



Freshmen struggle with adjusting to on-campus life amid COVID-19 pandemic

Freshman Scout Frost sits outside the Upper Quads, which are primarily freshman residence halls, March 15. After testing positive for COVID-19 in February and having to quarantine for 10 days, Frost said they had to adjust to life as a college freshman all over again.
ALYSSA BEEBE/THE ITHACAN

BY ALYSHIA KORBA

Freshman Kathryn Gilbride dreamt of attending Ithaca College since her freshman year of high school, but her first-year experience has her questioning whether she will return for Fall 2021.

“I feel like I’ve tried everything to make this experience work,” Gilbride said. “I just don’t know if I can do it because it’s ruining me. There are very few things that are keeping me here.”

Freshmen beginning at the college in Fall 2020 had an unusual start to their college careers, as classes were held remotely because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although the campus has reopened for Spring 2021, the college experience is limited by COVID-19 guidelines. Social isolation due to COVID-19 has made it difficult for some freshmen to make friends and has negatively affected their mental health.

Brian Petersen, director of the Center for Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), said that in a typical semester, freshmen generally struggle in three areas of adjustment: living with a roommate, homesickness and making connections with people. Petersen

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Proposed climate justice center will not be housed at college

BY CAITLIN HOLTZMAN

The proposed Ithaca College Center for Climate Justice (CCJ) will no longer be launched at the college following the elimination of 116 full-time equivalent faculty positions as part of the Academic Program Prioritization (APP) process.

Sandra Steingraber, distinguished scholar in residence in the Department of Environmental Studies and Sciences, was one of the main developers for the CCJ, along with Kathryn Caldwell, associate professor in the Department of Psychology, and Fae Dremock, assistant professor in the Department of Environmental Studies and Sciences. Caldwell and Dremock are co-chairs of the college’s Strategic Action Group on Climate Action. Steingraber said the CCJ would be a way for students to engage with actionable steps to address the climate crisis.

Steingraber said that she is still trying to figure out the possible future of the CCJ elsewhere and that the funding for the CCJ will be going with her to a new venue. Steingraber did not disclose who the funder was or how much



Students protest at the Global Climate Strike in 2019. The Center for Climate Justice has no future at the college due to the faculty cuts.
ASH BAILOT/THE ITHACAN

funding she received. She is leaving the college at the end of Spring 2021 in solidarity with faculty members being cut and the inability to continue the CCJ.

“Somewhere along the line, I thought, ‘Ithaca College could be this really great destination place, especially for environmental communication about the climate crisis,’” Steingraber said.

Steingraber said she pitched the idea to La Jerne Cornish,

provost and senior vice president for academic affairs, and was given approval to start searching for grant funding. Steingraber said she then joined the Strategic Action Group on Climate Action, which was created as a way for the college to figure out how to respond to the climate crisis as a higher learning institution.

Steingraber said that when the

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H&S requests benefits following faculty cuts

BY ASHLEY STALNECKER

In response to faculty and staff terminations made through Ithaca College’s Academic Program Prioritization, the Humanities and Sciences (H&S) Faculty Senate drafted a resolution that calls for the college to provide resources for terminated faculty members.

The Faculty Council endorsed the resolution at its March 10 special working group meeting. Chris McNamara, clinical associate professor and clinic director in the Department of Physical Therapy and chair of the Faculty Council, said in an email that the vote to endorse the resolution was unanimous. The draft was submitted to La Jerne Cornish, provost and senior vice president for academic affairs, and Hayley Harris, vice president for human resources and planning.

Claire Gleitman, women’s and gender studies coordinator, professor in the Department of English and president of the H&S Faculty Senate, said Cornish emailed her an acknowledgment of the resolution and assurance that it will be considered. President Shirley M. Collado and Cornish approved a plan to terminate 116 full-time

equivalent faculty positions amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Those faculty and staff members who are losing their jobs, either immediately or in another year, are going to be facing a terrible economy and, for a while now, the continued impact of the pandemic,” Gleitman said via email. “It is hard to imagine a more grueling time to find oneself suddenly unemployed. We felt that, as a matter of decency, the college should do whatever it feasibly can in order to mitigate these difficulties.”

In the document, the H&S Faculty Senate calls for an extension to family dependent tuition remission for at least four years beyond the end of the faculty or staff member’s contract. This covers the cost of tuition for dependents, like children of college employees. Additionally, the document states that faculty and staff members currently eligible for free tuition should retain the benefit for at least four years from their point of termination.

To assist with the job search process in a competitive climate for academic jobs, the resolution also calls for terminated employees to

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AFTER A YEAR**

Changes to be made at IC London Center

BY SYD PIERRE

After shutting down for the entirety of the 2020–21 academic year, the Ithaca College London Center (ICLC) is hoping to reopen in Fall 2021, with plans to make potential administration and structural changes.

Rachel Gould, director of Study Abroad in the Office of International Programs and Extended Studies, said the ICLC had planned to reopen for Summer 2021 but was unable to. All study abroad programming at the college has been suspended for the 2020–21 academic year due to COVID-19. Gould said the program might open in the fall.

“At this point in time, I would say that, unless we run into major issues with COVID as far as these variants that are springing up not being responsive to the vaccines, I don’t see any reason why we wouldn’t be proceeding with the fall semester in London and ... then with a normal academic year in London,” Gould said.

Gould said the application for Fall 2021 was originally due March 1 but was pushed to March 15 to give students more time to think through their plans. She said the due date was moved to March 31 given the reluctance some students have to consider traveling abroad next semester.

She said she would guess that ICLC will have an accepted group of 40–50 students for Fall 2021, lower than its normal 60–80 range.

She said there have been 72 applications submitted for the fall, including some applicants who originally applied for Fall 2020, Spring 2021 or Summer 2021 and deferred their applications.

“It’s not going to look exactly like a semester has looked in the past and travel to different European countries on weekends may or may not be possible,” Gould said.

COVID-19 cases are rising in Europe. According to the European Center for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), there have been 23,255,514 total cases



Students at the Ithaca College London Center (ICLC) in May 2019. The ICLC was closed for the 2020–21 academic year due to COVID-19 but plans to reopen in Fall 2021, as well as to undergo structural changes.

COURTESY OF MADDIE JACOBS

reported in the European Union and European Economic Area, as of March 17. The UK is currently under its third national lockdown and restrictions are set to be lifted by June 21.

Sophomore Sheila Wallis said she is planning to study abroad at the ICLC during Fall 2021 but has concerns given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

“It just seems like every day there’s something new with

COVID,” Wallis said. “What if we’re there and we have pandemic 2.0, you know?”

Catherine Weidner, professor and chair of the Department of Theatre Arts, was appointed as interim director of the ICLC in March 2021. The former director, Thorunn Lonsdale, retired October 2020 and passed away in November. Weidner will fully assume the position in August.

Gould said the department

will take the time to examine the administrative structure of the center. She said that while the potential changes at the ICLC do coincide with the Academic Program Prioritization process at the college, the two are not related. The ICLC currently has a director, associate director, program coordinator and program assistant.

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IC Creatives: Emily Jimenez

Artist and theater student senior Emily Jimenez shares their illustrations and love of acting.



“Star Wars: Episode IV – A New Hope” (1977)

Hosts Sydney Brumfield and Rachael Weinberg discuss what went into creating “Star Wars: Episode IV – A New Hope” and the massive franchise that followed.



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IC maintains language exchange

NY awards IC capital grant

BY ALEXIS MANORE

BY JILLIAN BLEIER

Ithaca College sophomore Irena Rosenberg is one of four students taking Intermediate Khmer II, a language class offered at Cornell University. She took Intermediate Khmer I during the fall semester and was enrolled in the Southeast Asian Studies Summer Institute at the University of Wisconsin-Madison during the summer to jumpstart her experience with the language.

The Academic Program Prioritization (APP) entails program and faculty cuts in the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures. Michael Richardson, professor and chair of the department, said it is losing two full-time faculty and five contingent faculty members, which will have an impact on the languages offered at Ithaca College.

The Ithaca College-Cornell University (IC-CU) Exchange Program allows Ithaca College students to take language classes that are not offered at Ithaca College. The program allows full-time students to take up to four credits at Cornell per semester and up to a total of 11 throughout their college experience for no additional tuition charge, Jen Wofford, director of the Office of Extended Studies at Ithaca College, said. Classes for Ithaca College students are only offered online this semester due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Rosenberg said that studying Khmer at the intermediate level satisfies her foreign language requirement as an international business studies minor and gives her the opportunity to connect with her cultural roots.



Ithaca College sophomore Irena Rosenberg attends her Intermediate Khmer II class, a course offered at Cornell University. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, she is taking the class remotely.

COURTESY OF IRENA ROSENBERG

Rosenberg said that making connections with peers from other schools is her favorite part of the program and that having students from Cornell and Yale University in her classes helps with motivation to do her best. Yale students can take classes at Cornell virtually through the Shared Course Initiative, an agreement between Yale, Cornell and Columbia University to share instruction for less commonly taught languages.

“I feel like you get to know people in such a different way when you’re learning something so specific as a language because you’re reprogramming your brain in so many different ways,” she said.

Cornell offers over 50 different languages, including Southeast Asian languages that are rarely

taught at the college level.

Richardson said he agrees that the exchange program is great but feels it should not be seen as a replacement for the languages that are being cut.

“When I tried to push back on some of these cuts, I was told, ‘Well, students can take languages over at Cornell,’ which to me is a not very satisfactory answer,” Richardson said.

The Department of Modern Languages and Literatures at Ithaca College currently offers classes, including French, German, Italian, Spanish, Chinese, Arabic, Hebrew and Latin. Arabic, Hebrew, Latin and Chinese courses are currently offered through the intermediate level at the college.

Richardson said that after the cuts are in effect, Chinese will be

the only one out of the four left, reduced to the elementary level. It will be the only non-European language offered at the college. All four languages are currently offered at Cornell up to the advanced level.

Wofford said that nine students are approved for the exchange for the current spring semester.

“Managing two campuses is an adventure in time management, but the IC-CU Exchange Program is a wonderful opportunity to branch out and explore a second, thriving campus community in Ithaca, and to study more deeply and broadly in academic and professional fields that interest you most,” Wofford said via email.

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Ithaca College has received a \$1,580,627 grant for its new Graduate Physician Assistant program.

The college received the grant from the Higher Education Capital Matching Grant Program (HECap). The HECap program provides capital grants to higher education institutions that support training in health sciences to fund the purchase of equipment and the construction or renovation of facilities on or near college campuses in New York state.

The program is run through the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York (DASNY), which provides construction, funding and other services for groups involved in health care, higher education and public use facilities.

Over \$57 million was awarded to 35 colleges March 12, a March 16 statement from Gov. Andrew Cuomo said.

Campuses that receive grants are required to invest at least \$3 of their own funds for every \$1 of state funds they receive, according to the statement. This means that the college will be investing at least \$4,741,881.

“As New York builds back, these investments are targeted to help attract and train people for the health sciences jobs that New York needs as we continue to reopen and reimagine our economy, and to strengthen and enhance our world-leading institutions of higher education,” Cuomo said in the statement.

The college’s Graduate Physician Assistant program is set for accreditation and will be housed in the Rothschild Building in Downtown Ithaca.

Dave Maley, director of public relations, said the college is restricted from discussing the program until it is approved and therefore cannot disclose how the grant will be used.

“We hope to be able to make an announcement about this soon,” Maley said via email.

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Faculty Council will not hold no confidence vote for SLT

BY ALEXIS MANORE

The Ithaca College Faculty Council has decided it will not hold a vote of no confidence against the administration.

The council discussed having a vote of no confidence at its March 2 meeting but tabled the discussion for a March 17 meeting to see if faculty constituencies were in favor of holding a no confidence vote or if they wanted to pursue other options. The Faculty Council Executive Committee (FCEC) held a working group meeting of the Faculty Council on March 10. The vote would have been a response to the administration’s handling of the Academic Program Prioritization (APP) process, in which 116 full-time equivalent faculty positions are to be eliminated. The council passed a motion to not pursue a no confidence vote, with 25 in favor of the motion, seven opposed and one abstention.

At the meeting, representatives from each school at the college reported whether or not their constituents supported a no confidence vote, according to a working session report written by Claire Gleitman, professor in the Department of English, women’s and gender studies coordinator and secretary of the council.

Within H&S, 17 out of 23 departments had surveyed their faculty members. Nine departments were either unanimously or almost unanimously opposed to a vote of no confidence, three departments were mostly or completely in favor and four departments had highly mixed votes. Two departments voiced support for a vote of no confidence against the APPIC’s final recommendations, not the administration. Additionally, a survey of 36 faculty members in STEM fields showed that, of the 21 faculty members who replied, two were in favor of

holding a no confidence vote.

