-9 record overall. Considering how strong the Huskies have consistently performed in this area, this is a point that UConn will want to exploit and try to gain an advantage from.

Connecticut has had an excellent season up to this point, owning a 7-2 record overall. With nearly half of the year left to play, UConn is in excellent shape to challenge the Big East as the program to beat, and stacking up crucial road wins is a necessary condition for making this happen. The program lost for only the second time all year long last weekend and has an ample opportunity on Friday and Saturday to put these losses behind them. However, no matter what happens away from Storrs this weekend, one thing is sure: The program is headed for big places. This weekend is expected to be yet another UConn coronation, as Connecticut is on the cusp of putting together a historic season that will be remembered for a long time.



UConn women's tennis matches up against Georgetown in Manchester, Conn. on Feb. 16, 2025. The gloomy day didn't stop friends, family, and fans of UConn players from supporting their team. PHOTO BY SYDNEY CHANDLER, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS



PHOTO BY SYDNEY CHANDLER, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS