

## HuskyTHON 'Day of Strength' event will be held next week

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HuskyTHON will be holding their 24-hour "Day of Strength" fundraising push on Feb. 25 from 9 a.m. to midnight at the Student Union.

HuskyTHON is an effort led by students at the University of Connecticut to help fundraise for the non-for-profit Connecticut Children's, which is on a mission to improve healthcare access for kids, according to the press release.

Day of Strength is the largest single fundraising push of the year for HuskyTHON, according to a press release from the organization. The event is meant to start off the fundraising for HuskyTHON's 2026 "Above All Else" campaign by challenging participants to raise \$148 each.

"Each participant is challenged to raise \$148 in honor of the 148,893 unique patients seen by Connecticut Children's in 2025," the press release read. "These individual goals are designed to help UConn students raise \$XXX,XXX in just 24 hours."

Paige O'Keefe, an eighth-semester elementary education major and the vice president of communications for HuskyTHON, said the fundraising goal of the event will be announced on Feb. 21 on the organization's Instagram page.

From 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. students will be able to win merchandise, play games and have the chance to sign up to be a part of HuskyTHON's dance marathon and other fundraising events, O'Keefe said.

At 7 p.m., Day of Strength After-Dark will begin and run until midnight. Activities such



HuskyTHON raising money for charity during their annual event. It received a record-breaking number of donations during last year's day of Strength.

PHOTO BY MATT FARAGO, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

as dance marathon fundraising challenges and a DJ battle will take place, and students will be provided with complimentary food and drink and resources to learn more about the children the organization raises funds for will be available, according to the press release.

The 24-hour fundraising total from the day will be announced at the end of the night, according to the press release.

In 2025, the organization received a record-breaking number of donations on Day of Strength, raising \$451,516.94, according to their Instagram profile.

"That milestone solidified HuskyTHON as the second-

largest Miracle Network Dance Marathon program in the country based on funds raised," according to the press release.

"We're hoping that we're just kind of gonna go above and beyond what we hit last year," O'Keefe said.

"The funds raised during Day of Strength contribute to HuskyTHON's overall fundraising total, which will be announced at HuskyTHON, the organization's 18-hour Dance Marathon, on March 7th," according to a press release.

"Viewers can support the effort by texting UCONN to 34-984 to donate, following @huskython on social media, or visiting huskython.org," according to the press release.

cording to the press release.

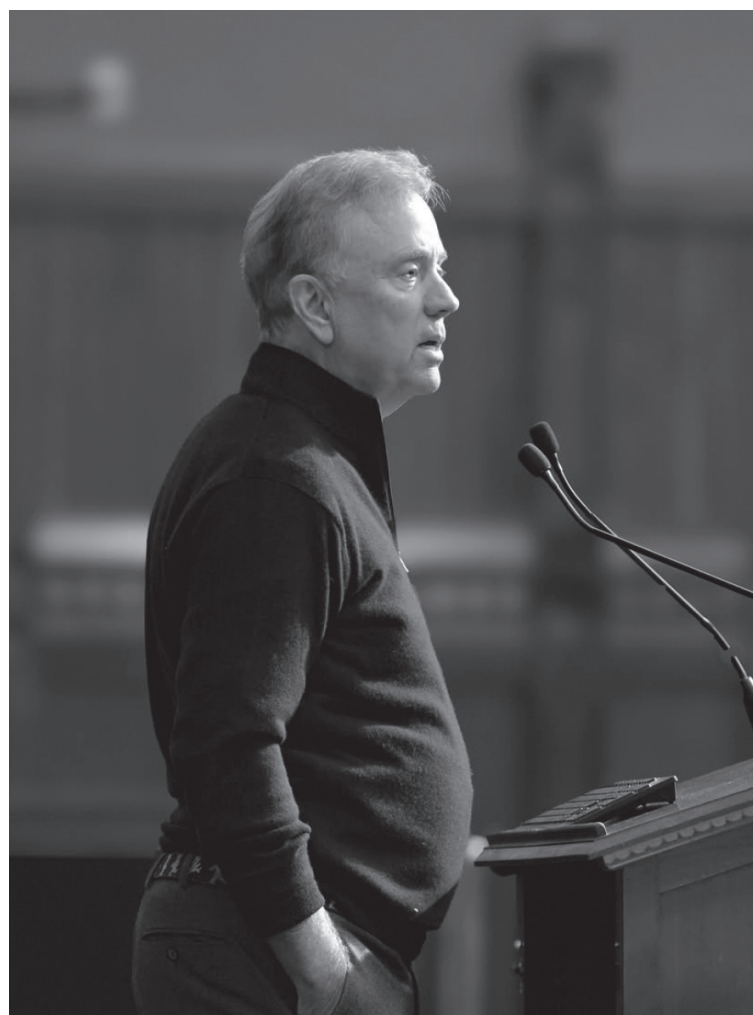
On the morning of the event, a Day of Strength video will be released on HuskyTHON's YouTube channel, according to the press release.

Molly Normandin, an eighth-semester allied health sciences major and the vice president of membership, said a lot of HuskyTHON members will be at the event during the day, including dance representatives, captains and HuskyTHON rising leaders.

Normandin said there are currently 4,300 participants for the 18-hour dance marathon.

More information about HuskyTHON can be found on the organization's website.

## Lamont proposes \$500 million tax rebate for Connecticut residents



Ned Lamont, the current governor of the state of Connecticut. Before becoming a politician, Lamont worked at the Black River Tribune, a small weekly newspaper in Vermont. PHOTO COURTESY OF @GOVNEDLAMONT ON INSTAGRAM

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Gov. Ned Lamont is proposing a bill to send tax rebate checks to roughly 2.2 million Connecticut residents this fall, totaling \$500 million in relief, according to the CT Mirror.

The plan, unveiled as part of the governor's budget address earlier this month, would return money to working families and middle-class households across the state.

"Unlike many other states, which are facing federal cuts or a deficit of their own, Connecticut is stepping up to protect our most vulnerable, and we are trying to make life a little less expensive for working families and the middle class, who are getting slammed by higher costs," Lamont said in his budget address to lawmakers, as reported by the CT Mirror.

According to the governor's fact sheet regarding the proposed bill, Senate Bill 84, the amount a household would receive depends on how they filed their 2024 state income tax return.

Single filers who earned up to \$200,000 would receive \$200. Joint filers who earned up to \$400,000 would get

\$400. Head of household filers who earned up to \$320,000 would receive \$320. Part-time residents would not be eligible.

There would be no application required. According to the fact sheet, the Connecticut Department of Revenue Services would automatically identify eligible residents using existing 2024 tax records; checks would be mailed no later than Oct. 31, 2026.

Lamont wants to draw \$500 million from Connecticut's projected \$1.9 billion budget surplus for the current fiscal year. The money would come from sales tax revenue, which the state expects to generate around \$5.3 billion in 2026. The CT Mirror notes that \$500 million is a significant sum, enough to fund two full years of special education grants to school districts statewide.

The rebate was not without its critics at the State Capitol. According to CT Mirror's coverage of Lamont's Feb. 4 budget address, House Minority Leader Vincent Candelora called the proposal "hollowing and gimmicky," arguing that Connecticut families need ongoing relief rather than a one-time payment.

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## STUDENTS DISPLACED FOLLOWING FLOOD IN BUSBY SUITES

by Samantha Brody  
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University of Connecticut students living in Busby Suites were woken up at around 5 a.m. on Monday, Feb. 9 after a sudden pipe burst caused a flood in a third-floor lounge, according to an email from university spokesperson Stephanie Reitz.

About 50 students were required to temporarily relocate following the burst, according to Reitz. Students were housed primarily in the Oaks on the Square, Connecticut Hall, Shippee and free apartments in other complexes, Reitz said.

The damaged pipe, a fire sprinkler pipe, froze and later burst in a third-floor study lounge near the building's exterior, Reitz said. UConn Facilities Operations has been working with trade shops and outside companies to lessen the water damage, repair or replace any damaged portions of the building and return the dorms back to normal conditions, Reitz said.

"The hall director and assistant director have been communicating with impacted students throughout the process, walking down the hallways and knocking on doors individually to speak with students," Reitz said. "They have also followed up by email to ensure they have been in touch with everyone in case some were out when they visited the hallways."

For students living in Busby, the sudden fire alarm so early in the morning was a shock. Resident Bradyn McNally, a civil engineering student in his fourth semester, quickly realized the problem.

"We knew it wasn't a drill because the drill was earlier in the week," McNally said. "So, we all kind of procedurally head out towards the exit. There's no water in the hall at that point, so we just assume that it's something random. But as we're going down the stairwell, we can see water dripping, and once we're out, we see even more dripping."

McNally said he and the other students living in the building stayed outside for about half an hour until the fire department allowed them back inside. By the time McNally reached his floor, a massive puddle had formed.

"We can see this giant puddle of water that's very slowly, like, inching down the hall," McNally said. "Water was dripping from the floor above. So, then we go back to our rooms. We're told that just to be safe, we should put towels in front of the door to stop any water from coming in. And from that point we were just confused on what to do."

See BUSBY, p. 2

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## News

**BUSBY, cont. from p. 1**

McNally was one of the lucky students on his floor, as the puddle had stopped growing shortly before reaching the door of his room. His belongings were unimpacted, and he was able to rest before later leaving again for his 10:10 a.m. class.

While McNally was able to return to normal life soon after, he said he didn't receive much communication from the university about the situation.

"We learned it was a pipe burst a couple hours after it happened, and that I think people on our floor were just told to evacuate for the time being," McNally said. "It was scary, I guess, but it wasn't 'evacuate,' evacuate. It was just 'get out of the area for the time being' or whatever. And I think, later that week, we got emails concerning people coming in to inspect the walls and whatever for water."

In her email, Reitz noted that frozen pipes bursting isn't unheard of. She said students can help prevent future incidents by staying aware.

"Unfortunately, buildings on campus can be vulnerable to frozen pipes during sub-zero temperatures just as [it] occurs in homes, businesses, and other locations," Reitz said. "We ask students to help by being our eyes and ears in their buildings, placing work orders when they first notice a leak or a heating issue, and to keep windows closed and secured."

**LAMONT, cont. from p. 1**

State Sen. Ryan Fazio, a Republican who is seeking his party's gubernatorial nomination, said the governor's budget lacked any long-term strategy to reduce costs or grow the economy.

House Speaker Matt Ritter, a Democrat, took a more measured stance, telling reporters he was glad the conversation had shifted toward returning money to taxpayers, though he left open the question of exactly how that should happen.

Legislators from both parties are pushing competing ideas, the CT Mirror reports. Many House and Senate Democrats favor a permanent child tax credit providing up to \$600 per child for lower- and middle-income families. House Republicans want to expand a property tax credit for the middle class, while Senate Republicans have proposed a broader \$1.5 billion package that would cut income tax rates and reduce the state's payroll tax.

The General Assembly must weigh all of these options before the legislative session ends on May 6, 2026.

# NVIDIA LEADS THE US STOCK MARKET HIGHER



Trader William Lawrence works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange, Friday, Feb. 13, 2026, in New York.

PHOTOGRAPH BY AP PHOTO

NEW YORK (AP) — The U.S. stock market ticked higher on Wednesday, led by its most influential stock, Nvidia.

The S&P 500 rose 0.6% and pulled a bit closer to its all-time high set late last month. The Dow Jones Industrial Average added 129 points, or 0.3%, and the Nasdaq composite gained 0.8%.

Nvidia helped lift the market and climbed 1.6% after Meta Platforms announced a long-term partnership where it will use millions of chips and other equipment from Nvidia for its artificial-intelligence data centers.

"No one deploys AI at Meta's scale," Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang said. Because his company is the most valuable on Wall Street, Nvidia's stock was the single most powerful force pulling the S&P 500 higher.

That performance demonstrated the upside of AI development for the U.S. stock market. But investors have also focused on the potential downsides recently, which has led to sharp swings for Wall Street. Worries are rising, for example, about how much companies like Meta are spending on AI and whether they can make back their huge investments through higher profits and productivity in the future.

Meta's stock fell as much as 1.7% before recovering and rising 0.6%.

Another worry is that if AI succeeds in creating tools to do complicated tasks more cheaply, companies in industries as far flung as software and legal services and trucking logistics could see their businesses get undercut. That has pushed investors to suddenly and aggressively punish stocks of companies seen as under threat, and analysts have likened it to a "shoot first-ask questions later" mentality.

Several profit reports from companies helped to lift stocks Wednesday. They continued what's been a strong reporting season for the big U.S. companies in the S&P 500.

Cadence Design Systems climbed 7.6% after delivering both profit and revenue for the latest quarter that topped analysts' expectations. CEO Anirudh Devgan credited what he called "the essential nature of Cadence's engineering software," even as investors worry about AI threatening to remake the industry.

Analog Devices rose 2.6% after likewise topping analysts' estimates for profit and revenue. The chip company said it saw record orders during the quarter for its data center business.

Outside of earnings reports, Moderna jumped 6.1% after saying regulators at the Food and

Drug Administration will review its flu vaccine candidate after earlier refusing to consider it.

They helped offset a 6.8% drop for Palo Alto Networks. The cybersecurity company reported a stronger profit for the latest quarter than analysts expected, but it gave profit forecasts for the current quarter and the remainder of its fiscal year that fell short of their estimates.

All told, the S&P 500 rose 38.09 points to 6,881.31. The Dow Jones Industrial Average added 129.47 to 49,662.66, and the Nasdaq composite climbed 175.25 to 22,753.63.

In the bond market, Treasury yields ticked higher following reports on the U.S. economy that came in better than economists expected. The yield on the 10-year Treasury rose to 4.08% from 4.05% late Tuesday.

One report said that industrial production improved last month by more than economists expected. Another said orders for computers, fabricated metal products and other long-lasting manufactured goods rose more in December than economists expected, when not including airplanes and other transportation equipment. A third report said homebuilders broke ground on more new homes in December than expected.

Such strong data could encourage the Federal Reserve to keep interest rates steady.

The Fed has put its cuts to interest rates on hold, but many on Wall Street expect it to resume later this year. The widespread forecast is that will come during the summer, after a new chair is scheduled to step in atop the Fed.

Minutes released Wednesday from the Fed's last meeting, though, showed many officials want to see inflation fall further before they would support additional interest rate cuts this year.

Lower rates can give a boost to the economy and prices for investments, but that comes at the cost of potentially worsening inflation.

In stock markets abroad, London's FTSE 100 climbed 1.2% after the latest update on U.K. inflation bolstered expectations that the Bank of England may soon cut interest rates.

Japan's Nikkei 225 rose 1% as Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi was reappointed by the parliament following a landslide victory for her ruling Liberal Democrats in a Feb. 8 election. The expectation is that she will push through policies to help the economy and markets.

Elsewhere in Asia, several markets were closed for the Lunar New Year holiday.

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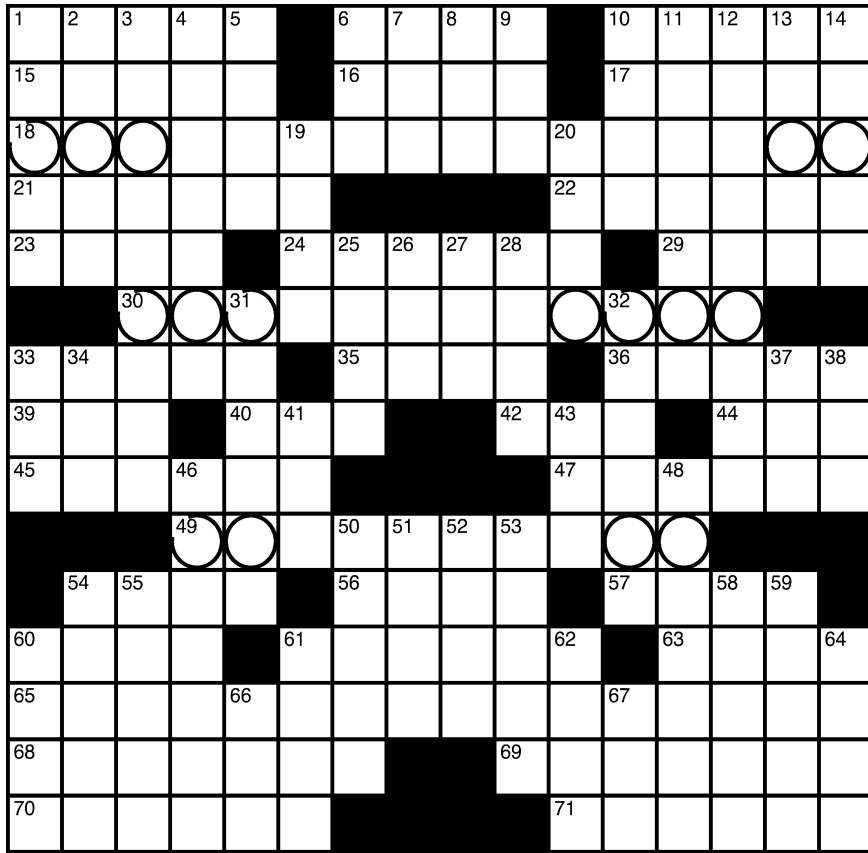
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- ACROSS**
- 1 Wood used by luthiers
  - 6 High-five sound
  - 10 One of many in Indonesia's Kepulauan Seribu
  - 15 He-Man's twin
  - 16 Area
  - 17 "I have a good lawyer and I'm not afraid!"
  - 18 "Espresso" singer
  - 21 2024 Korean Air merger partner
  - 22 More haunted
  - 23 "Jeopardy!" champion Amodio
  - 24 Collectible card protector
  - 29 Wee
  - 30 Taking time off from school?
  - 33 Flavor of fermented foods
  - 35 Secure, as a boat
  - 36 Mississippi formation
  - 39 Something to shoot for
  - 40 Start to fix?
  - 42 Tub with jets
  - 44 Product of a redox reaction
  - 45 Tranquil
  - 47 "Make it \_\_\_!"
  - 49 Pet adoption that wasn't planned
  - 54 Infield call
  - 56 Taqueria drink
  - 57 European range
  - 60 Pachakamaq worshippers
  - 61 Quick look
  - 63 Mammal with a saddle patch
  - 65 Metaphor for something with positive and negative consequences, or what 18-, 30-, and 49-Across literally are?
  - 68 Freelancer's targets
  - 69 Gave meaning to
  - 70 Knight rider's companions?
  - 71 "Nothing yet!"
- DOWN**
- 1 Tea in masala chai, perhaps



By Alisya Reza & Shannon Rapp 2/19/26

- 2 Tibet's capital
- 3 Payment method
- 4 Printing gaffe
- 5 Part of the water cycle
- 6 Kendrick Lamar's Grand National Tour co-headliner
- 7 Follower of wisdom or love, in hairstyling
- 8 Actress Gasteyer
- 9 A pop
- 10 "Got it"
- 11 Daily spectacle
- 12 Accidentally reveal
- 13 Do a virtual interview, say
- 14 "Fresh Air" co-host Gross
- 19 Condé
- 20 Orange skin
- 25 Citrus fruit
- 26 Indigenous people of North Carolina
- 27 Alter
- 28 Devices for watching old home movies
- 31 Sneak (around)
- 32 "Minor Detail" novelist Shibli

**Wednesday's Puzzle Solved**

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

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- 33 Shipper with brown trucks
- 34 Astronaut Jemison
- 37 Be better than
- 38 Whichever
- 41 In medias
- 43 Educational ad
- 46 Warm
- 48 Admit
- 50 Lore
- 51 "Holy moly!"
- 52 Step on a ladder
- 53 Stood up to, say
- 54 Aardvark feature
- 55 Like some accents
- 58 Given (to)
- 59 Item in an Ikea kit
- 60 Wedding exchanges
- 61 Understands
- 62 Starter home?
- 64 Puts together
- 66 Was in charge
- 67 NorCal hub

# The Daily Campus Games

## Crossword and Sudoku

# Sudoku By The Mephram Group

Level 1 2 3 4

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

Solution to Wednesday's puzzle

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

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# ‘Being Gordon Ramsay:’ A candid showcase of everyone’s favorite celebrity chef



Gordon Ramsay, one of the most famous chefs in the world. Ramsay has filmed dozens of television shows, grossing millions of views across platforms.

PHOTO COURTESY OF @GORDONGRAM ON INSTAGRAM

by **Nicholas Sorokobi**  
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What’s the first thing that comes to mind when you hear the words “angry,” “foul-mouthed” and “celebrity?” Probably globally renowned and award-winning British celebrity chef Gordon Ramsay, who is the subject of a new six-part Netflix Series “Being Gordon Ramsay,” which hit the streaming service on Wednesday, Feb. 18.

The series follows Ramsay, now pushing 60, as he takes the viewers behind the scenes in the stressful and anticipated lead-up to the opening of his latest and most prestigious restaurant venue: 22 Bishopsgate. A major, multi-complex commercial skyscraper and dining destination, the restaurant is situated over 250 meters high in the heart of Central London.

Ramsay, the star of the reality shows Kitchen Nightmares, Hotel Nightmares, Hell’s Kitchen and MasterChef, has established a name for himself over the past three decades not just through his appearances on reality TV, but through some of reputation as an exceptional chef and food critic. Ramsay has opened 95 restaurants in various locations around the world and received numerous accolades, including being named the Top Chef in the UK at the 2000 Catey Awards, numerous Michelin stars, a Guinness World Re-

cord and being named the Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) by Queen Elizabeth in 2020. Ramsay’s fiery temper and widespread use of profanity, coupled with his creative insults and sardonic wisecracks towards the contestants on the shows, have since propelled him to become a household name and is now loved by millions.

“The series follows Ramsay, now pushing 60, as he takes the viewers behind the scenes in the stressful and anticipated lead-up to the opening of his latest and most prestigious restaurant venue: 22 Bishopsgate.”

But “Being Gordon Ramsay” doesn’t just feature Ramsay as he deals with the hustle and bustle of his current projects and business endeavors. It also paints a raw, honest portrait of the relationship he shares with his large and loving family, which includes his wife of 30 years, Tana, herself a cookbook author, and their six children. Special family moments are showcased, such as Ramsay cooking a meal in the kitchen with daughter Tilly, now 24. Tilly

chose to follow in her father’s footsteps, attending culinary school in Ireland and becoming a TV personality, presenting “Matilda and the Ramsay Bunch” on CBBC alongside her family.

Ramsay also delves even further on a personal level, detailing the relationship he had with his father, the late Gordon Ramsay Sr. The elder Ramsay was a swimming pool manager, welder and shopkeeper by profession and an abusive alcoholic who discouraged his son from pursuing a career in the culinary field. Ramsay’s dysfunctional childhood was marred by brother Ronnie’s heroin addiction and the sacrifices his mother Helen made in order to raise her four children.

It’s here where we as the viewers see Ramsay at probably his most emotional state ever, but nonetheless are in awe by the grit and determination that he displays in spite the hardships he faced, rising to the top and becoming one of the most, if not the most, successful chef of all time.

In summary, “Being Gordon Ramsay” is well-worth the watch, not just for fans of the culinary star and his work, but also for those who are keen to learn about Ramsay’s backstory and how he’s currently getting on — still as successful, angrier, foul-mouthed and wiser as ever.

**Rating: 5/5**

# ‘Wild Boys: Strangers in Town’: Out of the woods and into the world

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What would you do if two strangers showed up in your small town? Well, the new Paramount+ documentary series “Wild Boys: Strangers in Town” answers this question. Split into two parts, the series follows the “Wild Boys” case, where two brothers emerged from the Canadian wilderness and into the town of Vernon, British Columbia with a story of how they were raised entirely off the grid, the woman who was by their side and the truth that ended up unraveling itself.

“What would you do if two strangers showed up in your small town? Well, the new Paramount+ documentary series “Wild Boys: Strangers in Town” answers this question.”

In 2003, Tom and Will Green appeared in a small Canadian town claiming that they had been raised off the grid and in the wilderness. The town was divided on whether or not they believed their story, but one woman in particular, Tami Ryder, trusted what the boys were saying and took initiative into helping them acclimate to the world. The boys stayed tight-lipped about their story until Will got sick from not eating and ended up in the hospital, and from there a journalist caught wind of the story of the “Wild Boys” and set off to get them to do an interview. It took some convincing, but Tom agreed and then they were

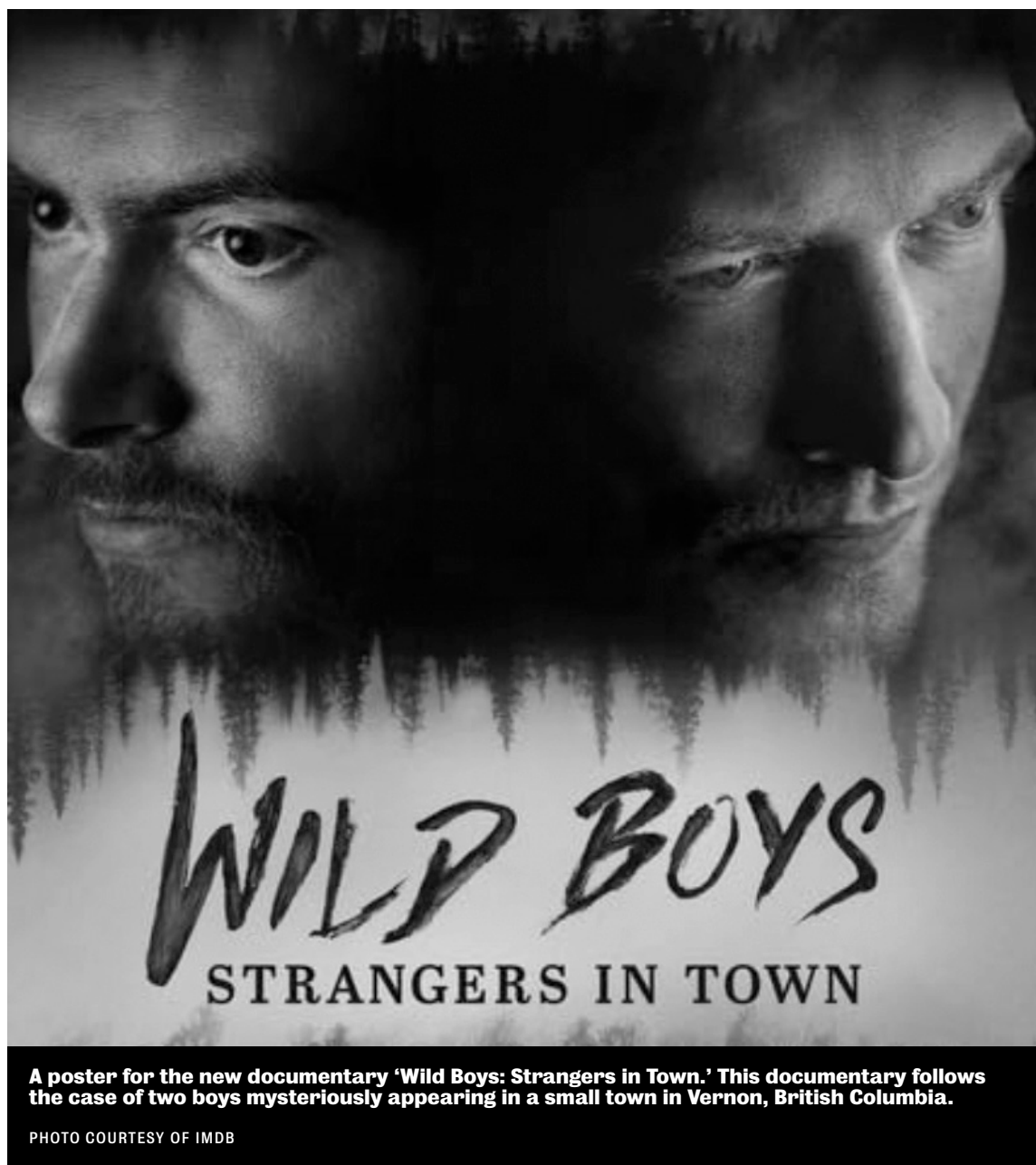
all over the news. That’s when it was discovered that Tom and Will Green were actually Kyle and Roen Horn, and they had never lived off the grid, but were actually from a decent family in California.

The story itself of these two brothers is kind of insane, especially if you’ve never heard of it. Considering the way, they were able to pull off hitchhiking across the border and get not only a town to believe them, but also people all over Canada and the U.S., you almost have to stand up and applaud them. The most fascinating part of the series was hearing about the complicated reasons as to why they did what they did, and the aftermath of it over the years.

The series really shows how close a bond the brothers have, in that they would do anything for each other to protect and keep each other safe. That affected their survival instincts because they ran away from home on impulse and need to figure out to survive until they could go back home without being taken to authorities, so they created alternative identities and spun a story that would draw people in but made it just weird and crazy enough that it had to be true because who could come up with something like that.

In the years since this all went down, the brothers haven’t had the best life and watching them, it’s easy to feel bad considering how lonely they are. The boys grew up with parents who believed in so many conspiracy theories that it got pushed onto them because they didn’t know any better, and now in adulthood, they’re still living in those realities. Being antivax, believing institutions are lying to you and thinking that eternal life is a possibility.

The series is also still relevant today, as it tackles concepts related to how we perceive the truth, how we access information and



A poster for the new documentary ‘Wild Boys: Strangers in Town.’ This documentary follows the case of two boys mysteriously appearing in a small town in Vernon, British Columbia.

PHOTO COURTESY OF IMDB

how we trust people when the world is so confusing. The people of Vernon wanted to believe the brothers and help them, but in the end, they were taken advantage of. Unfortunately, this kind of thing has only gotten worse with time. While many want to believe that everyone is good at heart, we’ve had to become cynical because of the misinformation that gets spread on the internet like wildfire.

The series itself was inter-

estingly filmed. There were interviews as well as your typical documentary shots where stand-ins replicate parts of the story, but there were also multiple shots of the two brothers in the current time that looked like they were straight out the Bachelor franchise. They took me out of the viewing experience as they didn’t fit the tone, and I just kept imagining what the director was telling the brothers to do to get these ridiculous “aesthetic”

shots.

Overall, the story is compelling, but I was kind of bored by it. Once the “mystery” was solved, I became disinterested in the life of the boys. While yes, I do think it was necessary to add so the viewer could get a well-rounded story, I just didn’t care as much. Most of what they were talking about was related to obviously untrue conspiracy theories so they ended up losing me.

**Rating: 3/5**

# Trendsetter: Female Olympians live their truths

by **Maleena Muzio**  
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While the weather may be warming up slightly at the University of Connecticut, the 2026 Winter Olympics are in full swing in Italy. The Olympics are iconic every time they are held, producing countless memes and launching the idolization of athletes. But this time, they seem to be more eventful than in recent years — and I don't mean sporting events.

From statement nails, alternative fashion and personal confessions, the Winter Olympics are putting on quite the show. In today's issue of Trendsetter, I will discuss some common themes I have noticed at this year's games, which are still ongoing.

**“From statement nails, alternative fashion and personal confessions, the Winter Olympics are putting on quite the show.”**

Despite the United States not ranking number one for number of medals won — Norway is currently first and Canada second — a handful of athletes representing the country are gaining popularity and media presence.

“The Blade Angels,” comprised of Amber Glenn, Alyssa Liu and Isabeau Levito, have stolen the Olympic spotlight. You made have heard the phrase already, but they are “alt, gay and from New Jersey,” and unapologetically themselves. Similar to the themes of award season (from the previous issue), boldness is in.

**“You made have heard the phrase already, but they are ‘alt, gay and from New Jersey,’ and unapologetically themselves.”**

The three women are figure skaters on Team USA. Glenn and Liu won gold medals in the team event. Liu is currently in third place for the singles category.

Also known as the “Babes of Glory,” the trio's friendship has taken the internet by storm. Glenn is the first openly queer woman on a U.S. Olympic singles figure skating team, according to an article published by USA Today on Feb. 17. Liu is known for her striped dyed hair and smiley piercing, and Levito is, well, from New Jersey and has her own spunk.

The trio of figure skaters provides non-conventional representation, in many respects, for the sport. Female figure skaters have famously

been held to strict public image standards, something that the former skater Tonya Harding struggled with in the 1990s.

More so than ever, women have been at the center stage of professional sports. Popular female athletes, like “The Blade Angels” are helping to promote their sport not only through their talent, but also through persona and uniqueness. Many are coining a personality or look — just think of “Bayou Barbie,” now “Chi Barbie” Angel Reese from the WNBA.

**“While many athletes are living in their truths publicly today, I chose to highlight a few female athletes that are expressing themselves the way they choose during this year's Winter Olympics.”**

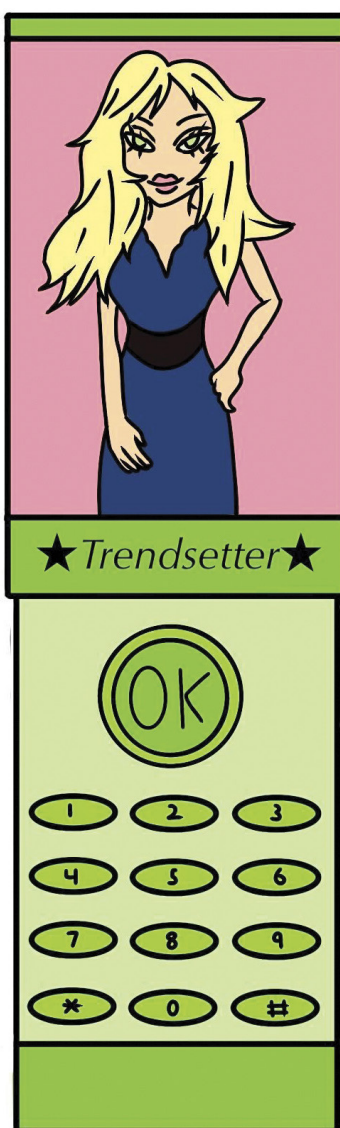
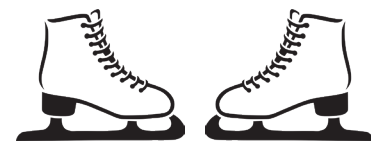
Other than dyed hair, nails and manicures have surprisingly been a topic in the Olympics. Stefania Constantini, alongside Amos Mosaner, won Italy a bronze in the mixed doubles curling event. Constantini refused to cut down her long nails and explained that if they were any longer, they would impact her performance, according to

an article published by The New York Times on Feb. 12. She serves as a reminder that modern femininity and athletics can co-exist.

**“Although each of these women are all successful athletes, they each have their own personal styles that they were unwilling to mask to appeal to the public.”**

While many athletes are living in their truths publicly today, I chose to highlight a few female athletes that are expressing themselves the way they choose during this year's Winter Olympics. Although each of these women are all successful athletes, they each have their own personal styles that they were unwilling to mask to appeal to the public. This trend is likely to gain popularity and gain traction for all athletes, not just female ones.

Check out the next issue to see if boldness continues to carry into 2026 or if people begin to crawl back into their shells — or maybe a completely new theme will dominate the culture.



LOGO BY LILLIAN LAFEMINA, ASSOCIATE ARTIST EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS  
PHOTO COURTESY OF @USFIGURESKATING ON INSTAGRAM  
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Daily

## Life

# First-Year Experience Programs host Lunar New Year celebration

by Jaylyn Davis

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To celebrate the Lunar New Year, the University of Connecticut's first-year programs hosted an event on Feb. 17 in room C80 at the Information Technology Building.

The event's environment was very festive. Each table in the room had a Chinese lantern, and Chinese music was played. The event had three stations that attendees could go to: flower decorating, origami and Mahjong. The event also had Chinese food, including rice cakes and chocolate coins.

The flower decorating station was where most attendees spent their time at. At the flower decorating station, attendees used scissors to cut out flowers. While cutting out the flowers, people conversed with each other in diverse languages, including English and Chinese.

At the origami station, attendees had the opportunity to make Chinese lanterns, origami dogs and origami cats. The Chinese lanterns came in various sizes. Some were small like bath bombs, and others were as big as soccer balls. The origami dogs came in numerous types. Some of the origami dog types were French bulldogs, dachshunds, cocker spaniels and border collies. The origami cats did not have a variety of types, but they were still a nice addition to the origami station.

During the event, not many attendees made origami dogs or origami cats. However, tons



of them made Chinese lanterns. Just like at the flower decorating station, most people who spent their time at the origami station talked to one another and shared happiness together.

The Mahjong station was not visited often. However, some attendees played the game. Mahjong is a traditional Chinese board game with tiles, typically played by four people. In the game, three players get 13 tiles, and the fourth player

acts as a dealer and gets 14 tiles. When it is a player's turn, the player discards a tile and grabs a new one from the wall of tiles. Players can also obtain a discarded tile to complete a set such as a Chow or a Pong. The players play the game until a player completes a 14-tile hand. When that happens, they call out, "Mahjong."

The event was very enjoyable for those who attended. It was also an excellent way to

promote holidays that are celebrated by Asian communities. At the beginning of the event, Castella Copeland, a student development specialist and the assistant director of the First-Year Experience Program, shared her thoughts on the importance of hosting events like the "Lunar New Year Celebration."

"I think it's really important to make sure our students have a sense of belonging and a place

to celebrate," Copeland said. "I know we have a lot of students who might be coming from international regions, and this is a big celebration for them. So, I think it's really important that we have this space, so people can learn about the celebration aspect of it."

The event was also an effort to help teach students about the holiday and bring students together, Copeland said.

"And it's really welcoming for everyone, whether people are learning more about what Lunar New Year is or are coming from a lot of the different international nations and want a place to have a sense of community and come together to celebrate with other students on campus," Copeland said. "So, doing this event was really intentional. It's run by the students in collaboration with our office to make sure that we're really having enough end experience."

Nayla Anderson, a fourth-semester student majoring in marine sciences, said the event was very relaxing.

"We really liked building our lanterns," Anderson said. "We got here a little late for the origami, but it's kind of a relaxing experience."

Events like this Lunar New Year celebration are very important. Not only do they promote international cultures, but they allow students from international regions to have a shared space to embrace their heritage and celebrate the holidays that are traditional to their home lives.



Students and guests participate in events for celebrating the Chinese New Year in the ITE building. The FYE program and ICOSA collaborated to bring games, crafts and food to enjoy.

PHOTO COURTESY OF @GORDONGRAM ON INSTAGRAM



# Opinion

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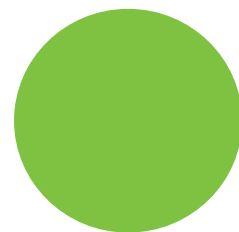
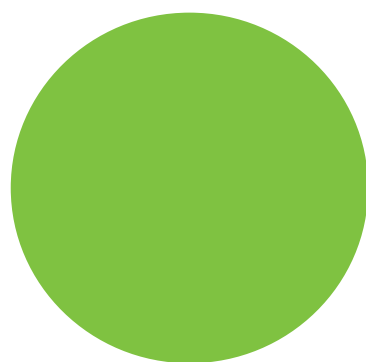
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# Patrick's Politics:

## WITHOUT CLIMATE REGULATIONS, THE EPA PROTECTS NOTHING

by **Patrick Minnerly**  
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Donald Trump has never been one to side with science, especially climate science. He has often spread false claims about climate change being some sort of "hoax" or "scam." You can imagine, then, how he feels about the Environmental Protection Agency, which is supposed to help counteract the effects of climate change and - as the name suggests - keep the environment healthy. A major pillar of the EPA's efforts pre-Trump was the 2009 "endangerment finding," which established the government position that greenhouse gases were detrimental to human health. However, the Trump administration announced it was formally revoking the EPA's endangerment finding last week, beginning the supposed "single largest deregulatory action in U.S. history." This revocation goes against established fact in order to service the interests of big business and the MAGA movement's obsession with climate change denial. It leaves the EPA adrift and powerless, unable to address the ongoing tide of global warming.

The endangerment finding was built on a 2007 Supreme Court case, *Massachusetts v. EPA*, which determined that the EPA did have the authority under the 1970 Clean Air Act to regulate greenhouse gases because of their threat to public health. This decision allowed the EPA to carry out regulatory policies to restrict emissions of these harmful gases.

Regulations are particularly important for transportation, which represents the largest share - 28% - of greenhouse gases released by the U.S. each year. The EPA's own website



**Donald Trump, the 47th President of the United States of America. Trump is one of the few presidents to serve two non-consecutive terms.** PHOTO COURTESY OF HISTORY.COM

says as much, which is deeply ironic given the Trump administration's new policy eliminates all federal regulations on greenhouse gas emissions for vehicles and engines from 2012 onwards. These regulations help prevent companies from simply having their fossil fuel output run rampant. Eliminating the regulations would mean America is now significantly out of step with other industrialized countries, which are busy expanding their own environmental protections and renewable energy sources. Trump's mission of deregulation represents a major step backwards, and it's about to cast aside restrictions in an area where the U.S. is already failing to protect the environment.

Essentially, the Trump administration's main argument for revoking the endanger-

ment finding is that American taxpayers will save \$1.3 trillion due to deregulation. Since the idea of cost is apparently so important to Trump, according to a federal report from 2023, climate change is costing the U.S. \$150 billion per year. That is a conservative estimate that only factors in direct damages, and the number will only grow larger as temperatures and sea levels rise, setting up more frequent and more destructive extreme weather events.

The current EPA's obsession with cost is no surprise. At the beginning of this year, the agency announced that it would no longer consider the amount of lives saved when determining regulations on air pollution, instead only calculating the cost to industry and businesses. Even for this craven administration, it was an on-the-nose decision that lays

bare their callousness. For Trump, the accumulation of money is far more important than protecting public health. This strictly business-based reasoning has now been extended to the endangerment finding; the White House website even lists a litany of fossil fuel and energy executives celebrating the finding's revocation.

Yet the Trump administration ignores that cost is a highly suspect way to measure the impacts of climate change in the first place. The damage of global warming is difficult to quantify, but we know its effects will significantly affect human life for the worse. As the Earth gets hotter and more inhospitable, we are barreling towards the point of no return when our effects on the climate cannot be stopped, and that future cannot be quantified in numbers. It can only be quantified in the suffering that will result. People will have to uproot their entire lives to deal with ever-more frequent disasters and the long-term effects of global heating, especially in coastal areas where seas will rise. The country of Tuvalu, a Pacific island nation, is already trying to upload a digital copy of itself in the face of being swallowed by the rising ocean. The potential loss of an entire nation cannot be quantified, and neither can many of climate change's adverse effects.

At the heart of the Trump administration's decision is catering to the MAGA base. For years, Trump and the rightwing media apparatus have primed Republicans to be very skeptical of climate change, or at least deny it is a pressing issue. According to surveys from Pew Research Center, just 12% of Republicans think dealing with cli-

mate change should be a top priority. Deregulation has also long been a crucial part of the Republican agenda - the Reaganite principle of trickle-down economics rests partly on deregulation of businesses. In addition, the current EPA administrator, Lee Zeldin, formerly served as a Republican U.S. House member and was previously most well-known as a Trump sycophant. He was specifically selected as a fully political, rightwing appointee.

Trump's history of spreading conspiracy theories and falsehoods about climate change has served to muddy the waters with his base about whether the climate crisis is indeed real. Global heating has been settled science for years, but Republicans have grown more indifferent towards tackling it in recent years. Since Trump first took power after winning the 2016 election, ignoring climate change has become a political cudgel, wielded against the idea of "wokeness."

All of this means gutting the EPA's authority doesn't hold much meaning with Republicans, but it should. The climate crisis affects both Democrats and Republicans, independents and radicals. It is a crisis for humanity itself.

Humanity, however, is not the Trump administration's concern. The EPA, instead of protecting the environment and public health, is now beholden to the interests of fossil fuel corporations and purely political considerations. Without regulations, the EPA will work to increase the amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, not decrease them. The agency has corrupted its mission, because without the endangerment finding, it is useless. And useless is just how Trump wants it.



# Opinion

Photo of the Day | Studying hard or hardly studying



UConn student studies in Homer Babbidge Library on Wednesday afternoon. The library has been especially busy this week with exams ramping up.  
PHOTO BY MADISON HENDRICKS, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

## Husky Talk: ||||| WHERE WOULD YOU TAKE ALEX RENZULLI ON A DATE?



**MAGGIE HUFFMAN (LEFT) AND ELOISE ANDREWS (RIGHT)**  
Semester: Fourth | Major: Psychology & Allied Health Science

**ANSWER: "WE CAN GO SLEDDING, THEN GRAB DINNER, AND AFTERWARDS GET A SWEET TREAT!"**



**QAIDEN GORDON**

Semester: Fifth | Major: Chemistry

**ANSWER: "A NICE HIKE... BUT LIKE NOT IN A CREEPY WAY"**



**MATTY ANEVSKI**

Semester: Fourth | Major: Accounting

**ANSWER: "LASER TAG!"**



**NICOLE LOJEWSKI**

Semester: Second | Major: Nursing

**ANSWER: "CAVA"**

# 10 MLB MANAGERS ON THE HOT SEAT IN 2026

by **Thaddeus Sawyer**  
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With spring training games starting Feb. 20, MLB fans (and owners) will be getting their first real look at what 2026 could hold for their squads. However, for some managers around the league, their teams' performances this season could be the difference between having a job next season or watching from the couch.

Here are 10 MLB managers who could be on the hot seat in 2026, ranked from least likely to most likely to be looking for a new job.

## Warren Schaeffer

Following the late hire of Paul DePodesta of "Moneyball" fame as president of baseball operations in November, the Rockies elected to hang on to interim manager Warren Schaeffer.

The former manager of the Hartford Yard Goats and Albuquerque Isotopes, this gig is Schaeffer's first in the majors. He won under 30% of games last season after taking over for long time manager Bud Black, and his fate may already be sealed come this offseason when DePodesta can properly conduct his own outside search.

## Oliver Marmol

The Cardinals won't be contending for anything in 2026 after trading away lineup mainstays in Willson Contreras, Nolan Arenado and Brendan Donovan.

Still, Marmol hasn't reached the playoffs since 2022 and led

the team to a losing record last season, with another likely on deck. There's a case to be made that he's already overstayed his welcome.

## Torey Lovullo

After reaching the World Series for the first time in his managerial career in 2023, Lovullo has missed out on the dance in each of the last two seasons, with the Diamondbacks becoming sellers by last year's trade deadline.

Arizona has posted a losing record in four of the last six seasons, and a second straight losing record may be the end of the line for Lovullo.

## Joe Espada

Espada is a holdover from both the AJ Hinch and Dusty Baker era Astros, serving as third base coach under both. Houston underperformed in 2025, missing the playoffs for the first time in almost a decade in a tough AL West. The division will be just as competitive this year, with four teams having at least some semblance of playoff aspirations.

With a partially rebuilt rotation, owner Jim Crane and GM Dana Brown likely still view the team as pennant contenders. Another playoff miss, or even a slow start across a tedious first month schedule, and the 'Stros could be looking for an outside hire to bring in a new message.

## Rob Thomson

The Phillies have won 90 games in each of Thomson's three full seasons as manager but have failed to win an NL

pennant since his time as interim manager.

After being eliminated in the NL Divisional Series in back-to-back seasons, along with clubhouse turmoil, it's fair to wonder if Philadelphia is maximizing their potential with Thomson at the helm.

## Aaron Boone

Boone will reach 700 wins as a manager this season, his ninth season as skipper in New York. He has reached the playoffs in seven out of eight seasons. The 52-year-old is missing just one thing: a ring. Winning just one pennant in his time as manager, Boone has withstood criticism in the New York media market as well as anyone.

Still, patience runs thin in New York when you aren't winning championships. Boone's predecessor, Joe Girardi, lasted 10 years while winning a championship. Time is running out.

## Carlos Mendoza

The 2024 National League Manager of the Year missed the playoffs last season despite managing one of the highest paid teams in baseball. Based on how owner Steve Cohen spends money to fix holes and how vocal he was about their underperformance last season, patience doesn't seem to be first on his agenda when it comes to winning.

If the Mets make it to the championship round (or even the divisional), Mendoza likely keeps his job; it's as simple as that.

## Don Kelly

A former Pirate, Kelly took

over for Derek Shelton in early May and managed the team to a respectable 59-65 record. He was given a contract extension to become the full-time manager following the season.