The School of Health Sciences and Human Performance held a meeting and polled those who attended. Of those who attended the meeting, 68% opposed a vote of no confidence. In a separate poll that garnered 84 responses, 77% were opposed to a no confidence vote, and 23% were in favor.

The School of Music held an anonymous survey, to which 47 faculty members responded. Of those who voted, 28 were in support of a vote of no confidence vote, and 19 were opposed.

Some faculty members felt that a no confidence vote would further harm the college’s reputation, that it would be damaging to the college’s enrollment and recruitment efforts and that the process to hold a vote has been moving too rapidly and does not give the administration time to announce its plans for phases two and three of the APP. Some faculty believed that the discussion of a vote of no confidence is laced with racism and sexism, and worried that the vote would alienate students and faculty of color.

“Faculty do not speak in one voice in their response to APPIC,” the report stated.

The School of Business did not want to share the results of its vote publicly, but representatives said the faculty have many questions that they would like answers to. Representatives from the Roy H. Park School of Communications said the Park School held a poll but did not want to share its results with the public. The council heard the results in an executive session.

Chris McNamara, clinical associate professor, clinic director in the Department of Physical Therapy and chair of the Faculty Council, said she received approximately 165 emails before the meeting, 90 of which were from staff members. She said that some of the messages



The Ithaca College Faculty Council meets Nov. 13, 2018. The council decided not to hold a vote of no confidence against the administration in a working session March 10, 2021.

FILE PHOTO/THE ITHACAN

expressed concerns about the possible vote and that some believed that faculty members were not considering the good of the college and the damage that a no confidence vote would cause.

Some messages stated that faculty members were being insensitive to staff cuts. At least 264 staff members have been furloughed or laid off since March 2020.

McNamara said she received messages from students and faculty who were not in favor of a vote of no confidence.

The group IC Alumni Against Austerity created a letter voicing its support for the potential no confidence vote. According to the letter, the group emailed the letter to the FCEC on March 10. The letter has received more than 70 signatures from alumni, as of March 11.

“We want to reinforce that there are other ways forward,” the letter states. “We join in many across the community to ask for a pause in the present order of things and a more serious re-tooling with sustained collaboration and buy-in

among constituents. Accordingly, we would also support a Vote of No Confidence in the Board of Trustees, should the faculty council decide to move in that direction.”

McNamara said that in a conversation with Dave Lissy ’83, chair of the Ithaca College Board of Trustees, he told her that the board views the APPIC recommendations as final and that the board fully supports the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). He said a no confidence vote would not change that. Lissy also said a vote of no confidence would have a negative impact on the college’s reputation.

There was also discussion about claims that critiques of the SLT have been racist. In November 2020, a group of faculty members of color approached the FCEC with similar concerns.

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said this is still the case during the COVID-19 pandemic, but the pandemic presents new obstacles within each area of adjustment.

“COVID makes it all even harder, especially around the connection piece, because I’m hearing over and over again from people that as much as it’s great that we can do Zoom, as much as it’s great that we have all of the social media to stay in touch with each other, it still can’t replace the actual sitting down across from someone and feeling their presence,” Petersen said.

There are 778 freshmen enrolled for Spring 2021, which is 322 students fewer than the 1,100 freshmen who were enrolled in the fall semester, according to the class standing tab from the Office of Analytics and Institutional Research (AIR). This 29% decrease between the fall and spring semesters is not significantly different from previous academic years. There was a 31% decrease from fall to spring in 2019–20, a 30% decrease in 2018–19, a 27% decrease in 2017–18 and a 30% decrease in 2016–17.

In 2017, 25.9% of freshmen at private four-year not-for-profit colleges in the U.S. dropped out during their first year at the college, according to data from the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center.

Jacqueline Winslow, director of New Student and Transition Programs (NSTP), said

the Retention and Engagement Strategy Team (REST) has been partnering with other offices and organizations on campus to support freshmen. REST and the Exploratory Program are holding events to help students make a four-year plan. NSTP and the Office of Residential Life are planning engagement opportunities for Fall 2021 with the hopes that most students will have received the COVID-19 vaccine.

“The Retention and Engagement Strategy Team is working with a number of campus partners to help students recover, revive and thrive in the wake of a tremendously difficult year,” Winslow said via email.

Jenelle Whalon, administrative assistant for NSTP, said the office has also been working with students and families on an individual basis to support them through their freshman year.

Freshman Darby Dutter said she has found it difficult to make friends due to the COVID-19 restrictions. At the beginning of the semester, students were not allowed to enter other students’ dorm rooms. As of March 15, students are permitted to visit other dorm rooms within their residential building while wearing a mask and social distancing. There is a limit of one visitor per resident.

“It’s really hard because it feels like you have to pick between following what the school wants you to do and having a social life because the rules are just so all over the place,” Dutter said.



Brian Petersen is director of the Center for Counseling and Psychological Services. He began his position in Fall 2019.
FRANKIE WALLS/THE ITHACAN

A 2018 study by Jaclyn Kopel, then-doctoral student at Walden University in Minneapolis, showed that students who remained at their respective college or university cited personal connections as their main reason for staying. The study is based on research at an unnamed private four-year not-for-profit university.

Petersen said students who already have diagnosed mental health conditions like anxiety and depression are more likely to struggle with the transition to college.

“If COVID raises everybody’s anxiety level, and if you’re already kind of at a pretty highly anxious state, that can become debilitating,” Petersen said. “For students that are already dealing with what I would call existential fears, about death and about illness and about healthiness, this is a nightmare.”

Gilbride said she struggles with mental health disorders like anxiety, and her mental health has deteriorated since starting college. She said she has struggled to find treatment at the college. Gilbride usually uses medical marijuana to manage her mental health conditions, but medical marijuana is not legal on college campuses under federal law. Gilbride said she has been seeking help from CAPS since her usual therapist is not licensed to work with clients in New York state.

Petersen said it is important for members of the college community to check on each other and on their own mental health.

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APP process started, she began to worry about the CCJ’s future.

“I needed to be able to reassure the funder that we were building this center on solid ground,” she said. “Once the cuts started to be announced, I realized I felt like I could no longer honestly go forward with this.”

She said nine faculty members who teach some aspect of the climate crisis are being cut, including Caldwell and Dremock. Steingraber wrote a commentary March 3 that gained traction in the college community and internationally.

At the “Future of the College” gathering March 4, Cornish said that she thought the Department of Environmental Studies and Sciences and other faculty on campus were supportive of the Center for Climate Justice.

“[Steingraber] is a wonderful resource and has been a wonderful addition to our campus community,” Cornish said. “I’m really sorry that she feels that she cannot stay here and launch that center. We will miss her, and we will also miss the two colleagues that she references in her opinion piece.”

Steingraber said that she felt like a workplace injustice was happening at the college and that she could not start a justice center here.

“The climate crisis is unjust because people, through no fault of their own, are being victimized,” she said. “They’re losing their health, they’re being put in harm’s way often because they’re poor, often because they’re communities of color.”

Caldwell said that, after the Ithaca Forever Strategic Plan was created, she, Dremock and other faculty worked from November 2019 to April 2020 on creating the Strategic Action Group on Climate Action. Caldwell said she and Dremock worked on a proposal that was sent to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) about recommendations for how the college can handle the climate crisis. The top recommendation was the creation of the CCJ.

The proposal laid out ways the college would be able to engage with the climate crisis through the CCJ. The proposal also touched on the strategic plan’s goal for more inclusion and diversity by describing how faculty and students need support in teaching and understanding the climate crisis, as well as social justice.

Communities of color are disproportionately impacted by climate change. One study showed that Black and Hispanic communities are more likely to be affected by air pollution, while most of the pollution itself is caused by non-Hispanic white communities.

Dremock said social issues the United States is facing are deeply interwoven with climate issues.

“The people that will be most affected by climate justice and environmental justice are the most marginalized of almost any community,” Dremock said. “The primary portions of the population that will be affected first and most seriously and most devastatingly are populations of color.”

She said that not having the CCJ at the college will be detrimental to both the campus community and broader community, as the college will be lessening its engagement with climate justice. Caldwell also said that she is upset about the CCJ no longer being built at the college and that she feels like the administration did not give it the proper attention.

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keep full access to the library, email and Zoom for one year following their termination. The resolution supports professional development assistance for employees through the Office of Human Resources, Career Services, the Center for Faculty Excellence and other relevant offices.

Finally, the document asks that in the future, instead of conducting a lengthy and expensive national search for non-tenure eligible notice (NTEN) faculty, departments be granted permission to rehire terminated NTEN faculty.

Currently, the administration suggests terminated professors refer to a resource document that is accessible to faculty only on a Frequently Asked Questions page of the APP



The Ithaca College Faculty Council meets March 3, 2020. In its March 10, 2021 working session, the council backed a resolution to provide cut faculty members with resources.
NICK BAHAMONDE/THE ITHACAN

“This is good, solid help that I would appreciate. I’m pretty sure they’re just going to say no.”
— Dyani Taff

website. Dyani Taff, lecturer in the Department of English, who will be terminated, said that the document is not helpful and that she had difficulty accessing it.

The resolution would provide the administration with a more humane termination, Taff said.

She said the extension of email and library resources could be especially helpful, as she is writing a book and is utilizing several publications from the library.

“This is good, solid help that I would appreciate,” Taff said. “I’m pretty sure they’re just going to say no.”

James Miranda, lecturer in the Department of Writing and Contingent Faculty Union chair, said he is concerned that the resolution is not geared more toward contingent faculty members. For Miranda, the loss of his position is a financial concern.

He said he is not sure if he can continue to keep his daughter in her current school due to the cost.

“I wish we had maybe been consulted or brought in a bit because we’re already doing some of this negotiating,” he said.

Miranda said the Contingent Faculty Union

proposed a memorandum of understanding in March 2020 when faculty were concerned with initial pandemic-related layoffs.

In the memorandum, he said the Contingent Faculty Union asked for a quicker turnaround of non-renewal letters, reference of COVID-19 in the letters and an 18-month extension of library and Netpass resources compared to the resolution’s one year request. He said severance pay could be another helpful addition to the resolution.

“If you’re going to let these people go in the midst of a pandemic, there should be some kind of severance that the college is really willing to put out there as a gesture of good faith, and there’s just been no talk of that at all,” Miranda said.

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Professor receives \$196,000 grant

Matt Sullivan, professor in the Department of Physics and Astronomy at Ithaca College, received a \$196,000 grant from the National Science Foundation earlier this month.

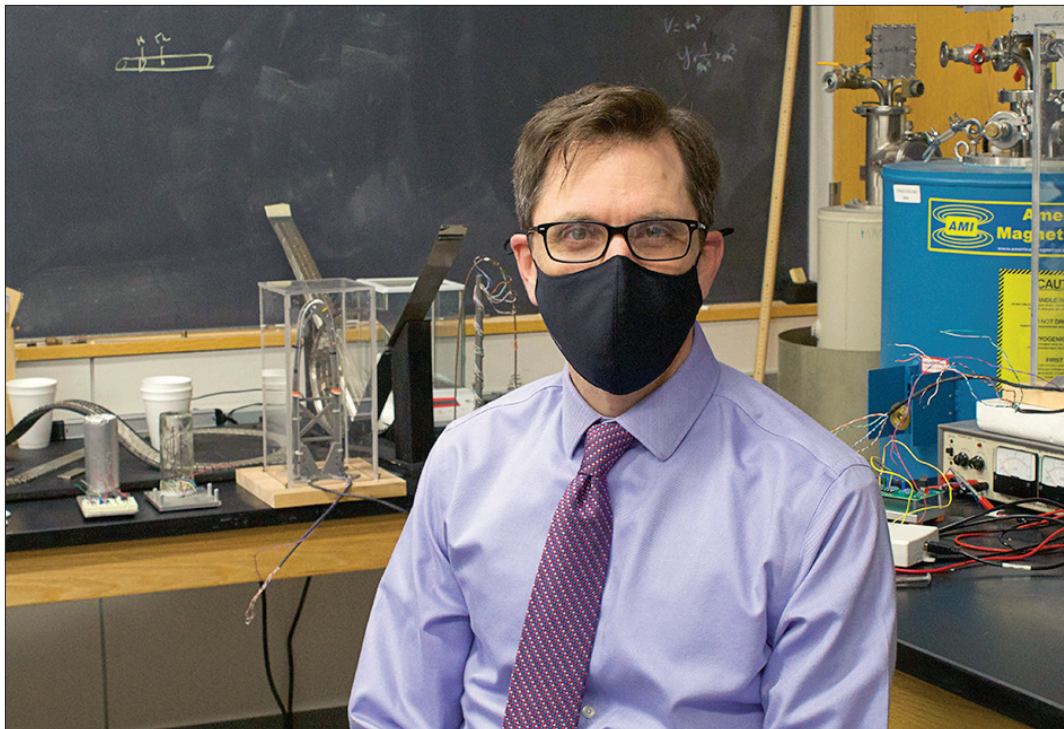
The grant will help fund a three-year research project Sullivan is working on with students and members from SUNY Polytechnic Institute in Albany and The College at Brockport. Sullivan's research project involves niobium oxide being used in neuromorphic circuits. Niobium oxide is a chemical compound that can be used in glass, optic and ceramic applications. These circuits are used to mimic neuron architectures in the human nervous system. The goal of Sullivan's project is to study these materials and integrate them into electronic components while also training undergraduate Ithaca College students to use the nanofabrication facility at Cornell University.

