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**RUBBER DUCKS
PADDLE TO FUND
4-H PROGRAMS**



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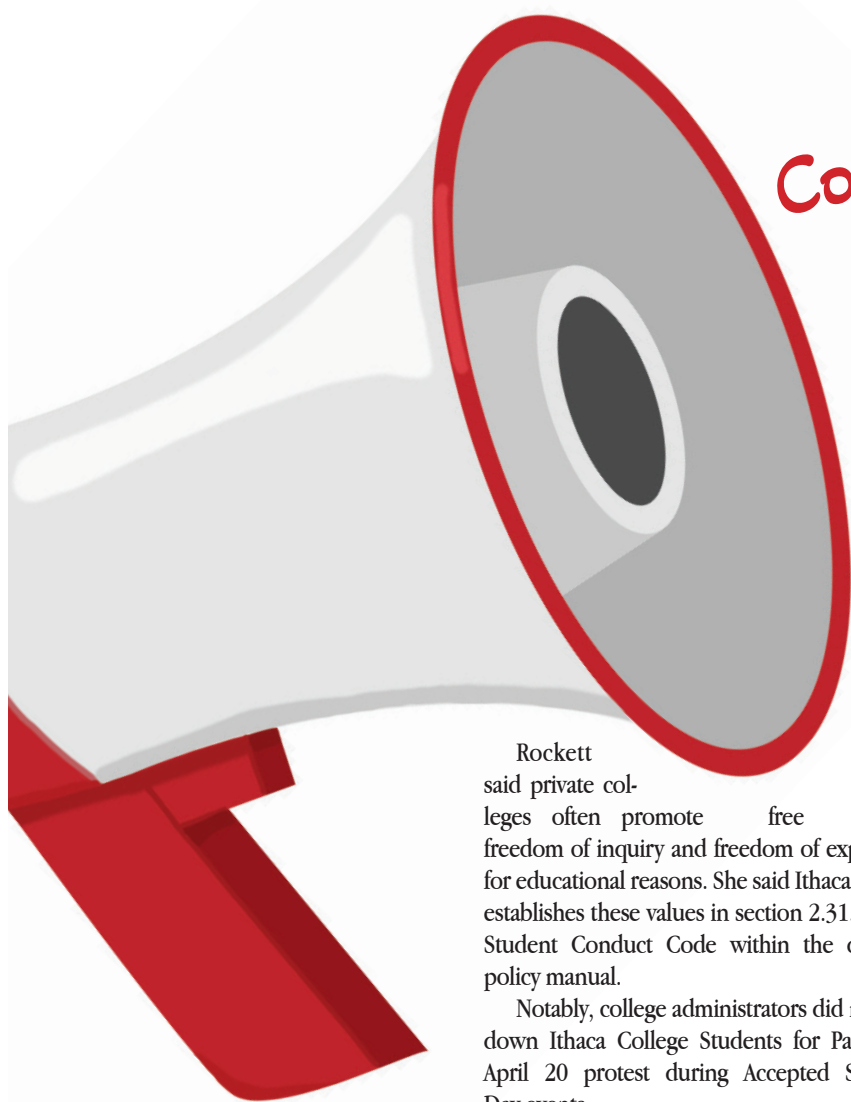
**COLLEGE FACULTY
SHOULD BE WELL
COMPENSATED**



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**FORMER BOMBER
TAKES HISTORIC
STEP INTO NFL**

Relevancy of free speech policies on Ithaca College's campus grows



Conversations grow amid national debates

**BY KAI LINCKE,
NOA RAN-RESSLER,
VIVIAN ROSE**

STAFF WRITER,
INVESTIGATIVE EDITOR,
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Ithaca College has a rich history of expression, and its free speech policy has changed over time as issues arise within and beyond campus. The college's free speech policy, written in Section 2.31 in the policy manual, highlights how the college responds to free expression while maintaining public order.

The college is a private institution, so it does not legally have to follow the First Amendment and protect students' rights to free speech and expression, according to the American Civil Liberties Union of New York. However, Emily Rockett, vice president, general counsel and secretary to the Board of Trustees, said the college must follow sections of the Higher Education Act of 1965 because it receives student financial aid from the federal government.

"As an institution that receives Title IV funding, we have to abide by Title VI, Title VII and Title IX, so you can't discriminate in the educational environment or terms and conditions of employment on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, race, national origin, color—all of the protected classes," Rockett said. "It's this fine line of if you are aware of an environment where ... illegal discrimination gets in the way of an individual's ability to experience their education, do you have to do something about it?"

Rockett said private colleges often promote free speech, freedom of inquiry and freedom of expression for educational reasons. She said Ithaca College establishes these values in section 2.31.1 of the Student Conduct Code within the college's policy manual.

Notably, college administrators did not shut down Ithaca College Students for Palestine's April 20 protest during Accepted Students Day events.

Dave Maley, director of public relations, told *The Ithacan* on April 20 that, according to 2.31.1, the students would not be punished because the college supports students' right to protest and they did not disrupt or create a safety hazard. Peaceful demonstrations are allowed as long as they do not include prohibited actions, like disrupting college events, classes or lectures; engaging in theft or destruction of college property; and acting in a way that threatens people on campus or college property.

Rockett said 2.31.1 complies with New York Education Law 129A, Section 6430. This article mandates that colleges set written rules to maintain public order on campus and college property and clearly define penalties for breaking the rules. The article cannot "be construed to limit or restrict the freedom of speech and peaceful assembly."

Michael Dorf, Robert S. Stevens Professor of Law at Cornell University, focuses on constitutional law and covers current events in law on his blog. Dorf wrote in 2017, and reaffirmed in 2023 as discourse about the Israel-Hamas conflict on college

campuses gained national attention, that it is especially challenging for residential colleges to find a balance between creating an environment where students feel safe and where they feel they can express themselves.

"Campuses are not just places for faculty and students to teach, learn and study," Dorf said in the 2017 blog post. "They are also homes ... and because it is in part a home, students should be entitled to some greater privacy and ability to shut out unwelcome messages; but because it is not only a home, at least in some times and some places on campus students should not be entitled to quite the level of protection from unwanted messages that we think everyone is entitled in their home."

Sean Stevens, chief research adviser for the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression, said one of the missions of colleges and universities is to share ideas and conduct forward-thinking research. He said one of the ways higher education can fall short of that mission is by stifling free speech.

"[Colleges] are the centers of how we're going to advance human knowledge [and] that depends on free expression," Stevens said.

FREE SPEECH, PAGE 4

Provost looks to fix salary gap

BY VIVIAN ROSE

ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Since before COVID-19, Ithaca College has had a larger faculty and staff salary gap when wages are compared to other higher education institutions. During the pandemic, this wage gap for faculty and staff widened as a result of a freeze on inflation-adjusted wages, according to David Gondek, associate professor in the Department of Biology and chair of the Faculty Council.

Faculty and staff at the college annually receive a 2–3% salary increase to account for inflation every year July 1. The freeze on inflation-adjusted wages was a cost-saving measure the college took during the pandemic between July 1, 2020 and July 1, 2021. As the college seeks to get the 2024–25 fiscal year budget approved by the Board of Trustees on May 17, Melanie Stein, provost and senior vice president for academic affairs, hopes to set aside funds in the budget to decrease the gap. At the time of publication, Stein could not say the exact number of the funds because the budget has not been approved. Stein said the plan should be in effect for five to six years to make a difference in the gap.

Faculty salary gap

Kirra Franzese, associate vice president and chief human resources officer, said the freeze

SALARY, PAGE 4

Q&A: President discusses plans

Nearing the end of the 2023–24 academic year, *The Ithacan* sat down to talk with La Jerne Cornish, the 10th president of Ithaca College.

Editor-in-Chief Syd Pierre, Managing Editor Malik Clement and News Editor Prakriti Panwar sat down to talk with Cornish about the current campus climate, including free speech and diversity at the college.

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

Syd Pierre: From what we've heard, some students feel like their programs on campus are shrinking and faculty are leaving or thinking about leaving and there's turnover in those areas. So how does the college plan to maintain the integrity of the education?

La Jerne Cornish: Well, you know, our faculty is still stellar. We were just voted No. 1 in undergraduate teaching. I don't think we were impacted by that with the quality of the programs that we offer. To me, they still remain stellar. We are a smaller school and we plan to be smaller. This is the result of the strategic planning process and the plan that we wrote and implemented in 2019. ... Does that mean we have fewer resources and certain places? Yes, we do.

Prakriti Panwar: You mentioned diverse perspectives—we have a divided campus community as a result of the Israel-Hamas war. How would you address that specific divide?

PRESIDENT, PAGE 4

Nation & World News

Anti-Islamic media alleged to have been at Hamburg rally

German Interior Minister Nancy Faeser called for police to act vigorously if crimes are committed during political demonstrations. Faeser was speaking after a rally by more than 1,000 Islamists in Hamburg on April 27, which passed off peacefully, but where allegations of anti-Islamic policies and an anti-Islam media campaign in Germany were heard.

Some carried posters that read “Caliphate is the solution” or “Germany – a dictatorship of values.”

Dubai Police arrests increase after “Anti-begging” campaign

Since the launch of its “Anti-begging” campaign in Ramadan, Dubai Police has arrested 396 beggars, 292 street vendors and 279 illegal workers. Police said 99% of the beggars arrested look at begging as a “profession.”

“Dubai Police is always keen to raise awareness among the community about the dangers of begging, and intensifies its efforts in the holy month of Ramadan and the holidays, given the attempt of beggars to seek sympathy from people during these periods,” Brigadier Ali Salem Al Shamsi, director of the Suspects and Criminal Phenomena Department in the General

Department of Criminal Investigation said in a press release.

Largest offer by a high-tech company completed in Tel Aviv

Israeli fintech company Nayax (TASE: NYAX; Nasdaq: NYAX) completed an offering on Nasdaq, raising \$68 million in March. Its three co-founders and senior executives — CEO Yair Nechmad, his brother Amir Nechmad, who serves as a director, and CTO David Ben Avi — sold shares for an aggregate value of \$26 million (about NIS 100 million).

The offering came a year and a half after Nayax began to be traded on Nasdaq, and almost three years after it was first floated in Tel Aviv, in what was hailed as the largest ever offering by a high-tech company on the Israeli stock exchange.

Sudan alleges war crimes against United Arab Emirates

The United Nations Security Council convened April 29 to discuss a formal complaint lodged by Sudan against the United Arab Emirates (UAE), alleging acts of aggression. Sudan’s representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Al-Harith Idris, told the official Sudan News Agency that urgent discussions are necessary to address the UAE’s alleged aggression against Sudan. The plea seeks to hold the UAE legally



USC demonstrates in support of Palestine

Pro-Palestinian demonstrators have gathered at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles. Some condemned USC for what they believe was an escalating series of missteps that provoked much of the hostility on campus.

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accountable for alleged support to the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, who have been accused of war crimes.

World Central Kitchen resumes operations after staff deaths

The World Central Kitchen (WCK) aid organization said April 28 it would resume

operations in the Gaza Strip four weeks after seven of its staff members died in an Israeli aerial attack. The seven WCK staff members died April 1, when Israel Defense Forces (IDF) drones targeted three vehicles carrying them.

SOURCE: TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

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Ithacan Tries: Syd & Malik rumble with ICTV

Ithacan Tries: Syd & Malik rumble with ICTV

In the season finale of “Ithacan Tries,” Editor-in-Chief Syd Pierre and Managing Editor Malik Clement visit one of Ithaca College’s TV studios to film an episode of “Roommate Rumble” with a twist!



Behind the scenes of “Year in Review”

In the final episode of the academic year, host senior Emma Kersting welcomes the Year in Review team; senior Elizabeth Kharabadze and juniors Ariana Gonzalez Villarreal and Leila Marcillo-Gómez.

THE ITHACAN

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THE ITHACAN IS PRINTED AT TOWANDA PRINTING COMPANY

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SGC hears about AI integration and passes three bills

BY JACQUELYN REAVES

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

The Ithaca College Student Governance Council met April 29 to pass three bills regarding time extension when presenting bills, an ad-hoc committee to change orientation to further support incoming students from underrepresented backgrounds, and providing a senator position for the Students of Color Coalition.

The council also heard from Dave Weil, vice president and chief information and analytics officer in the Department of Information Technology and Analytics; Jenna Linskens, director of learning and innovative technologies in the Center for Instructional Design and Educational Technology; and Casey Kendall, deputy chief of information officer and associate vice president of applications and infrastructure.

Weil started the presentation with an overview of staff and faculty who work within the IT department, and events the department recently held, like EdTech day.

"[The artificial intelligence the college will use] might be the generative [AI] we have to create [or we could use] machine learning to help better understand the problem or a situation," Weil said. "One of the things that we've been doing is we've been experimenting with AI."

Weil said the department is



From left, Dave Weil and Casey Kendall from the Department of Information Analytics met with SGC on April 29 to discuss the IT department and upcoming AI integration for students at Ithaca College.

LUCIA IANDOLO/THE ITHACAN

experimenting with two AI tools: Ithaca Insights, a chatbot with the goal of helping prospective students learn more about the college, and an IT service desk agent that will help students with any issues they are having with technology.

Weil said the department outlined a plan for the college and AI in 2024.

The first step is to create a presidential working group to discuss how the college will integrate AI.

"One of the things we need to be thinking about is where is it appropriate to use AI and where is it not appropriate to use AI," Weil said.

Linskens said the reason for having the working group is to look at AI through the lens of the campus community and the opportunity for AI to be biased is taken into account.

Kendall said the introduction of iClicker and TopHat, an application used to track attendance and student

engagement in class, will no longer be used because of the inconvenience it caused students.

"The TopHat model requires students to purchase a card or key code," Kendall said. "After all the feedback, the decision was to go with iClicker."

The council discussed the Bill Time Extension bill, introduced by sophomore Senate Chair Nikki Sutera to recognize that often

when presenting a bill, more time is needed than the two minutes given. The bill proposes five minutes instead of two.

The bill was passed with nine in favor, one abstaining and zero opposed. Sophomore Aoife Hartigan, senator-at-large, abstained because she proposed the bill.

The council then discussed the bill that first-year student LaRon Pigford, first-generation senator, introduced at the SGC meeting April 22 to create a temporary committee made to address a change to orientation to support students who are minorities.

Pigford said he made revisions to streamline the original goals of the bill to give students from underrepresented backgrounds an orientation that better assists them and their identities. The revisions provided more clarity to the roles of members of SGC. The bill was passed with eight in favor, two abstentions and zero opposed.

Senior Carli McConnell, president of the student body, presented a bill to create a senate position for a student involved with the Students of Color Coalition. The bill aims to allow students who are a part of the SOCC more power through a senate position.

The bill was passed with nine in favor, one abstention by McConnell and zero opposed.

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IC offers gender-affirming voice care through clinic

BY TAYLOR BORASH

STAFF WRITER

David Bayne, assistant professor in the School of Health Sciences and Human Performance, teaches and supervises students at Ithaca College who are getting their master's in speech-language pathology. His students work with clients for 50 minutes a week in the no-charge Sir Alexander Ewing-Ithaca College Speech and Hearing Clinic, which was established in 2011 and is the only place in Ithaca to offer in-person gender-affirming voice care.

Gender-affirming voice care is a practice that focuses on using speech therapy to help individuals find the voice that most authentically suits them and the way they wish to express themselves. Speech pathologists work with clients to adjust aspects of their vocal production like pitch, resonance and intonation.

Bayne, who got his M.S. in speech-language pathology at Ithaca College and his Ph.D. from the University of Oregon, said that no matter where he teaches, his focus is always on gender-affirming voice care.

"It's an area that's really near and dear to my heart, and voice is one of those things that's so integral to your identity," Bayne said. "It's just very rewarding to be able to help people who feel like their identity is not being expressed the way they desire. Having the ability to help even just one single person find themselves authentically is just a really wonderful experience."

Bayne said the voices he helps patients find are not typically constricted by a gender binary.

"I go in and say, 'OK, this is what we know is typically male, typically female, but you don't have to aim for any of those typical norms that we have,'" Bayne said. "I want to make sure that your voice is most authentic to you and your gender identity, so we might mix and match a little bit."

Bayne said it is unfortunate that the Sir Alexander Ewing-Ithaca College Speech and



David Bayne, assistant professor in the School of Health Sciences and Human Performance, supervises the clinic that offers in-person gender-affirming voice care.

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Hearing Clinic, which is located in Smiddy Hall, is the only place in Ithaca that offers in-person gender-affirming voice care.

"Unfortunately, I think it's an area that's really lacking in the Southern Tier and broader Finger Lakes," Bayne said. "There are a lot of gender-affirming services in the area, but specifically for voice and communication, I believe that we're some of the only ones that are providing that in this area."

To maintain the privacy of their patients, Bayne was unable to connect *The Ithacan* with patients who had received gender-affirming voice care from the clinic.

Elmina David, a graduate student who is getting her M.S. in speech-language pathology at the college, said via email that Bayne has been a big help for her and other graduate students who work under his supervision.

"We have weekly meetings where we discuss what we're doing with him and he gives us great

guidance that applies to our clients," David said. "So he supports us by actually explaining how to approach this type of work and giving us suggestions for how we can get better."

David also said that because the gender-affirming voice care work she does as a student clinician has been so rewarding, she would like to help the service become more widely accessible.

"It started as an option on the list of clinic placement possibilities that I just thought sounded interesting, and has become something that I have truly enjoyed being a part of and want to continue doing after graduation, especially after learning about how difficult it can be to acquire these services depending on where people live," David said.

Christina Gonthier, a graduate student who is also getting her M.S. in speech-language pathology at the college, said she was the teaching assistant for Bayne's brain science course in Fall

2023. Gonthier said she admired Bayne's effort to incorporate studies and texts from people of all different backgrounds into his classroom.

"He really wanted to highlight other individuals in the space," Gonthier said. "So we were looking at women who are publishing research, or LGBTQ individuals or Black individuals or Hispanic individuals, just to make sure that we were highlighting all folds of research in the communication sciences and disorders community, opposed to just cis white males."

As a graduate student, Gonthier also works with voice clients at the Sir Alexander Ewing-Ithaca College Speech and Hearing Clinic. Although she has yet to work with a gender-affirming voice client, she said she would love to do so in the future.

"I'm really loving working with adults and seeing what can happen when someone is proud of their voice again and can use their voice to express themselves," Gonthier said. "I think there's no better place to do it than gender-affirming voice care. It's definitely something I'd be interested in working with in the future, and I think this summer I'll have a gender-affirming voice client on campus, which will be exciting."

Bayne also said they will continue to provide gender-affirming voice care for those who need it in the future, especially when it not only helps individuals feel more comfortable with their voice but helps them feel safer as well.

"Imagine if your voice and the way that you communicated did not match the way that you presented physically," Bayne said. "That can put you in a lot of danger, especially if you're in a situation where somebody might not be as socially aware or is prejudicial against folks that do not fit that gender binary. It's really important to make sure that those people are staying as safe as possible, and that's why I want to keep doing it."

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FROM FREE SPEECH, PAGE 1

“Faculty has to be able to push the envelope with research, they have to be able to challenge dogmas and the well-accepted main principles of science. ... [If] nothing is 100% proven, then everything can be questioned.”

Stevens said that encouraging productive free speech on campus starts with faculty and administrators modeling appropriate behavior and remaining impartial.

“Students are going to be students,” Stevens said. “They’re going to protest. They’re going to complain about things. That’s going to happen. ... Schools need to adopt their viewpoint-neutral stance on expression.”

Tom Dunn, director and deputy chief of the Office of Public Safety and Emergency Management at Ithaca College, said officers only intervene when an individual is speaking if their speech creates a health or safety danger to themselves or others.

The college does not have a hate speech policy, but the college launched the Bias Impact Reporting Form during the 2018–19 academic year as one way to report hate speech and bias incidents.

“As a law enforcement officer, I can’t stop you from using the N-word,” Dunn said. “I would tell you it’s vile, it’s hateful, it’s despicable. But I can’t charge you with that. That’s not a crime. But if you as a student ... were to say that at another person in a directed manner, but not a threatening manner, I might send a report to [the Office of Student Conduct and Community



From left, student band Spelunking performs at the Free Speech Rock in 2024; IC Rise Up addresses the crowd in 2023 and Ithaca Open The Books rallies at the same location in 2021.

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY COLE JACKSON, MALIK CLEMENT, FILE PHOTO, MOLLY TESKA/THE ITHACAN

Standards] about that.”

Rockett said it is challenging for the college to set policies about hateful or offensive speech because there is no firm legal definition in the United States.

“What our policy does is tie speech obligations to the law, which when the law changes, the Supreme Court can make different interpretations of what it means to exercise your right to protected speech versus discriminate against somebody unlawfully,” Rockett said. “When the college ties its free speech policies to the law, they don’t have to change what those policies say over and over based on evolving legal requirements. It’s — you follow the law. And there are pros and cons to that. Some institutions make a policy

choice of, ‘We’re going to be really clear about what you can and can’t say.’ And they may or may not be legally allowed to do that at any given moment, depending on the state of the jurisprudence around free speech.”

Rockett said the college is not planning to introduce policies specifically addressing hate speech, but anyone can propose changes to the policy manual.

Students, faculty and staff can talk to representatives from the Student Governance Council, Faculty Council and Staff Council, respectively, who would bring the concerns to the President’s Cabinet and Board of Trustees.

Stevens said administrators need to draw the line of when free expression can become disruptive

behavior and when the behavior is unacceptable.

“You can stand up and hold the signs, but you can’t shout a person down so that other people can’t hear them,” Stevens said. “Administrators and faculty need to step in and enforce where those lines are. ... And I think faculty and administrators can ... [model] that kind of behavior. Because students and even faculty, are gonna protest.”

This is a collaboration between The Ithacan’s news section and the new investigative team.

It is part of a two-part series. View the other article online.

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FROM PRESIDENT, PAGE 1

IJC: I want us to continue to be in conversation with one another. I have said repeatedly [that] we can disagree without being disagreeable. Sometimes hearing your perspective either affirms my perspective or makes me say, “Maybe I need to change my thinking about this.” But if I’m not hearing other perspectives, then it’s like being in an echo chamber. So how do we provide more opportunities to expose our students to diverse perspectives on this campus? Education is the key. I’m delighted with some of the work that’s been done by the history department to bring in diverse points of view. We’re talking about how do we develop a speaker series for next year to bring diverse voices to this campus and diverse perspectives.

SP: We’ve been seeing encampments and protests at other universities across the country. ... When would there be a situation where you feel like you need to kind of step in and take more action?

IJC: I encourage you to look at the policy manual, Section 2.31.1 [Freedom of Speech and Peaceful Assembly]. Read what it says about our commitment to free speech and how we gather what’s allowed and what’s not allowed. I don’t want to see anything get out of hand. I remember what it was like to be between the ages of 18 and 22. I protested in my life. That protest that happened on [April 20], while it upset some people, it was peaceful. They came in, they had signs, they laid down. They were peaceful. To me, that did not warrant force. Commencement is coming. Commencement is a private event, a ticketed event. If that is disrupted or interrupted, we will have to act and I need to be clear about that.

SP: I was curious from your personal standpoint, what you would want to see from *The Ithacan* in the coming years, coming semesters?

IJC: I just want to congratulate you on the changes I have seen in the paper in the time that I’ve been here. There has been less editorializing and more sticking with the facts. Was I happy to see the video of “Cornish, Cornish you can’t hide, you’re supporting genocide”? Does that hurt my heart? And I tear up when I talk about that, but you didn’t make it up. You reported it. Those are the hard parts of the job. When you believe in free speech, when you believe in freedom of expression, you may be defamed in the process, but I’m not going to stop it. Because I believe in those things. That was a tough pill and if you want to write that, you can.

Malik Clement: What are some of the ways that you would look to address issues with diversity [and] equity?

IJC: Having a Center for Equity, Inclusion and Belonging I think is fantastic. That is an outgrowth of something we’ve been trying to do for years and I’m satisfied that we are there now. There’s still more work to be done. But at least we have a dedicated person for students, a dedicated person for staff [and] a dedicated person for faculty. But this is an institutional issue. We’ve got work to do there. ... But at least we have a place to start.

MC: Do you have your goals you want to achieve with the Center for EIB or just other representations of people of color?

IJC: Could we have an increase of POC in our faculty and staff? Absolutely. You know, going back to the results of the Campus Climate Survey, knowing that students of color feel less comfortable on this campus is something we need to do something about. Knowing that faculty and staff of color feel less comfortable on this campus is something we need to do something about. Again, we have lots of opportunities. Let’s look at the data. Our campus has told us what we’re doing well and where we have challenges. Now, what plan can we make together to address those challenges knowing that there’s no magic pill. This work is not one-and-done work. So, what are we doing every year to not only live our values, but help folks know what the expected behaviors are as members of this particular community?

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FROM SALARY, PAGE 1

on inflation-adjusted wages ended in 2021. Stein said the freeze on inflation-adjusted wages was not an isolated phenomenon and was something colleges across the nation experienced because of low enrollment.

Why enrollment matters

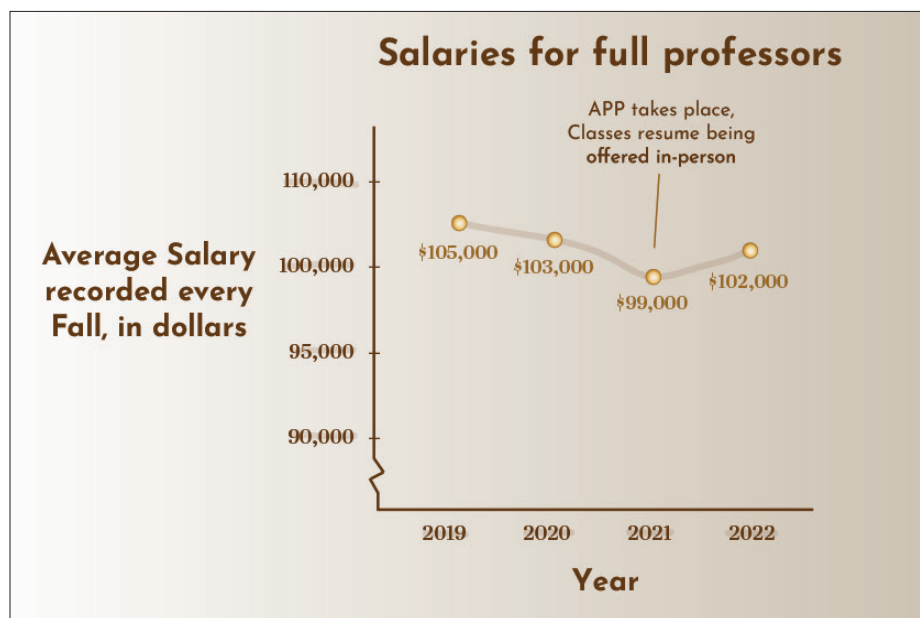
The college is a tuition-dependent institution. This means that the more money the college has, the more faculty and staff can be employed.

In the 2019–20 academic year, total student enrollment at the college was 6,266, and during the pandemic in the 2020–21 academic year, total enrollment was at 5,354. During the 2021–22 academic year, total student enrollment was 5,239 and during the 2022–23 academic year, total enrollment was at 5,054. Stein said enrollment is predicted to stabilize after the decrease the college observed during and after the pandemic.

In 2023, the average salary for a full professor at Marist was \$129,700, an associate’s salary was \$108,200 and an assistant professor’s was \$92,400, according to the American Association of University Professors (AAUP). In comparison, the average salaries for a full professor at Ithaca College was \$105,000 in 2023, an associate professor’s was \$88,700 and an assistant professor’s was \$69,300.

Once the freeze on inflation-adjusted wages took place during the pandemic, full professors’ salaries at Ithaca College decreased by \$6,400, associate professors’ decreased by \$4,300 and assistant professors’ salaries increased by \$300 from 2021 to 2023.

“I see it as taking the pathway where we’re slowly inching our way back up,” Gondek said. Gondek said that despite the salary gap, some faculty decide to work at the college because of non-monetary benefits like the quality of life in the Ithaca area. He said the college ranks as an “employer of choice,” an institution where people want to work.



Faculty and staff at the college annually receive a 2–3% salary increase to account for inflation every year on July 1. During the pandemic, the college stopped this.

GRACE VANDERVEERTHE ITHACAN

However, 70% of faculty reported in the Campus Climate survey that they had considered leaving the college. 67% of faculty reported considering leaving because of a low salary.

Amber Lia-Kloppel is a lecturer in the Department of Art, Art History, and Architecture, and is a steward for the Ithaca College Contingent Faculty Union. Lia-Kloppel said contingent faculty contracts end July 30, so the union is at the bargaining table with the college to negotiate new contracts. She said the contracts will include an increase in salary to help defer the impacts of the pandemic.

The average rate of inflation in the U.S. between 2022 and 2024 was about 5.6%. In March 2024, the inflation rate was 3.5% as compared to March 2023, according to Statista.

“We’re actively trying to get a much greater wage and we appreciate that because Ithaca College’s plan is toward greater diversity and equity and inclusion,” Lia-Kloppel said. “And we believe that fair pay and equal pay for equal

work is absolutely a part of that effort.”

Provost’s plan to shorten the gap

Stein said the plan’s funds will appear in the 2024–25 fiscal year budget, as long as the BoT approves the budget. She said the funds for the plan to reduce the faculty salary gap will be split in half. Half of the funds will go directly to all faculty of the college and will be distributed by the Office of the Provost. The other half will be distributed by the deans of each school to give to faculty members on a custom scale, meaning that different faculty will receive different amounts from their dean. She said every continuing faculty member will get some of the allocated budget.

“Every continuing full-time faculty member, those are the folks that this strategy applies to, will get something,” Stein said. “Everybody will get something, but how much they get depends on [what] their rank is.”

CONTACT: VROSE@ITHACA.EDU

Overview of changes in IC leadership

BY LIAM MCDERMOTT

STAFF WRITER

Quincy Davidson

Quincy Davidson served as the associate vice president for engagement at Ithaca College from March 2020 until April 2024. On April 16, Davidson's departure was announced in an Intercom post, which stated that Davidson would be leaving the college April 18 for another opportunity at Boston University.

"Over the past four years, Quincy has spearheaded initiatives that have significantly impacted the IC community," Norton said. "Under his leadership, IC has seen increased giving to the IC Annual Fund, three robust Giving Days, and programming that has engaged alumni and donors across the country."

Anne Hogan

Anne Hogan served as the first-ever dean of the combined School for Music, Theatre, and Dance at Ithaca College. Hogan announced her departure from the school April 8 in an email to the campus community.

"It has truly been an honor to serve as the inaugural dean of the School of Music, Theatre and Dance at Ithaca College, and to witness the talent, team spirit and commitment to ensuring an inspiring and transformative learning community that makes MTD so special," Hogan stated in the email.

Associate deans Steve TenEyck



Over Spring 2024, Ithaca College witnessed multiple changes in leadership. The departure of some members will be followed by national searches that will commence in Fall 2024.

COURTESY OF ITHACA COLLEGE

and Louis Loubriel will serve as interim deans while a national search is conducted during Fall 2024.

Lauren Goldberg

In an email Feb. 15, Hillel at Ithaca College announced the departure of Executive Director Lauren Goldberg. In the email, Goldberg stated that she was stepping down to spend more time with family.

"This place is very special. . . . I just look forward to being able to take a step into my nuclear family life rather than my student family life. Both are so central to

me," Goldberg said to *The Ithacan* Feb. 15.

A search has begun for a new executive director of Hillel. Applications were being accepted until March 1, but no replacement has been named as of yet.

Paula Younger

On January 16, President La Jerne Cornish in an email to the Ithaca College community announced that Paula Younger would serve as the first executive director of government, community and constituent relations at the college.

In the new role, Younger works

to develop the college's relationships with the local, state and federal governments.

Younger is not new to Ithaca College, as she previously served as the executive director for government and community relations from 2018 until 2020.

From 2021 up until the beginning of this year, Younger served as a lecturer and an executive-in-residence in the Jeb E. Brooks School of Public Policy at Cornell University.

CONTACT: LMCDERMOTT@ITHACA.EDU

Universities see rise in protests

RYAN JOHNSON

ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

With varying results and reactions, college campuses across the U.S. have broken out in protest over educational institutions' ties to the Israeli government and the Israel-Hamas war.

Following protests at campuses like Columbia University, the University of Texas at Austin and Brown University, the Coalition for Mutual Liberation (CML) at Cornell University set up a Gaza solidarity encampment April 25.

Students named the area on the Arts Quad the "Cornell Liberated Zone," which consists of about 13 tents and 50 participants inside.

On April 22, 46.77% of the Cornell student body voted in a referendum from Cornell to call for a permanent ceasefire in Gaza and to divest from companies funding the war, like Lockheed Martin and Boeing. The majority of students — 70.8% — voted for a permanent ceasefire in Gaza and 69.3% of students voted to divest from companies. The Office of the President at Cornell University has until May 22 to accept or reject the referendum.

Participants at the Cornell encampment were required to sign an intake form that asks for information like names and pronouns, emergency contacts in the case of arrests and dietary restrictions and allergies to food.

On April 29, Cornell President Martha Pollack issued her first statement on the encampment.

Pollack announced that Cornell administration met with a group of student encampment participants April 27 and April 28 to urge them to move the encampment to a different location, which participants declined.

CONTACT: RJOHNSON@ITHACA.EDU

Faculty and students react to campus climate survey

TAYLOR BORASH,
VIVIAN ROSE

STAFF WRITER,
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

On April 30, the Campus Climate Committee co-chairs hosted follow-up meetings for faculty and students to discuss the Key Findings report that was released April 16.

In the faculty meeting, attendees discussed what they found interesting about the key findings from the survey. Twelve faculty members attended the session, which was moderated by Belisa González, dean of faculty equity, inclusion, and belonging and co-chair of the Campus Climate Committee.

When discussing why faculty dissatisfaction was so low, Hugh Egan, professor in the Department of Literatures in English, said it was shocking that the highest dissatisfaction levels were reported by tenured professors.

According to the Key Findings Report, tenured or tenure-eligible faculty reported having lower levels of comfort than non-tenure track (NTEN) and temporary faculty — a difference that did not exist in 2016. 39% of tenure and tenure-eligible faculty reported feeling "comfortable" or "very comfortable," while 64% of NTEN and temporary faculty reported feeling the same.

"Because in one way, tenure-eligible [faculty] and tenure are the most protected or safe category on campus, but on the other hand, they've been here a long time to recognize the climate change and might be more inclined to register critique or criticism," Egan said.

A professor in the Department of Sociology, who is anonymous because of personal safety concerns unrelated to the college, said the dissatisfaction levels could also be attributed to events that have occurred over the last few years, including the COVID-19 pandemic and



Belisa González, dean of faculty equity, inclusion, and belonging and co-chair of the Campus Climate Committee, met with faculty to discuss campus climate.

SAMANTHA MACARANAS/THE ITHACAN

the faculty members that were laid off by the college in 2021. They said those causes were likely a large part of faculty dissatisfaction, even though there was not a place in the survey to address them.

"I'm on my floor in Muller and I know that on the fourth floor above me there are . . . empty faculty offices, and I show up to a parking lot where anytime I'm there, there are empty parking spaces," they said. "And those things aren't necessarily in the climate survey, they're in me. They're in my colleagues. They're in my classroom."

González said that while it is hard to determine the success of the survey based on the results alone, discussing the results with students, faculty and staff will make it easier to outline the next steps for the committee to take.

"So we need to spend some time thinking

about why there's this discrepancy, but also [about] what the quantitative data and qualitative data can sort of tell us. And then, quite honestly, do we need to ask more questions?"

The student meeting was led over Zoom by Luca Maurer, executive director for student equity, inclusion and belonging and co-chair of the Campus Climate Committee. Though no students attended, Maurer said it was necessary to have students on the committee during the process. The committee began meeting in April 2023 and the student committee members played a large role in discussing the logistics, language and questions of the survey.

"We separated out tenured faculty, non-tenure faculty, graduate students, undergrad [students] to make sure that they are matched but also input into the demographic questions to make sure that they

are not just appropriate, but recognize our campus community."

Maurer said the purpose of the separate meetings for students, faculty and staff was to determine what the next action steps should be after the results of the Campus Climate Survey came out. He said students who were not able to attend the meeting should consider emailing the committee directly at campusclimate@ithaca.edu.

"I would hope that if students have strong feelings about what that means, that they would make their needs known," Maurer said. "Our action steps are . . . to improve the campus climate."

The college began working with the Rankin Climate in 2016. Maurer said the college recommended Rankin because they have worked with higher education institutions before.

"It also means they can compare where we're at to other institutions where they have that data . . . they can say, 'Oh, compared to all of this, all of our clients are here or compared to all of our clients that are similar institutions.' And that is a real strength this time around," Maurer said.

Maurer said President La Jerne Cornish asked the diversity, equity, and inclusion working group to recommend other groups to work with. He also said the working group chose Rankin again so that the college could compare the climate of the campus from the 2023 academic year to the 2016 academic year.

"It would mean we would also be able to benchmark where we are now with where we were last time," Maurer said. "So not just against others, not just against the backdrop of other institutions."

News Editor Prakriti Panwar contributed reporting.

CONTACT: TBORASH@ITHACA.EDU
VROSE@ITHACA.EDU

COLLEGE BRIEFS

Community invited to attend Employee Retirement Reception

The Employee Retirement Celebration Reception will be held from 4 to 5:30 p.m. May 3 in the Dillingham lobby.

The celebration is a way to honor retirees' dedication to Ithaca College and will provide light snacks and non-alcoholic beverages, as well as alcoholic beverages attendees must be 21 or older to purchase.

There will also be a short program to recognize and honor the work of the retirees. If you have questions, concerns or accommodation requests, you can contact Laney Sodoma, talent management associate, at lsodoma@ithaca.edu.

Amani Gospel Singers to present gospel showcase performance

The Amani Gospel Singers will be holding a gospel showcase performance from 4 to 7 p.m. May 4 at Muller Chapel.

The Amani Gospel Singers have been Ithaca College's only gospel singing group for over 40 years and plan for their showcase to provide an afternoon full of music, faith and fellowship.

The event is sponsored by the Office of Religious and Spiritual Life, and is free and open for all to attend. Contact the Office of Religious and Spiritual Life with any questions. Individuals who require accommodations can reach out to Austin Reid, interim director officer of Religious and Spiritual Life, at areid1@ithaca.edu.

Students encouraged to apply to be summer teaching assistants

The Summer College for High School Students program is currently seeking applicants for five teaching assistant positions to run between July 15 and Aug. 2.

The five courses looking for TAs are Imaginative Writing, which will be taught by Katharyn Howd Machan, professor in the Department of Writing; Wildlife Tracking and Nature Observation, taught by Jason Hamilton, professor in the Department of Environmental Studies and Science; Rock Band for Beginners, taught by Matthew Clauhs, associate professor in the Department of Music Education; Introductory Astronomy, taught by Luke Keller, professor in the Department of Physics and Astronomy; and Foundations of Health and Human Performance, taught by Eber Beck, professor in the Department of Physical Therapy.

Students who are interested in the position can apply online and email Eric Howd at

ehowd@ithaca.edu for any further questions.

Stop and breathe at the library and make free buttons for prizes

As part of the JED Stop and Breathe Week, the library will be offering the opportunity for the Ithaca College community to stop by and make free buttons from 12 to 1:30 p.m. May 3.

Library staff will help attendees make buttons out of magazines, book covers or any images they may want to bring. A table will be set up at the first floor entrance of the library and registration is not required. Students who make a button will be entered to win a prize from the Center of Health Promotion as part of the JED Campus Initiative.

IC KicksBack event will be held on the Campus Center Quad

The IC KicksBack event will be held 3 to 7 p.m. May 3 on the Campus Center Quad for students, staff and faculty to celebrate the completion of the semester.

The event will feature four hours of live music, inflatables and carnival food that students will have access to with or without a meal plan. The menu includes many carnival-themed treats like corn dogs, cotton candy, lemonade, street corn and more.

No bags, water bottles or containers are allowed, and attendees must show their Ithaca College ID to be granted entry to the event.

Individuals who require accommodations can contact ickicksback@ithaca.edu.

Join JED in the Fitness Center for a cycling and dance class

The JED Campus Initiative's Stop and Breathe Week is offering a variety of activities May 2 in the aerobics room in the Fitness Center to help students destress during finals week.

Students can head to the aerobics room to participate in a cycling class from 3:15 to 4 p.m. and right after that, from 4:15 to 5 p.m. in the same location, students can participate in a TRX suspension training class.

Following that event, students can attend the Raise the Barre dance class from 5:15 to 6 p.m.

Celebrate family at the LGBT Center's Queer Family Feast

The LGBT Center will be hosting a Queer Fam Feast from 5:30 to 7 p.m. May



ITHACON 2024 draws in super crowds

From left, comic book writer Walt Simonson shakes hands with Travis Anstee on April 28 at ITHACON 2024 in Emerson Suites. The annual comic and cosplay convention draws in creators and fans of the medium from across the region.

NOA RAN-RESSLER/THE ITHACAN

2 in the Tower Concourse Suite 110 to give students the opportunity to celebrate their chosen family and enjoy free food before leaving for the summer.

The event is part of the JED Stop and Breathe Week, so attendees will be eligible to participate in the Stop and Breathe raffle to win a prize.

Students can contact lgbt@ithaca.edu with any access needs.

Have ice cream while the sun sets with Black Artists United

Black Artists United is hosting an outdoor ice cream social at sunset from 7 to 9 p.m. May 2 at CC Terrace patio above the dining hall. The event will be their final academic event of the year, and the entire Ithaca College community is invited to join current or prospective BAU members to celebrate.

Individuals who require accommodations can contact blackartistsunited@gmail.com.

IC Pinky Swear will be hosting bowling and bonding event

The Ithaca College Pinky Swear Foundation will be holding a bowling bonding

outing from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. May 2 in Williams 211.

The event is open to anyone and will give attendees the opportunity to meet and bond with PACK members while learning more about the group's involvement on campus and bowling.

Students with questions or access needs should contact pspack.ic@gmail.com.

Party with Stillwater Magazine to celebrate 63rd print edition

Stillwater Magazine will be hosting a launch party to present its 63rd print magazine from 7 to 8:30 p.m. May 2 in IC Square.

Students are invited to celebrate the work of artists, writers and editors in the magazine, and many contributors will be reading their work and artist statements aloud. Stillwater Magazine is an annual undergraduate art and literary magazine in the college's writing department. The event will have free refreshments and copies of the magazine available to pick up.

Individuals who require accommodations can contact stillwatermagazine@gmail.com.

PUBLIC SAFETY INCIDENT LOG

SELECTED ENTRIES FROM APRIL 15 TO 21

APRIL 15

PETIT LARCENY OVER \$200

LOCATION: Hilliard Hall
SUMMARY: Caller reported unknown person stole clothing from a washing machine. Patrol Officer Chaz Andrews responded to the call.

APRIL 16

PETIT LARCENY UNDER \$200

LOCATION: Tower Concourse
SUMMARY: Caller reported an unknown person stole a fire extinguisher. Ithaca Police Officer Jack Nelson responded to the call.

CRIMINAL MISCHIEF 4TH DEGREE

LOCATION: A-Lot
SUMMARY: Officer reported an unknown person damaged a sign. Security Officer Christopher Gallagher responded to the call. This is a pending investigation.

APRIL 17

FIRE ALARM ACCIDENTAL

LOCATION: 151 College Circle
SUMMARY: Simplex reported a fire alarm. The activation was caused by burnt food. Fire Protection Specialist Enoch Perkins responded to the call.

CRIMINAL MISCHIEF 4TH DEGREE

LOCATION: Butterfield Stadium
SUMMARY: Caller reported unknown person damaged window screen. Patrol Officer Jordan Bartolis responded to the call. This is a pending investigation.

APRIL 18

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE/PSYCHOLOGICAL

LOCATION: Garden Apartment 27
SUMMARY: Caller reported person intentionally attempted to self-harm.

The person was taken into custody under the mental hygiene law and transported to the hospital by ambulance. Patrol Officer Dana Malcolm responded to the call.

APRIL 19

FIRE ALARM UNDETERMINED CAUSE FOR ALARM

LOCATION: Campus Center
SUMMARY: Simplex reported a false fire alarm. There was an unknown cause for activation. Patrol Officer Jordan Bartolis responded.

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE/INJURY RELATED

LOCATION: Substation Road
SUMMARY: Caller reported a person fell down stairs and injured their ankle. The person was transported to urgent care by another person. Sergeant Bryan Verzosa responded.

APRIL 20

CHECK ON THE WELFARE

LOCATION: Garden Apartment 27
SUMMARY: Caller reported person sent concerning text message about self-harm. The officer determined that the person was not in imminent danger to themselves. Patrol Officer Connor McCoy responded and completed a report.

FIRE / FLAME / IGNITION

LOCATION: 180 College Circle
SUMMARY: Caller reported there had been a flame in the oven caused by cooking, which was extinguished by a fire extinguisher. Corporal Kevin McClain responded to the fire and completed a report.

APRIL 21

CRIMINAL MISCHIEF 4TH DEGREE

LOCATION: Bogart Hall, Egbert Blvd.
SUMMARY: Corporal Kevin McClain reported an unknown person damaged paper towel and toilet paper dispensers and threw them off

the balcony. McClain responded and this incident is a pending investigation.

SCC DEFACING/DAMAGING PROPERTY

LOCATION: Academic Quad/100-300 Block Textor Circle
SUMMARY: Sergeant Bryan Verzosa reported that a person was standing in a flower bed on the academic quad cutting flowers and issued the person a warning. The person that was responsible was warned for violation of the student conduct code.

Full public safety log available online at www.theithacan.org.

KEY

SCC – Student Conduct Code
V&T – Vehicle & Transportation
EH&S – Environmental Health and Safety

OPINION

THURSDAY, MAY 2, 2024

7

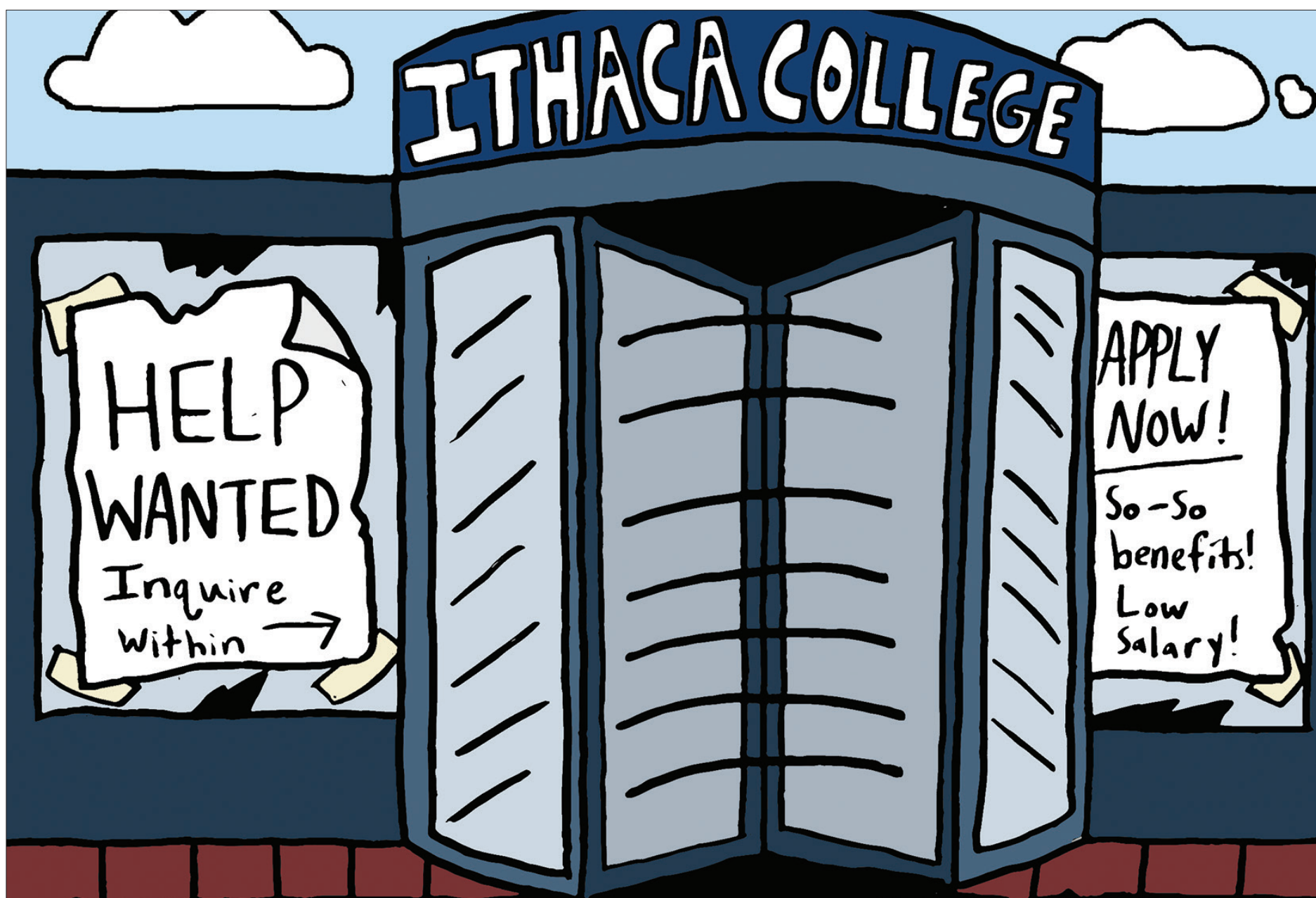


ILLUSTRATION BY JOSHUA PANTANO/THE ITHACAN

EDITORIALS

Equitable faculty salaries are essential for campus

No matter the school, educators are the foundation of students' learning. However, when educators are not properly supported or appreciated, their ability to educate students dwindles. Undervaluing educators leads to high turnover rates, creating an unstable and inconsistent environment for students. At Ithaca College, this problem is especially evident.

According to Campus Climate Survey results, 11% of faculty respondents — a 17% decrease from 2016 — said salaries for tenured and tenure-eligible faculty were competitive when compared with 40% of the peers at similar institutions. Numbers were similar for non-tenure track faculty. The college struggles to offer competitive wages.

The college has a low rate for faculty attrition, retention and upward mobility, which encourages high turnover rates. This creates a culture that devalues professors' abilities and voices.

As a result, the school becomes a revolving

door of educators instead of a space for shared growth among students and faculty.

The Campus Climate Survey is not the first time a lack of support for faculty has become apparent. The Academic Prioritization Process led to the reduction of 116 full-time equivalent faculty positions from the institution, and its ramifications are clear in the responses of faculty and students alike.

With beloved educators leaving the college, the campus community saw a decline in alumni donations, reduced course offerings and a feeling of uncertainty.

In order for the resources and opportunities to accurately reflect the hard work of staff and faculty, they must be properly compensated.

Faculty members make an environment and an institution — they are one of the most important aspects of higher education, and they must be treated in kind. There is a love for the institution from faculty and students that keeps them here, and that love must be reciprocated through support for its community.

Free speech policies must be upheld at universities

Throughout history, college students have been at the heart of social movements. From nationwide sit-ins during the Civil Rights Movement to more local movements, like protests advocating for the removal of former Ithaca College president Tom Rochon, students' voices have consistently been a catalyst for change. Today, students' right to free speech is being threatened nationwide. It is of the utmost importance that college administrators either uphold or create policies that support students exercising free speech, rather than silencing their voices.

College students across the country have been suspended, detained and arrested for protesting against U.S. involvement in the Israel-Hamas war. At Cornell University, four students who were part of a pro-Palestine encampment were temporarily suspended for unauthorized use of university property. The national trend of silencing students' voices across the nation fails to respect the right to free speech that is integral to a campus community.

Ithaca College's current policy on free speech, Section 2.31.1 of the Rules for Maintenance of Public Order, permits students to peacefully protest and exercise freedom of speech at the college, with stipulations regarding unauthorized entry, weapons and more. President La Jerne Cornish has upheld the college's policy and expressed her support for peaceful protesting.

In a recent Q&A, she said Ithaca College Students for Palestine had the right to protest at the open house April 20 but did voice that if students protested at a private event like commencement, there would be repercussions. While Cornish's decision to uphold the college's current policy marks a respect for free speech that many other administrators nationwide are failing to exhibit, it is important that this support continues, no matter the size or scale of protests.

Administrators across the country must commit to establishing and upholding policies that protect the essential right to free speech.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Send to ithacan@ithaca.edu.

ALL LETTERS MUST:

- Be 250 words or fewer.
- Be emailed or dropped off by 5 p.m. Monday in Park 220.

GUEST COMMENTARY

Send to ithacan@ithaca.edu or to the opinion editor opinion@theithacan.org
ALL COMMENTARIES MUST:

- Convey a clear message.
- Be written by an individual or group who has an educated opinion or is an authority on a specific subject.
- Be between 650–750 words. Whether more or less space is allotted is at the discretion of the editor.

GUEST COMMENTARY

Editor's Note: The opinions in this commentary do not necessarily reflect the views of the editorial board.

Community can be used to cultivate positive change

BY SYD PIERRE
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

College is supposed to be a time of change and an opportunity to forge new connections. During these four years, it's felt like the latter has suffered because of the sheer amount of high-level institutional changes the campus community has undergone. COVID-19 and the Academic Program Prioritization have had lasting effects on the Ithaca College community. The impact these changes have had is undeniable when compared to declining enrollment levels and high rates of faculty and administrative turnover. The results from the most recent campus climate survey showed that students, faculty and staff feel a lack of belonging.

We tend to think of changes as big, overarching actions that are out of our control because after all, that's what's been modeled for us these past four years — change and resulting campus alterations were not something that we could not prevent or design. And when you think of change as something large-scale forced upon you, it can be disheartening, frustrating and isolating.

"Be the change you want to see in the world" was a frequent refrain my mom repeated to me when I was younger. Every time she did, I thought, "What does that mean?" And then when I was around 8 years old, I created my first

homemade newspaper for my neighborhood, a single page of white printer paper covered in thick marker and thought: "Oh, that's it."

Through the uncertainty of the past four years, it has been journalism and *The Ithacan* that has kept me connected to the campus community, even though I began my first year in my childhood bedroom at home in Fall 2020.

Over the past four years, I watched and reported as *The Ithacan* covered countless changes, including the APP process and the faculty cuts that followed, IC Open the Books, a change in presidents, new variants of COVID-19, an increase of antisemitism on campus, IC Rise Up, a new turf field, the impact of the Israel-Hamas war and ongoing lawsuits. I covered meetings that stretched on long into the night and interviewed too many faculty members who learned their beloved jobs had been eliminated.

In order to become the change I wanted to see, I needed to reframe my thinking around what change looked like. It doesn't always have to be something big or outside of your personal control or influence. Instead, change can be a positive force brought about by a group effort of individual actions that lead to community action and something stronger than just one person.

The upside of being surrounded by constant change is that it makes



Senior Syd Pierre writes about her experiences as a student journalist at Ithaca College. She explains the importance of centering community to establish initiatives that prioritize positive change.

AMINATTA IMRANA JALLOW/THE ITHACAN

you less fearful of changing your own surroundings and situations. We took a leap and made changes of our own this academic year, as *The Ithacan* moved to a bi-weekly print schedule in order to meet the needs of our audience through an increased digital presence. It took a team to create a change for the better and we knew that this shift would allow us to create more connections across the campus community.

To create change for the better, start small. Think about what kind of attainable change you want to see within the organizations you're a part of, the friend group in your dorm building, the people you choose to surround yourself with. Consider your stakeholders. Change is rooted in the community and it can't be done overnight.

It was the connections and community I made through *The*

Ithacan — the inspiring editors, determined staff and sources so willing to share their stories and their time — who kept me motivated. I am constantly reminded of how many people and voices are strong enough to be the change we all want to see in the world.

Syd Pierre (she/her) is a senior journalism major. Contact her at spierre@ithaca.edu.

GUEST COMMENTARY

Editor's Note: The opinions in this commentary do not necessarily reflect the views of the editorial board.

Creative projects must be grounded in genuine care

BY GRACE AZAULA
OPINION EDITOR

To create is one of the most beautiful things a human can do. The ability to translate feelings into poems, opinions into films, sorrow into songs — it's what makes humanity so special. Creative projects and creative people alike have always entranced me, especially when they are able to use creativity as a force for change. However, as much as creating is a gift, it is a challenge that requires intention and care. When the reason behind the art gets lost, creative projects can quickly turn into a prettily-packaged piece of nothing.

For the first two years of my time in the Roy H. Park School of Communications, I struggled to find a sense of connection. I entered as a communication management and design major with no real sense of what I wanted from college, aside from using my creativity and finding a way to do something good in the world. While I did meet some wonderful "parkies" who truly cared about storytelling in a way that pushed for change, I often heard peers talk more about how their projects looked rather than what they meant. Quickly, Park started to feel like a place where people learned how to communicate and create countless films, reports, stories, but lacked one crucial component: heart.

Because of this disconnect, I searched for community in other spaces. In my a cappella group, Voicestream, I sang alongside wonderful musicians who exemplified the act of creating art with a sense of care. Members chose to sing together, not because they wanted to be the star soloist, but because they

wanted to use music as a way to cultivate belonging and community. As I began to explore my academic interests, I found a home in the education department, surrounded by peers and professors who were excited to discuss and write about a vast array of educational and social topics.

Getting outside of Park gave me the space to explore interests and passions that made me want to create. I was able to apply the design and communication skills I learned in the Park School to make a bigger contribution to the world through fields like education. I truly believe that to figure out what you want to create and why, you need to take a step away from the logistics of how to make the art, and instead, explore passions that give you something to say.

After taking a break from being heavily involved in Park, I spent my final year of college more invested in the school than ever before. I had the privilege of producing and editing a documentary titled "Restoring Joy," alongside a group of some of the best people I've ever met. The film was a collaboration with the Park Scholar program and students and staff from The Village at Ithaca that centered around the stories of students of color in local schools.

While the project began as a small service project for a scholarship requirement, it blossomed into something I could never have predicted. All of the students — both from the college and surrounding high schools and middle schools — cared immensely about one another and about pushing for educational equity. There was a sense of community forged, where no one person was better than the



Senior Grace Azaula writes about her experience in the Park school and highlights the importance of being thoughtful and authentic throughout creative projects.

SAM BURNS/THE ITHACAN

other and everyone was given input throughout the production process.

I never anticipated being involved in a film during my college experience. For one, I felt wary participating as a non-film major. But more importantly, I didn't think that a team of Park students would care as much about the people and subject matter behind the film as they did the cinematography and credits. "Restoring Joy" proved me wrong, and for that I am so thankful.

When we premiered "Restoring Joy" on March 21 in the Park Auditorium, I felt inexplicably full. Surrounded by young people, filmmakers and a supportive community, I felt a sense of renewed faith in the future of art

and creativity. "Restoring Joy" was the opportunity I needed in Park to restore my own joy — a key component to any creative project.

By exploring outside interests and surrounding yourself with people who are as compassionate as they are creative, you can create something that is beautiful, not just visually, but in substance.

Not only will the project be more authentic, but you, your community and the world will be better off for making something that means something.

Grace Azaula (she/her) is a senior communication management and design major. Contact her at gazaula@ithaca.edu.

Rubber ducks paddle to fund 4-H Youth

LUCIA IANDOLO,
MEI DENNISON
STAFF WRITERS

For the first time since 2019, the 4-H Duck Race was back and in person April 28 in Ithaca. Community members of all ages engaged in the fun at the Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE), where different tables from local businesses and organizations were able to sell products. The launch of the duck race took place at Cascadilla Creek falls.

Cynthia Cave-Gaetani, executive director for CCE, said the event encourages adolescent development and that it is an integral part of building a community.

"This is a really wonderful way to get the community to get together," Cave-Gaetani said. "And it's just so exciting that we sold 3,000 ducks — that's all the ducks that we have ... and, you know, it really helps to promote child and youth development and programming."

The CCE fosters youth programming for families in New York state, giving over 300,000 children and teens experiences in 4-H programming. Programs include youth development programs, camps, strengthening families programs, the Primitive Pursuits program, rural youth services and urban outreach programs.

Cave-Gaetani said the 4-H Duck Race is an opportunity for people to come together and celebrate community. She said the spirit of the town during the event creates a joyful experience.

"This is actually my first year as the executive director, and also my first year at this



The Cornell Cooperative Extension Tompkins County hosted their 4-H Duck Race for the first time since 2019, where Ithaca residents could watch 3,000 ducks race down the Cascadilla Creek falls. Prizes were given to the ducks that finished in first and last place.

LUCIA IANDOLO/THE ITHACAN

Duck Race," Cave-Gaetani said. "I'm new. It is all new to me. And it is such a celebration of this county of the community and just the spirit that people have about supporting youth. And it just makes you feel good ... looking at the crowd and the joy. That's what it's all about."

With a countdown from the crowd, the 3,000 ducks were sent down the waterfall at the Cascadilla Creek falls, located within the Cornell Botanic Garden's Cascadilla Gorge Trail, and started their adventure all the way to the CCE. The crowd followed the ducks as they went on their journey.

People were able to bet on one duck for \$5 or a flock of ducks — five ducks — for \$20. All proceeds from the fundraising event went to the 4-H youth programs in Tompkins County. The 4-H youth programs run programs year round and include after school programs, summer camps, clubs and workshops.

People were so excited that some attendees even dressed up as ducks with face paint and colorful attire.

The community eagerly watched as

the first place duck finished its expedition. The crowd erupted into loud cheers and celebrations. Although the ducks finished their journey, the people continued on to the CCE to discover the winners.

David Foote, communications manager at the CCE, was documenting the event and emphasized the importance of engagement within the greater Ithaca community.

"It's a good chance for the community to learn a little more about 4-H programs while enjoying fun games, activities and snacks, spending time with other people in the neighborhood and just having a good day," Foote said. "I think it's just a matter of letting people know we're here and if they're interested in connecting with us more, whether enrolling youth in programs, becoming a 4-H volunteer themselves, or just learning about some of our gardening programs or cooking classes."

After families watched the ducks travel down the river, they were able to attend a tabling event. Each table had a different topic like composting and agriculture with learning opportunities for the youth.



ILLUSTRATION BY MOLLY TESKA/THE ITHACAN

Gabe Smith, an agroforestry educator at the CCE, hosted a table that was representative of the CCE's agriculture and horticulture program.

"There's lots of different activities, very family focused, so it's been fun to talk about gardening with both kids and adults," Smith said. "What we do is education [and] education outreach, and so being able to do this in person, I think really highlights all of the programming that we do in a way that people can readily access it."

Cave-Gaetani said there are measures in place to ensure environmental safety.

"Those ducks have

been a part of this experience for 20 years. ... The same ducks year after year. We've added more to them because this has grown ... but we have 3,000 ... 3,000 went over ... and we will count 3,000 to make sure that they are all recovered," Cave-Gaetani said.

At 4 p.m. the awards were announced. The first prize duck won \$500 and the first 50 ducks received other prizes and gift certificates to local businesses — there was also a prize for the very last duck that finished the race.

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ILLUSTRATION BY MOLLY TESKA/THE ITHACAN

Barbara Adams retires after 50 years of inspiration

BY ELIZABETH KHARABADZE
YEAR IN REVIEW EDITOR

There have been 10 presidents at Ithaca College since its start as a music conservatory, all of whom have led the college through periods of great change. Barbara Adams, associate professor in the Department of Writing, has been employed at the college for six of those 10 presidents. Now, as the college's longest-serving faculty member with over 50 years of teaching, advising and reframing perspectives on writing, Adams is retiring.

Before the college even had a writing department, Adams began her career on South Hill in 1972 as an instructor in the Department of English. She said that at the time, writing was a small subsection of the English department and only offered as a lecture-style course.

Adams said it became apparent that the college's approach to teaching writing left students feeling discouraged because it gave the false impression that those who did poorly in English literature classes would do poorly in writing classes.

In 1973, the Department of Writing — then known as the Writing Program — opened to provide students the ability to immerse themselves in the world of writing without heavy emphasis on English literature. Adams taught more than 33 different courses in the department, including Academic Writing, Personal Essay, Magazine Writing and Editing & Publishing.

"It was very generative," Adams

said. "We just grew like weeds. ... We ended up with a curriculum with — I think it was well over of about 40 courses — just lots and lots of different kinds of writing: creative writing, journalistic, expository, all sorts."

Susan Adams Delaney, associate professor and chair of the Department of Writing, first met Adams in 2007 when Delaney came to teach at the college. Delaney said she was captivated by Adams' attentiveness to details at faculty meetings and how committed she was to improving the writing department — not only for students, but for faculty as well.

"[Adams] in particular had just such a keen eye for all of those details about how has this curriculum grown, how did we develop these courses, why are we doing things the way we are, what are some things we had discussed in the past that we need to revisit now," Delaney said.

Adams said there was great care placed in training students to be professional writers, not just creative writers. It was that desire to help students that led Adams to create the Internship Program in Writing & Publishing in 2001. From 2001 to 2020, Adams sponsored about 389 academic-year internships, most of which were paid.

Matthew Gardener '23 had Adams as a professor for several writing classes, like Personal Essay and Editing & Publishing — the latter of which Gardner said inspired him to consider a career in publishing.

"So in those two classes, just



Barbara Adams, associate professor in the Department of Writing, has been a faculty member at Ithaca College for over 50 years, having served as a teacher, adviser and innovative writer.

CLARK ROQUE ROYANDOYAN/THE ITHACAN

overall, I think [it] really helps people make that transition between the educational and college world into the professional world; that was something that was reflected in the courses," Gardener said. "We were always talking about the professional context for how the publishing industry was and she would bring in guests from all different places in the industry. ... So we [were] always feeling not just the skills that you need to do that kind of work, but also just how those industries work [and] what kind of niches are out there."

During her four years at the college, Chloe Eberhard '23 said she could be found spending most of her time in Adams' office. Eberhard said she had taken Editing & Publishing with Adams and was able to work four different internships through Adams' recommendation.

"It's hard to figure out what's going on in the publishing industry because it's all behind closed doors, and she'd opened those for us," Eberhard said.

Delaney said that with curriculum changes to the program, the Department of Writing has an

idea of who to look for — but Adams is someone who could never be replaced.

"You don't replace a person," Delaney said. "You always bring in someone new who brings their personality [and] characteristics. And that's all you can do because college is an institution, but it is an institution that's fundamentally about the humans who inhabit it. ... We are the people who work with us and we're also the students who come through."

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Award-winning saxophonist grooves at Ford Hall

BY GEORGIE GASSARO,
VIVIAN ROSE
STAFF WRITER,
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

The 2023–24 David P. '60 and Susan W. Wohlueter Jazz Ensemble Composition Contest welcomed award-winning jazz saxophonist Alexa Tarantino for her second guest performance April 27. It is not often that a guest performer returns for a second time. Tarantino's return is a reflection of her extremely impressive career as a musician.

Tarantino performed at the college for the first time since Feb. 29, 2020. The most recent composition night was supported by none other than Ithaca College's Jazz Ensemble. The group is led by Mike Titlebaum, associate professor of music performance and director of jazz studies.

The annual competition was created in 2010 to give composers the platform to write for a large band, and to give students exposure to assessing performances. The application process for the competition began in February and takes about a month. From the applicants, six composers were selected to perform alongside Tarantino. Of the selected composers, one is crowned the winner of the contest and is awarded a \$1,500 prize.

This year's six composers were from an array of colleges, either currently pursuing a degree or having graduated and are now full-time musicians: Zhengtao Pan, Jack Snelling, Ethan Helm, Jared Decker, Jonathan Bumpus and prize winner Eric Weaver.

The piece "Violet Skies" featured a significant collaboration. The song was written by Tarantino and arranged by Titlebaum. After

an introductory solo from Tarantino, the piece featured solos from nearly every member of the jazz band. Sophomore Chris Rake-man was on bass, senior James Williams and first-year student Alessio Vega were on trumpet and senior Dan Greenleaf was on guitar.

This showcase was the last student performance for seniors Greenleaf and Williams, who both received a farewell speech from Titlebaum.

"I teach that singers should play, players should sing," Titlebaum said. "Our model for that is Louis Armstrong. He was neither just a trumpet player, nor a singer. He was the greatest jazz musician who played the trumpet and sang. So this graduating senior, [Williams], I don't think I've had a student more dedicated to this idea."

As a senior, Greenleaf said he views performances at this point in his career as more celebratory than as something to be nervous about.

"[Tarantino] is phenomenal," Greenleaf said. "She's an example of honing your craft. I don't know if you could catch the vibe in the audience, but she's just really lovely to be around, on top being a musician, which is such a cool combination. It's so rare to find somebody that has mastered social ability."

The night featured a whirlwind of different instruments — trumpet, guitar, saxophone, bass, clarinet — and collaborations, both on the stage and in the behind-the-scenes musical composition.

Alongside her career as a musician, Tarantino is an accomplished educator. She has taught 500 workshops and worked with over a thousand students. On April 27, Tarantino delivered a masterclass before the performance, delving into her expertise and



Award-winning saxophonist Alexa Tarantino and sophomore Grace Gonoud duet on alto saxophones during Tarantino's visit to Ithaca College on April 27.

KAI LINCKE/THE ITHACAN

educating the attendees.

Audience member Peter Swift is a friend of Titlebaum's and has attended past performances at the college. Swift said it was the best he had seen, and was very impressed by Tarantino's masterclass.

"Her teaching was wonderfully modulated," Swift said. "Never critical, always positive."

Another standout performance was "Windy Days" by Pan. At the concert, Titlebaum gave "Windy Days" a reflective introductory speech, commenting on the imagery and tone of the piece.

"This piece has a really beautiful landscape and beautiful tonal language that is very appealing to me," Titlebaum said.

The selected composers came together to celebrate their recognition, and members of the Ithaca College Jazz Ensemble were able to collaborate with musicians from across the country.

Weaver, the winner of the competition, said he enjoys hearing artists outside of his school perform his music. Weaver is currently a graduate student at the University of North Texas.

"It's so wonderful to have those experiences, and to have everyone have a good time on the stage," Weaver said. "Winning is just one part of it."

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'Challengers' volleys with a true erotic triangle

MOVIE REVIEW: "Challengers" Amazon MGM Studios



BY MARIANA CONTRERAS

ASST. LIFE AND CULTURE EDITOR

When it comes to desire, passion and lustfulness, Luca Guadagnino is an expert at capturing it all — the excitement, the thrill and even the shame. He has proven himself capable of seducing the audience through his depictions of sensible and out-of-the-box eroticisms. It's no surprise, then, when Guadagnino and novelist-playwright Justin Kuritzkes take tennis, one of the most erotic sports, and craft a restlessly sexy, infuriating film in "Challengers." Since its release April 26, "Challengers" has become No. 1 in the box office with a domestic gross of \$15 million.

Despite the impression the trailer might have given, it is important to note that the sexiness in this movie is not thanks to any sex scenes or its undeniably attractive stars. In fact, one could dare say that this is one of those movie trailers that turns out to be very misleading — in the most positive of ways. Similarly, it's important to make the disclaimer that if one wants to watch a movie about tennis, this is not the right one.

Guadagnino has said he finds tennis boring to watch, yet it is his use of a match set in 2019 between the leads that is crucial to bring the romantic triangle of this story

to the next level. The film pairs its three acts to the sets in this Challenger — the second-highest tier of men's tennis tournaments — final match taking us through the current and past dynamics of the main cast: Tashi Duncan (Zendaya), a former tennis prodigy that never reached her full potential because of an injury; Art Donaldson (Mike Faist), a professional champion who is rapidly spiraling and Patrick Zweig (Josh O'Connor), a talented yet undisciplined rich boy who is struggling to make ends meet.

Driving the story are three superb actors, making for an intimate, focused drama that blurs the lines between sex, love and obsession. Faist quickly charms the audience with his portrayal of the boy next door, which is perfectly balanced by O'Connor's cocky grin as the troubled playboy. Yet, in the same way Tashi stole the pair's hearts, Zendaya steals the show.

While there is great appeal to the complex relationships between the characters, the true drama is dependent on the tempo created by the perfectly timed and zesty shots. Guadagnino's films are remarkable for being able to communicate so much without any dialogue. From close-ups to fun tactics like making the shot from the point of view of the ball or the racket to using zoom, pans and more, the cinematography truly pays



Art Donaldson (Mike Faist), Tashi Duncan (Zendaya) and Patrick Zweig (Josh O'Connor) are all high-performing and entangled tennis players in Luca Guadagnino's newest film, "Challengers."

COURTESY OF AMAZON MGM STUDIOS

homage to the expression "a picture is worth a thousand words."

Don't be fooled by the aforementioned love triangle because "Challengers" is in no way a love story. Even though the main conflict of this plot is driven by both Art's and Patrick's thirst to have Tashi, the true relationship that keeps us on our toes is that of the friends, alluding once more to the

underlying homoeroticism of tennis and the intimacy of two boys who entered manhood together.

Ultimately, "Challengers" is a sexy film, not because of the homoeroticism in it, not because of Zendaya as the leading lady, but because it focuses on passion. There's passion among the characters and the way they feel about each other, but also in the way they feel about

the sport. The film isn't afraid to explore the innate sexuality and alleged queerness in sports and friendship while also seeing sex as a weapon and a tool. Viewers can expect to leave the movie theater energized as they process an ending that urges them to rewatch the film at least once more.

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Famous features on St. Vincent's newest album

ALBUM REVIEW: "All Born Screaming" Virgin Music Group



BY SAMMIE MACARANAS

STAFF WRITER

On April 26, Annie Clark, more widely known as St. Vincent, released her seventh studio album, "All Born Screaming." The musician has made a name for herself since leaving alternative indie artist Sufjan Stevens' touring band in 2006. The multi-talented artist took a new step with this album, making it her debut as a producer. Clark's musical abilities are once again put on display as she plays the electric piano, bass, acoustic guitar, 12-string guitar, vocals and more.

In this album, Clark collaborated with Dave Grohl, Cate Le Bon and many other artists who helped the album shine. The album features 10 tracks, including three singles: "Broken Man," "Flea" and "Big Time Nothing." The album is a musical continuation of the 2020 film, "The Nowhere Inn," a psychological thriller-comedy mockumentary written by and starring Clark.

The album begins with "Hell Is Near," a dark bass drum and choir heavy song that plays with the idea that death is coming to all. A religious and choral sound is found through the layering of heavy drums and Clark's voice. The lyrics in this song are lost to the reverb a little bit, but Clark's vocal skills are still on display, as well as her instrumental abilities. The song ends with Clark repeating the words "Give it all away, you give it all away / 'Cause the whole world's watching you." The track itself and this repeated lyric are shrouded in mystery since there is no clear answer to who she is talking

to and what the listener is supposed to do.

"Broken Man" is one of the singles off of the album and it features rock icon Dave Grohl on the drums. The song is filled with a very heavy and strong electric guitar, as well as Grohl's iconic percussional sound. This song is one of the most addicting tracks from the album, which comes as a surprise as it is so widely different from Clark's previous discography. The song slowly unravels from a laid back rock song to an explosive climax that is focused around the percussion. The beginning of the track almost feels like Clark is counting toward the climax, with a "tick-tock" sound lingering in the background of the song. Clark has said before that she believes in gender fluidity and with the chorus saying, "And what are you looking at? / Like you've never seen a broken man," the audience can be led to believe that Clark is identifying as the broken man or that she is bending gender stereotypes by presenting as very feminine, but feeling more masculine as a person.

The final track on the album, "All Born Screaming," features Cate Le Bon. It starts as a very bright, shag-style song that transitions into a darker synthesized piece after the second verse and chorus. As the shag aesthetic drops out, the bass drums and synths fade into the instrumental. As the synths get heavier, the chorus begins to chant "We're all born screaming" over and over again, reminding the audience that "we're all born screaming." It's weird and unconventional, but is really one of the best on the album.

"All Born Screaming" is a very cohesive



St. Vincent's seventh studio album, "All Born Screaming," features contributions from Dave Grohl, Cate Le Bon, Josh Freese, David Rallicke and many more.

COURTESY OF VIRGIN MUSIC GROUP

album. As the album progresses, from "Hell Is Near" to "All Born Screaming," the listener can follow a life in reverse order, acting as an observer as Clark describes the feelings through the lyrics.

The album as a whole is a compound of all of her past eras and genres, but is also a window into a plethora of new genres for Clark to successfully produce music in. The songs are very easy to enjoy and

versatile, acting as songs that one can either listen to in depth or have on in the background. Clark's breathy vocals and the production are definitely the highlights of the album. Unfortunately for St. Vincent fans, the album is pretty short, with a 41-minute run-time and only 10 songs. Nevertheless, the album is definitely one to listen to.

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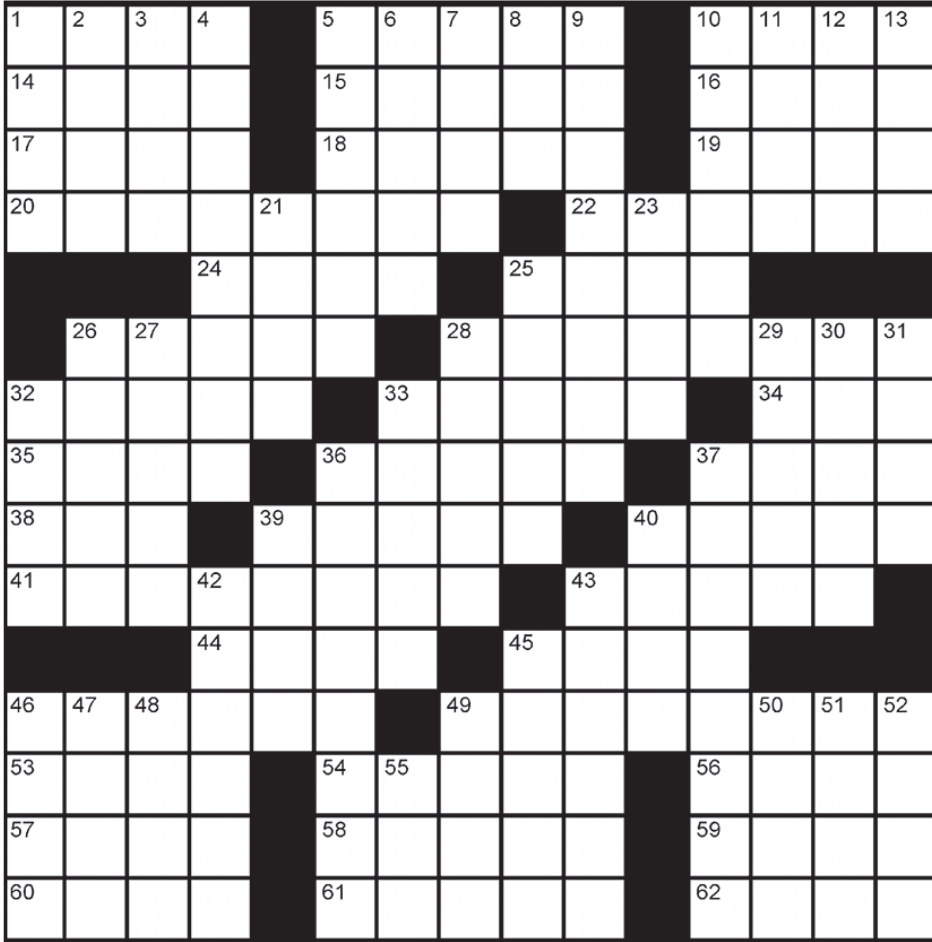
DIVERSIONS

THURSDAY, MAY 2, 2024

12

crossword

By Quill Driver Books



ACROSS

- 1 Sleep
- 5 Millan or Romero
- 10 Cotton pod
- 14 Numerical prefix
- 15 Pal, in Spanish
- 16 Fencing sword
- 17 In this way
- 18 Dressed to the —
- 19 "The Hunchback of Notre-Dame" Author
- 20 Glasses alternative
- 22 Prolific inventor
- 24 Periods
- 25 Federal agents (hyph.)
- 26 Fairylike
- 28 Magnificence
- 32 Where backups reside
- 33 Ancient
- 34 "Tarzan the — Man"
- 35 Pull along
- 36 "Toy Story" character
- 37 Copy
- 38 Every dog has — day
- 39 Unrefined
- 40 Prototype
- 41 Unmatched
- 43 Grass cutter
- 44 Yorkshire river
- 45 Friend of Dorothy
- 46 Kind of hound
- 49 Burgers and fries (2 wds.)
- 53 Aid and —
- 54 Landlord's offering
- 56 Johnson of TV
- 57 Positive
- 58 Young eel
- 59 " — be honest..."
- 60 Asterisk
- 61 Cloth factory workers
- 62 Expression

DOWN

- 1 Campus mil. group
- 2 Repeat
- 3 — gun
- 4 Refined
- 5 Lively dance (hyph.)
- 6 Expels
- 7 Cause for contrition
- 8 Gilded or golden
- 9 Flavoring plant
- 10 Trying to catch up
- 11 Musical work
- 12 Kind of block
- 13 Juan Ponce de —
- 21 Saharan
- 23 Gainsay
- 25 Barter
- 26 Fill with joy
- 27 Wingless parasite
- 28 Things for sale
- 29 — — parfum
- 30 Topmost
- 31 Spin around
- 32 Casino token
- 33 Residence
- 36 Grappled
- 37 Ruin
- 39 Hint
- 40 Pointless
- 42 Flight manifest
- 43 Skinflints
- 45 Printer type
- 46 Choir member
- 47 Touch on
- 48 Antitoxins
- 49 Best liked
- 50 Sandwich cookie
- 51 "The Simpsons" bus driver
- 52 Furniture item
- 55 Isle of —

last issue's crossword answers

K	A	T	E		F	L	A	S	K			C	P	R	
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C	O	S	T	A		A	L	L		S	I	L	A	S	
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answers to last issue's sudoku:

sudoku

medium

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

hard

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

easy

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

hard

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

THURSDAY, MAY 2, 2024

13

FORMER BOMBER SAFETY STEPS CLOSER TO NFL

BY FLYNN HYNES

ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

During the 1967 NFL draft, the Atlanta Falcons chose Sandor Szabo '67 with the 317th pick. That was 57 years ago and no athlete from Ithaca College has made it close to the NFL since then. Until now.

Shortly after the third and last day of the 2024 NFL Draft April 27 selections, former All-American safety Derek Slywka '23 was signed to a rookie mini-camp for both the Kansas City Chiefs and the San Francisco 49ers.

Slywka grew up in the small town of Waterloo, New York, as a passionate Cleveland Browns fan with his two younger brothers. Growing up, Derek said football brought his family together.

"I think it goes all the way back to when I was a kid," Slywka said. "It was my dad and my grandpa that influenced me a lot. I grew up a Browns fan, so it was just kind of like a football thing just growing up. ... It's been kind of a family thing. I have two younger brothers. So we've all played football our whole lives. Playing football in the backyard on Sundays after the Browns games were over."

Slywka's love for sports would help him grow into a three-sport athlete at Waterloo High School, where he played football, basketball and baseball.

Slywka's athletic talents would guide him to play basketball at Finger Lakes Community College (FLCC) for the 2019–20 academic year. However, he transferred to the Ithaca College football program after his first season at FLCC and the rest is history. Former teammate Issac Hadac is a social media football trainer who worked with multiple prospects through the draft. Even after working with him only a small bit, Hadac said Slywka presents multiple attributes that make him more than capable of competing in the NFL.

"He's a beast," Hadac said. "He's got the measurables, he's got the speed, he's got the ability and that's what really matters at the end of the day. It doesn't really matter what



Former All-American safety Derek Slywka '23 goes low to wrap up Springfield College senior running back Blane Hart on Nov. 18, 2023. After the 2023 season, Slywka began his journey to the NFL and has two mini-camp opportunities coming up with the Chiefs and the 49ers.

NOLAN SAUNDERS/THE ITHACAN

division you are. I worked with many kids this past draft class ... and he's one of the best kids I've worked with."

Despite Slywka's athletic ability, Bombers' head football coach Michael Toerper said Slywka's work ethic is first-rate.

"Obviously his physical skill set is impressive," Toerper said. "But his internal drive to incrementally improve every single day and having a plan to do so ... I think that's the one thing that separates him apart is his incredibly competitive work ethic."

As far as going on to the professional level, Slywka said he made this decision in spring 2023. He and Toerper sat down to talk about the potential opportunity to go play in the NFL. Afterward, Slywka knew he had to perform at a high level during the fall 2023 season in order to keep the door open and certainly did not

disappoint, as he was named to the D3football.com First Team All-American as well as becoming a Cliff Harris award finalist.

After the season, Toerper reached out to liaisons to earn Slywka a spot in pro day showcases. Pro days are opportunities held prior to the draft every year to showcase individual schools' players to professional scouts. Slywka trained six days a week, which he said was different from in-season training because he was preparing for drills like the 40-yard dash, the vertical and the 3-cone drill.

"I didn't have money to get a trainer," Slywka said. "So it was using my resources, talking with coach Toerper, using the lifting stuff we do at Ithaca — there's a lot of stuff online right now of trainers and their programs that they do, so I kind of put [a plan] together using

multiple different sources."

To say Slywka showed out at the pro days is an understatement. Slywka said his performance garnered the attention of about 20 different NFL teams, as well as received a prospect grade for the NFL draft database.

From that point, Slywka's film was in the hands of NFL scouts and he signed with agent John Perez of Perez Sports. Slywka said he waited until the NFL draft to see where he would fall, eventually being signed to the two rookie mini camps.

All 32 teams hold rookie mini-camps for two to three days across various dates in early to mid-May. Rookie mini-camps consist of NFL draftees, tryout players, undrafted free agents and players like Slywka, who are invited to participate in the hopes of getting a contract.

Derek's younger brother and former high school teammate, Kyle Slywka, said it is unbelievable to see the time pass from when they were playing football together in their backyard.

"It's crazy because we've always been competitors going back and forth in that yard," Kyle Slywka said. "Seeing that competitive spirit in him when he plays football now, it's stuff that he's always had in him and it's crazy to see how it translates to the field and how it helps him be such a great athlete. It's really cool."

Kyle Slywka also said he thinks his brother has had a lasting impact on their hometown in Waterloo.

"I think it's definitely a big thing because nobody's really done it from here, especially in football," Kyle Slywka said. "I mean, it's not been a well-known thing. And it's definitely going to help their community."

Toerper said that Derek's journey

is a testament to small-school athletes and that one of the main objectives of the football program at the college is to develop players into the best that they can be.

"It's just a microcosm for all small-school athletes that you don't have to be this highly touted five-star recruit to make it professional," Toerper said. "Certainly, there's things that are out of your control as far as metrics goes, as far as a certain size you have to be at a lot of these levels, or a lot of these programs to be able to get a sniff in the NFL, but it just proves if you're good enough, they'll find you."

During the rookie mini-camps, Slywka will be competing with drafted and undrafted rookies, as well as athletes who fall in the same boat as him. Slywka will fly out to compete in the Chief's mini-camp May 3, followed by the 49ers mini-camp May 10 if he does not earn a spot with the Chiefs. Slywka said he is excited to see where this opportunity takes him and is also excited to be able to do this and set an example for his younger brothers that both play collegiate football.

"It's something that if you told a 12-year-old me I'd be doing, he would probably be a lot more in awe than I necessarily am right now," Slywka said. "I'm kind of just working, just keeping my head down and grinding to be ready for whatever the opportunity is that I do get. But it's cool. I'm excited to be able to do it as an Ithaca Bomber. I'm excited to be able to, as an older brother, having two younger brothers, to be able to do something like that, to kind of pave the way for both of them who both play football."



ILLUSTRATION BY GRACE VANDERVEER/THE ITHACAN

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Rowing alumna races with time in olympic selection

BY KHARI BOLDEN
STAFF WRITER

Dynasty: a word thrown around so often in modern sports that it hardly means anything anymore. Winning a few championships or competitions within a short time frame is impressive, yet that does not fit the definition.

But if anyone ever asks Meghan Musnicki '05 what a dynasty is, she could just point to the gold medals around her neck.

At 41, the 2013 Ithaca College Athletic Hall of Fame inductee is set to become the oldest American woman to row for Team USA as she gears up for her fourth straight Olympic appearance. She is also the last active member of the National Women's Rowing Team's eight dynasty, which won gold at every Olympic Games and World Rowing Championships from 2006 to 2016.

Musnicki began rowing during her first year at St. Lawrence University before transferring to Ithaca College, starting her sophomore year. She said the transfer was partially because of a personal tragedy.

"I'm from the Finger Lakes area and Ithaca was one of the schools that I had looked at going to initially," Musnicki said. "My father passed away suddenly [during] my freshman year, and so I wanted to be closer to home."

Her father, Bill Musnicki '75, was also an Ithaca College graduate who earned his master's degree from the school's physical therapy program. When he died of a heart attack in 2002, his family was devastated.

Musnicki said her family members have always been her biggest fans.

Becky Robinson, women's rowing head coach at the college, said Musnicki's presence was key to the Bombers winning consecutive national championships.

"She was a captain senior year," Robinson said. "It was her leadership that really helped the team ... but she only had started rowing two years earlier and she was still in the development phase."

After graduating, she spent the next few years trying out for the U.S. women's national team.

Musnicki said all of the disappointment accumulated over the three years of trying and failing just made her success on the fourth attempt feel that much more special.

The rest is history: Musnicki won 18 total medals across seven years of competition, including seven gold medals as a part of the women's national team's eight; and retired in 2021 after a fourth-place finish in the 2020 Summer Olympics.

And that is where the story should end: with a 38-year-old Musnicki, already one of the oldest rowers in national team history. But the story does not end there.

After unretiring, Musnicki said she received a text from a familiar face: Alison Rusher, a former U.S. Rowing teammate. Rusher, who was also practicing singles, said she wanted to return to sweeping and was on the verge of quitting altogether around the time she reached out to Musnicki.

At the time, Musnicki lived in California, while Rusher was based



From left, Alison Rusher and Meghan Musnicki '05 race at the 2023 Winter Speed Order in Sarasota, Florida. Musnicki is set to be the oldest American women's rower in Olympic history. COURTESY OF LISA WORTH

out of Florida. So when Skip Kietl, Musnicki's husband and coach, and Mike Teti, California Rowing Club coach, suggested having Rusher fly out to row pairs, Musnicki said it was no small feat.

"I texted her and I said 'You want to come out here?' and she's like 'OK, when?' and I said 'Tomorrow' and, credit to [Rusher], she hopped on a plane and flew across the country to get in the boat with me," Musnicki said.

With only about a week of prep time, the pair posted a fourth-place

finish in the final heat of U.S. Rowing's 2023 Winter Speed Order, a national meet. The pair won silver at the World Rowing Cup II, giving them a berth to the World Championships later that year where they earned an Olympic berth.

Now, Musnicki is in New Jersey training for the eight and Rusher is training after being selected as an alternate for the Olympic team.

The U.S. national team's dynasty that lasted from 2006–2016 in the women's eight may be over, but Musnicki said she does not see it as

the end of an era.

"Each team has its own unique identity," Musnicki said. "I compare it to a living organism. It has its ethos, it has its beliefs. I happened to be a part of those teams that were so dominant. ... I hope that [experience] is something I can provide [to Team USA] — because the older athletes when I was younger provided that for me. But more importantly, I just want to be able to contribute to the team as a whole."

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Outfielder humbly approaches career hits record

BY JACOB INFALD
STAFF WRITER

Anyone who has watched the Ithaca College baseball team this season has had the privilege of witnessing greatness. Senior outfielder Louis Fabbo is in the midst of a historic career and is cementing himself as one of the greatest players to dawn the Bomber uniform.

On April 6, Fabbo became the sixth player in program history to record 200 career hits. Now he is on the quest to break Vince Roman's '90 all-time record of 220 hits that has stood for over three decades. Fabbo currently stands one hit away at 219.

However, Fabbo said he does not care about individual statistics or records. Assistant coach Cooper Belyea '15 said that out of everyone on the team, Fabbo probably cares the least about his heroics, his only concern is helping the team win.

"I gave him his ball for his 200th hit ... and he didn't even smile," Belyea said. "He was just excited to get the series win against RIT."

Fabbo graduated from Waldwick High School in Waldwick, New Jersey in 2020, meaning he lost his senior year to the COVID-19 pandemic. This meant he lost the opportunity to record 100 career varsity hits. He said this made him realize how privileged he was to be able to play baseball in college and since then, he has not focused on individual accolades.

"I never knew when I got 100 hits, and I barely remember when I got 150," Fabbo said. "Just like all of a sudden I was super close."

Fabbo, Colin Shashaty, senior outfielder and team captain; Ben Landis, senior pitcher/catcher and team captain; and the rest of the Class of 2024 began college together during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Head coach David Valesente said he owes much to the Class of 2024 because they have helped to shape the future of the program.

Fabbo and the rest of his class were the first recruiting class recruited by Valesente, who took over the program in 2019 after his dad, George Valesente '66 stepped down after managing the squad for 41 seasons. With his dad still helping out with the team, David Valesente said it would be a historic moment.

"I think he'd love to see Lou break the record," Valesente said. "I think it'd be a special moment for the transition for our guys in our program and Lou."

Throughout these last four seasons, his teammates, who Fabbo refers to as his family, have been in awe of what their friend has been able to accomplish. Shashaty said that on top of Fabbo's elite on-field performance, his work-ethic and attitude is what has had a great impact on himself and the rest of the team.

"I think it's been really enjoyable for someone like me, who is a captain, to watch him lead by example and just be a role model in various different ways," Shashaty said.

Shashaty also said he thinks Fabbo's defense is another aspect of his game that goes unnoticed. Fabbo started at second base as a first-year student, but was moved to the outfield his sophomore season. Over the last two seasons, Fabbo has only committed three errors in the field while starting every game.

Belyea said that because of Fabbo's hitting, it made sense for him to move to the outfield where there is less of a defensive focus. Fabbo's high school coach, Dan Freeman, said Fabbo's athleticism allows him to play anywhere in the field.

"He's such a special bat," Freeman said. "You find a place to fit a player like him in."



Senior outfielder Louis Fabbo makes contact on a ball in a 9-0 victory against Hobart College April 27. Fabbo is currently one hit off tying the school's career hits record. EMMA KERSTING/THE ITHACAN

Freeman said Fabbo had to work harder than anyone else on the team. While he attended Waldwick High School, he lived 45 minutes away and only attended Waldwick because his mom worked in the district. This meant that Fabbo would have to wake up before 6 a.m. most mornings and would not get back home until late at night. Freeman said Fabbo's commitment to his team helped him immediately gain the respect of his teammates.

"Lou worked his tail off and that was evident to the other players on the team," Freeman said.

Landis also had nothing but good things to say about Fabbo, who he considers to be a brother. Landis, who has been Fabbo's

roommate for the last three years, said what makes Fabbo special is that he is able to separate baseball and life outside of baseball. This helps him to stay grounded.

"He's the same after a four for four game and a [zero] for four game," Landis said.

Fabbo said that regardless of if he breaks the record, the thing that matters now is if he and the rest of his class can finish the job and take home some hardware this postseason.

"It's real now ... everything was the precursor to this," Fabbo said. "It doesn't matter what you do in the regular season ... it really only counts in the playoff games."

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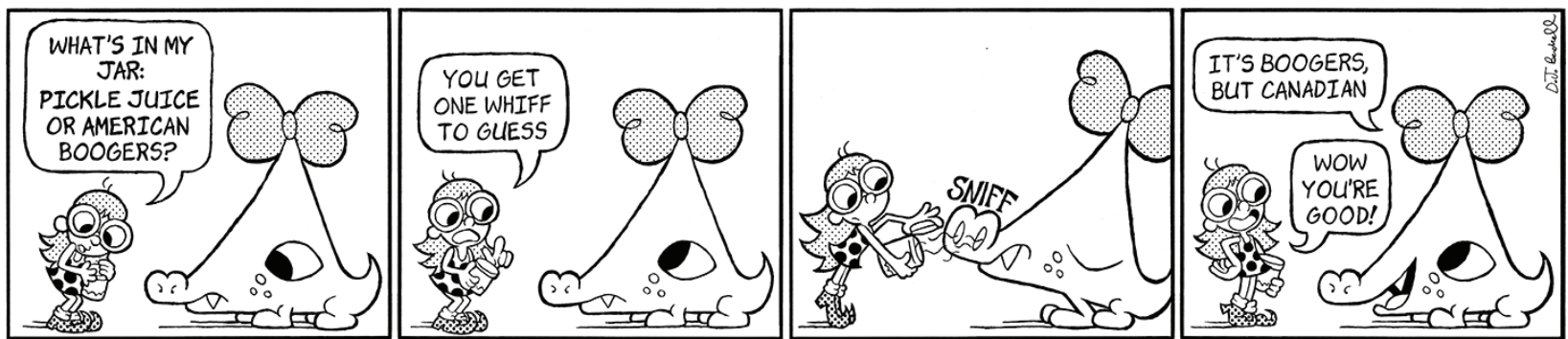
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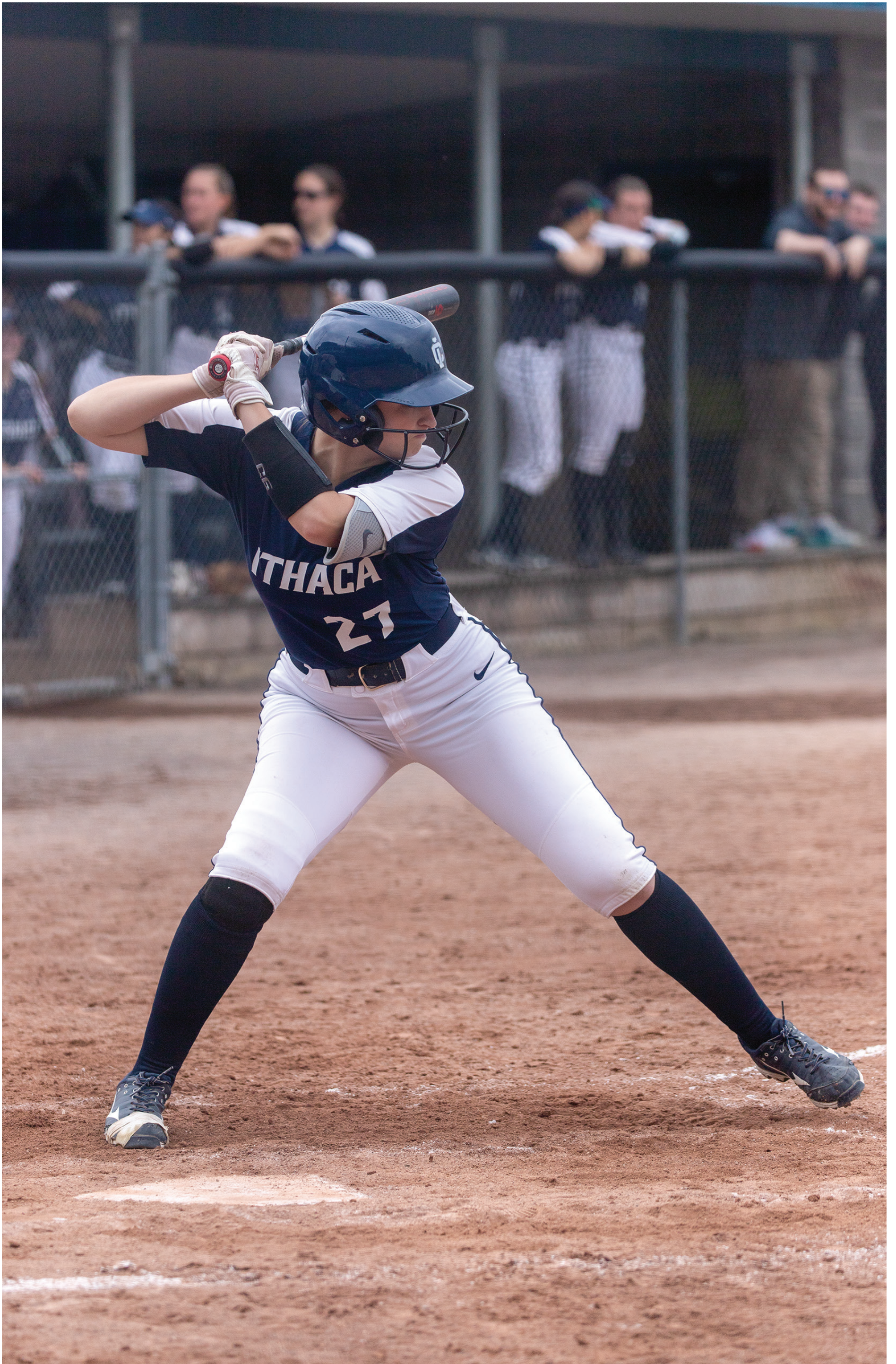
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Sophomore Kailen Winkelblech goes up to bat during the Ithaca Bombers versus the Skidmore Thoroughbreds game April 28. Ithaca won 4–1 in its first game and again 6–0 in their second. The Bombers will face the Rochester Institute of Technology Tigers next at 1 and 3 p.m. May 4 at home at Kostrinsky Field.

MADDY TANZMAN/THE ITHACAN