While Kelly clearly earned some respect in his prolonged audition in 2025, the Pirates have increased payroll by around \$15 million while being aggressive both in free agency and on the trade market. Kelly will be looking to lead Pittsburgh to their first winning record since 2018, something that could earn him some decent job security.

## Mark Kotsay

Under Kotsay, the Athletics have seen a modest increase in success in each of the last two seasons. Their payroll has also increased in each of those seasons and is expected to increase by around \$20 million more this season.

With young superstar Nick Kurtz leading a group of young, star position players, the A's may be looking to reach the playoffs for the first time since 2020. Kotsay has had a big hand in developing that core. Only a regression in their record would likely push Kotsay out of a job.

## Kevin Cash

Though the Rays have posted losing records in each of the last two seasons, that came on the heels of five straight playoff campaigns. Though new owner Patrick Zalupski has no ties to Cash, MLB's longest tenured manager is likely to receive a little extra grace.



Caption: Oliver Marmol, the current manager of the St. Louis Cardinals. Marmol grew up in Florida, but was first drafted to the Pittsburgh Pirates in the MLB.

Warren Schaeffer, the interim manager of the Colorado Rockies baseball program. Schaeffer was priorly the manager of the Hartford Yard Goats.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

PHOTO COURTESY OF MLBLOGS.COM

## Sports

## Photo of the Day |



UConn men's basketball plays Creighton University at Gampel Pavilion in Storrs, Conn. on Feb. 18, 2026. The crowd hyped up the team throughout the entire game. PHOTO BY SYDNEY CHANDLER, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

# The Weekly Power Play.

## The late Johnny Gaudreau honored at Olympics

by Nicole Caruso  
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The No. 13 jersey of Johnny Gaudreau hangs inside Team USA's men's hockey locker room to honor their former player.

Gaudreau and his younger brother Matthew were struck and killed in August of 2024 while riding bikes in New Jersey. They were killed just one day before their sister Katie was set to get married. Their deaths shocked not only the NHL community but the entire nation with an outpour of support immediately coming in.

J. Gaudreau played for Team USA in six different international events, including five International Ice Hockey Federation Men's World Championships. Throughout these games, Gaudreau earned 43 points in 40 games, the most points in USA men's IIHF history.

The Gaudreau family released a statement via Instagram showing their support for Team USA, adding how much the Olympics meant to Johnny: "Representing Team USA at the Olympics was one of his greatest dreams," the family said. "In that final summer, John was training harder than ever, with his dad, pushing himself to be in the best shape of his life. He was determined to earn his spot on that Olympic roster."

The family went on to add their support for Gaudreau's former teammates on their journey for the gold medal.

"Go Team USA. We know John and Matty are watching with pride."

While on the Columbus Blue Jackets, Gaudreau played alongside teammate and current member of Team USA Zach

Werenski. The pair represented Team USA together back in 2024 for the men's championship.

"It's super special to see his jersey hanging, and we're playing for him and trying to make him proud," Werenski said in an interview with NBC News.

Werenski arrived in Italy wearing a special sweatshirt in honor of Gaudreau. The hoodie is from the John and Matthew Gaudreau Foundation, which was created in memory of the two.

The foundation is run by the brothers' wives, Meredith and Madeline, and strives to support youth hockey initiatives and other families that have been affected by drunk driving.

Gaudreau was honored back in 2025 when Team USA won its first gold medal since 1933 at the IIHF World Championship. While celebrating on the ice, the team brought out his jersey and posed for a picture along with the trophy.

U.S. men's hockey team head coach Mike Sullivan acknowledged that Johnny's legacy does not go unnoticed.

"The fact that our team is celebrating him throughout this tournament just speaks volumes to the character and the person that Johnny was," Sullivan said in an interview with NBC News. "I know how much he meant to a lot of the guys in that room."

As of Feb. 18, Team USA has secured a spot in the Quarterfinals and will face off against Sweden.

With more thrilling matchups to come, fans can tune in and watch on services such as Peacock, NBC and CNBC, just to name a few.



Johnny Gaudreau, a former professional hockey player. He was tragically killed by a drunk driver on August 29, 2024. PHOTO COURTESY OF CREATIVE COMMONS



LOGO BY ALEXA PAPPAS, STAFF ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS

# LATO'S LENS:

UPSETS, TOP PERFORMERS, AND MUST-SEE MATCHUPS FOR THIS WEEK IN COLLEGE BASKETBALL

by **Tyler Lato**  
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This next week of college basketball features what might be the best slate of games in the entire regular season: No. 1 Michigan versus No. 3 Duke, No. 4 Arizona versus No. 8 Kansas, and No. 4 Arizona versus No. 6 Iowa State. These are matchups you just don't see every day.

Since the last edition of my column, the top ten has shifted once again, marked by impressive performances from future NBA stars across the country. So, without further ado, here are college basketball's biggest upsets and top performers from the past week, along with three upcoming matchups to keep an eye on.

**Greatest Upsets**

**Saturday, Feb. 14: No. 16 Texas Tech 78, No. 1 Arizona 75**

Once again, just like last week, down goes No. 1.

In a battle of Big 12 heavyweights, top-ranked Arizona dropped its second game in a row at the hands of JT Toppin and the No. 16 Texas Tech Red Raiders in overtime.

Toppin recorded what would be one of the most defining games of his career. He coupled a 31-point performance with 13 rebounds and three assists, drilling the eventual game-winning hook shot with one minute left in overtime to seal the deal for the Red Raiders. His battery mate, Christian Anderson, chipped in with 19 points, six rebounds and eight assists in the contest.

**Tuesday, Feb. 17: NC State 82, North Carolina 58**

The wheels are starting to fall off the train for UNC after unranked NC State pummeled its injury-ridden rivals by a score of 82-58. This marks Will Wade's second victory over a ranked opponent during his first year as head coach for the Wolfpack.

Former McNeese State star Quadir Copeland gashed the Tar Heels' defense, recording 20 points, six rebounds and seven assists, while freshman Matt Able added an impressive 19 points.

Without star freshman forward Caleb Wilson and center Henri Veesaar, the Tar Heels may be in trouble as the ACC and NCAA tournaments approach.

**Tuesday, Feb. 17: Rhode Island 81, No. 18 Saint Louis 76**

There's nothing better than a good old-fashioned court storming, especially during mid-major college basketball action, after the unranked Rhode Island Rams snapped No. 18 Saint Louis' 18-game win streak.

While having a hard time shutting down fan favorite Saint Louis center Robbie Avila, who scored 21 points, the Rams pieced together timely offense with crucial free throws down the stretch to stun their A-10 rivals.

Junior guard Jonah Hinton played a stellar game, possibly



UConn Men's Basketball plays Creighton University at Gampel Pavilion in Storrs, Conn. On Feb 18, 2026. The crowd hyped up the team throughout the entire game.  
PHOTOS BY SYDNEY CHANDLER, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

the best of his career. He accounted for 29 of the Rams' 81 points, including a season-high nine three-pointers, in the win. Keep an eye on the Rams as they approach the A-10 conference tournament.

**Top Performers**

Bennett Stirtz, Guard (Iowa) dropped 25 points, two rebounds and two assists in the Hawkeyes' 87-82 upset of conference rival and ninth-ranked Nebraska.

Bruce Thornton, Guard (Ohio State) recorded a 27 point, 14 rebound and 10 assist triple-double in the Buckeyes' 86-69 trouncing of No. 24 Wisconsin.

Solo Ball, Guard (UConn) led the No. 5 Huskies to a 79-75 victory over unranked Georgetown, scoring 20 points, six rebounds and four assists.

Nate Heise, Guard (Iowa State) drilled the go-ahead, game-winning three-pointer to lift No. 6 Iowa State over No. 2 Houston.

**Games to Watch**

**Saturday, Feb. 21: No. 4 Arizona (23-2) at No. 2 Houston (23-3)**

The Big 12 has been electric this season, and that energy will carry into Saturday night's battle between Houston and Arizona. Both teams have dominated the conference thus far and are poised to make deep runs in the NCAA Tournament this March.

Players to watch include Arizona freshman guard Brayden Burries, who is averaging 15.7 points, 4.7 rebounds and 2.6 assists per game, and Houston freshman guard who is putting up 16.6 points, 3.7 rebounds and 5.3 assists. Both are strong candidates for conference Freshman of the Year.