Sullivan spoke with staff writer Jordan Broking to discuss his project.

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

Jordan Broking: What made you interested in taking part in this type of research project?

Matt Sullivan: All academic programs have to be reviewed periodically, and I was one of the faculty members reviewing the program at [The College at Brockport], just outside of [Rochester, New York]. In the process of that review, I met another faculty member who was there, and we had interests that were similar, and we just got along really well. He said, "You know, we should write a proposal together." And I was like, "Okay,"



Matt Sullivan, professor in the Department of Physics and Astronomy, received a grant from the National Science Foundation to fund his three-year research project on neuromorphic circuits.

HANNAH WILKINSON/THE ITHACAN

and he was like, "So look, I know about these materials because I worked on them when I was a post-doc." He's got this collaborator at [Brockport]. He has contacts at the naval research lab, and so he's like, "So we can try [to] work with them to make films, and then I'll do all the structural characterization." He's going to look at their crystallization, and he's going to kneel them into furnaces. ... I'm not an expert in niobium oxide, and I'm not an expert in memristive materials. My expertise is in superconductors, not oxides or semiconductors, but I do have a lot of expertise in electrical characterization and electrical measurements of materials and films, as well as

taking the films and patterning them into devices.

JB: Why do you think it's important to actually get involved in this type of project, not just for yourself, but also for your students?

MS: I've spent a lot of time thinking about this, and it also comes down to sort of why would you want to work at Ithaca College, let's say, as opposed to working at Cornell because Cornell is a great institution. Research institutions are fantastic schools, so why does Ithaca College need to exist? And the answer for me is that I do research. I do research not because I necessarily want to advance the fundamental science. The main reason why I do

research is to train undergraduate students how to do research. The context that I use to train them is this research project or other research projects that I've used that were previously funded or aren't even funded whatsoever. ... But for me, it's really about teaching students how to do science, and that's why it's important for me to do this science. It's a two-tier system. I get to advance fundamental knowledge that human beings have about the universe, and I get to train students how to advance human beings' knowledge about the universe.

CONTACT JORDAN BROKING
JBROKING@ITHACA.EDU

Head of IDEAS leaves college

BY ALYSHIA KORBA

RahK Lash, director of the Center for Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Social Change (IDEAS), left Ithaca College on March 15 to pursue another opportunity.

Lash began working at the college in 2015 when he was hired as the associate director of multicultural affairs.

The Division of Student Affairs and Campus Life created the Center for IDEAS in 2018 to support underrepresented students at the college. Lash started as the associate director of the center.

After serving as interim director of the Center for IDEAS beginning in August 2019, he became director in February 2020.

"I've been welcomed, supported, challenged and loved by the campus and local community," Lash said via email.

Lash did not say what he will be pursuing after his departure from the college. Hierald Osorto, executive director for student equity and belonging, said he is working with Rosanna Ferro, vice president of the Division of Student Affairs and Campus Life, to determine what the future of the Center for IDEAS will look like.

"We want to reassure the campus community that the energy and vision RahK has helped cultivate for IDEAS will not be lost in this transition," Osorto said via email.

Lash directed the Martin Luther King Scholar Program and has supported the Ithaca Achievement Program, Brothers 4 Brothers and the African-Latino Society.

Sophomore Kristin Ho, a MLK Scholar, said she believes Lash made a huge impact on her college experience. She said she is sad to see him leave but is happy he is taking an opportunity that is best for him.

"RahK has been an amazing mentor and helped me build so many leadership skills and always provided me with resources to best succeed in my academic career and personal life," Ho said via email.

CONTACT ALYSHIA KORBA
AKORBA@ITHACA.EDU

THE FACES OF AUSTERITY

BY HARRIET MALINOWITZ



PROMOTED AND FIRED IN SHORT ORDER

Megan Graham, assistant professor in the Department of Writing, is 39 and has been at Ithaca College for nine years, rising from part-time to full-time contingent faculty status and finally, just this year, becoming a non-tenure eligible (NTEN) faculty member.

Identifying as queer and disabled, Graham has focused on working with students who share those self-descriptions, as well as with international students.

She works with the Office of International Programs and the Department of Writing to create courses that support non-native speakers as they transition to American English college writing.

She was also an organizer with the Ithaca College Contingent Faculty Union until she became full-time, frequently negotiating with management.

"Because I worked with the union for so many years, I've seen the hypocrisy and the absolute lack of compassion that the upper administration holds," she said.

Graham is a non-U.S. citizen herself and will lose her H1B visa along with her job, resulting in likely deportation to Canada.

This is after she has lived and worked in Ithaca for fifteen years.

Graham is originally from rural Manitoba, where she taught

English to immigrants from around the world for the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union.

She came to Ithaca as a graduate student in English literature at Cornell University and fell in love with the Ithaca Farmers Market, the local farms, restaurants and the community.

She lives with her partner, an American citizen.

"I had planned to make this my home forever," she said. "I was in the process of applying for a green card. I loved my job, I loved working with my students and I loved this town. My friends and my partner are here."

Graham said her recent hire as an NTEN made the timing of her termination even more troubling.

"It's cynical and unkind to put people through the application process when they're planning to 'rightsize' the college and fire everyone in a year anyway," she said.



THE GENTLE ART OF STORYTELLING

Regina, or "Regi," Carpenter, 63, lecturer in the Department of Communication Studies, has taught at Ithaca College for ten years. She is also an alum of the college with degrees in music and art history and has lived in Ithaca since her undergraduate days.

She has taught two sections of "Storytelling" each semester. They always fill up with both communication studies majors and non-majors. She has brought her students downtown to perform in story slams at Buffalo Street Books and Autumn

Leaves Used Books.

"This is not a theoretical class," Carpenter said. "What the students learn is a skill, and they learn by doing it. Through it, they become acquainted with the world literature of folk and fairy tales."

Outside of the college, Carpenter defines herself as a "touring professional storyteller," performing at storytelling festivals around the country and the world.

"Storytelling is a spoken word art where people reinterpret traditional folk and fairy tales and also write personal stories that they then perform," she said.

She has won a number of awards and has held discussions about storytelling at TEDx Talks. She specializes in performances and workshops for grieving children and shares narratives about mental illness and recovery.

One of the personal stories that she regularly performs is called "One Man's Trash," which depicts her dad's knack for improvising family fun in a poor upstate town. He would drive her and her siblings to the local dump on Sundays to go "shopping," bringing home objects like discarded television sets — a picture could be coaxed out of some in their home collection, while on others the sound worked.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the touring stopped, and the only income she had was from her teaching. Due to her termination, that will be gone as well.

"I'm a single, senior woman with kids who are grown and on their own," she said. "I don't have another source to pull on right now. ... This is where students come to learn the art of public speaking and contribute to global and community conversations. ... I was so proud to be a teacher here."

This series aims to put human faces on the faculty members who have been notified of their termination as a result of the Academic Program Prioritization process. Faculty members interested in sharing their stories can reach out to Harriet Malinowitz, lecturer in the Department of Writing, at bmalinowitz@itbaca.edu.

COLLEGE BRIEFS

Ithaca College Wellness Clinic open for both in-person and virtual visits

The Ithaca College Wellness Clinic is now open for faculty, staff and students both virtually and in person.

Services are free to all campus community members, and membership is required to access virtual personal training and in-person services. In-person services include group exercise classes, fitness evaluations, 90-minute workout sessions and exercise testing.

The clinic is following New York state and Ithaca College COVID-19 guidelines, and its health and safety plan has been approved by the Tompkins County Health Department.

Fall 2021 registration time tickets available to students March 29

The Fall 2021 course schedule will be made available to students March 29 at noon.

Students will also be able to see their registration time ticket on HomerConnect on the same day. Registration times are based on credits earned. Classes currently in progress or registered summer classes do not count for total credit hours earned.

Students with 90 or more credit hours can register for classes April 13, graduate students can register April 14, undergraduate students with 60–89.9 credits can register April 15, students with 30–59.9 credits can register April 20 and students with under 30 credits can register April 22.

Career Services to host career fairs for students in specific industries

Ithaca College Career Services is hosting a week of career fairs March 30 and 31 and April 1. The career fairs are targeted and will feature employers and grad schools in specific industries.

The Communications and Publishing Career Fair is from noon to 3 p.m. March 30, and it is a career event focused on media, writing, sports, communications, publishing, marketing and sales.

The STEM and Technology and Data Career Fair is from 2 to 5 p.m. March 31 and is a career and grad school event focused on

computer science, data, analytics, programming, digital communication, biology, biochemistry, business, chemistry, economics, environmental science, mathematics, physics, politics, public policy and technology.

The last career fair, Nonprofit and Social Justice Fair, is from 4 to 6 p.m. April 1 and is focused on people looking to work for a nonprofit organization or a social justice-oriented organization.

Hearing clinic evaluations open to campus community members

The Sir Alexander Ewing-Ithaca College Hearing Clinic is now accepting clients for audiology testing and services.

The clinic is offering free evaluations for members of the campus community experiencing various hearing issues like difficulty hearing over Zoom, as well as general baseline hearing tests. Those interested in receiving treatment or testing can contact the clinic at ewingclinic@ithaca.edu or (607) 274-3714.

IC Kosher Korner looking to hear from students about Passover

Ithaca College's Kosher Korner in Terrace Dining Hall is looking to hear from students in need of kosher food for Passover.

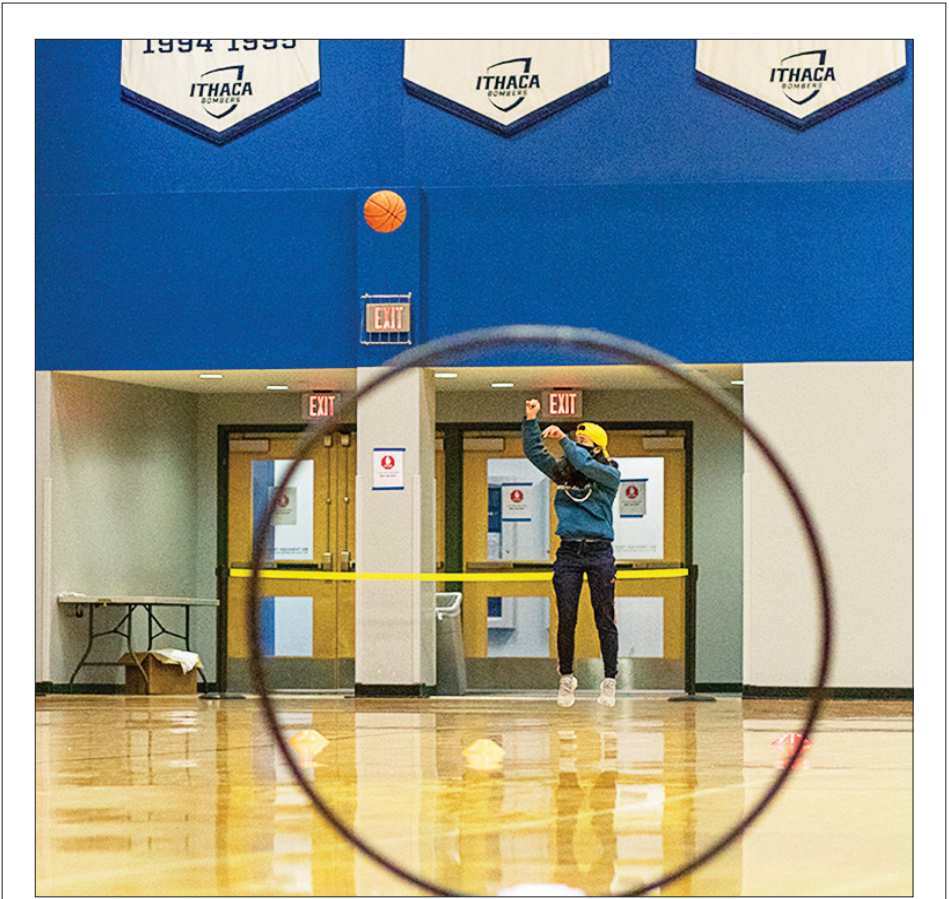
Students can meet with Chaim Goldgrab, college affiliate in Terrace Dining Hall, from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Sunday through Friday to discuss specific requirements, questions or concerns regarding what kosher food will be available.

Students can also email Goldgrab at cgoldgrab@ithaca.edu. Students can also check @ickosherkorner on Instagram to see daily Kosher menus.

Faculty and staff have opportunity to test run replacement for Sakai

Ithaca College faculty and staff can participate in a limited pilot of the college's new learning management system (LMS), Canvas.

There are two engagement levels people can participate through based on personal schedule and interest.



Bombers tip off to show basketball skills

Junior Jaye Kayne goes for a 3-point shot at the Bomber Ballers Skills Competition — the Office of Recreational Sports' first basketball competition of the year — at the Ben Light Gymnasium on March 14. Seven people attended.

LEXI DANIELSON/THE ITHACAN

The explorers level is a self-paced exploration of Canvas and its tools and course design. This level is open to all faculty and staff to explore Canvas's tools, but faculty and staff cannot implement them in current classes.

The pathfinders level allows faculty and staff to create a sample course to test and explore Canvas and its tools and design. There is also student access for a limited roster of up to 500 students. Faculty and staff can substitute a Sakai quiz, assignment or activity with a Canvas tool. Faculty and staff can also provide feedback to the LMS Implementation Team.

The pilot will be available from late

March through August 2021, and Sakai will remain the primary LMS through Spring and Summer 2021.

There will be minimal support and training from the IT department and the Center for Faculty Excellence during the pilot program. However, Canvas Tier 1 support will be available to users via email, phone and chat.

A webinar session is being held at 4 p.m. March 24 to further discuss the pilot program and the levels of engagement and provide an overview of Canvas. The webinar will be recorded for those who cannot attend.

PUBLIC SAFETY INCIDENT LOG

SELECTED ENTRIES FROM MARCH 1 TO MARCH 7

MARCH 1

CRIMINAL SEXUAL ACT 3RD DEGREE

LOCATION: East Tower

SUMMARY: A caller reported one person had sexual contact with another without consent. The incident was reported to the Title IX office. The incident occurred in February 2020. Tom Dunn, associate director and deputy chief, responded.

MARCH 2

CHANGE IN THE CASE STATUS

LOCATION: Office of Public Safety

SUMMARY: The officer reported a person was interviewed in reference to a fictitious licence. The officer referred the person for acts of dishonesty. Master Patrol Officer John Elmore responded.

ASSIST NEW YORK STATE POLICE

LOCATION: All Other

SUMMARY: The New York State Police crime lab requested a name confirmation for a submitted form. Sergeant Don Lyke responded.

MARCH 3

SCC IRRESPONSIBLE USE OF ALCOHOL/DRUGS

LOCATION: Hilliard Hall

SUMMARY: A caller reported an intoxicated person vomiting. The officer reported the person declined medical

assistance. One person was referred for irresponsible use of alcohol. Patrol Officer Sophia Dimkos responded.

HARASSMENT 2ND DEGREE

LOCATION: West Tower

SUMMARY: A caller reported a verbal harassment by a known person. The officer reported the person was verbally harassing another person after being asked to stop. Patrol Officer Mayra Colon responded.

MEDICAL ASSIST/ INJURY-RELATED

LOCATION: Terrace Dining Hall

SUMMARY: A caller reported an unsecured fan guard fell off and a fan blade lacerated a person's arm. The officer reported the person was transported to the hospital by ambulance. Patrol Officer Joe Oppen responded.

MARCH 4

OFF-CAMPUS INCIDENT

LOCATION: All Other

SUMMARY: A caller reported receiving alarming text and voicemail messages from a known person. The officer reported a local police agency was contacted for a check on the welfare of a person. Patrol Officer Mayra Colon responded.

SCC COLLEGE REGULATIONS

LOCATION: Gannett Center

SUMMARY: A caller reported a person

was refusing to wear a mask while indoors. The officer reported the person was located and referred for violation of the Community Agreement. Master Patrol Officer Waylon DeGraw responded.

MEDICAL ASSIST/ ILLNESS-RELATED

LOCATION: East Tower

SUMMARY: Tompkins County 911 reported a person having an allergic reaction. The officer reported the person administered one Epi-Pen injection and was transported to the hospital by ambulance. Patrol Officer Joe Oppen responded.

MARCH 5

CHECK ON THE WELFARE

LOCATION: All Other

SUMMARY: A caller requested a welfare check for a person who did not show up for appointments and has not been heard from in 24 hours. The officer reported the Ithaca Police Department was notified and made contact with the person and determined the person to be a danger to themselves or others. Master Patrol Officer Bob Jones responded.

MEDICAL ASSIST/ ILLNESS-RELATED

LOCATION: Garden Apartments

SUMMARY: A caller reported an abnormal medical issue. The officer

reported the person would seek medical attention from the health center when able. Master Patrol Officer Waylon DeGraw responded.

MARCH 6

FIRE ALARM ACCIDENTAL

LOCATION: Circle Apartments

SUMMARY: Simplex reported a fire alarm. The officer reported the alarm activation was caused by burnt food. Master Patrol Officer Waylon DeGraw responded.

FIRE ALARM ACCIDENTAL

LOCATION: Circle Apartments

SUMMARY: Simplex reported a fire alarm. The officer reported the alarm activation was caused by steam from a hot shower. Patrol Officer Shawn Lansing responded.

MARCH 7

SUSPICIOUS VEHICLE

LOCATION: S-Lot

SUMMARY: An officer reported a vehicle parked in a parking lot while running. The driver left the area before making contact with the officer. Patrol Officer John Norman responded.

FIRE ACTUAL FIRE/FLAME/ IGNITION

LOCATION: Circle Apartments

SUMMARY: Simplex reported a fire alarm. The officer reported a fire was present on the stove but was extinguished by residents using a fire extinguisher prior to officer's arrival. Patrol Officer John Norman responded.

ASSIST TOMPKINS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

LOCATION: State Route 96B

SUMMARY: An officer reported finding an elderly person walking on the roadway. The officer determined that the person was a resident of Longview and returned the person to their residence. Sergeant Chris Teribury responded.

MEDICAL ASSIST/ INJURY-RELATED

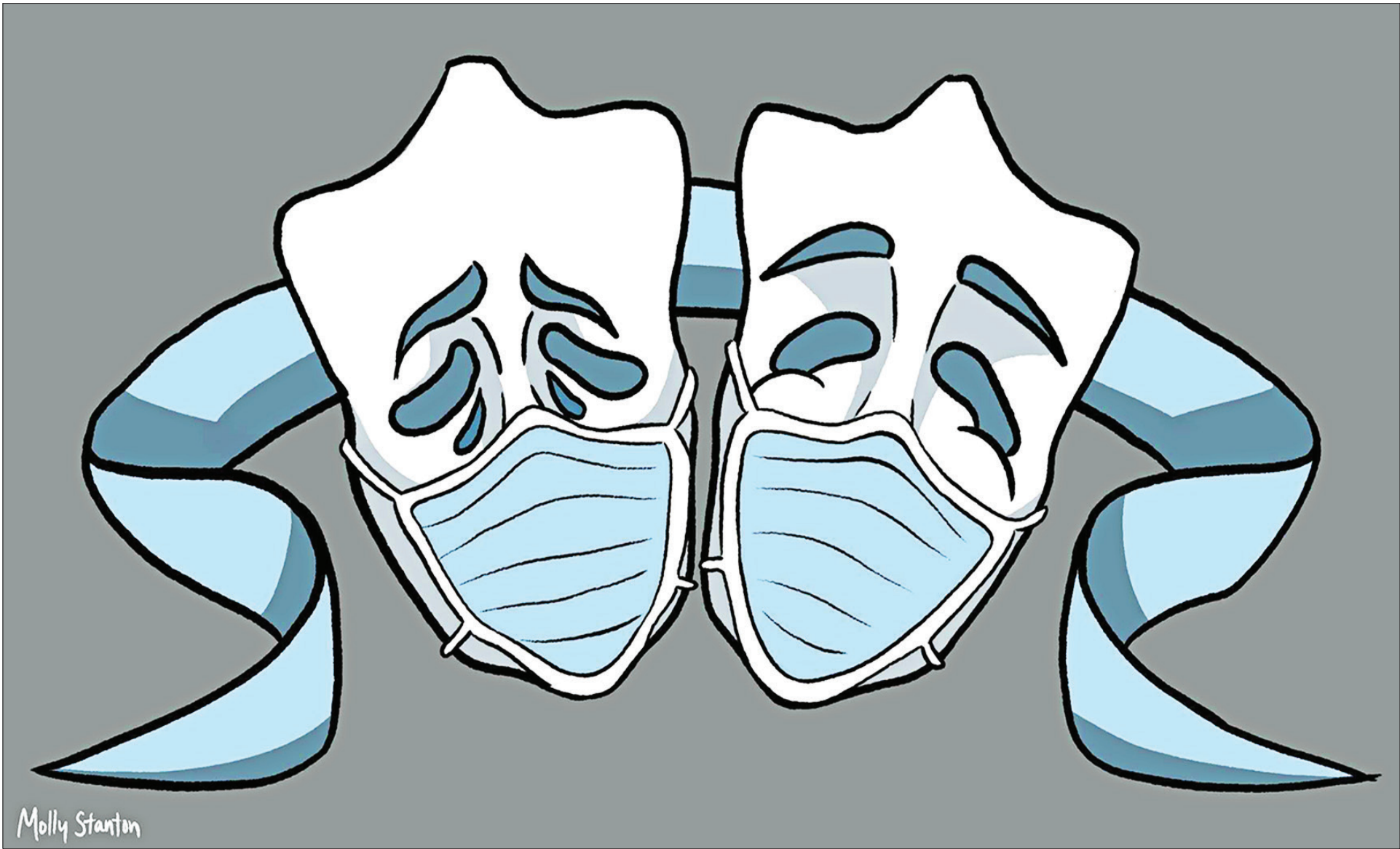
LOCATION: Athletic and Events Center

SUMMARY: A caller reported being injured during physical exercise. Patrol Officer Joe Oppen responded.

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

KEY

SCC—Student Conduct Code
V&T—Vehicle & Transportation
AD—Assistant Director
IFD—Ithaca Fire Department



MOLLY STANTON/THE ITHACAN

EDITORIALS

The show must go on, even during a pandemic

Though COVID-19 put the world on pause, students took hold of their college experience and found creative ways to adapt to a pandemic. At Ithaca College, students in Dillingham are continuing to put on shows through the spring semester, and in the Cerrache Center, students are still creating art. COVID-19 has brought considerable hardship to the community, but the arts have served as an escape to many as a healthy coping mechanism. According to Harvard Health Publishing, creative activities can alleviate stress, aid communication and prevent cognitive decline. The pandemic, especially during quarantine, has provided opportunities to grow skill sets. Continuing that creative momentum will only further strengthen our spirits and health. In downtown Ithaca, a nascent affordable housing project called Ithaca Arthaus is being constructed to provide affordable housing catered to local artists. It is reassuring to

see how the arts are being prioritized during this time. Although the pandemic created and exacerbated issues in the community, it has also been a time of strength and passion. COVID-19 has forced community members to find alternative ways to continue pursuing their interests while following safety guidelines. It has, in many ways, brought us together despite physically distancing us. Under their masks, students persevered and carried on a successful show. While the college may be undergoing drastic changes, students have been able to push past personal and academic challenges in order to produce art. Their impressive accomplishments deserve a standing ovation. Students are doing what they can to improve their experience and build memories that will last a lifetime. We must continue that momentum. This pandemic has stolen a lot from us, but it has taught us we can build new and become more innovative in the face of challenges.

Furthering campus divide will not help the college

The Ithaca College Faculty Council discussed holding a vote of no confidence against the administration, but it ultimately decided not to. It was a feat of courage and a testament to the well-being of the college. The Academic Program Prioritization (APP) process has been received with mixed reactions. Evidently, the college community is divided. A vote of no confidence would have only furthered the divide. Now, more than ever, it is crucial to bridge the gap between the administration and its constituents. A vote of no confidence would be counterproductive to creating effective civil discourse, which is already lacking. Deciding against the vote is admirable. Although some have vocalized how they wished the administration would have handled the APP process alternatively, a vote of no confidence would not solve anything nor protect anybody. The vote, which is a symbolic gesture, would only further injure the college's reputation. It would be damaging

to the college's enrollment and recruitment efforts, which are already struggling. Even more, voting against women of color, with little to no deliberation about the implications of the matter, could be perceived as racist and sexist. What kind of message would that send to current and prospective students? The APP process has left the campus community frustrated. Whether in agreement or not, the administration has approved the Academic Program Prioritization Implementation Committee's recommended faculty cuts. Now, our focus must be directed toward bringing our campus back together, not furthering the divide that exists. We must increase our efforts to share an open dialogue and apply the necessary pressure to do so. But a vote of no confidence would suggest that there is nothing left to fight for at Ithaca College. Our faculty, staff and students deserve a college that unites under hardship.

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 akohli@ithaca.edu.

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 500–650 words. Whether more or less space is allotted is at the discretion of the editor



Recentering the conversation

For so long, we've heard talks of diversifying faculty at Ithaca College and the need to support students of color, but I have yet to see a change. I've seen tokenism, but not true diversity or equity. Besides some of the members of the administration, there are not many people of color in positions of power at the college. It's as if the college feels it hit its diversity quota by hiring President Shirley M. Collado. This conversation surrounding diversity and equity becomes even more imperative in light of faculty cuts.

As part of the Academic Program Prioritization process, 116 full-time equivalent faculty positions are being cut. That's a significant number of lives that are going to be drastically changed. These are people with families that rely on them, children that look up to them.

I was especially disheartened to see that there are multiple Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) on the list of faculty who are going to be cut. I find it ludicrous that the one BIPOC woman in the journalism department is being cut. As a journalism student, I have never seen myself reflected in any of my journalism professors. That's an issue.

Although we don't know how many professors of color will be cut at the moment, even if seven are fired, it will have an effect. What safeguards does the administration have in place to protect faculty of disenfranchised groups? The administration talks about protecting faculty of color, but many times the plans lack execution. The administration needs to be transparent on this issue and show that it is committed to true diversity and equity — not tokenism. The actions of the administration can no longer be performative, especially in a financial deficit and a time filled with anxiety.

The number of BIPOC faculty being cut is not the only issue. The issue of racist professors still having a job and being protected by tenure needs to be addressed as well. Those are the professors that need to be cut. You should not be able to be an educator if you are prejudiced against your students. I can name at least 10 racist professors right now who are not on that list, and that is in the Park School alone.

In tandem with conversations surrounding faculty cuts, there has been a resurfacing of Collado's complicated past. This is not the time to bring up Collado pleading no-contest to a count of misdemeanor sexual abuse 20 years ago. What does that have to do with faculty cuts? Cancel culture has made us far too comfortable with looking at the flaws of others and not assessing ourselves first. This does not mean that she should not be held accountable, but now is not the time to bring up her past. People should be allowed to evolve and grow.

What we all need to be doing is calling out all the racist professors who still have a job, and hold them accountable. People have no issue calling out a woman of color, so let's keep that same energy for the white professors who abuse their power.

SEEKING JUSTICE is a column that examines race and cultural competency. **JOHN TURNER** is a junior journalism major. Contact him at jturner3@ithaca.edu.

GUEST COMMENTARY

Reframing Ithaca College's vision

BY NAEEM INAYATULLAH

President Collado has bet the future of Ithaca College on swiftly hiring a diverse leadership team and changing the college culture, thereby attracting students looking for diversity, equity and inclusion. We can think of this as the president's brand. Our administrators tell us that their emphasis on race and gender will make the college more attractive to students and faculty.

Some faculty and students cheer for a leadership that is by design composed almost entirely of women and people of color. Others wish to be allies, believing that support is obligatory and that criticism reveals shades of racism and of sexism. Many believe that the administration cynically weaponizes race to shut down discussion. Still, others remain unsure of their footing in this fog of insinuation. In such an environment, merely articulating critical questions has required resolve.

What is the price of the administrative vision? Pursuing it ignores the damage created by disaster capitalism, with its authoritarian methods and hurried change.

The cruel indifference of the APP policy severs the lifeline of 116 full-time equivalent faculty and their families. This amputation is especially perplexing when our administrators admit that the college is not in financial exigency. Of course, exceptional change is especially efficacious during a disaster. President Collado and her team have

pointed out repeatedly that the pandemic permits them to accelerate their plans. Administrators have merely applied what is known as the shock doctrine.

In *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, our president offers the following: "Seize the opportunity. Have a sense of urgency in getting a strong team in place to carry out your agenda." Urgency is the administration's leitmotif. It pushes the administration to bypass the cooperative process that faculty demand as their right. Uncalibrated speed leads to disorientation, even for those of us who want to support fellow workers and friends.

Many, and perhaps most, of my colleagues feel imposed upon. No one I know believes that this administration shares governance or has been fully transparent. Even at the best of times, the interpretation of admissions, demographics and budget is necessarily ideologically charged. Budget disclosure is always a political struggle. That is why the Open the Books coalition calls for public scrutiny. We demand decelerating the process so that it is inclusive and publicly deliberative.

The administration misunderstands an essential element of our dissent: a college community is founded on the relationships between students and faculty. These relationships ripple into a lifetime of connections both ideational and material. It is this relationship that development offices of every institution seek to exploit for building their endowment and securing their future. A pace that threatens



Naeem Inayatullah, professor in the Department of Politics, urges the college to prioritize its workers over capital interests. BROOKE BERNHARDT/THE ITHACAN

to extinguish these relationships is reckless. They have chosen firings without considering the ripples.

The damage is underway. Something in my body broke when I learned the names of those slated to be fired. I, too, had started on yearly contracts at my college and would have lost my livelihood had the pandemic struck earlier. Among my colleagues, I sensed horror, fear, anger and sinking morale. The administration's commitment to disaster capitalism has permanently divided our community. Our wounds are deep; they will not be easily healed.

It doesn't have to be this way. Within our collective shock, grief, and mourning, we have begun to find each other and our principles. We have organized

protests and revived associations. We argue there is still time to treat our economic lifeline in a manner that does not fracture and disembowel our colleagues' lives. To do so requires us to consider economic disparities with the same seriousness with which we treat injustices of patriarchy and white supremacy.

We must alter the vision. Why not the following: "Ithaca College, where the budget is built on the premise that all workers are essential and not disposable." What kind of faculty, staff and students might this vision attract? What kind of community might this principle anchor and sustain?

NAEEM INAYATULLAH is a professor in the Department of Politics. Contact him at naeem@ithaca.edu.

GUEST COMMENTARY

Why tenure is an institutional value

We write to respond to claims made by President Collado and Provost Cornish in the national press in recent weeks. Speaking in *Inside Higher Ed*, they remark:

"The [Faculty Handbook] ... outlines the order in which faculty positions should be eliminated, a process that protects the most privileged in the academy: our tenured and tenure-eligible faculty. While we are committed to tenure ..., the rules guiding the elimination of faculty positions mean that ... the college will lose some wonderful academics due solely to their status as non-tenure-eligible faculty. We hope ... this reality will invite a conversation among faculty about ... whether they wish to continue to privilege tenure and tenure-eligible status moving forward."

Questioned in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* about these remarks, Provost Cornish stated, "We are not suggesting ... tenure be dismantled. What we are saying is that tenure is a power structure. ... It is a caste system." But these claims are difficult to reconcile. A "caste system," as Isabel Wilkerson loosely defines the term in her 2020 book *Caste*, is "an artificial hierarchy," one that a person is "born into." If tenure operated in this fashion, then surely one should seek to dismantle it.

But tenure is not unearned, like other forms of privilege rightly excoriated in our culture. It is achieved, through years of hard work and rigorous assessment. Once achieved, tenured professors are not transported to highly paid sinecures. Indeed, one of many arguments for tenure, not just in higher education but also for elementary and secondary

school teachers, is the economic security it provides, drawing people to these professions who might earn more in other fields. Tenured faculty typically continue to teach, pursue scholarship and serve the institution with undiminished dedication.

As we watch our community reeling from the current cuts, and as we grieve the loss of cherished colleagues who are losing their jobs purely because they happen to be in non-tenure-eligible positions, we should be all the more invested in unambiguously defending tenure as a cherished institutional value. Tenure grants not just a reliable livelihood — no small thing, and not only in a pandemic. It undergirds academic freedom and a system of shared governance in which faculty can challenge status quo assumptions and engage in open discourse with administrators who in other ways have more power than they do. Tenure is the laudable quality that distinguishes the American university system from many others around the world.

None of this is to deny that it is fundamentally inequitable — indeed, at times entirely haphazard — that some people receive tenure-eligible positions while others, equally qualified, do not. But those decisions, generally speaking, are not within faculty control. It is the administration that determines what lines are made available to departments, and thus the suggestion that faculty are instrumental in maintaining these hierarchies is misleading. Departments will almost always request tenure-eligible hires (with exceptions in certain highly specialized areas, such as with some clinical faculty), but it is up to the administration to determine whether

to grant them.

There are pervasive structural inequities in our society, to be sure, that render the path to tenure inaccessible to many. Racial, gendered and class-based biases have, historically, resulted in fewer women, Black, Indigenous, people of color and differently abled people entering the professoriate. Here, faculty — who are centrally involved in determining who is hired and later tenured once lines are granted — have clear accountability. Our current administration has done admirable work in making bias training a regular component of our hiring and evaluation processes. To that same end, the appropriate response to systemic inequities is to broaden tenure and the protections it affords to larger numbers of people. That is within the power of college administrators.

It is reassuring to hear Provost Cornish and President Collado state that they do not oppose tenure. But the language they have used in two public venues has appeared to undercut that claim, arousing legitimate concern. Comparing tenure to a caste system does not facilitate the vital conversations we need to be having about extending tenure's reach, so as to decrease job insecurity in an increasingly embattled higher education climate. Instead of questioning whether faculty should continue to privilege tenure-eligible status, we should make full-throated arguments for widening its embrace.

Signed by Professors Claire Gleitman, Diane Birr, Peyi Soyinka-Airewele, Hugh Egan, Carla Golden, Tom Swensen, Chris Holmes, Jennifer Jolly, Patty Zimmermann, Raj Subramaniam and Stewart Auyash.

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ACCURACY • INDEPENDENCE • INTEGRITY

FROM IMMIGRANT TO CITIZEN

Ithaca College professor officially becomes a United States citizen



BY ABBEY LONDON

Twelve years ago, Miri Hadar-Bessire, lecturer in the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures at Ithaca College, fled her home country of Israel with her five-year-old son, Leryan, toward the end of the Second Lebanon War. "There were bombs everywhere, [and] missiles coming from Hezbollah," she said. "I said, 'No more. That's it. I'm done.' ... Lives in Israel were never easy. It's always war, always something going on and terror attacks, and I just had to live in peace."

Hadar-Bessire officially obtained her citizenship Feb. 19 at the Tompkins County Courthouse. She was one of 35 citizens in Ithaca who were naturalized by Judge John C. Rowley that day. Thirty-five petitioners took an Oath of Allegiance to the U.S. during the ceremony to finalize the legal status of the new citizens.

In Ithaca, as of 2018, approximately 18% of the population was foreign-born, and approximately 12% of people were noncitizens, according to the World Population Review. On Feb. 2, 2017, the City of Ithaca Common Council unanimously approved Ithaca as a sanctuary city to provide refuge for immigrants, as previously reported by The Ithacan.

Hadar-Bessire said the thing she is most excited to do now is to vote in the upcoming 2020 presidential election.

"When you are an immigrant, you are held to very high standards," she said. "You are always afraid that if you ... [do something] wrong, you'll be deported. ... [Now] nobody's going to deport me. ... I can vote. I can make my voice heard. I can protest. I can be

From left, Miri Hadar-Bessire, lecturer in the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures, stands next to Judge John C. Rowley on Feb. 19 at the Tompkins County Courthouse. Hadar-Bessire was one of 35 people who became U.S. citizens.

ABBIE LONDON/THE ITHACAN

CITIZENSHIP, PAGE 4

STAY IN THE KNOW
WHILE ON THE GO

I

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crossword

By United Media

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ACROSS

- 1 Yearn (for)
5 Free ride
9 Mail pouch
12 Not resist
13 European capital
14 Ms. Lupino
15 Strait of —
17 Kind of dance
18 Pointed tool
19 Motif
21 Water slide
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26 Not polluted
27 Desire
28 Giraffe feature
32 — Khan
33 A Miss America host
34 Stooge with bangs
35 One and only
37 Caesar’s law
38 Polluted air
39 Drying oven
41 Rancher’s wear
42 Sabrina, Kelly or Jill
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55 Ephron of “You’ve Got Mail”
56 Scarlet
57 Noblewoman
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4 Whirl around
5 Laze around
6 Ego ending
7 Gulf st.
8 Lawsuit bases
9 Take the bait
10 — Clayton Powell Jr.
11 Yawn
16 Blow away
20 Squawker
21 Balance-sheet gurus
22 Quasimodo’s creator
23 Siberian river
24 Keller or Hayes
25 Black gemstone
27 Bellow

- 29 Jane Austen title
30 Chicken’s digs
31 Tavern inventory
36 Use sparingly
38 Jerking (away)
40 Trojan War story
41 Debate side
42 Partly closed
43 Collar site
44 Encircle
45 Burlap fiber
48 Exec’s degree
49 Corsage flower
50 Collection of fauna
51 Work unit
52 Morse syllable


last issue’s crossword answers

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sudoku

easy

	3			4		1		
						2	6	9
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medium

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answers to last issue’s sudoku:


medium

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

hard


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

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Local writers share their Odysseys

Ithaca City of Asylum hosts reading series

BY MADDY MARTIN

In Homer's "The Odyssey," the hero Odysseus takes 12,109 lines of dactylic hexameter to reach his home in Ithaca. "Odysseys: Ithaca Writers on Exile, Wandering, and Searching for Home," a monthly reading series organized by Ithaca City of Asylum (ICOA), tells the stories of local writers' journeys to Ithaca.

"Odysseys" features local writers from around the world who have found a home in Ithaca. The series began in February and will run until May. The readings are held at 7 p.m. on Zoom, and attendees can register on the ICOA website for the readings April 13 and May 18.



Gail Holtz-Warhaft is a poet, translator and journalist who was featured in the first Odyssey reading Feb. 23.

MIKAYLA ELWELL/THE ITHACAN

The April reading will feature poet Valzhyna Mort and Raul Palma, novelist and assistant professor in the Department of Writing. The May reading will feature novelist Minfong Ho and poet Kenneth A. McClane.

"This series is a way to celebrate writers whose works, interests and even lives draw on this idea of immigration or migration or 'Odyssey,'" said Barbara Adams, associate professor in the Department of Writing and co-founder of ICOA.

ICOA is a project of Cornell University's Center for Transformative Action and part of the International Cities of Refuge Network. The organization provides sanctuary for writers who were not safe in their home country. Since

its founding in 2001, the organization has provided residence for seven writers.

The reading series features writers who are former residents of ICOA and other writers from the community who are from foreign countries. The reading series will highlight eight writers in total. During each reading, two writers present their work with a Q&A session at the end.

Kate Blackwood, secretary of ICOA's Board of Directors, said the ICOA board picked writers who it felt had interesting stories to tell. Blackwood said they organized the readings so writers from the same geographic area or with similar experiences were featured in the same reading.

"The theme of Odysseys implies lots of journeys, not just one," Blackwood said. "If we had one event with only two writers, that would only be two journeys, but it turns out that Ithaca has a wealth of writers from all kinds of places with all kinds of experiences."

The reading March 16 featured two writers from Pakistan: Sorayya Khan, author of the novels "Noor," "Five Queen's Road" and "City of Spies," and Raza Rumi, journalist and director of the Park Center for Independent Media. The reading had approximately 70 attendees.

Khan started off the event by reading a section of a memoir she is working on that described her childhood. In the section she read, Khan described her relationship with her mother and the impact the execution of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, former prime minister of Pakistan, had on her family and country.

"Those memories as a child stay with me and I think about how they are and are not connected to the narrative of what was going on at the time," Khan said during the reading.

Rumi was ICOA's writer in residence from 2015-17 and is now an ICOA board member. Rumi is also currently working on a memoir and shared the chapter about his move to Ithaca in 2015 at the reading.

Rumi said that when he first came to Ithaca he was struck by the town's natural beauty and then by the welcomeness of its community.

"What was a really reassuring and very heartwarming experience was to meet so many interesting, talented, humane and kind people in the community, especially the writers and the artists," Rumi said. "Everybody kind of knows each other, but people are very excusable and friendly. This is a unique thing. ... I found the environment really affable."

Adams said that in the past, ICOA writers in residence could hold a two-year teaching position at the college as an International Visiting Scholar in Residence.

The college has decided to end the Scholar in Residence program.

"We become more insular, less international, less global, which is unfortunate," Adams said. "Each of [the visiting scholars] has brought a huge amount to the college. We're losing that."

Rumi said that Ithaca serves as a home for many communities, including refugees, and that it is a place that enables and facilitates journeys. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 12.9% of the population in Tompkins County was born in another country as of 2019.

"So many people in the world are displaced or searching for homes," Rumi said. "People are displaced by war, conflict, climate change. It's important to pay attention to those journeys. But all these journeys are not just external journeys. They're also internal journeys, journeys of the spirit of evolution of your overall political and social and cultural consciousness, how it evolves. And once again, Ithaca is such an amazing place that it enables so many people to undergo that experience because of the kind of community that we have here of writers, artists, musicians, academics, scholars, students and young people, that it becomes a very conducive environment for inner journeys."

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Raza Rumi, journalist and director of the Park Center for Independent Media, was featured in the March 16 reading.

ASH BAILOT/THE ITHACAN

Community establishes local gift-giving economy

BY SYDNEY BRUMFIELD

In a time when communication and interactions that build up communities are forced to occur online, Ithaca community member Yayoi Koizumi has managed to bring a chapter of the international Buy Nothing Project to Ithaca. The group's mission is to connect members of the community with the intent of increasing awareness about sustainability and promoting the resistance of buying new.

The Buy Nothing Project began as an experimental local gift economy on Bainbridge Island, Washington, in July 2013. Since then, it has become a worldwide social movement. The Buy Nothing Project offers people a way to give and receive, share, lend and express gratitude through a network of local gift economies progressing the narrative that wealth is found in relationships rather than material goods.

Koizumi said she started the Ithaca chapter of the group in September 2019 primarily with waste reduction in mind. Her initial Facebook page was a success, gaining large support from the Tompkins County community.

There is now an Ithaca group, a Lansing group and a Newfield/Danby/South Hill Ithaca group, the latter of which started in February 2021. All of these groups try to keep their membership numbers below a roughly 500-person maximum.

"We like to be small," Koizumi said. "That's our strength. When the group is so busy, it gets messy because we get no shows and real big competitions for items. We want to keep it small and keep it in the neighborhood so we can get to know our neighbors."

Community member Sam Miao, who is an admin of the Facebook page along with Koizumi, said the primary mindset of the organization is to reduce individuals' waste and think sustainably.

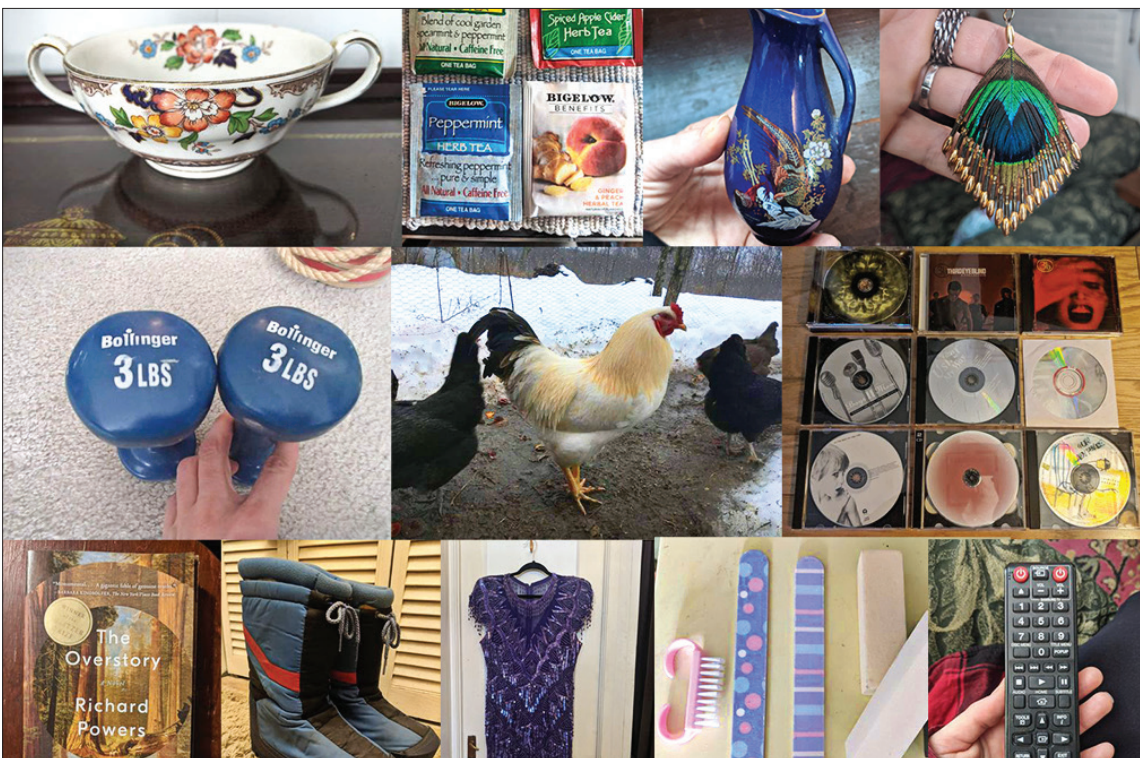
"We always want to make sure it is hyperlocal and not just people coming in from outside of our boundary just to grab stuff," Miao said. "There are plenty of other buy and sell groups out there. We really want to focus on building the community and trust between neighbors."

In order to be accepted to join the Buy Nothing Project's Facebook group, an individual must be within a certain geographic area, over 21 and not in any other Buy Nothing Group. Koizumi said the group tends to keep the group between local residents. The Facebook pages operate by utilizing a series of three different types of posts. A member can post regarding gifting, receiving or gratitude.

Gift-giving is when members gift items, knowledge or time. Koizumi said that gifting knowledge and skills is just as important to the functioning of the group as tangible objects. Community member Rachel Lori La Valle is an admin of the Facebook group as well and said that to her, the process of gifting items helps place that emphasis on a no-waste lifestyle.

"There is something that is literal waste to one person that someone else just around the corner who is two minutes down the road might actually be looking for," La Valle said. "People see that they don't need to trash or throw out items, there are people who will take it and use it, and that feels really good."

Receiving is when members ask



The Buy Nothing Project connects members in the same community to establish a local gift-giving economy. Members post images of the gifts they give and receive on the group's Facebook page.

COURTESY OF BUY NOTHING PROJECT

for help, answers or objects. A gratitude post is when members give thanks for something they received through the project. For instance, Koizumi said that last summer, a member grew her own catnip in her garden and offered it up in a gift post at the end of last year. Now members who received the catnip have been posting about it in the group, showing videos of their cats playing with the catnip.

Jason Hamilton, professor in the Department of Environmental Studies, offered more insight into the impact of environmental grassroots movements. Hamilton said that any action that is taken by one person has no real positive impact on the environment because it is only one person compared to the total population.

"Whether it is a hyperlocal gift economy or anything else, the way to make this have any positive impact at all is to make it be a community and to try to take whatever lessons you learn and encourage other people to do it also," Hamilton said. "It's absolutely crucial to do the personal everyday things because if you don't do that, you have no credibility, and you don't inspire anybody, and you don't build communities."

Koizumi said not everybody is on Facebook, which makes it difficult for more people to participate. Koizumi said that currently, the Buy Nothing Project is working on developing web- and phone-based apps so more people can join.

"I hope others can see that material goods are immaterial," Miao said. "Transformative change individually or within a society happens through deeply personal participation, so open your heart, make some friends because it's a great community."

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Ithaca Arthaus to provide affordable space for artists

BY KATHERINE KROM

From art galleries to sidewalk murals, sculptures on The Commons to artistic bike racks, art has always been a fundamental part of Ithaca. This fall, a new affordable housing project will be catered toward the artists in Ithaca who contribute to the community.

The Ithaca Arthaus is currently going up on 130 Cherry St. through the Vecino Group, a national construction company that builds affordable housing. In addition to providing housing for artists, Ithaca Arthaus will include housing for formerly homeless and foster care youth from ages 19 to 26. Bruce Adib-Yazdi, vice president of development for the Vecino Group, said the housing will be available to anyone who qualifies within the income limits, from 50% to 80% of the area median income. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the median household income in Tompkins County in 2019 dollars from 2015 to 2019 was \$60,240.

Adib-Yazdi said Ithaca submitted a request for a proposal for affordable housing in December 2018, and the group was chosen to start construction. Arthaus will have 120 units and a gallery on the ground level.

"Every project that we do and touch has to have a broader community issue that it solves, and in this case, it is the fact that Ithaca needs affordable housing, period," Adib-Yazdi said. "We asked the community what sort of housing they need, and one of the items that came up was an artist community."

To attract artists to the property, Vecino has partnered with the Cherry Arts, a non-profit organization on Cherry Street that presents and facilitates art spaces to different

artists and creators.

Samuel Buggeln is the founder and artistic director of the Cherry Arts. He said the Cherry Arts will run the artistic spaces in the gallery of The Ithaca Arthaus.

"We are really excited about the collaborative possibilities," Buggeln said. "What's really exciting for us is that arts companies across the country have an ongoing challenge of making the work available to lower income groups. People who haven't really felt invited into the arts making spaces, the galleries and theaters."

Mike Willemsen, president of construction for Vecino, said that having an affordable space for artists to be creative is very important.

"I think that sometimes in the world, there is so much focus on business and production, engineering and sciences and maths of the world," Willemsen said. "It is important to focus on the arts and culture. It is not a good idea to forget about that stuff. It is truly what makes us human. I think that our art house projects are a big testament to our commitment to that part of the world."

The Ithaca Arthaus has been in the works for over two years. Buggeln said Vecino has not seen many setbacks since the start of the pandemic because construction is mainly outside. Although the project is moving forward, the pandemic did have effects on the building process.

"Global supply chains were impacted, which have real-life impacts on our hometown communities," Willemsen said. "Sometimes you see stuff on the news about the pandemic and it's hard to kind of translate it to your own personal lives, but the construction industry is a global industry. We get impacted by trade,



The Ithaca Arthaus is an affordable housing apartment building for artists currently under construction at 130 Cherry St. The ground floor will feature an art gallery.

BEN DINIOA/THE ITHACAN

tariffs, supply. The pandemic has definitely added some layers of challenge."

Although there have been challenges this past year, once the Ithaca Arthaus has been made, Buggeln said he has hopes of the Cherry Street district potentially becoming an arts district.

"If all of the different developers wanted to come together to decide that they would have each building have an arts component to the building, then that could make their planning process smoother," Buggeln said.

Visum Development Group of Ithaca has plans to construct a 11.3-acre development near Cherry Street. The development will include retail, recreational spaces, housing, business hubs and event centers.

Buggeln said that so far, Vecino has been great to work with and matches the Cherry Art's goals for the Ithaca community.

"Their development philosophy is very much about bringing social good to communities," Buggeln said. "More than just making a buck on a big apartment building, this is affordable housing that can be for artists, and we hope that artists will want to take advantage of it."

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Disney delivers dazzling fantasy

MOVIE REVIEW: “Raya and the Last Dragon” Disney ★★★★★

BY AVERY ALEXANDER

Walt Disney Animation Studios has not wowed viewers with an original concept since releasing its powerhouse film “Moana” in 2016. While the 2018 “Ralph Breaks the Internet” and the 2019 “Frozen II” were both well-executed and widely acclaimed, “Raya and the Last Dragon” is the breath of fresh air that Disney fans have been waiting for.

Before diving into the beauty of the film itself, it is necessary to take a moment to appreciate the strange circumstances surrounding its production. When COVID-19 hit, the team for “Raya and the Last Dragon” was forced to work primarily from home. According to the credits of the film, this movie was made possible because of the diligence of Disney employees spread out across over 400 separate households.

After the dragons disappeared while defending humanity from a monster scourge called Druun, the fictional land of Kumandra broke apart and fell into discord. Warrior princess Raya (Kelly Marie Tran) and the last remaining dragon Sisu (Awkwafina) must come together to bring peace to Kumandra once more.

The undying passion for the product is clear. “Raya and the Last Dragon” is a true visual marvel that transcends anything Disney has ever accomplished. From fast-paced action sequences to calm wide-sweeping landscape shots, the animators squeezed

every last ounce of their skill into this movie.

Some of the most fantastic aspects of the animation are the fight scenes. Raya often finds herself engaging in battle, and every encounter is a feast for the eye. With each punch, kick and sword slash, the movie effectively immerses the audience in the action. Subtleties like variations in characters’ fighting styles add a layer of gritty realism to the combat and ensure that the sequences are fast-paced and exciting.

“Raya and the Last Dragon” also brings a deeply emotional story to the table. The film is the perfect balance of suspenseful, humorous and whimsical, and guarantees to keep viewers on a wildly swinging pendulum of emotion.

The ragtag cast of characters proves to be incredibly likable. One of the most memorable performances comes from Awkwafina. While the actor is known for her comedic roles in movies like “Crazy Rich Asians” and “Ocean’s 8,” she brings a lovely, melancholic nuance to her character. She still manages to balance this delicate emotion with the goofy charm that so many viewers have come to expect from her.

The cherry on top of this fantastic film is the score. “Raya and the Last Dragon” is certainly not the first non-musical Disney animated movie to exist, but it is the first Disney princess movie from Walt Disney Animation Studios to go without plot-driving musical numbers. At first, this might



“Raya and the Last Dragon” is a beautiful animation inspired by Southeast Asian culture. It was completed in quarantine.

COURTESY OF DISNEY

seem like a risky move, but “Raya and the Last Dragon” does not need large, choreographed music sequences or sensitive ballads to make the music great. Each song on the soundtrack swims with emotion and power. It also mixes modernized synthesized elements with traditional Southeast Asian instruments, like chimes and hand drums.

Besides being impeccably written, animated and scored, “Raya and the Last Dragon” is a step forward in the recognition of Southeast Asians in media. Although the film takes place in a fantasy setting, it was heavily inspired by Southeast Asian cultures and includes nods to Vietnam, Thailand and Laos.

Disney princesses are icons for many children, and it is extremely

important for Disney to use that influence for good. Raya is more than just another Disney princess — her existence leaves an opening for more people to seek social change through animation. With any luck, “Raya and the Last Dragon” is just the first in a long line of more inclusive Disney films.

While the triumph of “Raya and the Last Dragon” does not dismiss Disney’s deep, dirty history of racial inequity, it is a massive step in the right direction. Looking to the future, there is new hope that Disney will dedicate itself to not just creating other enchanting and entirely original ideas but also to continuing to right the many wrongs of its past.

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Series is beautifully surreal

TV REVIEW: “WandaVision” Disney

★★★★★

BY DARIENE SEIFERT

“WandaVision” is the newest addition to the Marvel Cinematic Universe, currently streaming on Disney+. Instead of the usual summer blockbuster action, this miniseries is more of a character study about anti-hero Wanda Maximoff (Elizabeth Olsen), also known as the Scarlet Witch. Throughout the nine episodes, Wanda tries to keep her home of Westview, NJ — and herself — together. Surrounding all of this is a touch of retro TV aesthetic.

The most captivating aspects of “WandaVision” are its tribute to older TV shows and the overarching mystery of Westview and who Wanda is. The first episode, “Filmed Before a Live Studio Audience,” has charm and wonder as Wanda and her android husband, Vision (Paul Bettany), navigate their “I Love Lucy”/“Bewitched”-styled world. Questions quickly arise when Wanda and Vision struggle to answer how they settled into Westview in the first place.

Wanda herself doesn’t know how she created this world. Yet, once she realizes she has control over it, Wanda refuses to leave. This introduces serious yet important themes including loss, grief and love. The more Wanda travels through each TV era, the closer her repression and pain reaches the surface. Instead of facing her problems, Wanda pushes her feelings back down, desperately trying to keep her happy home life intact. What Wanda doesn’t realize, though, is that she is hurting the townspeople in the process, causing more harm than good.

The production sets, special and practical effects, cinematography and music for each TV time period are impressive. Director Matt Shakman did an amazing job immersing the

audience into this fantastical and constantly changing world. Small details like the aspect ratio shifting when the storyline moves from inside the world of Westview to the outside world shows how much care went into this series.

The acting is superb. Olsen does a fantastic job interweaving emotions as her character experiences tranquility and turmoil. In turn, Wanda feels real and relatable. Bettany as Vision was a pleasant surprise. Bettany’s comedic skills truly excel in episode two. Vision gets gum stuck in his interior mechanics, which causes him to be in a drunken stupor. The chemistry between Wanda and Vision is endearing and authentic. In episode eight, “Previously On,” their relationship shines in a flashback conversation as the two discuss loneliness and sorrow. This is a standout in the season, as the audience learns about Wanda’s backstory and where her grief and love of vintage TV come from.

The most entertaining character is nosy neighbor Agnes (Kathryn Hahn). Hahn’s presence and humor steal every scene she is in, like when she passes a flask around to the other ladies at a committee meeting.

On the outside of Westview is Sentient Weapon Observation Response Division (S.W.O.R.D.) and the FBI, trying to solve the anomaly Wanda created. S.W.O.R.D. captain Monica Rambeau (Teyonah Parris) is sent to help out. Despite Wanda causing Monica anguish throughout the series, Monica is determined to help Wanda. She attempts multiple times to reenter Westview to reach Wanda, setting her up to have a meaningful role. Unfortunately, Monica’s presence falls flat and gets overshadowed toward the end of the series.

The supporting cast, while starting out



“WandaVision” creates a surreal world inspired by classic television programs.

COURTESY OF DISNEY

strong, struggles in the end. Darcy Lewis (Kat Dennings) and FBI agent James E. Woo (Randall Park) are part of Monica’s team. James ends up having so much potential, yet that potential is barely seen. He mostly delivers exposition and awkward comic relief. Darcy’s character is intelligent, funny and sassy. In fact, she is the one who finds out that Wanda is controlling Westview. However, she seems forgotten toward the last episodes.

“WandaVision” is an excellent addition to the Marvel universe. It takes a diverging approach to the superhero genre, and it works fantastically. People who don’t prefer Marvel can find enjoyment in Wanda’s complex personal journey or exploring each TV realm from episode to episode. Even more, the after-credits scene leaves Wanda’s story open, causing excitement over what’s next for the Scarlet Witch.

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POPPED CULTURE

Media is harsh on young stars

BY HANNAH SANSON

Pop culture has taken an active role in covering the deeply personal aspects of celebrities’ lives without care or compassion. In most cases, this takes a huge toll on their mental health without much acknowledgment or wariness from the public.

The “Free Britney” movement has recently reestablished public attention after the “Framing Britney Spears” episode in “The New York Times Presents” documentary series. The documentary, released on Hulu and FX on Feb. 5, highlights Spears’ rise to fame and the struggles that came with her stardom. Her first album “...Baby One More Time” was released in 1999, when she was only 17 years old. Amid the crazy changes that superstar level fame brought to Spears’ life, her father was not present in her life, largely shrinking her support system.

While Spears was pulled into the public eye as a result of her music, her private life followed her into the spotlight. Her success quickly led to a nationwide obsession with her personal life. When Spears went on tour with NSYNC, she began her relationship with Justin Timberlake. The media became obsessed with the concept of Spears’ virginity and what she must have done wrong when the relationship ended. She quickly had to learn how to answer uncomfortably personal questions.

Instead of leaving her be, the media put her upheavals on a pedestal. She had no room to deal with her heightened mental health issues that came with her fame. Under extreme pressure, Spears had multiple public outbursts, like the infamous shaved head hairstyle.

This is a story that is all too familiar for many female celebrities, especially those thrown into the spotlight at a young age.

Often for young female stars, media coverage is predatorial, misogynistic and extremely unhealthy. In 2008, Miley Cyrus’ MySpace was hacked, leaking revealing pictures of her onto the internet. The media characterized the event as “scandalous” and “dirty.” Despite Cyrus being a child, she was ruthlessly sexualized by the media, and Cyrus found herself having to defend her “wild child behavior.” Deemed crazy by the media for everything she did, she was unable to grow up in privacy without judgment.

Similarly, Lindsay Lohan had her share of harsh media coverage. The media had a disturbing fixation on her weight, and in 2006, Lohan admitted that she struggled with an eating disorder and drug use. Attempting to recover, Lohan took several trips to rehab, returning each time she had a relapse. But of course, she was mocked in the process.

The media’s fixation on body image has always been an issue, and the dangers have been felt by Taylor Swift as well. Swift discusses this issue and other mental health problems that formed alongside her rise to fame in the Netflix documentary “Miss Americana.” Despite speaking out against aggressive media, Swift has been ignored, proving that even if a female celebrity voices concerns, they are not taken seriously.

Until the media stops criticizing women for everything they do and gives these women the space to talk openly about their mental health, female celebrities will continue to be victims. Time and time again, audiences have watched the media dehumanize and exploit female celebrities. Some people eat it up as a form of entertainment, and some are disgusted by the dystopian nature of it all. If the media won’t stop, audiences need to at least think critically about the media they are consuming.

POPPED CULTURE is a weekly column, written by Life & Culture staff writers, that analyzes pop culture events. Hannah Sanson is a freshman journalism major. Contact her at hsanson@ithaca.edu.



CIRCLING BACK INTO COMPETITION

Multisport athlete returns to play after year away

Junior Luke Tobia plays defensive line for the Bombers football team.
COURTESY OF ARTIE TOBIA

BY ARLA DAVIS

On March 12, 2020, then-sophomore thrower Luke Tobia stood outside a hotel in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, where the Ithaca College men's track and field team was staying. The Bombers were set to compete in the NCAA Division III Indoor Track and Field Championships on March 13. Just moments prior, Tobia found out that the national championship was canceled due to COVID-19.

"I remember going out to the parking lot to call my dad," Tobia said. "My parents drove down to watch me compete, and I was just shocked. There were probably 50 or 60 people outside in the parking lot. People crying, on the phone, people giving each other hugs. For a lot of these people, it was their last shot."

After his first opportunity to compete for a national championship was canceled, Tobia said he and the rest of the track and field team hoped for a chance to compete outdoors, but they found out quickly that they would lose that season too.

However, this did not mean extra time off for Tobia. It just meant it was time to start training for football.

In addition to throwing for the Bombers, Tobia also plays defensive lineman for the college's football team during the fall. He said he was recruited out of high school to play football for the college, but was convinced by Tyler Burdoff, former assistant track and field coach, to compete in the shot put, discus and hammer throw events once he arrived on campus. Tobia said that he felt lucky to have another season to look forward to.

"It's kind of a unique situation for me," Tobia said. "A lot of people

didn't get the opportunity of looking forward to something, so a lot of people seemed to have a sense of hopelessness, where for me it was like, 'Alright, well, I don't have track, but at least I have football,' and vice versa."

Between football, indoor and outdoor track and field, Tobia's only time off from competition is the summer. He said that competing nearly year-round has benefited him mentally in both sports and has helped him overcome losing his past three seasons.

"I think it gives me a competitive edge just because I'm in it year-round, so I get a lot of experience just in competition itself," Tobia said. "I've always had an 'adapt and overcome' mentality. Whatever the situation is, you got to just take it and do whatever you can with it, especially now. You can't take anything for granted."

Tobia's mindset has not been overlooked by his teammates. Junior defensive lineman Ed Longest, Tobia's roommate since freshman year, said he has noticed this mentality day in and day out.

"He shows up every single day with a great attitude and level of focus," Longest said. "He attacks the day with whatever it is he's got going on, whether it be classes, school, practice, film sessions, things like that, and at a really high level of focus, attention to detail and effort that's just contagious to be around."

Tobia said this mindset has helped him transition from track and field season to football season not only mentally, but in his physical training as well. Head football coach Dan Swanstrom said the strength and power required to compete in the shot put and hammer throw events complements Tobia's position as a defensive lineman.

"Picking up something heavy and throwing it a couple hundred times a day and being explosive can only help him be a better football player," Swanstrom said. "It's just going to make him a more well-rounded athlete. He's added so much strength."

Tobia is on the five-year track for accounting in the School of Business and said he plans to utilize his extra

year of eligibility due to COVID-19 during his fifth year.

Now that Tobia is a junior, he said he has stepped into a leadership role in trying to help underclassmen become accustomed to both teams' cultures. Swanstrom said as an upper-classman, Tobia will lead his teammates by setting an example of commitment for younger players.

"We've really kind of changed how we view leadership roles within this program," Swanstrom said. "We want as many people leading by example as possible, and I think he can do that. ... He will be a committed athlete on the field, and he'll do it day in and day out, and people will take notice."

Despite all of the obstacles the pandemic has brought Tobia, he said his goals remain the same. For football, he said he hopes to see the team win the Liberty League, then compete in the national playoffs and potentially win a national title. In track and field, he said he also wants to see the men's team win the Liberty League followed by regionals, and then compete at nationals as an individual.

Jess Craven, a graduate assistant strength and conditioning coach, has been coaching the throwing events for the Bombers this season since Burdoff left to coach at Towson University in Maryland in the fall.

She said since meeting him in January, Tobia has been very focused on his goals.

"He's super driven," Craven said. "He comes to practice every day and wants to work hard. He's very determined to qualify for nationals, and return to where he was last year."

Craven said Tobia brings a positive spirit with him to the throwing circle that makes himself and his teammates better.

"He definitely contributes significantly to the atmosphere of practice," Craven said. "We try to keep things light and fun, and whenever Luke's at practice, I think everyone's engaged and having a good time. ... I can feel the level of camaraderie rise when he is around."

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Tobia works on his orbit in the hammer throw at practice March 11. This is one of three events he competes in during outdoor track and field.

ABBIE LONDON/ THE ITHACAN

Women’s crew alumni compete at Olympic trials

BY EMMA KERSTING

When former Ithaca College’s women’s crew and sculling team members Savannah Brija ’18, ’20 and Karina Feitner ’18 joined the program in 2015, neither had any experience in rowing. Nearly six years later, the two participated in Olympic rowing trials for the chance to represent Team USA at the Tokyo Olympics.

Though they both missed the cut, from Feb. 22 to 26, the two participated in the five-day event held in Sarasota, Florida. Brija was able to advance all the way to the third day of the event, while Feitner did not make it past the initial 2K time trial on the first day.

Both athletes came to Ithaca with the plan of playing a sport, just not rowing. Brija started her career as a student-athlete as a member of the women’s soccer team, while Feitner played women’s lacrosse. Brija began rowing her freshman year, but Feitner waited until her sophomore year to give the women’s crew team a try. Once Becky Robinson, head women’s crew coach, saw what each were capable of, she said that she knew that they were destined for success.

“From day one, both those guys walked in and they were competitors,” Robinson said. “They didn’t learn that here; they came with it, and then they developed that competitiveness. They just brought it into rowing, and they developed here as rowers.”

Robinson said the college is one of two colleges in the country

that offers varsity sculling, which is a single or double boat with two oars per sculler. The other program is Oklahoma City University in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, which is where Feitner currently resides. She moved there two years ago and has been spending the last two years training at the USRowing National High Performance Center in Oklahoma City.

Robinson said she believes the sculling program offered at the college was a tremendous help in Brija and Feitner’s preparation for the trials.

“Certainly, having varsity sculling was a huge benefit to both of those guys because all of the Olympic trials that were going on were in singles and doubles, which is sculling and crew,” Robinson said. “Rowing, typically, it’s sweep rowing, so athletes have one oar compared to sculling, where they have two. ... They would not have been able to compete in [the time trials] had we not have that sculling opportunity at IC.”

Feitner thought her rowing career was over following her senior year. After her boat, the Varsity 8, placed second in the NCAA championship and an emotional bus ride following the event, she said she planned on going to graduate school. But, before Feitner could get off the bus, Beth Greene, assistant women’s crew coach, recommended delaying graduate school.

“I thought that was it, that was the last race I’d have,” Feitner said. “Post-collegiate rowing is so much fun. It’s such a different



From left, Savannah Brija ’19 and Karina Feitner ’18 compete at the Women’s Rowing Olympic Trials in Sarasota, Florida, in February. Both alumni walked on to Ithaca College’s crew team in 2015.

COURTESY OF KARINA FEITNER

environment in a lot of ways. In collegiate sports, there’s a feeling of social club aspect of it. But once you get to this level, everyone is dripping sweat during the warm up. Everything they do in and out of practice is dedicated to improving.”

Brija said that she loves competing at a higher level and that she has wanted to since she started rowing. Because she was earning her Doctor of Physical Therapy degree in 2020, Brija was not available to compete for the Olympic trials in March 2020. With her degree completed and the postponement of events,

she was able to compete this year.

“My ultimate goal is to make it to the Olympics,” Brija said. “That’s why I’m still training, that’s what I’m going for. ... Hopefully, I can make the national team in the next few years to really set myself up for that.”

Brija did know her former teammate was also going to participate in the time trials, she said that she was more focused on proving her skill to the rest of the competition.

“Because it was my first elite race, I just wanted to post a time that I felt was my best and could be proud of regardless of placement,” Brija said.

When Brija and Feitner rowed for the Bombers, Robinson said it was fun for her to see them challenge each other while being supportive teammates. Feitner said that Brija motivated her to become a better athlete in the process. While both Brija and Feitner have their sights set on Olympic bids the next time around, Feitner enjoyed seeing her former teammate compete against her at the trials.

“I was so happy that [Brija] was there with me,” Feitner said. “She’s truly one of the fiercest competitors I’ve ever met.”

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Athletes consider using extra year of eligibility

BY ARLA DAVIS

When senior football player Andrew Vito first heard that Ithaca College and the Liberty League canceled Fall 2020 sports competition, he said he knew right away that he would take a gap year in order to compete one last time. While he said he was not shocked by the cancelation, he was upset knowing that he would not get to play with a majority of his fellow seniors again.

In October 2020, the NCAA Presidents Council approved a blanket waiver for Division III that stated athletes may compete during the 2020–21 academic year without losing participation or academic eligibility. This means that all Division III competitors may compete for a fifth — or even sixth — season. Athletes may delay their graduation by taking a leave of absence, enrolling in fewer credits for the semester³, or adding another major or minor. They may also continue to compete while studying in a graduate program.

Erienne Roberts, associate director of athletics and senior woman administrator at the college, said fall and winter sport athletes currently have two semesters of eligibility and one additional semester of competition, while spring athletes have three semesters of eligibility and two seasons of competition. Athletes have to consider factors outside of sport, like finances, academic plans and individual health. However, Roberts said the NCAA has been flexible for each member institution when it comes to student eligibility.

Roberts said the most difficult part is understanding the NCAA’s eligibility guidelines for students who are still planning to graduate on time but want to continue to play as they pursue an extended or second degree or graduate program, as the guidelines for

graduate students vary among Divisions I, II and III. She said most of her discussions with athletes focus on answering questions about whether to graduate on time and pursue a graduate program or take a leave of absence to delay graduation. She also said this is a unique experience for Division III athletes because often college is their last chance to compete.

“When we look at Division III athletes, this is it,” Roberts said. “Very rarely do they go on and play at a professional level, so these are their competitive days. ... Just even trying to get people to understand, ‘Why would a student want to delay? Just graduate.’ This is what they’ve been doing their whole lives.”

Junior track and field athlete Meghan Matheny has decided to stay at the college for a fifth year while pursuing another minor. She currently majors in business administration with concentrations in sport management and sport marketing. She also currently minors in photography and plans to add a graphic design minor. Matheny said she planned to graduate in four years and considered going somewhere else for graduate school prior to the pandemic and receiving two extra years of eligibility. However, she said she most likely will not compete for a sixth year if she goes to another university for a graduate program.

Vito, who is a business administration major, said he decided to take a leave of absence in the fall semester and worked for a medical supply company. He re-enrolled in Spring 2021 and will graduate this December. Vito said he is just one of two football players in his graduating class using the extra eligibility and feels that finances played a huge role in this.

“To come back just to play one semester of football is not conducive for a lot of people,



From left, senior Julia Nomberg, sophomore Jamie Rossig and junior Meghan Matheny run during track practice at the Athletics and Events Center on Feb. 21.

FRANKIE WALLS/THE ITHACAN

especially myself,” Vito said. “I wasn’t going to spend ‘X’ amount of dollars just to come play football, so that’s why I mapped it out the way I did. For some guys, scholarships didn’t carry over, or they thought they maybe would get into a grad program but weren’t given the scholarship they previously had. Money gets tight, and you know it’s Division III football at the end of the day, despite how much we love to play.”

Despite having the extra season of eligibility, some athletes have chosen not to take advantage of it for reasons other than academics and finances. After months of consideration — and being almost certain she was going to play a fifth year — senior field hockey player Katie Dick, who is in the college’s five-year occupational therapy program, said she ultimately chose not to because of an ongoing shin injury she faced during her junior year.

“My injury definitely played a part in my decision because my dad had so many injuries that have required surgery now that he’s older,” Dick said. “I can’t be waddling around hurting for the rest of my life. Like, I’m still only 21. I still have a lot of life left in my legs.”

While Dick said it was difficult to make the decision to end her field hockey career, she felt that she was ending on a high note after a former strength and conditioning coach spoke kindly of her at the team’s senior banquet, which was held in December over Zoom.

“I feel like some people are ready to be done, but I wasn’t ready to be until after hearing what Dakota [Brovero] said,” Dick said. “I was like, ‘Alright, if that’s how people are going to remember me, I’m happy with that.’”

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Sophomore Ethan Tuomala pours fresh maple sap into a barrel March 14 at the sugar bush in the Ithaca College Natural Lands. Students in the Non-Timber Forest Products course have started collecting sap from maple trees to turn it into maple syrup and will then sell it though their business, South Hill Forest Products.

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