**Saturday, Feb. 21: No. 1 Michigan (25-1) at No. 4 Duke (24-2)**

Many earmarked this matchup at the start of the season as the best regular season game of the year. Both teams are undefeated in their respective conferences. Both are loaded with NBA-level talent. Both are led by high-caliber coaches. And last but not least, the game will be played at the famous Capital One Arena in Washington, D.C., providing the perfect neutral site for such a highly anticipated out-of-conference clash.

**Monday, Feb. 23: No. 2 Houston (23-3) at No. 8 Kansas (19-6)**

Boy, Houston never gets a break.

Following their top five dual with Arizona, the Cougars will travel to the hallowed grounds of Lawrence, Kansas for a dance with the red-hot No. 8 Kansas Jayhawks.

The Jayhawks are riding the momentum from their upset of No. 1 Arizona two weeks ago and look to carry that into this matchup against the Cougars. Forward Flory Bidunga is having a stellar season for Kansas and will undeniably have a huge impact on the course of this game.



# Sports

## Women's Basketball:

### No. 1 UConn clinches 25th Big East regular season title

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For a program that uses its 12 national championship trophies as doorstops deep within the innards of its home arena, winning the Big East Regular Season Championship doesn't come with much hoorah for the UConn women's basketball team.

It's status quo, after all, even if Wednesday's 83-69 victory over second-place Villanova (21-6, 14-4) gave the Huskies (28-0, 17-0) their 25th Big East regular season crown and 61st conference title overall.

There are still things to "clean up," as Geno Auriemma cryptically alluded to last week.

Getting spunky freshman Blanca Quiñonez back from a nagging shoulder injury will certainly help in those janitorial endeavors... eventually, at least.

But after missing six consecutive games, Quiñonez will need time to readjust to the lineup - that was evident early on Wednesday. The freshman subbed in for Serah Williams at the 6:12 mark and turned the ball over twice before the first media timeout.

Quiñonez's early woes contributed to UConn's sloppy offensive start, which Villanova took advantage of to take a lead into the first media timeout.

Luckily the top-ranked Huskies have Naismith candidates

Sarah Strong and Azzi Fudd to lean on in times of offensive hardship. The two potential All-Americans combined for 14 of UConn's 19 first quarter points and were the catalysts in the Huskies' come-from-behind effort in the first half.

Strong and Fudd combined for 46 points on 19 field goals, 15 rebounds, eight assists and seven steals in the come-from-behind win over the conference's second best team, looking every bit the part of the all-world duo they've been billed as.

But Villanova, much like Marquette did on Saturday, instituted an early breakneck tempo in an attempt to outnumber the Huskies in transition. The Wildcats pushed the ball in transition and forced Connecticut bigs to burn fouls under the rim, leading to open looks from the perimeter for Jasmine Bascoe and forward Denae Carter.

The Wildcats, despite a moribund 17 first half turnovers (partially offset by 12 UConn giveaways), led by three points at the break after Bascoe notched her 18th point of the half at the charity stripe.

Outside of herculean efforts from Strong and Fudd, the Huskies struggled to produce offensively; Villanova was denying passes to bigs down low and trapping on passes to the wing.

It was Ashlynn Shade who helped dig Connecticut out of its 5-point hole early in the



UConn women's basketball team playing a home game against the Creighton Blue Jays at Gampel Pavilion. The Huskies dominated the game, winning 94-44. PHOTO BY CONNOR SHARP, PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

second quarter, slicing to the elbow and hitting on contested elbow jumpers to whittle the deficit.

Shade, one of two Huskies to appear and start in all 28 games so far this season, finished with 13 points on 5-of-11 shooting and corralled six boards in 37 minutes.

But the Wildcats, headed by Bascoe, would punch back after every Husky make, both from 3 and at the rim. Villanova led for over 16 minutes in the first half and never allowed UConn to settle offensively, pressuring the ball and double-teaming Strong. The Cats took a 40-37 lead into the locker room and held UConn to a 13-of-32 mark from the field and minus-5 mark on the glass (22-17).

It took Fudd less than 15 seconds to tie the game out of the half on a catch-and-shoot

3-pointer from corner. It took KK Arnold, UConn's most energetic defender, 10 more seconds to grind down the shot clock and force Bascoe's most wayward response of the night on the ensuing possession.

Strong and Shade added two tough buckets on the next two Husky possessions, Williams finished an and-1 opportunity at the rim, and Connecticut had its largest lead of the night (7) less than two-and-a-half minutes into the second half.

And it would last - and grow - without Strong, who exited before the third quarter media timeout after picking up two fouls in eight seconds to give her four personals.

That's when Quiñonez came alive. A driving lay-in from the freshman at the 5:23 mark extended Connecticut's lead back to six, and after Shade added

two at the charity stripe, Quiñonez found the bottom of the net again with a powerful step-thru to force a Villanova timeout.

But it was Fudd who threw the haymaker - ironically on the offensive glass, of all places. The graduate plucked Arnold's missed free throw out of the air and hurled it to Allie Ziebell, who canned a triple to extend UConn's lead to double digits for the first time all night in the final minute of the third.

The Huskies never surrendered the lead after that, flexing it to as large 21 points and running away from the pesky Wildcats with bottlenecking defensive pressure, ultimately downing the Wildcats SCORE.

UConn is next in action Sunday, when Providence comes to Gampel Pavilion for Senior Day at 12 p.m.

## Men's Basketball:

### No. 6 UConn falls to Creighton at home for second consecutive year

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Dan Hurley called for Gampel Pavilion to be a "mad house" after a disappointing showing from his home crowd against Georgetown on Saturday.

While Hurley got the live environment he was hoping for, it was not enough, as No. 6 UConn suffered its second conference loss of the season to Creighton,

91-84.

The Huskies (24-3, 14-2) fell to the Blue Jays (14-13, 8-8) at their on-campus venue for the second year in a row. UConn has never pulled off a regular season sweep over Creighton.

The Blue Jays did not shy away from the raucous crowd. Creighton exposed the Huskies' defense on the wing and consistently got downhill to the basket. The Blue Jays shot 47.6% from three with 10 makes from

beyond the arc.

Josh Dix and Nick Graves led the scoring effort with 19 and 18 apiece. Head coach Greg McDermott called it a "perfect game" from his offense.

UConn's undoing came during a nine-minute stretch in the second half where the team made just two shots on 16 attempts. The lull allowed Creighton to turn a four-point deficit into a 10-point lead with 41 seconds left in the game.

One of the Huskies' biggest struggles this season has been fouling. Solo Ball got into foul trouble in the first half which kept him from finding a rhythm, after finishing with twenty in each of his past two games.

Braylon Mullins had Gampel Pavilion in a frenzy. The five-star freshman laced his first triple of the night just before halftime to tie the game 45-45. He picked up right where he left

off after the break with another three pointer to take the first lead of the second half.

Mullins continued to unleash a barrage of three pointers, each generating a louder pop than the last.

Tarris Reed Jr. was unstoppable in the first half, missing just one of his seven attempts from the field. Creighton was able to shut him down in the second half. Reed was held to just two points after halftime, totaling 15 on the game.

Hurley has recently challenged his bench to step up and earn its minutes. The Huskies' second unit is averaging just over 13 points per game since the start of conference play.

Malachi Smith got the crowd on its feet in the first half. He buried a three to tie the game with 09:22 to play in the first half after Jayden Ross snapped a pass to the corner. Smith found Reed in the paint on the next possession, who finished through contact to take the lead and force Creighton to call a timeout.

UConn's bench posted 15 points in the first half. Ross and Eric Reibe each contributed six points to the effort before the break. The reserves could not replicate that success in the second half, going scoreless.

UConn will get back on the road this weekend when it takes on Villanova. The Huskies previously survived an overtime finish with the Wildcats in January at PeoplesBank Arena.

That game tips off at 5:30 p.m. and will be available on truTV and TNT.



UConn Men's Basketball plays Creighton University at Gampel Pavilion in Storrs, Conn. On Feb 18, 2026. The crowd hyped up the team throughout the entire game. PHOTO BY SYDNEY CHANDLER, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS